The Highlights of the Annual Students and Young Scholars Conference on Translation "TELL ME MORE 2025"

Beata Mongird

Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty
Institute of Literature, Language and Translation Studies
Muitines St 8, 44280 Kaunas, Lithuania
E-mail: beata.mongird@knf.stud.vu.lt
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0009-3198-8414
Research interests: Audiovisual translation, Intersemiotic translation, Multimodal research

Victoria Volgina

Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty
Institute of Literature, Language and Translation Studies
Muitines St 8, 44280 Kaunas, Lithuania
E-mail: victoria.volgina@knf.stud.vu.lt
ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0009-0006-2496-3882
Research interests: Audiovisual translation, Literary translation

Abstract. The international conference for young scholars on translation *TELL ME MORE* was held for the third consecutive year at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty on May 7th, 2025. This annual event brought together students and emerging scholars from various Lithuanian and European universities for an intensive day of scholarly exchange and insightful discussions. Providing a platform for exploring various facets of translation and fostering interdisciplinary research, the conference received diverse submissions. The topics included: audiovisual translation and accessibility; literary translation; localisation and technical translation; multimodal and AI-related translation research; intersemiotic translation and adaptation. A particular emphasis was placed on accessibility, highlighted by a guest speaker from Lithuanian Audiosensory Library. The paper critically reviews four parallel conference sessions, providing key insights into the presented studies.

Keywords: translation research; audiovisual translation and accessibility; literary translation; intersemiotic translation.

Introduction

On May 7th, 2025, the annual international conference on translation TELL ME MORE was held at Vilnius University Kaunas Faculty. Initially launched in 2013 as a conference on linguistics, literature, and media studies under the name *TELL ME* (*Thought Elaboration:*

Linguistics, Literature, Media Expression), it was revived after a prolonged pause in 2023 with an updated name, *TELL ME MORE*, and a narrower focus on translation. Since then, the conference has been organised annually. Although devoted solely to translation, it encourages the exploration of all possible facets of the field, offering an inexhaustible range of themes.

This year was no exception, with topics including audiovisual translation and accessibility, literary translation, technical translation and localisation, intersemiotic translation and adaptation, and multimodal and AI-related translation research.

The conference brought together 17 participants and numerous attendees in Lithuania (Vilnius University, Vytautas Magnus University) and other European countries – North Macedonia (Goce Delcev University), Slovakia (Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra), Poland (University of Social Sciences). The event was held in both English and Lithuanian, in hybrid format (offline and online).

After each of the four parallel sessions, the audience voted for the most engaging presentation of the session. These presenters were awarded prizes at the end of the conference, sponsored by the cinema theatre *Romuva*, the *Art Deco Museum, Kaunas Ninth Fort Museum,* and *Bundu* bakery.

1. Translation and adaptation

The first parallel morning session, focused on literary translation, adaptation, and multimodal research, was chaired by Indrė Višinskaitė, a PhD student at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty. The session began with a presentation on parallels from the perspective of intersemiotic translation and intertextuality between Coen Brothers' film O Brother, Where Art Thou*?* (2000), James Joyce's novel *Ulysses* (1922), and Homer's Greek epic poem *The Odyssey* (7th–8th century BCE), delivered by Gertrūda Šimčikaitė, a BA student at Vilnius University. The presenter elaborated on how filmmakers draw inspiration from ancient literary works, demonstrating the continued relevance of old problems and the creation of new narratives.

A guest from Vytautas Magnus University, an MA student Karolina Petraškaitė, explored genre, metalepsis, and translation in popular fiction, using Victoria Hislop's *Those Who Are Loved* (2019) and Peter Mayle's *A Year in Provence* (1989) as case studies. The presenter challenged the notion that popular fiction lacks intellectual value, showing that genres such as historical fiction and travel writing are dynamic and communicative. Moreover, she advocated for these genres, arguing that although the mentioned novels are aimed at mass audiences, the complexity of their historical content, genre conventions, and cultural nuances requires a serious approach and high translator competence.

The conference also welcomed guests from sunny North Macedonia – Asst. Prof. Jovana Karanikikj Josimovka and Prof. Darinka Marolova from Goce Delcev University. Their presentation focused on the translation of colloquial language from Italian into Macedonian, using three novels: *Abel* (2023) by Alessandro Baricco, *L'Arminuta* (2017) by Donatella Di Pietrantonio, and the culinary novel *La scienza in cucina e l'arte di mangiar*

bene (1938) by Pellegrino Artusi. The presenters examined how various forms of spoken language (dialect, slang, and popular tone) shape character development, atmosphere, and cultural context. They concluded by emphasising the crucial role of translator competence in preserving a text's stylistic qualities, emotional undertones, and cultural integrity across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

The session ended with a presentation by MA student Neilina Veitaitė from Vilnius University, who examined the multimodal representation of power dynamics in Todd Field's film *Tár* (2022). Neilina Veitaitė analysed how verbal, visual, and auditory elements interact to construct meaning in selected scenes, and how verbal content is adapted into Lithuanian subtitles. Three scenes were analysed to illustrate different types of power: authoritative control, collaborative dynamics, and creative autonomy. The presenter shared that analysing the interplay of visuals, sound, and language is crucial to understanding the manifestations of power, gender roles, and different perspectives in film. She also highlighted the challenges involved in the translation of these multimodal elements across languages and cultures. Neilina Veitaitė received sponsor-awarded prizes in recognition of her thorough and insightful research.

2. Accessibility in translation

The second parallel session was devoted to accessibility in translation. The Chairperson of the session was Assoc. Prof. Dr Jurgita Astrauskienė. The session began with a presentation by guest speaker Alisa Žarkova, Head of the Publishing Department at Lithuanian Audiosensory Library. The speaker provided an overview of the impact of inclusive publishing technologies on the reading experience, in light of the European Accessibility Act, which comes into effect in June 2025.

Underscoring the urgency and relevance of inclusive practices in publishing, the speaker noted that conventional printed books are not readable for at least 10% of Lithuania's population due to visual impairments, certain physical conditions, or dyslexia. According to Alisa Žarkova, the solution lies in the accessible e-book – one book meeting multiplicity of reading needs – offering such benefits as the ability to adjust font, size, and contrast of the text; enjoy audio descriptions of illustrations; switch between text- and pre-recorded audiobook; or conveniently listen to the book using text-to-speech tools. When discussing the development of reading technologies, the speaker noted that technological progress impacts global reading behaviour, making accessible e-books a more user-friendly choice for everyone and suggesting a promising trajectory for their future recognition and distribution.

The session continued with a presentation by Smiltė Butkutė, a BA student from Vilnius University, who presented her eye-tracking study on the perception of photographs depicting reconstructed 13th–14th century Kernavė noble costumes. The student reflected on the connection between audio description (hereafter AD) standards and eye-tracking technology, which helps identify which visual elements attract the most attention and should be prioritised in AD. The study demonstrated that faces and small and complex

details receive increased attention, while the most thoroughly observed details and the order in which the photo is scanned vary by age and gender groups. Contributing to the scarce research on the AD of static visual art related to Lithuanian heritage, the study highlighted the importance of interdisciplinary research combining AD and eye-tracking, and suggested a need for audience-specific AD.

The third presentation was delivered by the participant from Slovakia, Romana Jurigová, a PhD student in Translation Studies at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. She introduced a pilot study on the reception of subtitles for deaf and hard of hearing (hereafter SDH) by ageing audiences on television and streaming platforms. In-depth interviews with two deaf viewers revealed that, contrary to the initial hypothesis, SDH on streaming platforms was received more positively than SDH on television, which was criticised for the lack of captioned content, poor quality during live broadcasts, and technical flaws. Interestingly, despite the limited availability of Slovak SDH on streaming services, respondents preferred SDH in Czech – a language familiar to them – over SDH in their native language on television, effectively confirming the superiority of streaming services. The study also revealed individual preferences, such as colour-coding and simplified vocabulary, highlighting the potential need for personalised SDH.

The final presentation of the session was delivered by Vaiva Laukžemytė-Ordu, a BA student from Vilnius University. Her study on the AD of supernatural horror films examined Insidious: The Red Door (2023), focusing on the coherence of emotional tone and ambience in the English AD with the genre. The assessment of AD according to ADLAB guidelines revealed that suspense was maintained through appropriate tempo, word choice, and tone, and that genre-specific symbolism was overall rendered, despite a global tendency to omit detailed descriptions in AD. The study underscored the adaptability of ADLAB guidelines to specific genres and the general importance of considering genre conventions when creating effective AD. The audience highly appreciated the originality of the topic, and the conference sponsors awarded a special prize.

3. Intersemiotic, intercultural, and technological approaches to translation

The first parallel afternoon session comprised presentations on different facets of translation, including intersemiotic translation, technical and literary translation, and AI-performed interpretation. The Chairperson of the session was Beata Mongird, an MA student in Audiovisual Translation at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty.

Kristina Bernotaitė, a BA student from Vilnius University, opened the session by presenting her research on intersemiotic translation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in Peter Greenaway's film *Prospero's Books* (1991). The study defines Greenaway's adaptation as a cinematic remake, following Thomas M. Leitch's (1990) theoretical framework. It argues that replacing the central image of the tempest with that of a book offers a new perspective to the piece. At the same time, the distinct cinematic language of avant-garde director, including the references to Mannerist art and abundant use of digital effects, makes his interpretation stand out among traditional adaptations of Shakespeare.

The second presentation of the session also focused on intersemiotic translation. Miglė Skudžinskaitė, a BA student from Vilnius University, presented her study on the rendering of intertextual elements from the literary original in the cinematic adaptation of Franc Roddam's *Moby Dick* (1998). Following the concept of intertextuality proposed by Julia Kristeva (1966), the study revealed that original intertextuality notably suffered in the film, with many intertextual elements shortened (e.g. Biblical allusions) or completely omitted (e.g. encyclopaedic content abundant in the book) due to the limitations of cinematic medium. On the other hand, certain intertextual elements were rendered creatively by transforming verbal content into visual imagery (e.g. the image of the white whale referring to Leviathan to which it is compared in the book), illustrating the interpretive potential inherent in intersemiotic translation. The intriguing concept and charismatic delivery earned a special prize from the sponsors.

From intersemiotic translation, the conference proceeded to technical translation and localisation issues. Palina Salei, an MA student from Vytautas Magnus University, delivered an exhaustive overview of the challenges and quality assurance strategies in terminology management and translation. The speaker identified several key challenges, including terminological inconsistency, the inherent complexity of specialised terms, and the dynamic evolution of technical language, marked by the rapid emergence of neologisms and the resulting multiplicity of terms. To avoid inaccuracies and ensure high quality of technical and scientific translations, databases and computer-assisted translation tools were recommended, alongside collaboration with experts possessing domain-specific linguistic knowledge.

The fourth presenter of the session, Lauryna Martin Marin, an MA student from Vilnius University, introduced her study on the application of artificial intelligence (hereafter AI) in interpreting. The study evaluated the quality of English–Lithuanian interpreting generated by ChatGPT based on a corpus of five speeches delivered at the European Parliament, using a tailored error classification system based on MQM metrics and the accreditation criteria for translators at EU institutions. The study demonstrated that AI rarely outperformed human interpreting, often opting for word-for-word translation and altering the intended message. Moreover, the study revealed that ChatGPT lacks human flexibility and adaptability to the dynamic nature of live speech and the capacity to capture contextual nuances. These limitations suggest a continued and significant role for human interpreters in the foreseeable future.

Shifting to literature translation, participants from the Republic of North Macedonia, Dr Sashka Jovanovska, Professor at the Department of English Language and Literature at Goce Delcev University, the Faculty of Philology, and MA Marija Tashkoska, Director of an Educational Centre for Children, investigated the challenges raised by the translation of culture-specific elements in relation to two opposing translation strategies: domestication and foreignization. Analysing the Macedonian translations with commentary of two English books, *A Very British Love Story* (2018) by John Nichol and *You are What You Read* (2019) by Jodie Jackson, they concluded that achieving a balance between the two strategies is essential. The speakers emphasised that, while navigating between

these strategies, the translator should aim to make the original culture-specific meanings accessible to the target audience, while constantly reflecting on the impact of their choices and remaining responsive to evolving cultural contexts.

The closing presentation of the session was devoted to the translation of queer slang in Lithuanian subtitles for the film *Bros* (2022), investigated by Laimis Ališauskas, a BA student from Vilnius University. The study focused on the strategies applied in the translation of American queer slang and the effect this has on the portrayal of LGBTQ+ identity in the target text, an especially relevant issue in the context of the ongoing debate on queer rights in Lithuania.

4. Research in subtitling and dubbing

The second parallel afternoon session was chaired by Indrė Bagdžiūtė, an MA alumna in Audiovisual Translation at Vilnius University, Kaunas Faculty. The session focused on subtitle translation, the comparison of subtitling and dubbing, and the complex task of making audiovisual content accessible and understandable in another language and culture. Milda Urbanavičiūtė, an MA student at Vilnius University, delivered the first presentation. She explored the Lithuanian subtitles of the multilingual film *Triangle of Sadness* (2022), focusing on the translation strategies used to handle its satirical and multilingual content. The film includes dialogues in English, French, Greek, Swedish, and other languages, presenting significant challenges for subtitling. Milda Urbanavičiūtė examined how humorous scenes in these L3 languages were translated into Lithuanian and shared insights into how effectively humour was preserved or altered through various translation choices.

Another presentation, on the differences between subtitling and dubbing in the animated film *How to Train Your Dragon 3* (2019), was given by Beatričė Jakulevičiūtė, a BA student from Vilnius University. She discussed specific features, translation solutions, and localisation strategies used in both audiovisual translation (hereafter AVT) modes. Furthermore, she compared how subtitling and dubbing handle linguistic adaptation and cultural transfer, explaining the impact of different AVT methods on the reception of the film in the target culture.

The following presentation, on the challenges of translating songs in musicals, was delivered by Saulėja Visockytė, a BA student from Vilnius University. She presented the findings from her analysis of 13 songs from the film *Wonka* (2023), which was dubbed and subtitled in Lithuanian. The presenter shared that, in some cases, the dubbing and subtitles succeeded in maintaining the relationship between sound and image while preserving the meaning of the lyrics. Nevertheless, she also identified some inaccuracies that resulted in a loss of meaning and occasional confusion. Due to her engaging presentation and thorough analysis, Saulėja Visockytė received the audience's appreciation and was awarded prizes from the sponsors.

The conference concluded with a presentation by the guest speaker Yelyzaveta Paiul, a BA student from SAN University in Poland. She discussed the nuances and challenges that

subtitle translators face in their daily practice. She emphasised the importance of attention to detail in terms of translation accuracy and readability. During the presentation, Yeltzaveta Paiul shared the findings of her analysis on cultural adaptation, linguistic conciseness, and the constraints imposed by the character-per-line limitations. Furthermore, she addressed the challenges and solutions related to idioms, humour, wordplay, and regional dialect translation. In addition, the student brought to the spotlight one of the most currently debated topics – the use of artificial intelligence in subtitle translation and its impact on the future of human translators.

TELL ME MORE 2025 was a rich and engaging event, offering a diverse range of topics that covered not only the classic subjects of literary translation but also challenges faced in multimodal content translation, accessibility issues, and the growing impact and role of artificial intelligence. The conference continues its tradition of bringing open-minded and curious young researchers together to share knowledge, creating opportunities for collaboration, growth, and development. *TELL ME MORE* fosters a welcoming atmosphere for all – from presenters to attendees – and each year strengthens the motivation of its organisers to improve the conference and enhance the academic experience. Hopefully, next year will attract more participants, spark insightful discussions and build communities united by a shared passion for translation studies.

Author contributions

Beata Mongird: conceptualisation, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.

Victoria Volgina: conceptualisation, writing – original draft, writing – review and editing.