

Highlights from the Annual Young Scholars Conference on Translation “TELL ME MORE 2026”

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Research interests: audiovisual translation, subtitling, video game localisation, accessibility, sociolinguistic variation

Abstract. The international conference for young scholars on translation, *TELL ME MORE*, was held for the fourth consecutive year at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty on May 5th, 2026. Providing a platform for exploring various aspects of translation, the conference received more than a dozen submissions. The conference was organised by the students of the Audiovisual Translation Master’s study programme, some of whom also participated as presenters. This annual event brought together students as well as emerging scholars from numerous universities in Lithuania and abroad for insightful discussions and scholarly exchange. The conference was divided into two simultaneous sections – one focusing on audiovisual translation, and the other on literary translation. The topics that were explored included: proper name translation, humour translation, localisation and technical translation, AI-related translation research, and accent as well as dialect translation. This paper provides a review of the conference, giving insights into the presented studies.

Keywords: audiovisual translation; subtitling; dubbing; AD; SDH; literary translation; AI; machine translation.

Introduction

On May 5th, 2026, the annual international conference on translation, *TELL ME MORE*, was held at Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty. The first conference was organised in 2013. At the time, the conference focused on linguistics, literature, and media studies, and was entitled *TELL ME* (an acronym of *Thought Elaboration: Linguistics, Literature, Media Expression*). Since 2023, the conference has altered its title to *TELL ME MORE* and has devoted its spotlight entirely to translation. Since then, the conference has been organised annually by the MA students of Audiovisual Translation with the help of their lecturers. Although dedicated only to translation, it supports the investigation of all possible elements

Submitted 11 June 2026 / Accepted 04 July 2026

Įteikta 2026 06 11 / Priimta 2026 07 04

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of the field, providing a wide variety of themes. The current year was no different, as the conference topics included proper name translation, humour translation, localisation and technical translation, AI-related translation research, accent and dialect translation, just to mention a few. The event was held in a hybrid format (in-person and online).

The conference brought together 20 presenters and a large audience of students, researchers and academic staff. The attendees came from Lithuanian (Vilnius University, Klaipėda University) and other European universities – Latvia (Ventspils University of Applied Sciences), Ukraine (Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University), Greece (University of Ioannina), South America – Ecuador (University of Guayaquil), and Asia – India (JAIN (Deemed-to-be University)). The conference was opened with a speech by Prof. Dr Danguolė Satkauskaitė, Head of the Institute of Languages, Literature and Translation Studies at Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty, who welcomed the attendees, saying a few words in their native language. The chair of the conference's scientific committee, Assoc. Prof. Dr Jurgita Astrauskienė explained the technicalities of the conference and wished everyone a fruitful and engaging day full of insightful ideas and new connections. After the opening, the presenters and listeners were invited to join two parallel sessions.

1. Session on audiovisual translation, accessibility, AI, and machine translation

The first session was chaired by Agnė Markulytė, an MA student at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty (Lithuania). The session began with a presentation on idiolect and accent translation solutions in the Lithuanian version of animated comedy *Garfield 2* (2006), delivered by Salvija Dubosaitė, a student at Vilnius University. The presenter elaborated on the differences in how idiolects and accents are represented in both the original and the Lithuanian-dubbed version, with a particular focus on the two main characters, Garfield and Prince. The findings of her research revealed that in the original version of the film, the two characters were portrayed differently through their behaviour and unique way of speaking (through accent and idiolect). However, accents were not maintained in the Lithuanian version, thus leaving idiolect as the key feature distinguishing Garfield from Prince.

Polina Matosova and Andrii Kozachuk from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine) introduced the audience to their translation analysis of Ukrainian-dubbed songs in Frank Oz's musical *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986). In their research, the authors observed frequent omission of verses and misinterpretations of the original songs, while loss of rhyme was observed more rarely. Nonetheless, it was noted that the Ukrainian translation of the musical managed to convey the overall meaning of the songs, captured their mood, and in this way preserved the general feel of the original.

Another presenter from Vilnius University (Lithuania), an MA student Orestas Vaitekūnas, explored offensive language translation in the Lithuanian-dubbed animated film *Megamind* (2010). The presenter concluded that the Lithuanian version softened

offensive language in comparison with the original, but noted that a single film is not enough material to judge the cultural norms of the whole country, thus inviting to expand the research on the offensive language rendition.

Agnė Markulytė from Vilnius University (Lithuania), focused on the translation of humour in the Lithuanian and Italian versions of the animated sitcom *The Simpsons* (1989–). She analysed the translation of in-show prank calls. Her results revealed clear differences between the two target languages: Lithuanian translations tend to prioritise semantic clarity, frequently employing direct translation, modulation, and explicitation, while the Italian translations, by contrast, more often use adaptation and modulation to recreate the humorous effect. The quantitative analysis showed that Italian translations achieve a higher success rate of humour rendition.

Subsequently, a presenter, also from Vilnius University (Lithuania), Smiltė Butkutė spoke about audio description guidelines and an eye-tracking study of sighted viewers' gaze fixations. Her analysis results suggested that audio description guidelines remain useful in the creation of audio description of static visual art, but only partially correspond to the real viewing patterns as observed in the eye-tracking study of the sighted participants. She also claimed that eye-tracking experiments could offer a valuable empirical perspective on elements that should be prioritised when preparing audio description for the blind.

Margarita Jacinavičiūtė, a student from Vilnius University (Lithuania), spoke about the characteristics of the Lithuanian subtitles for deaf and hard-of-hearing (SDH) viewers in documentary films for children. In her study, she described the guidelines of SDH for children and analysed whether they are adhered to in the Lithuanian SDH of the documentary film "Siblings" (2016). In addition, she aimed to distinguish some unique features that are peculiar to the Lithuanian SDH. She carried out an analysis of speaker identification, SDH positioning, segmentation, and the usage of language emphasising the importance of proper SDH for children in order to ensure the language development and education of the young audience through documentary films.

Continuing the session, a presenter from Vilnius University (Lithuania), MA student Nedas Romanovas presented his study on fan localization of Japanese visual novels focused on the balancing of cultural fidelity and accessibility. Specifically, he analysed the use of domestication and foreignisation throughout the localisation process, while addressing the potential intercultural challenges that may emerge during translation.

Airidas Kairys, a PhD student from the University of Ioannina (Greece), presented his research in which he aimed to disclose how translators learn to use AI in their job tasks. To reach the aim, he organised semi-structured interviews with 19 Lithuanian translators, then analysed the collected data with MAXQDA software. His study showed that translators usually use such tools as DeepL, Google Translate, and ChatGPT, and learn to utilise them in their job tasks through self-directed learning practices. In addition, they utilise digital media and self-study resources, the trial-and-error method, and learn by comparing and evaluating tools.

The next speaker, Ilona Kozulia from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine), presented her research done under the supervision of Andrii Kozachuk, which

examined the outputs from Matecat, a Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) platform, and aimed at unveiling error patterns. The results of the analysis pointed out an inability to recognise proper nouns and cultural references. Instead, the neural machine translation software treated them as generic vocabulary. These specific lexical and contextual errors highlighted the persistent gap between human and machine translations.

Dominyka Maneikytė from Klaipėda University (Lithuania) delivered a presentation co-authored with Vaida Žegunienė. Their research focused on untranslatability and compared machine versus human translation, especially when dealing with literary texts. The authors showed examples from the translated literary texts to illustrate how untranslatable elements are handled in practice. The comparison of human and machine translation demonstrated that while machine translation provides efficiency and accessibility, it often struggles with stylistic and cultural nuances, whereas human translators are better equipped to preserve meaning and interpret the complexity of literary texts.

2. The literary translation session

The second session was chaired by Akvilė Varpiotaitė, an MA student at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty (Lithuania). The session began with a presentation by a PhD student Raveena KP, who presented her research, co-authored with Dr. Shradha Kanwar from JAIN (Deemed-to-be University). The speaker focused on two sculptures of the semiosphere of Mananchira Square, Kozhikode, which have been intersemiotically translated from literary narratives of *Randamoozham* and *Nellu*. She explained how these sculptures act as “physical archives” for regional identity.

The next presenters were Sofiia Khalepa and Andrii Kozachuk from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine), who spoke about the lexicon of Western Ukrainian Pokuttia dialect, and its translation into English. By analysing the translation of *The News* by Vasyl Stefanyk, they revealed that the frequent use of the adaptation strategy resulted in a more natural and accessible text for an English-speaking audience. At the same time, the lack of direct translation meant that Ukrainian dialectal features were compensated using colloquial and emotionally expressive vocabulary, which preserved the overall stylistic colouring of the text and prevented excessive domestication.

Svitlana Plechko from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine) presented a study carried out together with Andrii Kozachuk on linguistic deviations and their translation in *Flowers for Algernon* by Daniel Keyes. The findings demonstrated that direct reproduction of deviations is often impossible due to the structural and systemic differences between English and Ukrainian. The study confirmed that successful translation of deviated speech requires a dynamic, function-oriented approach.

Darija Jegorova presented research co-authored with Vaida Žegunienė from Klaipėda University (Lithuania). They explored the complexity of poetry translation, specifically balancing meaning, form, and culture. The conclusions implied that translating poetry requires linguistic knowledge as well as creativity, cultural awareness, and sensitivity to

literary style. Additionally, the translator must act as both an interpreter and a creative mediator in order to bring the poem to life in another language.

The session continued with a presentation by Viktoriia Prykhodko, a student from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine), who presented the Ukrainian translation of metaphors in Rebecca F. Kuang's novel *Babel, or the Necessity of Violence*. Following Peter Newmark's taxonomy, the student identified seven procedures that were applied to render metaphors. The presenter concluded that the accurate reproduction of a metaphorical system in fiction requires a shift toward cognitive and ideological equivalence in order to ensure the work's ethical core and resistance to imperial dominance remain intact.

The following presentation was delivered by Anastasiia Pryimak and Oleksandra Chernikova, students from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine). They presented the findings of their analysis of syntactic changes in the Ukrainian version of Kurt Vonnegut's novel *Cat's Cradle*. The results provided evidence that syntactic changes were realized via the following techniques: thematic-rhematic change of word order, replacing passive constructions with active ones to make the target text sound more natural; differences in grammar structure; adaptation and compensation. It was observed that the syntactic changes are not limited to only grammatical substitutions but are the main means of preserving the pragmatic effect of the original.

The next talk was given by Viktoriia Kryvenko and Daria Fedorenko, students from the Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine). These participants discussed strategies and techniques for historical vocabulary rendition in the Ukrainian translation of Julia Quinn's historical novel *Bridgerton: The Viscount Who Loved Me*. Their research demonstrated that in order to recreate the English aristocratic atmosphere of the 19th century, the translator used various translation techniques: the use of direct dictionary equivalents, descriptive translation, transcription, generalization, and calque. In addition, the authors analysed the role of footnotes as an additional means of explaining complex historical realities.

Diana Berzina from Ventspils University of Applied Sciences (Latvia) introduced her study on proper names' translation, specifically, the case of Spanish personal names in Latvian media and translated texts. The research findings suggested that while normative frameworks could provide a structured basis for name translation, the actual usage was influenced by multiple factors, including international exposure, translators' preferences, and media practices. The author noted that there is a need for clearer guidelines and greater consistency in practice, particularly in smaller language communities, such as Latvian.

The following speakers were Anastasiia Romanchuk and Andrii Kozachuk from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University (Ukraine). In their presentation, they delved into Mexican regional lexis in the English and Ukrainian translations of Juan Rulfo's novel *Pedro Páramo*. The results of the comparative analysis of the selected fragments from the source texts revealed that the Ukrainian translation was more successful than the English one since it better preserved the semantics of the source text.

Aurelija Pranevičiūtė presented the study conducted together with Vaida Žeguniene from Klaipėda University (Lithuania). The presentation focused on strategies used in book title rendition. The authors examined 30 English-language book titles selected from Le Monde's *100 Books of the Century* and compared them with their Lithuanian translations. The analysis showed that literal translation was applied most often, whereas calque, modulation, adaptation, and transposition were used rarely. In addition, the researchers made an observation that some titles were translated by utilising more than one strategy. They concluded that a translated title must remain connected to the original, yet it must flow naturally in the target language.

3. The closing of the conference and awards

As every single year, the conference ended with awards for the best presentations. The audience was invited to vote for their favourite presentation after each session and at the closing of the conference all votes were counted. The first place was taken by Agnė Markulytė for her presentation *Translation of Humor in the Lithuanian and Italian Versions of "The Simpsons": Comparative Analysis of the Translation of Prank Calls*. Nedas Romanovas took second place for his speech on *Fan Localization of Japanese Visual Novels: Balancing Cultural Fidelity and Accessibility*. The third place was given to Margarita Jacinavičiūtė who delivered a presentation entitled *The Characteristics of the Lithuanian Subtitles for Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing in Documentary Films for Children*. The winners were awarded prizes from the conference sponsors and supporters: Kaunas city Chamber theatre, Coffee house *Trys kartai*, A. Žmuidzinavičius Creations and Collections Museum, and Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty.

TELL ME MORE 2026 was an inspiring event, offering a diverse range of topics that encouraged all participants to discuss research questions on translation. The conference continues its tradition of bringing broad-minded young researchers together to share their insights, create opportunities for cooperation, and make new contacts. The conference attempts to create a warm atmosphere for all, from participants to the audience of listeners. The organisers aspire to develop the thematic scope that would reflect the current trends and key issues in translation studies.

One of the organisers of the conference, Agnė Markulytė, stated that "this was my first *TELL ME MORE*, and I had so much fun organising, moderating, and presenting my research at this conference!" She noted that she was "amazed how such a seemingly simple and small event brought together so many people from other countries – Latvia, Ukraine, Greece, India". When speaking about her expectations and execution, she mentioned that "I really was not expecting much, but I saw a room full of people who are passionate about translation and linguistics. The presenters had a spark in their eyes as they talked about what interests them the most, and the audience had so many questions that there was never a moment of boredom or uncomfortable silence". She concluded that "it is such a wonderful feeling to share your passion with people who are interested in it and to learn new things in a non-traditional way". The other chairperson Akvilė

Varpiotaitė added that, “being a part of *TELL ME MORE* was an extremely rewarding experience. Every presentation was insightful and filled with thoughtful explorations of the intricacies of translation. It was fascinating to listen to the various findings and to be part of the process, contributing even in the smallest way”. Future editions of *TELL ME MORE* may further expand the range of participants, strengthen international cooperation and encourage discussion of emerging issues in translation studies.

Author contributions

Orestas Vaitekūnas: conceptualisation, writing – original draft.

Acknowledgments to the groupmates who not only made the conference possible but additionally contributed to the event overview – **Agnė Markulytė, Miglė Skudžinskaitė, Samanta Tamaliūnaitė, Akvilė Varpiotaitė.**