



## CenTraS Newsletter, July 2024

Working at a university is a privilege: surrounded by bright, motivated young people (and some older people!) from so many different cultures and languages, this is an enriching, energising place to be. One of this year's highlights for me was our **Inside the Translation Industry** day, run by CenTraS colleague Dr Marga Navarrete. A good proportion of the speakers were CenTraS alumni, some of whom only graduated a year or two ago. It was wonderful to listen to these former students talking so enthusiastically about their new careers, and to see them embracing the opportunities and challenges brought by AI-related innovations. As the shape of the translation and interpreting sector changes, it has never been more vital for universities to have ongoing dialogue and collaboration with translators and interpreters, the wider industry, alumni, and professional associations. As a teaching and research Centre, we greatly value being part of this wider ecosystem, relying on it to ensure that our programmes are up-to-date and that our research is relevant to professionals and stakeholders across the language-related sectors.

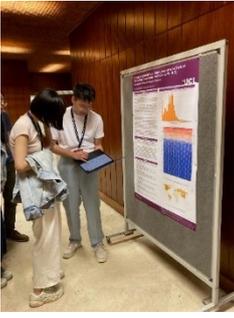


This autumn, I'll be handing the Director baton to my colleague Professor Federico Federici. It's been five-and-a-half years since I joined UCL as Director of CenTraS, and I'm looking forward to continuing to teach and research within the Centre but with potentially fewer emails to answer. I'm grateful to all at CenTraS for the collegiality and fun that has kept me going through the various global and local challenges that we've faced.

## MA Translation and MSc Translation and Technology News

### MA Translation Research Pathway gets a revamp!

Students taking our MA Translation degree choose from one of three pathways: Translation Studies, Translation and Culture, or Research. The Research pathway is particularly suitable for students who are considering a career in the academic sector. This year we have been piloting a new MA Research programme that helps students prepare for a PhD and gives them a taste of what an academic career might involve.



This year's MA Research students, Steven and Kathie, have grabbed all opportunities with both hands, taking part in PhD work-in-progress sessions, participating in conferences, and volunteering on staff-led research projects. The photos show Kathie and Steven presenting their research at a conference in Lisbon, at which I was also delighted to be speaking. The pastries were inspiring too...



### Translation Society – by students, for students

This year, one of our MSc student reps, Ash Kowalska, set up the Translation Society, a society run by students, for students. Ash explains: *“As an international student moving to London, one of my biggest fears was the loneliness. I knew I wanted to join some of the UCL’s societies and meet more people this way, but I didn’t realise the overwhelming amount of different clubs and teams! I wanted to get closer to my fellow translation students and build a strong network for once we start entering the workplace and launch our professional careers. That’s when the idea of the Translation Society was born! The society draws together anyone with an interest in languages and specifically the links and differences between them. Student support is incredibly important during courses as intensive as the MA and MSc Translation, and the Translation Society gives students opportunities for social interaction and collaboration, as well as group studying and networking.”* If you are a future MA/MSc student reading this, do consider taking up the baton from Ash to keep this friendly Society going.



### MA/MSc Social Events: A taste of England



It's fair to say that this summer's been a bit unpredictable, weather-wise. I'm not sure whether that's down to climate-related changes to the jet stream or just a particularly characteristic example of an English summer, but as a British-Irish person I wasn't surprised to see it raining on the day of the CenTraS picnic. Our students were a little less convinced about picnicking under a tree during a downpour...

Our Christmas social, complete with live performances of Christmas carols and a Christmas-themed quiz, gave our international students another taste of British traditions. This was the first year that the security guards have had to ask us to quieten down... let's just say that the quiz got pretty competitive, especially given that the prizes were only some fairly ancient translation studies textbooks and some uninspiring biscuits....



The competitiveness was also evident in our final social event of the year, a Translation Slam organised by CenTraS colleague Dr Olivia Cockburn and sponsored by our local Waterstones. Teams competed to translate the same marketing text for Michelin-starred restaurant Hakkasan. Many thanks to Waterstones and to our brilliant judge, Ilenia Goffredo from London-based translation agency, Lingbox Ltd.

Sticking with the competitive theme, **congratulations to this year's winners of the best CMII0102 Translation Technologies 2 e-portfolio**, especially to Ikue and Agata who won Trados Studio Freelance licenses courtesy of RWS.

## PhD student News



Many congratulations to Daria Chernysheva (pictured left, in the centre, after her viva), Jing Li, Mehemed Tarhuni, Lydia Hayes and Chengcheng Wang on the award of their PhDs since our last newsletter. Behind every successful PhD there's not only a ton of hard work, but also some tough moments and a good dose of self-doubt. For anyone reading this whilst in their own writing 'trough', take courage: you will get there too. Congratulations also to current PhD student Daniel Zhang, one of just 50 students from across the UK to have been awarded the "2023 Chinese Government Award for Outstanding Self-financed Students Abroad" (China Scholarship Council).

["I turned my hobby into a PhD" – we hear from Dody Chen, a PhD student working with Dr Xiaochun Zhang](#)

Dody Chen is a final-year PhD student working on game localisation. Dody has always been a big fan of videogames, and uses this interest – and her insider knowledge of the gaming industry – to motivate and guide her research. Dody explains: *"I recently published [two peer-reviewed research articles](#) on the localisation of one of my favourite game series, Overwatch (a Blizzard Entertainment game). My research got noticed by the Blizzard Chinese localisation team and I was invited to visit Blizzard in Shanghai and also to attend one of the biggest game localisers' conferences in China."* Way to go, Dody. If only my hobby of eating chocolate could lead to an invitation to a Swiss chocolate factory...



## Research News

### Theatre Translation

2023-24 has been a bumper year for inaugural lectures, following their suspension during Covid. Inaugural lectures are given by newly appointed or promoted Professors and mark a moment of celebration of their academic career. CenTraS Professor Geraldine Brodie's inaugural lecture, 'Translation on Stage Today', introduced by Emeritus Professor Theo Hermans, was a wonderful coming-together of translation theatre professionals, colleagues and former students.



['Nothing Happened: Translation Studies before "Translation Studies"](#)

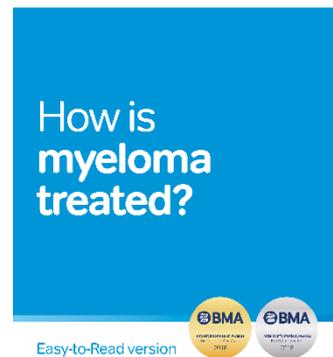
One of the highlights for me this year has been my collaboration with Dr Iryna Odrekhivska (School of Slavonic and East European Studies UCL, UK, and Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine). Over a coffee in Waterstones



we got chatting about the supposed 'beginnings' of the discipline of Translation Studies. Claims that Translation Studies began with James Holmes in 1972, and that nothing much happened in the 2000 years before that, ignore rich traditions from around the world, and particularly the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century institutionalisation of Translation Studies in Eastern Europe. That coffee turned into a 2-day conference, held at UCL in November 2023, with keynote speakers Theo Hermans, Hephzibah Israel and Daniele Monticelli (*pictured here with Iryna and Kathryn*). We're now working on an open-access edited volume which will present much of this forgotten and overlooked material.

## Accessing critical health information in translation

Translation is likely to improve cancer patients' understanding of treatment, consent to therapies, and management of prescribed medicines. **What quality of translation is needed to achieve these objectives, though? And how do we measure patients' comprehension and retention of information?** A group of CenTraS colleagues, led by Prof. Federici Federici, is collaborating with NHS haemato-oncologists, clinical trials experts, and Myeloma UK to explore these questions, with a particular focus on Limited English proficiency (LEP) patients undergoing cancer treatment. The project runs from 2024 onwards and will test translations into multiple languages over time with participants from various language communities, first in London and then more widely in the UK. CenTraS MA and MSc students and doctoral students will have multiple opportunities to be involved as research assistants in this project.



## Using AI to Improve Game Accessibility

CenTraS colleague Dr Xiaochun Zhang is collaborating with the industrial partner, Meaning Machine, to investigate how AI can improve game accessibility for blind and visually impaired players. The project, *AIAD: AI-enabled Audio Description for Video Games*, is funded by Research England's Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF), and will make use of the new **CenTraS Game Lab**, a space specially designed for empirical research into gaming, translation and accessibility. The Lab is due to open officially in autumn 2024 and will house our eye-tracking machines as well as new gaming-related hardware. More on that in the next newsletter...!

## Accessible Film-Making Day

This year we welcomed film director Dr Pablo Romero-Fresco and audio-describer Dr Louise Fryer (*both pictured right*), for a discussion of media accessibility and a screening of Pablo's 2022 documentary, *Where Memory Ends*. Organised by CenTraS colleague Dr Alejandro Bolaños García-Escribano, the event showcased groundbreaking innovations in audio description and was attended by representatives of the British Film Institute, Netflix, ITV Studios, Ofcom, as well as accessibility consultants, freelancers, academics and professional associations.



For more research news, do have a look at the [research section of our website](#).

## Alumni News



We love it when alumni drop us a line to tell us how they're getting on. Do get in touch if you have joys (or frustrations!) to share, or would be willing to pop in (in person or virtually) to speak with our students. Some news, in brief:

Congratulations to Jiali Chen, a 2022 MSc Translation and Technology graduate, on being awarded a Champion prize in the 2023 China Written Translation Contest.

Congratulations to Maddie Rogers, a 2019 MA Translation graduate, on the publication of her translation, *As the Eagle Flies* by Nolwenn Le Blevenec. Maddie's translation of Nolwenn's second novel, *Friends and Lovers*, is due out in spring 2025, also with Peirene.

Another 2019 MA Translation graduate, Emyr Wallace Humphreys, has also become well established as a literary translator. His translation from Welsh of Owain Owain's *The Last Day* recently came out with Parthian Books. Congratulations, Emyr!



**LinkedIn CenTraS Alumni Group:** <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13699508/>

**X/Twitter:** @CenTraS\_UCL

**Website:** <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/european-languages-culture/research-centres/centres/translation-studies>