

Foreword

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I entered the localization and translation program at UTA with very little knowledge of the vastness of the discipline. I knew what translation was and the importance of taking culture into account but had never studied either in depth. The Globalization, Internationalization, Localization, and Translation (GILT) Level I class not only taught me about translation theory and history, but also challenged me to think about the way I translate in French, Chinese, and English. I began to ask, “Why did I make that choice?” “What is the purpose of translation?” “Is it to capture feeling or a direct exchange?” As we discussed more about the industry of localization and translation, I learned the importance of both my language and culture skills regarding the international community in addition to potentially working as a translator. I learned about roles and localization specialties I had never heard of before. In class, we not only learned about translation in our target language but got to apply what we learned and compare it to other language groups. One of our first exercises was to take a section of a literary work in English and translate it into our target language. This experience stuck with me because it taught me the vast challenges associated with translating literary work, handling imagery across different cultures, and the importance of the translation theory applied.

In literature, translation is about more than relaying information. It introduces how culture, language, nationality, and experience shape different world views. That is why the translation of literary works needs to be treated with care. In the localization and translation program, our professors do not shy away from the discussion of AI and technology in the translation space. We are encouraged to question how AI and other tools work, consider what their flaws are, and be informed users of these emerging technologies in our field. We conduct experiments to test tools and build our own to better understand the benefits and drawbacks of the technology.

My newfound interest in literary translation made me curious as to how well technology would work with ancient literature. From experiments, we learned that literary translation could be difficult for machines and humans, and that machine tools were trained on more modern data with each updated version. This inspired me to ask my own questions in the field of localization and translation technology research. The GILT program was created by Dr. Pete Smith to encourage students to explore their curiosity for translation and instill in us the importance of staying informed about important developments in the field. Dr. Smith and his co-director, Professor Carpenter, not only presented us with course materials but also continuously equipped students with vital industry skills through research, experimentation, hearing from guest speakers in the field, and other professional development opportunities. There is no doubt that these professors love what they do and truly care about cultivating students who are ready to transition into the localization and translation workforce or graduate school programs.

—Savannah Fennell, Fall 2024