



8th IATIS conference - *Sustainable Translation in the Age of Knowledge Extraction, Generation, and (Re)Creation*

Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, Oman, 10-13 December 2025

PANEL PROPOSAL (panel 18): call for papers

Towards sustainable wayfaring: investigating the (un)translatability of eco-translation

The necessity of eco-translation has become undeniable at a time when translation is at risk of being un-diversified by the same forces that threaten the environment. Eco-translation therefore needs to be interpreted as a comprehensive concept, a “symbol that disclose[s] the structural character of the problems while at the same time fostering the ability to act” (Clark p. 4-5), so that the activities, persons, objects and contexts of translation may be preserved and sustained as viable expressions and interactions. However, as it happens with most great ideas, eco-translation is now “used” in studies whose objects, methods of analysis and monoglossic redaction are inconsistent with the philosophical foundations of eco-translation, thus undermining the sustainability of the concept.

Intersectionality with the arts, and creativity expressed in ecosemiotic or animalistic approaches (see Maran and Deer, for instance) are efficient ways of highlighting both the diversity of interpretation which eco-translation generates, and the need to fortify it as a paradigm capable of sustaining that diversity. The view of translation as wayfaring, by which the translator becomes instrumental in countering “strategies of legibility to be employed in ways that may be deeply damaging to human flourishing” (Cronin p. 29), and studies which ground their observations in an “ecosophy N” (following Naess’ ecosophy T) also reveal eco-translation as an approach that promotes activism through research. Moreover, the wayfaring prism shows how eco-translation matches other recent proposals in Translation Studies such as contra-instrumentalism and ecosemiotics.

On a textual level eco-translation is already sustainable as an understanding of translation where “the schema of visible and invisible, form and force, is analogous to the distinction between the text as written and what lies beneath, (Deer p. 12), thus functioning as the operational hinge on which the “ecological turn” in translation studies can be consolidated. However, eco-translation has given rise to a variety of interpretations in languages other than English: in France, for instance, it is limited to selecting nature-related study objects or describing eco-friendly material translation practices, while the Dutch “groenvertalen” or “natuurvertalen” and the Spanish “ecotraducción” seem to tend towards wider hermeneutic perspectives. As a term that is

“constantly retranslated and mistranslated” eco-translation “signal[s] the incommensurability of translation” (Apter p. 102 – my translation), and its (un)translatability can be seen as both a threat to, and a safeguard of its sustainability.

Topics of interest can include, but are not limited to

- Investigations into the (un)translatability of eco-translation, and/or into the ways in which eco-translation sheds light on the nature of (un)translatability
- Examples of interpretations and applications of eco-translation in languages other than English
- Comparisons of theoretical foundations and practical implications of eco-translation and other approaches in Translation Studies (contra-instrumentalism, biosemiotics, ecosemiotics, eco-translatology, translation as rewriting, functionalism, etc).
- Comparative examinations of anthropocentric versus eco-centric translations and/or their paratexts and reception
- Ecosemiotic models which shed new light on translation practices, including translator training, true vs market pricing, or “geological” (Deer) reading.

Abstract bibliography

- Apter, Emily. “Le mot “monde” est un intraduisible.” *Revue Relief* vol. 6 n° 1, 2012, pp. 98112.
- Clark, Timothy. *The Value of Ecocriticism*. Cambridge, CUP, 2019.
- Cronin, Michael. *Eco-translation. Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene*. London, Routledge, 2017.
- Deer, Jemma. *Radical Animism. Reading for the end of the World*. London, Bloomsbury, 2021.
- Maran, Timo. *Ecosemiotics*. Cambridge, CUP, 2020.
- Naess, Arne. *Ecology of Wisdom*. Penguin Classics, 2016.

Deadline for submission of proposals: 10 April 2025.

Abstracts can be submitted directly to the easychair link of the conference:

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=8iatis>

SUCCINCT BIOGRAPHY of panel convenor

Ineke Wallaert is a Belgian citizen and an Associate Professor at the University of Caen Normandie, where she teaches translation and directs the master’s programme in Specialized translation and localization, which has recently become part of EC network of European Masters in Translation (2024-2029). Prior to that she taught at HUST (Wuhan, China), the University of Rennes, the UAG (Université des Antilles et de la Guyane), and the University of Strasbourg. She also works as an active free-lance translator specializing in French to English translation of academic articles in sociology, ethnology and anthropology, and is a member of the Caen-based CRISCO research centre in linguistics.