Between Precarity and Professionalism

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Assembling Professional Identities in the Translation Industry

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Abstract

This thesis draws on new materialist assemblage thinking to explore how professional identities are produced in the translation industry. Translators are a largely freelance cohort that have to navigate various networks and technologies in their working lives. Assemblage thinking provides ontological and epistemological tools that have driven this project methodologically and analytically. Spurred on by a call from new materialist ideas to experiment, I have taken a mixed methods approach that combines ethnographic methods and quantitative social network analysis using Twitter data. This methods assemblage has been employed to explore the multi-layered and multi-textured nature of professional identity. Assemblage as a theoretical underpinning thus shaped the analytical process of picking apart and reconstructing the networks, technologies, people and discourses that are interwoven and produced in translation assemblages. Professional identities emerge out of the tensions inherent in self-employment in a neoliberal political economy. I explore how translators deal with these tensions; how they position themselves within networks and towards technologies; how they tussle between individual and collective needs; and how they are restricted and empowered by discourses of professionalism. Professional identity itself appears messy and complex, demonstrative of cross-scale entanglements of power, and rooted in intertwined material and discursive things.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Antonio Sanchez Cid, who has supported me throughout the PhD, continuously believing in me more than I believe in myself. I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my two brothers, Matthew and James Seddon, whose encouragement has always pushed me to think big.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Translating Precarious Expertise

About a year and half into working as a freelance translator, I had an email from one of my regular clients – a translation agency based in Italy. They had a quarterly magazine produced by an upmarket children's clothes manufacturer that needed translating. For the past year and a bit, I had taken on this task. At that time though, I was extremely busy and told them I couldn't fit it in. They pleaded with me, telling me they were keen to give their client consistency, telling me their client had been appreciative of my work in the past. I caved, my ego massaged, and did what I needed to do to squeeze in the translation. Next quarter, they again contacted me to ask when I could translate the magazine by. Again, I was busy and said "no". Again, they pleaded for consistency for their client. I now had nearly two years of experience, so I had started asking for higher rates from clients. I said that I would do it if they upped my rate from €0.06 per word to €0.08. Rather than pay the higher rate, the agency instead went to someone else and they never contacted me again. Consistency and good work clearly were not worth that extra two cents.

This anecdote is one of my own and I expand on my experiences as a freelance translator and how they are entangled in this project in chapter 4 below. I include it here to introduce some of key themes of the thesis. This project investigates professional identity construction and professionalism in translation. Translators, as a group of largely self-employed professionals, face uncertain and unstable working relationships and conditions. Translators maintain and mobilise agency when they can, just as I did in the anecdote, turning down certain rates, challenging clients, taking initiative to do training courses and join networks. Their status as professionals is not always recognised, and as a cohort they are marginalised, vulnerable, and "invisible". They are invisible insofar as they work at the end of the supply chain, often for translation agencies, so remain largely disconnected from their clients and the end-users of what they produce. The precarity and instability experienced and navigated by translators, both in terms of their professional identity and the organisation of translation work itself, underpins this thesis. With self-employment on the rise in recent years in the UK (Bologna, 2018), this project is timely, exploring the impact of these working relationships and conditions on professionalism and identity.

In this introductory chapter, I first discuss the translation and interpreting market, highlighting some key concerns and major actors in translation, to give a descriptive

picture of the world my participants work within. I draw on commercial reports and literature from translation studies to give some demographic details and background information. I have compiled a glossary of terms in Appendix A to help the reader navigate the technical terminology of translation, its data and IT support programmes and packages, the language of its various professional organisations and agencies, and the everyday jargon and social language of translators. In 1.2, I describe the principal tenets of assemblage thinking, the theoretical underpinning of this project. I briefly present the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage, which have been a key driver throughout the research process, influencing my research questions, methodological and analytical approaches. In 1.3, I present the aims and objectives of the project, which emerged from the assemblage thinking approach, my reading of the literature and my awareness of the issues faced by translators. In 1.4, I describe the focus of the methodology and methods employed in the project as driven by assemblage thinking. In 1.5, I give some background information on myself as a translator who became a researcher. This provides some context and highlights some of what drove me to pursue this project. Lastly, I present a thesis outline, which details the contents of each chapter and its contribution to the thesis as a whole.

1.1.1. *The language industry*

Translation[1] plays a major role in the circulation of political, cultural and economic capital necessary in a globalized world (Bielsa, 2005). Translators work within the language industry, defined as the sector dedicated to facilitating written (translation) and oral (interpreting) multilingual communication. Translation and interpreting are understood as separate occupations and skills by commercial organisations. In the academic literature, and higher education programmes, they come under the same umbrella of language services. For the purposes of this project, I focus primarily on translators, although my participants include a handful of interpreters. A key difference is that written translation can be done entirely remotely, whereas oral interpreting often involves the interpreter being physically present. The skillsets differ too, with translation more focussed on nuance and idiomacy, and interpreting emphasising speed and accuracy. There is significant overlap in the two groups with regard to working experiences, particularly in their interactions with translation and interpreting agencies.

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[1] This section is adapted from the following publication: Seddon, E. (2019) 'Exploring the social complexity of translation with assemblage thinking', in Kobus Marais & Reine Meylaerts (eds.) Complexity thinking in translation studies: methodological considerations. Routledge advances in translation and interpreting studies. New York, NY: Routledge. pp. 104–127.

However, I do not wish to oversimplify the experiences of interpreters by "lumping" them in with translators. Interpreters will have their own joys and frustrations emerging from the idiosyncrasies of their work that require specific exploration, although I am sure many will identify with at least some of the stories I explore in this thesis. For this reason, I specify which of my participants are interpreters and focus on the shared understandings between the two closely linked cohorts. The blurring between the experiences of translators and interpreters is also seen in the language services market. The scope of the industry is hard to pin down as many language service providers (LSPs) provide services other than simply translating and interpreting, particularly localization, marketing and software subscriptions ('Say what?', 2015). This mirrors the unclear role definition of the translator: translating, editing and proofreading are not always easy to separate, for example, and any one translator may provide these services and others to a variety of clients.

This is reflected in a report funded by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation that describes the general profile of the occupational cohort of translators as "freelance, part-time, fragmented and unregulated" (Pym et al., 2012: 3). According to this report, approximately 74% of translators are freelance and 60% work as translators part-time. The fragmented nature of the profession comes down to the fact that the work is often highly specialized. The report notes that there are 103 translator associations in the EU, often specific to a type of translation (i.e., legal), to a region or country. The occupational title of translator is unregulated insofar as "anyone" can be one. Furthermore, the report positions "translator" as an "emerging profession"; for example, it is noted that translators and interpreters were listed as a census category in the UK for the first time in 2011 (Pym et al., 2012:18). This is significant, as translation is listed under secretarial tasks alongside photocopying and typing by the European Union industry standard classification system, undermining the specialized skills necessary to produce a high-quality translation (Katan, 2009). This relates to the "obscure role definition" of translators, cited as a reason for their marginalisation (Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger 2008: 80). Translation technologies are further blurring the boundaries around translators' tasks as machine translation (MT) becomes increasingly sophisticated. These technologies are thought to speed up the translation process and reduce costs, with translators editing the output of MT systems. According to the report, translator is also largely an occupation held by women: 70% or above. The initial picture is one of a largely female, freelance, part-time, fragmented,

unregulated and vulnerable cohort, who have a problematic, or at least fledging, status as "professionals."

One of the findings of the report is that the value of translators and their work are not visible (Pym et al. 2012: 4, 9). The "invisibility" of the translator is a well-known notion in translation studies, which recognizes that the preference for fluency or idiomatic expression renders translation invisible and the translator subservient (Pym, 1996; Venuti, 2008; Kushner, 2013; Davier, 2014). The "invisibility" of freelance translators in particular is heightened, as they become a "medium" or yet another "interface" in a largely unseen commercial translation process (Kushner, 2013: 1244). Freelance translators tend to work for translation agencies, who largely determine the rates translators can charge for their work. This invisibility then is part and parcel of a supply chain primarily based on an agency model, in which translators find themselves marginalised. Furthermore, the lack of visibility contributes to and is the result of "market disorder", which is demonstrated in the lack of coherence and consensus regarding certification and qualification (Pym et al., 2012: 3). Precarity is the key take away from this year's report carried out by LIND – Web, the Language Industry Web Platform (LIND – Web, 2020). Approximately two fifths of individual professionals who responded to the survey are unable to earn enough from translation and interpreting alone, with many freelancers worrying about their finances. From both translators and academia, the need to increase the visibility and awareness of *professional* translators and *professional* translation emerges as a key concern. Within this thesis, I have sought to make visible translation as a professional practice and identity. Part of this involved making *myself* visible as a researcher-translator in chapter 4 below. Rather than shining a light on individual freelancers and their work, I have shown how translation professionalism and identities emerge, often out of sight, from interactions between clients, agencies, freelancers, discourses, technologies and other material components.

1.1.2. *Institutions, associations, networks*

The translation industry is comprised of a wide variety of entities, from large institutions to smaller interpersonal networks. The institutions of the European Union are the largest translator employer and client in Europe (Biel, 2013). Among such institutions, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (EC-DGT) employs the largest number of translators but nonetheless relies on freelancers for approximately one quarter of its output (Olohan, 2016). In addition to providing work,

the EC-DGT also provides various translation and language resources, including terminology and drafting resources, such as style guides and reports on the status of the language profession in the EU (Pym et al., 2012). The institution is also involved in training and education: the European Master's in Translation (EMT) is described as a partnership between the EC-DGT and higher-education institutions, providing a "quality label" for university translation programmes, with the goal of enhancing the status of the translation profession in the EU. Regarding events, the EC-DGT organises the Translating Europe Forum, a conference that has been held annually since 2013.

Within the UK, various national and regional translator associations provide accreditation, networking opportunities, and, in some instances, qualifications. Two of the largest and best-known in the UK are the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) and the Institute of Translating and Interpreting (ITI). The CIOL is a UK-based professional membership body that offers different levels of membership, chartered status, qualifications, CPD (Continuing Professional Development), and events. It has approximately 6,000 members in the UK and overseas; its professional qualifications are nationally-accredited and are awarded by the Institute of Linguists Educational Trust, its awarding organisation. The services and aims of the ITI overlap significantly with the CIOL. The ITI's members (3,000+) are practising translators and interpreters in the UK. It provides information on the industry, advice for newcomers, different levels of membership, CDP, and networking events. Translators may be members of both, only one or neither. Generally speaking, the CIOL has a broader focus beyond translation, with the ITI known to be more specialised. To my knowledge, there has been no research into the extent to which the ITI's and CIOL's membership bases overlap and reasons for choosing one or the other, or none at all. While not within the scope of this project, this knowledge could speak to the ideas presented herein related to professional identities within the language industry.

There are various online networks, particularly on social media platforms, for translators to engage with. On Facebook, for example, the 'Continuous Training (CPD) & Events for Translators and Interpreters' Facebook group has nearly 6,000 members, and describes itself as an "information and news hub" for CPD and events. Facebook groups are a means to vent about frustrating clients, share "memes" and jokes, and get support from a wider network online. Additionally, translator associations, institutions, companies and individual translators participate in Twitter networks. Major

translation events, such as the Translating Europe Forum mentioned above, are "live-tweeted" by the organisers and attendees alike. Translators participate in the online networks for career development and marketing, as well as for professional support and social events.

This overview of the translation profession and market demonstrates its varied nature. Translators build linguistic expertise but have no central reference point. The different organisations, online and offline interpersonal networks within translation highlight the fragmentation of the cohort and the unclear role definition of translators. Yet, the actions and mission statements of those organisations and groupings hint at a desire to centralise and standardise translation practice. These various characteristics and elements of translation all impact professional identity construction and professionalism, which are explored throughout this thesis.

1.2. Assembling Professional Identity

This project is underpinned and driven by assemblage thinking. It is central to the development of the research aims and objectives, to the methodology, data collection and analysis. I explore assemblage in depth in two chapters: chapter 3 is a theoretical exploration that explains the key elements of this mode of thinking that have contributed to the thesis; chapter 4 describes how this plays out methodologically in data collection and analysis. Here, I describe the rationale behind my desire to "assemble" this thesis.

Assemblage thinking is an orientation to the world based on the concept of the assemblage, which is defined as an entity that emerges from the interactions of its component parts. The ontological assumptions inherent within assemblage thinking subsequently and necessarily frame the focus of research. Those assumptions are based on one key idea: that phenomena are created in the interactions between things, be they human, non-human, animate, inanimate, material or discursive. Most pertinently for this project, social phenomena are created through the interactions of people, technologies, organisations, the state, discourse, norms, geographical and spatial traits or characteristics. In research, this ontological underpinning encourages researchers to seek out these assembled phenomena and to unpack the processes, actions, and components that go into their assembly.

Assemblage ontology is one of a range of approaches that have been developed in recent years to overcome the binary thinking that for too long marked social theory and

research. It offers a particularly nuanced and textured understanding of social phenomena. There is no need to bridge the micro/macro divide, because varying social scales are considered ontologically equal, able to interact directly in assemblages. The concepts of structure and agency are replaced with affect – an understanding of agentic capacity based on the ability to interact and interconnect. Affect enables different people and things to be drawn into assemblages, which vary in scale – from the individual person to a nation state – and temporality – from mere seconds to hundreds of years. The consequences of these ontological commitments are: the human is decentred from social research; social phenomena are understood as produced by the interactions of their component parts and therefore must be shown to emerge; social phenomena are consequently contingent, situated and complex. One of the principal drawbacks of assemblage thinking, shared with other non-structural approaches such as Actor-Network theory, is its limited ability to account for long-term and entrenched power inequalities owing to its emphasis on emergence (Brenner et al., 2011; Browne, 2011). To interrogate this, I bring Foucault and his conception of power into this discussion. I highlight the overlap between apparatus and assemblage, and demonstrate how Foucault's ideas can complement and bolster an assembled approach to power.

Methodologically, assemblage provides the researcher with the freedom to follow connections within and beyond the data throughout data collection. Indeed, the multiplicity of assemblage derived from its ontological commitments encourages the researcher to move beyond binary thinking in the research process. This means methods can be mixed under the methodological umbrella of assemblage, with the focus placed on seeking out and unpacking interconnections and interrelations within the data. Ontology and epistemology within assemblage are two sides of the same coin, with social production and its understanding rooted in emergence and interaction.

Assemblage thinking is a compelling approach to understanding the world and conducting research. Within sociology this perspective is underused and underdeveloped. In particular, I have seen little work that explores and unpacks the assembled nature of identity. In the next section, I explore this further and highlight the key contributions this thesis makes to the literature through understanding professional identity, and this thesis itself, as assembled.

1.3. Aims, Objectives and Contributions

In chapter 2, I explore two bodies of literature in depth: the sociology of professions, and precarious employment. Here, I highlight the key empirical and theoretical gaps in the literature that have contributed to shaping the aims and objectives of this project.

As the above section describes, translators are a group of largely self-employed expert workers who experience precarious working conditions. Much of the research on professionalism is focussed on established groups of expert workers (Ackroyd, 2016; Dent et al., 2016). The focus often falls on how these groups create and maintain a monopoly or jurisdiction over an area of expertise and specific task associated with it (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). These well-established approaches explore professionalism and expertise in terms of the power professional groups are able to exert, whether between themselves as professionals and laypersons, or between differing professional groups (Saks, 2016). Consequently, these approaches tend to overlook the burgeoning and precarious professional groups that emerge around new occupational roles and technologies. Translators fall into this broad grouping as a largely self-employed cohort experiencing significant technological shifts and vulnerability to market forces (Hassard & Morris, 2018). They experience precarity in the form of financial instability and insecurity. There has been a proliferation of work that discusses precarious employment in sociology in recent years, but there are also gaps in this literature that this project addresses (Alberti et al., 2018). Firstly, much of the work on precarious employment explores the "gig economy" solely in terms of so-called low-skilled and low-paid work (Kessler, 2018), rather than for knowledge workers and work that in some contexts can be relatively well paid. Secondly, the little work that does explore the precaritisation of expert work tends to look at established professional groups and how previously secure employment has become exposed to market forces (Hassard & Morris, 2018). Groups whose professional status has never been fully established are largely overlooked. This project can contribute empirically to the literature by focussing on a group of workers who possess esoteric knowledge, but whose working relationships have many parallels to the gig economy.

Theoretically, both professionalism and precarity tend to be discussed in reductive terms. Firstly, in the professions literature, theoretical assumptions are based on preconceived ideas of boundaries, fields and professionalism (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988; Saks, 2016). The relationship between the individual professional and the professional cohort is underdeveloped; the profession as a group is presented as a

homogeneous whole with little exploration of how *collective* action takes place. Explanations tend to be structural, or based purely on professionalism as a discourse that dictates working practices. The enactment of professionalism in working environments that might lead to the production of professional identities is not discussed. Research on gender in professional employment takes a similar perspective, exploring how professions are feminized, or how women are kept in/out of certain areas of expertise (Witz, 1992; Broadbent, Strachan, et al., 2018). Gender is equally presented as homogeneous, a stand-alone category that expert workers are assumed to possess. Although some translators' experiences may echo the descriptions of a feminized profession, this structural perspective on gender does not align with an assemblage ontology. Categorizations – whether gendered or related to professional boundaries – are not interrogated, but assumed and imposed. This project contributes to the literature by exploring how professional identity and professionalism are produced in interactions of people and things, demonstrating multiplicity and variety.

Secondly, while many scholars explore the experiences of precarity on a micro level, theoretical explanations of unstable employment are predominantly structural (Kalleberg, 2012; Alberti et al., 2018). That is, the production of precarity in workspaces or working relationships is largely forgotten. Scholars tend to explain precarity in economic terms and do not describe points of interconnection between individual workers experiencing precarity and policy or market forces. These macro and discursive explanations in both the professions and precarity literatures thus neglect the materiality and spatiality of professionalism, precarity and working identities. The enactment of precarity or professionalism within workspaces and the mundane doings and sayings of employment are left unexplored and disconnected from the socio-material relationships that produce them. This project contributes to the literature by looking at how both professionalism and precarity are enacted and produced in assemblages. I explore professionalism, professional identity and precarious work as emergent from the interactions of different components, from translators themselves to discourses of best practices, technologies and translation agencies.

Bearing in mind the particularities of translators as a cohort, the analytical focus enabled by assemblage, and the gaps in the literature identified above, the aims and objectives of this project are as follows:

<u>Overall aim</u>:

- Explore the idea of professional identity and professionalism as emergent, unstable, and processual.

<u>Objectives</u>:

- Explore how professional identities and professionalism emerge in different settings and spaces;
- Identify and unpack how freelance translators navigate working conditions and practices in their production of professional identities;
- Explore how technological developments in translation impact professional identity construction and ideas of professionalism;
- Employ assemblage thinking throughout the research process to enable an open approach to research that facilitates the identification of complexity, materiality and multiplicity necessary to fulfil the above objectives.

As I discuss above, this project contributes empirically and theoretically to the literature. Here, I summarise those contributions and introduce the methodological perspective that arises out of the research questions, further explored in the next section.

<u>Key contributions</u>:

- Theoretically, the project demonstrates how professional identity and professionalism emerge from the complex interactions and interconnections of socio-material assemblages, encouraging a multi-scaled perspective that sees professional identity and professionalism as emergent, contingent and situated.
- Empirically, my findings demonstrate the impact of precarity on professional identity from the perspective of a group of self-employed expert workers who do not neatly fit into the divisions in the literature between gig economy workers and professional groups.
- Methodologically, assemblage thinking guided the research process, from data collection to analysis, shedding new light on different aspects of this varied, multiple and complex phenomenon. This is most clearly seen in the novel and experimental mixed methods approach taken in this project, as explored in 1.4 below.

The aims, objectives, and contributions are underpinned by assemblage as an orientation to the world and an approach to research. In the next section, I expand on

this by briefly explaining how the assemblage approach taken in this thesis shaped my methodological choices.

1.4. Methodological Choices

Researching a freelance cohort of expert workers has its challenges, as there is no established institution or organisation to focus on. This is where the theoretical and methodological approach taken in this project comes into its own. Assemblage methodology encourages an open and reflexive approach to methods. For this reason, I have undertaken a mixed methods approach that combines qualitative ethnographic methods and quantitative social media analysis. This has enabled me to explore different settings, including conferences, co-working events, and online spaces.

Ethnography is well-suited to assemblage insofar as it incorporates different methods and types of data, enabling a "thick" description of events, identities, and wider connections (Lameu, 2016; Abourahme, 2015; Kadfak & Knutsson, 2017). It focusses on the everyday practices that lead to the emergence of phenomena and enables a range of different types of data to be collected, including field notes, participant observation, reflections of the researcher, interviews, documents, and social media (Agar, 1996; Amit, 2000; Atkinson, 2001). Ethnography enables me to explore the role of expertise within professional identity and its link to wider discourses; and how technologies are integrated into everyday practices and the production of professional identity. Participant observation in particular has allowed me to gather data within commercial settings, exploring how professional identity and professionalism emerge in interactions between people, objects, and spaces. I attended professional events and carried out semi-structured interviews with translators and interpreters.

On the quantitative side of this mixed methods approach is social media analysis. I chose Twitter as the platform to focus on for the following reasons: it allows a dispersed group to form an online community; the use of hashtags allows marginalised and "invisible" professionals to make their voices heard and contribute to wider debates and communities. I explore Twitter as an alternative space in which professional identities are produced, complementing the ethnographic account. Furthermore, Twitter analysis takes relations, rather than actors, as starting point, making it well-suited to an assemblage methodology. I primarily collected Twitter data based on a key event in the translation calendar, the Translating Europe Forum run by the EC-DGT. To analyse the data, I conducted social network analysis based on the conference to unveil the networks of interconnectedness in this part of the translation

Twittersphere. I also collected Twitter data based on frequently used hashtags related to translation, and have explored the content of these tweets to complement the interview data.

By mixing methods, I can pull apart the assemblages surrounding translation and translators, and shed light on the fragmentation and networks within this market and cohort. The juxtaposition of different types of data enables me to gain greater insight into how the professional identity of such a precarious group of professionals is constructed, allowing for a multi-textured exploration of professional identity and professionalism. The different analyses facilitate my reflection on different settings – online and offline – and different types of interactions with different people and things. The methodology thus aligns with assemblage to explore professional identities and professionalism as emergent from the interactions of different actors; as produced (and re-produced) in different settings; and as part of interactions and interconnections that spread out beyond the events and actors under study.

1.5.   Translator and Researcher

I started this introduction with an anecdote from my experiences as a freelance translator. Here, I briefly describe my background in translation, and how I came to do this project, foregrounding where *I* am in this thesis.

I became interested in pursuing translation because I had knowledge of languages – French from my undergraduate degree and Italian from having lived in Italy – but no means to use them. Translation appeared to be the obvious option. After saving up to pay for a Master's degree, I undertook the MA in Translation Studies at Durham University. I enjoyed the course and did well, leading to me getting two internships: one at CERN in Geneva and the other at a translation agency in Milan. I was also asked to produce a poster from my MA dissertation to represent Durham University's MA programme at the conference mentioned above, the Translating Europe Forum (2014), run by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation.

After the internships and conference, I started freelancing. I made a friend at CERN who recommended me to the University of West Brittany. The university has its own internal translation team, who outsource when necessary. They would end up being my primary client, and I would translate academic articles for publication and funding bids for research projects. I also worked for the Milan-based agency as a freelancer following the internship, and managed to pick up a few more clients over the two and

a half years that I was a full-time, self-employed translator. My experience freelancing seems to be standard: frustrations with agencies that do not pay on time, that insist on low rates and short deadlines; one or two "good" clients that pay well and punctually; income instability with periods of boom and bust; and the feeling that my expertise as a language professional was rarely appreciated.

The frustration borne out of the latter two experiences drove me to pursue this research. I come to this project as an "insider" (Green, 2014), learning and developing as a researcher. This framed the research process and analysis more widely, which I look at closely in chapter 4 below.

1.6. Thesis Outline

Chapter 1 introduces the key analytical themes, and theoretical and methodological decisions taken in this project. I describe the translation and interpreting market to provide context to the subsequent discussions; highlight the rationale behind assemblage thinking in research; detail the research aims and objectives; and introduce myself as a researcher-translator.

I review the relevant literature in chapter 2, showcasing the theoretical and empirical contribution of this project by setting out two main bodies of work: the sociology of professions and precarity. I situate this project within these two broad fields, demonstrating that, as a group of primarily self-employed expert workers, translators provide an empirical contribution to sociological studies of professionalism and precarious work. Theoretically, I challenge the ontological assumptions underpinning much of this research and conclude that assemblage brings a different means of understanding power within expert work and professional identity within a precarious labour market.

Chapter 3 focusses on the theoretical approach taken in this project. I firstly situate assemblage thinking within new materialism, highlighting the key claims that new materialist perspectives make. Secondly, I explain the key concepts of assemblage thinking that I work with in the thesis. Lastly, I explore the contribution that Foucault, in particular his conception of power, can bring to an assemblage approach. Primarily, this entails critically engaging with the social and political context of neoliberalism that forms the backdrop of this project.

Chapter 4 explores how the ontological assumptions and explanatory tools detailed in chapter 3 are methodologically enacted in this project. I describe my mixed methods

approached underpinned by assemblage, setting out this rationale and the methods used. I then detail the data collection process and ethical issues. I end this chapter by exploring how assemblage came to life in analysis, describing a particular method of "mapping" qualitative data that I developed following my dive into assemblage thinking.

Chapter 5 begins to work through the empirical and analytical research objectives. The assemblage approach to analysis, described in chapter 4, encouraged me to follow connections in the data. As I made my way through the interviews and fieldnotes, I saw translation agencies emerge as a powerful and significant actor in my participants' experiences. Agencies represent and perform the outsourcing of translation, which has transitioned from an in-house service to a largely freelance occupation. This chapter explores how the agency model and outsourcing practices contribute to identity construction for my participants. This chapter also sets the scene, demonstrating the influence of a neoliberal political economy on translators' working practices, conditions and relationships.

From this analytical starting point, I move on to unpacking how translators attempt to negotiate, protect and support themselves in this challenging environment in chapter 6. I go into more depth regarding professionalism, how it is created, what creates it, and how it is harnessed by different actors. I explore the networks that translators involve themselves in and the production of professionalism and professional identity within them. This chapter is somewhat of a counterpoint to the preceding one, adding a layer of individual difference and resistance (with varying levels of success) to the dominance of agencies. These two chapters combined provide a rich, contextualised and multi-dimensional picture of translators' professional identities.

Chapter 7 uses this analytical context and exploration to focus on a developing phenomenon within translation and within society more broadly: technology and automation in the form of machine translation. This chapter explores professional identities and technologies through ethnographic methods and quantitative social network analysis. I focus on the Translating Europe Forum 2018, and related interview and Twitter data, pulling out and unpacking the role of technologies in professional identity construction. This chapter brings together the threads of chapters 5 and 6 – the power dynamics between agencies and freelancers, the production of professionalism within translation – and weaves in machine translation.

Chapter 8 is a reflexive chapter, in which I build on chapter 4 by describing how my methodological choices, driven by the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage, have impacted this research project. This chapter draws together the themes and factors discussed in chapters 5-7 and explores how the methodological approach taken in this thesis enables a unique analytical perspective.

In chapter 9, I summarise the theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions this thesis makes to the sociological study of professions, precarious work and professional identity. I highlight the limitations of the project and provide some future avenues of research that are opened up as a result. I conclude that this project demonstrates the benefits of taking an assemblage approach throughout research, from putting together research questions, to data collection and analysis. Consequently, this thesis analyses professional identity construction from a different perspective, highlighting the contextual, contingent and multiple nature of both identity and research.

Chapter 2. Between Professionalism and Precarity

2.1. Between Professionalism and Precarity

This chapter provides an overview of the bodies of literature relevant to professional identity construction in translation and interpreting. As described in the introduction (1.1), there is a push towards professionalization from translation and interpreting scholars, translator associations and translators themselves. Yet, despite the expertise needed to do the job, the role of translator has no strict definition and no legal protection. The market is fragmented by specialisation and language combination, and has no central reference point, such as an institution or formal body of knowledge. Translators are largely female and freelance, making them vulnerable to market forces. Technologies increasingly play a larger role in translation practice, seeing new actors enter the market. These technologies and self-employment as the principal organisation of translation work create opportunities for flexible working that often prove illusory. Translators dwell in tensions between professionalism and precarity, and face change and challenges to their working practices.

The assemblage approach taken in this project, explored theoretically in the next chapter, understands professional identity as contingent, situated and emergent. The overlapping and intersecting issues detailed above contribute to how translators construct their identities in their relations with one another, their clients, technologies, and contextual factors. In this chapter, I explore how different literatures have explained and unpacked similar issues to those experienced by translators. I demonstrate how this project and an assemblage approach can contribute to these debates empirically and theoretically. The work I draw on in this chapter looks at a variety of professional and occupational roles, from "traditional" professions (e.g. lawyer, doctor) to new expert occupations and low-paid, precarious work. I demonstrate points of convergence and difference from translators, their expertise and working conditions, situating this project within these intersecting bodies of literature.

Firstly, I discuss the sociology of professions, looking at defining professions, and conceptions of power associated with professional status. I explore a handful of the main theoretical perspectives on the professions, highlighting the relevance of these approaches for this project, as well as their limitations. Secondly, I turn to precarity, a recent fascination in sociology, discussing precariousness, self-employment, technologies, enterprise culture and (non)expert work. This section demonstrates the contribution this project makes to the precarity literature by exploring precarious expert

work in the contemporary labour market. These authors often describe instances of precarity and instability, moving away from the highly analytical and frequently structural focus of the professions literature. The tone of the literature review subsequently shifts at this point, reflecting the more aggressively political descriptions of neoliberal violence in this work compared to the often descriptive and pointedly structural accounts found in the professionalism literatures. Lastly, I look at gender, professionalism and precarity, discussing the gendered aspects of expert and precarious work and exploring the relevance of gender in this thesis. This lays the groundwork for examining how translators negotiate the sometimes counterintuitive forces and processes at work within the translation market, their area of expertise, and the translation cohort. Translators' professional identities emerge from this negotiation and these interacting actors, processes, and "things".

2.2. Sociology of Professions

At this initial stage, it is worth making a definitional point. Defining professions and distinguishing between professional roles and other expert occupations is a difficult task (Broadbent, Healy, et al., 2018). The heterogeneity of groups that lay claim to professional status makes it impossible to draw up a meaningful list of professional criteria as the level of abstraction necessary to cover all professions weakens the explanatory power of any definition (Evetts, 2006). For example, one of the often-cited key traits of professional work is that it requires prolonged, specialised training with a theoretical base (Wilensky, 1965; Freidson, 1970; Macdonald, 1995). Larson demonstrates the problem with this as no definition is able to state how long, how theoretical, or how specialised training needs to be to make it "professional" over and above other types of formal training, which are all prolonged, specialised and theory-based to some degree (Larson, 1977: xi). The trend in recent decades in sociological research on professional work has been to move away from the need to define professions as a distinct mode of employment – an aim of early to mid-20th century sociologists (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011; Saks, 2012). It is argued that there are no empirical or analytical grounds for separating professions from other occupations, and instead they should be understood as expert occupations able to maintain some form of monopoly in the labour market (Sciulli, 2005; Evetts, 2006; Gorman and Sandefur, 2011). Expertise is itself a vague concept that I have taken to mean possession of esoteric knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge (Saks, 2012; Burau, 2016).

The possession of expertise is linked with the establishment and maintenance of some form of monopoly over a task or set of tasks (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988).

Broadly speaking, the focus has shifted from defining professions and professionalism as autonomous entities or ideal-types to exploring how occupations negotiate and maintain the privileged status and label of profession (Colomy & Brown, 1995; Macdonald, 1995). This is increasingly relevant in a labour market that sees new expert roles emerge alongside new technologies that do not neatly fit into traditional conceptions of profession, yet require expertise and have some level of monopoly over a certain task (Adams, 2015; Dent et al., 2016). Indeed, the labour market has changed since the "golden age" of the traditional professions – medicine, law, accounting, architecture, the clergy, science and academia, and engineering – when these groups enjoyed high status, good pay, and relative independence from the state (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Since the 1970s, political and societal changes have altered professional work: principally, neoliberal UK and USA governments in the 1980s pursued deregulation, expanding the scope of markets and weakening the power of the professions (Ackroyd, 2016; Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). Professionals, previously largely independent, have been increasingly integrated into organisations and institutions (Freidson, 1993; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012); previously safe from market forces, professionals are more and more evaluated by market criteria, such as efficiency (Bögenhold et al., 2014; Dent et al., 2016). Income has become an important indicator of status with occupational prestige gradually more linked to living standards (Ackroyd, 2016: 18). The motivation behind professionalization becomes complex and understood as a part of a wide system of interests of different parties: "Professions seek to suspend the operation of open markets for labour by controlling the right to designate who is allowed to claim and sell expertise" (Ackroyd, 2016: 18-19). Rather than trying to ascertain whether an occupation ticks all the professional boxes, emphasis now is often placed on expertise, knowledge and jurisdiction over the work itself in the face of deregulated markets and "competitors" (McKenna, 2006b; Saks, 2012).

Given these factors, I have worked with a pragmatic definition of professional and expert work that combines the following concerns. Firstly, broadly speaking, it is commonly accepted that all professionals are "repositories of authoritative knowledge" and all professions share the following traits: "restricted entry, high-level qualifications and stringent tests of competence, together with distinctive types of formal

organisation" (Ackroyd, 2016: 15). However, the distinction between professions and other occupations is one of "degree rather than kind" (Evetts, 2006: 134; Saks, 2012). Professionals or expert workers can therefore exist along a continuum of professionalism and professionalization, from strict, regulated barriers of entry to a group's possession of esoteric knowledge, that enables some level of monopolisation over a certain task or practice. With this in mind, I see this project as a sociological exploration of expert work that seeks to unpack the intertwining of discourses of professionalism and the working conditions and practices of a specific group of expert workers. Rather than try to explain translators' professional identities as a product of *being professionals* (or not), I explore how these identities emerge from the navigation of the pressures and challenges involved in translation.

This flexible and pragmatic definition of professional work enables me to reflect on translators as existing somewhere in this grey area of expert/professional work: for example, specialised training is not required to be a translator, but it is increasingly available and asked for. There is a push from translators themselves and other actors within translation – translator associations for example – towards standardisation and professionalization. Translators refer to themselves as professionals and call upon discourses of professionalism when discussing their work. To unpack the experiences of translators, and situate them within the literature, here I explore work that deals with key elements of professional status, looking at autonomy, expertise, and monopolies. I focus on a narrow but carefully selected set of key theoretical contributions and strands in the sociology of professions. Firstly, I explore Larson's seminal work (Larson, 1977), which places professions within a stratified system, alongside Weber's concept of exclusionary social closure (Saks, 2016). Secondly, I look at the highly influential work of Abbott and his system of professions (Abbott, 1988). I conclude that this work has limited relevance given the unstable working conditions of translators as expert workers, but it nonetheless encourages a reflection on the boundary work done by translators and other actors in this market. Lastly, I explore professionalism as a discourse in the context of Foucauldian approaches (Mackey, 2007; McKinlay & Pezet, 2010). Here, professionalism is understood as a ubiquitous discourse that is a key factor in professional identity. The work of Foucault questions and challenges conceptions of power in a way that is particularly relevant for this project. Throughout this section, I question the ontological assumptions of these established approaches and highlight how assemblage can contribute to these conversations.

2.2.1. *Professionalism as power*

Larson, whose concept of the professional project from her seminal book *The Rise of Professionalism* (1977) remains highly cited in the literature, focusses on the ability of occupational groups to create monopolies (Suddaby & Viale, 2011; Edwards & Pieczka, 2013; Matthews, 2017). She takes a neo-Marxist approach, incorporating the Weberian concept of exclusionary closure – explored below – into Marx's historical materialism. Marx's materialist theory argues that the means and relations of production form the basis of society and involve processes that lead to the formation of states and social stratification (Marx & Engels, 1965). From this perspective, the professions are bound up in these same processes (Ehrenreich & Ehrenreich, 1977; Macdonald, 1995; Krause, 2001; Saks, 2016).

Larson states that the development of professional markets from the late 18th century to the 1970s gave rise to a new form of structured inequality, in which marketable expertise plays a crucial role (Larson, 1977). She sees the rise of the professions as part of broader economic and societal changes that revolve around the market; and professionalization as "the process by which producers of special services sought to constitute *and control* a market for their expertise" (Larson, 1977: xvi, original emphasis). Professionalization seeks to maintain a "monopoly of expertise" in a market, and a "monopoly of status" in a class system (Larson, 1977: xvii). Groups of workers collectively pursue the objectives of market monopoly and social status, taking strategies to define and institutionalise boundaries, which, when successful, culminate in professional organisations, such as schools and associations (Matthews, 2017). For example, in the US in the late 1800s, the significant freedom of the medical market led to a proliferation of practitioners who sought to institutionalise their services by founding schools, contributing to the "emergence of a shared criteria of validity and reliability", which played a key role in the standardisation of medical services (Larson, 1977: 36-7). Increased standardisation linked modern medicine with and supported the superiority of a scientific base for medicinal practice over traditional medicine. This reinforced the expertise necessary to practice medicine and gave more autonomy to the emerging and growing medical institutions. Larson highlights how the development of institutionalised expertise creates a boundary leading to the dependence of apparently independent professions in a "state-controlled system of education and credentialing" (Larson, 1977: 219). The standardisation of esoteric knowledge as legitimised by the state gives professional groups their monopoly, while being

inextricably linked to bureaucratization. For Larson, meaning is negotiated and attached to certain aspects of an occupation leading to legitimacy and a privileged position (Edwards & Pieczka, 2013). As societal and economic changes have altered the organisation of work, the professions have become increasingly encapsulated within or dependent on organisations and institutions. They have become a "category of the occupational structure" and as such "agents of power", whose autonomy and expertise is part of an ideology of professionalization (Larson, 1977: 243). As knowledge is "acquired and produced within educational and occupational hierarchies which are, by their structure, inegalitarian, antidemocratic, and alienating", the professional ideology legitimises social inequalities by perpetuating educational and occupational hierarchies (Larson, 1977: 243).

Larson's professional project heavily draws on Weber's ideas, with the process of exclusionary closure key to the successful maintenance of both market and social monopolies by a professional group (Macdonald, 1995; Matthews, 2017). Larson is particularly interested in the collective actions of groups to attain market power, such as by formalising a body of knowledge and restricting access to it (1977: 41). This can contribute to structured inequality by excluding people of a particular class, perpetuating a stratified system. More broadly, neo-Weberian approaches have built on and applied this concept to, for example: explorations of corporate professions (Hodgson et al., 2015; Paton et al., 2013); professionalism in the military (Evetts, 2003); and the gendered politics of closure (Witz, 1992). Social closure is the idea that social groups are drawn to maximising rewards and privileges in order to keep social and economic opportunities to themselves (Andrews & Wærness, 2011; Saks, 2016). An occupational group becomes a profession when it is able to win and maintain state-sanctioned, official legal boundaries (Saks, 2016). Macro political power exerted within a competitive economy drives the process of creating a professional monopoly (Saks, 2016). Successful occupations form professional organisations, which are understood as "guards of self-interest, [which] claim monopoly on duties, strive to expand their area of jurisdiction and protect their domains" (Andrews & Wærness, 2011: 42). Neo-Weberian approaches therefore principally define professions by power:

> The process of gaining a professional monopoly is driven by the exercise of macro political power in a competitive marketplace where successful occupations typically enhance their position in terms of income, status and

power, privileging themselves as against other occupational groups in the division of labour. (Saks, 2016: 76)

Professionalism is the culmination of processes of gaining and maintaining power, with the acquisition and use of esoteric knowledge itself taking a secondary role (Harrits, 2014).

Baskerville explores "closure by proxy" in her research on accountancy as a profession (2006: 289). She looks at how practical details of accountancy courses within universities, which do not come from a professional body, restrict access to the profession according to class. She shows how changes to study requirements – from part- to full-time – introduced a closure mechanism that excluded working class students, as they were more likely to have additional work commitments. This demonstrates how a closure mechanism intended to strengthen "the educational foundation of aspiring accountants" reduced social mobility into "the professional class" for working class students by proxy, thus contributing to wider social inequalities (Baskerville, 2006: 310). This is, of course, not limited to class: by restricting access to an occupation, and the training and knowledge associated with it, people of a particular race, gender or religion maybe also excluded (Witz, 1992; Macdonald, 1995). Witz explores how women were excluded from the medical profession by gendered methods of social closure and looks at how aspiring female doctors used inclusionary and "usurpationary" strategies to gain access to the profession (Witz, 1992: 92-93). Such strategies included making the moral claim that women should be attended to by female doctors to safeguard their modesty; and mobilising proxy male power through the pursuit of legalistic tactics based on equal rights in an attempt to appeal to liberal male elites (Witz, 1992). Social closure does not only aim to attain and maintain a monopoly, whether on exclusionary or inclusionary grounds, it also strives to usurp the existing jurisdiction of others and promote the social position of the group as a whole (Macdonald, 1995).

Larson's neo-Marxist/Weberian approach and other social closure perspectives view the pursuit of professional projects as a power play, in which professional groups harness means to keep others out or get themselves in. This places the focus on entrenched social inequalities and their relationship with professionalism. However, these approaches lack ontological complexity: both perspectives conceive of power as static, "ready-made" and in the possession of a professional group, class, institution or state as a whole. These groups and entities are presented as homogenised, and

pursuing collective action, with little explanation of how this action comes about. Although power is the focus, the workings of power are left under-analysed and with little context. This conception of power risks obscuring other key factors: expertise, autonomy and the work itself. Nonetheless, the boundary-making explored with monopolies and social closure provides a theoretical and analytical a point of reflection. Namely, the extent to which translators and other actors in translation are striving to create boundaries between "professional" translators and "non-professionals". This provides a starting point for considering where and with whom power lies for these expert workers. This project asks different questions, looking at non/professional boundaries as produced by the interactions of people and things beyond the expert workers themselves, and as bound up in identity – something neglected by Larson and neo-Weberian scholars. This project contributes to these discussions by situating translators, their expertise, identity, role and any power they may have within complex assemblages that reach out beyond the professional group itself.

2.2.2. *Professionalism as expertise*

The work of Abbott (1988) addresses some of the issues discussed above and poses interesting questions for this project. Abbott's influential work defines professions as any expert occupation that competes for market jurisdiction within a system of professions (McKenna, 2006a, 2006b). For Abbott, the focus of research should be on work itself: the control, content, and differentiation of work in the professions creates conflict and distinction between professional groups. Abbott is interested in the link between a professional and their work to account for difference in attaining and maintaining professional status. He calls this link a jurisdiction:

> To analyze professional development is to analyze how this link is created in work, how it is anchored by formal and informal social structure, and how the interplay of jurisdictional links between professions determines the history of the individual professions themselves (Abbott, 1988: 20).

The professions rise and fall, in accordance with the advent and loss of "tasks", within a system of professions. While this system seems principally constructed from in-fighting, it is also affected by external forces, such as technological developments or new organisations that create new tasks or abolish old ones. Abbott describes how lawyers in both England and the US competed with various other groups over jurisdictions; the actions of the lawyers, their competitors, social and economic factors all impacted who won and who lost. For example, in the late 1800s in the UK, the state

"invaded" the jurisdictions of trust, general probate and bankruptcy. Actions taken by the government, including issuing the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 and the Public Trustee Act of 1906, meant lawyers had to share certain tasks with state officials: bankruptcy was a state matter; and clients could choose to go to the state or private lawyers regarding trusts (Abbott, 1988: 270-1). The jurisdiction of lawyers changed and they had no choice but to share this particular task with the state. This highlights the importance of maintaining professional autonomy both from the state and from other professional groups (Freidson, 1970, 1993). For Abbott, professionalism is inextricably linked with the maintenance of autonomy and jurisdiction over a task and the expertise necessary to do that task.

While Abbott's system of professions is not explicitly neo-Weberian, there is clear overlap here with social closure and Larson's monopolies, with groups competing over professional ground. Neo-Weberian approaches and Larson's professional project look more at the impact of professional power beyond the group and between the group and "non-professionals", as bestowed and maintained by the state as part of a stratified system. Whereas Abbott looks at the tussling for professional power between groups. The latter approach places expert knowledge in the limelight, as power comes from the link between relevant and necessary tasks and the ability of one group to do those tasks rather than another. The value of expertise is therefore contingent on the needs of broader society. Neo-Weberian and monopolistic analyses focus on how a group gains and maintains control over a particular field, but overlook how that field came to have professional status in the first place (Fournier, 2000). The existence of distinct, self-contained professional fields, for example, medicine or law, is taken as given in such approaches. Abbott's system of professions, which views history as "not a simple pattern of trends and development, but a complex mass of contingent forces" (Abbott, 1988: 316) is better able than other approaches to account for the complexity of the rise and fall of professional groups. It goes someway to addressing this limitation of neo-Weberian perspectives and Larson's professional project by exploring how professions rise and fall within a system created and perpetuated by continual competition. Again, this situates expertise and its value firmly within a point in time.

However, history as a "mass", albeit a complex one, creates a sense of a monolithic macro temporal pressure bearing down on professional groups. Abbott does not explore the interconnection or interaction between this "mass" and the rise and fall of fields of expertise and associated tasks (Fournier, 2000: 69-70). Despite Abbott's

contextualisation of expert work, there is an overreliance on macro explanations, with little bridging between individual professionals, their professional cohort and the system of professions. Nonetheless, within this project, Abbott's focus on jurisdictions and tasks is useful for reflecting on the limits and extents of translators' jurisdiction over the task of translation. This recalls Larson's monopolies, but with the emphasis placed on distinguishing between professional groups and their expertise, rather than professionals and non-professionals within a stratified system. It is Abbott's emphasis on expertise which is useful for this project. He explores the rise and fall of competing tasks and expertise, providing some flexibility that functions as a useful starting point for considering the challenges translators face from technologies and those with the expertise to develop them.

Abbott and Larson continue to be influential figures in the sociological study of professional groups. Larson's monopolies of expertise and status, employing both neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist concepts, are an attempt to wrestle some control back from increasingly deregulated markets. The success of Larson's professional project comes from its use as a means to follow the processes occupational groups have employed to develop themselves and to explain their success (Ackroyd, 2016). Abbott on the other hand draws attention to the rise and fall and/or failure of occupations to attain and maintain professional status. This model provides a more flexible framework that can better account for the impact of technological and economic change, and the new "tasks" that arise from these changes, on the organisation of work. However, in both cases, the definition of profession and professionalism remains one-size-fits-all. These approaches assume rather than explain the *collective* aspect of collective action, with the profession working and acting together as one with the same goal. The relationship between the individual and group goes underdeveloped, with the exercise of power remaining at a largely macro level. By taking the professional field as an autonomous object of study, neo-Weberian, monopolistic and jurisdictional approaches tend towards the reification of those fields, which can become separated from the historical, social, economic and political processes that went into their constitution. While all these approaches explore boundary-making, the boundaries surrounding fields of expertise themselves often go unexplained.

Translation as an unregulated profession does not demonstrate neat closure mechanisms or hard-won jurisdictional or monopolistic boundaries, since, according to the above definitions, there are not any. This is where the pragmatic and flexible

definition of professional/expert work discussed above enables me to engage with this literature to the benefit of this thesis. Regardless of the extent to which professionalization has been attained, I can explore the extent to which translators have a hold over the "task" of translating and if translators and other actors in the translation market are attempting to create a monopoly. From an assemblage perspective, this involves exploring how boundaries emerge from the interactions of heterogeneous actors and "things". I need to look more closely not only at the actions taken by individual translators and larger bodies and organisations, but also the impact and role of material and spatial factors in the emergence of such a jurisdiction or monopoly. An assemblage approach makes an ontological and epistemological contribution to the literature by moving away from the assumed existence of boundaries, monopolies and jurisdictions, to instead exploring how and what they emerge from, and where they are produced and enacted. Furthermore, the approaches discussed in this section do not consider the link between professionalism and professional identity. This project can contribute to these discussions in its exploration of professional identity as central to professionalism, as a tool and product of professionalization. The next section looks at work that addresses some of these concerns insofar as the focus falls on professionalism as a discourse and professional identities.

2.2.3. *Professionalism as discourse*

Much of the work that explores professional identity looks at professionalism as a discourse that informs interactions between professionals and their clients, and the actions and practices of professional groups. Professionalism, Evetts argues, has its roots in trust: lay people must trust in professionals' ability to do the job as they themselves do not possess the knowledge to do it. Professionalism "requires professionals to be worthy of that trust, to put clients first, to maintain confidentiality and not use their knowledge for fraudulent purposes" (Evetts, 2013: 780). Professionalism is created and maintained through the processes of acquiring a professional identity, which for Evetts "is associated with a sense of common experiences, understandings and expertise, shared ways of perceiving problems and their possible solutions" (Evetts, 2013: 780). In recent decades, professionalism has branched out from the traditional professions and as a discourse has been changed and co-opted by different actors. Previous ideas of professionalism and profession relate to: the assumed altruism of professionals, who put the needs of their clients

above their own in cases of a conflict of interest; the rewards that comes with the profession label as related to social standing over and above financial benefits; professional groups as largely independent from the state; and professionals as distinct from management, focussing on the provision of high quality services rather than administration (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011; Ackroyd, 2016; Saks, 2016). Following financial crises in recent decades, the state has been interested in broadening professionalism "so that it becomes more commercially aware, budget focused, managerial, entrepreneurial and so forth" (Hanlon, 1999: 121 in Evetts, 2013: 789). In this form, professionalism has been casualised: corporate actors have used professionalism in marketing and recruitment campaigns alike to attract both talent and customers (Fournier, 1999). Professionalism has become vague and pervasive, now present in all sectors, not only those associated with "traditional" professions (Fournier, 1999; Evetts, 2006, 2012).

Within a professional landscape of managerialism, new expert roles, and professionalism as a ubiquitous discourse, Foucault's work provides powerful explanatory tools that have been employed by sociologists studying professionalism (Fournier, 1999; Saks, 2016). Within Foucault's sociology, professions and professionalism – the medical and legal professions in particular – are integral cogs in a machine of social control (Foucault, 2010b). Governmentality is the conceptualisation of this form of power and understands governing as "a highly complex activity, or rather set of activities, which encompasses different institutions, procedures, tactics, calculations, forms of knowledge and technologies" (Burau, 2016: 93). It is a reconceptualization of "government" that sees it as the management and supervision of a population "so that they and society flourish" (Light, 2001: 1169). It encompasses the "conduct of conduct", the guidance of behaviour over outright control; a population feeling compelled to behave in certain ways, say and think certain things, and not others. For governmentality to be successful, people need to be motivated to behave in ways beneficial to the systems and procedures they are embedded within. One way to do this is "internalised laws, rules and norms", such as public health campaigns that rid smoking of its street cred; another is through "institutional procedures and pathways", such as having to register at a doctor's surgery to receive healthcare (Light, 2001: 1171).

As part of this system, the professions provide legitimacy for this form of governing, which claims to work "in the name of truth", and professional expertise is one way such

truth claims can be legitimised (Burau, 2016: 93). A dominant group maintains its authority through its restricted definition of what is true and what is false within a dominant discourse; questioning this version of truth means questioning the group's power (Foucault, 1977). This leads to the creation of regimes of truth, in which a truth can become the only truth and an act of definition is an act of control (Fahie, 2016). For example, the "truth" of illness is defined by doctors working within institutions, treatments are intended to return patients to normality based on norms decided by the professions, and any associated knowledge forms the basis of professional expertise (Munro & Randall, 2007: 899). The rules, systems and procedures of the medical profession produce the discourse that enables medicine to maintain its grip on power over the body, over defining what is pathological and what is "normal". The institutionalisation of knowledge and expertise is therefore integral to this form of governing, and is itself based on the autonomy and control of professionals (Burau, 2016).

The autonomy of the professions is key to their ability to provide legitimacy, as this self-constituted and self-regulated body appears to be neutral and independent. However, state-sanction is an important marker of professional status (Freidson, 1970; Harrits, 2014), meaning that the profession's own norms and rules are themselves crafted to fit within the system of government. The process of government heavily relies on experts, who themselves are subject to control at a distance, through various systems of accountability, such as auditing (Pickard, 2009). This control is both internal and external, as professional groups must answer to their own codes of conduct and state mandated frameworks of accountability. In Foucault's early work, he considered autonomy to be largely an illusion thanks to the power of "regimes of truth" and "normalisation", which make individuals – including professionals – feel as if they are autonomous (Raaen, 2011: 628). Although Foucault's later work introduced a less deterministic view of autonomy, enabling critical reflection on the part of individuals, professionals can nonetheless largely be considered "vehicles of power, not its points of application" (Raaen, 2011: 629). This system of government thus involves the co-dependence of the professions and the state, with professionals attempting to maintain autonomy from the oversight of the state seen in the rise of managerialism and the extension of audit culture (Thomas & Hewitt, 2011; Shore & Wright, 2015). Professional competence is linked not only to knowledge, but also practice and conduct, meaning professionals "have to inscribe themselves in a network of accountability" (Burau, 2016: 94). Professional groups are accountable for not just

what they know, but how they use that knowledge, and, increasingly, how their practices and services can be quantified (Light, 2001; Shore & Wright, 2015). While resistance is possible, for the most part, so-called neutral and independent professionals will behave in ways that fit with the institution they represent (McKinlay & Pezet, 2010).

From a governmentality perspective, the professions play a key role in the institutionalisation of knowledge and expertise, providing legitimacy for systems and procedures of social control. A central theme of Foucauldian approaches to the sociology of professions is institutions - famously, in Foucault's own work, the hospital, the asylum and the prison (McKinlay & Pezet, 2010). The danger of this institutional focus is that governmentality perspectives can tend to focus on a macro-level analysis (Burau, 2016). By highlighting the role of the professions within society, these approaches can fail to show how power is exercised and enacted on and by individuals. While there is room in Foucault's model for resistance and difference (see 3.3), professional groups are often presented as a homogenous whole. Governmentality perspectives can become programmatic and deterministic, lacking an explanation of the dynamics of power, or the processes of governmentality (McKinlay & Pezet, 2010). Although some Foucauldian approaches successfully explore power/knowledge and the professions without reducing the focus to a macro-level, the emphasis on discourse can neglect the material and spatial context of control, amounting to a "dematerialization" of power (Armstrong, 1991 in Chua & Sinclair, 1994: 671).

In contrast, the most powerful applications of Foucauldian ideas in the sociology of professions emerge when scholars explore the interrelationship between discourse, the role of the professions, and professional identities and experiences. This work also best exemplifies the ubiquity and pervasiveness of professionalism in all sectors as described above (Fournier, 1999; Evetts, 2013). McCarthy is one such author: he uses Foucault's work on the production of categories to explore how professionalism, in this case amongst funeral directors, is a "regime of self-regulation", creating a professional title or category (2016: 308). A professional category becomes a regulative process that sees individuals enact their own professionalism by adhering to relevant normative practices and dominant discourses. Funeral directors construct their professional identity to fall in line with practices and discourses related to markers of professionalism, and social expectations related to death and mourning. As professionals, this identity and associated professional practices contribute to defining

acceptable funeral behaviour, reifying their role and their expertise in the funeral process. Expert workers hold sway over the "layperson" because of their expertise, knowledge, and autonomy. Professional identity is at once productive, as it provides legitimacy and other benefits, as well as restrictive, as professionals must adhere to certain rules to maintain the label and associated advantages (Fournier, 1999).

As a restrictive power, deviating from a prescribed professional identity can be costly. Fahie (2016) looks at the effect of equality legislation, which makes it legal to discriminate against lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) teachers, within the Irish, largely denominational schooling system. In the face of constant surveillance and uncertainty, LGB teachers alter their behaviour through self-monitoring, working harder and more effectively, to avoid harassment and dismissal. The legislation works as a normalising mechanism or disciplinary technique that influences the behaviour of a group of professionals, who feel compelled to act in a certain way. A prescribed heterosexual sexual identity therefore becomes an integral part of the professional identity of teachers in this context. This piece of legislation goes beyond the direct policing of teaching staff, to the promotion and protection of a particular religious ethos, in which heterosexuality is the only permissible discourse of sexuality. Fahie's article demonstrates how professional identities can be situated within a wider social, historical, political context using Foucault's ideas. Professional identity can be thought of as flexible and contextual. In a similar vein, Mackey (2007) explores how occupational therapists have created a reflexive professional identity that is a continual work in progress following changes to the profession in the form of: a call for modernisation at a governmental level; the replacement of autonomous professional accountability with managerialism; the rise of consumer orientation in healthcare; and a more demanding and challenging public. As opposed to seeing professional identity as a fixed set of characteristics, Foucault's ideas are used to understand it as unstable, situated within a particular socio-historical context; as reactive to changes at societal and individual levels; as constructed from individual and collective experiences and languages; and as "expressed in countless habits, rituals, activities and myths" (Mackey, 2007: 97). The development of a professional identity is a key element of training, at once producing the individual professional, and the profession itself.

Professionalism as a discourse, particularly from a Foucauldian perspective, has a lot to offer this project. Indeed, in the next chapter I explore how Foucault's conception of power can complement an assemblage approach theoretically (see 3.3). The issue I

take with the approaches discussed in this section, however, is the over-emphasis of the discursive to the detriment of the material. As I describe in the next chapter, Foucault himself is keen to stress the material basis of power and discourse. Yet, in Foucauldian approaches to the professions, the material reality of expert practices is neglected. Some scholars conflate professionalism and professional status, with professionalism becoming a vague term that seems to mean "the ways people are professional", i.e. by having technical autonomy, esoteric knowledge and responsibility (Gorman and Sandefur, 2011; Robson et al., 2004). Robson et al. (2004) in particular assume a general professionalism discourse adopted by teachers, rather than exploring how professionalism is created. The practicalities, and mundane doings and sayings of how professionalism and professional identities are enacted and produced are largely neglected. Professionalism remains unanchored from the actions and things that go into its production. By taking an assemblage approach to researching a group of expert workers, this project demonstrates how professionalism and professional identity are co-constructed in the actions, interactions and practices involved in translation. The next section builds on these ideas and explores how precarity is a factor alongside professionalism for translators and interpreters.

2.3. Precarity

Precarity is something of a buzzword in sociology at the moment (Prosser, 2016; Alberti et al., 2018). The term has spread in academic research in recent years to describe changes to the relationship between labour and capital, the expansion of "contingent structures of employment" and the increase in perceived insecurity among workers (Alberti et al., 2018: 448). Alberti et al. (2018) provide a brief history of the origin of the term:

> Bourdieu (1963) is credited with the term précarité, using it in his research in Algeria to differentiate between workers with permanent jobs and those with casual ones. During the 1970s, it gained greater prominence through its adoption by leftist movements in continental Europe, as a means of rallying (often) young workers excluded from stable jobs. The notion of precarity therefore finds its roots in worker mobilization from the left, with these connotations following through to the contemporary moment. (Alberti et al., 2018: 448)

Precarity describes a lack of stability and security in work linked with recent changes to conditions of employment enacted by corporate and state actors. Within sociology,

precarious employment has been explored in: the service sector (Harvey et al., 2017); in public sector supply chains (Jaehrling et al., 2018); in "creative" fields (McRobbie, 2016); in journalism (Cohen, 2016); and in the labour market more broadly (Prosser, 2016). In recent research on precarity, its roots in leftist movements have given way to an imprecision and "conceptual stretching" that has weakened its explanatory power (Alberti et al. 2018: 448). Precarity in work is instead often understood as a given, the result of a deregulated and globalised labour market following decades of neoliberal economic policies (Giddens, 2002; Harvey, 2011; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012). Often this link between neoliberal politics and precarious employment is not fully elucidated. Here, I explore the literature that explains the rise of precarity; I then look at how processes of precaritisation have impacted self-employment and professional work. I am most drawn to the literature that explores the precaritisation of work, which brings considerable explanatory power to analyses of work by focussing on situated processes that create precarious employment (Alberti et al., 2018). Lastly, I explore the interaction and co-production of precarity and technological developments in work. By exploring precarity as something produced by contingent factors and historical processes, this concept can have continued validity as an analytical tool that is relevant in this thesis and in sociological understandings of work.

2.3.1. *Precarity and neoliberalism*

An increasingly precarious labour market causing insecurity and instability for a range of workers in different fields has its roots in neoliberalism (Kalleberg, 2011, 2012; Harvey et al., 2017; Alberti et al., 2018). Broadly, neoliberal politics and policies emerged out of the economic crisis of the 1970s that "brought finance to the fore" and ushered in an era of politics in which free-market capitalism and reduced prominence of the state were championed as the only route to prosperity (Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012: 1). President Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom began processes of deregulation, expanding the scope of the markets, reeling in the state and cracking down on unionisation (Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012; Ackroyd, 2016). Political economies regionally, nationally and globally were changed by the subsequent hegemonic ideology of the free-market (Giddens, 2002; Brown et al., 2008; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012). Beyond the immediate impact on political and economic decision-making, neoliberal reforms have continued to influence the organisation of social reality in a variety of ways (Harvey, 2011). In the decades following Thatcher, subsequent UK governments have continued to pursue agendas

of deregulation and privatisation (Jaehrling et al., 2018). Reflecting specifically on work, the influence of neoliberal policy has been explored in: operational structures and discourses (Cutler, 2010; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012); technology in expert work (Brown et al., 2008; Susskind & Susskind, 2017); contractual arrangements between staff and companies (Manky, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2019); and emotional attachment to work (Musílek et al., 2019).

The liberalization of the labour market has led to an increase in unstable and poorly protected jobs (Manky, 2018). Neoliberal policy contributes to lack of job security and a reduction in employment protections, often accompanied by poor pay. Kalleberg's work (2011, 2012), based in the US, shows that job quality has changed in recent decades leading to higher income inequality and more precarious work. One of the major factors in these changes is the liberalization of the labour market, which she summarises as follows:

> macrostructural factors (e.g., globalization, technological changes, deregulation) [in] generating the conditions (e.g., growing price competition and declining union power) that encouraged and enabled employers to adopt more flexible employment relations (e.g., temporary and other nonstandard work arrangements). (Kalleberg, 2012: 431)

Kalleberg also stresses the role of agency, subjectivity and ideology in this process. Neoliberal discourses lauding markets and privatisation provided legitimacy for deregulation and the increased financialization of the economy. Culturally there has been a shift towards responsibilization and individualism further supporting and legitimizing the hegemony of the market. Kalleberg's work provides an interesting perspective, stressing the importance of interacting factors at different scales, which certainly chimes with the approach taken in this project. A limitation of her work is that she does not explore how these different factors and processes are enacted in workplaces or other settings. In connection with and as a result of this, material factors are also neglected. I have found myself coming up against these two limitations repeatedly with this body of work: materiality is forgotten and the production of precarity is only explained at a macro level. The political critique embedded in this work is also clear here, with macro explanations of neoliberal violence taking centre stage. This sets the tone for much of the work presented in this section, which perhaps consequently neglects a more nuanced and analytical account of processes of precaritisation. Nonetheless, the precarity literature is varied and rich, providing a

range of perspectives and situated examples that are relevant for this project, some of which I explore below.

2.3.2. *Precarity and self-employment*

Some scholars describe the liberalization of the labour market as a "dualization", that is, a majority of workers face insecurity, whereas a minority have secure jobs (Manky, 2018). The liberalization and/or dualization of the labour market is evident in the decline of standard work contracts and the increase in self-employment in all sectors (Musílek et al., 2019; Prosser, 2016). For example, in the UK, spending cuts since the 2008 financial crash increased contractual insecurity in the local government sector (Prosser, 2016). The increase in self-employment demonstrates the transfer of risk and responsibility away from corporate and state actors towards individual workers. This is understood as a factor in the precaritisation of work, contributing to a fragmented labour market (Manky, 2018; Moore & Newsome, 2018). Self-employed workers are of course not a homogeneous group. Relationships between employer and self-employed worker vary depending on the type of work and service or product provided (Gold & Fraser, 2002; Dawson et al., 2014; Mallett & Wapshott, 2015; Bologna, 2018; Moore & Newsome, 2018). Here, I focus on low-paid and so-called low-skilled work, exploring high-skilled self-employment in the next section.

The fragmentary processes described above, driven by neoliberal policies, limit the power of self-employed and in-house staff, both of whom become disposable (Moore & Newsome, 2018). The use of freelancers is part of a process of cost minimisation within "lean" capitalism that seeks to limit the amount spent on workers, for example, by removing having to pay for the "non-productive" time that is inevitable with employed staff (Moore & Newsome, 2018: 485; Wood et al., 2019: 945). This process of reducing costs is felt most by self-employed workers, who lose employment protections, such as sick pay and holiday pay. There are varying levels of dependency between employer and self-employed worker, with some thinly veiled full employment relationships. Indeed, some companies have come under fire for their use of so-called self-employed workers. One of the most famous cases is that of Uber, a "ridesharing" company that provides a platform on which individuals with a car can offer their services as a driver to users of the platform. Uber argues that its drivers are not employees, but in fact small businesses to whom it leases use of the platform, meaning the company does not provide employment protections (Butler, 2018). This kind of company-contractor relationship is often described as falling under the "gig economy"

(Kessler, 2018; Wood et al., 2019). The gig economy "consists both of work that is transacted via platforms but delivered in a specific locality and of platforms that enable remote working" (Wood et al., 2019: 932). Platform providers, such as Uber, facilitate the distribution of "gigs" without taking responsibility for the working conditions of their self-employed workers. Companies provide these digital platforms to both service providers and users, promoting convenience and flexibility for everyone (Wood et al., 2019).

The gig economy is inextricably linked to the "platformatization" of work, which enables the fragmentation of labour processes (Ross, 2013; Kessler, 2018; Wood et al., 2019). As in the case of Uber, digital platforms connecting contractor to company and client enable labour to be parcelled out in a strictly controlled and monitored environment (Brown et al., 2008; Moore & Newsome, 2018). The freedom self-employment brings to "be your own boss", often used as a counterpoint to insecurity and precarity, is perhaps illusory (Moore & Newsome, 2018; Musílek et al., 2019; Rosenkranz, 2019). Increasingly complex and mobile technologies are able to track labour processes down to the minute (Moore & Newsome, 2018; Wood et al., 2019). For Alberti et al. (2018: 452), these technologies rearrange capital and "reproduce new forms of dependency, surveillance and subjugation". Technologies can at once produce work and produce precarity, destabilising both employed and self-employed workers (Moore & Newsome, 2018). Online platforms enable self-employment while opening up tasks to a seemingly endless pool of potential workers, reducing incentives for companies to make this work provide little except an illusion of freedom (Wood et al., 2019).

The literature here describes some of the complex interrelationships between neoliberal policies, technologies and self-employment in a precarious labour market. What is lacking from these analyses is an exploration of the platforms themselves as actors. The interactions between company-contractor-client via these technologies, and the impact of these interactions on the technology, provision of services and individuals involved are left obscured. What these technologies *do* to these working practices, and the influence this may have on work identities, are often neglected. This project contributes to the literature by exploring how relationships between freelance translators and their clients, and the use of technologies emerge in the production of professional identities. This highlights another point: the gig economy is most often associated with low-paid and low-skilled labour. Translation does not fit this category, yet parallels of power dynamics with agencies and working conditions can be drawn

with the "platformatized" work described above. The next section looks at precarity and professional or expert work to see where this project can make further contributions to the literature.

2.3.3. *Precarity and professional work*

Neoliberalism does not discriminate: all sectors of work have been impacted by deregulation and a drive towards cost reduction (Harvey, 2011). As described in 2.2 above, the "traditional" professions have seen sweeping changes over the past few decades, particularly as a result of increased deregulation. This has largely placed these roles within organisations, expanded the scope of the market and weakened the power of the "traditional" professions (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011; Ackroyd, 2016). These changes, and the appearance of new expert work in line with technological developments, have blurred the boundaries between the professions and other occupations (Dent et al., 2016). Managerial roles, formerly seen as distinct from professions, now sit within this wider category of expert work (Ehrenreich & Ehrenreich, 1977; Thomas & Hewitt, 2011).

Expert work may not be precarious on quite the same terms as self-employed, low-paid and low-skilled labour, nonetheless, this kind of employment has become unstable and insecure (Susskind & Susskind, 2017; Hassard & Morris, 2018). To reiterate the aims of this part of the literature review, it is useful to think of precarity in terms of the precaritisation of work (Alberti et al., 2018) and the subsequent experience of insecurity and instability in the workplace. Hassard and Morris (2018) explored precarity and insecurity in managerial roles in the USA, UK and Japan. They note that research shows, despite the increase in "non-standard" employment contracts, long-term employment has not decreased in recent years. However, "job stability is not necessarily related directly to job security" (p. 566). Changes to the labour market, while creating explicit precarity for some workers, like those in the gig economy, have created perceived precarity in a wide variety of fields "including professionals and managers whose jobs had previously been regarded as 'secure'" (p. 566). These changes have been driven by neoliberal policies encouraging corporate restructuring and marketization. This has led to a growth of mergers and acquisitions, creating heightened employment anxiety as managerial responsibilities and decision-making are themselves unstable, shifting between key actors (Kalleberg, 2011; Hassard & Morris, 2018; Rubery et al., 2018).

Insecure work outside of the gig economy is thus understood more as a psychological affliction created by processes of precaritisation, which is explored below. Before moving on to that, however, it is important to address a limitation of this work. There is a striking lack of engagement with ontological and epistemological questions in these papers, which do not interrogate the "market" or "market forces". The market is taken as given and is often not defined. Its materiality, if it has any, is not explored. How or what it arises from and how it is maintained is equally not discussed. The influence of the market is clearly felt by workers, but how this influence transfers from this seemingly coherent whole to the level of a company and a stressed manager is not explained. This mirrors the concerns above about a lack of interrogation over the production of precarity in workplaces, technologies or interactions. Much of the work discussed here so far establishes a micro-macro divide with little attempt to reconcile the two or explore how they might be connected. This has been a source of frustration for me, as the research questions and data collected in this project are not able to unpack the market itself. Translators, as self-employed workers, navigate market forces in their interactions with potential clients. The omnipotent and omnipresent market emerges as a factor in professional identity construction. Consequently, I have sought out work that explores this interconnection between the seemingly homogeneous and whole market and the individual worker, explored below.

In thinking about how to interrogate the positioning of the market as a totalizing and mysterious force, I have been drawn to work that looks at contracts as a means of demonstrating the production or enactment of market forces within workplaces and for individual workers. The relationships between workers and employers are monitored, defined and controlled at least in part by contracts (Cohen, 2016; Moore & Newsome, 2018; Manky, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2019). There are differences in the role of contracts depending on the type of work and type of employment relationship. Here, I would like to look at "professional" self-employment, particularly freelance journalism and the "creative" industries, focussing on the work of Cohen (2016) and Rosenkranz (2019). Parallels can be drawn between translators, journalists and "creative" professionals, all of whom enter into project-based employment contracts and have to negotiate rates of pay. Contracts are socio-legal instruments that control interactions and set out mutual obligations (Rosenkranz, 2019). The clauses within contracts place the freelancer outside the company, reinforcing the insecurity of freelancers: external to the organisation, they are only entitled to remuneration on a project-by-project basis. For freelance journalists, this remuneration is worked out "either per word, per article,

per hour, per project" as established in their contract, with rates often set by the publication rather than the writer (Cohen, 2016: 68, 71). The per-word mode of payment in particular is seen as not considering or valuing the skills and knowledge necessary to produce a text. This form of payment highlights the clear similarities between journalists and translators. However, I argue that translators are more vulnerable given the establishment and awareness of journalism as a field, demonstrating the empirical contribution this project makes. Furthermore, journalism and other "creative" industries are highly-competitive, like translation, with many individuals keen to pursue what is thought of as interesting work (Cohen, 2016: 66; McRobbie, 2016: 2). Again mirroring the discussion above on low-skilled self-employed work, this means employers have little incentive to raise rates as there is a pool of potential freelancers to pick from.

In return for this instability, it is often argued that self-employed workers get freedom, flexibility and autonomy (Alberti et al., 2018; Kessler, 2018; Wood et al., 2019). This freedom can take various forms, such as a kind of mobility that allows workers to decide which jobs to take on (Moore & Newsome, 2018); and as a chance to "be your own boss" (Cohen, 2016: 70). Freedom and autonomy in self-employment are nuanced and complex, with the freelancer needing to balance various interests and demands. This is framed by ideas of enterprise as a *neoliberal* freedom in work, which I discuss below in relation to responsibilization. For Rosenkranz, having freedom and instability means:

> [freelancers] can control their work-time and leverage the disadvantages of project-based employment by taking on multiple projects […] It is exactly this tension between uncertainty and flexibility that is prominently identified as the 'new spirit of capitalism'. (Rosenkranz, 2019: 616)

This experience of precarity becomes a "threat to the professional self, as a condition of permanent professional anxiety" (Rosenkranz, 2019: 625). Indeed, companies are able to extract surplus value from labour by exploiting the contractual arrangements with freelancers that give them this flexibility (Cohen, 2016). Contractual engagements are central to this shifting of risk and responsibility, with companies able to shun their legal and moral obligations to freelancers through contracts (Rosenkranz, 2019). For expert self-employed workers, their contracts treats them as small, entrepreneurial businesses providing services for clients (Cohen, 2016). This obscures the somewhat dependent relationship between sole trader and client-cum-employer, much like in the

Uber case. Short-term contracts that set out rates of pay perceived to not accurately reflect the time and expertise needed to do the work demonstrate a point of production of precarity in interactions between the self-employed and their clients.

This shifting of responsibility and risk onto the individual is demonstrative of an increasingly pervasive enterprise culture (Kelly, 2013). Neoliberal policies that have deregulated the labour market see self-employment and entrepreneurship as a means to pursue economic growth and oppose a "dependency culture" of welfare and benefits (Mallett & Wapshott, 2015: 252). Foucault's work is again relevant here, as it has been used to show how neoliberal governmentality "seeks to transform subjects, fostering entrepreneurial and self-responsibilizing capabilities and dispositions" (Fridman, 2014: 92). Enterprise culture within neoliberal governmentality frames the responsibility placed on the individual – for their financial security – as "freedom" and "autonomy". Mallett and Wapshott (2015: 250) describe enterprise as a pervasive discourse that is influential "when individuals in self-employment make sense of their work-based identities and negotiate their identity claims with others". Any successes and failures are the sole responsibility of the entrepreneur rather than attributable to external circumstances. The neoliberal labour market emphasises entrepreneurship and impacts attachment to work, which has become increasingly individualised, moving away from attachment to a company or colleagues (Musílek et al., 2019). Both self-employed and employees alike are encouraged to take responsibility for their welfare and increase their employability. In the workplace and beyond, this "enterprising subjectivity" is seen in a variety of activities and managerial vocabulary that emphasise autonomy, such as "time management and personal productivity" (Musílek et al., 2019: 4).

Freelance translators, as expert self-employed workers, must negotiate these various pressures in their identity construction. Contracts form a point of connection between the market, the company and the individual, demonstrating an enactment and production of market forces, enterprise discourse, precarity and professional anxiety. From an assemblage perspective, a missing element is the materiality: an exploration of the materiality of workplaces and infrastructure (such as "co-working" spaces and internet connections) would add another dimension to explorations of contemporary working practices. In terms of contracts, it would be interesting to see more exploration of the physical contract itself, the law behind it, and the practice(s) of signing it. While this project does not look specifically at contracts, I add to these discussions by

exploring emergent points of connection between these various actors and how they contribute to professional identity construction. This roots precarity and the precaritisation of work in contingent, situated and material assemblages, moving beyond the micro-macro divide seen in much of the work cited here.

2.3.4. *Technology and precarious expertise*

Another material element that has a role in the instability and insecurity of expert work is technology. Above, technology, platformatization and the gig economy were explored in relation to low-skilled labour. However, technology equally has a key role in the precaritisation of expert work (Brown et al., 2008; Susskind & Susskind, 2017; Bucher, 2017; Bucher & Fieseler, 2017; Elliott, 2019). Susskind and Susskind (2017: 2) predict that in a "technology-based Internet society", highly capable machines will begin to "take on many of the tasks that have been the historic preserve of the professions". Three key factors contribute to this: (1) the fragmentation of work into repetitive tasks that machines can complete; (2) globalization enabled by communication technologies; and (3) increasingly sophisticated technologies able to take on a wider range of tasks. Although there is no order to these factors, which have all produced and been produced by one another within the neoliberal setting described above, I work through them individually below.

Firstly, various work processes previously assumed too complex to be done by machine are increasingly being fragmented into "bite-sized" chunks that technologies can digest (Brown et al., 2008; Crowley et al., 2010; Wood et al., 2019). Brown et al. (2008) use digital Taylorism to explain and explore the impact of technological developments on the fragmentation of the service sector. Digital Taylorism replicates mechanical Taylorism that standardised and subsequently automated mechanical jobs (Crowley et al., 2010). Digital Taylorism describes processes that standardise jobs within the service sector that were previously out of the reach of standardisation:

> Through building modular applications, business processes, including ordering, marketing, selling, delivering, invoicing, auditing, and hiring, can be broken down into their component parts, which include the unbundling of occupational roles so that job tasks can be simplified and sourced in different ways. (Brown et al., 2008: 138)

The complexity of these roles is broken down into granular tasks, which are then increasingly subject to automation. As a consequence "an increasing proportion of

managerial and professional jobs, that were previously sheltered because they were not tradable, are being redesigned" (Brown et al., 2008: 138). Esoteric knowledge itself can be extracted, codified and digitalised into software. Digital Taylorism reduces the autonomy of professionals by opening up roles understood as complex and processual to automation via fragmentation.

Secondly, technologies, particularly internet-based communications, link globalization and work insecurity in high-skilled occupations (Elliott, 2019). Technologies enable the "offshoring" of intellectual roles, meaning professionals working in financial, legal, medical and hi-tech sectors face competition from overseas workers in low-wage economies (Elliott, 2019: 69-70). Indeed, the combination of computer systems, software and new communications technologies have enabled a wide variety of jobs to be done remotely (Brown et al., 2008). Furthermore, globalization, facilitated by neoliberal politics, has opened up more and more fields to market forces, reducing employment security and increasing vulnerability across the board (Fournier, 1999; Giddens, 2002). Globalization enabled by widespread neoliberal economic policies and the rise of the internet extends the reach of the gig economy to high-skilled work (Bucher & Fieseler, 2017; Wood et al., 2019). Wood et al. (2019) look at how the labour of platform workers in Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa is commodified through outsourcing networks, excluding them from social protections. There is significant oversupply of labour for the varied roles – from animation to copywriting and accounting – and most of the clients for these freelancers are based in other countries. Once professional and managerial roles are broken down into granular tasks, they can be "spatially and temporally distributed across the network through algorithmically enhanced arm's-length market transactions" (Wood et al., 2019: 943). The work of these freelancers is commodified on a global scale. Processes of digital Taylorism are therefore inextricably linked with globalization in the production of instability and insecurity in expert work.

To unpack the third point – increasingly sophisticated technologies begin to take on more tasks – I am again drawn to work on "computational journalism", which explores the intersection of professionalism and technologies (Wiik, 2010; Archetti, 2012; Brems et al., 2017; Bucher, 2017; Carlson, 2018). This work looks at how technologies have changed professionalism within journalism in two intersecting ways: 1) blurring boundaries between professionals and non-professionals; 2) technologies taking on tasks previously thought to require uniquely human skills. Firstly, the internet has

changed not only the production but also the consumption of media dramatically, calling into question the relevance or need for journalists, particularly foreign correspondents (Archetti, 2012). The boundaries between professional and layperson have been blurred in a world where "anyone" can write and make that writing available to anyone else with an internet connection. Secondly, boundaries have been blurred between professionals and technologies themselves, as algorithmic actors encroach on the territory of journalism (Bucher, 2017). Artificial intelligence has begun to play a larger role in this technological takeover, as algorithms become more "intelligent" and begin to conduct the services of higher-skill occupations (Elliott, 2019: 73). Within journalism, algorithms have begun to produce articles and news stories, encroaching on the jurisdiction of journalists (Cohen, 2016; Bucher, 2017; Carlson, 2018). In Bucher's (2017) and Carlson's (2018) work, they explore how technologies can be incorporated into professional identities, focussing on the concept of journalistic judgement. Journalistic professionalism was distinguished from algorithmic abilities insofar as machines cannot "judge" whether a news story is relevant, viable, or even factual. For Carlson (2018), the use of the software in journalism is discursively inscribed with the existing "professional logic", in which algorithmic expertise is a complement to the journalist's professional skills. The intrusion of artificial intelligence into journalism is incorporated into journalists' professional identity as a means of distinguishing their professional, journalistic judgement as a human skill unique to their role.

Carlson's work, drawing on Ananny (2016), paints an interesting and complex picture of the interactions between journalist, algorithm and news production, which is described as: a "novel assemblage comprising networks of actors, sets of practices to produce news, arguments for why this is a legitimate form of judgment, and assumptions about the types of knowledge that can be legitimated" (Carlson, 2018: 1767). The algorithm then is imbued with agentic capacities, described as an assemblage of "institutionally situated code, practices, and norms" that has the power to structure information and knowledge, and produce relationships between people and data (Ananny, 2016: 93). This work goes some way to exploring the relationship between technology, professional identity and broader social, economic and political processes. Although there are clear parallels to be drawn between journalism and translation, I argue that journalists have a better-established professional identity owing to their greater visibility. This project builds on these ideas of algorithmic expertise within a cohort that is arguably in a more precarious position. Echoing the

work of Carlson (2018) and Ananny (2016) in particular, the assemblage approach taken here situates translation and interpreting expertise and technologies within complex, co-constitutive, emergent entities. Furthermore, much of the literature focusses on the impact of technologies on working practices, without contextualising the relationships between professional and technology. To incorporate the themes discussed above, this project bridges the gap between expert worker, technology and broader labour market conditions and factors. Professional identity is understood as a produced by the interactions of technologies, unstable working conditions, and expertise, which take place within the backdrop of a neoliberal economy.

2.4. Gender, Professions and Precarity

In this section, I give an overview of the literature that explores gender, professionalism and precarity. Translators and interpreters are predominantly female (Pym et al., 2012); professional or expert work involves gendered power dynamics and discourses (Broadbent, Strachan, et al., 2018); and women are more vulnerable to market forces (Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018). Firstly, I look at gender and professionalism, questioning if the issues highlighted therein are relevant to translators and interpreters. I then look at precarity and gender, exploring how precarity intersects with gendered elements of work, and drawing connections to translation and interpreting. Throughout, I highlight how this work tends to take a structural approach to gender, in which this category is imposed on workers and its impact is assumed. Although some translators' experiences may align with these descriptions of feminized professions and the gendered elements of work, the imposition of categories involved in these approaches is ontologically reductive.

2.4.1. *Gender and professionalism*

Historically, the role of gender in the professions has often been ignored (Witz, 1992; Broadbent, Healy, et al., 2018). The work of Witz (1990, 1992), which explores the relationship of gender and professionalization, was seminal in this regard. She integrates neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian concepts to explore the intersection of gender, class and closure strategies. She argues that instead of looking at professions generically as the successful professional projects of "class-privileged male actors", individual professionalization processes should be explored and located within the structural and historical context of patriarchal-capitalism (Witz, 1990: 675). Witz criticises both neo-Marxist and neo-Weberian approaches for failing to take into account gendered aspects of professional projects, whether that involves the exclusion

of women from male professional spheres, or specifically female professional projects (Witz, 1992).

Witz's work somewhat sets the tone of more recent explorations of gender and professions, in which the theoretical focus falls on structural inequalities, understood in terms of horizontal sedimentation and vertical segregation (Marlow, 2002; Bolton & Muzio, 2007; Meliou et al., 2018; Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018). Vertical division leads to stratification insofar as women are excluded from senior positions; horizontal division leads to sedimentation whereby women tend to be involved in niche feminized areas of a profession (Bolton & Muzio, 2007). This stratification and sedimentation of a professional field is most evident in hierarchical occupations, often based within organisations and institutions. Consequently, gendered explorations of expert work tend to focus on gendered power relations within organisations (Durbin & Lopes, 2018); and gendered institutions in which female professional roles are labelled as "caring" (Bolton & Muzio, 2008; Trotter, 2017). To explain these divisions and categorizations of professional work, scholars seek to unpack closure strategies that hinder women becoming involved in certain fields, and gendered closure strategies internal to the profession.

Stratification and sedimentation occur following different closure strategies. Regarding sedimentation, analyses often link the expansion of university level education to women slowly making their way into a professional field, segments of which become feminized (Bolton & Muzio, 2007; Sang et al., 2014). For example, Bolton and Muzio (2007: 54) claim that the feminization of certain areas of law are in fact an internal closure mechanism that protects "the masculinized professional core, ensuring that women remain as 'other' and have minimum impact upon the masculine code of the legal profession". Regarding stratification, scholars tend to look more at the external gendered "realities" of contemporary life and their intersection with work. For example, women still tend to take on the role of primary care giver within heterosexual couples that have children (Marlow, 2002; Craig et al., 2012; Broadbent, Healy, et al., 2018; Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018). These gendered factors restrict women who cannot commit to the long hours needed to progress in their professional careers (Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018).

The theoretical perspectives taken in much of this work broadly examine structural inequalities to the detriment of theorising the categorizations that emerge from these approaches. Equally, the profession as a cohort or group is not problematized. I find

myself repeating my criticisms from the above sections. That is, the professional group is presented as homogeneous and, in this case, it acts as whole to exclude or include women. Similarly, gendered discourses are presented as homogeneous and pervasive in workplaces that are themselves not explored as material environments. The gendered professional experiences and identities of women as a result are rarely contextualised within broader social, political and technological developments, as discussed in 2.3 above. Rather than exploring the production and enactment of gendered hierarchies and interactions as contingent and situated, gendered "codes" and "discourses" are provided as a catch-all explanations (Bolton & Muzio, 2007). Both gender and feminized professions are not interrogated as categories. As a result, this work contributes little to my exploration of professional identity in translation as assembled and emergent.

2.4.2. *Gender and precarious work*

Women and minority groups are more vulnerable to market forces than their white, male counterparts and are more likely to experience precarious working conditions (Rubery & Rafferty, 2013). To explore this, I look at the literature relating to gender and precarious employment, and gender and self-employment.

As discussed above, parenthood and caring responsibilities impact work disproportionately for women (Craig et al., 2012; Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018; Raw & McKie, 2019). While this may hinder women's careers within established professional fields, parenthood and caring exacerbate precarious working conditions more generally. For women employed in low-paid work, having to balance caring responsibilities and working can lock them into low-paid jobs (Raw & McKie, 2019). Part-time and shift work enable women to negotiate with their colleagues to meet the caring needs of their dependants. Similarly to professional women (Navarro-Astor & Caven, 2018), those in low-paid work with responsibilities find it difficult to move onto better-paid positions that require more commitment and rigidity in their working schedules (Raw & McKie, 2019). Self-employment similarly offers an opportunity to balance work and caring responsibilities – with precarity as the pay-off. Craig et al. (2012) look at how work and family demands are managed by mixed gender couples in relation to self-employment. They conclude that the opportunity to work from home is a driver for mothers to be self-employed. Working from home as self-employed is viewed by some women as a means to stay in touch with the labour market without having to commit to employment (Black et al., 2019). Being based at home enables

mothers to combine earning and childcare, whereas fathers tend to prioritise paid work whether they are employed or self-employed; parental self-employment is therefore "likely to reinforce rather than challenge household gender divisions" (Craig et al., 2012: 717). The flexibility self-employment brings to combine priorities may be offset by the challenges of self-employment, as discussed above, including financial insecurity, and a lack of employment protections. Being self-employed makes mothers more vulnerable to market forces, while providing an opportunity to combine earning and childcare. Much like self-employment, part-time and shift work provide flexibility for combining work and caring responsibilities, but keep women locked into less secure working conditions.

The often-gendered division of caring responsibilities opens women in employment and self-employment to market forces. This was exacerbated following the 2008 financial crisis, the aftermath of which saw women bear a disproportionate share of job losses (Rubery & Rafferty, 2013). The austerity politics ushered in to shore up the economy followed neoliberal economic policy, leading to a dismantling of the public sector as an employer. The public sector is a significant employer of female workers, and, under austerity, this previously secure employment trajectory became unstable, and redundancies reduced the size of the public service workforce (López-Andreu & Rubery, 2018). Furthermore, women in employment had reduced security, with the rise of zero hours contracts (López-Andreu & Rubery, 2018) and the minimum wage falling in "real value" due to freezes or nominal increases (Grimshaw & Bosch, 2013). Austerity politics also reduced the size of welfare state, negatively impacting women, for example, through reductions in childcare support for working women (Rubery & Rafferty, 2013).

Whether employed or self-employed, women now face increased levels of precarity in work owing to their increased vulnerability to market forces, reduced employment protections and lower levels of state support. I now turn specifically to self-employment and entrepreneurship, to explore the gendered challenges faced by female entrepreneurs (McManus, 2001; Marlow, 2002; Meliou et al., 2018). Marlow (2002) explores the market pressures that female self-employed workers are subject to, highlighting that much of the literature on entrepreneurship and self-employment does not consider the gendered elements of work. She combines conceptions of vertical segregation, which sees women generally employed in lower-paid and lower-skilled jobs, with self-employment. It is "well documented that the majority of those entering

self-employment do so on the basis of learned skills in waged work" (Marlow, 2002: 87). Women tend to start their own businesses in similar areas to the fields they worked in, therefore similarly doing low-paid and low-skilled worker as a self-employed worker (McManus, 2001; Marlow, 2002). Meliou et al. (2018: 530) state that women's "enterprise activity tends to be concentrated on feminized professions and business fields, placed at the periphery of the masculinised technology and knowledge intensive sectors". This reinforces the point that women tend to set up as self-employed in low-paid fields (McManus, 2001; Marlow, 2002; Dawson et al., 2014). Within entrepreneurship, women face more boundaries to accessing funding to start businesses and are more likely to face discrimination based on age and race (Meliou et al., 2018). Broader gendered elements of the labour market therefore impact women as self-employed workers, making them more vulnerable to working forces and more likely to be in low-paid fields.

This literature has more relevance for this thesis insofar as it explores why women tend to undertake more precarious and insecure work. The experiences of some translators may echo the gendered elements of precarity associated with self-employment discussed here. For example, there are gendered benefits to working from home, principally the ability to combine childcare and earning. This may contribute to career decisions within translation for some of my participants. As discussed above, my principal criticism of much of the work presented in this section is that gender is presented as static and inherent within women and men. It is largely taken as a given, somewhat of a variable in often economic analyses that focus on macro explanations. The impact of precarity and various working relationships on gender and occupational identities are not discussed. Viewing gender in this way does not align with an assemblage approach, that seeks to avoid assumptions about the emergence of phenomena. Although some of my participants may identify with the issues highlighted in this work, if gender is to play a key role in professional identity construction in translation, it must be shown to emerge from complex interactions and assemblages.

2.5. Concluding Remarks

The broad range of literatures discussed in this chapter demonstrates the intersecting experiences and challenges faced by translators. In this thesis, I unpack the most pertinent and revealing elements of professional identity construction, some of which have been highlighted here. Namely, translators experience precarity alongside burgeoning professionalization. This project can contribute to these bodies of literature

by taking an alternative ontological stance that sees both precarious working conditions and professional identity as emergent from the interactions of people, things and discourses. It bridges the divide between the individual, the professional cohort and the broader context of a neoliberal economy. Professional identity and professionalism are anchored throughout this thesis in contingent, situated and complex interrelationships. My exploration of these bodies of literature has enabled a reflection on the data from different perspectives. Firstly, my frustration with the reification and reductive theoretical explanations of professional groups has emboldened my conviction in assemblage as a theoretical and methodological underpinning. This is explored in chapters 3 and 4, demonstrating the contribution this approach can bring to sociological research on work and identity more broadly. Secondly, discussions on distinguishing between professions and other occupations have facilitated my reflection on the unstable professional status of translators and the extent to which they have power and autonomy over their working practices and expertise. Lastly, delving into literature on precarity and technology – and to a lesser extent on gender – has allowed me to situate the experiences of translators and interpreters within a broader social, political and economic context that influences their working conditions.

To conclude this chapter, I would like to build on the point made in the opening section: translators dwell somewhere between professionalism and precarity, which are themselves not binary opposites, but overlapping tendencies. Throughout this thesis, I explore and unpack how professionalism and precarity co-exist and co-produce one another. Translators construct their professional identities in their interactions with other people, things, and discourses, negotiating the contemporary labour market and technological change. Professional identity is understood as emergent, a product of these interrelationships and interconnections.

Chapter 3. New Materialism and Assemblage Thinking

3.1. New Materialism and Assemblage Thinking

This chapter explores key aspects of new materialism and assemblage thinking, drawing on uses of assemblage from a range of scholars. Assemblage thinking has emerged from the work of French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. It is underpinned by Deleuze's "new" materialism, which emphasizes materiality and material processes. While materialism itself is not new in philosophy or the sociological study of phenomena, new materialisms differ from other forms of materialism in their insistence on the agency or active powers of "things". In new materialism, matter matters. Other, older forms of materialism, such as Marxism, which considers social institutions to be determined by economic organisation, have been criticized for being macro-reductionist, determinist and anthropocentric (Lemke 2015; DeLanda et al. 2005; Fox and Alldred 2017). New materialisms can contribute to sociological research by questioning the ontological assumptions behind the criticisms of older forms of materialism and other approaches; bringing new frameworks to the study of the social world that challenge the more conventional explanatory tools of social research; and insisting on emergence, flux, and agency that extends beyond the human.

As a branch of new materialism, assemblage thinking is an orientation to the world and research derived from Deleuzian and DeleuzoGuattarian philosophy (McFarlane, 2011). Buchanan (2015, 2017) highlights the potential dilution of assemblage as an exploratory and explanatory tool as use of the concept has proliferated in the social sciences. There are two possible problems: firstly, assemblage becomes something of a synonym for complicated or complex (Buchanan, 2015). This can mean that the emphasis on power seen in the concept of assemblage micropolitics (discussed below) is neglected in favour of simply describing complexity. Secondly, assemblage can be taken as a coherent, fully-fledged theory (Buchanan, 2017). Therein is the risk that research using assemblage becomes a box-ticking exercise, ending up disconnected from its central ontological and epistemological commitments. This somewhat defeats the object of an approach that foregrounds openness, multiplicity and fluidity. These two concerns combined mean assemblage can become less explanatory and more descriptive.

I tend to agree with these concerns, having seen examples of assemblage as a synonym for complexity in particular (Burton, 2013; Gale & Wyatt, 2013; Sinanan et al., 2014). I also find myself drawn to Deleuze and Guattari's call for play and

experimentation, to their encouragement to move away from conventional, top-down ways of thinking that enforce and reify hierarchies (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 23-28). They encourage the rupture and disruption of ingrained patterns of thought by imbibing the ontological commitment of assemblage, which is explored throughout this chapter. The experimentation lies in setting aside more conventional ontological assumptions and instead thinking with and through assemblage. Bearing this in mind, I agree with de Assis, and Fox and Alldred, who approach assemblage as a logic (de Assis, 2018) or mode of thinking (Fox & Alldred, 2017, 2018). Rather than a steadfast theoretical framework or an alternative adjective to complex, assemblage is a means of unpacking and exploring an object of study. In addition, I argue that assemblage is also a means of knowing. The emphasis has largely fallen on assemblage as an ontology with little discussion of the implications of assemblage as an epistemology. I demonstrate that ontology and epistemology feed into understandings of one another within assemblage. This is particularly key when thinking with assemblage as a methodology, which I discuss in chapter 4.

In this chapter[2], I explore the main conceptual tools assemblage provides, primarily focussing on how these tools, as part of assemblage thinking or a logic of assemblage, elucidate social phenomena. I provide an exploration of assemblage thinking that encourages the reader to see assemblage as an approach to reality based on ontological and epistemological assumptions that consequently and necessarily shift the analytical focus. In the first part, I situate assemblage within new materialism more broadly, looking at the key claims these theoretical approaches make. Then, I explore assemblage specifically, identifying the key concepts and understandings that it brings to research. Lastly, I look at the principal weakness of this approach, and how the work of Foucault both overlaps with that of Deleuze and Guattari, and can help mitigate the limitations of assemblage.

3.1.1. *New materialisms*

The bulk of this chapter will focus on assemblage thinking, but it is worth briefly situating assemblage within new materialism more broadly. Fox and Aldred (2017)[3] identify four key theorists whose ideas are most useful to a new materialist sociology:

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[2] This chapter builds on the theoretical section of the following publication: Seddon, E. (2019) 'Exploring the social complexity of translation with assemblage thinking', in Kobus Marais & Reine Meylaerts (eds.) Complexity thinking in translation studies: methodological considerations. Routledge advances in translation and interpreting studies. New York, NY: Routledge. pp. 104–127.

[3] In the introductory section, I draw extensively on the work of Fox and Aldred (2017), who provide a useful introduction to these perspectives and a rationale for taking a new materialist approach in sociological research.

Latour (2005), and Deleuze and Guattari (1988) focus on networks and assemblages, explored below; Barad (2007) takes insights from quantum mechanics to reframe scientific knowledge as materially and culturally constructed; and Braidotti (1994) integrates embodied feminisms and materialisms to develop a post-human project that critiques anthropocentrism. Dividing these scholars and their thinking is somewhat artificial: not only is there theoretical overlap in these perspectives, but these authors[4] tend to draw on one another explicitly at least to some extent. This variety of new materialist approaches emerged in part as a reaction against the post-structuralist trend in philosophy, and social and cultural theory, which was thought to foreground language and culture over matter and materiality (Davis, 2009; Fox & Alldred, 2017). That is not to say that new materialism is "anti-post-structuralism", in fact some post-structuralist theorists can be beneficial in conversation with new materialism (Haraway, 2004; Lazzarato, 2009; Legg, 2011).

It is also important to point out that, although new materialist scholars describe their approaches as a "turn toward matter" (Alldred & Fox, 2017: 1162), they are not the only ones to have foregrounded materiality. Some feminist and queer scholars argue that they have considered the material, particularly the body, before new materialism came along (Ahmed, 2008; Davis, 2009). These scholars are some of the strongest critics of new materialism, stating its ontological commitment to emergence make it a poor explanatory tool for the entrenched inequalities of a patriarchal system (Browne, 2011). This limitation will be explored in 3.3 below. Feminist and queer theory though is by no means diametrically opposed to new materialism, with some scholars in these fields embracing and developing new materialist approaches (Braidotti, 1994; Grosz, 1994; Colebrook & Buchanan, 2000; Puar, 2007, 2012; der Tuin, 2011).

Beyond the broad aim of focussing on matter, new materialism as a "trend" or "turn" in the social sciences seeks to shift the analytical focus in significant ways. Fox and Alldred describe three radical claims of new materialist approaches that are central to this shift:

> the material world and its contents are not fixed, stable entities, but relational, uneven, and in constant flux;

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[4] with the exception of Deleuze and Guattari, whose publishing days came before the others.

'nature' and 'culture' should not be treated as distinct realms, but as parts of a continuum of materiality. The physical and the social both have material effects in an ever-changing world; and

a capacity for 'agency' – the actions that produce the social world – extends beyond human actors to the non-human and inanimate. (Fox & Alldred, 2017: 4)

Within sociology, these claims alter the focus of research and analysis, decentring the human subject and individuals to instead look at how heterogeneous assemblages or networks appear, are maintained, and fall apart (Latour, 2005). New materialism takes a post-human approach to social reality that focusses on the production of that reality by people and things (Braidotti, 1994; Grosz, 1994). Scientific enquiry and knowledge is not an independent observation of reality, but is itself materially and discursively constructed within that reality and constructive of that reality (Barad, 2007; Hein, 2016). These claims and their implications demonstrate the importance of ontology – "concern with the kinds of things that exist" (Fox & Alldred, 2017: 6) – within new materialism. A new materialist orientation to research relies on metaphysical assumptions underpinned by a "flat" ontology (Grosz, 1994; Anderson, 2006; McLeod, 2014), which rejects the binaries of nature/culture, human/non-human, micro/macro. As a result, conventional sociological explanations that rely on social structures, such as class, are no longer sufficient:

[t]here are no structures, no systems and no mechanisms at work in new materialist ontology; instead there are 'events'; an endless cascade of events comprising the material effects of both nature and culture that together produce the world and human history. (Fox & Alldred, 2017: 7)

Any structures that may appear to exist are instead understood as a long series of repeated events that create the impression of a permanent structure, but are in fact produced by relational networks or assemblages. Equally, agency, conventionally understood as the preserve of human actors, is extended beyond people to "things" that might be material or discursive (Latour, 2005; DeLanda, 2006). I explore how assemblage thinking specifically breaks down the structure/agency binary in 3.2 below.

Latour's actor-network theory (ANT) is perhaps the best known of the new materialist approaches and overlaps most clearly with assemblage (Fox & Alldred, 2017). Latour's theory was originally developed to explore agency and power dynamics within science,

highlighting the processes that comprise scientific innovation and production. The actor-network itself is comprised of human and non-human actors, who are engaged in processes of *translation* (Latour, 2005). In ANT, translation "evokes successive strategies of interpretation and displacement by which an idea gradually moves into becoming a scientific fact or artefact" (Buzelin, 2005: 197). In other words, scientific facts are produced and transformed by the relations between different actors in a network. ANT has been employed by translation studies scholars to shift the focus away from the individual human translator to instead focus on the processes that constitute translation, understanding individual human agents involved in translation as interacting within a network (Buzelin, 2005; Solum, 2017). For example, Solum (2017) explores literary translation criticism in Norway, highlighting the process of negotiation necessary between actors within translation networks to determine how translations should and should not be critiqued. Rather than the translated texts themselves or even the criticisms, the focus falls on how the various actors involved interact to produce and negotiate standards for translation quality assessment. The process rather than the product becomes the focus of ANT-based research.

There is clear overlap between ANT and assemblage: both theoretical frameworks emphasize the relationality of the world, understand space as topological[5], and focus on emergence and relations between human and non-human elements (Müller & Schurr, 2016). Some scholars describe the two as essentially the same, while others state that Deleuze and Latour pursue irreconcilable projects (Müller & Schurr, 2016). One of the principal differences between the two approaches that appears frequently in the literature is their ability to account for stability and durability versus instability and fluidity. On the one hand, assemblage thinking emphasises the fleeting nature of phenomena and the unexpected (Campbell 2016). On the other, the strength of ANT is in its ability to conceptualise stable and long-lasting networks (Müller & Schurr, 2016). For Thrift (2000: 214), this gives assemblage the upper hand, as ANT "still has only an attenuated notion of the event, of the fleeting contexts and predicaments which produce potential". Assemblage is better equipped to explore rupture, flux and fluidity, particularly owing to the concepts of affect and becoming (explored below).

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[5] In a topological understanding of space, proximity is defined in terms of relationships between points rather than distance (Müller, 2015).

Assemblage thinking does not stand alone in its new materialist orientation to the world. Scholars that employ assemblage often draw on a range of new materialist, social, cultural and feminist theorists, taking advantage of the inherent flexibility and multiplicity of these approaches (Olkowski, 2000; Legg, 2011; Puar, 2012; McLeod, 2014; Lameu, 2016; Fox & Alldred, 2018). The next section focusses specifically on assemblage, exploring the key concepts and understandings of reality it brings to research.

3.2.   Immanence and Affect

Assemblage thinking is enabled by a metaphysical understanding of reality found in the work of Deleuze, in particular his interpretation of Spinoza (Deleuze, 1988). Deleuze's radical new materialism, at its most fundamental, is a "philosophy of immanence" (Hein, 2016: 132). His reading of Spinoza situates all bodies, minds and individuals on a "plane of immanence"; life, "each living individuality", can be understood as the temporary production of order brought about by a complex relation between particles (Deleuze, 1988: 122). No "thing" or "individuality" can exist independently of the elements – and most importantly relations between elements – that comprise it. This is what allows Deleuze to construct a "flat" ontology, which moves away from a "two-world" ontology of immanence and transcendence (Anderson 2006; Fox and Alldred, 2017: 7). The binaries – mind/body, structure/agency, artifice/nature – that result from this two-world thinking and rely on preconceived ideas of form and function, leading to top-down definitions, are no longer relevant. Each entity must be shown to emerge from the relations of the elements that comprise it. These relations are described as the capacity of elements to affect and be affected (Fox & Alldred, 2017). *Affect* – the capacity to interact and interconnect – enables phenomena to be drawn and held together. Agentic capacities in the form of affect are extended beyond the human to the non-human, artificial, immaterial and even inanimate. The ontology from Deleuze's new materialism lays the groundwork for assemblage thinking by substituting the structure/agency binary with an understanding of all reality as emergent, consequently accounting for agentic capacities beyond the human, and emphasizing production and complexity.

3.2.1. *Assemblages and events*

Assemblage thinking involves applying a DeleuzoGuattarian ontology to social research. This ontology is centred around the concept of the assemblage, arising from Deleuze's new materialism and developed in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1988).

This well-established conceptual approach has been developed and discussed by feminist scholars (Grosz, 1994; Braidotti, 1994; Puar, 2007, 2012) and cultural and social theorists (Massumi, 2002; DeLanda, 2006). In the empirical social sciences, assemblage has seen a sharp increase in its application in recent years (Anderson et al., 2012; McLeod, 2014; Campbell, 2016; Raynor, 2019). While applications of this approach vary, they share an ontological commitment deriving from Deleuze's new materialism that foregrounds relationality, emergence and production. Assemblage thinking, based on the concept of the assemblage – an entity produced by the continual interactions of its heterogenous component parts – is principally concerned with unpacking the processes behind emergence. These processes can be natural, as in the evolutionary processes that lead to the emergence of ecosystems, or human-driven processes that result in the emergence of social networks.

Assemblages are unique historical entities regardless of scale or complexity (DeLanda 2016) and can be partly or entirely comprised of non-human and even inanimate and immaterial component parts. This is made possible by the notion of affect described above, which acts as a force drawing and holding assemblages together. The affective capacities of the heterogenous elements, their interactions and interconnections, allow assemblages to emerge. This means moving away from a subject-object ontology to instead see agency in the form of affect as "circulation, flow, transmission" (Anderson 2006: 736). An affect is a *becoming*, a flow resulting from a relation between particles, or the elements of an assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 285). This represents a change in the state or capacity of an entity that can be physical, psychological, emotional or social; within an assemblage, affects produce other affective capacities and "because one affect can produce more than one capacity, social production is not linear, but 'rhizomic' […] a branching, reversing, coalescing and rupturing flow" (Fox and Alldred 2015: 401). The concepts of becoming and affect then are intimately connected. Deleuze's ontology:

> "is a rigorous attempt to think of process and metamorphosis—becoming—not as a transition or transformation from one substance to another or a movement from one point to another, but rather as an attempt to think of *the real as a process*". (Boundas 2005b: 191, in de Assis, 2018: 53, emphasis de Assis')

If the real or the actual is a process, it is itself in a continual state of becoming, that "simultaneously is fed by and generates a continuous flux of forces and intensities," which only become visible and tangible at the moment of interaction and thus

actualisation (de Assis, 2018: 53). Affect is one of these generative forces produced by the processuality of the real (Anderson, 2006). Becoming can be understood as "as an intensive movement from an actual state of affairs, through a dynamic field of virtual tendencies, to the actualisation of this field in a new state of affairs" (de Assis, 2018: 53). This movement is enabled by affect and enables affect to flow.

Agency in the form of affective capacity is distributed across the assemblage in interactions (Acuto and Curtis, 2014). While individual elements have the capacity to act, agency does not reside solely within any one component and the assemblage can act as a whole (McLeod, 2014; DeLanda, 2006). To give an example, as I explore in chapters 5-7, professional identity can be thought of as an assemblage. Its components include working practices, discourses of professionalism, the professional themselves and any colleagues, translation and communication technologies, among others. Professional identity emerges from the interactions of these components. Affect is seen in the ability of these components to interact with one another. The continual interactions of the components enabled by their ability to interact with one another produces a professional identity in a state of becoming. It is becoming insofar as it is continually produced through these interactions. It is never static, it never *is*, it is in constant production: *becoming-professional*. The concepts of affect and becoming as central to social production highlight the fluidity and multiplicity of assemblage. A becoming resulting from affective flows is one possible outcome; it is the actual. The virtual, or the potential other outcomes, remain latent within the continual processes and interactions that produce the actual. Assemblages never *are*, they are *becoming*, always teetering on the edge of change. Assemblages are therefore relational and emergent, continually being made and remade, produced by the interactions of their component parts.

The flat ontology of assemblage thinking rejects not only traditional sociological understandings of agency, but also social structure as an explanatory tool. As an assemblage ontology refutes any notion of transcendence, there can be no determining structures or mechanisms at work, with affect and becoming behind all social production (Fox & Alldred, 2017). Abstract, transcendent structures are replaced with a conception of social reality as a series of events. Affect and event are inextricable: affect is by necessity situational, the "invisible glue that holds the world together" in events (Massumi 2002: 217). Events are continually unfolding, produced by and in socio-material relations driven and enabled by affect. Assemblages are

themselves events and accrue around events through rhizomatic affective connections (Fox & Alldred, 2018). As explored in Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1988), a rhizome is a root system with no discernible centre or starting point that expands and leads to the growth of new plants. Rhizomatic connections do not follow a linear structure, but are entanglements in which any one point can be connected to any other.

Assemblages as events emerge from rhizomatic connections, demonstrating the situational, processual and generative nature of affect. Woodward (2016) explores the Deleuzian notion of the event as a means to grasp the multiplicity of reality. He takes the event of a battle, which comprises multiple realities: the reality for each soldier, the reality for the shells and the ground they strike. This is not just a case of differing viewpoints of the event from within, but of multiple material realities simultaneously taking place within it. This highlights the limits of the human perspective, "while the event forges complex and specific singularities – a material synthesis – what gets presented to a thinker and subjected to *re*-presentation are only its fragments and material traces" (Woodward, 2016: 331, emphasis original). An assemblage as an event is a becoming and generates becomings: becoming-battle, becoming-soldier. Thinking with and through assemblage emphasises this multiplicity and encourages the researcher to seek out fragments and material traces that are rhizomatically connected within and beyond the event. Assemblage is also a means of knowing phenomena through an emphasis on the tracing of interactions and interconnections in research. The ontological commitments of assemblage thus become its epistemology. Although it is not possible to "know" the event as a whole, assemblage thinking explores the event through these traces and fragments, elucidating part of a complex, unknowable phenomenon.

Places themselves become agents in events, charged with potential as *event-spaces* (Massumi, 2002). In geography, in particular, assemblage has been employed due to its ability to elucidate the processual, relational and generative nature of a space by focussing on the "doing" and "making" of this space (McFarlane 2011: 653). As Campbell (2016) has shown, taking space "seriously" using such approaches need not be restricted to geography. As an event-space, space is understood as productive, dynamic and in flux. Taking an assemblage approach orients the researcher towards the composition of these spaces, the interactions of the components and what these interactions produce. For example, in her article on the classroom as an assemblage,

Lameu (2016) uses this framework to highlight the complexity of an everyday space. The classroom-assemblage is generative, relational and emergent, a place in which "subjectivities are constructed, discourses circulate, policy making happens, money flows" (Lameu 2016: 582). In the classroom-assemblage, the affective capacities of the various component parts – from teachers and pupils, to education policy and best practice discourses, to books and pens – draw the micro and macro, and socio-material into one encounter. The exploration of "everyday" spaces as assemblages allows the researcher to focus on the various processes that go into the production and creation of, for example, policy and discourse, as well as individual identity construction.

Understanding social reality as a series of events grounds explorations of social phenomena within materiality and event-spaces; focusses on the rhizomatic connections and "affective conditions" that allow the events to occur (Puar, 2012: 61); and favours focussing not on what those events mean but on what they do or produce (Henriksen & Miller, 2012). For translators, these events and spaces vary in size and scope, from large conferences in institutional venues, to workshops and networking afternoons in cafes and libraries. The event as a whole is unknowable, but through following the traces and fragments of the event, I can identify and explore the professional identities produced in those spaces.

3.2.2. *Assembling and disassembling*

Deleuze and Guattari's ontology is one of production, and assemblages are themselves productive. The focus of the DeleuzoGuattarian "project" is on the micropolitical consequences of assemblages and what they produce (Buchanan, 2015; Fox & Alldred, 2017). Micropolitics is a means of describing and explaining "the processes of power and resistance that shape social organization and subjectivities" (Fox & Alldred, 2017: 31). A micropolitical understanding of power looks at how it is produced and enacted in complex, situated interactions between individuals (Scherer, 2007). Political in this context refers to micropolitics as a means of governance. The micropolitics of assemblages is described in terms of processes of territorialization and deterritorialization. Broadly speaking, territorialization is a process of "specification", increasing internal homogeneity and sharpening the boundaries, while deterritorialization is one of "de-specification", increasing internal heterogeneity and blurring the boundaries (DeLanda, 2006, 2016; Fox & Alldred, 2017). That is, power as micropolitics is visible in the ways assemblages emerge, are maintained, change, and fall apart. Nail describes four different kinds of de/reterritorialization:

(1) "relative negative" processes that change an assemblage in order to maintain and reproduce an established assemblage; (2) "relative positive" processes that do not reproduce an established assemblage, but do not yet contribute to or create a new assemblage—they are ambiguous; (3) "absolute negative" processes that do not support any assemblage, but undermine them all; and (4) "absolute positive" processes that do not reproduce an established assemblage, but instead create a new one. (Nail, 2017: 34)

Nail's typology of processes of change within assemblages seems to push a logic of assemblage towards assemblage theory as a coherent and exhaustive social ontology (de Assis, 2018). As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, assemblage as a fully-fledged theory can become restrictive, potentially undermining the radical ontological commitments of new materialism. Nail's work nonetheless demonstrates the different or even counteractive processes of assembly and disassembly that may go on within any assemblage.

The component parts of an assemblage can be split into expressive, or discursive, and content or non-discursive elements (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988; DeLanda, 2006; Lazzarato, 2009; Usher, 2010). Lazzarato provides a clear explanation of how this plays out: processes of territorialization and deterritorialization work on non-discursive components, that is, they "intervene on what one *does* (possible or probable action)" (2009: 111, emphasis original). "One" here of course does not refer only to any humans involved, but to any component that has affective capacity. On the other hand, coding processes "intervene on what one *says* (possible or probable statements)" (Lazzarato, 29: 111). Discursive components and coding processes go beyond enunciation to other forms of statement:

legislative bodies such as a parliament draft laws, employment agencies specify the norms, other agencies establish regulations, universities produce academic classifications and reports, media construct opinions, and experts make informed judgements. (Lazzarato, 2009: 112)

In a professional translation association, for example, territorializing processes, such as criteria for membership, intervene on actions, in this case, joining the association. The professional association also writes a code of conduct that establishes norms and codifies the assemblage. Both processes create categories of "professional" and "non-professional", in membership status and adherence to a set of norms (or lack thereof).

This demonstrates how discursive and non-discursive components, and the processes that influence them, can often overlap and intersect. For example, the "professional" label associated with membership may impact the work that an individual is able to access. Equally, the norms established in a code of conduct impact the actions of members of the professional association. As discussed above, a counteractive process of disassembly may be ongoing simultaneously. For example, the advent of Google Translate providing free translation to anyone with an internet connection blurs the boundaries between professional and non-professional. Although this is external to the professional association itself, translators who are members nonetheless encounter this deterritorializing process in their interactions in other assemblages. The importance of micropolitics thus shifts the focus to "affect, desire, and temporality, with an eye toward dynamic flows, multiplicities, and moments of becoming" (Henriksen and Miller 2012: 437). Within these flows and moments of becoming, discursive and non-discursive components and processes are continually woven into one another (Usher, 2010). Assemblages emerge, are maintained and disassemble, depending on the affective capacities of their components and ongoing coding, decoding, territorializing and deterritorializing processes.

These processes aggregate and disaggregate people and things within and across phenomena. Assemblages emerge from the tensions between the two extremes of aggregation and disaggregation. The more aggregate elements of an assemblage can be described as stratified (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2006; de Assis, 2018). Strata are the "orderings of all productive processes as they become actualised in the world" (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2006: 2). That is, strata have a layered *historicity* that must be taken into account: over time, repeated processes of territorialization and coding increase homogeneity leading to a stratified reality (de Assis, 2018: 85). Strata exist within assemblages insofar as highly codified and territorialised components of assemblages are layered. Equally, strata can extend beyond the assemblage, suggesting applicability beyond the phenomena under study. To start with the former, strata are entities or elements of entities that exhibit some stability. Let's take a school as an example: it could be described as a highly territorialized and highly codified entity. It is highly territorialized to the extent that it presents a certain level of homogeneity: the pupils will likely be from the local area and learning alongside pupils of the same age; it is spatially bounded to the school grounds. It is highly codified insofar as the school emblem will be printed on documentation and the school uniform, and pupils will be expected to follow (un)written codes of conduct. Strata that exist

beyond the school will also contribute to stratification within the school, such as the people, things and words that comprise education policy. These aggregate and stratified elements of the school must be continually produced, as it is the repeated layering of interactions and interconnections that create the apparent stability of this assemblage. However, inherent within this stratified reality is the possibility for change, disaggregation and abstraction from stability. The interactions and interconnections that comprise the school have infinite possible permutations. The teachers, the pupils, technologies and education policy may all change, shift, fracture and fragment. The highly stratified nature of the school makes it likely that it will continue to be produced in similar ways. Nonetheless, the possibility for difference and abstraction is inherent within this apparent stability. This highlights the importance of the actual and the virtual in assemblage thinking. The extremes of stratification and abstraction can be thought of as *virtual* overlapping tendencies or possibilities rather than an *actual* binary opposition (Colebrook, 2002: 1-2). The assemblage emerges out of this tension, becoming-stable and becoming-abstract.

This tension between stratification and abstraction can be described in terms of lines of consistency and lines of flight (Patton, 2006; Usher, 2010; Thornton, 2018). Lines of flight represent the possibilities for difference, fragmentation, and dissipation; lines of consistency represent sedimentation, concretisation and stability. Assemblages are criss-crossed with these lines, which emerge from and enable processes of aggregation and disaggregation. An assemblage or component within it may take off on a line of flight, enacting and producing one of its latent possibilities, its potential becomings. Lines of consistency, on the other hand, tie down those possibilities. Usher provides an insightful explanation of these concepts:

> Lines of consistency connect and unify different practices and effects and by so doing establish hierarchies and define relations between center and periphery. They create rules of organisation which lead to stasis and solidified strata. Lines of flight in contrast disarticulate relations between and among practices and effects, opening up contexts to their outsides and the possibilities therein. They break-down unity and coherence. They decenter centers, disrupting hierarchies and disarticulating strata. (Usher, 2010: 71)

Lines of flight and lines of consistency function rhizomatically, linking assemblages and components. This is why the word "line" is key: a line enables connection between different points, or assemblages. The lines are themselves becomings, or rather

becomings can be described as lines, passing between components, drawing them into events and assemblages (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 263). For Deleuze and Guattari, becoming is a line in direct opposition to a static point: "Becoming is the movement by which the line frees itself from the point, and the renders points indiscernible" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 324). In brief, lines of flight and lines of consistency are understood as deterritorializing and (re)territorializing processes that create connections, function along connections, and equally disconnect and change trajectories. Lines of flight and lines of consistency demonstrate the juxtaposition and co-existence of chaos and order within and across assemblages. They highlight the tension between the virtual (flight) and actual (consistency) discussed above.

Lines of flight and lines of consistency provide a processual and rhizomatic conception of aggregation and disaggregation rooted in ideas of becoming and affect. They create the conceptual space for variation within and across assemblages. As a social ontology, this accounts for the simultaneous existence of order and disorder, of difference within populations, of resistance to power that succeeds and fails. Assemblages exist in the tension between movements towards stratification, territorialization, homogenisation and codification, and towards abstraction, deterritorialization, chaos, heterogeneity, and multiplicity (Høstaker, 2014). The researcher then is tasked with identifying lines of flight and lines of consistency, and processes of territorialization and deterritorialization. Within translation, this means exploring the processes that establish hierarchies and centres impacting working practices, and the possibility for resisting those dynamics within the constraints of the neoliberal economy (discussed in 2.3 above). This again highlights assemblage as epistemology, as the identification of aggregative and disaggregative processes constitutes a mode of inquiry driven by ontology. The concepts described here – assemblage, strata, (de)territorialization, (de)codification, lines of flight, lines of consistency do not come together in one coherent theory, and they should not (Buchanan, 2015, 2017; de Assis, 2018). They all deal with aggregation and disaggregation in slightly different ways. They all enable the tussle between these two polarities to be explored. The danger of taking these concepts as a coherent social theory is that this radical approach becomes a box-ticking exercise, as discussed in the introduction. Therein is a danger of falling back into binary, micro/macro thinking, one that flips between aggregate/disaggregate. This would simplify these thought processes, moving from rhizomatic to hierarchical and static connections, from becoming to being. The challenge that assemblage thinking presents is to resist this

tendency, to use these concepts to demonstrate the dynamism, hybridity and multiplicity of reality. The aggregate is always becoming aggregate after all. Lines of consistency, processes of (de)territorialization and coding are alive within even the most seemingly static phenomena. The disaggregate, similarly, cannot be reduced to individual difference, as it is rhizomatically linked through lines of flight to other assemblages.

Assemblage thinking is of course not without its critics. In the next section I explore the principal criticism directed toward assemblage and look to Foucault for a helping hand with this limitation.

3.3. Assembling Power

Identifying the micropolitics of what assembles, maintains or disassembles an assemblage is a means of understanding the distribution and circulation of power. The integration of a DeleuzoGuattarian ontology into understandings of power moves away from reductionist explanations of top-down structural authority. The major perceived drawback of this approach is that the ontological commitment involved fails to account for structural factors. For Brenner et al., assemblage neglects the "context of context" – i.e., global structures leading to social inequality and divisions – and loses the explanatory power of more traditional sociological concepts (Brenner et al. 2011: 233). Refuting the very existence of structure means neglecting to take entrenched power and inequalities into account. This failing is also highlighted by feminist theorists, who claim that Deleuze and Guattari's work cannot accommodate the historical and "ingrained patterned specificities of female existence" (Browne 2011: 166). For some critics, this flat ontology is in danger of levelling all elements of social entities and social reality, potentially failing to grasp the significance of key components (Brenner et al. 2011: 233). The flatness and unstructured nature of Deleuze's ontology has been described as "so overinclusive and under-determining as to be unserious about its real possibility" (Norrie, 2010: 205 in Flatschart, 2017: 288). However, rather than rejecting the notion of macro influence in its entirety – for example, assemblage thinking does not refute the existence of regulation produced and enforced by state-level entities – these ideas see the macro and micro exercise of power as *simultaneous* and located within territories or events (Webb, 2008). Within translation, the responsibilization encouraged by neoliberal discourses is enacted in micro events. For example, professional associations may act as a point of connection between neoliberalism as a political economy and the freelancer by reinforcing the idea that translators as self-

employed workers are responsible for their own financial security. This may take the form of encouraging their members to take part in training workshops to bolster the freelancer's CV and gain more/better work. Assemblages are therefore cross-scale entanglements of power. Discourses related to best practice, for example, can territorialize a working environment, restricting and homogenizing the actions of employees, but must be understood as enacted and produced within temporary emergent entities.

These criticisms of assemblage are nonetheless legitimate: while mapping the micropolitics of assemblages provides a new angle for the exploration of power relations, it alone may struggle to explain entrenched and ingrained power dynamics. Although the concept of strata discussed above gives a historicity and longevity to assemblages, the progression from individual component to stratified element can be difficult to fully flesh out (Saldanha 2016). The concepts of lines of flight and processes of dis/assembling provide interesting explanatory tools for exploring power in terms of difference and resistance. Indeed, Deleuze and Guattari's project is a political one (Buchanan, 2017), that encourages different questions to be asked to move away from linear understandings of power towards rhizomatic exploration (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 28). In sociological research, this emphasis of theirs on difference means the focus often falls on multiplicity, flows and non-human agentic capacity on that individual level, with power and its enactment either irrelevant or neglected (Buchanan, 2015). In this section, I explore how a Foucauldian conception of power and governance can contribute to unpacking power in assemblages and assemblage thinking. The overlap and tension between Deleuze, Deleuze and Guattari, and Foucault's work has been discussed at length by Deleuze and Foucault themselves among others (Morar et al., 2016; Legg, 2011, 2009). For the purposes of this project, I focus on how Foucault's apparatus, or *dispositif*, can complement an assemblage approach.

3.3.1. *Assemblage and apparatus*

An overview of Foucault's conception of power is explored in 2.2.3 above in relation to professions. Here, I briefly summarise Foucault's concept of governmentality again and then explore apparatus in more depth. Foucault claims that power relations pervade all aspects of human interaction, influencing the nature of human relationships as power reacts to continual challenges and resistance (Foucault, 1977). Power is seen in the discursive practices that at once enable and restrict, produce and inhibit, ways of writing, speaking and thinking (Hook, 2001). Discursive practices and

discourse are created by rules, systems and procedures that are produced by the social system and ensure the reproduction of this system (Hook, 2001). As I describe in chapter 2, governmentality understands governing as "a highly complex activity, or rather set of activities, which encompasses different institutions, procedures, tactics, calculations, forms of knowledge and technologies" (Burau, 2016: 93). Government refers to "the ensemble of techniques and procedures put into place to direct the conduct of men [sic] and to take account of the probabilities of their action and their relations" (Foucault, 2004b in Lazzarato, 2009: 114). Governmentality provides a conception of power that comprises heterogeneous components. Foucault's apparatus is a specific "mechanism" of government (Foucault, 2002: 219) that he describes as follows:

> What I'm trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions–in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. (Foucault, 2010a: 194)

At first glance, apparatus sounds quite assemblage-like, integrating both material and discursive elements into an assembled mechanism of control. A simplified perspective on the difference between apparatus and assemblage is one of power v. resistance and stability v. instability (Legg, 2009, 2011). However, this does not mean that apparatus can be reduced to a stable power mechanism, and assemblage to an unstable rejection of that power. Deleuze and Guattari spoke about assemblages in terms of stratification and sedimentation, as described above; and Foucault equally spoke about resistance and difference (Pickett, 1996). Legg (2011) brings assemblage/apparatus into conversation with one another and concludes that apparatus is a type of assemblage. Apparatus has a "dominant strategic function" that is historically constituted and relevant (Foucault, 2010a: 194). It is "more closely aligned to political or power relations, being defined as a concrete assemblage of diverse elements with a particular purpose, specific targets and controlling strategies" (Legg, 2009: 239). However, the power of an apparatus is not fixed or gifted to it by virtue of its more macro status. Instead, it is produced in processes of adjustment to

the needs of power as they arise over time. Foucault describes how a "strategy" of social control emerged in the heavy industry towns of the early 1800s:

> At Mulhouse and in northern France various tactics are elaborated: pressuring people to marry, providing housing, building *cités ouvrières*, practicing that sly system of credit slavery that Marx talks about, consisting in enforcing advance payment of rents while wages are paid only at the end of the month. Then there are the savings-bank systems, the trucksystem with grocers and wine merchants who act for the bosses, and so on. Around all this there is formed little by little a discourse, the discourse of philanthropy and the moralization of the working class. Then the experiments become generalized by way of the institutions and societies consciously advocating programs for the moralization of the working class. Then on top of that there is superimposed the problem of women's work, the schooling of children and the relations between the two issues...—so that you get a coherent, rational strategy, but one for which it is no longer possible to identify a person who conceived it. (Foucault, 2010a: 202-3)

While this example relates to "strategy", which seems to place the emphasis on discursive elements of power, it clearly involves the material: the wine merchants deal in wine after all. The apparatus is formed from the continual interaction of the elements that comprise it.

Here, I would like to use the terms micro and macro, but without the ontological dualism that assemblage thinking rejects. Micro can be understood as the individual component, whatever or whomever that might be, such as a bottle of wine or a grocer. Macro can be understood as the aggregate, stratified elements of an apparatus, such as a savings-bank system or discourse of philanthropy. The macro emerges out of micro interactions over time, creating a historicity and coherence that maintains the apparatus. What is defined as micro and macro will also depend on the emergent entity: the bottle of wine is itself comprised of component parts, but its role within the local economy is micro. Macro then is not ontologically distinct from micro and these terms can be used without reducing discussions of power to a structure/agency binary. Micro and macro distinctions are thus a question of analysis. In the apparatus, the micro and macro continually engage with and react to one another, adjusting accordingly. Apparatus can contribute to the conceptualisation and exploration of stratification within and beyond assemblages and can help elucidate how micro becomes macro. Apparatuses – understood as macro phenomena (Lazzarato, 2009;

Legg, 2011) – can help safeguard against one of the perceived limitations of assemblage discussed above, that is, its ability to account for historical and entrenched power relations. The "strategy" of the apparatus is historically constituted, giving the impression of a rational order of things. This strategy is enacted and continually produced in interactions between micro and macro components within the apparatus.

A key alignment of the concepts of assemblage and apparatus is in their productiveness. They both produce *themselves* and other things. Apparatuses produce regulation and government that continually readjusts as part of an assembled order (Foucault, 2010a: 195). Assemblages produce rhizomatic connections that may maintain or disassemble the assemblage, leading elsewhere or to nothing (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 556). The distinction Legg draws really comes down to a focus of analysis: stable and historic constituted power in apparatus; fluidity and rupture in assemblage. Apparatuses and assemblages can coexist, can contradict one another, can contribute to the formation of one another (Legg, 2011). It is important to stress that apparatus/assemblage does not constitute a binary division. There is no point where one falls into the other. Much like in the discussion about abstraction and stratification (3.2.2 above), apparatus and assemblage can be understood as overlapping tendencies and possibilities. The assembled nature of both means each contains the possibility towards disorder and order, towards stratification and abstraction, towards becoming-apparatus and becoming-assemblage. Apparatus is immanent to assemblage, and assemblage is immanent to apparatus. Within this project, this means identifying the apparatuses and assemblages that contribute to professional identity construction in translation. As I explore in the next section, the doing of translation takes place within a neoliberal apparatus, creating stratified and stable elements of commercial translation, such as a discourse of professionalism. Translators interact with this more stable element of translation in temporary events and assemblages. These assemblages contain the possibility for difference and resistance towards the established discourse of professionalism. Professional identities are the product of translators negotiating the tension between stratification and abstraction that plays out in these interactions.

3.3.2. *Assembling a neoliberal apparatus*

Within this project, Foucault's apparatus is most useful in explaining the broader socio-economic-political context of neoliberalism that translators find themselves in. Foucault's work on neoliberalism has been hugely influential in sociological research

(Kelly, 2013). Here, I expand on the above discussion by looking at how integrating Deleuze and Guattari's assemblage and understanding of capitalism with Foucault's apparatus enables an exploration of the assembly of neoliberalism. This provides an analytical and theoretical backdrop for exploring emergent assemblages related to translation and professional identity.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe capitalism as a "*new threshold of deterritorialization*" (1988: 500, emphasis original). Capitalism deterritorializes insofar as it shapes everything in its own image: capital becomes homogenous and independent, a "monetary mass" (p. 501), which strips away other determining factors or meanings. Labour and capital are "decoded flows" that circulate freely, with the State a "model of realization" that enables this flow (p. 502). The State is not "canceled out" but is exceeded by worldwide capitalism: "to exceed is not at all the same thing as doing without" (p. 502). Capitalism deterritorializes the State, changing it to the benefit of the flow of labour and capital. Through these processes of deterritorialization, capitalism shifts everything towards lines of consistency (Usher, 2010). These lines pass through other (perhaps all) assemblages. Usher gives the example of lines of consistency in academic research: "Consistency can be seen in the pressure on researchers for outcomes that are commercialisable rather than curiosity driven and in the emphasis on research as a driver of economic competitiveness in a globalised world" (2010: 77). Capitalism deterritorializes research by changing its inner workings to be in line with the agenda of free-flowing capital.

Deleuze and Guattari state that:

> modern power is not at all reducible to the classical alternative "repression or ideology" but implies processes of normalization, modulation, modelling, and information that bear on language, perception, desire, movement, etc., and which proceed by way of microassemblages. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988: 506)

There are clear parallels here with Foucault's apparatus and his explanation of how a "strategy" with no discernible author can be formed. Indeed, this is where integrating a logic of assemblage and apparatus can contribute to assembling neoliberalism. As discussed above, Deleuze and Guattari's emphasis on assemblage and its inherent fluidity mean the link between infinite and varied components and the "mass" of macro-scaled power are hard to trace (Saldanha, 2016). Apparatus can contribute by demonstrating how these microassemblages become macro, or how the macro

agenda of neoliberalism infiltrates and produces microassemblages. Apparatus is explicitly about targeted control and Foucault does a better job of unpacking the processes that go into establishing and maintaining that control in an ever-shifting world. Although continually constituted, the concepts of apparatus and governmentality evoke more seemingly concrete or permanent systems. There is a danger of reifying apparatus into a structure that then sits opposite agency and resistance, although this is useful for exploring entrenched and ingrained inequalities.

Deleuze and Guattari's becoming can stop the reification of apparatus, which is instead becoming-apparatus. Foucault certainly does not claim that apparatus is a static macro structure, as the above quotations show, but the concept of becoming foregrounds the continual production of phenomena. This ensures that historicity and stability are never assumed to exist but must be shown to emerge from continual interactions. Longevity is not in itself proof of control or power, as that longevity is in a permanent state of becoming, which can be analysed. The differing emphases can be combined into an understanding of power: apparatus emphasises the establishment and enactment of control, assemblage emphasises the continual production of that control. Capitalism as a deterritorializing force can be integrated into apparatus, further explaining the continual constitution of neoliberal power.

This deterritorialization must be shown to take place and cannot be assumed to exist. A powerful, pervasive discourse that produces and is produced by capitalist deterritorialization is that of enterprise (see 2.3.3). Foucault's governmentality and the concept of responsibilization have been used extensively to explore neoliberal modes of governing (Kelly, 2013). Lazzarato (2009) incorporates the work of Deleuze and Guattari and Foucault to explore neoliberal economies as an ensemble of apparatuses. Starting with Foucault and apparatus, Lazzarato integrates DeleuzoGuattarian micropolitics to explain how a macro apparatus is able to hold onto control. He focusses on the micropolitics of enterprise society, in which the individual is discursively reframed as "the entrepreneur of oneself", valorising free market ideals and enterprise (p. 131). In addition to actions taken to deregulate the financial markets, labour markets and international trade, "the valorization of the entrepreneurial model in public opinion" is needed to promote a competition-based market ideal (p. 129). Lazzarato assembles neoliberal power through the layering of discourses at different scales.

Responsibilization involves the "conduct of conduct" and self-governance to encourage individuals to act in a way that benefits both themselves and maintains the order of things (Foucault, 2010b). Inherent within this is the possibility to resist, called "counter-conduct", which engenders "processes of 'autonomous and independent' subjectivation, that is, possibilities for the constitution of oneself" (Lazzarato, 2009: 114). Within a neoliberal apparatus, resistance also happens at a micro level. The possibilities within Deleuze and Guattari's micropolitics for difference can account for this too. That is, assemblage thinking foregrounds the existence of conflicting logics and processes that are continually and contemporaneously producing and productive of other interactions and interconnections. The micropolitics of an apparatus can be explored to uncover processes and practices of power and resistance that contribute to the maintenance and disruption of the apparatus. Much like the event discussed above, the apparatus can be revealed – at least some of it – through following the fragments and material traces identifiable in micropolitical practices and actions. The combination of assemblage and apparatus provides the ontological malleability to conceive of temporary emergent entities that take off on lines of flight from stratified, highly codified assemblages and apparatuses. These more stable entities may change, they may even fall apart, but these processes of often simultaneous abstraction and stratification can still be unpacked.

The key weakness of Lazzarato's work, however, is an over-reliance on discourse. Despite stating that "[d]iscursive and non-discursive practices are ceaselessly interwoven and together produce our world and the relations that constitute it" (Lazzarato, 2009: 113), he does not demonstrate how or where they interact. The ontological commitments inherent in an assemblage approach encourage the exploration of this interweaving of discourse and matter. An analysis of micropolitics and the layering of discursive practices within an apparatus must consider the material elements that inhibit and enable these practices. For example, material elements in translation include translation and communication technologies that interact with discourses of quality and professionalism.

3.4.   Towards Translation

The integration of a logic of assemblage, apparatus and enterprise society creates the context of this thesis. The neoliberal machine is a continually constituted, internally conflicted "ensemble of apparatuses" (Lazzarato, 2009: 109) that creates the environment in which assemblages related to translation and professionalism emerge.

Those assemblages are comprised of both the enactment of power and resistance to power. They involve counterproductive processes and logics and yet largely maintain their control. The focus of my analysis is not the neoliberal machine itself, but how translators' professional identities are produced by and produce it, how technologies contribute to this production, and how translators negotiate the various pressures this brings about. In chapters 5-7, I explore the restrictions placed on translators, their attempts at resistance and means of coping. I also explore the interactions translators have with other people and things in the co-constitution of translator identity.

Assemblage thinking allows me to focus on individual difference as a means to explore the aggregate and stratified elements that translators interact with. By also thinking with apparatus, I can understand power as flexible yet stable, involving the enactment of deterritorialization in microassemblages. That is, elements of translation and translators' identities are deterritorialized by practices and discourses to serve the agenda of free-flowing capital. However, it is important not to create an omnipotent, determining power structure by reifying neoliberalism or capital. Within this, translators and other actors and "things" create change and rupture, reacting to and producing this environment. A continual co-constitution takes place in assemblages and apparatuses. These cross-scale entanglements of power and the tensions between abstraction and stratification produce assemblages. This forms the theoretical basis for an assemblage methodology, which I explore extensively in the next chapter.

Chapter 4. Methodology and Methods

4.1. Assemblage Methodology

Assemblage is the "method of the anti-method" (Zourabichvili, 2012: 208), meaning it does not prescribe specific methods for data collection or analysis. Instead, assemblage thinking encourages the researcher to take an open and experimental approach to methodology (Bleiker, 2014, 2015; Abrahamsen, 2017; Bueger, 2014). For McFarlane and Anderson (2011: 126), assemblage thinking "suggests a certain ethos of engagement with the world, one that experiments with methodological and presentational practices in order to attend to a lively world of differences". This call for experimentation relates to Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) insistence on disrupting ingrained, often binary modes of thought that enforce and reify hierarchies as discussed in 3.1 above. Established methods and logics may miss the assembly and disassembly that produces objects of study, as they are often rooted in conventional ideas of structure/agency, micro/macro, and human/non-human (St. Pierre et al. 2016). The experimentation lies in setting aside established modes of thought and allowing assemblage as an ontology and methodology to guide decision-making in research. An assemblage ontology implies epistemological commitments – to relationality, complexity, emergence, multiplicity, production – that have profound implications for how it is operationalised in research. This presents the researcher with the challenge of respecting such commitments in the research process, including how and what data to collect, and how to analyse it, without having prescribed methods to lean on.

My approach to the methodology has been driven by assemblage thinking from the start. This chapter explores how I took on this challenge and applied an assemblage methodology to all stages of this project. Firstly, I describe the methods assemblage I have constructed, involving both ethnography and quantitative social media analysis. I explore how assemblage enables an approach to methodology that incorporates contrasting logics under one epistemological umbrella. Secondly, I describe how this methods assemblage played out in practice, focussing initially on the data collection process. I describe the interviews and participant observation, and I go into more detail regarding the social media data, as this is still new terrain in sociology. Thirdly, I explore the ethical considerations and issues in the project, discussing how I navigated my positionality, social media ethics, and ethics in representation. Lastly, I unpack and unpick how assemblage thinking influenced the analytical process, describing what I did with the qualitative data in particular. This process, in which I found myself facing

high quantities of data with no roadmap of how I might best analyse them, was rewarding and challenging. I used the ideas of assemblage, its ontological and epistemological commitments, to create a method of analysis that foregrounds connection within and beyond the data.

A key element of the methodology driven by assemblage thinking is aggregation and disaggregation (explored theoretically in 3.2.2 above). Here, I briefly describe the relevance of aggregation and disaggregation for assemblage as a methodology. Aggregation and disaggregation link the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage to methodological choices. The emphasis on emergence and relationality both epistemologically and ontologically orients the researcher towards the "infinite possibilities of social ordering," focussing on the relationships between actors, objects and spaces, rather than on predefined units of analysis (Abrahamsen, 2017: 254). Social ordering can be thought as the aggregation or bringing together of people and things. Disaggregation is when those people and things move apart. Methodologically, researchers should engage with objects of study that appear to be, or can be presented as, aggregate, coherent wholes, unpacking and exploring the relationships and social ordering involved (Bueger, 2014).

As a methodology, assemblage involves the "empirical study of practices" and their "ordering effects" that aggregate and disaggregate (Bueger, 2014: 65). Focussing on how aggregation and disaggregation occur means exploring not just *what* but *how* something comes into being (Anderson, 2016). This "how" is rooted in an understanding of "things" as emergent and produced by the interactions of their component parts. It is those interactions, interconnections, relationships that the researcher is drawn towards. At the same time, methodological choices aggregate and disaggregate insofar as they pool data together or pull it apart. By combining data collection methods and analyses that collect and interact with data in aggregative or disaggregative ways, the researcher can highlight different textures of the same phenomena. That is, within a complex entity, ongoing interactions and processes simultaneously create order and disruption. In chapter 8, I build on these ideas further by reflecting on how the concepts of aggregation and disaggregation enable theoretical ideas, methods and analysis to feed into one another throughout the research process. Below, I explore how mixing methods with attention paid to aggregation and disaggregation provides an analysis that is better able to explore the multiplicity and variability of the object of study (Mason, 2006; Fox & Alldred, 2018).

4.2. Mixing Methods

4.2.1. *Methods assemblage*

The multiplicity of assemblage as a means of thinking analytically leads researchers to move beyond binaries and dualisms – micro/macro, subject/object – within their own research. Epistemologically, assemblage recognises that research contributes to the construction of the phenomena it studies (Fox & Alldred, 2018). Any "truth-claims" made reflect the position of the author and do not represent a "value-free scientific observation" (Abrahamsen, 2017: 257). Assemblage methodology allows the researcher to break the epistemological assumptions centred around the qualitative/quantitative binary associated with certain methods. For example, qualitative and quantitative methods are often assumed to be divided along positivist and interpretive lines. This follows through to the methods implied by such epistemologies: quantitative techniques using numeric data are to be analysed statistically; and qualitative techniques relying on the collection of spoken or written data are to be interpreted (Walliman, 2006; Bryman, 2016). Many traditions in qualitative research have asked similar epistemological questions to those posed by assemblage and similarly concluded that such binaries are at best not useful and at worst obfuscatory (Clarke, 2005; Mason, 2006). Assemblage adds to the discussions that challenge such a dogmatic approach by questioning the idea that an epistemological and methodological framework must follow one coherent logic (Bueger, 2014; Abrahamsen, 2017; Bleiker, 2015). Instead, as part of a mixed methods approach, a "method assemblage", "meshing" of methods, or methodological rhizome can be constructed by the researcher, attending to different aspects of the same phenomenon (Law, 2004: 14; Mason, 2006: 23; Bleiker, 2014). This aligns with the methodological commitment to openness and flexibility to account for uncertainty and multiplicity (McCann & Ward, 2012). For Baker and McGuirk (2017: 435), this means that "the 'reach' and intensity of methodological attention should not be pre-determined" to allow the researcher to follow connections and curiosities as they arise.

An assemblage methodology "implies attention to detail and the mundane activities of doings and sayings by which realities are enacted, relations are built and ordering takes place" (Bueger, 2014: 65). While this would naturally lead to ethnographic methods, assemblage methodology recognises that all methods have ordering effects (Fox & Alldred, 2018). The use of different methods with different logics allows the researcher to reflect on those ordering effects and any reification caused by any one

method (Bleiker, 2015). Methods can be mixed with attention paid to aggregation/disaggregation within research, for example, a highly aggregative and analytical method can be combined with a less/non-aggregative method (Fox & Alldred, 2018). Aggregation and disaggregation relate to what is *done* to data: an aggregative method seeks to combine and draw data together; a disaggregative method seeks to open up and pull apart data. Given the epistemological assumption that research contributes to the construction of the phenomena it studies, mixing methods enables the researcher to reflect on what different methods *do* to different types of data within the research project.

By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, which tend to disaggregate and aggregate respectively, researchers can attend to the multi-dimensionality of lived experience (Mason, 2006), contributing to a more "robust and penetrating analysis" (Crossley & Edwards, 2016: 1). Mixing aggregative and disaggregative methods gives access to the different textures of phenomena: the ordered and disordered elements. This allows light to be shone on different aspects of the same phenomenon and enables the researcher to be reflexive in their understanding of the role of research(er) and methods within research. This has similarities with the more conventional methodological concept of triangulation in social research. Triangulation often establishes the "*reliability and completeness of qualitative data*" by collecting a variety of sources of data related to the same object of study (Walliman, 2006: 56, emphasis original). Mixing methods with assemblage instead seeks out connections between data sources and types rather than coherence across them. Within this project, the methods assemblage comprises two key methods: ethnography (participant observation and interviews) and social media analysis. Below I detail the theoretical and methodological justification for these choices, followed by a description of the data collection and analysis methods.

4.2.2. *Ethnography*

Ethnography is a research process and orientation to research that originates from social and cultural anthropology (Macdonald, 2001). It is well-suited to assemblage insofar as it situates the researcher and reader within a manifold, complex context. Its goal is to "understand the social meanings and activities of people in a given 'field'", to understand their actions and experiences; it requires "intimate familiarity with day-to-day practice and the meanings of social action" (Brewer, 2000: 11). Assemblage ethnography specifically bears in mind the epistemological commitments of

assemblage within an ethnographic approach (Gale & Wyatt, 2013; Abourahme, 2015; Lameu, 2016). This attunes the researcher to identifying objects of analysis beyond the immediately obvious, such as actors, identity, and discourse. Instead, the researcher should be open to exploring temporality, cross-scale entanglements, non-human "things", and spatiality. Additionally, the researcher should look beyond the phenomenon directly under study to its historical context, and rhizomatic connections that branch out materially and discursively to other assemblages.

Ethnographic methods fit well with this emphasis on a heterogeneity of relations as they allow for a wide range of types of data to be collected and analysed, including: field notes, participant observation, reflections of the researcher, interviews, policy and many other documents, and social media data (Agar, 1996; Amit, 2000; Atkinson, 2001; Rapley & Rees, 2018). This is in line with the ontological commitment of assemblage that foregrounds multiplicity and non-human agency. For example, social media involves materialities – the platform itself, devices and internet connections – that may play a role in producing the phenomenon under study. These methods and types of data demonstrate that connections and interactions extend beyond the immediate assemblage, beyond the "field". Indeed, interactions and connections can be explored as rhizomatic: such connections have no discernible centre or starting point, and do not follow a linear structure (discussed in 3.2.1). An ethnographic approach can therefore highlight rhizomatic connections to a broader context, and other assemblages, via technologies or discourse, among other things.

This frees the researcher from committing to certain methods in favour of experimenting and adapting to how the assemblage emerges. For Baker and McGuirk (2017: 425), three methodological practices are necessary to achieve an assemblage orientation in and to research: "adopting an ethnographic sensibility, tracing sites and situations, and revealing labours of assembling". I will address each of these in turn. Firstly, an ethnographic sensibility enables "defamiliarisation": "an inductive strategy that grapples with the situated articulation of multiple interacting processes and labours that produce socio-spatial phenomena" (Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 434). This aligns with the epistemological commitment of assemblage to explore and understand phenomena that appear to be a coherent whole as in fact emergent and processual. Assemblage ethnography is not restricted to a "prescribed set of methods," but is

instead a "critical and questioning disposition that treats the familiar as strange" (Shore and White, 2011: 15 in Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 434).

To use Fox and Aldred's (2018) terminology, ethnography forms the disaggregative part of this methods assemblage, using participant observation and semi-structured interviews to open up possibilities within the research. Both participant observations and interviews are understood as emergent themselves, as spaces of potential interaction and interconnection within and beyond the event at hand. Baker and McGuirk's (2017) second methodological practice, tracing sites and situations, comes into play here. Tracing sites and situations is a way to move beyond a restrictive "bounded field" (McCann & Ward, 2012: 43), enabling the exploration of the dynamic, active and multiple production of phenomena:

> Sites, in this sense, might include a conference hall, a social service facility, the offices of a ministry, or the administrative territory of a city, while situations might relate to prevailing notions of best practice or a hegemonic political-ideological project that exists beyond, but is nonetheless constituted by, particular sites. (Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 437)

Therefore, rather than focussing on one field-site, assemblage encourages a "multiple and mobile" understanding of the spaces which lead to the emergence of phenomena (McCann & Ward, 2012: 44). The use of different ethnographic methods and a multi-locale approach allowed me to access different and multiple perspectives and contexts involved in the complex process of professional identity construction (Brockmann, 2011). In this project, the sites and situations explored are not only face-to-face meetings, but also online events and groupings.

Assemblage ethnography has allowed me to trace the sites and emergent situations of translation (see 4.3 below). Professional identity is not understood as constructed in one space and then transported or broadcast outwards. Instead, it emerges from different sites and situations that themselves are connected to greater and lesser extents. Conducting interviews and participant observation at different translation events allows sites and situations to be traced, giving me flexibility to follow connections to other branches and clusters that contribute to the production of professional identity. Fieldwork within an assemblage ethnography aims to show how spaces emerge from their constituent parts, and how their emergent characteristics enable and hinder affective "flows" and broader connections (Abourahme, 2015; Angell

et al., 2014). This may also include material elements, such as reports, codes of conducts, and leaflets, found in the field. These materials can be seen as "ethnographic artefacts that provide windows into the creation, mobilization, and application of [policy] knowledge" (Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 434). These "artefacts" can at the same time be traced to other events and assemblages, while also presenting and producing discourses and practices seen elsewhere. "Thick" descriptions can then describe the interactions between people and material components, allowing the researcher to trace networks and entanglements (Kadfak & Knutsson, 2017). When sites become the focus, the micro and macro encounters within those spaces can be elucidated, demonstrating the complexity of everyday settings (Lameu, 2016).

Accompanying observations, interviews enable the researcher to take a more active role, to "probe the contingent socio-material alignments and taken-for-granted labours" of emergence (Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 434). The interviews in this project were semi-structured, allowing both participant and researcher to be open and follow the flows of the conversation (Rapport, 2012; Bryman, 2016). Each interview is itself an event, a holistic encounter in which the participants construct and reconstruct themselves and their social worlds (Collins, 1998). Interviews are a chance to delve into complex, multiple, and relational phenomena through individuality and difference. The researcher too finds their *self* constructed and reconstructed, "confirmed and legitimated" (Collins, 1998) in this encounter (see 4.4 below for positionality and reflexivity). Interviews can be thought of as event-spaces, much like observations, where potential selves and worlds are slowly pinned down and concretised. Participants become "double agents" (Roy, 2012: 37), at least at points, able to turn their own reflexive gaze on their practices, actions, and identity. The co-authorship of the interview extends this reflexivity to the researcher, who is obliged – whether or not it is one of their research questions – to construct and reconstruct themselves both as a researcher and, in my case for this project, as a translator (see 4.4.2 below).

Baker and McGuirk's third methodological practice is revealing labours of assembling:

> if an ethnographic sensibility is concerned with 'how to look', and tracing sites and situations is concerned with 'where to look', a methodological practice directed to the task of revealing labours of assembling is concerned with 'what to look for'. (Baker & McGuirk, 2017: 437)

Revealing labours of assembling involves seeking out the actions and practices that draw the components of assemblages together and create order. Labours of assembling are multiple, insofar as they involve a variety of actors and things situated in a variety of spaces and settings. They are processual, emergent phenomena that are "laboured-over" through assembling and disassembling practices and actions. This continual labour can also lead to change and even unpredictable effects reflecting the shifts in one or another part of the assemblage. Within this project, an assemblage methodology understands professional identity as emergent from different spaces, as "traceable" through those spaces and in interactions, as laboured-over and produced by the practices and actions of translators themselves and other components. The ethnographic sensibility of assemblage enables a defamiliarisation of professional identity construction, making the familiar "strange" (Roy, 2012: 37) and uncovering practices and processes of assembling and disassembling. Through the unpacking of the observational and interview data, I have explored how participants laboured over their position as professional translators. This involved identifying and tracing the actions and practices that go into assembling professional translation both individually and collectively. This "work" creates order in the form of individual and collective professional identities, shaped out of the various pressures and challenges translators face. In 4.5 below, I detail how I applied these methodological practices to the data.

4.2.3. *Social media analysis*

If ethnography forms the disaggregative part of this methods assemblage, encouraging and enabling flexibility and openness, social media analysis forms the aggregative part. It is aggregative as a method in that it is "bound" to the platform and the data within it. The analyses too are aggregative in that they collate and bring together data, rather than pull it apart. In 4.3 below, I detail the data I collected and how it is analysed. Here, I explain my rationale for including Twitter within this methods assemblage.

Social media is pervasive in everyday life and provides new platforms for "socialization, public debate, and information exchange" (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017: 1). These platforms and their ubiquity, particularly given the "on-the-go" social media access afforded by smart phones and other devices, generate interesting data for social scientists (Moreno et al., 2013). Twitter, although not used as widely as other platforms (see Figure 1), has contributed to a transformation in the way information is spread: references to Twitter activity are often made by mainstream media when reporting on

news stories, making Twitter an "important part of public discourse, despite not being widely adopted by the general population" (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017: 17).
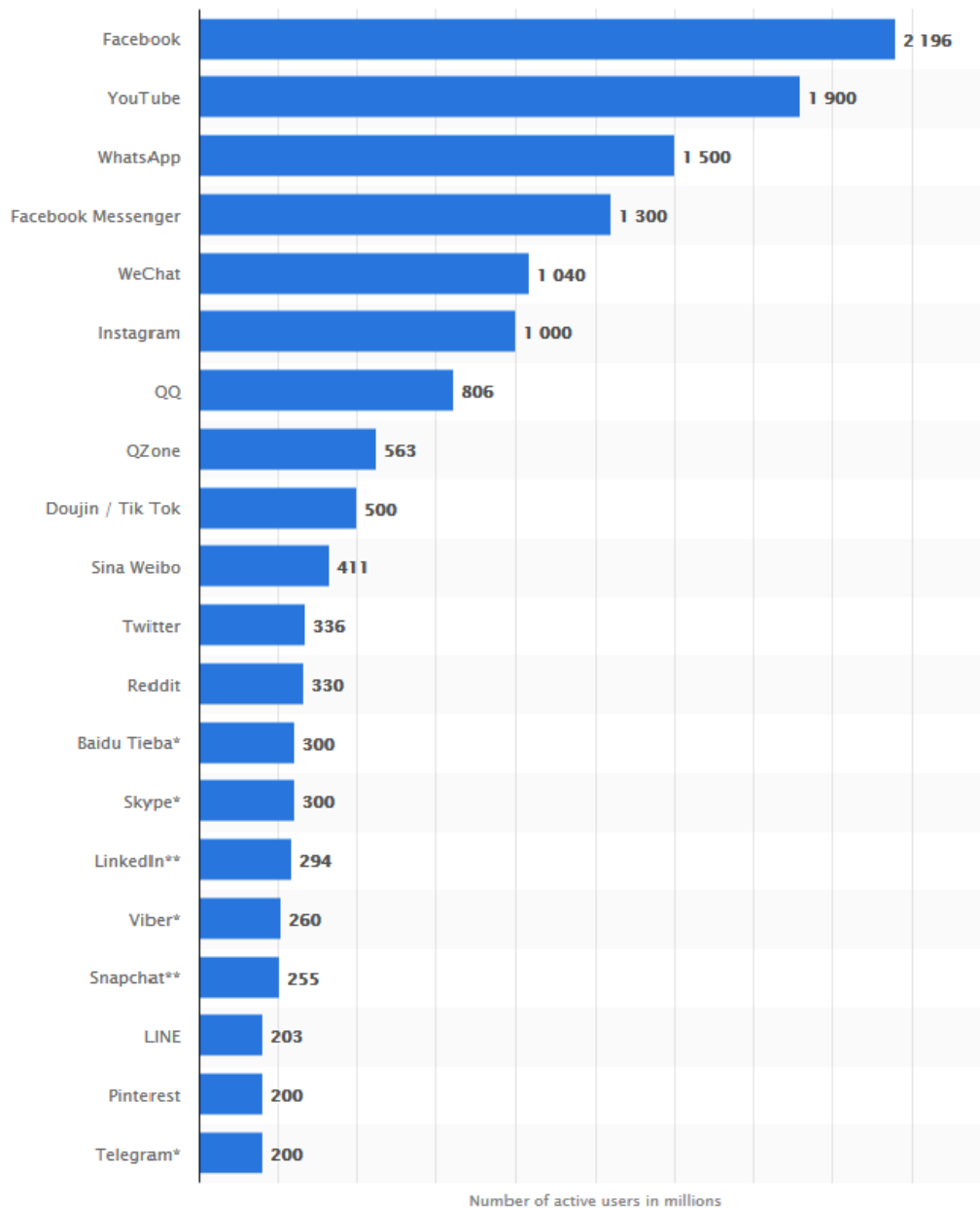
Figure 1: Most famous social network sites worldwide as of July 2018, ranked by number of active users (in millions). Source: Statista Inc. (2019)

Twitter sentiment is often used as a proxy for public opinion by politicians, particularly during election campaigns (McGregor et al., 2017). They might have good reason for this: studies have shown that sentiments expressed in tweets have a strong correlation with traditional public opinion surveys, with some scholars suggesting that text stream platforms, such as Twitter, could replace or at least add to traditional polling (Flores, 2017). In research, Twitter has been used to explore: the centrality of Catalan parliamentarians in Twitter networks comparing Twitter activity and position in the party

(Borge Bravo & Esteve Del Valle, 2017); the impact of tweets on public opinion (Flores, 2017); the relationship between "real life" events and Twitter activity (Jungherr & Jürgens, 2014); how external events influence interactivity on Twitter in relation to the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico (Merry, 2014); and the adoption and use of social media for campaigns in relation to pro- and anti-EU sentiments (Nulty et al., 2016).

As a social media platform, Twitter appears useful and suitable for translators: it allows a dispersed group to form an online community; and hashtags allow marginalised and "invisible" professionals to make their voices heard and contribute to wider debates. It constitutes an alternative, fluid space in which professional identities are produced and intersect with wider and industry-specific discourses on professionalism and language, among others. In interviews, various participants discussed Twitter as a means of engaging with the wider community, making themselves known and keeping up-to-date with changes in commercial translation. The conferences and events I attended equally all displayed their hashtags and encouraged attendees to tweet. Twitter has a role in professional identity construction that is worth exploring.

The mixing of methods enabled by an assemblage methodology encourages experimentation and an openness to following connections as they appear. This is where Twitter analysis comes in: as a connection I followed from my observations and interviews. Twitter analysis is also promising in assemblage approaches as it offers ways to take relations, rather than actors, as its starting point (Tagarelli & Interdonato, 2014). An aggregative counterpoint to the disaggregative ethnographic methods, the processes of collecting and analysing this data have contributed to a highly-reflexive research process that considers how different research methods impact research – and the researcher. This project has taken a theoretically and methodologically driven approach to Twitter analysis that begins with "real life" external events, grounding the research questions and subsequent data collection in the main preoccupations of assemblage thinking. This involves using assemblage to conceptualise Twitter and the continually changing assemblages and rhizomatic connections that are produced through interactions of people, devices, internet connections, discourses and events.

4.3. Methods Assemblage

4.3.1. *Methodological map*

This methods assemblage comprises ethnographic data in the form of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, and social media data in the form of

tweets, their associated metadata and network data. Data collection took place concurrently over six months (June-December 2018). I present a diagram of the data collection and analysis process in Figure 2 (Creswell 2010; Niglas, 2010). I began by attending events, where I would recruit for interview. The data gathered at interviews and observations informed the questions I asked at subsequent interviews and informed my focus at subsequent events. In line with the methodological commitment to openness and flexibility, I followed connections and recommendations made by participants, leading me to other events and other interviewees. Noticing hashtags at events and talking to participants about social media led me to the Twitter data. This demonstrates the simultaneous and iterative nature of the data collection process, reflecting the ontological commitments of assemblage thinking. During analysis, I took this further, foregrounding connections and interconnections within and between each data collection 'event', leading to a synthesis of methods (Nastasi et al., 2010; Onwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010). This synthesis culminated in the quantitative measures used to analyse the Twitter data speaking directly to the concepts of affect and becoming from assemblage that are explored in the ethnographic data (discussed in chapter 8). This again was an iterative process that involved deep immersion in the data, guided by the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage. As I describe in section 4.5 and highlight in the methodological map, writing itself was part of this process. In the sections below, I detail each method and the analysis process in turn.
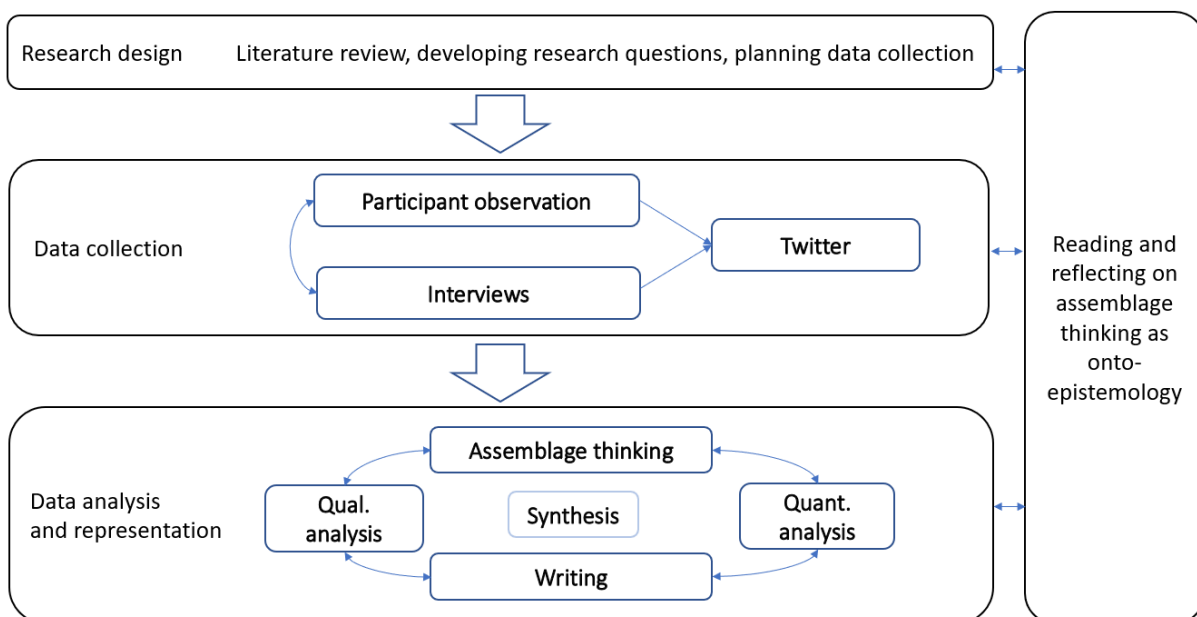
Figure 2: Methodological map detailing research process

4.3.2. *Ethnography and ethnographic data*

Assemblage ethnography incorporates different methods and types of data, enabling a "thick" description of events, identities, and wider connections (Lameu, 2016; Abourahme, 2015; Kadfak & Knutsson, 2017). It focusses on the everyday practices that lead to the emergence of phenomena. These methods provide insight in the form of "*situated conversation[s]*" and "*situated action[s]*" that complement one another (Brockmann, 2011: 231, original emphasis). These interactions with participants gain analytical value from being situated, that is, having meaning in the context in which they arose (Brockmann, 2011). Ethnography is able to capture both those interactions and the context itself. Translator identity is recognised as emergent from everyday practices and becomes visible through an ethnographic account. The interviews and participant observation that comprise these ethnographic methods feed into one another. Emboldened by the call to experimentation and openness, as a researcher I explored connections and interactions as they appear to me in the "field", recruiting participants for interview from events, and discovering new events from my participants. My research assemblage was fluid, flexible and open to rhizomatic connections, much like the phenomenon under study (Fox & Alldred, 2015, 2018). In this section, I initially describe the fieldwork conducted at events, followed by the semi-structured interviews.

The fieldwork consisted of:

Event	Organiser	Participants	Cost
Two-day conference - Translating Europe Forum	European Commission Directorate General for Translation	500	Free
Specialised translation workshop	CIOL[6]	50	£25
Social media workshop	CIOL	50	£25
Specialised translation workshop	ITI	30	£5
Social meetup	ITI	4	Free
Specialised translation seminar	University	40	Free
AI seminar	University	30	Free

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[6] Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL), Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI). See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

Co-working day	ITI	6	Free
5 x 1.5 hour webinar	ITI and educational partner	300	Free

Table 1: Participant observation events

As the above table demonstrates, this was a multi-site ethnography that involved short observations in a variety of research sites (Brockmann, 2011; Carney, 2017). To ensure rich and nuanced ethnographic data was collected, I navigated the sites as physical, social and cultural spaces. I briefly describe these three elements in turn here. Firstly, I drew attention to the physicality of the research sites by drawing maps of the rooms and venues I encountered. These quick sketches enabled me to consider how people and things moved and were moved through the spaces. This also enabled material and spatial elements of the space to be understood as components within these complex assemblages, capable of interacting and interconnecting with people and things (Abourahme, 2015; Fox & Alldred, 2018). Considering the physical space, how it is used and shapes events allowed me to capture the multiple voices in the field, rather than focus on only the most prominent (O'Toole & Were, 2008). This attuned me to the cultural attachments and meanings associated with and produced in spaces – the second element of my guiding orientation to the research sites. The European Commission, for example, is located in the administrative heart of Europe, and the buildings I explored were spaces that spoke to the European project culturally. This cultural element of the spaces could be seen in both material and discursive things: from the colours and adornments on the walls, to the content of the talks. This gave a tone to the research site, with the cultural nuance of the space evident in some elements of its physicality.

Viewing the research site as a cultural space enabled me to consider how culture was produced at the level of interaction and how it shapes those interactions (Burrell, 2009). By exploring multiple sites, I compared these actions and practices across sites, capturing further nuance and detail (Carney, 2017). The sites also saw groups interact and come together with a specific goal in mind, principally some form of professional development. This makes the spaces social – the third element of my orientation to the sites. This social element was seized upon by some translators as a chance to develop relationships. In my interactions with and observations of other attendees, I explored the social side of the space. I engaged in field conversations, distinct from the interviews discussed above. These informal discussions enabled me to gain insight into the social side of research sites by joining interactions between other participants

and striking up conversations of my own (Driessen & Jansen, 2013). I noted down the ways fellow attendees introduced themselves and began conversations, I saw how pre-existing relationships were consolidated through these events with a sharing of news and recent experiences. I also noted how the coffee breaks and lunches were points and places of social interaction.

The physical, cultural and social elements of research sites are intertwined, and neglecting one means missing a nuance or detail of another. Approaching data collection in this way contributed to my analytical process and decisions, focussing on research sites as complex entanglements of material and discursive things and people (Lameu, 2016; Baker & McGuirk, 2017). Unpacking these entanglements is key to an assemblage methodology. Furthermore, this process of viewing research sites as physical, cultural and social research spaces helped me to defamiliarize these spaces and events, central to an ethnographic approach (Agar, 1996; Amit, 2000). Indeed, as a researcher-translator, I sought a balance between my "insider" translation knowledge, and my analytical mindset as a researcher (Chavez, 2008; Burrell, 2009; Green, 2014). I explore this more extensively in 4.4 below.

I met most of my participants at the events discussed above. There are similarities here to the more conventional sampling technique of "snowballing", which involves recruiting participants through other participants. This is often employed when participants belong to an "exclusive" or "private" network that is hard to access (Walliman, 2006: 79, 82). My method is distinct insofar as I sought out connections that would enable me to probe the networks and groupings produced by translation, although the technique of accessing participants is effectively the same. I was not looking for more participants in a hard-to-reach cohort to get a more representative sample. Instead, I sought out connections that might allow me to explore the labours of assembling involved in translation. Of course, I could have continued following the connections endlessly, but the time restraints of the project, and the conventional methodological standard of "data saturation" told me when to stop collecting data (Bryman, 2016: 412; Creswell & Poth, 2018: 87). Below, I detail the interview and participant observation data collected.

Thirty-five semi-structured interviews comprised:

Interview mode	2 via email, 16 in person, 17 on the phone
Length	From 40 mins to 2.5 hours (mostly around 1 hour)

Gender	21 female, 14 male
Age	22-65
Nationality	26 British, 2 Chinese, 3 Polish, 2 Spanish, 1 German
Location	30 based in UK, 1 in Republic of Ireland, 4 in Belgium
Race/ethnicity	mostly white British/European, 2 Chinese
Employment status	5 employed by European Commission, 30 self-employed
Association membership	12 not members of associations, 23 members of associations
Experience	from less than 1 year to 30+ approaching retirement, most 2-10 years

Table 2: Ethnographic data

The in-person interviews were conducted either on campus at Newcastle University or in the participant's home, based on what was most convenient for the participant. Given the geographically dispersed nature of participants, email or telephone interviewing was often the only viable option. It is worth briefly describing the logistical and qualitative issues surrounding these different communicative channels. The merits and limitations of telephone and email interviews have been debated, with some scholars stating that different interview modes give rise to different kinds of data that may not be comparable (Sturges & Hanrahan, 2004; Burns, 2010). One concern is that the interviewer does not see the participant's informal, nonverbal communication over the phone or email, potentially reducing the richness of the data (Novick, 2008; Drabble et al., 2016). In Sturges and Hanrahan's (2004) comparison of face-to-face and telephone interview modes, they state the main limitation of lacking visual cues was that the interviewer could not use them as a basis to probe participants. This is to some extent offset by the interviewer being able to take notes during the interview without distracting the participant, and then asking follow-up questions later. I took this approach with my telephone interviews, making notes and asking additional questions later. Similarly with the email interviews, I was able to reflect on the answers from the two participants and ask nuanced follow-up questions in the next email (Burns, 2010). I found the depth and quality of the data collected over the phone and in person to be comparable, in line with Sturges and Hanrahan's (2004) study. The email interviews did not produce as much data, although the answers were detailed and high quality. As I only conducted

two interviews via email, the smaller quantity of data from these interviews is not a concern for this project. I did not find conducting interviews remotely restricted the rapport I was able to create and thus reduce the richness of the data (Novick, 2008; Drabble et al., 2016). As I discuss in 4.4.2 below, my positionality as a translator meant a shared understanding preceded the interview and aided the establishment of rapport.

4.3.3. *Twitter methods*

Although social media platforms have now been around for more than a decade (Twitter was established in 2006), there is no uniformity within social media research methods and little comparability (Jungherr, 2016; Mayr & Weller, 2017; Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). This is due to continual technological developments influencing the access to and use of social media; the fast-paced proliferation of social media platforms and technologies; and the need for new methods to collect and analyse this data. "Big data" social media research has tended to dominate this field, but equally there is no consensus over what "big data" means and a lack of uniformity regarding "big data" methods (Mayr & Weller, 2017: 107). This lack of uniformity is partly caused by and contributes to the relative obscurity of methods used by researchers, many of whom do not state how they collected their data (Jungherr, 2016). There is a call from some social media scholars to increase transparency regarding data collection methods, as this would allow for comparison, duplication and consensus over best practice (Jungherr, 2016). Crucially, it would allow for the further development of ethical principles, critical engagement with methodologies and methods, and a better understanding of how researchers' choices impact their findings (Townsend & Wallace, 2016; Golder et al., 2017). Some of the key sticking points relevant to this project are explored below and relate to: the software or programming language used to interact with Twitter, the restrictions Twitter puts on data, and what searches and queries are based on.

The Twitter API (Application Programming Interface), which most researchers use – directly or indirectly – to collect data, presents its own issues. In his review of Twitter use in election campaigns, Jungherr (2016) details the methods used to access Twitter data. He finds that there are two main approaches: the use of scripts or code to query the API directly, and the use of third-party software to do this for you. Coupled with the obscurity of methods used in some cases, there has not been a systematic assessment of the efficacy and accuracy of these approaches, making it difficult to compare the two. Each individual piece of software has its own restrictions on top of the access

limitations provided by the API. For this reason, I focus here on how the API provides and restricts access to Twitter data. Firstly, there are two types of API that can be used to collect tweets: REST and Streaming. The Streaming API allows live data – 1% of the Twitter steam – to be collected; the REST API allows researchers to search for tweets that are up to nine days old. The main problem with both APIs is that they do not tell researchers what data they are getting and what is excluded. For example, research has shown that the Streaming API does not provide a representative sample (Jungherr, 2016). Twitter has not disclosed how it choses which tweets are made available via the Streaming API, so the type of bias in this sample is not clear. Researchers have found that "trending" hashtags are either over or under-represented, not accurately illustrating peaks and troughs in the use of these hashtags on Twitter (Morstatter et al., 2014). Regarding the REST API, researchers have an opportunity to ensure they collect a more complete dataset – within the time frame accessible – as they can run multiple and subsequent queries. Twitter grants access to 1% of its stream to any one account. Assuming the total amount required is below this level, researchers have a good chance of collecting most, if not all, of the data related to their search (Lorentzen & Nolin, 2017). The only way to verify this, however, would be to go through the Twitter stream and check each tweet off the list of those collected through the API. This is simply not feasible for most research projects, which make use of thousands if not tens of thousands of tweets. Bearing this in mind, I used the REST API and made sure my queries overlapped to collect the most data possible (see 4.3.4 below).

Additionally, the search terms and methods chosen to collect data have their own limitations and biases, which inevitably impact findings. The use of hashtags to collect data, for example, can be a problem for researchers interested in conversations and interactions on Twitter, as replies do not necessarily contain the original hashtag that began the discussion (Lorentzen & Nolin, 2017). This method also excludes less Twitter literate users and may only gather tweets in one language, with speakers of other languages perhaps using different hashtags to talk about the same topic (Jungherr, 2016). The issue of representation is much broader: some segments of the population and parts of the world are left out of social media entirely, as "social media adoption, usage and its social implications are dynamic social processes that occur within existing patterns of inequality" (McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2017: 14). Even in areas with relatively high Twitter adoption, the Twittersphere does not accurately represent the wider population: in the US, Twitter users "are generally younger, more urban, more racially diverse, and perhaps more liberal than the US population as a

whole" (Flores, 2017: 345). Taking this further, within the population of Twitter users, not all contribute equally, as described by the "1:9:90" rule: 90% of users do not actively contribute, 9% may contribute and 1% produce the majority of the content (Tagarelli & Interdonato, 2014). Put differently, various studies have shown that a relatively small group, perhaps only a few thousand, post 60-90% of tweets (Lorentzen & Nolin, 2017).

Despite these drawbacks, Twitter and other social media data provide insight into the use of social media and its interconnection with "real world" events, as discussed below. Research design can go some way to overcoming or at least acknowledging these limitations. To understand and account for the limitations of these platforms and data collection methods, social media research should begin with a research question, and not start with a dataset. This is a frequent pitfall of "big data" research, in which researchers may restrict the questions asked to those that are easily answered by the data to hand (Mayr & Weller, 2017). Mayr and Weller provide a list of prompts for researchers to consider prior to and during data collection to avoid and make visible the limitations of their methods:

1. Which social media platform would be the most relevant for my research question?

2. What are my main criteria for selecting data from this platform?

3. How much data do I need?

4. What is (unproportionally) excluded if I collect data this way? (Mayr & Weller, 2017: 110)

In this way, research design can begin to account for and be transparent about these limitations and their impact on research.

As the examples of research given above show, this data is often related to if not the direct result of external events (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017). It is important not to treat this data as separate from "real life", but as integrated into the wider social world. Twitter is not a world unto itself; conversations on the platform are often related to situations, processes and actions external to Twitter. This may include political debate and elections (Jungherr, 2016; McGregor et al., 2017), political activism (Gleason, 2013; Bastos & Mercea, 2016; Blevins et al., 2019), and professional self-promotion (Brems et al., 2017). Context needs to be prioritised when designing and carrying out social media research, and additional information and data sources, such as newspaper articles and maps, are often necessary to "flesh out" this context (Sloan & Quan-Haase, 2017: 3). As with any method, there are unavoidable pitfalls to be

acknowledged. With Twitter, there is no getting away from the API: even with the most scrupulous data collection processes, it is possible that not all relevant data will be collected. The basis for search queries needs to be thoroughly considered and relevant to the question, but will nonetheless have its own limitations. The significance of issues of representation will vary depending on the project and research design. In any case, researchers must be mindful of the challenges of this data and associated methods, and not be tempted to make claims beyond the platform users (Mayr & Weller 2017). In the next section, I detail the choices I made about data collection using Twitter.

4.3.4. *Twitter data collection and R*

Twitter came up at events and in interviews as described above and illustrated in the methodological map (Figure 2). Based on these interactions and my own knowledge of the translation industry, I collected Twitter data related to the Translating Europe Forum (8-9 November 2018), the annual translation conference run by the European Commission Directorate-General for Translation. I chose this event as I also attended the conference in person. This gave me the unique insight of having been "in the field" and on Twitter as a researcher. Before analysing the data, I filtered the tweets for translation and interpreting terms to ensure their relevance. I also collected what I call "general" translation tweets using a variety of search terms. The intention behind this was to collect the general translation chatter on Twitter over a longer period (three months) to see what was discussed in association with translation hashtags not related to a specific event.

Regarding the limitations of Twitter listed above, issues of representation are largely mitigated by the fact that I looked for tweets and associated data from a particular population – the translation Twitter community. The use of thought-out hashtags and search terms via the REST API will therefore have provided me with at least the bulk of relevant data available. Details of the data collected and analysed are as follows:

Twitter collection	Search terms	Dates	No. of tweets
Translation Europe Forum	#2018TEF, #TranslatingEurope, "translating europe forum"	19/10/18 – 19/11/18	8,538

General	#xl8, #t9n, #1nt, "translating", "interpreter", "freelance", #freelance	15/09/18 – 15/12/18	18,230

Table 3: Twitter data

This data was collected using R, an open-source programming language. R has countless functions and some well-developed packages that allow researchers, data scientists and data enthusiasts to collect and analyse various types of data. The packages contain "functions" that allow data to be collected and manipulated in certain ways depending on the needs of the researcher. These packages essentially reduce the amount of code an individual needs to write (and know!), as a function will do a lot of the leg work.

To search for and collect tweets, I first had to create an application on the Twitter website. Twitter allows "developers" to create applications for the collection of Twitter data. After creating the application, the *rtweet* package was used to create a link between RStudio and the Twitter REST API (see Appendix B. Glossary of R and SNA terms)[7]. I used this package to search for tweets using hashtags and search terms. The searches returned up to 18,000 tweets in any 15-minute period. This is the maximum allowed by the REST API and is called the "rate limit".

To search for network information, I collected the user IDs of the followers and users followed by a specified Twitter user. I decided to collect this information for the top 100 tweeters for each query. I chose the top 100 for practical reasons: firstly, this takes a lot of time as the rate limits have to be respected. Secondly, collecting information on the most active users with regards to these hashtags should yield more relevant data with less "noise" (i.e. someone who retweeted something once). As detailed above, a relatively small group of Twitter users are responsible for the majority of tweets. The number of tweets I collected is a drop in the Twitter ocean: the total number users who tweeted about the Translating Europe Forum was 528, making the top 100 over 20% of the total. According to the literature cited above, which states that as little as 1% of users produce the bulk of the content, this comfortably covers the vast majority of tweets on this topic. The tweets and network data were stored in data frames to be analysed later.

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[7] See online repositories for code: https://github.com/EmmaLS. See also Appendix D. Links for R code.

The Twitter REST API allows tweets to be collected from that are up to nine days old. I ran search queries every two to five days, updating the queries with new hashtags or terms as necessary, and removing any duplicated data.

4.3.5. *Analysis Using R*

To analyse the Twitter data, two main methods have been used: social network analysis (SNA) using the *igraph* package, and content analysis using the *tidytext* package[8]. I firstly describe SNA methods using R, before discussing text analysis.

SNA is a range of methods that analyse social networks of different kinds using graph theory. SNA focusses attention on the "the relationships among the entities that make up the system", taking a "fundamentally relational view of social phenomena" (Borgatti et al., 2013: 1, 10). SNA can comfortably be integrated into an assemblage methodology that orients the researcher to a relational understanding of the world. In this project, the tools from SNA focus on understanding the structure of translation-related Twitter networks based on the hashtags used for data collection. The *igraph* package has various powerful functions that allow for the creation of graphs highlighting different characteristics of networks and their nodes.

SNA often includes descriptive, mathematical analyses that give a picture of the overall characteristics of the network (see Scott, 2000; Borgatti et al., 2013). Density is calculated as an initial description of how interconnected a graph is. Density is the ratio of the number of actual edges compared to the number of possible edges, i.e. if all nodes were connected. This ratio is between 0 and 1, with 1 being the maximum, so if 100% of possible connections exist in the network. A low density score would give the indication that there are many asymmetrical connections between nodes, whereas high density would indicate that many of the nodes have reciprocal connections. Transitivity, also called the clustering coefficient, is usually calculated. Transitivity describes the tendency of nodes to form closed triangles, giving an initial picture of how clustered the network is. As with density, transitivity is a ratio is between 0 and 1, with 1 indicating maximum levels of clustering. A network in which nodes tend to cluster together would have a transitivity nearer 1, and a network with few clusters would have a score nearer 0. Modularity, another ratio between 0 and 1, looks at density within

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[8] See online repositories for code: https://github.com/EmmaLS. SNA code:
https://github.com/EmmaLS/SNA_thesis. Text mining code : https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis.

subgroups compared to their connections to other groups. A network with a high modularity score that approaches 1 would have densely interconnected clusters with few links between them. Modularity and transitivity both look at clustering, but are quite different measures. Transitivity compares the number of closed triangles to the number of connections between two nodes. Modularity compares the density of connections within clusters to the density of connections between clusters. For example, a graph with many closed triangles that overlap one another, i.e. each node is a member of many closed triangles, would have high transitivity but low modularity as the clusters are not isolated.

Centrality measures are used to demonstrate the varying levels of "influence" or "prominence" of nodes within a network (Disney, 2014). These measures give a more in-depth picture of the structures within a network by assigning values to individual nodes. SNA has various centrality measures, many of which may produce similar findings as they tend to focus on the number of connections a node has in a network while focusing on slight differences. The choice of centrality measure should be based on what specific measure is most useful for the network and research question (Luke, 2015). The most basic centrality measures are in-degree and out-degree, the former of which describes the number of people connected to a node, and the latter the number of people a node is connected to (Scott, 2000). In-degree and out-degree are directed measures, so in the case of Twitter this means in-degree is the number of followers a Twitter user has, and out-degree is the number of Twitter users each user follows. This is a basic structural characteristic that gives an initial picture of the network.

For a more nuanced and detailed understanding of centrality, I focus on betweenness in this project. Betweenness is calculated based on how many pairs of nodes a particular node sits "between". That is, how many paths from one node to another have to pass through each node. A node with high betweenness is of note, as "that node is in a position to observe or control the flow of information in the network" (Luke, 2015: 94). Twitter users with high betweenness values can be understood as gatekeepers of sorts, who facilitate and inhibit the flow of information through a network based on what they decide to retweet and like – or not. Betweenness provides interesting information about the network that can be visualised. For example, Figure 3 uses betweenness to determine the size of the nodes – or vertices – based on the data collected for the Translating Europe Forum (TEF) conference. It shows clear clustering in the middle

and some standalone clusters where there are some highly "prominent" or "influential" Twitter users.
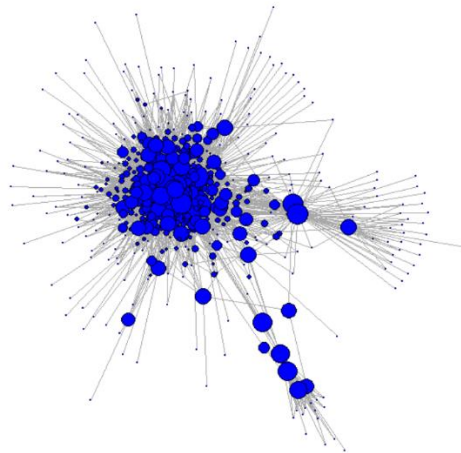
Figure 3: Graph of TEF Twitter network example

Within networks there are often subgroups that are more or less densely connected than the network as a whole. The *igraph* package has various ways of discerning these subgroups that may not be immediately visible. I focus on *k*-core groups, which demonstrate the levels of "connectedness" in a network: "a *k*-core is a maximal subgraph where each vertex is connected to at least *k* other vertices in the subgraph" (Luke, 2015: 110). This is a popular means of identifying and highlighting subgroups within networks as it enables a hierarchy of subgraphs of increasing centrality to be identified.

> [*k*-cores are] obtained by recursively removing all the vertices of degree smaller than *k*, until the degree of all remaining vertices is larger than or equal to *k*. Larger values of *k* correspond to vertices with larger degree and more central position in the network's structure. The *k*-core decomposition therefore provides a probe to study the properties of the network's regions of increasing centrality. (Alvarez-Hamelin et al., 2005)

That is, a node with a *k*-core value of 1 is connected to one other node in the network, a node with a *k*-core value of 2 is connected to two other nodes, and so on. Using *igraph*, I can strip away the layers of nodes with lower *k*-core values, revealing a more densely connected "core" of nodes. This information can show who is most connected within the network. Combined with centrality measures, this gives a picture of "prominence" and "influence" within the Twitter network. Figure 4 shows the *k*-core values of all nodes in the TEF dataset compared with the nodes with the highest *k*-core values. These graphs are integrated into the qualitative analysis to complement

the observational data, examining and exploring connections formed "on the ground" and in the "Twittersphere".
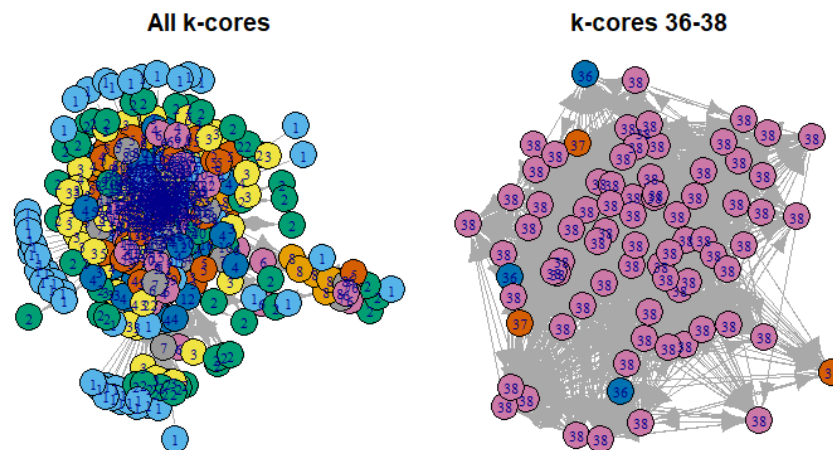
Figure 4: k-core decomposition Twitter network example

It is important to point out that social network scholars have combined qualitative data collection and analysis with quantitative SNA methods (Dominguez & Hollstein, 2014; O'Shea, 2014; Crossley & Edwards, 2016). Indeed, SNA emerged out of the work of anthropologists in the 1950s (Hollstein, 2014). Researchers have combined methods in SNA to explore: how networks are built and function; changes to network structures; and power dynamics and strategies within networks (Hollstein, 2014). Mixing methods in SNA can bring a more nuanced discussion of how and why networks form and function. In this way, qualitative and quantitative analyses are combined to unpack and problematise the connections between actors. For example, O'Shea (2014) has taken a mixed methods approach to exploring feminist music networks, looking at the role of sexuality among other things to explain and describe the quantity and quality of connections between feminist activists. This project contributes to these methodological discussions by foregrounding assemblage. I have not sought to explain the connections between Twitter users based on network analyses. Instead, I have explored how the quantitative measures of SNA can speak to an assemblage ontology and epistemology directly. I explore this in detail in chapters 7-8.

Regarding analysing the text of tweets, I have primarily used the *tidytext* package in combination with other text analysis and data visualisation packages. With thousands of tweets at my disposal, I could not individually code the content of each one. Luckily, the *tidytext* package contains functions that allow for large scale content analysis, often know as text mining (Silge & Robinson, 2017). I created wordclouds and word

association networks. Wordclouds are frequently used to give an overview of the most common words in a dataset, with the size of the word relating to the number of times a word appears in a dataset. See Figure 5 for example.

Figure 5: Translation tweet wordcloud example

To build on this, I used *tidytext* to create graphs of paired words or word associations, which draw out words that are most commonly found together. This involves various functions that are used to select the text, remove "stop words"[9] (e.g. "the", "a") and any URLs, and then count pairs of words found together. This information can then be used to create networks of words, providing some insight into a volume of text that would not be accessible otherwise (see Figure 6 for example).

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[9] Stop words are words that are used in everyday speech so frequently they are thought to detract from more meaningful and specific terms (Silge & Robinson, 2017; Yang & Zhang, 2018).

Figure 6: TEF word association network example

4.3.6. *Limitations and uses*

There are clear limitations with the Twitter analysis methods described above. SNA identifies connections that cannot be probed further – the "why" of these relationships cannot be seen in a network graph. Centrality measures discern "prominence" and "influence" based on quantitative measures alone. This can feel two-dimensional and lacking in depth. Content analysis based on word associations risks missing nuance and complexity in text. However, these methods and the use of R enable me to access, explore and visualize volumes of data that would otherwise be impossible within the time and resource restrictions of this project. SNA can demonstrate levels and hierarchies of connections in online networks that go unseen "in the field". Additionally, as the text data is in the form of tweets, which are limited in length, there is a good chance that the R methods can select the most significant textual elements. This data can be explored further by drawing connections with the interview and observation data. The integration of this data into the larger project is where it can contribute most. As the Twitter data is intended to complement the interview and observational data, these limitations are not an obstacle to its use in this project. In fact, the Twitter data provides an aggregate perspective that requires a differing logic. Within an assemblage methodology, seemingly competing logics can be combined to explore different levels and "textures" of phenomena (see 4.2 above). The Twitter data can be thought of as the data equivalent of "zooming out": it provides a different perspective on professional identity construction and professionalism within this geographically dispersed and fragmented cohort. It has been used to describe an aggregate aspect of translation as a social phenomenon. It can visualize and provide insight into another space in which translators and others – people and "things" – interact, where information and discourses flow.

4.4.   Ethical Considerations

This project follows the ethical guidelines of the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth (ASA), the British Sociological Association (BSA) and Newcastle University's Code of Good Practice in Research. This involves ensuring that my participants are not at risk of harm and are presented accurately; that participants' anonymity and confidentiality is respected and maintained as far as is possible; and being reflexive regarding my role as a researcher and in any participant-researcher contact (Iphofen, 2011). The ethical considerations for this project mostly

reflect the standard questions and considerations for a "low risk" project: the nature of the collected data was not sensitive, data collection largely took place in public places, and no vulnerable adults or persons aged under 18 were involved. In this section, I detail how I ensured the project was as ethical as possible.

I took the necessary steps to ensure the anonymization of participants to the best of my ability, and made clear to participants that total anonymity cannot be guaranteed (Sieber, 2009). I have chosen to give participants pseudonyms that include a surname as this gives a level of formality that better reflects the professional nature of the topics discussed. I have also changed identifying features – such as place names – when using interview and observational data. The only case where I have not done this is for the Translating Europe Forum run by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (EC-DGT). The issue of identification in ethnography is complex and contested (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001; Harrison, 2018). Given this is the only European Union institution that runs a translation conference, it would be impossible to conceal its identity without changing the setting entirely and losing crucial contextual information. This conference is entirely public and is available to watch on YouTube and other social media platforms. Although speakers were not able to consent explicitly, the public setting of the event and its online broadcast demonstrate that speakers were aware that their presentations would be publicly available. This aligns with the ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Association on participant observation in public spaces (Clark et al., 2009; British Psychological Society, 2014). Whenever I spoke to an attendee directly, I informed them of my role as a researcher; and I applied the same techniques for anonymising participants. Furthermore, the focus of the data collection and analysis in this context was not on individual attendees or speakers, but on the event as a whole and the role of the EC-DGT as an institution. My decision to identify the conference does not represent an increased risk of harm to participants.

To ensure participants understood what partaking in the study involved, I went through a process of having them read and sign an informed consent form. I emailed this to participants in advance of the interview if the interview was to take place remotely. Given the level of education within this group, it seemed reasonable to assume this measure was sufficient to establish informed consent. However, before beginning the interviews, I ensured participants fully understood what participation entailed and gave them the opportunity to ask questions. For participant observations, I sought out

permission from the organisers of the event. At the start of the smaller events, I was introduced by the organiser(s), making all attendees aware that I was there for research purposes. At all events, I informed participants that I was a researcher when entering into field conversations. During the webinars, I posted on the chatbox multiple times that I was conducting research; that all names would be anonymised; and that I could be contacted at the email address provided if anyone had questions. I told all participants that their transcripts are available to them should they wish to view them. I have sent provisional findings to everyone involved, including event organisers. Transcripts and fieldnotes are otherwise to be kept fully confidential during the project and after submission. All digital files were stored on a password protected external hard drive, and paper copies of documents (including consent forms) were kept in a locked cabinet on Newcastle University property. Given the potential for new ethical issues arising from the use of social media data, I have explored this in detail below.

There are more nuanced aspects of ethics in sociological research to take in account, namely positionality. Regarding my educational and professional background in translation, I occupy a dual or hybrid role as a researcher-translator (de Andrade, 2014). One of the concerns of "insider" research is a lack of objectivity or "distance" (Chavez, 2008; Green, 2014). However, regardless of "distance" from the subject matter, the researcher will inevitably be written into the research. Rather than try to eliminate subjectivity or create distance, it is important to recognise the impact of positionality on research design, interactions with participants and methods of analysis (Bourke, 2014). To foster reflexivity, I have borrowed and altered the following questions from Bourke (2014: 2), which I consider below:

1. What role did my positionality as a translator studying issues of translation play?
2. How did I use my positionality in different spaces?
3. Did my positionality influence the interactions that I had with participants that were translators?

My insider knowledge of the industry put me in a prime position to interact with translators at events and in interview (Green, 2014). For example, I am familiar with many of the terms and acronyms thrown around in these settings and conversations (see Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms for a dizzying list). My familiarity with translation practices and my ability to join and contribute to conversations on translation helped flatten the hierarchy that often exists between researcher and

participant (Collins, 1998). I had to negotiate between the two roles while carrying out the research, which required active reflexivity (see 4.4.2 below). I generally found that, whether at events or in interviews, participants were happy to talk to a fellow translator, who shared their woes and enjoyment of translation practices. My positionality enabled me to create trust; to reduce a sense of researcher-participant hierarchy; and to reduce the impression that I was putting my participants "under the microscope". For England (1994: 243), researchers should utilise methods that "develop this advantage", namely that of meanings and experiences being shared by researcher and researched. This aligns with feminist research methods, that again strive to reduce and mitigate the problematic power imbalance between researcher and participant (Hoskins, 2015; Nazneen & Sultan, 2014). Particularly with participants I met multiple times, our common interests allowed for trusting relationships to develop. However, as the "insider" perspective can give the researcher access to information they otherwise would not have given, this comes with ethical responsibilities (Reyes, 2018). To prevent participants saying more than they might feel comfortable with owing to this familiarity, it is important for the researcher to make clear their role *as a researcher* in any interactions (Lewis & Russell, 2011). Consent forms are helpful here as they distinguish the interview in particular as a research event.

It is also important and only honest for me to consider those moments when I felt out of my depth. Hoskin (2015) reflects on her positionality and that of her participants, focussing on class and how similarities and differences in identity – class, race, gender – can impact the interview process. My identity as a white, university-educated, British woman, who has lived in two other European countries (France and Italy), meant I had many shared understandings and experiences with my European participants. However, cultural differences and my lack of knowledge on commercial translation in China meant I found myself having to ask more basic questions to the two Chinese translators I spoke to. I also found an event on AI and translation focussed on the Chinese market to be unfamiliar. I was welcomed and there was certainly crossover in terms of translation practices, but my "foreignness" in these situations made me less sure of the notes I was making and questions I was asking. Although "defamiliarisation" is a key tenet of ethnographic research, here I was at risk of unintentionally ignoring differences that my positionality makes me less sensitive to (Bourke, 2014). While I was keen to explore the experiences of translators working with non-European languages within the UK, I had underestimated these differences and issues of positionality. I was also aware that I was in danger of broadening the scope of my

project too much and subsequently not doing justice to the data I collected, likely reducing the complexity of the particular experiences of the only translators of colour I had spoken to. I was also deeply aware that my inclusion of these two Chinese translators could feel like tokenism. Interesting parallels and connections exist, but I needed to be reflexive to consider what is beyond the scope of this project to most ethically represent my participants. For this reason, in analysis I have focussed on the experience of European translators working for (mostly) European companies and institutions. In 4.4.2, I go into more depth regarding reflexivity in analysis and representation.

4.4.1. *Social media ethics*

From a research perspective, the booming of social media has provided researchers with a wealth of data that might otherwise have been impossible to collect, or at the very least involved a long and potentially costly data collection process (Golder et al., 2017; Moreno et al., 2013). Yet, the use of digital platforms and social networks in research throws up new ethical issues. Principally, the ethical cornerstones of informed consent and confidentiality have to be rethought, and definitions of public and private become blurred. Researchers can use these rich sources of data ethically by undertaking precautions to uphold their duty of care to their research participants and themselves, and minimise any risk of harm. The digital platform or network itself, how it functions, how its users intend or expect their input to be used are central to any ethical concerns. I have used Twitter exclusively, so only consider ethical issues related to this platform. This section largely refers to the British Sociological Association's (BSA) "Ethics Guidelines and Collated Resources for Digital Research" (2017), and a guide by the University of Aberdeen on the ethics of social media research recommended by the BSA (Townsend & Wallace, 2016).

Twitter is a social media platform in which users post and contribute to conversations in the form of tweets. The consensus in the literature is that data collected from Twitter can be considered public (Golder et al., 2017; Townsend & Wallace, 2016; BSA, 2017). This is due to the characteristics of this platform in particular: posts are public by default, most profiles are public, and profiles and tweets can be viewed by anyone (i.e., no password is required to access a public post or profile). Twitter's terms of service state that any content produced by users can be used by Twitter and others, in accordance with their terms and conditions (discussed below). While researchers cannot expect social media users to have read the terms and conditions of website or

application (Webb et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2017), this demonstrates the intent behind Twitter to be a fully public platform. Furthermore, I have used hashtags to collect tweets. The use of hashtags implies that users intend and expect their tweets to contribute to a wider debate or conversation, and to be read by many more people than just themselves (Townsend & Wallace, 2016).

I have also considered that I have a Twitter profile, and have tweeted using translation hashtags when working as a translator. This was not an issue as I collected tweets from a specific period (see 4.3.4) during which I did not tweet using any relevant hashtags. None of my tweets were unintentionally collected. Any tweets by participants from events or interviews are only included in the dataset in an aggregate form should they appear there incidentally. The tweets I pulled out of the dataset to illustrate and develop an analytical point were posted by other Twitter users, whose permission was sought separately. This avoids potentially revealing the identity of participants who understood their involvement to be anonymous.

Anonymity can be problematic with social media research because any content produced is linked to an identifier that leads to a profile and potentially the participant's name and other personal information. I have used tweets in analysis from both individual Twitter users and companies, which need different ethical approaches. Social media allows data to be collected from prominent public bodies, organisations and companies related to translation. The ethical requirements for using the content produced by these actors are less stringent. For example, maintaining anonymity is not an issue and reproducing this content does not lead to an increased risk of harm as these tweets are intended for a broad readership (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). I can therefore reproduce the tweets of organisations related to translation without needing to obtain informed consent. For individual Twitter users, the easiest solution is to seek consent from each user for a specific tweet before using it. Williams et al. (2017) provide a framework for considering the ethics of using and publishing tweets in social research (Figure 7). This flowchart summarises the key points I have made here, including which tweets can and cannot be used, and helped me ensure I carried out this research ethically.

The right to withdraw is key to research ethics and is a potential ethical pitfall, as participants in social media research will likely not be aware that they are part of a study (British Psychological Society, 2013). This throws up difficult and novel ethics questions: for example, if a social media user deletes a post, should this be considered
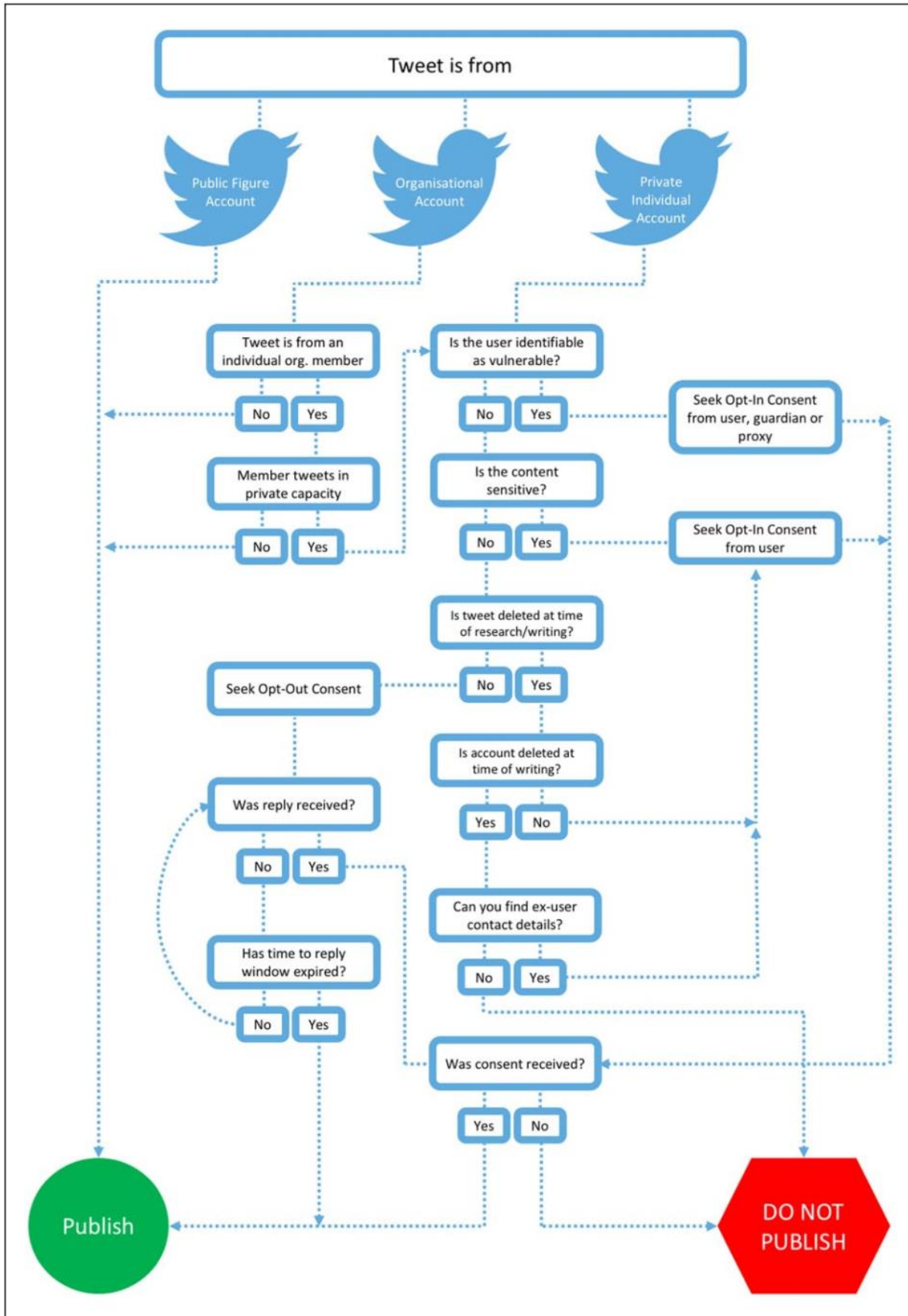
Figure 7: Decision flow chart for publication of tweets (Williams et al. 2017).

as withdrawal from the study (Townsend & Wallace, 2016; Zimmer & Proferes, 2014)? This is particularly relevant regarding Twitter's view that its users retain rights to change their tweets in the future (Williams et al., 2017). Twitter's terms and conditions state that "all reasonable efforts" should be made to delete or modify content to replicate the actions of the social media user when that content is reproduced elsewhere ('Developer Agreement and Policy — Twitter Developers', n.d.). Researchers should strive to support their participants' right to withdraw as well as the expectations social media users have of the platform they use. To maintain the highest ethical standards, I sought consent from individual Twitter users whose tweets I included in the analysis (consent sought from four Twitter users).

4.4.2. *Ethics in analysis and representation*

Representation is an ethical issue. Despite all the efforts made by the researcher to address power imbalances during fieldwork, when it comes to analysis and representation, the researcher is the one with the power (Gringeri et al., 2010; Hoskins, 2015). Throughout the research process, choices are made by the researcher about what to include and what to exclude. This is most powerfully seen in representation. It would not be possible to attend to every nuance and complexity of the social phenomenon under study, so the researcher must filter, and this is where the power lies. Positionality and reflexivity, combined with an awareness of research participants and the broader context, are important to ensure ethical decisions are made in analysis and the representation of findings. Indeed, reflexivity should not be underestimated. In Skeggs' (2002) rousing critique and exploration of reflexivity, she draws a sharp line between being reflexive and doing reflexivity. It seems all too easy for reflexivity to become writing the self – the researcher-self – into the research. Ironically, this practice, rather than maintaining the focus on the researched, makes the project about the one with the power in the first place. Skeggs argues that this can be overcome by approaching reflexivity only as a means to interrogate the power and politics of research from the start, rather than "making direct claims to know via [their] positioning" (2002: 312). Reflexivity is not self-examination but a recognition of the possibility of appropriation and an awareness of the power relations at play; it is not about narrating the self but about the impact of the self on the research.

So, how does *my* self impacts analysis and representation? As discussed above, in line with feminist research methods, my background in translation enabled me to

mitigate power imbalances between researcher and researched. In analysis and representation, this requires further thought. My position, both as a freelance translator and as a post-graduate researcher, influences how I read and ultimately filter my data. When I started the PhD, I was still a self-employed translator. Immersed in this world, I was convinced I would hear translators talking about the need to be objective in their work and other translation-specific traits and characteristics that I imagined would create a professional identity. Instead, I found a much richer and deeper story emerging, taking me to professionalism, neoliberalism and enterprise culture. Unexpectedly, I faced my own precarity and insecurity in having these discussions and attending these events. I was immediately and powerfully drawn to stories that chimed with my experiences, particularly my frustrations. It was also a joy to hear the thoughts of translators who loved their work and languages, as I did and still do.

The danger is that I replicate myself, my story, through selecting the bits of my participants' stories that are most familiar to me. In doing so, I may struggle to critically engage with the subject matter as a result of being too "close" to it (Chavez, 2008; Green, 2014). Indeed, the danger of my familiarity is that I might fail to defamiliarise the sites and events I attended as is central to an assemblage methodology. Reflexivity is the key to mitigating these risks (Green, 2014; Chavez, 2008; Bourke, 2014; England, 1994). I tried to be reflexive and sought out experiences, stories, and connections that disrupted and challenged my understandings (Reay, 1996). I sought out the positive, the resistance, the alternative narrative to that of the down-trodden freelancer that loomed large in my mind. I tried to write about this "side" of translation, about translators not bothered by agencies or concerned about technologies driving down rates. Overwhelmingly, however, I found the same concerns and frustrations that I experienced as a freelancer being told to me again and again, although I certainly interviewed a handful of well-established and successful translators. Yet, rather than trying to force a positive spin on these experiences in some ill-advised attempt to not make it all about me, I instead sought out the means and ways translators framed and dealt with the issues they face. An awareness of my position as an insider, and concern over the ethics of representation, enabled me to be reflexive. The iterative process of writing became a means to interrogate and explore the tensions between myself as a translator and as a researcher (Ellis, 2004; Collins & Gallinat, 2010).

Although this project is not an autoethnography, it has certain autoethnographic elements insofar as it blends the ethnographic and the autobiographical (Reed-

Danahay, 2009). By remembering and reflecting on my experiences as a freelance translator, I can confront "the tension between insider and outsider perspectives" (Reed-Danahay, 2009: 32) and explore these ethical issues. This tension can be addressed through the connection of "personal (insider) experience, insights, and knowledge to larger (relation, cultural, political) conversations, contexts, and conventions" (Adams et al., 2015: 25). Indeed, my dual researcher-translator role puts me in the unique position of personally understanding the concerns of my participants, while being guided by a methodological perspective that seeks to unpack and explore how those situated, contingent concerns emerge and what they are connected to. This is where the researcher side of this dual identity comes to the fore: by keeping in mind the ontological, epistemological and methodological commitments of assemblage, I focussed on the interconnections and interactions that I saw unfold, or indeed that I pursued, throughout the research. The tussle between self and participants, reflexivity and self-narration, is shaped by assemblage as a methodology. The ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage are tools that craft research. In analysis, this predisposition orients me towards the connections in the data. It encourages me to follow flows and interactions, to examine material and nonhuman agency. I was able to incorporate this relational mode of thought into my reflexive process, to distance myself from my *self* in my fieldnotes and interview transcripts.

4.5. Assembling Analysis

Assemblage methodology gives the researcher freedom while steering them towards the processes, practices and products of order and disorder, aggregation and disaggregation, production and reproduction. Methodologically the focus falls on how order emerges and falls apart. The researcher must seek out relations and connections, how they form, emerge, disintegrate, connect to other things, and what these relations and connections produce. Throughout the research process, from the writing of research questions, to data collection and analysis, it is inevitable that the complexity inherent in this understanding of the world will be reduced. As much as one might like to, it would be impossible to follow every thread, every fleeting or longstanding connection between one emergent entity and another. Prior to analysis, the researcher is perhaps more able to keep the project open to assemblage thinking. They are able to choose research questions and methods that foreground emergence and focus on interconnections and relations, and to follow, when possible, the unexpected paths that appear out "in the field". When it comes to analysis though, to

the minutiae of how that data is analysed, for me at least, the next steps were not clear. Assemblage is the "method of the anti-method" (Zourabichvili, 2012: 208): it is not prescriptive. It tries to avoid the reduction of complexity involved in providing a methodological "framework" that assumes, rather than seeks to show, the existence of phenomena. Now, this is all well and good in theory, but how does it work in practice? Scholars that use assemblage effectively can make significant, novel contributions to their fields, but they rarely detail exactly *what they did* with their data (Abourahme, 2015), or simply state that it was coded (Raynor, 2019).

My approach to analysis was naïve insofar as I completely neglected it as a methodological choice. Until, that is, I turned to face a mountain of data: 35 interviews, 14 participant observations, countless leaflets and documents[10], and thousands of tweets. While assemblage had been present in my mind throughout the research process, I had not yet had to apply it to the data itself. My first instinct was to code thematically; this would allow me to get the lay of land, an overview, to get me to the stage where I could do the "assemblage-y" bit. After four interviews, I had a feeling that there was a better way to go about it, a method of analysis that foregrounded and enabled assemblage thinking from the start. I did not know what it was, but it was not coding. I am, of course, not the first researcher to feel frustrated with this method. So, with this frustration in mind, I went to the literature and came across two articles (McLeod, 2014; Augustine, 2014) that allowed me to connect assemblage as an object and process in the world (Abourahme, 2015) and assemblage as a methodology (McFarlane & Anderson, 2011).

The article by Augustine (2014) – "Living in a post-coding world" – immediately spoke to me. She describes how she came to use writing and reading as a method in her analysis of the reading practices of academics. She immersed herself in her data and saw writing as an experimental process that enabled the complex relationships within interview transcripts to emerge. To distance herself from her literature review, she went to the work of Deleuze and Guattari and of scholars who had explored these ideas in their own work: "Writing is the thinking that brings into focus the theories central to analysis, but writing is never enough. Analysis requires the researcher to read widely at first and deeply once immersed in the data" (p. 752). Rather than applying assemblage to data, these analytic practices, the researcher and the data themselves

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[10] The documentary context of the professional translation field and the work that documents do in this shifting social world (Hodder, 1994; Prior, 2003, 2008) would constitute a study in itself and I made the decision here not to focus on documents.

become part of an assemblage that creates a "space of becoming" (p. 750). Reading practices can be understood as and demonstrated to be a continually produced and reproduced event, not a "point of arrival", but "movement" (p. 750). This iterative and dialogic process of writing and reading allowed Augustine to ask new questions and experiment with connecting theory to data.

McLeod (2014) took inspiration from Augustine's work as part of her strategy to challenge human-centred qualitative research by reframing the research process and "orienting to assemblage" (p. 377). McLeod situates assemblage methodology within a body of literature that, over the past few decades, has sought to decentre the subject to better align qualitative inquiry with theoretical paradigms. In her research on antidepressant use, McLeod wanted to destabilise and decentre the depressed individual to: avoid reproducing binary understandings of how these medications work – either "through a pharmacological action or through activating human agency"; to challenge the broader cultural debate around antidepressant use; and to avoid viewing antidepressants as passive entities to which meanings and identities are attached (p. 379). Her strategy involves seven "orientations" that describe how assemblage was used to achieve a more complex understanding of antidepressants and those who take them. At this stage of my project, the sixth orientation was of most interest to me: making maps. By drawing various maps, McLeod was able to better understand the relationships between and the co-production of the different elements in her data. She draws on Deleuze and Guattari's own work, which describes mapping as "working at the surface to connect exterior objects to the forces related to them, and exploring open connections and multiple entryways" (p. 385). She created modified situational, relational and position maps based on Clarke's (2005) work that I look at below. She first drew out the elements of a research encounter, then sought to demonstrate connections between human and nonhuman elements, before showing the positions various elements took (McLeod, 2014: 386). Mapping can focus on emergence by highlighting interconnections between elements within situated research encounters.

Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), McLeod does not give any examples of her maps and does not describe in detail how she created them from the raw data. I went to Clarke's (2005) work myself, which takes a grounded theory approach, to get more of an idea of how to start mapping. She suggests different types and levels of maps to identify key components in a research encounter. The situational map is a means of getting acquainted with the data. It begins with a "messy/working" version in which all

key elements are pulled from the data (p.88). This is then transferred into a more ordered map that categorizes the elements: human/nonhuman, discursive, spatial, political, and so on. The relational map (p. 84) is the next analytic step up that begins to highlight relations between elements identified at the first stage. This method seems particularly suited to assemblage for two reasons: it highlights relations between heterogeneous elements; and it treats each research encounter as an individual event or even assemblage. There is just one problem: Clarke recommends an initial coding – if only partial and preliminary – of the data prior to creating a situational map (p. 84). To me, this seemed almost to defeat the object entirely. So, with a call to experiment ringing in my ears (St. Pierre et al., 2016), and McLeod's and Augustine's words in mind, I decided to start mapping my own way.

The analysis process I have developed has five loosely defined, overlapping stages, which are inspired by Augustine (2014), McLeod (2014), Clarke (2005), other scholars that discuss assemblage methodology (Bazzul & Santavicca, 2017; Baker & McGuirk, 2016; Bueger, 2014; Fox & Alldred, 2018), as well as Deleuze and Guattari themselves (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988). The first stage is what I call a content map: I map the content of the interviews and observations. This involves scribbling all over an A1 piece of paper, linking the content of what is spoken, and what I observed, which elements are mentioned and connected. The second stage is my version of Clarke's situational map: firstly, I pull out the key people and "things" from the content map and then put them into the more orderly and descriptive situational map below.

Name of participant	
Human elements	**Discursive elements**
Nonhuman elements	**Temporal elements**
Political/economic elements	**Spatial elements**
Other key elements	**Practices and actions**
Territorialising	**Deterritorialising**

Figure 8: Situational map for qualitative data

After doing this for various interviews, I began to see what connects, drives, pushes together and produces different entities at different scales, from the identities of individual translators and their practices, to the design and use of software and the mobilisation of discourses. This is when I started to write, inspired by Augustine's methods. I wrote and read my maps, drew more maps, slowly making my way through the interviews and observations. I read assemblage analyses and theory, and wrote some more. Another of the maps I drew (Figure 9) takes a further analytical step and begins to piece together an element that has emerged to have an ordering effect: quality.
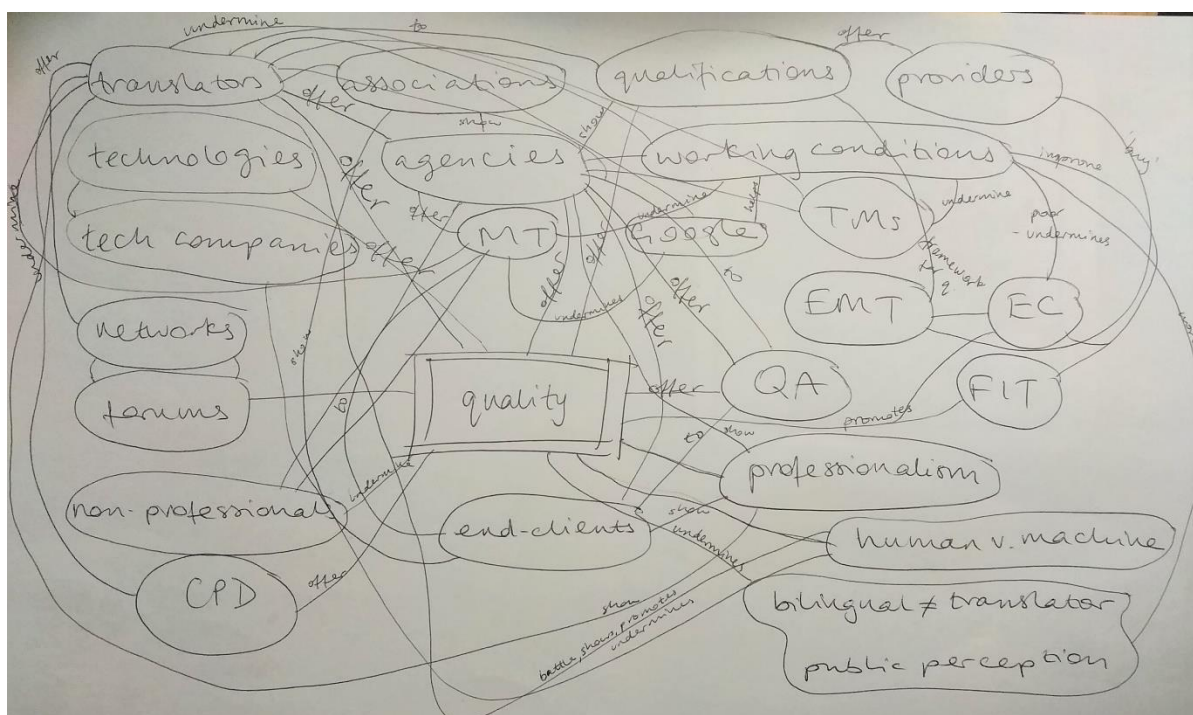
Figure 9: Hand-drawn analysis map

This iterative process of reading, writing and mapping meant I was able to home in on the interactions and interconnections that seemed most pertinent to my participants and the other aspects of translation that I heard about and observed. Key players – agencies, technologies, associations, social media – began to emerge and loom large in my thoughts. It became clear to me that I should focus on these elements as ordering processes and the products of these processes (Bueger, 2014; Abrahamsen, 2017). By following connections, both literally – with pen on paper – and analytically, the analysis chapters began to take shape. My choice of which interviews, events and tweets to focus on emerged as a result of this process. I selected data that appeared to me to be representative, but was first and foremost rooted in connection. I allowed

my analysis to be driven by connections between people and things; connections leading to emergence, to order and disorder. I discuss the impact of the different methods of data collection and analysis on the research in chapter 8.

The thesis is itself an emergent entity, shaped and driven by assemblage thinking, it takes partial shape through the interactions and connections I observed. Those events are components within this thesis, interacting with all the journal articles and industry reports I have read. Inevitably, I find myself reassembled through this process. Assemblage ethnography teaches me to treat the familiar as strange. This was something of a deterritorialization, in which I opened up my identity as a translator and budding researcher to those same exploratory ideas I took to the research process. As I discuss in 4.4.2 above, I faced my own precarity and insecurity as I saw the connections between the elements that make up translation branch out, coalesce and dissipate. I felt small. Not a Researcher but one tiny cog in a complex machine I was trying to understand. The mapping and writing process was in turn something of a reterritorialization. I redrew boundaries and lines. I carved my way through this mountain of data driven by those same epistemological and ontological commitments that had so thoroughly opened me up to chaos. I was reconstructed along with my reconstruction of what I saw. This thesis attempts to distil some of the ordering and disordering, the ordered and disordered that I encountered in my foray into commercial translation into an interconnecting, emergent story. The next chapters are the product of the processes I have described here, where I explore the interconnections and fragmentations within and beyond the data to shine a light on professional identity in translation.

Chapter 5. Outsourcing Translation

5.1.   Outsourcing Translation

Susanne Lorenz is a German translator based in the north of England. She describes her route into translation as a natural progression for someone who liked and was good at languages at school: "one thing led to another". She trained as a multilingual secretary at 16 and went on to study translation specifically, culminating in a Master's degree. After the Master's, she had about a year of waitressing and other jobs before landing an in-house translation position in a large, international technology company. She worked there for three and a half years before being made redundant. The company decided they were spending too much money on translation, so Susanne's department was outsourced. She set up as a freelancer immediately and worked for the agency that got the contract from her previous employer: "my job was outsourced to me".[11]

Susanne's story is one example of a wider phenomenon and serves as a great introduction to the organisation of translation work. Business practices have changed, driving the growth of translation agencies: translation, like other services, has largely shifted from in-house to outsourced over the past few decades (Kushner, 2013; Bologna, 2018). More recently, translation agencies have appeared, acting as a go-between for direct clients or end-users of translations and translators themselves[12]. In this chapter, I describe how translators' interactions and relationships with their clients – for my participants, largely agencies – shape their professional identity.

Assemblage forms the analytical backdrop to this project, with professional identity understood as complex, multi-layered and multi-level. It is emergent, never fully realised or complete. As such, it is produced in the interconnections between the macro – state institutions and outsourcing – and the micro – per word rates and payments of invoices. Interactions with translation agencies are moments in which the macro actor of a neoliberal political economy comes into contact with individual freelancers. Freelancer-agency relationships are points of interaction where neoliberalism is enacted. Given the lack of regulation of translation as a practice, the freedoms afforded

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[11] In chapters 5-7, I use a combination of italicised and plain text. Data from interviews and observations is italicised, with analysis and background information in plain text. This is to create a sense of rhythm in these chapters and signpost the shift in purpose and writing styles of the paragraphs.

[12] The proportion of freelance translators has risen since the 1990s, when large companies began increasingly outsourcing their translation services, with translation agencies equally growing in number and size (Pym et al. 2012). As discussed in the introduction, freelancers make up approximately 74% of translators in the EU (see 1.1.1).

to agencies and freelancers allow for a market-driven definition of competency and quality. I use assemblage to frame these relationships as productive of professional identities within a broader context of a neoliberal apparatus. I also begin to explore the relationship or role of neoliberalism within these assemblages: it is both the wider environment and an active part of the network(s) I uncover. That is, the context of neoliberalism establishes powerful discourses that impact interactions between various actors and have material affects, such as economic policy that deregulates the labour market. At the same time, neoliberalism has an active role when it is enacted in assemblages, such as when Susanne's job is outsourced as part of cost minimisation. I explore the interactions and relationships between agencies and freelancers as moments, events and assemblages in which neoliberalism plays a greater or lesser role. Professional identity is produced in these moments, shaped and driven by a variety of people and things.

Throughout this chapter, I identify these disparate actors and follow the connections between them to explore translators' professional identities. In the next section, I detail the working practices and relationships between agencies and freelancers. I describe the size and scope of the translation market and explain how freelancers and agencies establish their working relationships to contextualise the analysis. I then move on to exploring the networks and connections I have traced in fieldwork. As I move through the sections, I look at the relationship between time, money and identity, and how agencies establish and reinforce ideas of professionalism. Firstly, I unpack how freelancer-agency relationships create flexibility that can be beneficial, but is equally productive of uncertainty. Secondly, I explore how institutional outsourcing of translation and interpreting has impacted ideas of professionalism and the value of expertise. Thirdly, I discuss how agencies' requirements have begun to shape professional identities, particularly for newcomers to the industry. I bring the chapter to a close by drawing together the tensions between uncertainty and flexibility inherent in a largely freelance and unregulated profession. Agencies emerge from this analysis as at once productive and restrictive for translators. On the one hand, this working relationship enables translators to build a professional identity and develop areas of specialisation. On the other, deadlines and rates, largely defined by agencies, restrict translators' abilities to exercise their expertise and broader autonomy as professionals. The productive and restrictive elements of the freelancer-agency relationship are therefore not mutually exclusive, but emerge as overlapping tendencies from which professional identities are constructed.

Before beginning the analysis, I would like to define two key concepts: professionalness and the profession "as a whole". In the literature, professionalism tends to be explored in two ways: professionalism as professionalization; and professionalism as discourse. For the former, professionalism relates to the "processes and circumstances through which occupations pursue, negotiate and maintain professionalism" (Bolton & Muzio, 2008: 284). This principally describes the means by which a group of professionals gains and maintains a jurisdiction or monopoly over a task or market (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). On the other hand, professionalism as discourse describes the competence, skills and practices expected of a professional. In these primarily Foucauldian analyses, professionalism is a mechanism of control that enables a group to exercise power through restricting and defining what it means to be professional (Fahie, 2016; McCarthy, 2016). The idea of professional*ness* contributes to these discussions by highlighting the qualities and characteristics of *becoming* professional, itself an active process not a finite quality. Professionalness is professionalism as laboured over, built up, possessed and projected to potential clients. This hints at the complexity of professional identity that has emerged from the data.

Professional identity is individual yet links the individual to an occupational cohort, group or population. This brings me to the second concept: the profession "as a whole". The profession "as a whole" is an imagined collectivity in translation that largely goes undefined at the events I attended and in discussions with translators. It loosely relates to all "professional" translators and interpreters, as well as university programmes, and translator associations. In other words, this imagined collectivity includes all those who engage in best practice in translation or those who promote it. Speaking of "the profession" evokes ideas of commitment to translation beyond simply a means to earn money, but almost as a moral imperative and point of professional pride (Ackroyd, 2016; Musílek et al., 2019). Translators and translation associations position themselves within the profession as a whole, incorporating it into their professional identity construction. From this perspective, professional identity seems esoteric at first glance – "about translation" – but that quickly dissolves. It goes far beyond the task of translation, far beyond any jurisdiction or monopoly over translation practices (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). Across chapters 5-7, I explore how professionalness, the profession as a whole and individual experience feed into one another and elucidate the complex interactions that produce professional identities in translation.

5.2. The Agency Model

Agencies vary in size and services, some are specialised (i.e. medical or legal translation), some cover all topics. Some offer only a few language combinations and others offer seemingly all. Among other linguistic services (editing, copy writing), some also offer localisation, which entails adapting a product or content to suit a particular market, and frequently involves translation. Agencies are often called language service providers, or LSPs. This term also applies to freelance translators as they also provide language services, but generally is specific to larger providers, like agencies. Many agencies have a range of in-house staff, including project managers (PMs), quality checkers, and translators. From the perspective of a freelance translator looking for work, you apply to an agency either by emailing a CV or by applying on a platform of sorts via their website. They usually ask you complete a "test translation", a short, unpaid translation to evaluate your ability. That translation is assessed either by in-house translators or proof-readers, or is sent to another freelancer for evaluation. Assuming your work meets the agency's (unwritten) standards, you are sent various documents, such as a confidentiality agreement and contract that you need to sign. Once on their books, a PM[13] gets in touch when a suitable project comes along. This normally involves the PM sending an email with a brief of the project that may or may not include the text to be translated. Often there is already an established deadline, but you are sometimes asked when you might be able to complete it for. Depending on your availability and the needs of the end-client, you could rule yourself out of the project on this basis. If you and the agency come to an agreement over the rate and deadline, you normally get a confirmation or project order. You may be given access to the agency's TMs[14], which you access via an online server. Some agencies will have you working entirely on a Cloud-based server that includes all the necessary documents and TMs. In any event, you need to email back the text when completed. Working with an agency usually means your work is proofread or edited. This may be done by an in-house proof-reader/quality checker (who may be a translator that does this when needed) or sent out to another freelancer. This is a possible alternative source of income for freelancers. This is part of the quality assurance that agencies offer their clients. Invoicing is usually done once a month: the agency sends a rundown

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[13] PMs sit outside of translators as a professional role, although many have a background in languages and translation. In fact, I have come across one freelance translator that takes on project management remotely for agencies. On the whole, however, PMs as a cohort and identity are distinct from translators.
[14] Translation Memories – this is a database of paired texts and sometimes terminology that can be used when translating. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

of the projects you have done and how much each one amounts to. You then produce an invoice and, depending on the payment terms, are paid by bank transfer. In the UK, payment terms are usually 30 days, but they can be up to 90.

It is difficult to get an overview of the language industry and the role of agencies within it. Based on industry and market reports, it appears that there have been increasing numbers of mergers and acquisitions of LSPs over the past few years, with 2018 being possibly the most active to date ('Slator 2018 Language Industry M&A and Funding Report', 2019). Large LSPs have been growing with mergers and acquisitions a key driver of this growth for many of these companies (Bond, 2019; DePalma et al., 2018; 'Nimdzi 100', 2018). The overall picture is that this industry is expanding – "supported by various growth drivers, such as increasing globalization, growing e-commerce, increasing online and offline content volume, etc" – and that the big LSPs are getting bigger ('Global Language Service Market 2019 - Reuters', 2019). The few sources of market research I have been able to access create an implicit comparison to a relatively recent past in translation, in which the majority of this work was conducted in-house, by individual freelancers working for direct clients, or small agencies. The impact of this shift away from in-house translation department and direct translator-client relationships towards larger LSPs can be seen in professional identity construction, which I explore in the rest of this chapter.

5.3.   "Please Feel Free to Bring Biscuits and Other Translation Supplies"

I arrived at the co-working event, held in a small local library tucked away in the wing of a large shopping centre, with a packet of hobnobs. The day had been organised by the local branch of the ITI, and generally attracted members of the regional group[15]. Susanne Lorenz, the event organiser and regional group coordinator, was already there. She was disappointed at the turnout recently for these monthly co-working days, only about four translators would usually turn up. I put my things down on the large central table, surrounded by shelves filled with dictionaries. Susanne showed me where the kitchen was, and I made myself a cup of tea. I plugged my laptop into the extension lead which sat in the middle of the table. Over the day, as others came and went, this extension lead with its four plugs was negotiated depending on whose laptop

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[15] The ITI (Institute of Translation and Interpreting) contains regional groups that provide locally focussed events, but are linked to the national ITI, which provides accreditation and other benefits as discussed in 6.3. Translators can be regional members, that is, a member of the regional group only. This is less expensive and does not have the benefits of being a member of the national ITI. For example, regional only members have to pay full price for national ITI events.

had battery and whose didn't. In total, there were six of us that day, Susanne was pleased. As people arrived, there would be introductions, curiosity in my project, then work, the sound of typing, interspersed with cups of tea and coffee, biscuits, and discussion about translation. With no windows in the room, our faces glowed in the blue light of our laptop screens.

Agencies came up a lot in our eruptions of talking throughout the day, that would often start with a sigh and then a comment sent out to the table, met with mutual understanding and a sharing of experience. In an ideal world, agencies add value to a translation project by offering services that a single translator cannot offer – e.g. proofreading, quality and consistency – but this is not necessarily the reality. Two of the attendees had worked in agencies prior to going freelance: Jenny Bardsley as a translation checker, and Teresa Villa as a project coordinator. Jenny described the "micro-management" of working in-house on the linguistic side of an agency: your output is quantified, the volume of work required is set by management who are not trained linguists: "if my freelancers can do 3000 words a day, why can't my in-house translators?" The translation itself is an afterthought. Teresa's experience echoed this. She worked for a large, international translation company who were ruthless with their freelancers. They offered a three-step process – translation, proofreading and quality management – that was sold cheaply to the client. As a project coordinator, Teresa often had to go to freelancers in Argentina to get people to work for low enough rates. It is run by businesspeople – not translators. At an annual meeting that Teresa attended in the US, they ran an "Oscars-esque" award ceremony, with the American staff giving out awards because they "managed to get an interpreter to work for half the price". Teresa imitated a crowd roaring and cheering. As a freelancer, Teresa worked for a "fast fashion" clothing brand, again through an agency, and described painfully low rates. Susanne commented: "you're just one of the many, many people that gets exploited along the way".

This small hub of translators, some working on translations, others on admin tasks, are one small event of thousands, happening at that exact moment. This event is connected to other events, other hubs and clusters, some larger, some smaller. Agencies are one of those larger hubs, likely with some physical presence in an office miles away, in this case: Germany, Italy, France, Spain. Money-making is happening through this connection of individual to agent to end-client (to their client, audience, or the public). Individual translators make money for themselves, each word giving them

a certain number of pennies or cents. Each of those words makes money for agencies, which in turn enables the end-client to do something: sell or publicise or reach out to a new audience. The setting of rates is generally a negotiation that is heavily weighted toward the agency, with lesser experienced freelancers having little say (Cohen, 2016). In an economy that prioritises cost reduction and minimisation, the actor at the end of the supply chain is hit hardest (Moore & Newsome, 2018). Power relations between freelancer and agency are established in the material element of per word rates. Money – the promise of it at least – flows along internet connections, clustering in texts and TM packages and final products.

Translation clusters at different points in this complex network and is also itself a connection, a connecting element. Expectations of quality and understandings of value (of translation itself, of the time and expertise of translators) sometimes clash. Precarity and frustration hang in the air. These translators describe elements of a fragmented and deregulated labour market, which has contributed to a rise in self-employment and the instability that goes with it (Kalleberg, 2011; Manky, 2018). Deregulation, driven by neoliberal policies, limits the power of freelance and in-house staff in companies that rely on both forms of contractual relationship. In Jenny's case, the performance of directly employed translators was compared to the daily output of freelancers. Such comparisons limit the mobility of directly employed workers who become disposable (Moore & Newsome, 2018). There is an economic/spatial element to this precarity, with PMs "obliged" to reach out to low wage economies, undercutting the translators in this room. It is thought that the people doing these translations produce lower quality work: they are likely to be non-native speakers of the target[16] language and may not have the grasp of idiomatic expression that native speakers have. Lower quality work further undermines the expertise and skill of these professionals. Agencies as big business focus on the bottom line, with translators and interpreters as hidden humanoid translation machines that can churn out volume of text in any given language. They have no power, these atomised linguists, whose rates can be pushed down and who have no recourse to a union or body that will stand up for them.

This initial vignette gives some indication of the complex and multiple connections between agencies, translation expertise and practice, and professional identity. The

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[16] "Source" and "target" language or text refer to the direction of translation. "Source" is the original and "target" is the translation. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

rest of this chapter will explore elements of the networks and assemblages that are produced by these interactions and interconnections.

5.4. Translate-send-repeat

Ellie Bradford, unlike the translators I met at the co-working event, is not a member of an association. She is one of the more professionally isolated translators I spoke to in this sense, although she has her own networks to tap into (see 6.6). Ellie did "all the languages [she] could at school" and went on to do a translation and interpreting degree at Heriot-Watt University. She did an internship and then got a job in-house at an agency in Scotland before going freelance pretty quickly. She has now been freelancing for six years. Her business is going well and she set up as a limited company last year. Ellie summarises the benefits of working for agencies that many other translators described:

> *[…] with an agency, if [clients] complain, you're not the person they go to; they go to the project manager and they work out how to deal with it […] often some of the bad agencies just pass on a complaint and you know they won't put any effort in whatsoever they just say 'oh the client complained, what do you think?' 'I don't know how about you have an opinion because this is your job!' but in general they are very good. You just know that you're a good translator and you did good work and it'll get it looked at by someone else. You don't have to worry about it or if you are in the wrong they will say- they'll tell you, and sometimes you have to offer a discount […] I always think that the benefit of working for agencies as that you can just translate, send, repeat.*

> *[…]*

> *sometimes they're just an annoying middleman but sometimes they are very useful middleman.*

The "translate-send-repeat" nature of agency work, combined with Ellie's own interests, have led to a specialisation in translating clinical trials. During her in-house job, she translated some medical texts, which piqued her interest. She started to read medical articles, develop her knowledge in this area and state this was a specialism of hers to agencies. This has culminated in Ellie undertaking a new higher education qualification:

as soon as I decided I wanted to do medical, I started like, actually trying to know what I was talking about, and I'm doing a degree in health sciences with the Open University.

I asked Ellie if there were any signs that meant she would not work for an agency:

yeah usually if there are a lot of things to sign or like a big long thing or if they've got a lot of weird terms and conditions like 'you must delete all documents after a week of delivery' or 'you must delete translation memories' or things. Or you know if they say: 'if we find any mistakes you will be fully liable' and things like that. Well then, 'what's the point of you?' The point of an agency is, yeah, they make sure that the quality of what they deliver to their client is good, and if they are just going to blame everything on you if the client isn't happy- and yeah and you can sometimes tell from the things that you are asked to sign that they are going to be that type of agency, so… Or if they don't agree to your rates to be honest, or if you quote something that's reasonable and they say 'oh you know we pay our translators half of that', you think: 'well, you're never going to send me any work then are you?'

Agencies create value from their position in the translation supply chain through the systems they put in place to find and keep clients. Agencies are a necessary evil that represent the segmentation of translation as a commercial process. They are a step in its commodification that reinforces and demands per word rates, which at times make it seem like translation can be weighed in words like grain can in kilos. Contracts emerge as a material component of the freelancer-agency interaction, which at once produce and inhibit that interaction, monitoring, defining and controlling these relationships (Moore & Newsome, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2019). Various translators spoke about the documents they had to sign to work for agencies. The clauses within the contracts place the freelancer outside the company. This confirms the precarity of translators' working conditions: external to the organisation, they are only entitled to remuneration on a project basis. Companies are able to extract surplus value from labour by exploiting these contractual arrangements with freelancers (Cohen, 2016). For example, Ellie being passed on complaints from clients is beyond the scope of the translate-send-repeat contract. Client management is not her job.

However, some scholars argue that self-employed workers get flexibility in return for their precarity. Freelancers have more control over their how they organise their

working day and can mitigate the financial instability inherent in project-based contracts by working for multiple clients (Gold & Fraser, 2002; Dawson et al., 2014; Lupano, 2017; Moore & Newsome, 2018). As Rosenkranz (2019: 616) explains, "[i]t is exactly this tension between uncertainty and flexibility that is prominently identified as the 'new spirit of capitalism'". This tension between uncertainty and flexibility is seen in translators' experience of precarity, which is two-fold: firstly, rates themselves are uncertain and vary; secondly, they do not know where the next job will come from. Contracts to some extent mitigate one aspect of this uncertainty: depending on the agency, rates may be established in the contract. Nonetheless, this experience of precarity becomes a "threat to the professional self, as a condition of permanent professional anxiety" (Rosenkranz, 2019: 625).

As an antidote to this condition, Ellie takes advantage of her relationships with agencies to build a specialised professional profile. Her professional identity emerges from these interactions and her actions and practices in her work. Successful translate-send-repeat relationships increase the homogeneity of working practices: it is (mostly) about producing translations. This is often contrasted with working for direct clients, which involves a wider variety of working practices: "managing" client expectations and complaints, chasing invoices, marketing oneself and getting clients. While freelancers will often find themselves engaging in some of these same practices to get and maintain agency clients, overall they can focus more on translation itself. The experiences of translators chime with the market research presented in 5.2 above: direct clients are few and far between; agencies dominate and are growing. In direct client relationships, freelancers take on more risk, as the time investment in a client may not pay off. Translate-send-repeat relationships reduce the risk to freelancers, enable specialisation, but tend to be more restrictive on rates and deadlines, with agencies taking a cut. The tensions between uncertainty and flexibility in the new spirit of capitalism extend beyond payment within project-based employment, with freelancers having to balance various forms of risk and responsibility (Dawson et al., 2014; Warr & Inceoglu, 2018). The relationships in which freelancers are least able to exert their autonomy also provide a space for specialisations to be honed, which may open up possibilities for higher rates and increased autonomy.

Nicky Elliot's route into translation is similar to Ellie's. She studied French and German at Heriot-Watt University, because those were the languages she did at school. She went on to do a Master's in translation at the same university because she wanted a

career that would mean she could make best use of her language skills. Nicky got three different in-house positions prior to going freelance: firstly in a translation company in York. She then looked into moving down to London, where she got a position in the Ministry for Agriculture; 18 months into that job, a role was advertised internally to work in the Department for Trade and Industry.

> *so I was there for a couple of years… the department was under review by a management consultants to see if they provided value for money for the department, for the Ministry as a whole. And in the civil service there was a process where you could apply for voluntary severance or voluntary early retirement if you were at that stage. So at that point I thought I might as well apply for voluntary severance because it was equivalent to two-months' pay and I could set up as a freelancer with about five years' experience.*

Nicky has been freelancing since January 2005. She initially worked freelance full-time, and then took some time off and periods of part-time work when she had her children. She has been gradually building up towards full-time again in recent years. Working for agencies has given her flexibility that employed positions, or even working for direct clients, would not give:

> *a big advantage for me as that I take away a lot of time off, say school holidays I take six weeks off more or less, and I know that agencies have other people they can call on, so I'm fairly confident that I can not work with agencies for the summer holidays and they'll still be prepared to work with me after the summer holidays, because they know the score and they have other people to fill the gaps. And when I went on maternity leave and when I came back saying: "could you give me either shorter jobs or jobs with a longer deadline and then I can sort of fit that around unpredictable sort of childcare" and whatever. So they can if they are understanding and they value their translators. They can juggle the translators they have and sort of get the best arrangements for everybody.*

Despite the advantages of working for agencies, Nicky highlighted the main disadvantage that most translators referred to:

> *I suppose the disadvantage is that they take a cut of the pay, there's one agency that I've worked with since the beginning, but they basically have almost not raised the rate they are willing to pay me at all since 2005. I mean I don't think*

rates are going up, usually, generally, but there are- there definitely seems to
be a ceiling on what rates agencies in general are willing to pay.

The tensions of the new spirit of capitalism that Nicky experiences differ from those Ellie describes. Nicky has seen the impact of austerity, with her translation department in a government agency slowly being phased out. A neoliberal emphasis on value for money and the austerity politics that began in the 2000s created an unstable public sector in which her expertise was not deemed a good return-on-investment (Rubery & Rafferty, 2013; López-Andreu & Rubery, 2018). She subsequently transitioned to self-employment, and since has been able to combine earning with childcare, maintaining her expertise while incorporating motherhood into her working practices (Craig et al., 2012; Black et al., 2019). Yet, the stagnant economy has seen little to no increase in the rates she has been paid since initially going freelance (Grimshaw & Bosch, 2013). In the tension between uncertainty and flexibility, working for agencies has allowed her to continue translating, and her role as a mother restricts the amount of time she can work. As part of Nicky's navigation between motherhood and translation, agencies as a population of emergent entities are varied, and are dichotomised into "good" and "bad". Working with "good" agencies can consolidate professional identity, whereas "bad" agencies do not provide the added value they should or could. The "good" agencies that value their translators have enabled Nicky to consolidate her professional identity by enabling her to combine earning and taking on the primary child caring role in her family. Both Ellie and Nicky construct their professional identities out of the tensions of flexibility and uncertainty inherent within freelancer-agency relationships. Their identities emerge in moments of interaction and during their working practices. In the next sections, I look in more detail at specific elements of these relationships and their impact on professional identity construction.

5.5.   When Institutions Outsource

In this section, I turn specifically to interpreting to dig into the tensions around state outsourcing. The UK's largest government supplier of interpreting services – thebigword – is an agency that came up more than once in interviews and observations. Various participants, whether themselves interpreters or translators, told me about the role of this agency in the ongoing saga of police and court interpreting in the UK that started a few years ago. Under the European Convention of Human Rights, anyone who is arrested and does not understand the language of the court is entitled to the free assistance of an interpreter (Council of Europe, 1950). The old system in

the UK, administered by a National Agreement, stipulated that interpreters should be registered with the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), because this provides safeguards "as to interpreters' competence, reliability and security vetting" (Ministry of Justice, 2008: 4). As far as was possible, interpreters were recruited from this prestigious register when they were needed. In 2011, the Ministry of Justice outsourced police and court interpreting to Applied Language Solutions (ALS), at the time a small language service provider (LSP), in a four-year £168-million contract, in an effort to save money. Some parts of the old National Agreement were "dis-applied" to this contract. Most interestingly for our purposes, the following paragraph, excluding the first sentence, no longer applied to the procurement of interpreting services (Ministry of Justice, 2011):

> *It is essential that interpreters used in criminal proceedings should be competent to meet the ECHR [European Convention on Human Rights] obligations. To that end, **the standard requirement is that every interpreter/LSP working in courts and police stations should be registered** with one of the recommended registers, ie the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (**NRPSI**) at full or interim status (with Law Option) for non-English spoken languages, and, as full members, with **CACDP** [Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People] for communicating with D/deaf people. (Ministry of Justice, 2008: 4, emphasis original)*

It is no longer a standard requirement that interpreters or LSPs are registered with the NRPSI. The register has subsequently been undermined and devalued, and has since reduced its own stringent entry requirements (Aslanyan, 2017).

Before the contract began, ALS had already been bought by Capita – a public contractor giant. Capita's reign over police and court interpreting is generally thought to be chaos. They pushed down payments to interpreters, causing many to refuse to work and leading to a messy and ineffective provision of services that resulted in multiple fines (Maniar, 2016; 'Interpreter firm fined thousands', 2014). Thebigword won the most substantial part – including all interpreting – of the bid for the subsequent four-year contract, which started in 2016. In contrast to Capita, thebigword is an established translation and interpreting agency. While this new contract appears to be improved, there are significant and similar issues to the previous one, particularly with regard to pay. Moreover, thebigword initially struggled to meet its contractual success rate of 98% (Dino, 2017).

Marcela Zima and Alicja Broz are two Polish interpreters with similar stories. I met Alicja at a specialised translation workshop, and she was eager to speak to me about her experiences in more depth in an interview. She then suggested I contact Marcela to hear what she had to say. I interviewed them both over the phone, and heard strikingly similar stories, although the two only met once. Educated to university level in Poland, they both came over to the UK and worked in schools as language assistants. They transitioned to interpreting, with some translating too, both taking the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI). They both had similar things to say about the state of the profession in the UK.

Alicja told me about the NRPSI and laments its more recent demise. She described the prestige of the register and how the previous use of the NRPSI paid interpreters well for their professional skills:

> *to be put on the register you had to have more than 400 documented hours of interpreting a year altogether, you had to have a full DPSI references, you know, a whole list of documents. It cost I think £220 to register […] the pay was fabulous, the payment terms were great, and you know it was more like a profession because not everybody could be on that register you know. You had to prove that you are, you know, professional, but then as far as I know- people did say that some professional bodies still use it but some completely just disregard it […] it's kind of serving to devalue the whole esteem or prestige of that register.*

Although there was previously no regulation stating that interpreters had to have a qualification, the use of the NRPSI as governed by a National Agreement generally maintained standards. Now that this register has been devalued, there is less and less onus on interpreters to get a qualification. For Alicja, her commitment to her work is seen in her qualifications, which she believes are essential to providing a professional service as an interpreter:

> *I know that in Germany it's not easy at all to become interpreter you have to have, you know, a complete a qualification. It costs money, you have to commit to it, and I think that's the right way to do it. And I would love to see the day when that happens in the UK, because currently the whole market is fragmented and, you know, you have got better agencies and worse agencies, and it's only logical that an agency that pays £12 an hour will not attract the best of talent*

from the pool and also professionalism […] there was one colleague in Polish circles – or community – she keeps popping up and people have had, you know, veritable horror stories about her. For example, one murder trial where the victims' children were present, and they are effectively bilingual, so they could verify that what that lady was saying was not what was being originally said… a complaint was made about her and she is still doing the job.

For Marcela, there is not enough vetting of interpreters. I asked Marcela if she thought anything could be done, particularly by larger bodies within translation:

well they could do an audit maybe, they could put pressure on – I'm going to name names here – thebigword and other agencies to employ- to run their checks as appropriate and employ appropriate people.

Instead, agencies are more focussed on profits than the service they provide and the working conditions of their interpreters:

the agencies they only want to make a profit at the costs of both interpreters […] the service itself and the service users so […] they offer lower and lower rates. So, obviously people who find those rates still beneficial go for it, but professionals will not because, well, they just will say it's demeaning, you know, to have studied for 20 years or so and have qualifications and then go to work for £12 an hour excluding your travel.

Part of the problem for Marcela is the lack of awareness on the part of the public of what translation and interpreting are, how they work, and who is entitled to what. This means service users are not empowered to ask for anything and have no way of evaluating the service they are provided with.

MARCELA: *obviously not being in the industry themselves, they don't really have no way of knowing whether someone is doing a good job, because of course if you're using an interpreter, you don't know the language. So you can't really assess their knowledge. I don't think the customers have any agency, and definitely not at this stage in this political climate: you're on the verge of Brexit, nobody has ever listened to what immigrants have to say much anyway, but at the moment they are at the very bottom of the ladder […]*

EMMA: *well it sounds quite bleak, doesn't it?*

MARCELA: it does. Sorry, I've been doing my tax so I'm in a bleak mood.

Money, professionalism and quality are interrelated in interpreting and translation. A change of practice at government level, associated with recent austerity politics, has caused a fundamental shift in police and court interpreting. In the UK, spending cuts since the 2008 crash increased contractual insecurity in the local government sector (Prosser, 2016). This is evident in the decline of standard work contracts and the increase in self-employment in all sectors (Prosser, 2016; Musílek et al., 2019). This has impacted discourses of professionalism, as the actions of neoliberal UK and US governments to increase deregulation have expanded the scope of the markets and weakened the power of expert workers (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011; Ackroyd, 2016). Professionalism has been deterritorialized by the neoliberal apparatus and made to aid the flow of capital, emphasising time efficiency and cost reduction, with pay increasingly seen as important to the recognition of professional services and expertise (Fournier, 1999; Ackroyd, 2016). As an example of this deterritorialization, old means of vetting and evaluating interpreters have been replaced by government and corporate interests to save money. Neoliberal policies that favour certain business practices have left various professions and occupations more exposed to market forces (Hassard and Morris 2018). For Alicja and Marcela, this change to the profession – the shift in vetting practices – led to the disregard for interpreting expertise, made visible and tangible in the rates available.

This material change in remuneration destabilised professional identities and the way professional interpreting was defined and valued. The prestigious NRPSI has even lowered its admission criteria, increasing the internal heterogeneity of this population of linguists. The courts themselves are destabilised, and potentially vulnerable people do not have access to justice. While interpreting was previously largely freelance and therefore inherently precarious work, this increased heterogeneity, owing to reduced rates and the devaluing of qualifications, has created increased precarity. However, this is not just a quantitative change. Not only has precarity increased, but the quality of the experience of professional interpreting has shifted. New interests and tensions have come into play, devaluing linguistic expertise and knowledge of the legal system. Interpreters not only face the quantitative increase in precarity through lower rates, they also face qualitative change to their professional lives through an undermining of

their training and skills[17]. The actions of state actors, and the pervasive belief that the private sector is more cost-effective, are an example of a macro influence on professional identity.

The European Union (EU), particularly the European Parliament and the European Commission (EC), are the largest employer of translators and interpreters in the world (Members' Research Service, 2018). In addition to a large body of in-house staff, EU institutions outsource approximately a quarter of their translation and half of their interpreting (European Commission, 2016). For Robert Kahler, a senior translator in an EU institution, agencies are "the root of all evil", he's never had to work for one and is "eternally grateful":

> *most people translating seem to me to be people just trying to stay alive, just trying to feed themselves, you know, that's just an incredibly hard life I think. I'm a senior civil servant so doing agreeable work in agreeable conditions, you know, I have- and very well paid, I'm looking forward to a substantial final salary pension, and, you know, I'm not scraping a living. It's an agreeable activity I mean it's… it's like doing crossword puzzles for a living which suits me perfectly, being a freelance translator would be my idea of hell.*

Robert came to translation, like many others I spoke to, "by chance". He's been working for the EU as a translator for many years. As a child, he read a lot and was "good at languages"; they had summer holidays abroad. He studied multiple languages at university, and had a French girlfriend for a couple of years "which brushed up my French no end". She "got sick of [him]" and suggested he went abroad, showing him an advert in the back of a newspaper looking for translators for the EU. He was "on the dole" and "more or less homeless" but managed to provide a forwarding address. He got through the "competition" and was recruited to work for the EU as a translator. He thinks it was his knowledge of Russian that got him in, which was crucial "when the whole thing just went bang, you know, after the Fall of the Berlin Wall".

Fast forward a few decades, and this experienced translator has sat in on a few tender evaluation committees for outsourcing translation. The quotes these agencies provide, to get a potentially huge volume of work over the course of the tender (four years), simply do not add up. The speed required to produce enough translation to make a

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[17] The provision of police and court interpreting is an example of gatekeeping measures in translation, which I explore in the next chapter.

living means that the translator is not working under what Robert thinks of as "professional conditions". They cannot do the research necessary to produce the quality the agency states it will provide in its tender bid.

> *there is no way a professional job can be done under those conditions really, on the basis of my knowledge myself, you know, I've been translating for years and I don't honestly see how, day in day out, you could maintain any sort of professional standards.*

The volume of translation needed by the institution is so great that a freelancer would struggle to meet their needs as an individual. They are therefore "more or less obliged to deal with agencies and the agencies can only really compete on the basis of the salaries they pay their translators". These agencies "promise the world": endless language combinations and quality assurance in the form of revision. The financial regulations put in place to ensure transparency and avoid institutional corruption mean that "even if we know that this agency hasn't delivered in the past, we are institutionally obliged to forget this fact, you know, it gets a fresh bite of the cherry unless they've done something completely and utterly illegal". The previous competitive tender was evaluated based on 60% quality and 40% price. They are institutionally obliged to take the bid that has the overall "best" score. This means that if an agency puts in an incredibly low price, regardless of quality, it will be accepted. This quality is assessed by the EU body when it comes in from the agency: in-house translators evaluate 10 pages or 10% of the text depending on text length. For Robert, the tender is a "lying competition":

> *you know they are lying because of the money they are quoting for the work and, from the work you've seen, you know the standards haven't been respected you know [...] there's no way that paltry sum can be divided fairly between the agency, translator and the notional reviser[18], you know, it just doesn't add up, you know that the translator will be working probably without a net and that you may have some- you may have a secretary in the agency's office who will proofread the English and make some appropriate changes of her own or his own [...] I think the sort of fear of the financial regulations we do*

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[18] The principal method of quality assurance in translation is to have the translated text revised by another person. The reviser is often a translator themselves and revision can be an additional source of work for freelancers.

> *all sorts of stupid unsatisfactory things just in the interests of not being perceived as corrupt you know just 'ok it's done' but it's hands-off.*

This paltry sum and how it is divided impacts how translators see themselves. Pay is a form of recognition that contributes to translators' perception of themselves as professionals:

> *that's how, you know, you recognise a professional: they bill you for, you know, their knowledge and time and generally you know these bills are excruciating, you know, I mean lawyers' bills, doctors' bills. You know, you know you've been done over by a professional.*

Serendipity brought Robert to the EU institutions. Politics, his nationality, and his ex-girlfriend browsing the papers culminated in a decades long career translating thousands upon thousands of words for the EU. His stability contrasts with the precarity of Alicja and Marcela, and that of the freelancers whose work he reads. This work – these texts – move from EU to agency to freelancer, to agency to the EU. The EU sets quality standards that agencies promise to achieve. If those standards are not met, they will repeat that journey. The translation process is fragmented, with texts sent to external agencies who send them onto external freelancers. Competitive tendering enforced by financial regulations enables the commodification of intellectual services at an institutional scale (Cowling & Mitchell, 1997; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012; Rubery & Rafferty, 2013; López-Andreu & Rubery, 2018). The tender is an event that marks the start of this fragmentation. The tender is open, charged with potential. Financial regulations set limits and begin the process of aggregation. Calculations are made by both agencies and then the EU. Potential is shut down; the tender is awarded. The work and money take on a staggered flow, moving along communication networks, clustering in computers and bank accounts. This flow produces and is produced by translation being done, in homes and offices.

Quality is sold as part of the tender, guaranteed – or at least promised – by quality assurance processes, usually in the form of a reviser. Until the delivery of the translated text, quality is potential, possible, not actual. Quality relates to professionalism and professional levels of skill and ability, which should be reflected in pay. For Robert, professional work is only possible in professional conditions, which are enabled by having enough time to do the work necessary. Having enough time to do the work necessary hinges on the amount of money the translator gets per word in a market

where pay is dictated by rates. Translated words as a commodity place the emphasis on volume for all parties. Agencies sell more translation for less; freelancers must churn out high volumes of text to earn a decent wage. This highlights the qualitative change that comes alongside the quantitative increase in precarity. The doing of translation as a means of income, for many translators and interpreters, rests on the amount they are able to produce. Expertise and linguistic ability, while still important, take a back seat to volume and speed, evidencing a market-driven definition of competency and quality in translation. For Alicja and Marcela, the low rates offered and the travel time not recompensed, reflect on the professionalism that is asked of them. In a neoliberal economy, money, and how it relates to time, make the professional.

5.6. Choice and Precarity

Harry Garrard is a translator who lives in a historic market town in northern England, and is perhaps one of the freelancers Robert Kahler is talking about. He invited me into his home for the interview, and offered me a cup of tea. We sat down on the sofa, using a wooden chair as a makeshift table where I balanced my laptop and phone to record. Harry did an undergraduate degree in French in Paris, before coming back to the UK, where he did a law conversion course, and a MPhil in European Law. He then "did the whole kind of thing people do when they're in their mid-20s: why not be a teacher!" He hated the PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education), so, after trying it for six months, he returned to Paris and got back into the freelance writing he'd done throughout his undergraduate degree. While he was there, working as an English editor for a magazine, he found himself doing some translation and thought "oh this might be a good idea". So he came back again and set up as a freelancer, slowly building up contacts, and has now been doing it for 10 years. At some point during this back and forth before translation, Harry was also a freelance journalist in Madrid. Along with his Spanish A-level and now extensive experience, this means he translates both French and Spanish. He specialises in European law and has translated texts, through agencies, for NATO and the European Commission. He criticises these bodies for "farming off" their translations to the "cheapest agency":

> *basically you shouldn't be doing a EU job for less than €0.08 a word for common European languages […] you get these agencies that win the tender and they screw the price down to say seven so they can cream off the top […] so I'm always a little bit wary when they put a competition out now. I mean I did [one*

for an agency] that would screw you down to six and you know that your market rate is about eight […] and they're screwing you down to six because they want to cream off the top […] I think you've always got to go with the bullshit radar on when you go into these sort of things because the thing is they recruit translators that have got maybe one year experience and are not specialists in EU law but they undercut you […] it's like poker face you've got know your price and then know when to walk away.

The nature of freelancing, its ups and downs, its feasts and famines, mean that sometimes even an experienced translator like Harry will have to take that lower rate:

> *you've very much got to play a poker face in the translation game because you'll take on a job and because, you know, it's Wednesday and you've not had any work, so you'll take a lower rate because you want to put food on the table, but then it'll be sod's law that two hours later or 20 mins later someone will come with a higher rate.*

Echoing other translators, there are "good agencies" and "bad agencies". The bad ones are those that screw the price down, that have long payment terms and are rated badly on ProZ Blue Board[19]. Harry will be "conveniently busy" when an agency that does not pay on time asks him to do an urgent job: "basically respect breeds respect: if you respect me as a translator and you pay me like a professional, I will work for you. If you don't, then I will be busy even if I'm not". These "bad" agencies don't care about qualifications and will try to fob off freelancers by sending them "proofreading" at a low rate that is in fact a text that has been machine translated (he told me a tip for identifying these texts). Whether an agency is "good" or "bad" comes down to its PMs:

> *I'd say when you've got a good PM it makes all the difference, when you've got a crap PM it's a horrible day. I mean I've got a couple of clients, for example, and there's one agency – although they're due to pay me today and haven't paid me yet – they have good PM skills, and what they do is they have the ISO[20], it's the 9001, it's the administration ISO, you know, they've got to respond within a certain time and they're really nice to work with and they're the sort of people that send you Christmas cards and, you know, it's a good relationship.*

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[19] ProZ BlueBoard is part of a translator platform – ProZ – that is free to join although has paid-up memberships too. BlueBoard is where agencies are reviewed by translators.
[20] International Organization for Standardization. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

Over time, Harry has built up relationships with certain clients that he trusts, that he'll get out of bed early for. Some of these professional relationships with PMs have become personal:

> *HARRY: quite a few of my PMs have become friends because you build up a relationship. My girlfriend who I've been together for five years with was a PM.*
>
> *EMMA: oh really?*
>
> *HARRY: yeah! We met seven or eight years ago, we actually worked on a project together and then yeah...*

These "good" relationships are based on frequent and quick communication, on not having to chase for payments. Ten years in, Harry is in a position where "they need [him] more than [he] needs them". Mostly, he can choose to work for the "good" agencies that treat him "like a professional".

Harry does not seem to be scraping a living, although he certainly alludes to precarity. In the past, he was one of those translators Robert refers to, fulfilling the tender bid of an agency somewhere in the EU. Now, he has learnt about agencies, tendering and rates, and is often able to walk away – but not always. The ability to be mobile and work for multiple clients is an element of flexibility the counteracts the precarity of self-employment (Moore & Newsome, 2018). It presents freelancers with the chance to be their own boss and have more control over their worktime (Cohen, 2016). Professional identity is linked with choice: the ability to turn down jobs knowing there will be other work from other clients that treat you like a professional. The professional*ness* of the individual is to some extent reflected in the company they keep: their clients more so than their peers. Much like Nicky, Harry describes agencies as "good" and "bad", and will make choices and decisions about who to work for when he can based on this distinction.

Professionalism as a discourse is a "regime of self-regulation" (McCarthy, 2016: 308) that is produced in these interactions and shapes them. Professional competence is linked to not only to knowledge, but also practice and conduct (Burau, 2016). Individuals enact their own professionalism by adhering to relevant normative practices and dominant discourses dictated by this professionalism. Professional identity is constructed to fall in line with the practices and discourses related to markers of professionalism that are relevant to the professional category in question (Mackey, 2007). Professionalism is therefore restrictive and productive, producing individual and

collective identities via this regulative process. In the freelancer-agency relationship, professionalism revolves around expected behaviours deemed professional. This goes from contractual obligations, such as paying on time, to being convenient and available, promptly replying to emails and taking on work as and when you are needed. This discourse serves as a territorialising component that standardises interactions and consolidates professional identity. Various things are recruited in and contribute to this restrictive and productive process: translation technologies, emails and rates. Professionalism as a discourse is interwoven with the actions and things that make up a working relationship. The action of paying an invoice and the money sent through digital banking systems consolidate or disrupt this relationship, reinforce or question professional identities. A delay in payment signifies a lack of professionalism on the part of the agency; a low rate is indicative of Harry's precarity and those moments when he has not been able to walk away. Harry and his clients are engaged in feedback loop of professionalism, which becomes a means for him to distinguish between agencies worthy of his time and those that are not. Professionalism in these freelancer-agency relationships is an enactment of neoliberal values. It becomes an entrepreneurial professionalism that stresses time efficiency to maximise profit (Harvey, 2011; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012). Again, time and money make the professional.

Liam Arkwright is a young legal translator, or should I say was; he now works in-house on the "client management side" of a translation agency[21]. The rates he was earning as a freelancer were too low to be sustainable, particularly coupled with the insecurity and precarity of freelance work. He needed the agencies more than they needed him; he was one of those translators with one year of experience undercutting Harry.

> *the average for a couple of agencies for legal is €0.05 per word which is almost half that an experienced translator would get… I appreciate that I'm starting out but it's quite low… and then other agencies basically pay between six and seven*

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[21] Although agencies emerge as powerful entities in translation, Liam's place in this thesis is one of intense precarity. While his current employment may mean he experiences more stability than the self-employed translators I spoke to, this has only come about following unsustainable precarity as a freelancer. As a result, he has had to give up translation and take on a new role, albeit within the same broader commercial translation process. Furthermore, although agencies are powerful entities in the freelancer-agency relationship, the power of individuals who work within the agency should not be conflated with the power of the agency itself. This larger, corporate entity has capacities well beyond the reach of an individual employee. The dynamics and processes involved here could be explored by going 'inside' the agency, as discussed in chapter 9.

cents per word for translation work and then I've also done some US based stuff which is mainly for literary translation where they were paying me $0.02 a word.

I interviewed Liam on the phone as he is based down in London. He studied German and Italian at university "with the odd law module thrown in" and quickly developed the idea of becoming a lawyer-linguist. This role doesn't really exist in the UK but is a well-known profession in other EU countries. After completing a translation Master's, Liam reached out to specialist legal translation agencies in Italy and did a six-month internship in-house with one of them. He had worked freelance part-time with them, and a handful of other companies, for two years. His transition to the language industry was a rough one:

> *it's more about quantity rather than quality… that was the biggest difference for me working, going from a university background to a commercial environment: the time pressure. It's as much as you can possibly do as quickly and as cheaply as possible in my experience.*

For Liam, agencies have too much power: they negotiate prices with clients and then push translators' rates down to match what they have promised. Translators, on the other hand, have limited ability to negotiate themselves. Agencies define the professional world, they shape professional competencies and working conditions. Agencies respond to their clients' demands by forcing translators to work for less and in less time.

> *I mean I can't really earn a living wage through just translation at the moment, the way that agencies push down pricing, because, in my experience, they push it down and down and down to the point where it's just not feasible to work like that.*

Liam quickly realised that the precarity of freelance translation meant he would struggle to support himself fresh out of university. Despite his qualification and internship, he does not have enough leverage with agencies to hold out for higher rates. He also cannot afford to wait it out, to take lower rates and "build his CV", to give himself a better bargaining position. This is why he got a full-time job in a translation company. He is still interested in translation but thinks he would need to be more financially secure and foresee potentially six months of an insecure wage if he were to go freelance again. For the first few months, it would be a struggle to get enough work from agencies at a decent rate: they need to trust you as a translator.

When there is no choice, there is only precarity and instability. Liam describes an almost impossible situation: despite gaining a sought-after specialisation, he has only been able to find rates too low to sustain himself. At the end of the supply chain, Liam and other inexperienced freelancers bear the brunt of cost minimisation (Moore & Newsome, 2018). Freelancing may provide flexibility in the form of working for multiple clients and having control over when you work. But freelancers are only as flexible as their finances allow them to be. Not all self-employed workers have a baseline of income that enables them to take advantage of this flexibility. Rosenkranz (2019) describes this tension between flexibility and uncertainty as creating a state of professional anxiety (see 2.3.3). She asks: "under what conditions does professional anxiety become unsustainable?" (Rosenkranz, 2019: 626). For Liam, uncertainty triumphed over flexibility: his experience of precarity led to him securing an employed position. Other translators too described difficult times, where they felt obliged to take lower rates to "pay the rent" or "put food on the table". For some, like Ellie, Nicky, and Harry, they are able to handle their professional anxiety and even make the most of the flexibility it affords them. For Liam, though, it became unsustainable and he sought out the increased security and certainty that come with employment.

The complex, multi-layered and multi-level nature of professional identity is apparent in the interconnections between the macro – state institutions and outsourcing – and the micro – per word rates and payments of invoices. Somewhere in this mesh of things and people, are agencies. Agencies emerge as relatively stable elements that facilitate the creation of networks and relationships in an unregulated, largely freelance market. Agencies are an aggregation that enable further aggregations. The daily email contact between PMs and translators, for example, can allow trusting and even personal relationships to form. Agencies, and the technologies they use to run their business, channel and organise people alongside translations themselves. For Liam, there is no way to push back at agencies. There are only individuals with no power in the face of businesses. So, if you can't beat them, join them – and who could blame him. Agencies define professional identity through their requirements, their vetting processes and rates. In an unregulated, market-driven industry, there is no clear mechanism or process by which to challenge this. Money makes the professional, and to make money, you need to get clients. To be a professional in an unregulated profession dominated by the agency model, you need to "get in" with an agency, get "on their books". You need to comply to their terms. In the next section, I explore how those

most vulnerable to these terms – newcomers to translation – negotiate the requirements of agencies.

5.7. Agencies and the Experience Gap

My earphones were plugged in to my laptop. I clicked on the link sent in an email the day before and entered my details that took me into the webinar, along with approximately 200 others. The ITI[22] and an educational partner ran a series of webinars on getting started as a freelance translator and/or interpreter. The platform enabled attendees to communicate with the organisers and speakers in various ways: there was a chatbox to the bottom right of the screen, where people listed where they were attending this webinar from, there were emoticons we could click and polls we could participate in. For the first few minutes, attendees entered their locations into the chatbox, with the speakers reacting audibly: "oh lucky you in sunny Saudi Arabia". The audience was global, with attendees in Moscow, New York, New Zealand, Aberdeen, Greenland, Berlin, Zaragoza, and Milton Keynes, among others. To get the talk started, we were asked to complete a poll about our current stage: 24.6% were on an undergraduate course; 19.4% were recent graduates; 25.6% were on a postgraduate course and 30.2% were considering or in the process of changing careers. The next poll asked us to give our languages, the options were limited, but it seems predominantly we worked with French, German, Spanish and Italian, with around 20% of poll respondents speaking Russian, Arabic and Mandarin. For those whose languages were not represented in the poll, they were encouraged to type them in the chatbox, they included: Greek, Thai, Welsh, Portuguese, Polish, Korean, Serbian, Croatian, Belarusian, Japanese, Hungarian, Mongolian and Danish. The lack of English in this list demonstrates its ubiquity, a default language almost, particularly as the webinars were given exclusively in English.

The audience of the webinar series gives some indication of the global appeal of "getting started in the translation and interpreting industry". This event branched out beyond the UK – where the ITI and its partner are based – through internet connections, contributing to the production of fledgling professional identities elsewhere. The webinar highlights the geographically varied nature of translation. Translation often crosses borders and facilitates the crossing of borders (Cronin, 2003; Bielsa, 2005); globalisation and communication technologies have driven and enabled

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[22] Institute of Translation and Interpreting, discussed in the introduction (1.1.2).

this process (Giddens, 2002). Professional identity construction will therefore be influenced by both international, national, regional and local factors. The impact of each geographical scale varies for each individual translator, and the various networks they belong to. The platform on which the webinar is run, is an example of the globalization of precarious work (Susskind & Susskind, 2017; Elliott, 2019). Communication technologies enable intellectual roles to be sent "offshore", making these previously secure expert jobs open to global market forces in the form of competition from overseas workers in low-wage economies (Brown et al., 2008; Elliott, 2019). This has fragmented intellectual roles and dismantled the social protections that previously came with sought-after expertise (Bucher & Fieseler, 2017; Wood et al., 2019). Technologies commodify translation work on a global scale, both enabling remote working – and training –, and creating insecure working conditions. The highly-competitive and almost endless supply of potential workers enables agencies to call the shots when it comes to requirements for working for them and the conditions this work dictates (Harvey et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2019).

Many of the speakers were professional translators and interpreters, who told their stories of getting into the industry and gave advice on one aspect or another of "getting started". Throughout the talks, a few pieces of advice were repeated: do voluntary work, build up your CV, build your profile. In the first webinar, a professional translator and conference interpreter described their route into this work and both recommended working for free. The speakers make comparisons to the legal profession in particular, which does voluntary or pro bono work. It provides a service and experience for junior members of the law firm. The speakers state that voluntary work also means giving back, doing it out of goodwill and not for the money. But you gain a great deal for yourself too. Doing voluntary work is a way of learning "how to be a professional": respecting deadlines, problem-solving, being courteous in emails. This comparison to law seems slightly off, as the voluntary work is being suggested as a means to build a CV and construct your professional profile, rather than as a commitment to pro bono work to provide a service for those who may not be able to afford it.

The conference interpreter stressed the importance of building a CV and "having something to offer". She said:

It took almost a year until I started getting paid assignments. All you hear is crickets[23], no one gets back to you, no one is interested. It takes some time to start getting jobs and being paid.

This voluntary work allows newcomers to build up a profile worthy of agencies, many of whom require experience, and some qualifications. In a profession with no clear route into the industry, how to "build up your CV" is not straightforward and will often require a period of instability and high precarity, as described by Liam. In addition to voluntary work, there are platforms and websites that are known for paying low rates, and not being so concerned about the experience of translators. In the chatbox for the second webinar, attendees debated the merits of working on these platforms:

Gemma Osbourne: Thank you to whoever suggested Babelcube[24] yesterday; I'm translating a book as a result 😊

[…]

Clara: Don't you think translating for Babelcube is a bit counter-productive? I mean, as professional translators we should make sure we get what we are worthy and in this platform you're just translating basically for free thousands of words...

[…]

Rosie Fairchild: Try Upwork[25]. They take quite a massive chunk of your pricing but it is a good way to get started find small projects go in at a low offer and gain experience. I did a handful of cheap/free projects (small ones) received good feedback and then was able to apply for bigger jobs for more money

[…]

Lucy: Rates are way below market standards and I actually think places like Upwork harm the translation market because they just hire the cheapest person and there are many people offering translation for as a low as 0.01 per word...

Gemma Osbourne: They're all ways of building up a portfolio.

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[23] "to hear crickets" is a US idiom that means silence.

[24] Babelcube is a website that links up authors with translators – the book is translated for free but the translator will get a percentage of any royalties if their translation sells.

[25] Upwork is a platform that connects people looking for services with self-employed people who provide those services. It can be anything from translation to woodwork.

[…]

Melanie Kijek: By accepting lower prices you are undercutting the value of everyone else. Also, you will end up burnt out and frustrated as you are not getting anywhere really. Not if you want to be a professional, and not just do is as a hobby.

For the newcomer, agencies define the professional translator. The requirements of agencies have an affective capacity insofar as meeting them facilitates the flows and interactions necessary to produce translation assemblages. This highlights something I have not been able to explain: freelancers lament the low standards of agencies; and agencies exclusively seek out experienced and qualified translators. There appears to be an irreconcilable difference here that I am not fully able to unpack, at least partly as I did not get "inside" any agencies (see 9.5). A tentative joining of the dots would be that this relates to those "good" and "bad" agencies Harry and Nicky mentioned (5.4 and 5.6 above). "Bad" agencies that offer the lowest rates undermine translators' expertise by not paying enough for it and by enabling the inexperienced and unqualified to work for them. Inexperienced and/or unqualified translators struggle to get work that pays well enough – i.e. from "good" agencies – to make ends meet, as Liam explained (5.6). For the would-be translator, the requirements of "good" agencies draw them to certain forms of low paid or voluntary work to create a CV that says they can be relied upon to produce quality translations[26]. The requirements of agencies, and the little freelancers can do about them, reinforce precarity and establish power dynamics between agencies and freelancers that benefit agencies (Cohen, 2016). Agencies' vetting procedures are the enactment of a market-driven definition of competency enabled by neoliberal discourses that prioritise profit (Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012). With no regulation or standardisation, agencies impose restrictions that enable them to sell quality to their clients without limiting their pool of potential freelancers too much. Yet, as the discussions in the chatbox show, there is resistance and difference within this cohort, with some translators unwilling to take actions that they believe undermine the expertise they want to get paid for possessing (Cohen, 2016).

The fourth and last webinar in the series included a talk from a woman who worked recruiting freelance translators for a translation agency. She described rates as a "taboo" topic in the industry, with one rate for an agency that does most of the

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[26] There is more to 'making up' quality and gatekeeping within translation, which will be explored in chapters 6 and 8.

groundwork, and another higher rate for direct clients because you – the freelancer – are doing the work, getting the client, maintaining the client. From this freelance recruiter's perspective – at least for the purposes of the talk – freelancers were "part of the team", "not just a number". The daily email contact means you get to know one another. From an agency perspective, communication is key; out of office replies should be turned on if you pop out to the supermarket for a few hours. Project managers have their "preferred" or "go-to" translators who might get a bit more leeway with not responding instantly. As a freelancer, especially one trying to get established, accessing and checking emails can become a constant practice, beyond usual office hours. To get on the books of an agency, they need to see that you know what you are doing and that you take it seriously; joining a professional organisation and getting certified in a CAT[27] tool will show this. You should check, as well, that the agency is themselves a member of a professional body, a corporate member of the ITI or a member of the ATC[28] so you know they will abide by a code of conduct. You should be open to doing work other than translating, such as editing and proofreading, and be honest about your ability to do (or not) a job. This agency runs training and networking opportunities. This helps them develop a relationship with their "suppliers" and also helps their "suppliers" overcome the loneliness of freelancing: "these events help you get out from behind your computer".

Once "on their books", expectations of professional conduct defined by the agency inform interactions, contributing to a restrictive and productive discourse of professionalism (Mackey, 2007; McCarthy, 2016). This builds on Harry's definition of professional conduct between freelancers and agencies (see 5.6). In this case, the demands and expectations of professionalism seem to be one-way: agencies become constraining entities, particularly for the new and inexperienced. The requirements of agencies set out the "laws, rules and norms" for those new to translation (Light, 2001: 1171). Professionalism here means near-instant communication, flexibility and knowing the limits of your abilities. Professionalism also means "taking it seriously", which should be demonstrated, made visible and tangible through membership to associations and qualifications. This is reflected in the actions of translators, as shown above and discussed in detail in the next chapter. For agencies, the professionalism of translators is a proxy for quality. A professional translator produces professional

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[27] Computer Aided Translation. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.
[28] Association of Translation Companies. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

quality translations. And agencies sell quality to their clients (Figure 10). Freelancers' identities can be co-opted by agencies, while the freelancer has to hope their profile is professional enough to get themselves work.

Figure 10: Lionbridge (LSP) marketing image. Source: Lionbridge.

Neoliberal economic policy interacts with newcomers to translation and those hoping to get new clients through the requirements of agencies and their vetting processes. Professionalism, as defined by agencies and driven by market values, is co-opted by the neoliberal apparatus to aid the flow of capital along freelancer-agency-client lines (Usher, 2010). The next chapter explores how translators make sense of this professional environment, fractured and fragmented by neoliberal values. Agencies themselves are of course subject to the same forces of cost minimisation and efficiency; they are both product and process of the neoliberal apparatus. Professional identity shows itself to be fluid and contingent and consequently needs to be contextualised within these processes. Agencies are one of the multiple and varied components that contribute to the production of professional identity.

5.8. Expertise and the Agency Model

Teresa Villa expressed an interest in being interviewed after I met her at the co-working event (5.3). We organised meeting up a few weeks after that day and I found out more about her translation story. Teresa was born in Spain; her father is English and her mother is Spanish. She grew up bilingual, reading books in both languages. This got her interested in translation and she ended up studying it at undergraduate level in Spain. Her first job in translation was as a PM in a large translation agency – which she described at the co-working event – and she then went freelance about nine years ago: "I just basically started emailing companies and trying to build a CV from there".

Teresa has seen rates stagnate over the time she has been translating. She had a "rough patch" freelancing about five years ago because she wasn't earning enough:

> *salaries are going up by a bit but rates aren't, so it's sometimes not sustainable. I almost quit five years ago because I just wasn't earning enough basically to pay the tax bills and stuff and that was it*
>
> *[…]*
>
> *I just had to work, even if I had a cold, I had to do it, because I couldn't lose that money, I needed it.*

Teresa pulled through the rough patch and kept translating. Part of her longer-term efforts to be more financially stable involved moving to the UK, where tax thresholds provide some respite for periods of little or low paid work. This is not the case in Spain, where there is a minimum tax for the self-employed regardless of how much they earn.

I saw Teresa at a few events over the course of data collection, one of them being a workshop on translation at a Northern university. We got the train back to Newcastle together. It was busy, so we stood in the vestibule. As the train creaked and lurched its way along, we spoke about the day and translation. She had enjoyed the workshop, particularly the chance to feel like the expertise she had built up over the years was useful. It didn't just disappear off in an email, never to be acknowledged. She said she'd been to a book translation conference recently and it was good because they spoke about "the reality of the industry". She was annoyed because no one is talking about rates. Book translators in France get double what they get in Spain. These conferences often talk about translating classics, translating Dickens, but they don't talk about the reality of the industry, no one does. She spoke about how Michelle Obama's book had come out and simultaneously come out in various languages, but what made that possible was not this idealised version of book translation, but the reality, which is that four translators were working on it at the same time, working long hours to get it done. The other idealised side "is only a tiny part of the market". It was refreshing at this recent conference to hear about "how best sellers get translated". She said that a lot of translators are afraid to say they've done work on the black market: "I'm not afraid to say I've done work on the black market or I've worked for peanuts when I've had to". Lots of translators are afraid because they think someone will point the finger at them and say "oh that's bad for all of us", "it's bad for the profession", but that's the reality of it for freelancers. She then apologised for talking

about it for so long and sighed "let's talk about holidays instead". She's going away on her honeymoon over Christmas and is taking two weeks off for the first time in three years. Normally she can't afford to.

The majority of commercial translation does not live up to some idealised vision of the translator, surrounded by books, pondering nuance and connotation. The reality of the practice for the translators I spoke to is a complex, fast-paced negotiation between different forces and actors. Those forces include the finances of the translator, reflecting the financial materiality of living in a capitalist society. Teresa did not elaborate on the black market, and no one else I spoke to mentioned it. I am hesitant to delve into it analytically for this reason, although it is certainly a potentially rich avenue of research. What Teresa sums up eloquently that simmers under the surface of many interviews and observations is the tension that seems inherent in precarious and insecure self-employment. Low rates undermine translation expertise and the profession "as a whole", potentially damaging future possibilities of earning more, but food needs to be put on the table. The conflict this causes was often palpable.

Agencies contribute to this tension: depending on the level of experience and financial security of the translator, agencies dictate rates. As the source of the majority of work for the freelancers I spoke to, they inevitably contribute to professional identity construction. In interviews and events, when these identities are produced and called upon, agencies can become a scapegoat that may or may not always be deserved. I find myself coming up against an analytical brick wall, hitting my head against the same tensions, knots and complexities. Agencies create value in doing the "legwork" of translation, and they are appreciated. They undermine value by pushing down rates. This undermines expertise. This is seen in a lack of standardisation regarding quality in translation as a final product of this commercial process. Lower levels of quality in translation further undermine expertise, so rates are kept low or pushed down further. The "legwork" agencies can do that freelancers cannot mean they provide a relatively steady flow of work for precarious translators and interpreters. And so the merry-go-round continues. What emerges here is a tension between the individual and the collective; between taking low rates now and hoping to charge more in the future as part of a bolstered profession; between taking actions to support the collective and trying to stand out from the crowd. Competition of course exists in many professional cohorts who fight to get clients (Abbott, 1988). However, the boundaries around translation are porous, its hold over this jurisdiction unstable (see 2.2.2). The next

chapter explores this further, looking at how the actions and practices of translators are part of an attempt to create some certainty in these uncertain working conditions, all the while knowing their acceptance of low rates and short deadlines contributes to that uncertainty.

5.9. Concluding Remarks

The overarching theme in this chapter is that of precarity and vulnerability to market forces within a neoliberal apparatus. The conditions involved when working for agencies and the impact this has on translators demonstrates a point of connection between the market and freelancers. Predominant ideas of private sector efficiency, the importance of cost minimisation and a deregulation of the labour market have increased outsourcing, with agencies establishing themselves as a go-between for end-users and freelancers (Kalleberg, 2011, 2012; Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012; Prosser, 2016). Freelancers are at the end of this commercial translation supply chain and bear the brunt of cost reduction (Moore & Newsome, 2018). The "sizeable hyper flexible workforce" agencies to have to draw from affords them the same flexibility and "freedom" that is more commonly discussed with regard to self-employment (Harvey et al., 2017: 31). Given the lack of regulation of translation as a practice, the freedoms afforded to agencies and freelancers allow for a market-driven definition of competency and quality. Language experts have limited ability to make these definitions themselves. They lack this autonomy, a key feature of the professional label in the sociological literature (Freidson, 1970; Dent et al., 2016). Market-driven definitions of competency and quality reflect the needs of clients and their understandings of translation – or the lack thereof. Client expectations can therefore impact the demands made of freelance workers by companies (Moore & Newsome, 2018). Agencies are free to establish requirements and vetting procedures that suit them with little regard for translation expertise.

It is important to point out that agencies are not a coherent whole or smooth corporate entity. Freelancers interact with different components that comprise agencies: emails that go back and forth, IT and administrative systems, contracts, PMs that manage projects and clients. These interactions contribute to professional identity construction and equally produce the agency itself. Agencies are assembled and in this assembly flexibility and uncertainty are produced for freelancers. I have not explored this element of freelancer-agency relationships as I did not get "inside" the agency. The emphasis here is on translators whose professional identities, produced in these varied and

multiple interactions, are defined at least in part by income (Ackroyd, 2016). This begins to build a picture of a complex, situated and contingent emergent identity, but presents just one side of professional identity construction. In the next chapter, I look more closely at gatekeeping in translation beyond agencies, exploring other networks, actions and practices that construct the identities of translators and interpreters.

Chapter 6. Connection and Fragmentation in Professional Translation

6.1.   Fragmented Market, Multiple Identities

In the previous chapter, I established that professional identity does not start and end with the process of engaging with the work itself, or the skills and expertise needed to do it. Professional identity is emergent; the result of individual expert workers negotiating tensions and interacting with interests other than their own. It is also networked; it goes beyond the individual and speaks to a cohort, some sense of a profession as a whole. One of the key tensions that has arisen is between the individual and the imagined collective, with translators disparaging the working conditions proffered by many translation agencies, but at least at times having to accept them. From this perspective, translators as a professional cohort are fragmented by how the work is organised. The fragmentation of the work isolates freelancers from one another in their working practices, yet creates connection through shared experiences when translators come together. Neoliberalism forms the backdrop, encouraging business practices that emphasise cost reduction and outsourcing, influencing the freelancer-agency relationship.

This chapter builds on these ideas, further exploring the emergent tensions and fragmentation, by unpacking how translators make sense of their working lives. I identify points of connection between the neoliberal apparatus and translators, focussing on the responsibilization of translators as self-employed workers by associations, agencies and translators themselves. I show that a responsibilized cohort is fragmented and its ability to challenge working practices collectively is subsequently limited. I explore how these fragmentary practices have created a porous boundary around professional translation, limiting translators' ability to resist dominant working conditions individually. This brings nuance and depth to the tensions – between individual and cohort, between support and competition, between belonging and standing out – that are discussed in chapter 5. The themes that emerge can be distilled into a central tension between association and responsibilization. That is, translators are drawn together and pulled apart in their navigation and negotiation of various interests and needs involved in the production of translation. Assemblage adds to this analysis by focussing on points of connection between market forces and individual translators; and by exploring the enactment of enterprise discourse within the experience of precarity. Various points of interaction are highlighted in this chapter,

such as professional events and training courses. I identify some of the material and discursive things that interact in these settings and spaces, causing identities to emerge.

This chapter explores the actions taken by translators to make sense of their working lives and empower themselves in relation to working practices. In the next three sections, I discuss the contextual value of qualifications and membership to translator associations. I explore these actions taken by translators as a means of reducing precarity and a demonstration of the enactment of responsibilization. I show how the tension between individual and collective is exacerbated by the instability and insecurity experienced by freelancers. I explore different strategies for navigating and understanding the contrasting elements of being a member of this group: belonging, support and competition. In 6.5, I build on the previous sections by looking at the possibilities of collective resistance, the frustration and success experienced by a handful of participants. In 6.6 and 6.7, I look beyond formal networks to the actions and practices of translators who do not belong to professional associations, and those who engage in online groups and discussions. Here, the fragmentation of the cohort is at its most visible, particularly in the textual Twitter data discussed in 6.7. Lastly, I conclude that the tensions highlighted in chapters 5 and 6 cannot be resolved. Indeed, it is working with these conflictual demands that opens up professional identity construction in translation in all its irreducible complexity.

6.2. Contextual Value, Potential Meaning

Although there are no strict requirements to working as a translator, many of the translators I spoke to had some form of qualification. These qualifications are typically either issued by a professional association, or a university. Professional associations issue qualifications, whether in the form of an exam needed to qualify for a certain level of membership, or a standalone qualification issued by the body. Over the past few years, the number of higher education qualifications in translation appears to have increased. A quick search on Google for Master's degrees in translation programmes in the UK produces collated lists of 90+ programmes offered by 40+ universities. Robust data on this is hard to come by, but the apparent increase in postgraduate programmes is in line with the general trend (Blagg, 2018). Many translation agencies, particularly within the EU, insist on Master's level or equivalent experience (usually defined as five years) to get on their books. This prerequisite on the part of many agencies also appears, anecdotally, to be a relatively new phenomenon.

The European Master's in Translation (EMT) network is another recent addition to the broader sphere of translation qualifications that brings together universities offering postgraduate programmes in translation. The first EMT network was launched in 2009 and has been expanding in each of its iterations since then. To be a member of the network, a university has to offer a translation programme that meets the standards set by the European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (EC-DGT). Membership covers for the "run" of the network, which tends to last five years. The current run will be 2019-2024 and comprises university programmes from 81 universities in the EU. This directive was set up by the EC-DGT to provide a "quality label" for postgraduate programmes in Europe. According to the EC-DGT website ('European Master's in Translation', n.d.), its main goal is to "improve the quality of translator training in order to enhance the labour market integration of young language professionals". It does this through the establishment of a "competence framework", which forms the basis for the standards required for membership. The competence framework is written by European "experts" and defines the basic skills that translators need to work successfully in today's market. The longer-term goal of the directive is as follows:

> By training highly skilled translators in close cooperation with the language industry the EMT seeks, in the long run, to enhance the status of the entire translation profession in the EU. ('European Master's in Translation', n.d.)

Qualifications are promoted and encouraged by various large players in the translation market. It is no surprise that qualifications often play an important role in professional identity construction. However, it is not as straightforward as qualification = better translations, or qualification = better chances of doing well. In the next sections, I unpack the nuances of this *doing* of translation. This section highlights and builds on the link between qualifications, quality and gatekeeping discussed in 5.8 above.

6.2.1. *Porous barriers*

Nicky Elliott (see 5.4) got a Master's in translation following her undergraduate degree. She sees qualifications as important to an individual's ability to understand what translation is, and how to do it well.

> *I mean that's one of the problems with this profession is that there's no barriers to entry and that the less people know about translation the more they think they can do it, so… Well I graduated from my undergraduate degree doing*

translation […] as a language learning exercise, and I thought I knew what translation was, and then I added a Master's in translation. I realised that what I had thought a year earlier was nothing like what translation was.

The process of doing a qualification creates a space for would-be translators to get feedback from more experienced peers. This feedback is not necessarily going to be given freely or constructively once the translator enters the market. The value of the qualification comes not only from the piece of paper with your name on it, but from the process of learning about translation.

I think it's good studying translation before you do it professionally, it's a good space to learn and get experience and feedback, which you're not necessarily going to get when you work professionally. I mean, especially if you don't get the right connections with the right agencies who are supportive and will give you feedback. You only get out of it what you put in, so people maybe won't engage with the Master's process fully, and then it's less valuable, and then it **is** *just a piece of paper and maybe it would be worth getting professional experience instead.*

Nicky worked in-house before going freelance, and her Master's was a prerequisite to getting those jobs. The value of the qualification for freelancing is less clear-cut.

I mean I got jobs in-house and it was definitely- and I got them with sort of old-fashioned organisations and they wanted a Master's in translation or equivalent qualification so it was definitely important to me… I think it's important for getting a job in-house but there aren't very many of those, so for freelancing it's really hard to tell.

I asked Nicky if she thought qualifications were meaningful to "the industry". Nicky echoed the thoughts of others: it depends on who is reading your CV. Certain letters after your name are only meaningful to certain people.

[qualifications] are recognised by the professional organisations… it's difficult to say what 'the industry' is. This is one- for instance, I never know- I mean, I say that I am MITI[29] sort of on my email signature and I say that I've got a Master's in translation. Ok, and actually I'm quite pleased it's an MSc in Translation which is just a quirk of Heriot-Watt: it does an undergraduate MA, which is the four

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[29] MITI refers to a qualified member of the ITI. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

Nicky has a few accreditations: undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications, and qualified status – MITI – from the ITI (Institute of Translation and Interpreting). There is some tension here, between the intrinsic motivation to study translation to be a better translator, and the value of that piece of paper to the right people to get work. All Nicky's qualifications consolidate her professional identity, they provide a means for her to get feedback from more experienced translators, develop her skills and come out the other side with a more commercial understanding of what translation is. Her MSc sits alongside her name and provides rigorous academic proof of her ability to produce quality translation. The additional clout the "Sc" of her MSc hints at broader discourses and public debates of the value and validity of Arts v. Science (O'Leary, 2018). Although MITI status is known to be rigorous by those who know, its weight outside of this group is at best unpredictable. Nicky uses her qualifications and related expertise to demarcate herself from others as a professional (Fredriksson & Johansson, 2014).

Her professional identity emerges from the process of doing qualifications, which can be thought as a form of professional socialisation (Mackey, 2007; Allen, 2011). She was taught what translation *really* is, not what an undergraduate or layperson might think it is. This process of doing a Master's enabled Nicky to align herself with the identity and associated understandings of professionalism, which are explored below. With this knowledge, and the recognition that it is esoteric, she can "incorporate these values and perform [her] duties in an appropriate manner to become" a translator (Fredriksson & Johansson, 2014: 587). Nicky empowers herself with the knowledge that she has expertise earned through the rigorous process of attaining a postgraduate degree and then working in professional translation. However, the value and meaning in the action of undertaking and completing these courses and achieving qualified status depends on the context.

Teresa Villa (see 5.8) – who knows Nicky through the ITI – summed up how many translators view qualifications: useful but not essential.

> *I think there are different pathways to becoming a translator, I know excellent translators for example in fields- especially in very specialised fields, like*

medicine or engineering, people who are experts in that field but also know the language […] they train and by experience they become good translators. But they're not- they don't have a specific university level degree or course. So I don't think it's essential.

Qualifications, whether formal education or provided by a translator association, can nonetheless be helpful. Qualifications are a means of showing that you are a competent translator, and this particularly is useful for newcomers who lack the ever-coveted experience:

> *obviously when you're starting, they always ask for experience, don't they, and obviously you've just started obviously you don't have any experience, so I guess yeah they are [important]. I don't- I don't have them, I have struggled with being freelance in the past, but I'm still there. I think once you have the experience- I think the experience in a way sort of proves you can do your job because you're still doing it.*

Whether or not a qualification will help you get work again depends on who is reading your CV. A translation qualification will not necessarily mean anything to a client who is not explicitly involved in commercial translation. In other words, an agency is more likely to "get" the qualification, whereas a direct client – usually the end-user of a translation who does not produce translations – will likely not:

> *well at least with my experience of working with direct clients they don't- quite a lot of them don't even know how to write properly, so what I mean is that they don't- they don't know anything about translation. So they don't care which title you have, all they care is that the job is done. So I guess if they have to choose between you and somebody else, they're going to go for you if on your CV or on your website you have this diploma and the other person doesn't. But if both persons had two diplomas and different diplomas, I don't think the client would be able to differentiate or decide which one is better than the other.*

Teresa wears her experience – her persistence in translation – as a badge of honour. The length of time that stretches out behind her demonstrates her ability to produce quality translations. Time consolidates her professional identity in two ways: her abilities as a translator have been honed over the years; her continued stream of work is evidence of this skill. Teresa's professional identity has built up over time through its articulation in everyday practice (McCarthy, 2016). Her years of experience as a

translator reinforce her identity because they are meaningful to her, and to current and new clients. Time then has a cumulative power, a cumulative affective capacity to draw Teresa into other assemblages that further reinforce her professional identity. That is, Teresa can get more jobs with a wider range of clients because of how her time spent translating interacts with other people and things in potential translation assemblages. Knowledge and expertise have to be acquired over time, which creates an undefined but very real barrier to entry (Saks, 2012). Implied is a commitment, a seriousness, reinforced or even stratified over time, which conveys professionalism.

Professionalism built up over time has a historicity (see 3.2.2) that gives it weight. This has to be continually made up and worked on, demonstrating how the consolidated and stratified elements of professional identity need to be produced (de Assis, 2018). An extended period of time in professional identity requires a freshness, which, at first glance, almost contradicts a seemingly static and dusty historicity. But it is the continual involvement in the work, the keeping up-to-date with technologies, and cultural and linguistic shifts that maintains the professionalness of experience. This highlights that even the most experienced translator never *is*, they are *becoming-translator*, continually producing their professional identity through actions, practices and interactions. Expertise, gained over time, gives the professional sway over the layperson or non-expert (Freidson, 1970; Fournier, 1999; Saks, 2012). Here, a tension arises in translation: this sway is contingent and situated. Expertise, whether evidenced in qualifications or experience, only has value and meaning for those who know about the idiosyncrasies of translation practice. Teresa navigates this tension by contrasting her expertise her clients' lack of it. Teresa rests assured in the knowledge that her hard-earned years of experience set her apart from these non-experts, even if they do not seem to appreciate her esoteric knowledge. Qualifications have limited weight. In the next section I explore how professional associations sell themselves to translators at least in part as an antidote to the contextual value of qualifications.

6.3. Associations and Responsibilization

Over half of the translators I spoke to were members of translator associations. All bar one of the events I attended were run, at least in part, by associations. Associations play a key role for members and make claims to the professionalization of translation and interpreting as a profession. As I discuss in the introduction, the Institute of Translating and Interpreting (ITI) and the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) are the two of the largest translator associations in the UK. There are significant similarities

between the two organisations both structurally and in terms of what they provide their members. They both offer Continual Professional Development (CPD) in the form of webinars and workshops. They both have subgroups based on language combinations, specialisations and location. They both have similar membership structures, which go from basic affiliate membership to higher level associate and qualified membership. The different levels provide different benefits and have different fees: higher levels are more expensive and provide additional benefits, such as the use of the association's logo. They both have barriers to entry: for the higher-level memberships, applicants need to sit an exam, and have qualifications and/or experience. They both have a member directory: a publicly available, searchable database of members. Recently they have both taken to going to universities and offering students affiliate membership for free: *"that's only just happened in the past two years... the two organisations watch each other. One does one thing, then other one does"*, so Tracy Woods tells me.

Tracy is in her mid-60s and has been translating for around 40 years. For much of that time, she has been a member of the ITI and the CIOL. In fact, she joined the associations back when they were one association. In the 1980s, the Institute of Linguists, now the CIOL, had a translators' guild, which broke away and became the ITI: "they split because the translators' guild wanted to be independent and bigger, and therefore I automatically became a member of both". She has stayed a member of both over the years but became more involved in the CIOL. She says there is a subtle difference between the two organisations. If she were "only a translator", she would probably only be in the ITI. But she is also an interpreter and teacher of translation so stays a member of the CIOL too. Both associations sell themselves to potential members as providing training, accreditation and support for freelancers.

6.3.1. *The CIOL and serious credentials*

I sat in the back of an events' room in an industrial city in the North of England. I was slightly late, as I had had a problem with the trains from Newcastle. One of the organisers passed me a pack for the day – a workshop on specialised translation run the by the CIOL. It set out the day's programme, which mainly consisted of an experienced English to French specialised translator giving advice about how to get started in her translation specialism. The room was full, with windows down one side and a tea and coffee table at the back. Translators and interpreters spoke to one another in the breaks, discussing language combinations and specialisations.

*After the workshop had finished, for about half an hour, Sharon Kay, who works for the CIOL, gave an impassioned speech about why members should go for chartered status. The CIOL is the only translator association that has a Royal Charter – issued by the Privy Council itself[30] – and can award this protected title. The CIOL aims to professionalise the industry and reaching a critical mass of chartered linguists is the way to do this. A high number of chartered linguists makes "choosing chartered industry standard". This in turn improves standards at both an individual and industry level. Professional translators are fighting against non-qualified and inexperienced translators who are pushing down rates and giving the industry a bad name with their poor quality translations. The profession and the skills associated with it are undervalued. Chartered status, however, is **understood** by the wider public – the association's research shows this – it means being "of a professional standard". Being chartered gives you "serious credentials" that have been checked. This title is protected; it can be taken away. And "that's the strength of it". It requires a degree level qualification and includes an auditing process to check that chartered linguists are living up to the standards required. A certain percentage a year will be audited: this will involve the number of their CPD hours being checked. They are not prescriptive about how you get those CPD hours: it can be both formal – attending workshops like this – and informal – subscribing to a foreign language magazine. If you are already established as a linguist, this is a step you should take for the industry. Besides, it will still distinguish you from everyone else.*

The Queen, Privy Council and the Royal Charter issued to the CIOL circulate in this events room. The clout this gives chartered status, the weight, the affective capacity promised by Sharon, emerges in stark contrast to those non-qualified and inexperienced translators, equally pulled into the room. Sharon paints an idealised picture of respected chartered linguists who are in demand for their expertise, sought out for that protected label. The CIOL directly contradicts the experiences of Nicky and Teresa, both of whom describe the contextual nature of value and meaning in translation certifications. And this is Sharon's point. Chartered status is not unique to translators, interpreters and other linguists. Being chartered represents a standard of ability and professionalism that crosses fields (McKinlay & Pezet, 2010; Matthews, 2017). It is more reminiscent of the closure mechanisms of established professions,

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[30] In fact, only the Queen can grant a Royal Charter, but it is on the advice of the Privy Council.

which draw distinct lines between the qualified and non-qualified (Larson, 1977). Chartered status is a territorialising component in professional identity, sharpening the boundaries between those that drag the profession down, and those that maintain professional standards. Sharon sells chartered status as a publicly or even universally recognised proxy for professional, as opposed to the contextual meaning of qualifications discussed above in 6.2.1 above.

However, chartered status does not guarantee a monopoly over a certain task as it is only an indication of a level of competency and is not mandatory (Matthews, 2017). This links with a deeper and more problematic tension between belonging to a cohort and that cohort being comprised of competitors. Chartered status requires commitment to oneself as a professional and to the profession, in the form of qualifications and experience, and ongoing CPD. This demonstrates a desire to be "good" at your job and a desire to bolster all translators as committed professionals. The CIOL capitalises on the precarity of freelancers, offering a buffer against market forces in the form of chartered status. Each individual translator benefits from translators as a cohort being perceived as professionals worthy of higher fees. Yet, one of the challenges freelancers face is the vast pool of self-employed workers spread across the globe and presumably sitting next to one another in this event (Faulconbridge & Muzio, 2012; Susskind & Susskind, 2017; Hassard & Morris, 2018). The last two sentences of the vignette highlight this logical impossibility: *If you are already established as a linguist, this is a step you should take for the industry. Besides, it will still distinguish you from everyone else.* Responsibilization as part of an enterprise culture makes translators responsible for their own financial in/security and un/certainty, producing fragmentation within the cohort (Kelly, 2013; Fridman, 2014; Mallett & Wapshott, 2015). This in turn limits their ability to collectively challenge restrictive working practices. Responsibilization produces fragmentation and a fragmented cohort has little chance within a neoliberal apparatus.

6.3.2. *The ITI and professional standing*

In each of the webinars run by the ITI (see 5.7), a brief talk – up to 5 mins – was given by someone at the ITI. This interlude extolled the benefits of the association and reminded attendees of the offer available until the end of the month. ITI membership was described as invaluable to your career, with a whole host of benefits, including webinars and training courses, workshops and the biannual conference, networking and a magazine. There are subgroups and networks. ITI membership gives you a

discount on professional indemnity insurance and access to a free legal advice phoneline. ITI membership supports your transition into the industry because it adds to your professional standing. This point was particularly key given these webinars focussed on getting started in translation and interpreting.

The ITI representative was active in the chatbox. Links were given to the ITI website whenever someone spoke about rates and knowing how much to charge. Each time one of the speakers spoke about "educating clients" or "raising awareness", she would recommend the materials produced by the ITI. The institution provides a downloadable booklet called "Translation: getting it right" on the "Advice to Buyers" page of their website ('Advice to Buyers', n.d.). This booklet tries to convince potential "buyers" of the importance of having translations done by a professional translator for the sake of quality and the reputation of their company.

The other speakers often mentioned the ITI and its benefits in their talks. You would be searchable on the ITI directory. You have to take a test to be a full member, ITI membership is a qualification in itself. You have to abide by its code of conduct as a member, meaning membership demonstrates professionalism because you'll get chucked out if you don't follow it. It will teach you about the confidentiality and impartiality needed to be a professional interpreter. It is important to join the ITI because of the access to networks it gives you. There are requirements for joining, and reaching those requirements shows commitment: "you're not just a chancer", you take it "seriously". Being an ITI member isn't just about your career, it's about furthering the profession and the practice of translation and interpreting.

In this online space, computers, internet connections, microphones and a PowerPoint slide interact with discourses on professionalism and collegiality in the translation industry. These technologies enable professional identities to be created in that online space, which reaches into the screens, homes and offices of attendees. Based on the comments of the ITI representative, membership to the association is a ready-made, one-size-fits-all professional identity. Entry requirements function as a filter, that increase or sustain the homogeneity of the ITI's members, while extending professional legitimacy to those who meet them (Edwards & Pieczka, 2013). This is in turn bolsters the profession as a whole, that is, those who are engaged in or promote translation best practice (see 5.1). The ITI and CIOL offer similar benefits to their members: both sell professionalism to the individual by making claims to the professionalization of translation as a coherent entity. The professionalization of the

individual professionalises the profession; the professionalization of the profession increases the individual's chances of getting professional work. Professional work means high rates and reasonable deadlines from a client that understands the value of translation expertise, as discussed in chapter 5.

As part of a discourse of professionalism within translation, membership confirms compliance with the norms, values and ideas of professional translation (Light, 2001). Although the ITI cannot offer chartered status, it offers tangible and "meaningful" commitment and seriousness evidenced through its membership requirements. It claims to educate the public, and create "awareness". A better-educated public will choose professional once they understand the importance of doing translation professionally. This speaks to the importance of the wider public's recognition of the professional*ness* (see 5.1) needed to translate well – they are, after all, potential clients. This reinforces Nicky and Teresa's comments (see 6.2.1): the value and meaning of membership are contextual, potential, and not actual. Again, the vulnerability of translators to market forces is harnessed to justify and promote the association. While associations offer value and provide services, this value cannot be assumed. Within this fractured professional environment, associations nonetheless offer some kind focal point. That is, although the claims they make about professionalization are contested, they aid translators in navigating this fragmented and often isolated professional experience. In the next section, I explore this further by discussing the ways translators make sense of associations and incorporate them into their professional identities.

6.4. Commitment to Self and Cohort

Alan Everett describes himself as a "failed academic" who "stumbled on" translation as an alternative way to use his languages after a career in academia in the US didn't work out. We met at the specialised translation event in described 6.3.1 above. We first started chatting during lunch, a buffet provided on the ground floor of the building. He attended the event because he was curious about developing one of his fledgling specialisms. I asked Alan if he'd be interested in being interviewed for my project after he showed interest, and we organised a phone interview by email some weeks later. He told me more about his story and route into and through translation. He has been working as a translator since the mid-90s, mostly freelance with an in-house stint a couple of a years ago. He has been a member of the CIOL for around 15 years: "to be honest it was initially just to have the letters after the name to give myself credibility".

Since being made redundant from the in-house position about five years ago, he has made more of an effort to be involved, attend events and meet people. These events boost his morale "regardless of whether [he has] actually learnt something or not". Alan gets an email about a possible job while we're talking on the phone and he excuses himself to reply "as you know, we're a slave to the emails". It turns out to be nothing, but then:

> *oh you'll have to forgive me I **have** got an email… Oh that's a nice one yes… check that- sometimes they make a mistake in the languages they think I do… sometimes you get an email and it's a blunderbust email it's gone to everyone but as this one's got my name in it then I'll… when's the deadline? Friday… I'll have to get my skates on with that one but yeah… ok go ahead.*

He accepts the job and we go back to talking about the CIOL and chartered status. Alan is chartered: "well it was free, it sounded convincing when they said "do it" and, you know, it makes sense. That's it really, and I thought it'd make me credible and more saleable". As for whether it would be good for the profession as a whole, he thought it probably would. Although he questions whether it would improve translation quality itself:

> *I was reading an article in the Economist a little while ago and it questioned the sort of the motive when people do create these- what are they? Barriers to entry – is that the right word? […] I don't have the authority on that but what it does is it just protects interests rather than doing anything to improve the service.*

Alan isn't against actions being taken to improve the status or prestige of translation more generally. But he also cannot focus on that; he's "just surviving in it [himself]".

In our conversations, the letters after Alan's name loom large. Those letters drew him to this event and have drawn him to others. The email exchange that occurred during our interview featured those letters in his email signature. His membership and now chartered status give him affective capacity in the form of professional legitimacy. That is, much like Teresa and her years of experience (see 6.2.1 above), the chartered label enables affect to flow, with Alan able to interact in more translation assemblages. He is chartered not out of a sense of duty for the profession, but to give himself credibility, to improve his chances. Equally, he seeks to improve a specialism so that he might get more work with higher rates. Alan is enacting the discourse of enterprise culture seen in the rationale associations provide for their existence and for the paying of

membership fees and events (Kelly, 2013; Fridman, 2014; Mallett & Wapshott, 2015). Responsible for his own financial security, without the protections of regulations or employment, he builds his own buffer against market forces (Ackroyd, 2016; Hassard & Morris, 2018). This buffer is rooted in material and discursive interactions, such as the letters after Alan's name, a material trace of the actions and practices of attaining chartered status. He identifies the instrumental or even self-interested nature of erecting barriers to entry, but his own precarity justifies his focus on protecting and boosting his income. Alan intentionally builds a professional identity that is identifiable and tangible in his email signature and on his business cards. The more professional you are, the more you can charge, the more work you can get, and the better the terms will be. Alan's incorporation of chartered status in his professional is part of an explicit effort to reduce his precarity.

Alicja Broz, a Polish interpreter I also met at the specialised translation event (see 5.5) appreciates her membership to the CIOL. She happily told me about why she joined the association:

> *you have a banner that says you are a member, you get terms and conditions, […] it's well established and it's well known, you know […] it has a code of practice so you've got something to refer to. They offer indemnity insurance which is comparable to other quotes […] preparation past papers, webinars. What else? […] book discounts […] you can get involved in events, and The Linguist, the journal. I heard about this organisation eight years ago when I was first working and I thought 'that sounds really nice' […] and it's recognised […] most people have heard of it and, you know, it bears that professional credential with it.*

The membership fees to be paid "present you as someone who is serious about what they're doing". Besides, many professions, such as lawyers and doctors, are members of one professional body or another. Engagement with the association, perhaps most importantly for Alicja, keeps her on her professional toes:

> *it gives you that push to upskill and to keep learning and to keep developing and you know you don't stagnate because you share information, especially if you get to meet people at conferences for training sessions or whatnot.*

Beyond whether or not membership will get you additional work, the criteria you need to meet, the references required to join set you apart from others: "it's not something you can just pay for and have". The process of gaining and keeping membership shows "that you are committed to you know become better and better at what you're doing which you kind of should try to do anyway".

Alicja's story in some ways stands in stark contrast to Alan's, highlighting another mismatch: the potential friction between taking actions out of a love for translation, and translation just being a means of earning money. There is an element of professionalism discourse in translation that harks back to ideas of altruism in "traditional" professions: the idea that motivations for professional status emerged out of a desire to contribute to society (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011). This lingers in the commitments Alicja makes, such as joining the CIOL and doing CPD. In addition to providing professional legitimacy, these actions are a visible and tangible commitment to her work and to improving her skills. Professionalism in interpreting for Alicja relates to providing the best service possible for her clients. As a police and court interpreter, the material and discursive components of the justice system feed into her professional identity (Morris, 2010). Alicja described multiple incidents where she felt restricted and conflicted as a professional by the processes involved in the court system and the courtroom itself. I cannot explore this further here, and indeed this analytical avenue is worthy of its own project (see 9.5). Suffice to say that Alicja's professionalism – part of which is her membership to the CIOL and the commitment this entails – facilitates access to justice for potentially vulnerable individuals. Alicja's professional identity emerges from her own actions and practices interacting with material and discursive components related to police and court interpreting. Yet Alicja's identity is multi-layered: she laments the reduction in rates paid to interpreters following changes to the procurement of interpreting services by the Ministry of Justice (see 5.5). A desire to provide high quality services to one's clients and a desire to earn money are of course not mutually exclusive. The friction arises then when a professional's ability to earn money is limited by the mechanics of the market. In this case, the agency model which prioritises cost minimisation (Cohen, 2016; Hassard & Morris, 2018; Cohen et al., 2019).

Susanne Lorenz (see 5.1) joined the regional group of the ITI associated with her city when she moved there. Susanne initially joined as an associate, "and then I sort of got sucked into it and it becomes a bigger and bigger part of your life the more time you

spend and you want to upgrade your membership. At least that's how it worked for me". She got involved with the running of the regional group and is now its coordinator. She describes regional groups as "loosely assembled group[s] of translators" formalised by their association to the national ITI.

This regional group, and the ITI as a national association, is connected by their mutual commitment to translation practice that creates a sense of belonging:

> *I think the greatest benefit for me is a sense of belonging that you- you know that other people who are members of the ITI, I feel sort of connects us, because we've committed to it, you know, it does cost money. So, by saying 'ok this is important enough to me that I will pay for it' then I have something in common with all the other people that are the same. Yes, it also gives you a certain amount of industry recognition, but because I have an undergraduate degree and a Master's in translation, I didn't feel I needed that so much, and I had the in-house experience as well which is quite solid […] so I already felt that my professional standing was pretty good without that, but now that I've got it I'm glad of course. But yes it's funny because sometimes people ask me 'well is it worth it?' and people ask me 'what do you get?' and I say 'well you get a discount for the conference, you get a magazine', but somehow on paper these benefits don't look so compelling to be worth – how much is it one or two hundred pounds a year? – somehow, it doesn't sound good but it feels right to me.*

In addition to a sense of belonging and "industry recognition", Susanne's ITI membership distinguishes her as a "real" translator. This is significant in an unregulated industry, where "anyone" can call themselves a translator with "zero experience, zero degrees". The ITI not only provides benefits for its members, but is a guardian of standards where no regulation can be enforced:

> *So I suppose really the main role of the industry association is to just set a specific standard and make it easy for end-users of translators to identify who is a real translator and who isn't. And by real I mean a qualified and experienced translator, and I think that's quite important because going back to what I said at the beginning of the discussion there is a sort of understanding or misunderstanding of what standards you really need to achieve to work as a translator or what that actually involves or what you need to be able to do it. And*

I think some people set out as a translator with no knowledge, no experience, very well meaning, I don't necessarily- I'm sure some of them are also fairly successful, but I think it is important to have standards and to have an association that looks after that or that says 'well this is what we expect, if you want to buy a translation then that's what you should look out for'.

Susanne links community and commitment, and professionalism and quality together in her ITI membership and involvement. Susanne's professional identity is consolidated by her membership to the ITI, which is a commitment to translation practice and her fellow translators through a commitment to standards. This distinguishes her from "non-professionals" because she has made a material commitment – an outlay of money – that is a measurable, quantifiable taking-translation-seriously. Susanne identifies the connection that membership to the ITI brings through this shared commitment and attachment to translation practice (Musílek et al., 2019). Susanne's assertion that her membership to the ITI "feels right" contrasts with both Alan's and Alicja's rationales. Alan and Alicja are more instrumental in their motivations, albeit in different ways. Susanne's commitment is above all to the cohort, from which she gains a sense of belonging. There is an assumed homogeneity on Susanne's part that her fellow members are committed to their profession in the same way. Yet there is a tension here, as the boundaries drawn by translators between professionals and non-professionals are necessarily fuzzy, or porous (Colley & Guéry, 2015; Hodgson et al., 2015; Dent et al., 2016). This porosity is due to the lack of regulation or standardised route into the profession. Susanne remedies this by using a commitment to translation best practice as a means of defining a professional translator – a "real" translator that is "qualified and experienced".

The ITI creates spaces – online and in person – for this commitment to be shared with others. The sense of belonging that makes Susanne's membership fees worth it emerges from these spaces. Her deeper involvement in the ITI, as a coordinator for a regional group, highlights the role the association has in her professional identity. Susanne's commitment to the ITI is a commitment to translation best practice. She discusses the often-underestimated standards required to produce a good quality translation and the role associations might have in upholding them. This alludes to what I explore next: solidarity or the lack thereof. For all the good will that professional associations, organisations and translators may have, their ability to change working conditions that enable translation best practice is limited.

6.5. (Dis)empowered Translators

The European Commission Directorate-General for Translation (EC-DGT) is one of the largest employers of translators and procurers of freelance translation in Europe. The EC-DGT runs various schemes and programmes, including the EMT network, intended to promote the translation profession. As described in more detail in 6.2 above, the EMT network aims to boost the translation profession by prescribing standards set by experts for postgraduate degrees. Robert Kahler (see 5.5), however, remains frustrated by the EC-DGT's approach to translation:

> *it seems absurd to me that the Commission should be behind the European Master's in Translation and should be doing everything it can to sort of rig the market in favour of agencies. I mean it's just sort of paradoxical to me, you know, that, on the one hand, you're trying to professionalise translators, and on the other you're sort of procuring vast amounts of dodgy freelance translation from agencies.*

For Robert, the EC-DGT's procurement processes – the competitive tender described in the previous chapter – benefit agencies over freelance translators. The efforts of the organisation to professionalise translators via the establishment of training standards, which are then undermined by agencies taking a big slice of the freelance pie, simply don't make sense to him. Robert is also unconvinced that the EC-DGT's other schemes, such as the Translating Europe Forum I attended in Brussels (explored in 7.3 below), do anything to benefit "translation as a profession".

> *If it were part of a much wider campaign perhaps [it might contribute to promoting translation]. I mean, I can't see a two-day event sort of changing anything, you know, I mean a change in the Commission's procurement practices would probably make a considerable difference, you know, or a change in the financial regulation to allow us to use a different system for the procurement of intellectual services […] the Commission must be one of the biggest customers for translation and […] if it paid the money that was needed to get the quality required it would probably make a difference, yeah.*

I asked Robert what he thought about translation qualifications more generally. His undergraduate degree was in languages, but he has no qualifications specific to translation. He sees the practice of translation as something you either can or cannot

do: "you could probably acquire a professional qualification and you wouldn't necessarily be any more suited to the task, and your written English just might not be up to it". His experience in the Commission, the exam he took to "get in", the approval of experienced colleagues, makes him arguably more qualified: "the recognition of your peers is probably as good a qualification as you can get". Robert admitted his scepticism towards formal courses:

ROBERT: *I'm sceptical, but I really don't know anything about, sort of, what a translation course involves. What did you find most useful about your translation course?*

EMMA: *maybe the confidence that it gave me actually and I had-*

ROBERT: *recognition. Look I'm a translator.*

EMMA: *recognition. Yeah, ok, I can do this, it's not just me.*

ROBERT: *yeah, I think one of the main problems of the profession is that indeed anybody can say they are a translator. So, at least a translation qualification would at least be something that would distinguish a particular person as being very serious, you know, when you claim to be a translator.*

In this fractured profession and market, the EC-DGT is something of an absent centre. The vast amounts of translation it goes through, both in-house and outsourced, and the visibility of this organisation within the EU make a potentially powerful force in translation. Despite his scepticism about the EC-DGT's directives, Robert recognises the impact such a body can have. Or rather could have, if it directed resources that way. The EMT network sets standards for postgraduate qualifications in translation and is run by the EC-DGT. Yet, it employs a competitive tendering process that favours agencies that charge less. There is a tension here, with the same organisation promoting educational and training standards in translation while undermining those standards in its procurement of outsourced translations. The EC-DGT's actions, as a visible body in translation and as a procurer of vast amounts of freelance translation, impact self-employed workers. The standardisation and professionalization they work towards with EMT and other initiatives contrast with their procurement practices. In a profession whose value and competency is defined by the market, those initiatives mean less than whom they award the tender to. Where the market – itself an emergent phenomenon comprised of countless interactions and transactions – defines

competency, a big player in said market could create change. If the EC-DGT were to set minimum rates for freelancers as part of its tender, this would place an emphasis on quality and professionalism. Within a market-driven definition of quality, in which cost and speed come first and foremost, this would disrupt the neoliberal apparatus by resisting the dominant discourse of cost minimisation (Whitehead & Crawshaw, 2012; Moore & Newsome, 2018).

Liam Arkwright (see 5.6) has an undergraduate degree in modern languages and a Master's degree in translation. The Master's was useful to get some work as a newcomer to freelance translation, as it is often the minimum requirement for agencies in the EU. Ultimately, though, it was not enough to prevent the high levels of precarity that saw Liam leave freelancing. I asked Liam if he thought a Master's adequately set someone up to start as a freelancer:

> *No, no […] I think it negates all the problems that you encounter when you first try to freelance. Like I said, when you register with agencies where you basically have your prices cut. There's no kind of commercial awareness side to it in the sense of discussing what the average rate would be, how to negotiate those and discuss them, what kind of trouble you have when you work with an agency, and kind of the usual contact between them, or even the usual contact you'd have between a direct client and yourself. It doesn't teach you any of those vital skills that you need as a freelance translator, I guess.*

He nonetheless sees the appeal and benefit of postgraduate programmes, particularly in developing his understanding of translation and his skills. He also identifies the broader value of the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network for the translation profession.

> *a lot of university courses are EMT accredited so I think that is quite a big step forward because they're trying to create a professional education, kind of education that's standardised, uniform for everybody, and I think that does really help the kind of professional standard amongst translators, because in the freelance field you get people coming into it from a lot of different backgrounds. And yeah, finding a standard- to try and enforce any kind of translation standard is quite a big task. Whereas at least if there's an education system where we'll all working towards, at least in the techniques or the theories at least being*

aware that they exist, yeah it does help to get a professional standard or professional solidarity at least.

If there is more standardisation of practice, more awareness of techniques, "it really helps to be able to justify to clients and agencies why you've picked a certain way to translate something". It is also useful to you as a translator to think actively about why you decide to translate something in a certain way. Increased awareness would drive quality, as translators and their clients would be better informed about how translation works, and why it is not as simple as word replacement. This push for standardised training and practice should, according to Liam, "come from all levels".

> *it needs to come from agencies themselves, it needs to come from professional translators and freelancers and obviously from educational institutes, and then any kind of associations and organisations can contribute too, because, at the minute, I think there is a disconnect between theory and practice.*

Standardised training and practice may have the added benefit of bringing solidarity and the ability to lobby against agencies. Liam has not seen any evidence of this and for this reason has not joined an association:

> *if associations could pool freelance translators, especially altogether, it would really help because you could determine pricing, know what the standard price is, essentially more power to bargain with agencies. […] there's a lot of professional talks about stepping into new areas of translation or how to kind of be more professional so they focus on the practicalities of translating but I feel when it comes to pricing when it comes to kind of the freelance dynamic there's none of, again from what I've seen, there's no one focussing on that and really pushing translators to come together and kind of push back on agencies.*

Liam draws together professional standards and professional solidarity. The two potentially feed into one another, creating clearer boundaries between professionals and non-professionals. This recalls ideas of self-interested professional groups who aim to maintain their jurisdiction or monopoly over translation practice and expertise (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). Given the suffocating working conditions Liam has encountered at the hands of translation agencies, this is an understandable response. Liam seeks a collective solution to his individual precarity, but his own experience has shown him that this is not possible. Liam empowered himself in this unstable and insecure market by leaving freelance work for the security of employment. He no longer

tussles with the tension of wanting to be recognised as a professional but needing to make ends meet with low-paid jobs. Now, he works for an agency that presumably uses similar practices to those he laments. In this highly competitive market in which those with the expertise are largely disempowered, resistance is difficult to fathom (Harvey et al., 2017). Liam makes sense of it by no longer doing work he was underpaid for. His commitment to translation is intact as he no longer undermines the profession or his own expertise by taking poorly paid jobs. There is a glimmer of hope though, with initiatives like the EMT network pooling together students of translation and recognised postgraduate qualifications. If newcomers to translation are empowered by their training to have their expertise valued, they may have some chance against agencies by standing in solidarity. For the time being, however, the realities of a market-driven definition of competency and a large, mobile workforce create fragmentation that make collective resistance something of a logical impossibility (Harvey et al., 2017; Hassard & Morris, 2018; Wood et al., 2019).

Although she lives in the UK, Teresa Villa (see 6.2.1) is a member of two associations in Spain, one of which specialises in book translation. This association knows about contracts with publishers and other useful details of "doing that kind of translation". Her language combination is English to Spanish, so it makes sense for her to continue being a member of those associations despite being based in the UK. She is also a member of the regional group of the ITI that Susanne is coordinator of, and this is how I met her. She has considered fully joining the ITI, but it would be too costly:

> *the cost of [the ITI] will stop a lot of people from joining and we need to- we need to be joined in some sort of association because there's a lot of... we're isolated as freelancers and we need to make our job better and have better- better working conditions and the only way of doing that is to be part of a group. But I think the high cost of the ITI is probably stopping a lot of people from joining, which in my case is not that terrible because I'm already a member of two associations, so I can fight for having better working conditions from Spanish clients, which are my clients. But for somebody who's new, someone who's just starting in the business, they won't have that backup, they can't learn that a certain rate is peanuts and that certain working conditions certain deadlines are just, just not right.*

Her membership to associations allows her as an individual to fight back against big business. As a book translator, she finds herself in market dominated by a handful of large companies. There are "basically two publishers that then own smaller labels":

> *so it's a monopole and we're just individuals. I think it is, it is political: we need to be able to fight against, well, sometimes oppressive conditions, oppressive deadlines and oppressive rates.*

Teresa is happy to share a small victory with me: the book translation association in Spain have been in talks with the Spanish Minister of Culture over rights translators should be paid when their translations are published. The Ministry of Culture provides grants to publishers for translating literature, which were not being passed on translators. Teresa hopes this intervention on the part of the association will lead to some form of standardisation of rates and payment of rights: "it's a small thing but it's a seed, something that […] can be taken further."

Teresa is open about her hardships as a freelance translator (see 5.8). She reinforces Liam's comments, that it is only as a group that freelancers stand a chance of resisting the dominance of agencies. In contrast to Liam, she has managed to ride out the precarity of self-employment and has even seen some power exerted by a translator association in Spain. This is a rare example – the only one I came across in the research – of translators' voices being heard. Despite the fragmentation of this cohort, they have successfully pooled their resources and begun to affect change. Resistance is perhaps not a lost cause. Teresa's participation in this collective effort contributes to her individual profession identity. She empowers herself within the oppressive working conditions she describes by contributing to a community of book translators. Her involvement in this community in turn produces a collective identity. Collective and individual identities feed into and off one another (Mackey, 2007; Allen, 2011; McCarthy, 2016). Teresa's own experiences of precarity inform her interactions with associations and clients; and her memberships to associations inform how she now reacts to her precarity. Teresa makes sense of the tension between individual and collective, between support and competition, by working towards empowering herself and her fellow professionals.

6.6. Outside Formal Networks

Cathy Stanley got in touch with me following a tweet I posted looking for translators who were not members of associations. We organised a convenient time to do the

interview over the phone. About 10 minutes in there was a knock at the door and she was asked to take in a package from a neighbour. We laughed about this small inconvenience of working from home. Cathy has worked in the wider language industry since graduating from her undergraduate degree in modern languages. She first worked for a media company writing descriptions of German adverts in English. This gave her the idea to look into translating, so she did a Master's in Russian and German translation. About nine years ago, after graduating from her Master's, she worked in-house for a translation company that were corporate members of both the CIOL and ITI, she "got to see a little bit about what being a member involved". Much of the work the company got from these memberships (i.e. from being listed on the member directory) was "boring standard work" that didn't appeal to her. Given the fees the associations charge for their exams in particular, she didn't think it was worth it. These "astronomical" fees are particularly galling if you have already paid for and successfully completed a Master's:

> *I mean I don't know where people get the money from to do it because it's so expensive and you know when you've got a Master's degree I don't think it should really be necessary to do that as well, so it's not anything you haven't really done before.*

Cathy does not attend many CPD events – one the major selling points of associations – mainly because they tend not to be held near her. She sees this as a shame and thinks she should do more. Like many of the translators I spoke to, Cathy has friends and ex-colleagues she knows from before going freelance that form part of her translation networks. She gets in touch with these fellow linguists if she has a question about a tricky turn of phrase in Russian or German. She speaks with translators and interpreters she knows well on WhatsApp, and she occasionally uses LinkedIn. She also reaches out on Twitter if she's stuck. Twitter, in fact, is the main way Cathy is in touch with other translators. She uses it to share experience and knowledge about translation:

> *generally [use it for] sharing blogs and I know that in the past when someone's tweeted about a bad experience with a client I've definitely recognised some of that and agreed with some of that yeah and sharing glossaries as well things like that if I find something useful.*

Cathy's professional identity has been consolidated over time, through her work, studies, and her relationships with fellow linguists. Her identity is not built through involvement with an association or continual skill development, but through her everyday enactment of professionalism and translation practices (Fredriksson & Johansson, 2014; McCarthy, 2016). Part of the *doing* of translation for Cathy is her involvement in interpersonal networks and social media. Cathy makes sense of her work by situating herself within a broad and fragmented network with roots in face-to-face interactions and online connections. Twitter enables Cathy to engage with wider networks, via the practices of networking on this platform, "liking", "following" and perusing hashtags. For Cathy, the doing of translation spills out online and allows her to identify with other translators and gain a sense of community and support remotely. The experiences she reads about and the shared information further territorialise her identity, aligning her with other professional linguists and adding to her esoteric knowledge. This informal sharing of experience and resources contrasts with the formality and standardisation translator associations and the EMT network aspire to, which is more reminiscent of established profession's bodies of knowledge (Freidson, 1970; Saks, 2012; Carvalho & Santiago, 2016). Cathy's identity emerges in those moments of interacting with other translators on Twitter and in WhatsApp chats. Cathy navigates the fragmentation of her professional experiences through her networks. The technologies and platforms she interacts with consolidate and solidify her identity in spite of professional anxiety and insecurity (Hassard & Morris, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2019).

For some of the well-established translators I spoke to, they simply did not feel the need to join an association. Ellie Bradford (see 5.4) does not find it necessary to become a member of an association while her business is going well. Simply put, the effort involved – doing an exam and providing references – is not worth it while she is making good money: "I think if I was struggling to get any work and things, I would probably spend more time on it. But for now, I just don't need to".

The events other translators are keen on are also not enough of an attraction to warrant going for membership. Ellie has other networks – colleagues from her internship and in-house position – that she can socialise with. Her friends and fellow translators have also not signed up: "if someone said: 'I did this and these are the benefits I got' then I would be more interested, but none of my friends have done either so, yeah". The CPD others gain from events and webinars, Ellie pursues on her own in the form of

undertaking a degree in health sciences. Lastly, she enjoys being able to choose when and whom she socialises with:

> *I'm quite an introverted person and I quite like working from home so one of the nice things about my job is that when I- I don't have to see people every day. So when I do see people I'm very happy to talk to them. I think if I kept trying to go to events and things I would just get very tired of it so…*

Ellie's main interaction "with the translation community at large" is through Facebook groups. There is one principally comprised of people who work from home, where translators can "let off steam about annoying clients". Ellie sees the benefits of having this distant group of quasi-colleagues:

> *everyone likes having colleagues and things so you can bounce ideas off each other but also vent about things and when you work from home you don't get that one-on-one situation so Facebook groups and etc are kinda good. […] one of the biggest ones has 13,000 people from all over the world […] it's a good community especially because they do the Christmas secret Santa thing, so you can put your name and your address down and any allergies you have, and people will send you things. It's really nice because offices often have a secret Santa, but obviously you don't if you work on your own, so it's quite nice. Like last year, I got something from Austria and something from someone else in the UK but from a Turkish guy, so he sent me something so yeah it was really nice.*

Ellie is one of the most successful and financially stable freelancers I spoke to. Membership to an association is superfluous to her. Like Cathy, Ellie finds collegiality in social media platforms. This collegiality, made material through the sending and receiving of Christmas presents, enables a sharing of experience with a global cohort of translators. This consolidates her identity by aligning her experiences with the translation "community at large", while allowing her to enjoy the autonomy of self-employment (Alberti et al., 2018; Kessler, 2018; Wood et al., 2019). Ellie's experience of belonging to an outsourced office, described as "nice", highlights an underpinning desire, need and seeking for belonging that circulates through many of these comments. Given the fragmented nature of the cohort and the work itself, there is no central organisation or network to turn to for that sense of professional belonging. Ellie seeks out emotional support, community and practical advice from Facebook groups. Ellie does not look for solidarity related to working conditions, unlike Liam and Teresa

(6.5). This is perhaps because she is content with her business and not racked with professional anxiety emerging from precarity (Hassard & Morris, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2019). The stories of these translators demonstrate a variety of imagined forms and shapes of collectivity, community and cohort with commercial translation. These self-employed workers seek the tone of belonging that meets their needs, from a shared understanding of the trials and tribulations of working in translation, to practical advice and a commitment to promoting the interests of the cohort. Belonging to a professional group – whether fragmented and dispersed in online network, or centralised within an association – empowers translators to navigate the various and multiple challenges of self-employment.

6.7. Tweeting Contradictions

Various online platforms are used by translators to connect with one another, form networks, get support – whether linguistic, administrative or pastoral – get clients, vent about clients, and keep themselves "up-to-date". The most commonly used forms of social media are Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and WhatsApp. Here, I focus on Twitter, looking at how "tweeting" contributes to identity construction. To explore this, I delve into the 18,230 tweets I collected over three months using common translation and interpreting hashtags: #xl8, #1nt, #t9n, #translation, #interpreting (see 4.3.3 for methods).

Susanne Lorenz (see 6.4) was one of the keenest tweeters I spoke with, and she in fact tweeted about our interview:

SUSANNE: *I use Twitter. Yes, that's really the [social media] that I use almost exclusively professionally and I largely use that for conferences or when I do something unusual like today maybe even!*

Susanne described how translators used Twitter:

> *It's largely centred around conferences, and of course there's the conference hashtag, and translators tweet about conferences and other translators see it and then they follow each other. And, of course, they tweet about their translations for the rest of the year. So, there's anecdotes about translation, about specific jobs or questions even. I've sometimes asked questions online directed towards the Twitter world.*

To get an initial picture of what translators and interpreters tweet about specifically in relation to translation and interpreting, I have created a wordcloud of the most common words. In a wordcloud, the size of the word determines its frequency. So, the larger the word, the more frequently it occurs within the tweets. Unsurprisingly, this wordcloud (Figure 11) is dominated by "translation", common translation hashtags, and other words that you could expect to find. This makes other words that might provide more insight difficult to make out.

Figure 11: Wordcloud of #xl8 tweets

In Figure 12, I have removed the search terms and other more predictable words to see what their dominance might be hiding. This second wordcloud provides a richer picture of translation chatter on Twitter, hinting at actions and practices discussed in interviews and at events. Words related to training appear, such as CPD, conference, workshop and webinar. There are acronyms related to events and conferences, such as International Translation Day (ITD) and Translation Europe Forum (TEF). Practicalities of translation feature, from terminology to clients and quality, and working freelance. Professional associations appear, such as the American Translators Association (ATA), as do "colleagues" and "clients", hinting at network comprised of a variety of actors.

Figure 12: Filtered #xl8 wordcloud

To get more context on these tweets, I have put together a word association network (Figure 13)[31]. This splits the tweets into pairs of words and then creates a network that shows which words are most often produced together[32]. This word network gives a better indication of translators' interactions on Twitter, what gets tweeted about and how the action of tweeting, or even just viewing tweets can contribute to professional identity. The hub in the middle of this network is drawn together – predictably – by the hashtag #xl8. This is the principal hashtag used to refer to translation. It is common practice in text mining to remove the most frequently used terms (Silge & Robinson, 2017), as was done in Figure 11 above. The dominance of these terms, which can be assumed to be in the data based on how it was collected, is thought to potentially obscure more interesting terms and topics. However, I have decided to include these terms in the word networks as they are key to what holds together these assemblages of tweets. Popular translation hashtags have affective capacity – understood as the ability to interact and interconnect with other components in an assemblage – within these networks. That is, they draw together not only the content of tweets, but also

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[31] Due to formatting restrictions, the images cannot be expanded to fit the full page. For downloadable file, see https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis. This is available for all word association networks.
[32] To make these graphs as legible as possible, I used shading to represent the frequency of connection between words. The darker the shading, the more frequently those words appear together in the dataset. This allows the quality of these relationships to be highlighted while keeping the words visible. In Figure 13, to allow for greater legibility, each word appears at least 50 times in the dataset. Any fewer mentions, and the network is so full of words it is illegible. For Figure 14, Figure 17, and Figure 22 each word appears a minimum of 15 times in the dataset. This is possible with these graphs as the data has been filtered, and so contains fewer tweets overall. With fewer tweets, the graph remains legible with a higher level of detail.

Figure 13: #xl8 word association network

devices and Twitter users interested in contributing to or reading these anecdotes, experiences, and promotional materials. The graphs allow for the visualisation of differing levels of affective capacity that would be lost if they were excluded.

This data complements the interview and observational data, with discussions emerging around events, professionalism, and freelancing. There is a hint of a human v. machine discourse, but this is explored extensively in the next chapter, so here I will focus on other things. To delve into this data more deeply, I will "zoom in" on a few different topics that echo discussions I had in interviews or observed at events. I have drawn together key terms to create topics as follows: 1) conferences and CPD; 2) freelance and professional; and 3) quality and rates. When I initially explored these key terms individually, for example quality and rates, I found there to be significant overlap, with many of the same tweets coming up for both search terms. For this reason, I have combined the key terms into three different graphs to eliminate a duplication of data.

6.7.1. *Paying for expertise*

Figure 14[33] focusses on "rates" and "quality". It presents us with two sides: high – "quality interpreting", "quality translation", "ensure quality", "subtitling qualitymatters" – , and low – "low rates", "substandard conditions", "low quality". Quality and rates are linked in these tweets, as seen in the popular tweet in Figure 15 stating that low rates will lead to low quality. This recalls Alicja's and Robert's comments about pay and professional standards (5.5). Professional standards are only possible in professional conditions, which need to be recompensed accordingly so the professional can focus on quality over volume. Quality and rates are linked to professionalism, with translators compared to "conventional" professions (Figure 16). This tweet from Metropolitan Translations uses conventional markers of professionalism that draw a boundary between expert and layperson (Fournier, 1999; Saks, 2012). Professional translators should receive "fair rates" for this hard-earnt expertise, just like lawyers and doctors, demonstrating the broader discourse around income signifying professional status (Ackroyd, 2016).

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[33] For downloadable file, see: https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis. Each word appears a minimum of 15 times in the dataset.

Figure 14: 'rates' and 'quality' word association network

Figure 15: Popular tweet　　　　　　　Figure 16: Promotional tweet

In these tweets, we find a logical impossibility: promotional tweets from agencies promise high standards and quality provided by qualified experts; freelance translators disparage the low rates agencies offer that undermine their ability to produce quality work. Agencies use the expertise of their freelancers to sell themselves to potential clients. Translators' professionalism becomes a marketing ploy, a proxy for the provision of quality services harnessed by agencies to gain clients (Fournier, 1999; Evetts, 2006). On the other hand, freelancers complain that the rates they are paid do not allow them to produce quality texts. There is another layer to this, with translators discussing rates between one another and sharing resources that provide advice. The goal of these interactions is that translators do not end up being "paid peanuts" and "donot undersell". This recalls Teresa's comments about newcomers not knowing how much to charge (6.5 above). Some collective guilt or culpability seems directed towards those who take little for negatively impacting the whole "sector". A collective identity begins to emerge that places the burden for rates at least partly on individuals that take less.

These tweets provide a snapshot of the tension between individual and cohort seen throughout this and the previous chapter. Responsibilization is not only enacted by professional associations hoping to get new members and sell tickets to their events (see 6.3). Individuals on Twitter reproduce this discourse, forming another point of interaction between the market forces that dictate working conditions and freelance

professionals themselves. This dance, between having to get work in a highly competitive self-employed market and being frustrated that translation expertise is not financially recognised, epitomises the experience of translation professionals. In this negotiation of commitments and priorities, translators make sense of their working lives and find empowerment where they can, as explored throughout this chapter. Professional identities emerge out of the various and multiple interactions involved. Quality and professionalism are intertwined with rates and time, forming a substantial part of this tension and professional identity.

6.7.2. *Privilege and curse*

Figure 17 shows the word association network based on the terms "freelance" and "professional"[34]. This assemblage sees different sides of freelance professionalism emerge alongside one another. On the one hand, Twitter users tweet about the difficulties of freelancing. This overlaps with the above section, with translators complaining about rates and agencies (see Figure 18). To combat these difficulties, "personal kindness" is encouraged through sharing "self-care strategies". These tweets are shared by companies and individuals alike (see Figure 19). On the other hand, is the freelancer as professional, who must create a business, a brand even (see Figure 20). Productivity tips and "business strategies" are shared alongside courses in marketing. There is also passion for translation and interpreting, and for professionalism, alongside an appreciation of "#freelance" experiences and "freelancelife" and the rollercoaster of uncertainty (see Figure 21). The "new spirit of capitalism" and the tension between flexibility and uncertainty that is inherent in enterprise culture are condensed into these tweets (Rosenkranz, 2019: 616).

Freelancer as professional or professional freelancer as an identity emerges as a complex, contextual and fluid phenomenon. It is at once a privilege and a curse, offering flexibility and variety, but tough working conditions.

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[34] For downloadable file, see: https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis. Each word appears a minimum of 15 times in the dataset.

Figure 17: 'freelance' and 'professional' word association network

Marc Eybert-Guillon ✍️🤳 Gaming ... ⌄
@GreenTwrites

Dear #freelance translators,
which circle of Hell would you say
(some) agencies most belong
in: 4th (Greed), 8th (Fraud) or 9th
(Treachery)?

#translation #localization #t9n
#l10n #xl8

11:32 · 16 Sep 18 · Twitter Web Client

Marc Eybert-Guillon ✍️🤳 Gaming ... ⌄
@GreenTwrites

Yeah, sure, and would you like my
soul with that?
#translation #localization #t9n
#l10n #xl8 #freelance #agency

Budget:0.03 $/word

3:36 · 15 Sep 18 · Twitter Web Client

Figure 18: Tweets about freelancing and agencies

SDL Trados ✓
@sdltrados

How to stay happy and healthy while running a thriving
freelance #xl8 business

📅 November 28
🕐 3pm GMT
🧑 @corinnemckay

Sign up here: ow.ly/65wK30mKpif

How to stay happy and
healthy as a freelancer

SDL*

12:30 PM · Nov 26, 2018 · Hootsuite

Figure 19: Self-care materials

Memsource
@memsource

Building you freelance #t9n brand can be tough. But our
four step guide makes it easy:bit.ly/2P2keqw
#xl8 #freelancer #personalbrand

BUILDING YOUR FREELANCE
TRANSLATOR BRAND

MEMSOURCE

11:05 AM · Nov 29, 2018 · Hootsuite Inc.

Figure 20: Business freelancer

Eoin Madigan | Treaty City Translat... ⌄
@TCLtranslations

Me, when I haven't gotten a job
in a few days: I'm such a useless
piece of shit. What the fuck was
I thinking becoming a #freelance
#translator? Disaster!

Me, after getting three job offers
in one hour: I am the single
greatest translator who ever lived.

9:53 · 09 Nov 18 · Twitter for Android

SarahTranslate ⌄
@SarahTranslate

Translating Philippe Forest who
quotes Proust, Barthes, Lacan,
Hugo, Céline, and Italo Calvino
(and Schrödinger's cat too) #1nt
#consecutive #ilovemyjob

Translate Tweet

📕 **Circolo dei lettori** @CircoloLe... · 03 Dec 18
"Il XIII arrondissement di Parigi è il crocevia tra
passato e futuro, un luogo che è cambiato
completamente, fino a confondere. Per questo
ha ispirato il mio libro".
...

14:53 · 03 Dec 18 · Twitter for Android

Figure 21: Tweets showing frustration and passion for translation

In this data, responsibilization mirrors that which is described above (see 6.3), with freelancers told to build their professional profile to buffer themselves against market forces. In addition, the now pervasive concept of self-care puts the responsibility of dealing with the stress of these conditions on the individual (Liebenberg et al., 2015). SDL itself, one of the most dominant companies in translation (providing software and functioning as an agency), promotes self-care (Figure 19). Translation companies are seen to harness the professionalism of translators, as above, and harness the precarity of #freelancelife to promote training and self-care events. Translators as in a state of professional anxiety are responsible not only for the rates they receive, but also how they deal emotionally and physically with their precarity. These tweets provide yet another snapshot: that of the neoliberal apparatus deterritorializing professionalism and strategies to deal with the stresses of self-employment to aid the flow of capital (Usher, 2010).

6.7.3. *Individual and collective conferences*

The last topic I want to focus on is conferences and CPD. This word association network (Figure 22)[35] is full of acronyms and hashtags that are cryptic to those not in the know. They refer to conferences, other events and the organisations that run and promote them. This network has a temporal/spatial element that the others do not, with dates and locations of events stringing together both attendees and curious browsers. Dates are sometimes woven into the hashtags themselves – mtsummit2019, fiteurope2018 – bringing to mind iterations of events, repeated year on year. These events and their supposed annual frequency co-produce professional identities both on and offline. There is a legitimacy that comes with time, as Teresa describes (6.2.1 above): the fact that she is still translating is proof that she can do it. The fact that these events happen again and again is perhaps proof that this *is* a profession. This recalls the work of Abbott and the idea of a group's jurisdiction over a given task and Larson's monopoly in the market. On an individual level, time builds up a professional profile. On a collective level, times builds up a jurisdiction distinct from other expert groups (Abbott, 1988), and more clearly defines the boundaries between professionals and non-professionals (Larson, 1977).

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[35] For downloadable file, see: https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis. Each word appears a minimum of 15 times in the dataset.

Figure 22: 'conference' and 'CPD' word association network

Time lends historicity and stratification to a profession that is able to maintain its jurisdiction and monopoly over the years. The hashtags and tweets themselves demonstrate a temporal layer that, when placed on top of the previous year, create a digital-material element of this historicity.

Figure 23: CPD tweet 1

For individual translators, conferences and events are presented as useful for freelancers as professionals, as businesspeople, and as human beings (Figure 23). As a professional, you can hone your skills. As a businessperson you can demonstrate your commitment to your skills, which will result in higher rates. As a person, conferences and events are a chance to socialise. CPD events, workshops, conferences, webinars and other training sessions are presented as the antidote to the freelance translators' woes. This recalls the various imagined collectivities in translation that work for different purposes (6.6 above). The coming together of freelancers, online and offline in conferences and workshops, relates to: practicalities and improving skills; labour and improving working conditions; and the emotional side of often isolated work. These different elements of individual and collective professional identity are negotiated differently by freelancers. The development of a professional profile and honing one's business skills tend to go hand-in-hand, particularly given the increasingly entrepreneurial nature of professionalism in translation (Fournier, 1999; Evetts, 2006). The tension arises, as demonstrated throughout this chapter, between the entrepreneurial professional, and the isolated self-employed worker seeking out a community. A sense of belonging, support and competition are drawn from and created by participating in professional networks. Some translators focus on pursuing collective action (see 6.5), while others focus on remedying their precarity (see 6.4).

On Twitter, conferences and CPD are an opportunity to cultivate collectivity and solidarity with aims of standardisation and professionalization of the whole (Figure 24). This is collective and individual: as seen in interviews and observations, the

professionalization of the individual goes hand-in-hand with the professionalization of the whole. These actions also contribute to identity construction insofar as they are a public – if the translator chooses to tweet about it – demonstration of a commitment to improvement. The tweet is a digital materiality that contributes to the production of professional identity. Tweet upon tweet, course upon conference upon webinar, build a digitally tangible identity. That identity is searchable, attached to a name or company and contact details.
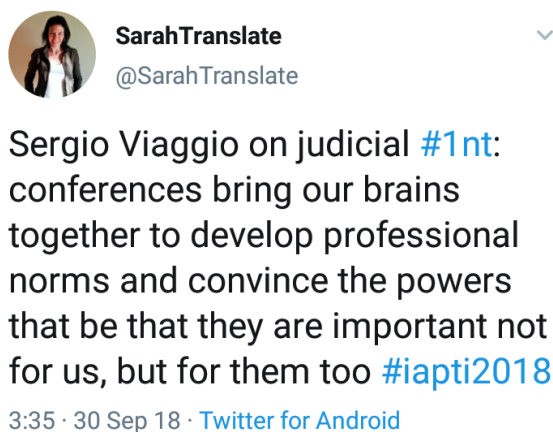
Figure 24: Collective power tweet

Figure 25: CPD tweet 2

Translators incorporate pervasive and somewhat generic discourses on professionalism into their identities by weaving them into tweets about their actions and practices. Or rather those discourses weave themselves in: translators draw on and are drawn to these discourses, which have beyond meaning the translation (Twitter)sphere. The ubiquity and recognition of professionalism draw translators and other actors in translation towards it (Fournier, 1999; Evetts, 2006). Professionalism and professional identity are restrictive and productive discourses that dictate actions and practices recognised as professional (Mackey, 2007; Fredriksson & Johansson, 2014; McCarthy, 2016). In translation, professionalism is intertwined with the provision of quality services or the production of quality translations (see Figure 25). It can be used to sell both the translator, or the course which promises recognition and tangible professionalism. The entrepreneurial nature of professionalism sees translators as responsible for their financial security through their ongoing professional development that enables them to stand out from the crowd (Allen, 2011; Kalleberg, 2011, 2012). The powerful discourses are stratified, relatively stable elements of professional translation. They are lines of consistency (see 3.3.2) that establish and reinforce hierarchies and centres based around translation agencies and increasingly software

companies, which are explored in the next chapter. These tweets condense the tensions in translation into bite-sized digital materialities that travel through networks, creating multiple, overlapping and sometimes contradictory identities online.

6.8. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has explored the ways translators make sense of their working experiences and how they empower themselves in relation to their cohort, qualifications and professional associations. The precarity highlighted in the previous chapter is built on here, demonstrating the enactment of responsibilization within translation. I have explored points and moments of interaction between the market, neoliberal discourse, and translators. The actions and practices involved in undertaking qualifications, joining associations, and participating in networks are entangled with precarious self-employment and exposure to market forces. The neoliberal apparatus creates fragmentation within commercial translation leading to multiple, nuanced and conflicting demands that emerge from the overlapping and contradictory desires and needs of the individual and the collective. This comes back to the central theme in this chapter of the tension between association and responsibilization. As I state in 6.1 above, this tension cannot be resolved. Instead, the navigation and sense-making translators engage in as they pursue their careers defines professional identity construction in translation.

Building on chapter 5, a more complex image begins to appear here, where translators' professional identities emerge from: their work and projects, their interactions with clients, rates and deadlines, and their interactions with the "translation community at large" whether in person or online. Additionally, professional identities emerge from the enactment and production of an entrepreneurial professionalism, which promises security if you are just professional enough. Concepts from assemblage thinking have demonstrated the variety of components involved. Professionalism and enterprise discourse have been deterritorialized by lean capitalism creating powerful lines of consistency. Although challenging working practices in translation is difficult, resistance to current ways of doing in translation is visible in the one example of collective action Teresa describes (see 6.5). Professional identity is not limited to the work itself, to expertise or autonomy over it as stressed in the literature, it emerges from a wide range of different people and things interacting in different contexts, creating multiple, situated and fluid identities. Chapters 5 and 6 have also touched on technologies and their role in translation. The next chapter explores this in-depth,

adding machine translation and algorithmic expertise into the tensions and challenges that translators face.

Chapter 7. Translation in the Age of Data

7.1.   CAT Tools and MT

This chapter looks at technologies in translation. It will touch on both CAT (Computer Aided Translation) tools and Machine Translation (MT), focussing primarily on the latter. CAT tools are software that use Translation Memory (TM) features to speed up translation processes. This works by storing pairs of translated texts as segments. When segments are repeated or produce a "fuzzy match"[36] with new texts those segments can be reused in full or edited. On the other hand, MT, which appeared following the Second World War, produces translations of an entire text (Ramati & Pinchevski, 2018). Original MT methods use statistical models created from the analysis of bilingual text corpora to produce translations. The most recent development in MT, Neural Machine Translation (NMT), uses artificial intelligence (AI) and natural language processing to generate translations from corpora of texts. NMT is generally thought to represent a significant advance in the technology as it produces idiomatic and fluid texts that statistical methods are often unable to match. Although not yet perfected, NMT is now spreading into the market and is commercially available. Focussing on Google alone, in 2018, the company launched a Cloud-based NMT service that allows users to create their own custom model (Dino, 2018); and the free translation service Google Translate is now moving over to NMT (Ramati & Pinchevski, 2018).

Below, I call upon interviews, participant observation at a major translation conference, and Twitter data to explore how translation technologies contribute to professional identity construction from different perspectives. I start with the interview data in 7.2, exploring how translators make sense of technologies in their working practices and how this contributes to drawing distinctions between professionals and non-professionals. Technologies are incorporated into working practices and professional identities in different ways, with some translators viewing MT as just another tool, and others rejecting it outright. In 7.3, I move on to the Translating Europe Forum (TEF) held in Brussels, where voices from AI and the European Union institutions can be heard. Here, the hierarchies and power dynamics of translation in the age of data become more visible. The development of these technologies and their impact on translators' roles appears clearly out of translators' hands. I unpick the complex and messy entanglements of technologies, corporate and institutional actors, and

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[36] Fuzzy matches are partial matches of varying percentages that require more extensive editing.

discourses on professionalism and enterprise, from which professional identity emerges. Lastly, I bring the Twitter data into these discussions in 7.4. This data was collected using the TEF hashtag and provides an alternative perspective on the conference and its online imprint. The tweets and the networks I explore demonstrate the online production of networked identities. Building on the use of tweets in chapter 6 (see 6.7), the social network analysis (SNA) methods I use highlight how the *doing* of tweeting forms part of the sociotechnical assemblages that translation is produced within. I conclude that the technological revolution that is changing translation practices in the form of MT has also created new spaces in which professional identities can be produced and new ways of producing those identities.

The topics dealt with here could be analysed using a more conventional materialist approach, which would frame these expert workers as victims of automation whose labour is being expropriated (Attewell, 1987; Comor, 2015). This may provide some initial insight into how translators navigate the challenges they face from technological developments in their field. However, this reductive approach would neglect the role of the technologies themselves by relying only on the voice of translators (see 2.3.4). The assemblage approach taken here, which encourages the integration of various sources of data, adds multiple layers to the discussion. I use various concepts from assemblage thinking – aggregation and disaggregation, lines of flight and lines of consistency, and deterritorialization – to explore how technologies interact with other people and things, bringing nuance and complexity to the analysis. This is evidenced in the structure of the chapter, which goes from interviews, to the conference, to Twitter. It gradually "zooms out" and becomes more aggregative (see 4.2.1). In this way, the chapter builds and adds layers of analysis, elucidating rather than reducing the complexity I encountered during data collection. Part of this complexity is in the apparent paradoxes and ironies that emerge, reflecting the feeling of quiet chaos that permeates the project.

7.2. Resignation and Defiance

7.2.1. *MT and the agency model*

Tracy Woods (see 6.3) has seen a lot of change in her near 40-year career. Back when she started, translations were delivered in hard copy via a courier on a motorbike. It was all typed up on a typewriter. The advent of the word processor made everything quicker and easier. Email was similarly transformative for the better. CAT tools and MT are the latest in a long line of technological innovations that she has adopted, although with caution. She has the API for Google Translate integrated into her translation

software but is considering moving over to DeepL[37] because they are "just a little better". Her motivations are academic because, as a teacher of translation in university programmes, she's "interested in where it is going […] more and more we are going to see that […] machine translated texts need editing. I think that's where we need to train the students as well". A common concern I had encountered was that MT reduced levels of quality in translation, so I asked Tracy what her thoughts were on this. She said:

you can also use bad translators, and it's all to do with money, you know, I'm often turned down because I charge a lot and I'm not prepared to go down. I mean some agencies would like to pay me roughly what I charged 20 years ago and I'm not prepared to do it. The same with machine translation, you do have such a thing as quality control, a human editing, so it can be just as good as a human translator. I think that in certain fields, machine translated texts are brilliant, particularly in pharmacy, for instance, the car industry, where you don't have sentences but phrases. Idiomatically I think it is very good. It's not my preferred tool for sentence translation […] but at the side, as another form of corpora, I think it is brilliant; it comes up with things that I think: 'wow, I hadn't thought of that one'.

Tracy highlighted the variability of human translators and admitted that she can have "good days and bad days […] whereas a machine is a machine". MT is getting better and better and she does not agree with translators that say: "it's just awful", because "it depends what you put in". We discussed what the impact of improved MT, leading to a broader roll out of the technology in different fields, would have on the translation market:

it's not good for translators, is it? […] the other thing that's happening is that you've got to look at target audience and the purpose of the translation and sometimes a machine translated text is fine: people just need a gist translation […] if it's just for information then it's fine, and I think there's going to be more and more of poorly written text no matter whether it's translated or is just an original because everything's got to be done quick quick quick quick quick.

That is why Tracy warns her students: "you've got to specialise and find a niche where machine translation can't do the job". Although she can't offer much advice in terms of

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[37] DeepL is a free machine translation service that has emerged as a competitor to Google Translate.

which fields specifically because MT is "going to get better and better" as NMT takes over from statistical methods. These technological shifts have already led to the appearance of new roles in commercial translation, including pre- and post-editors. Post-editors edit a text that has gone through MT, while pre-editors edit a text before it goes in to produce "better" output.

> *It's interesting how you can manipulate machine translation and my view is that technology is there to help us. It's our tool as a translator and what we need to do is manage it and not allow it to take over and drag us in its wake. So, if we know what it can do then we can manage it and that's what we'll have to do. But translators do need to be aware that artificial intelligence is here and it's here to stay and it's going to be massive and stop saying 'well, I don't want it'.*

According to Tracy, whether MT is an opportunity or threat to translators is beside the point: it is simply unavoidable. Agencies are already using MT to reduce rates, and again this is nothing new.

> *I saw the introduction of CAT tools. I got my first one in 1999, which was Trados workbench, and it was great, it was my tool and it was just amazing. And at the time I was translating once a month or every other month a hair magazine and […] translation memory worked extremely well […] the men who were the editors producers of the magazine hadn't heard of translation memory so that was a money spinner for me, that was wonderful. But what happened, where we are now, is that agencies, like you said, are saying: 'right 50%, 20%, and we're not paying you the full whack'. I mean I have the privilege that I can say: 'no, I won't work for you'. I have got some agencies who will pay my rate but they will go to someone else first, they only take me as a last resort because I'm too expensive. So, you know, that's a losing battle, and machine translation is going to be the same […] I had one agent, and that's the beginning of the rot […] I had one agent who wrote to me because I was working in the Cloud, so, I was working on their server and they could see that I had the API switched on. I don't know how but they saw that I had used Google Translate and they wrote back, they said: 'we see that you use machine translation, your rates are very high, we would like you to reduce them because you use machine translation'.*

This idea that MT significantly reduces the time and skill needed to produce a quality translation is a "misconception". Tracy sees it similarly to a dictionary, another form of

corpus to be used as a tool. She sees no validity for reducing her rates, she thinks what happened with CAT tools will happen with MT. This means that the future of the industry "is grim!"

Tracy links the uptake and developments in MT to other technological changes and shifts in the way we interact with media. There is less text about nowadays, more images. Fewer hard copies, more screens.

> *a lot of people are just living on their smartphones, which is a small computer, and using appropriate abbreviations. So, beautiful sentences are inappropriate and not helpful. So, I think that we will accept machine translation as fine; it serves a purpose.*

She was on a flight recently and noticed that she was the only one reading a physical book, the only one not looking at screen. It was a book of poetry and she thought: "there's nobody on this flight reading poetry, that's just pure black text, no pictures, nothing, but also poetry requires a lot of your imagination and it's much more relaxing to just […] watch this thing". This impacts the kinds of texts companies need translating and the levels of quality they're looking for, which will most likely not be the sort of work translators want or need.

> *sorry it's grim but that's my view of the future and I'm glad that I am where I am and I don't have to spend another 40 years translating.*

Technological changes have deterritorialized and reterritorialized translation, drawing lines and boundaries in different places over time. These changes reflect and produce other technological developments that have modified our interaction with text, media, and images. Translation is firmly situated within these seismic changes, the translator's role similarly shape-shifting to keep up. Tracy's experience demonstrates the processual nature of work and identity, as individuals adopt new practices and technologies over time. Tracy also describes how corporate actors in translation adopt and adapt to these technologies: primarily as a means of minimising costs (Nelson & Irwin, 2014; Wood et al., 2019). Taking this further, the interweaving of internet-based communication and translation technologies has enabled agencies to use platforms – their online servers, TMs and MT systems – as a means of surveillance (Moore & Newsome, 2018). As in Tracy's experience working in the Cloud, the agency was able to see she was using the Google Translate API and used this as justification for lowering her rates. This highlights the supposed "freedom" of freelancing as somewhat

illusory: "since the re-arrangement of capital through new online technologies can reproduce new forms of dependency, surveillance and subjugation" (Alberti et al., 2018: 452). Companies make use of technologies to improve their services and their competitiveness, while increasing the monitoring of self-employed workers and benefitting from cost reduction. This builds on the previous two chapters by adding a technological layer to the understanding of how translation – as a commercial process, form of expertise, and professional identity – emerges from the interactions of a wide range of people and things. The rest of this chapter explores the deterritorialization and reterritorialization taking place through and within these complex relationships.

Liam Arkwright is at the beginning of his career, a handful of years out of his Master's. Although not a student of Tracy's, he followed the same advice to specialise that she gives to her students, but still faced levels of insecurity that led to him leaving freelance work for employment (see 5.6). His experience working in an agency "more on the management side" gives him a unique insight into MT from different perspectives.

> *I've noticed the huge huge emphasis on translation technology in trying to improve the client's experience or even trying to save the client money, it's a huge selling point. Like I say, the drive is just so massive to basically just push prices down and to produce more content for less and I think technology is a massive factor in that. You can actually make more money from the client, actually, whilst delivering more content for less.*

In Liam's experience, translation technologies, including CAT tools, mean agencies can charge their clients less per word for translations while adding additional charges for creating and maintaining TMs. This is also the case for creating and maintaining personalised MT corpora. For Liam, CAT tools can help translators, improving efficiency and maintaining quality, while still being heavily dependent on human input. Whereas "machine translation […] is a lot less beneficial to translators in general". This is because the drive to use MT changes the translator's role more substantially, focussing on editing MT texts, resulting in more substantial changes to rates:

> *basically, the translators become editors and often the output is so poor that the translator is essentially putting a lot of effort into making that text acceptable, and then getting paid a lot less for it and at times a lot less recognised in that process.*

The lines between "light" and "full" post-editing are not clear-cut. So it can be difficult for the translator to know just how much they should edit or even what "acceptable" means. Quality becomes about the text being "acceptable", not as good as possible. Responsibility for the quality of the text often becomes muddied. This means that translators may find themselves changing things less than they would otherwise to stay within an "acceptable" level of quality:

> *technically the translator has to stop themselves from changing things to make it sound like it should, or how they would translate it, to just make it acceptable. It's a different way of working for them, and it's a lot of cheaper and it doesn't earn anywhere near as much.*

For Liam, this use of MT leads to cheaper translations in which quality control is limited. Prices can be significantly pushed down, and output increased.

> *EMMA: in terms of machine translation, who would you say gets the most benefit?*

> *LIAM: agencies*

The blanket application of MT is partly driven by clients and their expectations, which are "kinda very out of line with the reality":

> *they're not educated on the translation process and, like, the pitfalls of translation, the kind of challenges that you face. They sometimes have really unrealistic expectations or they think 'I don't see the benefit of not using machine translation' […] there's some clients where speed is everything, but then they don't understand why quality would suffer if you went faster.*

Liam nonetheless sees MT as both an opportunity and a threat to translators. Human linguists will always be needed because machines simply cannot deal with language in the same way humans can. For example, "they can't anticipate the end-use as well as a human would". He sees it as a threat insofar as "it will redefine a translator's role into more of an editor than a translator, at the same time, it will really push prices down".

For Liam, MT is reterritorializing the role of translators into something they have little say over. Clients' mismatch of expectations with the "reality" that Liam refers to demonstrates the lack of knowledge non-experts have about translation. Here, Liam asserts his own professionalism through esoteric knowledge of translation best

practice. The use of software and increasingly algorithms is driven by "organizational needs for speed, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness" (Carlson, 2018: 1762). Liam's experiences echo Tracy's, in which agencies' clients want their translations for yesterday, reflecting a world of "high-speed patterns of digital interconnectedness, lightning-fast information technology and just-in-time global production processes" (Elliott, 2019: 129). From this perspective, MT, harnessed by agencies at the whims of their clients, changes translators' roles while limiting them. MT is an actor that enables and constrains translation practices (Bucher, 2017). Or, as Liam puts it, it is a "different way of working" in which translators must adjust their usual ways of producing a translation. This challenges the idea that technologies become inscribed with an existing "professional logic" (Carlson, 2018: 1763). This might sometimes be the case, as in Tracy's description of MT as another tool to add to her professional arsenal. However, Liam suggests that the use of the technology can in fact be inscribed with the logic of neoliberalism, which prioritises speed and cost minimisation, impacting definitions of quality and translators' professional practices.

Software can be integrated into working practices and processes in different ways. This is not a mutually exclusive binary between professional and neoliberal logics. These two approaches can be thought of more as overlapping tendencies (Colebrook, 2002). MT inscribed with an existing professional logic, in which it becomes a tool for the freelancer, can also be inscribed with a neoliberal logic emphasising volume and speed. Technologies become enmeshed in tensions between communities with different interests, and tensions between different visions of a professional's role within complex processes (Rees, 2016). That is, a translation agency may encourage the use of MT for cost minimisation purposes, and the translator may simultaneously view the technology as the next technological development in their profession. Sense-making around technologies is multiple and contingent on the needs and desires of the actors that interact with it.

7.2.2. *Fragmented process, fragmented market*

Cathy Stanley freelances part-time and otherwise does temp work for a local agency (see 6.6). She couldn't do translation full-time because it would likely mean having to take on jobs she didn't like to make ends meet. Besides, it seems there is less work around: "I think a lot of translators are finding that that there is less and less work, so I don't know who is getting all the work, if it's machines, probably Google Translate for a lot of business stuff". Like other translators I spoke to, Cathy does work that she

thinks is perhaps beyond the reach of MT: subtitling. She describes it as a "subtle skill", with a lot of potential to go wrong if done by machine. She thinks the future will be divided along skill lines "where the less specialised the translation is done by machine, but the more sort of technical-specialist it is, the less the actual- well, the more human input would be needed".

Whatever the future ends up looking like, these new technologies will change the role of translators. They could end up working for technology companies, using their expertise to develop software rather than doing "the actual translation". Cathy did not enjoy her experience of doing post-editing, describing it as "soul destroying":

> *it was not what I would want to do with my life really […] I would rather do temping in an office and then do translation work that I enjoy, rather than do lots of post-editing work and sort of reviewing Excel files and that kind of thing. Horrible.*

It was poorly paid and mainly involved assessing how well the machine had translated various terms. She did it once and couldn't conceive of doing it on a regular basis. She thinks translation as a profession is declining, with people leaving the market because it's getting harder to earn a living that way. She thinks it's likely the emphasis will fall on volume, "it doesn't look too good at the moment". But, there is a possible positive spin: the impact of this squeezing of rates and use of MT may have "the effect that, you know, proper expert translation gets more valued again, you never know".

The increasing sophistication and ubiquity of translation technologies is contributing to the commodification and fragmentation of translation as a practice and source of income. As in Cathy's experience of post-editing, the work is becoming "granular, modular and decontextualized" (Bucher & Fieseler, 2017: 1868). Improvements in communication and other digital technologies increase the ability to break down the complex elements of knowledge work into constituent parts, "unbundling" occupational roles (Brown et al., 2008: 138) into "microtasks" (Ross, 2013: 20). MT allows the practice of translation to be sourced from a machine, with the translator's role, in Cathy's experience, reduced to cleaning up after the software. Now a recurrent theme in this analysis, these processes are part of cost minimisation efforts: a kind of digital Taylorism that fragments production and alienates workers (Brown et al., 2008; Ross, 2013). Translators, as digital workers, are disenfranchised by this division of the

commercial translation process, which sees them detached from the final intellectual product (Aytes, 2012).

Where Cathy seems resigned to a future of AI-dominated translation, Ellie Bradford (see 5.4) is defiant. I asked Ellie what changes she had seen in her six years translating:

> *[it has] definitely moved towards machine translation. Not as much as people think though. Even when I first started everyone was going 'in five years everything will be machine translation' and it's been six years and I've got a few of my clients who will email and say 'we're offering more machine translation post-editing. Can you let us know your rates for this?' but I've just replied and said 'no, I don't do that' because I think if everyone in the industry says 'no' then they can't do it.*

Like many other translators I spoke to, Ellie speaks about the issues of quality, with unknowledgeable companies running a text through Google Translate and paying low rates to get it edited: "they're expecting good results for cheaper and they're not getting it". Part of the problem is this emphasis on cost minimisation:

> *it will be the same with a lot of industries: people care about price more than they care about quality, not realising how important quality is [...] people are 'this company does this, this company has the same thing but this is cheaper, let's go for the cheaper company', not realising that actually they scrimp on things and that's why they are cheaper.*

If everyone said "no", then they might have the power to stop it "a little bit", but it also depends on just how good MT gets. There is substantial variety between language combinations in terms of the quality of texts produced: "it can't do Chinese to English yet very well at all". There are linguistic idiosyncrasies that "Google just can't cope with". Like Cathy and other translators, Ellie sees the future becoming more fragmented, along lines of quality, text types and language combinations due to the varying capabilities of MT. However, the reduced cost of translation thanks to MT could mean more companies begin to get more things translated: "so it could be that there's just as much work, it's just different".

I asked Ellie what she would do in that scenario, where more and more work is post-editing only and it begins to encroach on her field:

> *I don't know [Ellie laughs] I suppose I'll have to see when it comes to it. I think if it became a thing where I just couldn't get any work that wasn't post-editing, well, that would be the time to move to direct clients, because there is a- I mean I'm not in it, but, there is a what's the word… […] a boutique market. There definitely is, and that's where, you know, translators are a charging like 80 cents a word or at least 40 cents a word or something like that […] They are there because they want really good quality. I think that would be the time […] that I would join professional things and go to conferences and do the DipTrans[38] or whatever, to be like 'now I am one of the best, that's why you should be paying me 50 cents a word' because if all agencies were just doing post-editing then […] I don't want to do that. I would do it for the money, just so I could live while I was looking towards more direct clients but, because, you know, there will always be a boutique and higher market.*

Ellie elaborates on Cathy's glimmer of hope that the ubiquity of MT may lead to human translation expertise once again being valued. This reflects the transformationalist view that "uniquely human skills" will be highly valued under an AI revolution (Elliott, 2019: 578). Ellie foresees a two-tiered future, in which translation is divided into low-cost, high-volume post-editing, and high-cost, "boutique" human translation. Translators' roles will fragment along these lines, tracing the capabilities and weakness of MT. In this two-tiered future, Ellie imagines the markers of quality discussed in chapters 5 and 6 will play a key role in maintaining her jurisdiction over the task of translation (Abbott, 1988) and continually reterritorializing professional identity. This builds on the discussion of responsibilization and enterprise culture, again adding a technological layer. As AI advances and moves into higher-skilled jobs, an individualist scenario emerges in which successful "workers of the future will be highly adaptable, endlessly pliable […] and continually keeping up-to-date with new digital skills" (Elliott, 2019: 76). To not be subsumed into an anonymous mass of post-editors, it is the responsibility of the individual translator to ensure they fall on the "right" side of this future divide. Ironically, Ellie sees increasing her association with groups of translators – principally professional associations – as a means to individualise her professional identity. Given the way this is sold to her (see 6.3), this is an understandable position.

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[38] DipTrans is the qualification issued by the CIOL. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

Harry Garrard (see 5.6) has seen the rise of MT in his 10 years of freelance work, and, like Ellie, he rejects post-editing jobs and resists MT in different ways. Reflecting on his experiences, I asked him how he thought the industry might look in 10 years' time:

> *there's one school of thought that Google Translate will- […] everything will be automatically translated, there'll be no need for a human translator... I rather cynically specialised in law to offset that because nothing that's been MT-ed will ever be admitted to court, so I'm kind of protecting myself by doing something that you actually need a human to do rather than a machine.*

As other translators lament, a problem of working for agencies is that they might try to sneak in a post-editing job by labelling it as "proofreading". This further commodifies translation, making it a "you get what you pay for" service. Harry has a trick to find out if agencies are trying this with him:

> *there's this test, by the way, if you're translating into English. You can do it yourself with French and Italian if you ever get anything through to proofread. If you go into Word, you run a find 'of' and 'from' and it's because the Google algorithm going into English – certainly for French I don't know for Italian – can't distinguish between 'of' and 'from' and so you can spot that it's been MT-ed and then you're basically re-writing it, so you just send it back and say 'no!' So, that's a good tip for you.*

Harry does use MT, integrated into Trados, like Tracy. He sees it as "the same as Googling something". It's a tool, like a dictionary, that helps with translation. He wouldn't use it to translate a whole text though, because "you need a voice in it and if it's mechanical, it doesn't have a voice". He thinks texts should have a written flow that machines simply cannot produce: "I think translators are basically pedants and I like it kind of getting it exactly how I want and so MT doesn't do that".

We discussed how MT lowers the quality of translations and negatively impacts rates. This is already happening and could get worse as MT develops further. I asked Harry why this trend would have a negative impact:

> *well it's bad because I'll be working in Waitrose [Harry laughs] no, it's a bad thing because, like, communication is so important and if translations are bad then, you know, it affects everyone.*

MT reterritorializes Harry's identity in two seemingly contradictory ways. He integrates it into his translation software and working processes seamlessly, inscribing it with an existing professional logic (Carlson, 2018). MT becomes another string to his professional bow, but not the bow itself. In this way, technologies, computers, software, and MT corpora, are primarily presented as a "technical support for existing practices" in professional identity construction (Bucher, 2017: 924). On the other hand, the sneaky actions of agencies mean MT consolidates and sharpens the boundaries around his professionalism, his pride in his work and expertise (Marks & Scholarios, 2007). He asserts his resistance through using a "trick" to identify texts that have been machine translated. He then feels justified rejecting this work, consolidating the tasks he is willing and happy to do, and his professional identity along with them. Human translation has a "voice" that MT does not have. This is connected with professionalism for many of these translators: it is their humanity that makes them professional. Any claims that translators make "about the inferiority of the machine thus need to be understood as a discursive strategy used to maintain the distinctiveness and value of" translation professionalism (Bucher, 2017: 930). That professionalism is intrinsically *human*. Although MT can increase insecurity and precarity – and can leave you imagining working at Waitrose – it can be integrated into identity construction as a means of asserting professionalism and expertise.

7.2.3. *Why pay when Google Translate is free?*

Tracy Woods, the first translator mentioned in this chapter, asked if I was going to interview Nicky Elliott (see 5.4). They live in the same historic market town and are members of the same local network of the ITI. Nicky does a lot of advertising and marketing translation, which is often viewed as being out of the reach of MT because of its "creative" nature. These kinds of texts require cultural, contextual and idiomatic linguistic knowledge that machines simply don't have. Or at least not yet. Susanne Lorenz (see 6.4) knows Nicky though the ITI, and also translates similar texts. Susanne and Nicky, who were interviewed separately, both have similar thoughts about MT.

Let's start with Nicky, who sees MT as:

> *a threat to the general quality of translation produced, because it is available and people do use it and people have their whole website sort of translated by Google Translate and there doesn't seem to be generally an awareness of why that wouldn't be a good thing.*

This is bad for commercial translation more generally because poorer quality translations, when read by the general public, are taken to be the standard:

> *the people who read [bad translations] generalise and think that either translators are not good quality or that- they might get used to seeing quality that's not good and they might expect that. But especially with the rise of things like Google Translate being available, if you're going to have the choice between a poor translation that you've paid for or a poor translation that you get for free from Google Translate, you might as well just put it through Google Translate.*

While there are some clients out there willing to pay for specialist services, there are also plenty of people who "don't value translation because they don't know about it". As a result, the market will have to compete on price over quality: "so agencies are trying to get a lot of words translated in the shortest amount of time and they may encourage or persuade translators to use machine translation". For Nicky, it is this lack of understanding of how translation works and why it matters that undermines translation expertise and opens the door for MT.

Nicky doesn't see MT as a direct threat to her, however, because she thinks she can "persuade people that there is a difference between using machine translation and using somebody who's got a lot of experience of translation". One of the dangers of NMT is in fact its increased fluency. Just because it sounds convincing, it doesn't mean it is free of mistakes, whether that is the nuance of a word with many meanings, or factual inaccuracies. A public that is not interested in language that lacks linguistic knowledge has "no way of identifying where errors are". Nicky told me: "I could say quite a lot about what the difference is [between MT and an experienced translator] but I don't know whether people would listen".

Susanne expresses similar frustration: she is often asked: "why don't they just use Google Translate?" when she tells non-translators about her work. For her, translation is not related to this "mechanical process", but she cannot deny the changes it has made. When I asked Susanne about translation in 10 years' time, she isn't sure she would "even want to speculate":

> *I actually really don't know, I would never have predicted it to look like this… yes I hope I can still play a part in it, I'll try to. I think I have often translated*

things or transcreated[39] things where I was quite certain that no machine could ever do that and I'm actually not against certain elements of MT, when it is reasonable I think getting the boring stuff out of the way is always an advantage, I've always been of the idea that if you don't translate like a machine then a machine is no competition. But, you know, I think all our lives will change so much in the next 10 years… I think if AI gets to a point where it can really think then yes that will affect translation, but it will affect everything so… but whether I'll still need a job or not I don't know.

MT is a potential opportunity, removing some of the repetitive tasks of translation, but if used as an excuse "not to pay translators properly anymore, then it is a threat". It is the potential for misuse of the technology in the hands of agencies, rather than the technology itself, that poses a risk for translators.

I think if you put say 30% less effort in, but they only pay half the rate, you know, sort of small changes like that, slightly ever so often chipping away, then I think that it's not really the technology's fault, it's just a misuse in the industry. So, I think there are people who probably will attempt to do things like that […] I think the technology itself is no threat, because I think it will only ever be able to do things that are quite straightforward for a translator anyway. So, the interesting bits, the challenging bits will be the marketing or legal translation or medical translation. I think that will always require a human brain if we still live in a world where human brains are necessary.

Susanne isn't particularly worried about MT taking over and losing her income. She thinks it is unlikely she'll ever need to take on post-editing work "because [she turns] down so much of [her] non-post-editing work". As an established and in-demand translator, she imagines she would have to be "fairly desperate" and she doesn't see "that level of desperation arriving any time soon".

For Nicky and Susanne, their professionalism and expertise sit in contrast to Google Translate's clumsy, mechanical method of translating. It sharpens the boundaries between them as discerning professionals and laypeople, who don't know and don't care. This recalls Liam's comments about clients' expectations being out of line with

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[39] Transcreation – a form of translation that often involves changing the text dramatically from the source on a word-by-word basis into something that fits culturally with the target audience. This is common for advertising text types where accuracy is less about "closeness" of source and target texts, and more about making the text serve its intended purpose, i.e. sell something to a culturally and linguistically different audience.

the "reality" of translation best practice (7.2.1 above). A paradox arises here, as, arguably, Google Translate has democratised translation, enabling non-linguists to access and produce content in different languages (Ramati & Pinchevski, 2018). In this way, developments in translation and communication technologies have blurred the boundaries between experts and non-experts (Carlson, 2018). That is, according to the sociology of professions literature, the maintenance of a professional jurisdiction or monopoly over a certain task or body of knowledge is key to professional status (Larson, 1977; Abbott, 1988). As the technology improves, the task and knowledge associated with translation are no longer reserved for trained linguists, perhaps calling into question the very professional role itself (Archetti, 2012). Both Nicky and Susanne recognise the potential threat to quality from this technology and are unsure about what the future holds. However, for now, the weaknesses of MT are woven into their professional identities, sharpening the boundaries around their professionalism and expertise, while the boundaries around the task itself appear to be dissolving.

These interviews show that complex interactions between translators and MT systems influence the continual development of these technologies (Elliott, 2019). Indeed, the action of translating discursively and materially produces these tools. That is, the corpora used to generate the "fuzzy matches" of CAT tools or the entire texts produced by MT software have been translated by human translators. These translations, used to produce the output of translation technologies, potentially change or reinforce certain types of output. The technology will then produce a text that is evaluated by a translator. This translation process is entangled with neoliberal discourses and policies, enabling and enabled by a drive for cost minimisation. The subsequent emphasis on volume, seen in a reduction of per word rates, means the translator is encouraged to move through this work quickly. They are therefore less likely to change a text that is "adequate". This confirmation or minor editing of a translation is fed back into the software, making it likely similar output will be produced next time. On the other hand, as various translators mentioned, MT can be integrated almost seamlessly into their working practices. This output can potentially foster new ways of thinking about translation difficulties by pooling the collective work of countless translators. This shows that "algorithms and software are entangled in practice" (Bucher, 2017: 929). The doing of translation interacts with the technology, with a rhizomatic feedback loop between translator, corpora and software. This reaches into individual translation decisions that branch out and fragment into other translation projects, potentially influencing practices. Furthermore, communication technologies that have emerged

in recent decades create possibilities for surveillance and a globalised economy driving the need for speed (Elliott, 2019; Wood et al., 2019). The next two parts of this chapter will further explore these complex entanglements.

7.3.   8-9 November 2018, Translating Europe Forum

It's November in Brussels. The trees have turned. The air is cool. I walk to the Charlemagne building of the European Commission. I was here four years ago as a translation MA graduate presenting a poster on my dissertation. I get in the queue, the email confirmation of my place in the conference in my hand. The queue snakes through the lobby out the revolving doors (now halted mid-revolve) and onto the patio outside. I wait in line, steadily moving forward. The lobby sets the scene of the European project, of multiculturalism. There is a display of Euro coins, with specific coins for each country in the Euro zone. Most things are bright blue and yellow. The colours of the EU. I'm called to the desk when it's my turn. I hand over the email confirmation and my passport. I'm handed a security badge on a lanyard and a bright blue tote bag with the conference programme in it. "Thank you. Next?" I move through the barriers and into the ground floor, where posters are displayed on boards. Four years ago, one of those posters was mine.

I get on the escalator, slowly remembering how this part of the building is set out. The main conference is on the first floor. I put my coat in the cloakroom area that is dotted with suitcases. I'm now in the "networking village". There is a buzz in the air. The tea and coffee are in the far corner. I get myself a tea. There are tall tables meant only for standing at dotted around the space. They have baskets of mini pastries in the middle. I note posters in this space too, although no one is looking at them. I set my cup and saucer down, take a mini pain aux raisins. I overhear a conversation about the importance of technology in translation nowadays, especially if you're a newcomer. I manage to gently insert myself into a discussion about how translation is undervalued; how even public bodies don't always take it as seriously as they should, shown in the shoddy English versions of their websites. We start to notice the crowd slowly filtering into the auditorium behind us, so we follow and head into the first session that starts the conference.

Although I do not know it yet, that bustling auditorium we walk into will be transformed into an event-space (Massumi, 2002) where the virtual and actual of translation will interact. Tensions will emerge between professions and fields of expertise, old and new technologies, human and machine, progress and protection, institution and

individual, and freelancers and the market. These various people and things will negotiate and feel their way through these juxtapositions, creating emergent entities and meanings to take forward. These aggregations and interactions will, over time and with repetition, forge the future of translation: who does it, with what tools, what skills are required, its monetary value, whose expertise is needed.

The previous section explored the disruption caused by a homogenising force: MT and AI bring translation into line with other industries and markets driven by neoliberal ideals. Yet, within the space of the conference, which sees various actors come together, AI both deterritorializes and reterritorializes. It creates disruption while simultaneously creating new hierarchies and reinforcing already established centres. For translators, it decentres and disrupts the value of their expertise, thus acting as a line of flight, a rupture. However, AI is part of a broader deterritorialization that fragments translation as an intellectual process, bringing it in line with the needs of lean capitalism (Usher, 2010). AI, then, is a line of consistency that creates connection and unification out of the disruption caused to translators. That is, the centrality of agencies in commercial translation is bolstered, and hierarchies are reinforced, with freelance translators firmly at the end of this commercial supply chain (Moore & Newsome, 2018). Potential new configurations, new assemblages and strata, which incorporate and are incorporated by new technologies, are visible in the interactions happening in Brussels. Traces of these burgeoning potentialities are seen in the professional identities of translators, some of whom welcome change; others who hold their ground in the face of what they consider a technological onslaught.

The conference theme is "Translation in the age of data: Translators working with data – data working for translators". The auditorium, where the keynotes and main panels are held, is a large, almost triangular room that funnels the audience towards the stage. I sit somewhere off to the right at the back. Behind me are the interpreters' booths. The conference is interpreted into French and German from the mostly English talks, representing the three procedural languages of the EU. Occasionally the English interpreters have to swoop in when a question is asked or answered, or a speech is given in the other two languages. On stage is the conference moderator, who kills time while we wait for the keynote. That morning is dominated by voices from computer science and AI. Academics and professionals in the fields of deep learning, machine learning, natural language processing and computational linguistics address the attendees. The conference as a whole, but these first two panels in particular, are

overwhelmingly pro-machine translation and AI. Both are presented as something that is there to help you, as tools, and as inevitabilities. Tools help increase productivity, AI is just another tool that is there to make your life easier, to remove the burden and boredom of repetitive tasks. Its efficiency as a tool is what makes it inevitable. For freelancers who largely don't call the shots of their working conditions, agencies will inevitably seize this opportunity to reduce costs.

> *Panel Chair: should [research] say at some point 'ok let's not go there, because if we go there a lot of people are going to lose their jobs'. So what is your view on that?*

> *Speaker1: […] if we stop trying to build better things because of that then progress is at risk.*

> *Panel Chair: is that progress? All these casualties?*

> *Speaker1: I wouldn't call them casualties… I mean, we adapt as humans, we're very good at that […] I don't think anyone likes to be doing repetitive tasks anyway […] it's a matter of finding where that set of skills is really […] there have been so many revolutions before, I don't think this will be different.*

> *Speaker2: I am totally for progress, you know, just take it down to biology, evolution is survival of the fittest. If this is the way things are going and a little bit of retraining is needed, take the retraining. […] We're always going to need the human in the loop.*

> *Speaker3: […] it's about reconceptualising what the job of the translator is […] things will change, I don't think necessarily that there will be huge job losses unless people are not willing to […] constantly develop professionally […] it could lead to a much more sophisticated understanding of language.*

In the second panel, one speaker made an analogy to apple picking: "would you not expect to earn less if you had a tool that took away much of the work?" A comment on Slido[40] read: "apple picking isn't an intellectual activity, Greg". Things thought not possible five years ago have now been achieved. It isn't perfect, but who knows where we will be in another five years' time. Despite the pro-MT sentiment, another panel

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[40] Slido is an interactive conference platform that allows audience members to ask questions, make comments, participate in polls.

member said that he wouldn't get in a plane if someone had used his machine to translate the manual: "the best translation is a human translation".

Translator as a professional identity and as an occupation is in flux, at a tipping point, as new fields of expertise in AI and MT increasingly gain ground. This recalls the idea of professionals from differing fields fighting over the same task (Abbott, 1988). But translation as a jurisdiction, over which translators and software developers are jostling, loses the nuance of how the technology is shifting translation expertise and best practice. Translators as professionals are not being pushed out entirely; they are being repositioned. Being "the human in the loop" within a new data and machine learning approach to translation emerges as a future professional identity, in which linguistic expertise is a complement to expertise in AI, a complement to the machine itself. AI blurs the ontological distinctions between human and machine (Elliott, 2019; Guzman & Lewis, 2019). In the age of data, the human translator becomes part of a machinic process as a post-editor, altering their working practices to fit with relevant definitions of translation quality. This is reinforced and intensified as the work of translators is fed back into MT systems, further blurring these distinctions, with machines "learning" from translators, and translators adapting to machines. As translation enables and facilitates communication in a globalised world (Cronin, 2003), machines encroach not only on the professional role of the translator, but on the human ability to communicate (Guzman & Lewis, 2019). Translator is an identity that risks becoming outdated, archaic even. But, as seen in the interviews above, this shift is not yet complete and there is perhaps some room for kickback, or at least time to adapt.

After lunch on the first day, "the translator's perspective" is brought to the fore, with panels focussing on the translation side of MT and contemporary working practices and conditions. One panel member says: "as a freelancer you're running a business and you invest time and money into a tool – why should this investment not be reflected in your rates?" This raises the issue of who owns and benefits from data and technology. Freelancers will likely not have enough data to create their own MT systems, they can only work on the systems of their clients. Their work then gets incorporated back into that MT system. The bigger the system – the more data – the better it will work, therefore the lower rates become. For another panel member: "the problem isn't technology per se, but that translators aren't in a position where they can exercise their expertise". Translation expertise does not wield the power it should, which is compounded by a public misconception of what technology – AI in particular

– can do. There is no answer for this, just the often-repeated statement: translators need to adapt. One panel member is keen to highlight the presence and prominence of agencies in the commercial translation process:

Speaker1: [LSPs][41] *need to offer training to their translators […] they need to invest time and money into their translators, their freelance staff […]*

Audience member: […] How can LSPs be convinced to do this investment? Knowing that they actually prefer to pay us as little per word as possible.

Speaker1: well the answer is easy, there is no other way […] [LSPs are] already offering training but there will have to be much more and there will also have to be translators who are open for this new kind of technology.

The issue of rates is raised by the panel, as soon-to-be-termed "language consultants", perhaps translators should be paid by the hour, as this would better reflect the work involved in translating nuance and idiomacy. The question remains, how can the "industry" be convinced of this? The "industry" here is exclusive of translators themselves, instead referring to agencies and perhaps other large clients. Translators perceived as separate to "the industry" demonstrates the power dynamics at play. The previous chapters discuss how deadlines and rates are largely decided by agencies. Change, too, is out of the hands of translators. This new role will move towards linguistic expert, with translators asked to validate TMs and machine translated texts. For one panel member, there is a danger that this will mean translation as a skill and practice becomes fragmented, viewed as "word replacement". There is a need to "focus on what makes translators different [from machines]". The translator's role "in the age of data" is fragmented, involving not only translation but editing, proofreading, post-editing, dealing with different file formats and "tags" on CAT tools.

Speaker2: I think the skillset will shift to digital but I don't think our numbers will dwindle, call me optimistic.

Speaker1: […] the future is today, it has already arrived […] we need to be open to these technologies […] translators should be aware of the fact that LSPs need translators not vice versa, because as freelancer translators we can choose 'I will work for them, them and them not for those' […] we have the power and should not sell our services too cheap.

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[41] Language Service Provider. See Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms.

Humans will still be needed – if only to validate content – the demand for translation is sky rocketing, but translators need to change to keep up with this demand and with the technology.

The ground has begun to shift underneath translators' feet and they are presented with conflicting messages: to stand their ground, and to adapt at all costs. The extent of the change and the impact of this on professional identity is not clear. If translators become "language consultants", their skillset and the tasks they perform changing with their job title, then their professional identity too must change. This reinforces the idea that new technologies undermine translation expertise. The knowledge work of translation is converted into "*working knowledge* through the extraction, codification and digitalisation of knowledge into software prescripts" (Brown et al., 2008: 139, emphasis original). Translation expertise and professional knowledge become encoded into software, reducing the need for professionals or perhaps replacing them with automated services (Susskind & Susskind, 2017). Translation knowledge becomes a complementary linguistic authority to a monolithic knowledge-base: algorithmic expertise. This form of expertise is produced by the "sociotechnical relationships" that take the algorithm from its abstract mathematical origins to its utilization (Ananny, 2016: 97-8). The algorithm is shaped by the entanglement of heterogeneous actors including translators, agencies, software engineers, end-users and clients, quality assurance, profits, discourses of professionalism, and multilingual corpora. The relationships, and expertise that circulates through them, set the parameters for the algorithm. In turn, the power embedded within the algorithm – to structure how information is produced – shapes the sociotechnical assemblages in which the algorithm is running (Ananny, 2016; Carlson, 2018). Although this knowledge is created by the work of translators – their translations make up MT corpora – it is not in their hands. The professional autonomy lay claim to by translators, considered key for professionalization (Freidson, 1970), is further undermined.

In the networking village, during coffee breaks and at lunch, attendees gather around the standing-only tables, eating, drinking, and talking. At the conference reception at the end of the first day, trays of drinks and hors d'oeuvres circulate. Wine glasses are topped up. People discuss the content of the talks, the ubiquity of MT, the now common concerns of rates of pay and new skills needed. A woman complains about having to constantly retrain, learn new technologies and specialisms, not knowing what to invest in.

Fast forward to the following morning, back to the networking village, this time bare of tea, coffee, and pastries. Attendees grumble. The digital future – and maybe last night's wine – creating some kind of professional-existential hangover that coffee and buttery croissants could make more bearable. Or maybe that's just me.

We are called back into the auditorium for the day's keynote. It is called "Reframing Translation" and seems intended to rouse and terrify translators in equal measure. The speaker is a philosopher and motivational speaker with no knowledge of translation or AI. "Who thinks they will be replaced by a machine?" the speaker asks the audience of at least a few hundred. Around 15 hands go up. According to current estimates, the likelihood is around 38%. "Start worrying" says the speaker, although he admits he thought the figure would be higher.

The speaker frames human translation as "artisanal". In the human v. machine battle, it's important to ask the question: does Google Translate understand what it's translating? The answer is no, it's just pattern matching. He gives the example of human v. machine in chess. The ultimate test of intelligence. A man was beaten, so he decides to work with the machine. Human + machine beats even the best machine every time. The speaker goes onto describe the idea that human + machine = centaur. His choice of centaur over something like a cyborg seems perhaps strange given the technological nature of the changes facing translation. The virile image of the centaur shines out from the screen onstage, facing a largely female audience. The speaker could be criticised for not doing his homework, but this perhaps demonstrates the very invisibility that translators talk about. The professional identity of translator is unknown because it is unseen; its gender is male by default.

We are encouraged to discuss the following question in groups: do you want to be a centaur? I speak with a group of three men in their 50s-60s. The immediate response to the speaker's question is: "we already do it"; "he's behind because he's not in the industry." Another comment: "I'm a stablemaster [of centaurs]". That is, not a translator but someone in charge of translators within an LSP. Another man says he is too. The main issue with the machine element of the centaur is trust: can you trust the output of MT? A human will always be needed if the text is for use by other humans. Unless we accept different levels of quality, which is the reality of the industry. I ask how this would work with pay. The response is what was mentioned yesterday, that this work should be paid by the hour. One of the "stablemasters" said this is effectively already the case even if it's paid by the word: it's based on an industry standard of translating 2500

words a day, when in reality some translators can translate 5000, if you know the text. So, this issue of pay isn't a big deal (say both non-translators). The only other translator – than me – in the conversation says: "it's a big deal for translators". We go back to listening to the speaker, who wraps up the talk.

For the last panel session of the conference, four speakers discuss what they will take away from the event. Translators will be the human in the loop of a symbiotic triad comprised of data, human and machine. Translation has an AI future – the translator's job will be transformed. It will be more interesting; it will be facilitated and sped up by technology. The future is bright. Translation and interpreting is dividing, there is high value (legal and advertising) translation that needs people, and then low value MT. There is a need to prepare students and translators for this division. A diversity of university programmes is needed to teach "human" skills that MT doesn't have. Future translators will need to be multi-skilled to survive – students and newcomers should take advantage of internships, voluntary work, earn little money to beef up their CV. There is a tendency to think that machines are perfect, and humans are flawed. There needs to be a better understanding of how translators work – a lot of people don't understand translation as a practice or process. We need to support and encourage people to value their work, both clients and translators themselves. Without translators, there's no EU, no translation and interpreting, we need to highlight the value of the human to everyone. These technologies and platforms make other things and collaboration possible. There are more humans behind NMT than it might first appear: there are people coding, trying to understand language. Humans are still at the centre.

AI and machine translation are painted in a benevolent light: translators can become centaurs, powerful, translating mythical-cyborgs. They will be the human in the loop, linguistic consultants, and language experts. This again reflects the transformationalist view in which AI will shine a light on "uniquely human skills" (Elliott, 2019: 57). Future professional identities are created here, based on current MT capabilities and projections, coupled with this transformationalist perspective. The two-tiered future Ellie predicts (7.2.2 above) is discussed here, too. So-called "high value" translation will be done by humans, and "low value" by MT. There is an irony or perhaps an injustice here that is not called out, as this "low value" work for translators includes creating "high value" MT corpora from this work, which translators are alienated from. The process of MT detaches translators from individual translations and from commercial translation processes, as they have limited ability and time to make it their

own and have to work on increasingly granular tasks (7.2.2 above). As has already been touched on, they are also detached from the MT corpora itself, which their work contributes to.

The use of MT by agencies and other clients intensifies the commodification of translation, which has value as an individual text and as part of corpora used to produce further texts. This is an enactment of the power embedded in the algorithm to structure how information is produced. As introduced above, the sociotechnical assemblages in which the algorithm is running are shaped by this power (Ananny, 2016; Carlson, 2018). In the age of data, information – in this case from translation – is a commodity (Carr, 2008). Translators contribute to individual texts and MT systems, but only receive remuneration for the former. Their labour is therefore doubly exploited as they are not paid the true value of what they produce: they are not remunerated for their translations as *data*. In working for agencies that build MT systems, they are contributing to their own (financial) demise, and encoding their own expertise into MT systems. And they often have no choice. The contracts they sign with agencies determine who owns what. Translators, by and large, do not own what they produce.

During the last panel, a Slido word cloud asks people to give one word best describing the conference and they quickly accumulate on the screen: nojobin5years, centaur, ourjobswillcontinuetoexist, transformation, data, reframing, adaptation, pessimism, optimism.

Question from the audience: "will AI flatten cultural differences and enforce an anglo-saxon model that is pro-gig economy, faster, more efficient = better?"

The panel's answers mainly skirt around the "gig economy" issue, instead focussing on the cultural element of the question. Only one panel member tackles it head on:

> *I want to focus a little bit on that gig economy, and I'm very optimistic about the human future etc but I also think we should not be naïve, I think you need to be ready to have […] the price per word halved and then halved again and then halved again until you get to 1/8 of what you're getting now: 12%. The gig economy, the idea of pitting competitors against each other, the kind of platformatization of society is a threat to some business models […] There are new levels of precarity that we're inventing and people will find it much much harder to makes end meet […] the race to the bottom, I certainly think that is a clear and present danger.*

After the panel session, I approached a Polish translator, Katarzyna Wallace, who I'd heard ask a few questions, to see if she wanted to chat. She said that she thinks the profession is on its way out, that it's only possible as a side gig. She can "play at translator" because of her husband – she told me in the interview we conducted later that her husband was an Irish diplomat, and being a "travelling translator" allowed her to work as she followed her husband to different postings abroad. Rates are dropping, it's not viable as a profession. Even the European Commission has reduced what it pays freelancers – in the tender, freelancers can't compete with LSPs to get Commission work. Even big companies that could afford to pay for translation and need confidentiality are outsourcing it, not doing it in-house even though confidentiality is a huge concern. Translation is not valued, people don't understand the importance of it and the importance of professional translators.

I was then beckoned over to join a conversation between a translator and interpreter, one of whom I'd met at a panel earlier that day. She'd asked me about my project then and called me over now because she thought I'd find their discussion interesting. They spoke about knowledge being lost in translation, this artisanal type of knowledge, "craft", that won't get "passed down" to new translators as training changes to "keep up with" technologies. The interpreter made an analogy with Monsanto in the Philippines and the knowledge of old women and different plants that has been lost following Monsanto bringing in just one type of seed. This gives them power because they have the knowledge. The same might happen with translation. The power would be in the hands of those who create/own the software/data. The translator said she was at the Translating Europe Forum two years ago and it was a completely different story. There they were pleading with translators to help them develop tools, and she wondered at the time – "what about when the tool is complete?" She has seen – as backed up by the speakers – a leap in technology over the past two years. I was asked if I used any MT. I said "no". She said "well, we're in the middle of it". On top of NMT there is the next step of text to speech and "robot interpreters". The first tests have been done for Bulgarian and German to English. The results are promising.

The conference allows issues of power that were less visible in the interviews to emerge. The power inherent in ownership and the power to define progress. Translators do not own what they produce individually, and collectively they cannot define what progress in translation means. Other experts in other fields – AI and MT – define this for them. The agency model and a neoliberal apparatus discussed in the

previous two chapters interact with these technologies, deterritorializing and reterritorializing professional identity in translation. Technologies are part of an enterprise culture that places the burden on translators for their professional and financial security. Translators are told they must adapt, and invest in new technologies and skills or they will be left behind. Translators' professional identities emerge from these interconnections and interactions. They form "knots of intensity" (de Freitas, 2017: 119), enmeshed and entangled in the rhizomatic "beginninglessness" (Usher, 2010: 71) of translation as product and process. I have pulled out elements of this messy and muddled feedback loop of translation expertise, algorithm, data, agency, end-user, and profit. The interviews and participant observation data show how translators are making sense of their role within this technological shift. The last section of this chapter will explore what emerged from this conference online and what it can tell us about professional identity construction.

7.4. The Twitterconference

The Twitterconference emerges from the interactions of attendees, speakers, not-present-but-interested Twitter users, their devices, hashtags, internet connections, the Twitter platform. It emerges from the event itself, from its organisers tweeting updates, to attendees – whether "in the flesh" or in the Twittersphere – tweeting and retweeting comments on the content of talks and their interactions at the conference. It emerges from already-present connections on Twitter, and it produces new connections during the conference, linked to the use of hashtags, visible discussions, retweets and "likes". The Twitterconference is not simply the conference online: it is tied to Brussels, but emerges from the direct engagement and interactions of individuals, organisations, software and hardware not present "on the ground". Conversations can happen on Twitter between Twitter users that are not present, but those conversations emerge from the event itself. It would be reductive, however, to state the conference in Brussels is fully independent from the Twitterconference. The hashtag is visible on various leaflets and posters, on screen, and the EC-DGT itself is active on Twitter. Twitter is pulled into the conference venue throughout my time there and is a feature of the event, to varying extents, for those physically present.

In total, I collected 8,538 tweets related to the conference (see 4.3.4 for methods). While I cannot assume that all the Twitter users in my dataset are translators, they are at least interested in translation. The frequent use of well-known but translation-specific hashtags tells me it is likely they also tweet about translation outside of the

event and intend these tweets to contribute to wider discussions on translation in the Twittersphere. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the majority of Twitter users in this dataset are involved in commercial translation, and that a large subset are translators themselves. Exploring the network created by the actions of these Twitter users enables us to get a glimpse of what identity(ies) emerge online from the conference and Twitterconference, and who and what goes into producing them. Before delving into that network, the content of the tweets can give us a snapshot of the discussion.

Figure 26[42] is a word association network, that shows which words occur most frequently together, and what they are connected to. The word network shows different aspects of the conference, the fact that it is live-streamed on YouTube, the dates and location of the conference, who it is run and hosted by – the European Commission (EC). The largest cluster in the word network is around the conference itself, the Translating Europe Forum (TEF), and its associated hashtag #2018TEF. The Language Show, another big translation event that took place just after TEF in London, is mentioned frequently in association with the conference. This hints at a profession with some internal cohesion at this event level. Indeed, this is reflected in my observational and interview data, as I met a speaker at TEF who works for the EC-DGT and also chaired a panel at The Language Show. Beyond these organisational details, there are clusters around language and translation that branch off to different topics, reflecting the range of discussions and talks during the conference: machine translation, translation work, professionalism, the European project, languages and their politics. Professionalism within translation and its connection to technologies tallies with my observational notes and interviews: "quality", "tiny nuances", "target text", "reality check", "translation – human – quality", "translator's perspective". This speaks to a machine v. human discourse and how it is called upon to shore up professional identity. There is a discussion on AI and society: "transforming society", "digital age", "data analytics". This hints at broader questions being asked about MT as part of the AI "revolution" and its implications. More than a handful of terms in the word network are jargon-y hashtags and/or acronyms, such as: "TM", "NMT", "xl8", "t9n", "1nt", "MTPE" (see Appendix A.). These terms refer to technologies – TM, NMT, MTPE – or are general hashtags related to translation and interpreting – xl8, t9n, 1nt.

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[42] For downloadable file, see: https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis. Each word appears a minimum of 45 times in the dataset.

Figure 26: TEF 2018 word association network

There is a cluster around translation that branches off to "copyright" and the "EU", to "industry" and "research", and to "machine" and "bad". This word network provides a snapshot of the professional tipping point translators find themselves at: the commercial process of translation is embedded within broader and sweeping technological change, while at least some of its practitioners make claims to a field of expertise and professionalism that is apart from those changes.

Figure 27 is an assemblage of a geographically dispersed group, connected, at least for the duration of the conference, via Twitter and the conference hashtag: #2018TEF. The problem with this image is that it is essentially a "hairball", a meaningless – to the naked eye – mash of interconnected nodes. To understand the structures within it, I turn to social network analysis (SNA)[43]. I keep Latour's words in mind as I move through this analysis: a network "is a tool to help describe something, not what is being described […] the map is not the territory" (Latour, 2005: 131-133). Yet to use this network as a tool to describe, it first needs describing. The characteristics of this network can themselves reveal something about the broader questions being asked here. So, while trying not to get ontologically caught up in the network, let's see what is hidden in this "hairball".

Not everyone in this network is as loud – or tweets as much – as everyone else. In Figure 28, the larger the node, the more that Twitter user has tweeted in this dataset. The graph contains a densely interconnected core, where we also find our most frequent tweeters. The size of the node equates to the number of tweets, with some prolific tweeters (over 500 tweets). Twitter activity, however, does not tell us much about the connections between nodes. To explore this, I quantitatively analysed the connections that make up this friends and follower network. Twitter allows for asymmetrical connections – as opposed to a platform like Facebook – insofar as Twitter user *A* may follow Twitter user *B* whether or not Twitter user *B* follows *A* back. This network has 528 nodes or vertices (individual Twitter users) and 7435 edges ("follow" connections). This network has a density of 0.02, which is low. However, given the possibility of asymmetrical connections in this platform, a low-density score is expected. This tells us that there are many asymmetrical connections between nodes. Transitivity is 0.21, indicating moderate levels of clustering. The initial picture is of a

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[43] See Appendix B. Glossary of R and SNA terms.
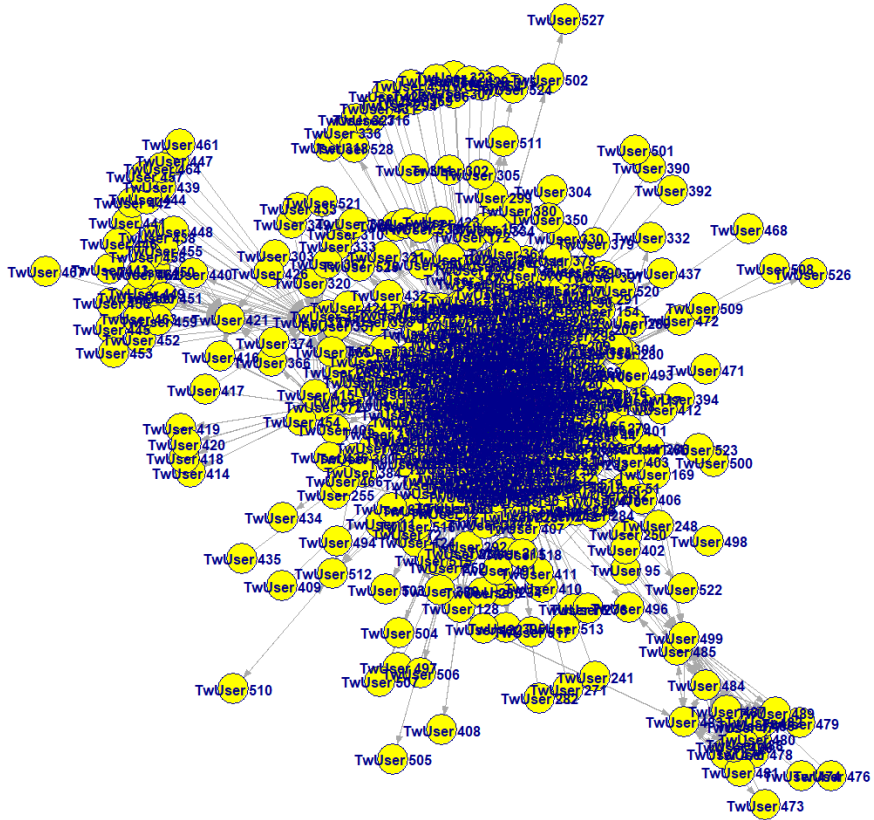
Figure 27: TEF Twitter network
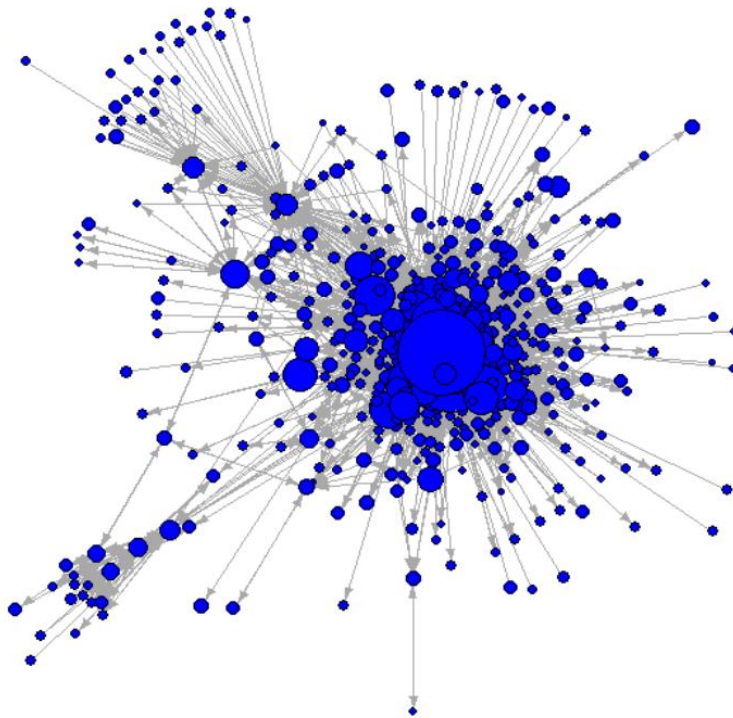
Figure 28: TEF network no. of tweets

graph that is low in density, but with moderate clustering (see 4.3.5 for details on SNA methods). Centrality or prestige measures, which look at the connections between nodes, can be used to get a more in-depth picture of the structure(s) within the network. In-degree and out-degree centrality are the most basic structural properties of nodes, which describe the number of directed connections each node has. In this case, in-degree is the number of followers a Twitter user has in the dataset, and out-degree is the number of Twitter users in the dataset that each node follows. Table 4 picks out the top 25 Twitter users based on number of tweets. Table 5 presents the top 25 based on in-degree, and table 6 based on out-degree. By putting these tables next to one another, these different basic measures can be compared[44].

ID	Number of tweets	In-degree	Out-degree
TwitterUser 212	595	149	166
TwitterUser 386	563	163	32
TwitterUser 149	299	210	194
TwitterUser 93	252	286	38
TwitterUser 97	247	70	90
TwitterUser 15	237	59	52
TwitterUser 257	222	54	47
TwitterUser 223	210	200	47
TwitterUser 100	183	144	52
TwitterUser 232	157	51	29
TwitterUser 237	117	15	28
TwitterUser 197	111	38	18
TwitterUser 14	110	38	31
TwitterUser 80	109	111	50
TwitterUser 66	97	10	29
TwitterUser 20	96	29	54
TwitterUser 54	84	27	72
TwitterUser 64	83	7	38
TwitterUser 140	79	48	31
TwitterUser 375	79	23	23
TwitterUser 292	75	3	8
TwitterUser 155	72	32	71
TwitterUser 53	66	37	39
TwitterUser 181	63	68	36
TwitterUser 214	62	63	40

Table 4: Top 25 Tweeters

ID	Number of tweets	In-degree	Out-degree
TwitterUser 93	252	286	38
TwitterUser 356	37	230	26

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[44] See Appendix C. Table of SNA Measures for full table ordered based on betweenness value (discussed below).

TwitterUser 149	299	210	194
TwitterUser 220	23	205	56
TwitterUser 223	210	200	47
TwitterUser 217	39	165	68
TwitterUser 386	563	163	32
TwitterUser 212	595	149	166
TwitterUser 100	183	144	52
TwitterUser 385	12	144	13
TwitterUser 273	17	115	58
TwitterUser 119	21	114	102
TwitterUser 80	109	111	50
TwitterUser 216	21	110	83
TwitterUser 200	33	102	11
TwitterUser 377	28	90	11
TwitterUser 429	27	88	7
TwitterUser 116	35	83	106
TwitterUser 131	27	79	146
TwitterUser 133	22	77	84
TwitterUser 138	44	73	87
TwitterUser 97	247	70	90
TwitterUser 181	63	68	36
TwitterUser 230	55	68	27
TwitterUser 214	62	63	40

Table 5: Top 25 In-degree

ID	Number of tweets	In-degree	Out-degree
TwitterUser 149	299	210	194
TwitterUser 212	595	149	166
TwitterUser 36	38	21	156
TwitterUser 131	27	79	146
TwitterUser 116	35	83	106
TwitterUser 119	21	114	102
TwitterUser 7	36	50	96
TwitterUser 97	247	70	90
TwitterUser 188	12	39	88
TwitterUser 138	44	73	87
TwitterUser 133	22	77	84
TwitterUser 216	21	110	83
TwitterUser 78	24	44	74
TwitterUser 54	84	27	72
TwitterUser 182	11	53	71
TwitterUser 155	72	32	71
TwitterUser 47	18	26	69
TwitterUser 217	39	165	68
TwitterUser 139	50	45	65
TwitterUser 22	18	54	63
TwitterUser 6	15	32	59
TwitterUser 273	17	115	58

TwitterUser 157	47	27	57
TwitterUser 61	5	14	57
TwitterUser 220	23	205	56

Table 6: Top 25 Out-degree

There is significant overlap between the first two tables, with many of the top tweeters also having the highest number of followers. Our top tweeters and those with a high number of followers are predominantly companies and organisations, speakers at the event and the event organisers, including professional translators and terminologists – some representing organisations, some freelancers. However, there are some Twitter users that have tweeted little, but have high in-degree scores, such as TwitterUsers 217 and 356. Both Twitter users are institutional translation and interpreting Twitter accounts. TwitterUser 97 is an interesting example. This freelancer, who did not speak at the conference, has tweeted 247 times in the dataset, placing them fifth in the first table. Yet, compared to the other top tweeters, TwitterUser 97 has a lower in-degree score. Although the highly interconnected and active core highlighted in Figure 28 is in central to this network, there is more to discover.

These basic analyses demonstrate the asymmetry of connections typical of Twitter, and hint at the differences between individual translators and larger bodies within the network. This also begins to explain the low-density score mentioned above, with relatively few connections between nodes. These simple measures give an initial overview of connections between nodes, but they do not describe how such connections influence the form and function of the network. Betweenness is a more targeted centrality measure that looks at how many pairs of nodes each node sits "between". This gives a richer quantitative measure of centrality that is particularly relevant given that this is a Twitter network. By looking at betweenness, a better picture emerges of how the relationships between nodes impact the flow of information – in the form of tweets – through the network. In Figure 29, the size of the node is based on the betweenness score of each node. This graph shows another highly interconnected core and possible gatekeepers to other less well-connected parts of the network.
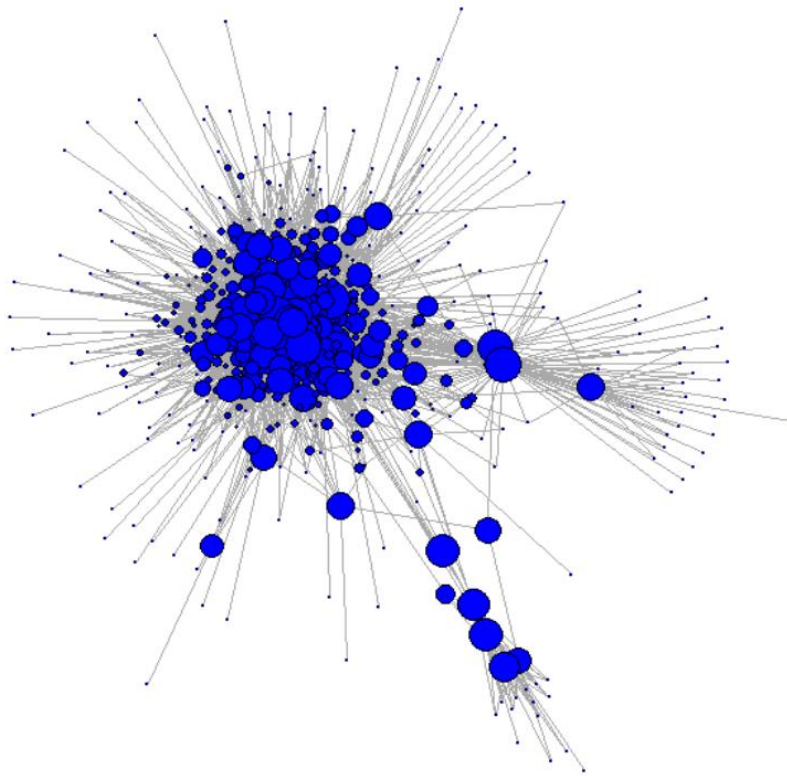
Figure 29: TEF network betweenness

Figure 30 shows the top 10% of Twitter users in this dataset based on their betweenness values. There is some crossover with the top tweeters highlighted in Table 4, insofar as some of the Twitter users who tweeted the most are present here. However, there are also striking differences, with some prominent individuals in betweenness terms that did not tweet as frequently. Figure 30 shows a clear central cluster with other nodes acting as gatekeepers to smaller but separate – to some degree – parts of the network. TwitterUser 499 is an MEP, whose own network likely reaches out beyond this one. TwitterUser 499 is significant to the functioning of the network, enabling information – in the form of tweets – to reach out beyond the highly interconnected core. This graph thus gives us a different picture of the internal cohesion of the network, demonstrating how information flows through it and beyond it.
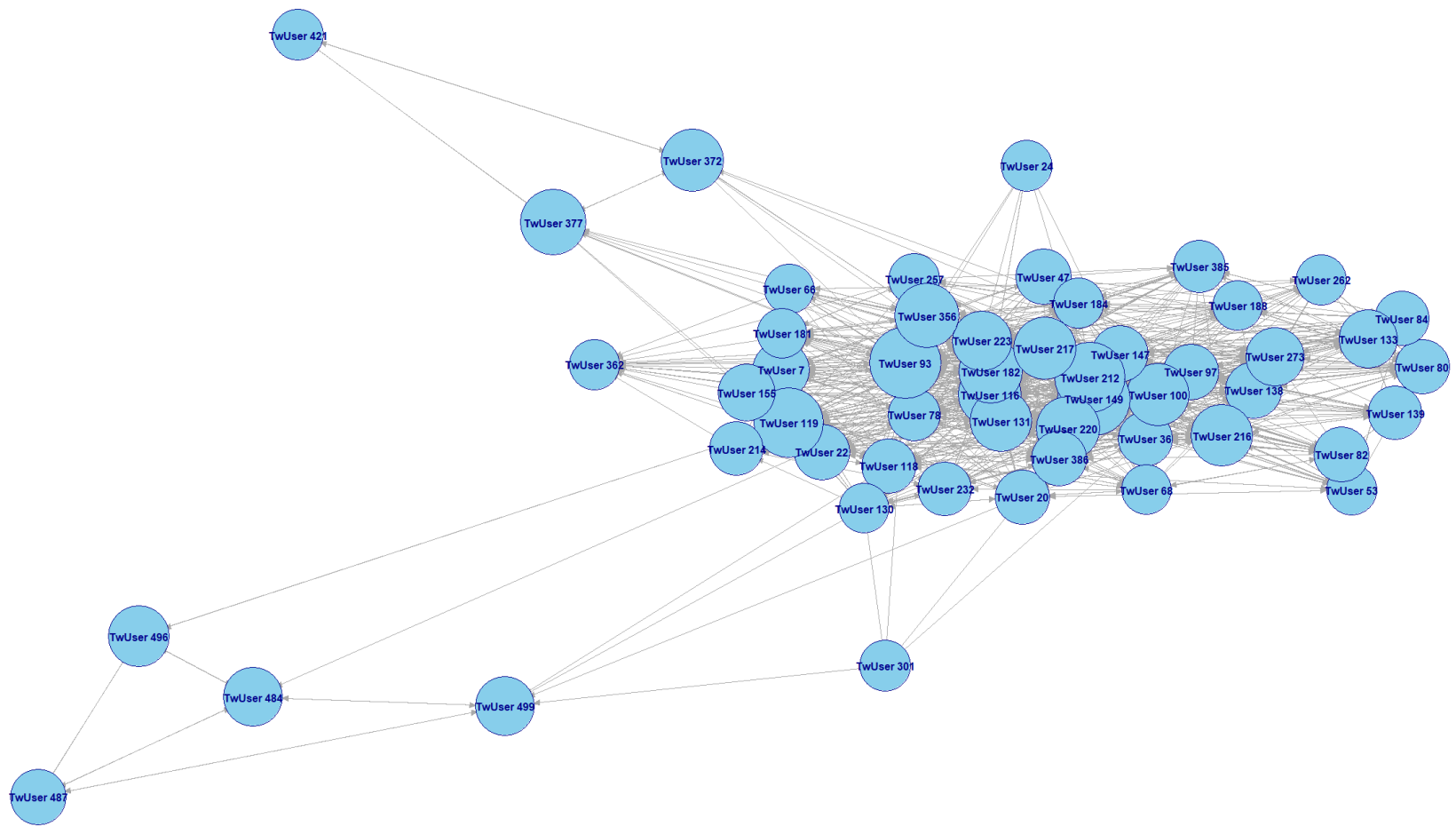
Figure 30: TEF top betweenness

To explore the structure of the network in more depth, I have looked for the existence of "communities" or highly interconnected hubs that are largely separate from the rest of the network. Figure 31 highlights many small communities and a large core community, which is likely what can be seen in Figure 28-29. There are also small subgroups connected to the larger community via key gatekeepers, who pop up in the betweenness graph. The modularity of this graph is low, at 0.03. The low modularity of this network is the result of what appear to be small peripheral "communities" of one. This analysis is therefore of limited use and brings little understanding of the subgroups within the network. However, it highlights that this network appears to have the characteristics of a core-periphery network, with core nodes connected to one another and to periphery nodes, while periphery nodes are largely only connected to core nodes.
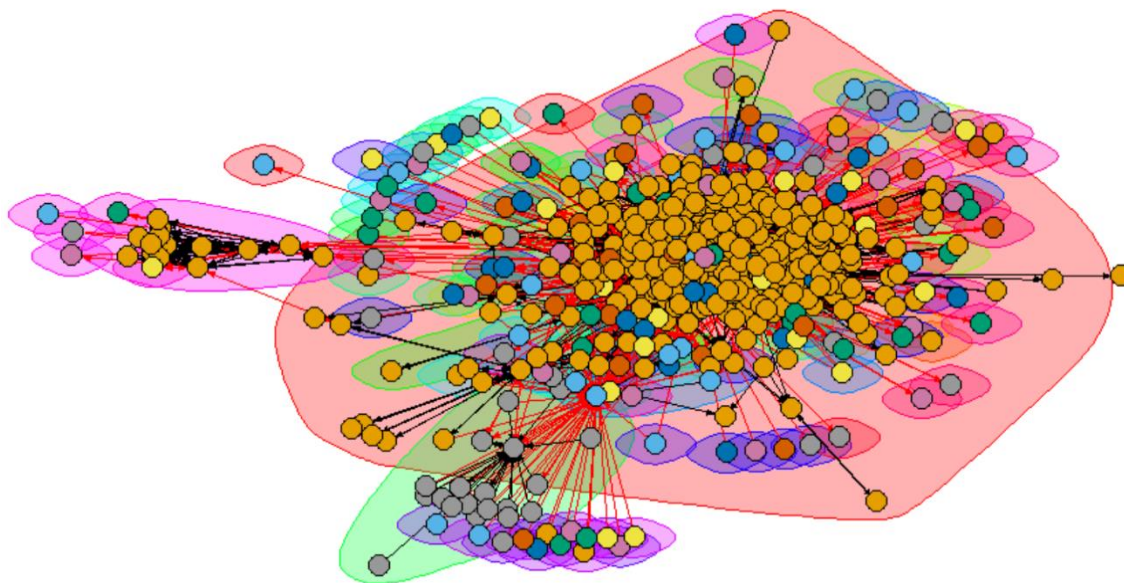
Figure 31: TEF communities

To get a better understanding of these layers of interconnectedness, I have used *k*-core decomposition. The value *k* is equal to the number of connections a node has. The nodes with lower *k* values can be stripped away, steadily revealing the hierarchies of connectedness, and subgroups within the network – as in each subsequent image in Figure 32.
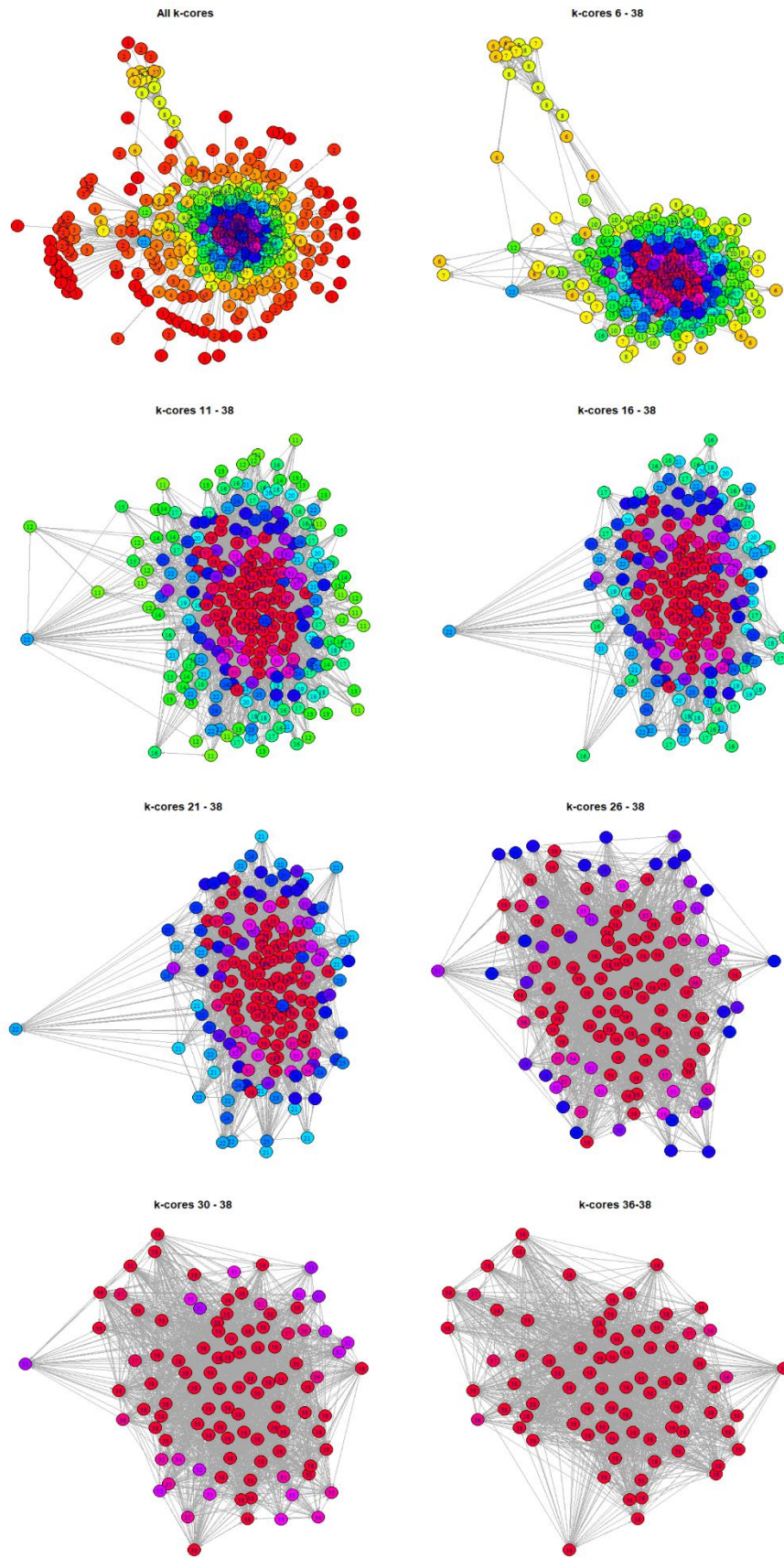
Figure 32: TEF k-core decomposition

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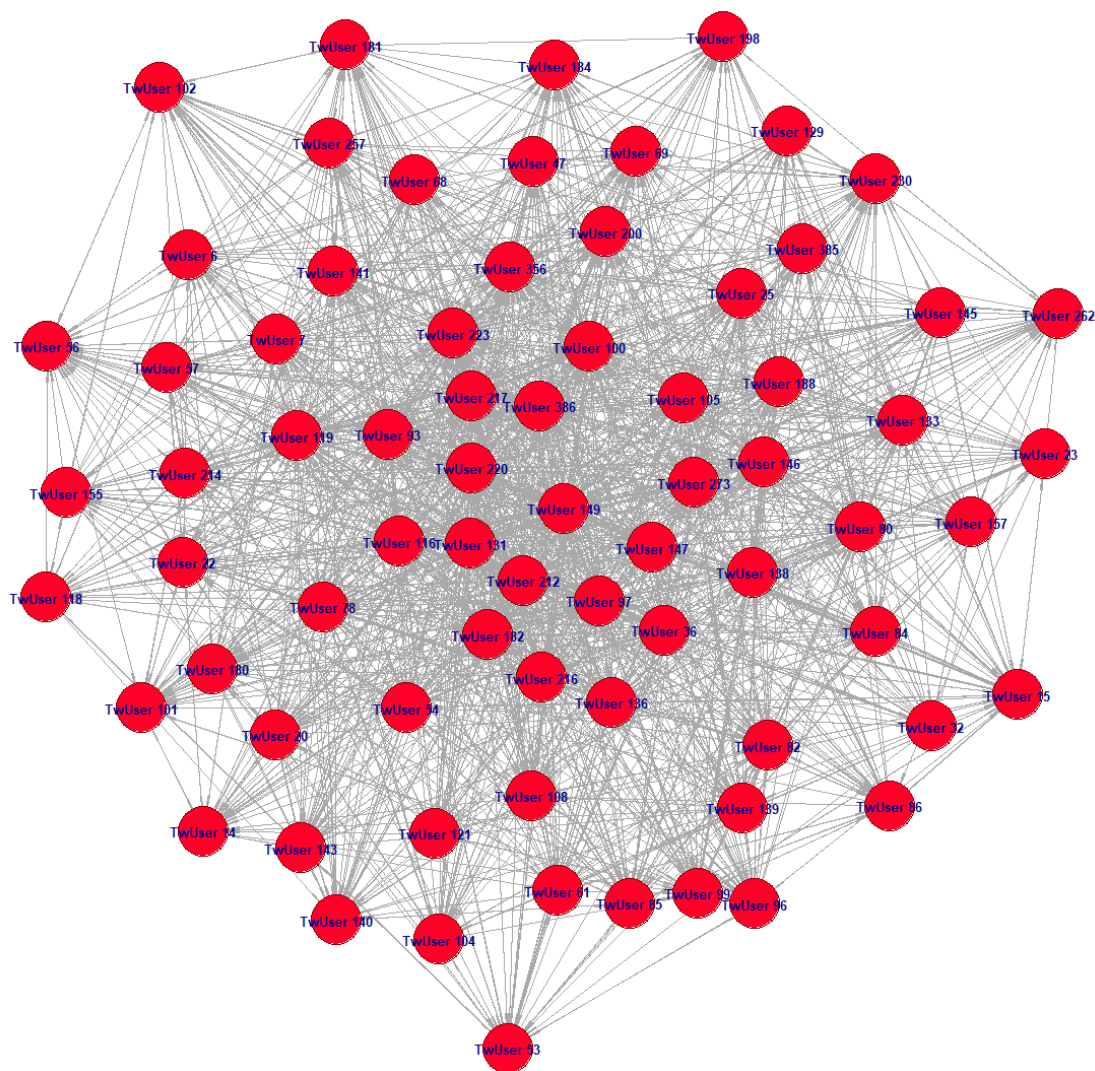
Figure 33: TEF top k-cores

Figure 33 is the core of our network, comprised of nodes with *k*-core values of 36-38. That is, each node within this subgroup is connected to 36-38 other nodes. There is again overlap with the betweenness graph. There is a large subgroup that often tweets the most and is the most interconnected. The communities graph (Figure 31) and the *k*-core decomposition show that this central, cohesive group has relatively few connections outside of itself. This network as a whole is not densely connected, and it has few subgroups. Many of the "core" nodes are associations, companies and a handful of prolific individual tweeter-linguists. The peripheral nodes and nodes with lower *k*-core values are more commonly individual freelancers and smaller companies. So, while this conference has drawn together this temporary assemblage via the hashtag, these Twitter users are still largely fragmented, as their profession dictates. It shows some reach beyond the world of translation, as seen in the betweenness values, with a key gatekeeper to another branch in the network being an MEP, whose own broader network is likely more diverse.

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Beyond these characteristics, which lead us down the dangerous path of treating the network as the "thing" to be described, it is important to consider what this highlights about the Twitterconference, about this assemblage, and about translators' professional identities as emergent. What SNA takes from graph theory can shine a light on the characteristics of interrelationships and interconnections, which would otherwise go unseen. It provides an aggregate picture, a "zooming out", that can challenge and complement the fine-grained and disaggregated ethnographic approach taken above. If affective capacity is understood as the ability to interact and interconnect with other components in an assemblage (see 3.2), centrality measures from SNA can highlight those individual Twitter users who are most "capable". This is of course not exhaustive and affective capacity extends beyond Twitter users to the hashtag itself, to the connections between nodes, and beyond the network to phones, apps and internet connections. Recognising these limitations, SNA provides a quantitative measure of affective capacity, albeit a restrictive one. It can highlight some of the components within an assemblage that have the ability to draw in other components, to create clusters, to create further connections. Betweenness thus provides a literal picture of affective capacity that I would not get if I did not consider it. It tells me that the actions of these individuals are key to this assemblage emerging online; it is their Twitter activity which encourages or inhibits the flow of information around this network. In this way, SNA allows a temporary assemblage hanging together via known and unknown connections to be visualised. The known connections are found in the data we can collect from Twitter; the unknown connections exist beyond this data, such as the threads that I have traced through interviews and events in this thesis. The unknown connections cannot be visualised but are no doubt there and contribute to network production. SNA provides an alternative angle on the conference and how professional identity emerges from it. These graphs are snapshots, photographs using different lenses, in the form of different analyses, that highlight different qualities and textures of an emergent phenomenon.

Latour criticises visual representations of networks for not showing movement, calling them "simple-minded" (Latour, 2005: 133). I tend to agree, if these representations are presented in isolation, if they are said to be the answer, the "thing" to be described. It is in the assemblage of both quantitative SNA, visualisations of networks and ethnographic methods that movement through, in and out, upwards, movement that creates emergence at different scales and levels can be seen. The graphs are 2-D representations of the actions and practices of network*ing*. Nodes and edges are

condensations of the interactions between Twitter users: "following", "liking", tweeting, retweeting, using hashtags, tagging other users. The nodes and edges that make up the graphs are produced and maintained by these activities. Furthermore, the actions of networking contribute to the construction of networked identities. For some translators and other actors in translation, identities are produced at least in part online in this increasingly digital world (see 6.7). The "networked" professional self "must undertake regular, routine and repetitive actions of connecting and disconnecting, logging on and logging off" (Elliott, 2019: 128). The images of this network are a snapshot of these activities, and thus a snapshot of these networked identities.

There is a cohesive core to this network comprised principally of organisations or individuals explicitly representing organisations. The EC-DGT, the International Federation of Translators (FIT), the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL), and companies are all well-represented. This core subgroup also features individual translators and interpreters, some of whom spoke at the conference. Prominent organisations and bodies can be thought of as, to some extent self-appointed, bastions of professionalism in translation. Take professional associations, for example, that explicitly aim to promote the profession, they sell/provide quality in the form of awarding certifications and restricted criteria for membership (see 6.3). Their members, who pay their membership fees and put their member status on their CV, legitimize this claim. Their prominence in this network demonstrates the importance of this and similar events for these collective claims to professional identity and professionalism. Translator institutions, agencies, and digitally prominent freelancers are all engaged in the discussion around this conference and are – to greater and lesser extents – connected and interconnected to one another. For a largely freelance, geographically dispersed and marginalised cohort, Twitter creates the opportunity to join and contribute to networks that involve the big players in the field. This core makes online claims to professionalism within translation through their Twitter activities: such as following and retweeting relevant tweets, and entering into discussions on MT. This network provides a different image of professional identity in translation, one that is not rooted within individual freelancers, but is produced as part of a corporate or institutional image.

Analysing the Twitter data in this way provides another perspective on MT and its role in professional identity construction. The hashtags, some of which are specific to translation, some specific to machine learning, situate these discussions and

comments within wider debates and networks on Twitter. As seen in the previous chapter (6.7), Twitter creates a searchable, traceable, and "Googleable" professional identity. Individual translators, professional associations, EU institutions and others incorporate MT into their identities through processes of networking on Twitter. Translators can delve into these networks not only by undertaking these networking practices, but simply by browsing tweets. Professional identity emerges online from the interaction of these varied Twitter users, discourses related to translation and professionalism, the events they attend and the connections they make. Discussions on MT, comments and commentaries of this conference feed into the identity construction of translators. The online networks they plug into influence what they interact with online, potentially sharpening or blurring boundaries around their professionalism and professional identity. For those who engage in tweeting, the *doing* of Twitter is part of the *doing* of professional translation. The tweets I have collected are a digital-material component of the actions and practices of professional translation. MT itself plays a role in these networked professional identities, creating connections and the potential for connections, by proxy.

The actions of "liking", "following", and retweeting create assemblages loosely hung together via hashtags. The hashtag is a powerful thing that creates a cluster, drawing in different individuals, allowing interaction between individual and institution, creating digital "knots of intensity" (de Freitas, 2017: 119). In this way, it produces and is produced by events and actions. It draws together and generates discussions and activities of networking, thus contributing to professional identity construction. The conference itself and the topic it covers – MT – are equally productive of discussions and connective actions. These actions of networking not only connect Twitter users, but have content that can contribute discursively to identity construction (Figure 26). Professional identity is not something that "belongs" to an individual translator or to translation as a coherent whole, it is something that is produced in myriad settings and spaces. One of which is Twitter, where it is produced in the claim made to it by these various organisations, and this can be seen here. The technological revolution that is impacting translation practice has also created new spaces and ways of *doing* professional translation.

While I make no claim to have uncovered The Professional Identity of translators, this data and analysis provides an aggregate view that, far from pasting over difference, highlights fragmentation. An emergent, conflicted, shape-shifting Twitter identity is

made visible from this "zoomed-out" perspective. Translators may contribute to it, reject, contradict, ignore, or support it. This snapshot displays some of the same conflicts, pressures and changes that can be seen at the individual level, in interviews and observations. A cohesive core with fragmented peripheries too reflects what I have seen and heard elsewhere. Translators are often isolated from one another in their working practices. They are drawn to associations and online networks, and they attend events, which are themselves hubs, subgroups, cores. Although there is some ability of these atomised linguists to join together in these networks and events, they remain less interconnected than those more formally organised clusters. This conference has drawn together this temporary Twitterassemblage, but individual freelancers remain loosely connected, or in fact isolated from one another, connected to larger organisations and companies. The isolation and connectedness of translators cannot be measured in binary terms. Indeed, the various measures and figures that SNA provides show that the connectedness of this specific network falls somewhere between 0 and 1. By combining these analyses, what we see are partial connections. Isolation is not absolute, but neither is connection. The speed afforded by these technologies "permits fast connections and even faster disconnections" (Elliott, 2019: 129). Both in translators' experiences, in their actions and in their networks, interactions and interconnections flicker on and off. This fluctuating nature of aggregation and disaggregation, particularly in online networks, gives professional identity in translation its scalability, variability, and shape-shifting quality.

7.5.   Concluding Remarks

Translators find themselves in a precarious position. That precarity is both immediate, as explored in the previous two chapters, and distant – albeit arguably fast approaching, as explored here. Translation as a commercial process, a product and occupation is complex. Layers of interconnections and interactions create an apparently coherent whole: a translation industry, market or profession. As chapters 5-7 have shown, translation, whichever slice of it you take, is multiple, varied, fluid, contingent, and situated. Heterogeneous, material, discursive, human and non-human components interact and interconnect, producing emergent entities. Professional identity emerges from these interactions, and itself appears at once entirely individual and yet collective and connect*ing*. Translators co-produce their professional identities in sociotechnical assemblages that involve agencies, technologies, discourses of professionalism, among other things. Each translator's identity is unique to them, yet

connections between translators and other people and things are created through this identity. The various people and things involved in these emergent identities are fragmented yet strung together through discursive and material threads.

Translation technologies are one of the material and discursive threads that criss-cross these dispersed and splintered assemblages and (dis)aggregations. Materially, translation and communication technologies connect translators to one another and to their clients in translation practices. That is, by working with and on these technologies, translators and their work are entangled in digital-material assemblages that include agencies, end-users and fellow translators. MT and other tools are physically integrated into the very doing of translation, changing translation practices. The needs of a neoliberal economy inform these interactions, emphasising speed and volume, and thus the uptake of these technologies, influencing interactions with agencies and end-clients. Discursively, MT generates debate and discussion, sharpening and blurring boundaries around translation professionalism. Technologies are cross-scale components, contributing to identity construction within collective assemblages, and interacting with translators as individuals. As the interviews show, these technological components play co-constitutive roles in translation practice and quality at this individual level. Concerns over the impact of technologies on the quality of translations produced and on the viability of translation as an occupation are discursively incorporated into professional identity (Bucher & Fieseler, 2017; Bucher, 2017). Translators are able to empower themselves in relation to MT by using their own humanity to assert their professionalism.

The move towards MT situates translation within broader processes and discourses related to AI and automation, which was brought to fore by the conference. Here, the analysis of technologies within translation highlights the power dynamics between translation expertise and AI expertise, and again between translators and their clients. In some level of contrast to the interviews, the conference had a palpable sense of inevitability. The powerlessness of translators in the face of technologies and their harnessing by corporate actors was not discussed on stage, but it was between professionals I spoke to. As chapter 5 demonstrates, interactions and relationships with agencies play a significant role in professional identity construction. In the age of data, who owns what often relates to who can make decisions. Translators, by and large, do not own software and do not own what they produce; agencies do. The

invisibility and marginalisation of translators extends from their working practices to their envelopment into new technologies (Kushner, 2013).

The Twitter data allows me to take an aggregative step, exploring the online network that briefly hung together via the conference hashtag and activities of networking. This step enables a reflection on the qualities of connectedness experienced and produced by translators and the other entities they connect with. These connections can be partial, with individual translators falling in and out of isolation, and in and out of various emergent entities, which themselves rise and fall. Individual nodes appear isolated from one another but in this temporary Twitter storm, they are connected. The nodes and edges are themselves impressions of the actions and practices of networking. Equally, this assemblage hints at other, longer lasting collectivities of different sizes and temporalities. This data is a digital-material component of the sociotechnical assemblages of translation. The production of tweets and the networking activities – liking and retweeting – involved in *doing* Twitter are part of translators' professional practices. Tweets as things and tweeting as a professional practice are an element of professional identity construction for those who engage in these networks and platforms. The technological shift we are witnessing has produced not only MT, changing working practices, threatening livelihoods, but it has also created new possibilities for the production of professional identities. Here, MT is a draw that creates clusters and practices of networking specific to translation. Yet, it also situates translation firmly within wider debates and the seismic shift of the AI revolution. The next chapter takes the analytical conclusions of chapters 5-7 and explores how aggregation and disaggregation, seen here in the different data used, run through this project and through professional identities in translation.

Chapter 8. The Unknowable Shape of Professional Identity

8.1.   The Unknowable Shape of Professional Identity

I sometimes feel I'm on the cusp of figuring it
out—and then I check the news, and the world
has changed again, into yet another strange
and unknowable shape. (Orlin, 2018)

The metaphor of an unknowable shape chimes with assemblage as an orientation to the world and an approach to research. An unknowable shape evokes something vast, varied and unfamiliar. I have come across this term describing Ahab's encounter with the whale in "Moby Dick" (Hoare, 2011), in which the body of the whale is described as essentially unknowable:

> The living whale, in his full majesty and significance, is only to be seen at sea in unfathomable waters; and afloat the vast bulk of him is out of sight, like a launched line-of-battle ship; and out of that element it is a thing eternally impossible for mortal man to hoist him bodily into the air, so as to preserve all his mighty swells and undulations. […] [S]uch is then the outlandish, eel-like, limbered, varying shape of him, that his precise expression the devil himself could not catch. (Melville, 1992: 288-9)

Assemblages can be thought of in this way, as unknowable in their entirety due to the limits of the human perspective, and the inherent complexity that is beyond the reaches of even the most comprehensive analysis (Woodward, 2016). Even if it were possible to hoist the great body of the whale out of the waters, these limitations would make it impossible to know every swell and undulation. In this chapter, I use the metaphor of the unknowable shape to show how embracing assemblage as an onto-epistemology enables all facets of research speak to one another. I explore the epistemological, methodological and analytical conclusions I have drawn from doing research with assemblage to unpack the interconnections between theory, data and analysis in this thesis.

Here, I want to build on DeLanda's (2006, 2016) conceptualisation of assemblage as realist, which he bases purely on it being a philosophy of immanence (see 3.2). This ontological stance states that there is a reality separate from human minds, that is, the whale will still be swimming in the ocean even if he is not being observed by people. For DeLanda, the key distinction is the emergence of phenomena that moves away from essentialism, but otherwise takes a realist perspective (DeLanda, 2016: 138-9). I

argue, however, that the nuance and power of an assemblage realism comes from accepting the *unknowableness* of reality. In the act of observing, the researcher constructs their object of analysis, draws lines and boundaries around it, separates it from reality more or less arbitrarily. The researcher necessarily constructs reality itself in this process. This differs from "grounded" theory-building, in which an accessible basis of reality is assumed to exist from which to construct theory (Clarke, 2005). Assemblage recognises that the researcher decides where the whale stops and the water begins, producing both through analysis. The researcher can only catch glimpses of their object of study, like the whale, the bulk of whom is not only out of sight, but is obscured by the water he is swimming in. Indeed, the whale can only be seen *in the water*, he must be situated and contextualised. The *thingness* of an object of study, the extent to which it is separate and definable from everything around it, is constructed in research.

The metaphor of the unknowable shape illustrates this tension between what is known and what cannot be known, what is constructed and what is – dare I say it – *real*. The participants in this study certainly exist and work as translators with or without my observation, but professional identity as having *thingness* has been constructed in analysis. It is necessary though to construct these "things" in order to create meaning in research. For this reason, I find the unknowable shape a useful concept: it enables me to reflect on my epistemological assumptions from an ontological perspective. The unknowable shape factors in the limitations of research while enabling the production of knowledge, or the construction of *thingness*. This reflection ensures the ontological commitments of assemblage are cohesively applied throughout the research process. Bearing this in mind, professional identity as an unknowable shape emerges at the boundaries and interconnections of other unknowable shapes. We only see lines, traces and edges of these shapes clashing, merging, drifting apart, appearing, and disappearing. If we accept that social phenomena are unknowable in their entirety, we have to content ourselves with knowing parts, seeing an edge here, a surface there, perhaps a corner. Methods are our sources of light, our torches that we shine into those unfathomable waters, hoping to catch sight of our unknowable shape. The more torches you have, the more of the shape you will see.

At its most fundamental, this is my rationale for a mixed methods approach. The differing logics of the methods I have employed provide me with alternative angles from which I can shine my torches, catching different glimpses of this unknowable shape.

The limits of different methods are recognised by various methodological approaches (Creswell, 2009; Bernard, 2011; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Indeed, methodology often frames and justifies elements of research questions and analytical choices that necessarily restrict what the researcher focusses on. This of course is a staple of introductions and conclusions in PhD theses and journal articles, perhaps framed as limitations and boundaries, or the limited scope of research. Here, I describe how my theoretical, methodological and analytical choices have been impacted by one another, and how I am able to sketch out a more comprehensive picture of this unknowable shape from the lines, corners and pieces I have sought out. This builds on chapter 4 by bringing a key analytical conclusion – quality as an ordering component – into the discussion. I describe how quality in translation creates order and impacts professional identity construction. I focus on how quality emerged from an assembled methodology to highlight the entanglement of methods, epistemology, and ontology in this project.

In this chapter, I firstly reflect on my methodological choices from the perspective of an unknowable shape, concluding that assembling a mixed methods approach enables a unique analytical perspective. I then define quality in translation, summarising how it runs through chapters 5-7 and describing how it is entangled in professional identity and my findings. This leads me into a reflection on how each method has enabled an unpacking of aggregation and disaggregation within translation and within research. Aggregation and disaggregation are textures of professional identity that can be highlighted by incorporating aggregative and disaggregative methods in the research process (see 4.2.1). Quality emerges from the aggregative and disaggregative processes and logics that occur in professional identity construction and in research. The ubiquity and variability of quality in professional translation make it an analytical reference point that, when followed, gives a different understanding of how the unknowable shape of professional identity is formed. I discuss how ethnographic and social network analysis (SNA) methods highlighted the intertwining of quality and professionalism within a neoliberal context. From an assemblage perspective, quality has been deterritorialized by neoliberal discourse and made to aid the flow of capital as part of a capitalist apparatus (see 3.3.2). Quality, along with professionalism and technologies, are co-constitutive of one another and contribute to a neoliberal economy that places responsibility on the individual professional for their own financial security and wellbeing. The methods employed in this thesis situate professional identity within this broader context. This reflexive chapter allows me to combine the methodological reflection and exploration in chapter 4 with the analytical conclusions of chapters 5-7,

demonstrating how an assemblage approach both methodologically and theoretically shines a light on the unknowable shape of professional identity.

8.2. Revealing Pieces, Traces and Edges

Much like Ahab's whale, the mighty swells and undulations, the varying shape of professional identity, cannot be seen in its entirety. I call upon Woodward's thought-provoking article in this reflection where he discusses the "countless perspectives" of an event, with the observer able to "bear witness only to [the] pieces, traces, edges and aftermaths" Woodward (2016: 334). I have been struck by the complexity of social phenomena, seen in their distributed agentic capacities, the flows of affect, and the interconnections and disconnections of material and immaterial elements. I have sought to explore these flows, interconnections and disconnections in both my methodological and analytical choices (see 4.2 and 4.5). The complexity I found gives rise to those countless perspectives Woodward describes, highlighting the limits of the researcher to capture them all. Even if it were possible to trace each perspective, creating a singular version of the event or assemblage for the purpose of analysis would nonetheless be out of reach: each perspective *is* its own unique, discursive and material version. Each element is affected uniquely by its interactions within the assemblage, owing to its constructed and processual nature. Rather than try to set down a strict definition of professional identity, I have had to learn to be content with not knowing, or rather with knowing I am missing something. As Usher states, assemblage challenges the "authorial omniscience of the researcher, the demand that all research demonstrate completeness and integrity" (Usher, 2010: 77). Not only is the thing I want to explore unknowable, but I, as the researcher, am fallible and restricted. I found myself trying to reconcile the different expectations and commitments I had entered into. The ethical commitment of presenting as accurate a picture as possible; the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage that seem to laugh at the concept of accuracy; and the expectations associated with conducting a PhD to answer research questions. These considerations are of course not unique to me or to an assemblage approach. Ethnographers, for example, have grappled with questions of completeness and accurate representation (Agar, 1996; Harrison, 2018). My contribution to these discussions lies in using assemblage to guide my decisions throughout the research, which I reflect on here.

These decisions were shaped by: calls for methodological experimentation as discussed in 4.1 (St. Pierre et al., 2016; Fox & Alldred, 2018); the ontological

assumptions of multi-scaled, multi-layered assemblages of things and people (Fox & Alldred, 2017); the multiplicity of events (Massumi, 2002; Woodward, 2016); the recognition of the limits of the researcher (Usher, 2010); and the desire to bring to light as much as possible about professional identity. My imperfect solution was to experiment with mixing methods that explore different layers of individuality and collectivity through differing aggregative and disaggregative logics (Fox & Alldred, 2018). Incorporating aggregation and disaggregation into my methodological decisions enabled me to respect the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage while grappling with differing logics. As I discuss in chapter 4, an assemblage methodology "implies attention to detail and the mundane activities of doings and sayings by which realities are enacted, relations are built and ordering takes place" (Bueger, 2014: 65). Ordering in assemblage thinking relates to the emergence of assemblages as some kind of temporary order out of the multiplicity and potential chaos of social reality. Aggregation is the emergence of order and disaggregation is when that order dissipates, disassembles, or becomes open to change.

To reiterate Fox and Alldred's (2018) point, methods can be mixed with attention paid to aggregation/disaggregation. Ethnography forms the disaggregative part of this methods assemblage, using participant observation and semi-structured interviews to open up possibilities within the research. Both participant observation and interviews are understood not as bounded events but as opportunities to look for connections within and beyond the data collected (Abourahme, 2015; Baker & McGuirk, 2017). Assemblage ethnography plays a disaggregative role in this project, as it encouraged me not to collate data into themes or codes, but instead to immerse myself in the assemblages I witnessed and participated in during interviews and fieldwork. On the other hand, the Twitter data and SNA formed the aggregative part. The quantitative methods collate and measure elements of Twitter users and their networking practices, presenting aggregate or even cumulative images and analyses. To ensure I respected the ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage while combining these differing logics, I focussed on connection. This is a key tenet of assemblage thinking, in which social reality is understood as produced by the interactions and interconnections of people and things (see 3.2). Subsequently, I followed connections during both data collection and analysis: I followed connections in the field; explored the Twitter data as a network; and mapped the qualitative data. Consequently, I did not look for commonality, but used the pieces, traces and edges of professional identity

to explore and represent the various aggregate and disaggregate textures inherent to its assembled nature. In the next sections, I describe how quality as an ordering component emerged from this reflexive methodological process.

8.2.1. *Entangling and untangling quality*

Quality as an ordering component emerged from the combining of aggregative and disaggregative logics in data collection and analysis. In this section, I define quality in translation, highlight the problems with attempting a definition and then summarise how it runs through chapters 5-7. As I demonstrate below, encapsulating quality into a chapter of its own would have reduced its complexity and obscured both its variability and ubiquity. Throughout this chapter, I seek to show how my methodological choices, and ontological and epistemological commitments bring to new light the messy entanglements produced by and productive of quality.

Quality is a thread that is woven through professional translation, from the working practices and tools of translators, to the translators themselves and their clients, from translator associations to legislation, from local to national and international networks. People, things, networks, organisations, associations, discourses, practices cluster around, promote, produce, and undermine quality. Quality is the saviour of the professional translator facing a machine as competitor, underpinning and justifying their existence. Quality is under threat from unqualified, untrained "chancers". Quality is the calling card of translator associations. Quality assurance is offered by translation technologies and agencies alike. Quality is undermined by the working conditions facilitated and encouraged by such technologies and agencies. Quality justifies translation qualifications and the existence of the European Master's in Translation network. Quality is offered, sold, and bought at different levels by different actors and actants. Quality connects the individual translator to their laptop, to the government, to their network(s), to discourse, to money, to practice.

Quality here ostensibly refers to the quality of the end-product: the translation or interpreting service. Yet, trying to define quality in translation immediately demonstrates the fragmented and complex nature of this profession. Quality will vary depending on the text type, on the purpose or end-use of the translation, on subjective linguistic characteristics such as "naturalness" and "style", and on the needs of the client (i.e. speed may be more important than linguistic characteristics). Quality is a slippery concept but is lauded and sought after. A quality translation is: accurate, complete, faithful (to the source text), communicative, natural, appropriate (style and

formality of language), consistent, creative, fit for purpose, reliable, fast. Any one of those adjectives can trump any other depending on the project. Taking purpose as an example, the end-use of a translation will differ between a poem and a technical manual, between advertising copy and a legal contract. In each of these scenarios, the elusive and variable "quality" acts as an affect that draws in different components, from the software used to the individual choices the translator makes, to the rate they are able to charge and discourses on professionalism and writing conventions. Quality as a goal and product that is bought and sold thus links these various components and creates the temporary assemblage of a translation project. (One of) the product(s) of this assemblage, the translation, then goes on to facilitate or enable further processes and practices, from a business deal to an author becoming known in another country, from the running of the European Union to the operation of a new piece of equipment. Quality matters because "mistakes" or lower quality, whatever that might mean in each scenario, can hinder these processes.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the word quality appeared again and again as I began to unpack the data. Sometimes it took centre stage, such as when I asked translators "what does a professional translator bring to a translation project?" and I got a one-word answer: "quality". Other times it snuck in under the radar, such as when I attended professional events, and membership to translator associations was a means of demonstrating seriousness and professionalism to potential clients. Seriousness and professionalism meant the quality of the translation would be higher. Or, when exploring Twitter discussions on machine translation (MT), and "quality" appeared alongside "low" and "rates" (Figure 26). The more I analysed, using maps of qualitative data and networks of Twitter data, I began to see the word quality hidden in the words "professional", "expert", "expertise", "serious", and "professionalism". It was assumed that a professional would provide a quality service. Expertise enables quality. Primed by the logic of assemblage, I chose to explore how quality is connected to other things, and connects other things. I began to see a merging of ontology, epistemology and methodology, with the latter simply an extension of assemblage thinking to the doing of research.

Due to its variability and ubiquity, quality appears throughout chapters 5-7. In chapter 5, I explore how quality runs through the organisation of translation work as a primarily self-employed profession. Neoliberal pressures create conditions in which agencies push down rates for freelancers, with quality entangled with time and money. Quality

may be sacrificed as working conditions, pay in particular, become unsustainable. Translators are caught between the convenience of working for agencies, who provide a relatively steady flow of work, and the concern that their dominance in translation is pushing down rates and quality as a result. Chapter 6 builds on this by exploring the interrelationship between quality and sense-making in this precarious and fragmented profession. Quality is "made up" to create a saleable professional profile that gains the freelancer better paid and more reliable work. Here, quality is linked to the porous barriers to entry in translation. Translator associations and qualifications do some of this barrier work, offering quality labels for translators. Meaning and value emerge as contextual and potential given the various ways translators are hidden in the organisation of translation work as explored in chapter 5. Chapter 7 brings technologies into these discussions, with quality thrown around by various actors to highlight both the advances of MT and the uniquely human characteristics of translation expertise. Technological developments and client expectations shift understandings of quality, with working practices similarly changing to keep up. Human translation is still lauded as the "best" translation, but one that is becoming less affordable or at least the expense of which is less justifiable in the fast-paced, ever-more-efficient world of business. Quality has emerged as an irreducible element of professional identity and the tensions around the doings and sayings of translation.

In the next two sections, I explore the processes that went into creating these analytical conclusions, highlighting the aggregative and disaggregative logics inherent in my methodological choices, and ontological and epistemological commitments.

8.2.2. *Finding aggregation through disaggregation*

The slippery concept of quality, itself produced and reproduced in infinitely varied forms in each translation project, circulates and contracts into "knots of intensity" (de Freitas, 2017: 119), where it shapes and is shaped by the organisation of translation work and technologies, and individual needs and market forces. In this section, I focus on the disaggregative logic of the ethnographic methods, which enabled me to explore how quality creates order and impacts professional identity construction.

By picking apart the interview and observational data, I was able to identify how quality shaped the actions and practices of translators. Through the process of mapping (see 4.5), I began to make connections within and beyond the data. I identified connections between individual interviews and events that did not emerge from a commonality of experience, but from the processes and flows that produce translation. I explored

branches, that sometimes went nowhere, and others that linked up participants who had never met. In chapter 5 (5.5 and 5.6), Robert Kahler, Harry Garrard and Liam Arkwright are examples of such connections. Their involvement in the European Commission and legal translation links Brussels, to Northern England and London. Linking Robert, Harry and Liam shone a light on the complexity of quality in translation. Robert is frustrated with the undermining of quality at an institutional level driven by a desire to cut costs. This in turn leaves Harry dissatisfied with the rates offered for his expertise in EU law, and he assumes this work is picked up by someone who will take those rates. Liam was one such freelancer who was offered unsustainable pay for his work. In contrast, connections also went unmade or unfound. Cathy Stanley (see 6.6) is one such isolated freelancer, whose working practices and relationships did not lead me neatly to other participants or events. Cathy highlights the fragmentation within translation; her experiences, practices and networks show that some branches in translation go nowhere or at least are more limited in their interconnections. Both complex connections and isolated individuals situated my analysis within the broader networks and assemblages each participant interacted in.

Through this process of breaking down the data to see the connections within it, I was able to look beyond the stories and experiences of individual translators. I began to see the role of material factors, such as money, and how this interacted with understandings of best practice in translation. A broader picture emerged in which neoliberalism set the tone but was not itself fully explanatory. Through these connections, I saw that quality in translation had been deterritorialized to facilitate the flow of capital (Deleuze & Guattari, 1988; Usher, 2010). On an international scale, quality translations enable commercial transactions across national and linguistic boundaries, facilitating globalisation (Bielsa, 2005, 2013; Brown et al., 2008). The deregulation of the labour market and the neoliberal belief that the private sector trumps the public sector for financial efficiency have increased self-employment and state outsourcing (Kalleberg, 2011, 2012; Manky, 2018). Translation is no exception, with a dissolution of in-house services and increased freelancing (Kushner, 2013). The discourse of enterprise responsibilizes the individual for their financial security (Kelly, 2013; Harvey et al., 2017) and sees quality become a commodity sold to both freelancers and clients alike. This largely freelance cohort must harness and create a professional reputation rooted in expertise and quality to shore themselves up against the hardships of insecure work.

Quality and professionalism are tied together through responsibilization that sees translators build up their professional*ness* to provide some sense of security in the face of stagnant rates, and tight deadlines. This contextualised Robert, Harry and Liam's experiences, confirming and "fleshing out" the connections I had made. I began to see how the actions and practices of translators were situated within these complex networks, events and assemblages, making it clear that their professional identities are contingent on many material and discursive processes and elements. I saw that the quality of the translator and the quality of the translation are tightly bound, so goes the adage: "you're only as good as your last piece of work". Quality, intertwined with entrepreneurial professionalism and the insecurity of freelance work, pools and clusters in certain spaces and things, such as higher education courses and Continual Professional Development (CPD) workshops. The certificates translators are awarded with are quality in tangible form, a crystallisation, a knot of intensity (de Freitas, 2017), that are charged with potential. Quality reaches out beyond the translation project, to the past and future, to online and "real life" spaces, connecting and (co-)producing other assemblages and events of different scales and durations, such as: courses, webinars and conferences, marketing material, contracts, social media networks, the purchase of software or membership to an association.

This demonstrates how the disaggregative logic associated with ethnographic methods enabled me to pull apart the interview and observational data. As a result, I did not look for commonality, but used the pieces, traces and edges of professional identity to seek out connections, to unpack and represent its assembled nature. I was then able to take these connections further, beyond the confines of those moments of data collection. This process of splintering the data enabled me to see the aggregation captured within it. Quality emerged as an ordering process and component, productive of assemblages, events, practices and actions. Quality itself is shaped and defined by these same processes within the context of a neoliberal apparatus. Translators negotiate the pressures of self-employment, their professional identities emerging from these myriad assemblages and events. Chapters 5 and 6 in particular explore how translators interact with quality in moments of becoming-translator, their actions and practices influenced as a result. The ethnographic methods thus provide the granular, the experiential and individual elements of translation, while situating the stories of translators within a broader context. However, the ontological commitments of assemblage state that phenomena exist across scales. Although the qualitative data allows me to explore collective elements of translation through the experiences of my

participants and my observations of larger events, the data itself remains individual. In the next section, I explore how the collective and aggregative nature of the Twitter data brings another texture to the phenomenon of identity in translation.

8.2.3. *Aggregation and fragmentation on Twitter*

If ethnography forms the disaggregative or at least less aggregative part of this methods assemblage, encouraging and enabling flexibility and openness, social media analysis forms the aggregative part. It is aggregative as a method in the sense that it is "bounded" to the platform and the data within that platform (see 4.2.1). Below I explore how this data is "unbound" from Twitter through analysis, in an analytical undoing of aggregation. Initially, it is restricted to what can be collected via the Twitter API on the terms of the API. This is unlike ethnographic methods and semi-structured interviews, where the researcher is immersed in a research encounter and can delve into things of interest (Lewis & Russell, 2011). Particularly with participant observation, the researcher is free to move around physically, speak to different participants and collect spatial and material data (Agar, 1996; Amit, 2000; Atkinson, 2001). In contrast, the Twitter data is collected in bulk via the API and returns only the information that is made available. The methods of analysis too are aggregative in that they collate and bring data together. Word association networks, for example, draw links between words that frequently occur together, aggregating the textual data of tweets (see 4.3.5).

I want to focus in particular on quantitative social network analysis (SNA) here. As discussed in chapters 4 and 7, centrality measures create aggregate numbers that are attached to nodes within a network. These numbers enable the visualisation of the network based on the quantifiable characteristic of each node: the total number of friends and followers. From an assemblage perspective, agency is understood not as the ability to act, but as the ability to interact and interconnect with other components in an assemblage (see 3.2). So, centrality measures highlight those individual Twitter users who are most "able" from this perspective. The qualitative, nuanced and multiple nature of affect is thus quantified, reduced, bound by and to a number. The logic of this differs wildly from assemblage, that seeks to explain and explore complexity, rather than reduce it. However, I argue that in incorporating a reductive logic, an element of affect is made visible that otherwise would have passed me by. Affect does not only work at the level of the individual encounter, it crosses scales, drawing in micro and macro components (Anderson, 2006; Webb, 2008). It is precisely the analysis of the aggregative side of affective capacity that adds a nuance, a texture, to my exploration

of translation. Centrality measures provide a literal image of affect that would not be visible without these aggregative methods and logic. This offers a different perspective on the conference to what I was able to observe on the ground, and a different view of the Twitterconference from the simple reading of tweets.

The aggregate texture of affect that is visualised through SNA emerges from a varied and multiple collective: a Twitter network. Through aggregation I can see how information flows through and between these Twitter users. As I describe in chapter 4, Twitter analysis, particularly SNA, takes relations, rather than actors, as its starting point (Tagarelli & Interdonato, 2014). Quantifying those relations made it possible to access many more people and things that make up professional identity in translation. The Twitter data opened up the analysis to international networks involving freelance translators, translator associations, EU institutions and initiatives, translation agencies and other companies. The Twitter analysis allowed me to map these connections from an aggregate perspective, rather than from the fine-grained view of ethnography. The graphs are images of the collated or cumulative practices and actions of networking undertaken by various actors in translation. SNA highlights that the *doing* of Twitter is an element of this professional identity that crosses scales. From the individual freelancer, to the translation agency and the EU institution, tweeting and networking on Twitter produce professional identities and are produced by professional identities. These tweets and the associated information – users IDs, date and time, URLs – are a digital-material component of identity. This bounded data and aggregative method provided direct access to an active component of professional identity construction and the doing of translation.

By collating and quantifying this data I was able to see the disaggregation within this cohort and commercial process on an aggregate scale. In the analysis of the Twitter data, both in the production of word networks (see 6.7) and SNA (see 7.4), I saw a fragmentation of professional identity and commercial translation. I had felt this fragmentation deep in my bones during fieldwork, in interviews and at events. And there it was, in a stream of tweets and a series of network graphs I could flick through. The fragmentation also mirrored my own experiences as a translator that I had to negotiate throughout the research process, as I discuss in 4.4.2. This sharpened my analysis and attuned me to the complexity of professional identity within translation. The ethnographic analysis demonstrates how the fragmentation takes place at the level of the individual, as in the stories and experiences of my participants whose

working conditions and practices tend to pull them together and apart simultaneously. Translators are drawn together as quasi-colleagues yet are in competition with one another; they lament the downward push on rates yet may be obliged to take them; they become a member of an association as a means to stand out from the crowd. By collecting and analysing thousands of tweets, I was able to see what form this takes at a collective level. I saw these same tensions repeated countless times. I saw how networks are formed out of these tensions on Twitter, with freelancers largely isolated from one another on the outskirts, connected to a more cohesive central core (see Figure 32). The aggregation of Twitter data and analysis provides another texture to the disaggregation of professional identity explored with ethnographic methods.

Much in the way that assemblage ethnography is not fully disaggregative – as a story needs to be told (see 4.3.2) – Twitter analysis is not only aggregative. To bring Twitter analysis firmly into an assemblage epistemology, it is linked, it is "unbound" from the platform as further connections are sought. I saw that quality, intertwined with professional identity, is networked and productive of networks on Twitter. Quality runs through and links up networks, enabling components to cluster at and around opportune points and spaces. On Twitter, quality is a point of discussion that links with the merits and limitations of MT, pitting professional against machine. The varied and interconnected online world highlights the differing fields of expertise that are all chasing quality in translation: algorithmic, human translator, coder, software developer, translator association, agency. Big players in the field are interconnected, reproducing identities, drawing on MT and quality to do so and doing so for different purposes (see 7.4). Translators too take part in the actions and practices of networking on Twitter alongside associations and organisations. This highlights how identities are networked in very literal ways: identities are produced in networks and through network*ing*. Technologies create connections and are connections. Identities do the same, create connections and are created in connections. MT and its relationship with quality creates clusters and practices of networking specific to translation from which identities can emerge. Through the "unbounding" of the Twitter data, I could situate translation materially within the broader context of the artificial intelligence (AI) revolution and automation (Elliott, 2019).

The tweets I collected are digital-material elements of this revolution in two ways. Firstly, software developers and experts in AI contribute to these discussions, using the same hashtags. These tweets, emerging from technological developments, are a

material part of this ongoing sociotechnical shift. Secondly, the Twitter platform itself is a product of these developments. Twitter is comprised of the platform, its users and the content they produce. What I collected is a slice – albeit a slim one – of this technological revolution. Translators' professional identities and professional experiences are part of the broader and sweeping change of the AI revolution. Their insecurity is exacerbated by the breakneck-pace of contemporary business, which undermines perceptions of how quality is created in translation, driving the development of technologies that fragment and *taskify* complex intellectual practices (Brown et al., 2008; Crowley et al., 2010; Wood et al., 2019). Translation expertise thus becomes encoded in software as a means to produce quality translations, but rests firmly in the hands of agencies and software developers (Brown et al., 2008). The translators' role in the commercial process of translation appears to be settling down, shifting towards editing or the more optimistic "linguistic consultant" role mentioned in the conference (see 7.3). Other actors introduce new technologies driven by market ideals that cause upheaval for the individual translator, whose role, on an individual and cohort level, must adapt to them. Quality is not only a factor in individual translation projects, it crosses micro and macro scales, rhizomatically linking and connecting different actors and "things" at different levels, in different spaces, over different time periods. Quality is an example of how the combination of methods used in this project shine a light on aggregation and disaggregation within professional identity construction, and within the data and methods themselves.

8.3. Concluding Remarks

The varying shape of professional identity in translation, its swells and undulations, sit just out of reach in the unfathomable waters of social reality. It has been revealed, to some extent, by the approach taken in this thesis. The combination of disaggregative ethnographic methods and aggregative quantitative SNA enabled a reflection on the entire research process. I have seen the benefits and drawbacks of each, the contribution each can make to illuminating this unknowable shape I have been fixated on for three years. Assemblage methodology and mixing methods reframes debates on professional identity and challenges ontological and epistemological assumptions. By combining ethnographic methods and SNA with assemblage, I have been able to make tangible more perspectives or versions of this broad and varying phenomenon (Mason, 2006; Bleiker, 2015; Fox & Alldred, 2018). The use of Twitter data, which includes thousands of data points from hundreds of actors, opens up possibilities of

collective identities and aggregate qualities. The ethnographic methods in turn provide the granular, experiential data enabling and encouraging me to explore beyond the bounds of all research sites and spaces. As a consequence, my limits as a researcher are to some degree mitigated, providing insight into different textures, scales and versions of professional identity.

This chapter looks at how quality runs through the project and how the methods enable those threads to be identified. Quality emerges as a component that is both shaped by and shapes the processes and assemblages it is involved in. Quality cannot be encapsulated into a singular "thing" that circulates through these networks and relationships. Quality morphs and shifts depending on who or what is calling on it. Equally, professional identity cannot be reduced to a one-size-fits-all form. This brings a richness, depth, and complexity to the analysis of professional identity construction in translation. Professional identity is shown to be both individual and collective; it is a connection between individuals and it allows connections to form between individuals. Professional identity itself then is aggregative and disaggregative, comprised of both individualities and collectivities. My interpretation, presentation and weaving of SNA into an assemblage methodology, which tends to exclusively use qualitative data, embraces calls for experimentation. I have found that this experiment brings richness and depth to my analysis as well as enabling this very reflection on the research process. By setting this reflexive process aside, I have been able to do the work of unpacking and unpicking the aggregative and disaggregative logics of assemblage discussed in chapter 4 while drawing on the analytical conclusions explored in depth in chapters 5-7. This chapter highlights that methods, epistemology and ontology are themselves entangled in complex assemblages and networks. As a result of this process, I have seen that professional identity is an unknowable shape that sits beyond my reach, but that embracing assemblage as an onto-epistemology brings it a little bit closer.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

9.1. Exploring Professional Identity in Translation

As outlined in the introduction, this thesis sought to explore how translators construct their professional identities. Driven by assemblage thinking throughout the research process, I aimed to demonstrate that professional identity emerges from complex socio-material assemblages and events; that it is produced in various settings and spaces; and that it emerges from translators' navigation and negotiation of their working conditions and relationships. In this concluding chapter, I work through how I have achieved the aims and objectives set out in the introduction and contributed to the literature. In 9.2, I reiterate some of the gaps in the literature that aided in the development of the project, and I highlight how I met each aim and objective in turn. In 9.3, I state the principal empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions this project makes to the literature. The empirical contribution relates to translators' position as self-employed expert workers; the theoretical and methodological contributions result from my exploration and application of assemblage thinking. In 9.4, I discuss the implications of this research beyond academia, looking at what translators, translator associations and other actors can draw from the findings. Lastly, in 9.5, I explore the future avenues of research that have been opened by my analysis and methodological approach. In this section, I also describe the limitations of the project, which equally represent intriguing possibilities for future research.

9.2. Meeting Aims and Objectives

In the introduction, I provide an anecdote from my time as a translator, and outline my background in this field. This thesis is rooted in those experiences in many respects, and I have built on those foundations throughout the research process. In completing this project, I have carried out an in-depth exploration of the literature that speaks to those experiences and knowledge. The process of reviewing scholarly work highlighted gaps that this project could fill, which I summarise in three key points. Firstly, much of the work in the sociology of professions focusses on established professional groups (Gorman & Sandefur, 2011; Dent et al., 2016); and much of the work on precarious employment focusses on either low-skilled, low-paid work as part of the gig economy, or on the precaritisation of established professions (Kalleberg, 2012; Susskind & Susskind, 2017; Kessler, 2018). Translators do not fit neatly into any of these categories. Secondly, the theorization of precarity and professionalism tends to rely on macro explanations or emphasises discourse, both to the detriment of

materialities (Saks, 2016; Alberti et al., 2018). Thirdly, the categorizations involved in the analyses of professional or precarious groups of workers are themselves not interrogated, but often assumed and imposed (Robson et al., 2004; Hassard & Morris, 2018). How precarity and professionalism are produced and enacted in the everyday doings and sayings of work is often neglected. Assemblage thinking shaped my critique of the existing work, providing an ontological and epistemological standpoint from which I developed the key aims and objectives that have driven this project. Below, I detail how I met each of those aims and objectives in turn.

9.2.1. *Professional identity as emergent, unstable and produced*

The overall aim of the thesis was the following:

- Explore the idea of professional identity and professionalism as emergent, unstable, and processual.

As I highlight in chapter 2, sociological explorations of professionalism mostly focus on institutions, established professions, and the power of the professional label without exploring professional identity itself. Where professional identity is explored, it tends to be discussed in terms of discourse alone, which is often taken as given. This thesis shows how professional identity and professionalism emerge from the interactions of people and things. Consequently, it is unstable, individual, differently-scaled, contingent, and situated. Here, I briefly describe how each chapter highlights one or more elements of this ontological stance, before going into more depth in the next sections.

In chapter 5, I explore how the relationships between freelance translators and their clients, principally translation agencies, impact professional identity construction. These relationships have both material and discursive components, with contractual arrangements dictating rates and other terms, and discourses of professionalism dictating appropriate behaviour and email response times. Professional identity emerges in these moments of interaction, in emails and phone calls, in contracts and deadlines. I show how these interactions are moments in which neoliberal values are enacted and produced, demonstrating that professional identity emerges from cross-scale entanglements. In chapter 6, I explore the practices and actions undertaken by translators in their navigation of the sometimes harsh realities of freelancing. Professional identity is shown to emerge in translators' interactions with one another and other people and things. I show how professionalism and the creation of a

professional profile is central to professional identity in this largely freelance group. The actions and practices involved become a means for translators to distinguish between professionals and non-professionals. Collective identities emerge from these interactions, as translators are eager to gain both a community and professional profile. This shows how boundaries themselves, often predefined and assumed in the literature, are continually produced in a variety of interactions and events. In chapter 7, I situate translators' professional identities within the ongoing technological revolution, including both communication technologies and machine translation (MT). This chapter explores the interrelationship between professional identity, technologies, and working practices. Professional identity emerges as unstable and malleable, reacting to technological innovation and its impact on the *doing* of translation. Whether translators embrace or reject MT, translation technologies become a means of distinguishing between human and mechanical expertise, between professionals and non-professionals. This chapter builds on chapters 5 and 6, further demonstrating the fragmentation and instability of professional identity, as this cohort of expert workers navigate the new actors in their field.

As this summary demonstrates, achieving the overall aim necessitated the thorough contextualisation of the data to show how, from what and whom professional identity emerges. The more I mapped the data, the more I saw the precaritisation of translation work as key to professional identity. The actions and practices of translators and other actors in translation, as discussed in chapters 5-7, emerge from a neoliberal context. Neoliberal economic policy was enacted and produced in the interactions I witnessed and participated in. This context encourages and facilitates certain doings and sayings in translation that impact the professional identity construction of my participants. In the next sections, I explore in more detail how professional identity, as contingent and situated, is shown to be emergent, processual and unstable.

9.2.2. *The settings and spaces of translation*

In this and the next three sections, I work through each key objective.

- Explore how professional identities and professionalism emerge in different settings and spaces.

Different settings and spaces emerge throughout the thesis, reflecting the varied nature of data collection and analysis, and professional identity itself. Settings constitute the backdrop or broader environment; spaces are the concrete locations in

which interactions take place (Gieryn, 2000). Some of those spaces I explored in fieldwork, such as professional development events in conference venues, a co-working space in a library, and online webinar chatboxes (see 4.3.2). Universities, the European Commission and Twitter formed settings in this thesis, in which interviews, observations and large-scale data collection took place. I mapped out the data from each setting and space, immersing myself within each research encounter to explore how professional identity emerged from it and reached out to other spaces. These physical and online spaces possess characteristics that enable translators to work together, talk to one another, learn and develop skills. Other spaces that I did not have direct access to were hinted at by translators in interviews, such as home offices, from which they are equipped to carry out their work and the mundane activities that accompany it: emailing agencies, drawing up invoices, plugging into online networks. Below, I give an example from each chapter of a setting and space that demonstrates a facet of the multiplicity and complexity of professional identity and its connection to space.

In chapter 5, I set out a vignette from a co-working day, which saw a handful of translators gather in the intimate space of a small library. Stories and frustrations were shared; people worked on translations, emailed clients; cups of tea and coffee were made. In this space, I saw the connections between individuals that professional identity enables, and which enable the emergence of professional identity. The space itself contributed to this: the table, with its communal extension lead that required negotiation, and the packets of biscuits brought in and passed around. This space allowed the mundane doings and sayings of translation to take place in a small, shared environment for a day. The actions and practices facilitated and encouraged by the space and setting allowed professional identities to be produced in those interactions with people and things. This co-working space, in which translators shared their stories with one another and with me, mirrored the freelancer working from home, browsing and participating in online discussions as discussed in chapter 6. In this chapter, social media emerges as a space where translators co-produce professional identities and ideas of professionalism through the functionality of various platforms. Facebook groups, for example, provide spaces in which translators can ask for advice, reach out for pastoral support, and vent about difficult clients and tricky translation problems. These online settings enable a geographically dispersed and self-employed group to create some collegiality with other expert workers.

Some of these settings and spaces enable networking practices, from the more traditional exchange of business cards, to the contemporary "following" and "liking" practices on Twitter. These actions and practices enable translators to form individual professional identities and enable collective identities to emerge. In chapter 7, the setting of the European Commission, and the spaces that the Translating Europe Forum took place within – on Twitter and "on the ground" – allowed me to witness such networking practices and other interactions. The European Commission forms a powerful backdrop, where highly codified spaces present translation as central to the European project. This institutional setting presented me with two overlapping professional identities: the translator as discussed on stage – a flexible worker keen to learn and play their role in the developing profession; and the frustrated freelancers I spoke to in the audience – fed up with retraining and technological developments that do little to benefit them and their expertise. This space demonstrated the multiple, contested, and varied nature of professional identity. The interests of the individual freelancer and the institution played out spatially, with professional identity broadcast from the stage, and then emerging in more intimate conversations between attendees during coffee breaks. On Twitter, I saw the networking practices of large bodies in translation and freelancers. The conversations in the Twittersphere that emerged from the conference related to MT saw the production of a human v. machine discourse, with some promoting the uniquely human skills of the translator, and others the potential of AI-driven translation technologies. The conference and the different spaces it took place within highlight the continual production of professional identity and the multiplicity this gives rise to.

Each of these settings and spaces influences how professional identity emerges, what and who is involved in its production. The different settings highlight the multiplicity of translation and professional identity. Space itself is not separate from the components within it and beyond it that produce professional identities. Spaces demonstrate that professional identity does not belong to any one person or group but is a product and process of all that goes into working in translation. The variety of spaces and settings in this thesis demonstrates the varied, contingent and situated nature of professional identity.

9.2.3. *Fragmentation in the market and cohort*

- Identify and unpack how freelance translators navigate working conditions and practices in their production of professional identities.

Throughout the thesis, I have demonstrated that translators' navigation of their working conditions and practices contributes to their professional identity construction. This navigation involves interacting with a variety of people and things, such as translation agencies, MT, qualifications and Continual Professional Development (CPD) events. The working conditions and practices themselves, as well as the ways translators deal with them, highlight the fragmentation of the market and cohort. The organisation of translation work is fragmented through agencies; translation practices are fragmented through text-types, purpose of the translated text, the clients' needs and so on. The cohort is similarly fragmented, with freelancers isolated from one another to greater and lesser extents owing to these same characteristics and processes. Professional identities are produced in the navigation of these varying levels and scales of fragmentation.

While many elements of the translation process are out of the hands of translators as self-employed expert workers, translators undertake actions and practices to empower themselves and make sense of their working experiences. In chapter 5, agencies emerge as powerful entities that are more or less able to exert control over elements of translators' working conditions and practices, including rates of pay and deadlines. In translators' navigation of these interactions, professional identities emerge as a means of empowering oneself in often challenging circumstances. For some translators, this means leaving the profession or working part-time, seeking out other work that provides more stability. Many translators capitalise on the particularities of the agency-freelancer relationship to develop specialisms that may enable higher and more secure income in the future. They also make choices when they can to act differently, refusing certain rates, chasing up invoices and being "conveniently busy" the next time late payers request a job. In chapter 6, I look beyond agencies to explore other actions and practices involved in translation. Translators undertake qualifications and training, join associations, and participate in online and offline networks. The sharing of the joys and frustrations of translation create a sense of belonging for some, who feel their expertise is recognised as a result. These actions enable translators to draw more distinct boundaries between themselves as professionals and non-professionals, whether clients or the public. In chapter 7, I explore this in relation to MT, with the distinction between human and machine as central to highlighting the professionalism of human translators, discussed in the next section. Translators can thus empower themselves and make sense of their professional experiences in their interactions with a variety of people and things.

The navigation of the working conditions and practices of translation as part of professional identity construction highlights a key tension between the individual and the collective that runs throughout the thesis. The fragmentation inherent in the organisation of translation work positions translators as isolated competitors. Nonetheless, translators recognise the value in coming together as a professional group: it provides a sense of belonging, pastoral and practical support; it creates the possibility to improve individual working conditions through the professionalization of the cohort. This is also employed by translator associations to encourage membership. That is, translators are encouraged to join associations as a means to set themselves apart in order to get better working conditions. Yet their fellow translators, indeed other members, are the ones they seek to stand out from. I could not find a resolution for this tension, only a belief on the part of some translators that lifting up the entire group is the only way to lift themselves up as individuals. This further demonstrates the complexity and multiplicity of professional identity production: translators interact in a variety of assemblages, events, and networks, and undertake actions and practices in the navigation of their working lives. Their professional identities are produced continually, in these moments of interaction, a product of and productive of the fragmented world of translation.

9.2.4. *Technology and professional identity*

- Explore how technological developments in translation impact professional identity construction and ideas of professionalism.

Technology in translation takes various forms, with two principal technologies of concern in this thesis: translation technologies including CAT tools (Computer Aided Translation) and machine translation (MT), and communication technologies. These technologies pop up in the analysis chapters, with MT the primary focus of chapter 7. The consensus is that CAT tools benefit translators, enabling them to make use of their expertise. This technology forms part of professional identity construction insofar as mastering it is key: agencies ask for it; it is a feature of CPD events and university Master's programmes; and translator pay for subscriptions. Mastery of CAT tools becomes a means of distinguishing between professionals and non-professionals. Spending the time, effort and money on subscribing to and becoming proficient at using this software demonstrates a seriousness and commitment to translation. This highlights the entrepreneurial form of professionalism discourse littered throughout the

thesis. On the other hand, agencies make use of these technologies to reduce the rates paid to translators. In this way, it both supports and undermines translation expertise.

MT similarly has dark and light sides: it is both threat and opportunity; it is rejected and embraced. MT is necessary to keep up with the fast-paced reality of contemporary life, and is a means of distinguishing between those who know about translation and those who do not. MT fragments the process of translation into tasks that can done by machine, reinforcing per word rates. It enables multiple new actors to enter the translation market. The task of translation is morphing, definitions of quality and best practice are changing alongside it. Professional identity is similarly shifting, moving away from translator to editor. MT thus represents both destabilisation and fragmentation alongside centralisation and homogenisation. Translation is destabilised insofar as new technological actors – both the software and those with the expertise to make it – have come onto the scene. This disrupts understandings of linguistic expertise, which is in danger of being replaced. The commercial process of translation itself is fragmented, with linguistic knowledge encoded in software and the translator taking on the role of editor to a machine. In turn, as this technology develops and becomes more sophisticated, it will likely become ubiquitous, ushering in a more homogeneous role and MT-based translation process. This ties translators and the users of translation more tightly to the agencies and software companies that own MT systems, centralising translation and those involved with it.

Communication technologies, while not the strict focus of analysis, also play a role. The internet enables a remote workforce of translators to be scattered across the world, with participants mentioning clients in Argentina, the US, and continental Europe. This demonstrates the global trade enabled by communication technologies and the earning potential for freelancers. However, the recent advent of Cloud technologies has increased levels of surveillance on freelancers, whose use of software can be monitored and rates consequently restricted. Additionally, the internet opens up UK translators to global competitors living in low-wage economies who are willing and able to accept lower rates. The extent of the impact of this is not discernible from the data. What is clear, though, is that these potential global competitors contribute to the production of professional anxiety. This is worked into identity construction as seen in the actions and practices described above that are intended to provide a buffer against market forces in this unregulated market. The internet and the

Cloud facilitate freelance translation work while also contributing to the precarity, instability and disempowerment of these working practices. Translators navigate technologies and their intersection with agencies and the market, producing professional identities in the process.

9.2.5. *Assembling research*

- Employ assemblage thinking throughout the research process to enable an open approach to research that facilitates the identification of complexity, materiality, and multiplicity necessary to fulfil the above objectives.

Assemblage thinking has been central to the development and execution of this project. As I state in the introduction, my rationale for taking an assemblage approach comes down to its ontological and epistemological assumptions that encourage an open and experimental research process. The key driver is an orientation to the world that emphasises the multiple, complex and socio-material nature of phenomena. I explore this ontology in chapter 3, pulling out key elements that have contributed to this project. Principally, those elements relate to aggregation and disaggregation. That is, the ways things are pulled together, stay together and fall apart. Order and ordering, in terms of aggregation and disaggregation, are the principal theoretical focus and contribute in three key ways. Firstly, this shaped my critique and exploration of the literature as I set out in chapter 2. I found categories and boundaries imposed and assumed to exist between professional groups, and between professionals and non-professionals. I found precarious employment and working within a neoliberal context to be largely reduced to structural explanations. I found professionalism to be presented as a ready-made discourse that influenced behaviour and to a lesser extent professional identity. Assemblage thinking encouraged me to challenge these often binary and reductive stances in my reading of the literature. Secondly, assemblage as a critical mindset informed my research questions, which sought to contribute to discussions on professional and precarious work by providing an alternative angle that might address the ontological limitations of other approaches. These aims and objectives set the tone for the entire research process.

Thirdly and perhaps most critically, an assemblage ontology impacted my methodological approach as I describe in chapter 4. I took the ontological assumptions – multiplicity, materiality, production, emergence, complexity – and unpacked how they necessarily entail epistemological commitments that can be explored in methods. When phenomena are understood as multiple and complex, the limitations of the

researcher must be accepted. Furthermore, socio-material assemblages in which all components are ontologically equal has the implication that there is a *knowing* that is beyond the reaches of the researcher. This material knowing – the ways non-human components interact and are impacted by their interactions – is at least partly obscured, despite the best efforts of the researcher to attend to materialities. This results in the acceptance of social phenomena as unknowable in their entirety, as I reflect on in chapter 8. I sought to attend to the multiplicity of professional identity by intentionally seeking out methods that entail differing logics, as I discuss in chapters 4 and 8. Chapter 4 details the methodological implications of an assemblage ontology. Chapter 8 builds on this by incorporating a key analytical conclusion – quality as an ordering component – into a reflection on the entanglement of methodology, methods, ontology and epistemology in this project. I brought the ontological commitments into the methods directly by combining ethnographic methods with quantitative social network analysis. That is, I combined the two opposing logics – the aggregative Twitter analysis and the disaggregative ethnographic methods – under the same epistemological umbrella of assemblage. The Twitter data emerged as a material artefact of professional identity, produced in interactions in the Twittersphere. The ethnographic data provided a fine-grained insight into the textures of experience in different spaces. Consequently, I sought to capture and replicate complexity, multiplicity and materiality by mapping multi-scaled entanglements of people and things that produce professionalism and professional identity in translation.

This also impacted how I dealt reflexively with my position as a researcher-translator. As I discuss in 4.4.2, assemblage as a methodology enabled me to negotiate the emergent tensions between my self as a translator and my self as a researcher. In the process, as I summarise above and detail in chapter 8, aggregation and disaggregation were critical to all elements of the methodology. I, as a researcher, became caught up in the methodological and analytical process. My self, or perhaps selves, were disaggregated and reassembled as I carved my way through the data and came to analytical and theoretical conclusions. The relational mode of thought that was central to the project became central to the reflexive process, which itself cannot be separated from the research. The ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage enabled me to reflect on how I became untangled and entangled in the project. Throughout the research process, I retained an open approach that allowed me to reflect on the place I took in identifying and demonstrating the complex interactions and interconnections that produce professional identities in translation.

9.3. Key contributions

The assemblage approach taken in this project underpins the theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions this thesis brings to the literature. In 9.2 above, these contributions are hinted at, as they are central to the achievement of the key aims and objectives. Here, I specify each contribution in turn.

9.3.1. *Assembling professional identity*

This project makes two key theoretical contributions. Firstly, this thesis adds to the literature on professional identity by understanding it as assembled from the interactions of various people and things. Much of the sociology of professions literature fails to interrogate the boundaries between professionals and non-professionals. These boundaries are taken as given; how they are produced in the mundane doings and sayings of professional work is often not explored. Furthermore, much of the literature on professional identity focusses on discourses of professionalism, neglecting material factors. In this case, what it means to be a professional tends to be an assumed set of norms and practices that expert workers take on during their training or career. In contrast, this thesis has shown that professionalism and professional identity are varied, multiple and malleable. They emerge from the interactions of discursive and material elements that take place in various spaces.

Secondly, I did extensive reading and reflecting on assemblage and new materialism to bring this theoretical perspective to the thesis. I was drawn to the work of Foucault and his apparatus to overcome the principal limitation of assemblage: its problematic ability to explain and explore entrenched and long-term power inequalities. This thesis makes a further theoretical contribution by situating Foucault's apparatus within Deleuze and Guattari's assembled world. This enabled me to theorise the neoliberal context that translation and professional identity construction take place within. I was thus theoretically equipped to analyse the data and map the interactions and interconnections within, between and beyond it. The theoretical contributions to the literature demonstrate how professional identity can be understood as emergent, contingent and complex, continually produced from the interactions of its socio-material component parts.

9.3.2. *Precarious professionalism*

Empirically, this thesis adds to the literature on expert work and precarity by exploring translators as a group of self-employed expert workers. Translators bridge professionalism and precarity, presenting some of the hallmarks of esoteric knowledge associated with more established professions, while experiencing the instability and insecurity associated with the gig economy and casual work. I have drawn together these two overarching themes, showing that professionalism and precarity overlap and intersect in contemporary society. Precarious expertise is something of a neoliberal phenomenon, as the deregulation of labour markets has exposed traditionally secure jobs to market forces. Other literature that explores the precaritisation of expertise tends to look at established professional groups. However, without the history of an established profession behind them, translators are particularly vulnerable. This thesis explores how professional identity and professionalism become tools for creating a buffer against market forces in an unregulated, largely self-employed profession. Despite their linguistic expertise, translators have little autonomy over their working practices and their esoteric knowledge seems to be further threatened by the rise of machine translation. I have shown that translators' professional identities emerge from their attempts to empower themselves and make sense of their working experiences in this highly competitive and shape-shifting market. With self-employment on the rise in the UK, this project is timely and highlights an often-unexplored side of the precaritisation of expertise.

9.3.3. *Research assemblage*

Methodologically, this project contributes to the literature by taking an experimental mixed methods approach. The ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage encourage experimentation and facilitate such a mixing of methods. I have taken this to heart in the methodology, using the centrality of interconnection and interaction to bridge the divide between quantitative and qualitative methods. I have not conducted two different methods whose data and analysis sit side by side. Instead, the social network analysis and ethnographic methods speak directly to one another and directly to assemblage. I have subsequently highlighted the epistemology of assemblage, which is often neglected in favour of its ontology. I have shown that those very ontological assumptions necessitate an epistemological approach that foregrounds connection and multiplicity. The methodology was driven by and in turn reinforced the enactment of assemblage thinking within the thesis. As a result, each

key contribution to the literature is interconnected with the others and demonstrates the coherence of the project.

9.3.4. *Quality as an ordering component*

Quality wraps up the story of this thesis, demonstrating the synthesis of methods, logics and analysis that creates chapters 5-7. Quality shapes and is shaped by working practices, technologies, discourses of professionalism and enterprise, networks and network*ing*, and the doings and sayings of agencies, translators and other actors in this fragmented commercial process. Quality is an ordering component within the neoliberal apparatus explored in this thesis, which is co-opted by different actors in different ways in the construction of professional identities. Quality emerged as powerful and pervasive while remaining illusive and impossible to pin down neatly. This key finding – quality as an ordering component – strengthens, links and contributes to the empirical, theoretical and methodological contributions of this thesis described above by highlighting the complexity of professional identity. Empirically, quality demonstrates the multiple and heterogeneous people, things and discourses involved in the emergence of professional identity. This encourages scholars to look beyond the immediately obvious, and firmly situate identities within broad, complex contexts. To take this further, quality highlights the intertwining of the methodological and theoretical choices I made throughout the project. The ontological commitments of assemblage, operationalised in data collection and analysis, enabled the complex, messy and rhizomatic nature of quality to emerge. I have demonstrated the different textures of quality in translation, how it aggregates and disaggregates, how it flows and clusters, and consequently how it contributes to professional identity construction. This demonstrates the explanatory power of an assemblage onto-epistemology and its methodological implications, encouraging researchers to experiment with theory-driven mixed methods.

9.4. Implications Beyond Academia

In this section, I highlight the implications of this project's findings beyond academia. There are three main groups whom I think would be interested: translators and interpreters, particularly freelancers; translator associations and other professional organisations; and policy makers interested in self-employment. Below, I work through each group in turn.

Firstly, translators and interpreters, particularly freelancers and those considering

going freelance, would be interested in these findings. For self-employed translators, this project gives a microphone to frustrated professionals who feel their voices are not being heard. The thesis shows the advantages of networks, and the support they provide. This may encourage more isolated freelancers to reach out and join groups. If I have one hope for this project, it is that translators, and indeed other similarly precarious self-employed professionals, may see that their isolation as workers leaves them with little power and autonomy. The call for solidarity from some of my participants, and the small victory described by Teresa Villa (see 6.5), might encourage freelancers to come together. Although this did not make it into the thesis itself as I could not fully elaborate on it, Robert Kahler (see 5.5) stated his wish that freelancers would begin to set up cooperatives. This would allow translators to share overheads, such as subscriptions to software, and to bid for work collectively. While this would take some legal expertise to work out, it would remove the agency "middleman" and increase the per word rate for translators or hourly rate for interpreters. Reflecting on the importance of quality as discussed above, this would enable these expert workers to spend the time necessary to provide the high-quality services they wish to, and would encourage expert interpreters to get back into the industry following the actions of the Ministry of Justice (see 5.5). Translators working within cooperatives may have more of a say over how machine translation is developed and used as it continues to expand.

Secondly, professional translation and interpreting associations would find these findings valuable in various ways. Firstly, this project highlights the limitations translators see in professional associations – primarily high membership fees, and a lack of action taken by associations to support precarious and isolated freelancers. Secondly, I have shown the difficulties and challenges translators face – in brief, unstable and uncertain income, and a lack of power, autonomy and visibility in the translation process. Thirdly, the benefits and advantages of association membership have been highlighted – pastoral support, practical advice, and professional legitimacy (albeit contextual). Quality plays a key role in the shaping of professional associations. If associations are able to reflect on this and the needs of their members and potential members, they may be able to modify their services, better supporting their members and increasing their membership base. I recognise that professional associations have limited resources, but I nonetheless think there are valuable insights in this project for these organisations.

Thirdly, this project may be of interest to policy makers who are concerned with the working conditions of self-employed workers and the challenges increased automation will bring. The development and expansion of machine translation speaks to wider ongoing discussions about how work is changing as the AI revolution rumbles on. The overwhelming conclusion is that the lack of employment protections in the context of significant technological changes may enable flexibility for both workers and companies, but the workers bear the brunt of the subsequent instability. This thesis also highlights the pitfalls of outsourcing and challenges the idea that cost reduction should always come first. Within this, the variable and contextual nature of quality as highlighted in this thesis may help policymakers reflect on the impact of neoliberal politics and economics on both self-employed workers and what they produce. The case of police and court interpreting in particular should be of concern (see 5.5). The changes to the procurement of interpreters resulted in poorer services: expert interpreters walked away from the work; court proceedings were delayed, leading to hidden costs. This is a vital and rich avenue of research to be pursued, as I have only been able to briefly touch on this. Additionally, I hope the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (EC-DGT) takes heed and thinks about its outsourcing practices. The criteria for procurement have already changed since I carried out data collection, shifting the weighting further towards quality: the latest round of the competitive tender was judged 70% on quality provision and 30% on price (*Tender specifications CASC17*, 2017). This may alleviate some of the problems connected to this work, but more could be done.

9.5. Future avenues of research

This thesis opens up various avenues of research, some of which have emerged from analytical insights, and others from the limitations of the project. In this section, I work through the principal and most intriguing ways this project can be built on.

Through the exploration of the networks and events involved in translation, agencies emerged as a key actor, as demonstrated most clearly in chapter 5. Although I reached out to the Association of Translation Companies (see Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms), I was unable to carry out data collection within agencies. It would be fascinating to investigate the agency as part of the network from the inside. This would add depth to the analysis conducted here, by delving into how translation practices, freelancers, texts, technologies and money all flow and cluster in and around the agency. This would enable the further exploration of just how agencies "sell" their

freelancers' professionalism and quality to their own clients, while imposing often harsh rates and deadlines. This would also expose the ways agencies as companies operating within a neoliberal economy are themselves vulnerable to market forces, adding a further layer of complexity to the commercial translation process.

Certain methodological limitations highlight areas to be explored in more depth. Firstly, the translators I spoke with and the events I attended do not accurately represent the wide variety of language combinations worked with in the UK. This is partly due to and partly contributes to the lack of racial diversity in my sample, which I discuss in 4.4. A future project that focusses on translators and interpreters working with non-European languages would gain another perspective on professional identity in translation. Secondly, owing to the project's broad focus on translation over interpreting, the majority of the data and analysis relates to translators and their identities. Although there is overlap as I discuss in the introduction, the idiosyncratic practices and relationships involved in interpreting require in-depth and focussed investigation. This is particularly true of the change in procurement practices for police and court interpreting in the UK (see 5.5). I was only able to touch on this briefly, but the implications of the actions of the Ministry of Justice and the companies that have subsequently won the tender are far-reaching. A project that explores these events and their impact – on interpreters' professional identities, and on the users of these services – would be timely and impactful.

Lastly, I would like to flag up the question of gender. As I set out in the introduction and chapter 2, gender could not be assumed to be a significant factor in professional identity construction. In the literature on gender and employment, gender is primarily conceived of as structural, a social category that is imposed on workers. The ontological and epistemological commitments of assemblage mean that gender cannot be assumed to exist as a macro factor impacting translators. Instead, I sought out how gender emerged in the assemblages captured in the data, but tended to come up empty handed. Throughout the analysis process and bearing in mind that translators are a majority female cohort, I was confronted with the stubborn question of "where is gender?" In 5.4, I gave an example of how Nicky Elliot's experiences as a translator and mother align with the literature on feminized professions. I also heard the odd comment about language services being relatively low-paid because it is largely women who do this work. Yet I did not see gender itself emerge as a component in professional identity construction. Overwhelmingly, I saw a commonality of the

experience of precarity from all participants, further pushing me to explore the interaction of precarious work and insecurity on identity construction over and above seeking out gendered differences. Although I am certain that gender plays a role in the broader position of translation as a feminised profession in the labour market, it was precarity and the organisation of translation work that emerged as central to the production of professional identities in this project.

The larger question remains of how to conceptualise of gender and its role from an assemblage perspective. I am drawn to the work of Braidotti on bodily materialism (1994, 2003) and Puar (2012) in her critique of intersectionality. This work asks important questions about how to understand and analyse gender not as a category, but as a becoming. Yet there is more conceptual work to be done to extend such ontological understandings to complex "real world" data and experiences that do not speak directly to gender. In relation to this study, gender did not emerge strongly enough for me to pursue its impact on professional identity construction. Future research could take on this conceptual challenge and explore how gender emerges in self-employment from a different perspective. For example, an investigation into the doings and sayings of working from home may reveal material and discursive entanglements in which gender is made to matter.

These three areas are not an exhaustive list of the future avenues of research opened up by this thesis. In particular, the intensification of machine translation, both as a distinct force in translation practices and in relation to wider social questions around automation, will continue to demand sociological attention. But I have highlighted the key empirical and theoretical questions I see emerging from both the findings and limitations of this project.

9.6. Concluding remarks

Professional identity emerges from this thesis as complex, multiple and varied. The assemblage approach taken throughout the project has shown professional identity to be more than a set of prescribed norms and rules, but a socio-material phenomenon that emerges in cross-scale entanglements of people and things. Professional identity is produced in connections and is productive of connections. The assemblage methodology has facilitated and enabled such conclusions by taking an open and experimental approach to research. By combining methods with different logics, I have highlighted and put into practice the epistemological insights of assemblage, making the analysis richer and more varied. As a researcher, this approach has enabled

extensive reflection on the research process, research methods, and my *self* as a researcher and translator. This project has highlighted a range of theoretical, methodological and empirical questions. Consequently, the findings of this project contribute to conversations in academia and beyond about expertise and professional work in precarious times.

Appendix A. Glossary of Translation Terms

Term	Explanation
1nt	Hashtag that means "interpreting"
ALS	Applied Language Solutions Ltd. – translation agency
API	Application Programming Interface – a software intermediary that allows two applications to talk to each other
ATC	Association of Translation Companies – professional association for translation agencies
CAT tools	Computer Aided Translation tools – software that breaks down texts into segments and uses linguistic databases to produce translations of segments where terms/phrases are repeated
CCC	Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru – professional association of Welsh translators and interpreters
CIOL	The Chartered Institute of Linguists – professional association for linguists
CPD	Continual Professional Development
DeepL	Free online machine translation service
DipTrans	The qualification issued by the CIOL
DPSI	Diploma in Public Service Interpreting – UK recognised qualification in interpreting issue by the CIOL
EC	European Commission
EC-DGT	European Commission Directorate-General for Translation - the European Commission's in-house translation service
EU	European Union
EMT	European Master's in Translation network – a network of universities across Europe that offer postgraduate training in translation, run by the EC
ISO	International Organisation for Standardization – organisation that develops and publishes International Standards
ITI	The Institute of Translation and Interpreting – professional association for translators and interpreters
LIND – Web	Language Industry Web Platform – EC body that compiles facts and figures about the EU language industry

LSP	Language Service Provider – an acronym used in commercial translation to refer to any provider of language services, generally refers to translation and interpreting agencies
MT	Machine Translation – software that produces translated texts using bi-lingual or multi-lingual corpora
MITI	Qualified membership of the ITI
MTPE	Machine Translation Post-Editing – the process of editing a text translated by MT
NMT	Neural Machine Translation – the latest development of MT that uses machine learning to produce translations
NRPSI	National Register for Public Service Interpreters – UK register for police, court, and community interpreters
PM	Project Manager
ProZ	Online platform for translators and interpreters
Slido	Interactive conference tool via an app
ST	Source Text – the text to be translated
t9n	Hashtag that means "translation"
TEF	Translating Europe Forum – the EC-DGT's annual translation conference
TM, TMs	Translation Memory or Memories – a feature of CAT tools that stores paired texts (STs and TTs) to reduce the amount of a new text that needs to be translated, i.e. if there are repetitions of something previously translated
Trados	One of the most well-known and used CAT tools on the market
TT	Target Text – the translated text
xl8	Hashtag that means "translation"

Appendix B. Glossary of R and SNA terms

Term	Explanation
Betweenness	Centrality measure that quantifies how many nodes each node sits between
Centrality measure	Various methods of quantifying the "prominence" or "influence" of nodes in a network based on the number and type of connections each node has with other nodes
Density	The ratio of the number of actual edges compared to the number of possible edges, i.e. if all nodes were connected
Edges	The connections between nodes in a network, in the case of Twitter, follow connections between users
Function	A piece of code that manipulates data
igraph	R package used to analyse and visualise network graphs
In-degree	Represents the number of connections directed towards a node in network – in the case of Twitter, the number of followers
***k*-core**	A means of describing the subgroups within a network based on the number of connections each node has
Modularity	An analysis that describes the density within subgroups compared to their connections to other groups, giving an understanding of how modular the network is
Node	In the case of Twitter networks, an individual Twitter user
Out-degree	Represents the number of connections directed away from a node in network – in the case of Twitter, the number of users an individual user follows
Package	A collection of R functions that enable the collection, analysis, and visualisation of data
R	An open-source programming language
REST API	A means of accessing the Twitter stream to collect tweets posted up to 9 days prior
RStudio	The interface used for collecting, analysing, and visualising data using R
rtweet	R package to collect and analyse Twitter data
SNA	Social network analysis

Streaming API	A means of accessing the "live" Twitter stream
Stop words	words that are used in everyday speech so frequently they are thought to detract from more meaningful and specific terms, such as "the" and "a"
Subgraph	A graph within a graph – in this project, a cluster or subgroup within a Twitter network
tidytext	R package for the collection, analysis, and visualisation of textual data
Transitivity	A calculation that describes the tendency of nodes to form closed triangles or clusters, giving an initial picture of how clustered the network is
Twitter API	Application Programming Interface linking RStudio and Twitter
User ID	In this case, a number that identifies Twitter users
Vertex, vertices	Another word for "node" or "nodes" – in this case, a Twitter user

Appendix C. Table of SNA Measures

ID	Number of tweets	In-degree	Out-degree	Betweenness
TwitterUser 149	299	210	194	41228.33674
TwitterUser 93	252	286	38	33347.85418
TwitterUser 212	595	149	166	27029.25611
TwitterUser 119	21	114	102	25867.79834
TwitterUser 377	28	90	11	14347.13613
TwitterUser 356	37	230	26	12020.74127
TwitterUser 182	11	53	71	10532.43423
TwitterUser 220	23	205	56	10412.66798
TwitterUser 116	35	83	106	9277.30002
TwitterUser 372	50	19	24	9148.510917
TwitterUser 217	39	165	68	8820.875836
TwitterUser 100	183	144	52	8408.856454
TwitterUser 131	27	79	146	8309.761173
TwitterUser 216	21	110	83	8038.683348
TwitterUser 496	8	3	3	7408.889654
TwitterUser 223	210	200	47	6052.604152
TwitterUser 484	20	16	14	5679.418034
TwitterUser 499	24	25	14	5232.080919
TwitterUser 273	17	115	58	4984.801114
TwitterUser 133	22	77	84	4890.569952
TwitterUser 7	36	50	96	3996.445396
TwitterUser 155	72	32	71	3952.288889
TwitterUser 138	44	73	87	3683.779531
TwitterUser 147	3	46	55	3601.149413
TwitterUser 47	18	26	69	3492.867706
TwitterUser 22	18	54	63	3420.825775
TwitterUser 97	247	70	90	3409.131971
TwitterUser 487	16	15	11	3306.774853
TwitterUser 386	563	163	32	3013.086735
TwitterUser 82	16	48	52	2924.647553
TwitterUser 84	14	62	52	2910.987405
TwitterUser 20	96	29	54	2859.427287
TwitterUser 118	5	28	28	2692.402549
TwitterUser 36	38	21	156	2685.442886
TwitterUser 80	109	111	50	2664.675244
TwitterUser 232	157	51	29	2504.474465
TwitterUser 139	50	45	65	2434.721122
TwitterUser 214	62	63	40	2420.155928
TwitterUser 385	12	144	13	2156.356907
TwitterUser 78	24	44	74	2078.95499
TwitterUser 257	222	54	47	1729.778238
TwitterUser 24	17	9	20	1718.192921
TwitterUser 301	20	10	9	1706.359838
TwitterUser 421	28	23	5	1689.174754

TwitterUser 184	4	34	18	1630.354527
TwitterUser 262	15	40	38	1573.059978
TwitterUser 362	35	45	13	1571.996178
TwitterUser 53	66	37	39	1549.616984
TwitterUser 188	12	39	88	1459.276127
TwitterUser 66	97	10	29	1402.341839
TwitterUser 68	30	26	50	1394.342741
TwitterUser 130	4	17	31	1381.788314
TwitterUser 181	63	68	36	1359.914629
TwitterUser 15	237	59	52	1345.072126
TwitterUser 388	15	9	3	1339.606304
TwitterUser 483	16	12	12	1273.977534
TwitterUser 54	84	27	72	1250.196765
TwitterUser 263	15	16	15	1242.796981
TwitterUser 469	13	31	7	1208.711622
TwitterUser 422	10	3	3	1166.505615
TwitterUser 397	28	29	15	1163.92452
TwitterUser 14	110	38	31	1134.42419
TwitterUser 197	111	38	18	1130.610825
TwitterUser 69	11	51	17	1010.989342
TwitterUser 230	55	68	27	1007.134821
TwitterUser 65	21	27	27	980.9584556
TwitterUser 339	15	15	13	972.9899884
TwitterUser 105	4	33	52	945.0125984
TwitterUser 292	75	3	8	944.1119496
TwitterUser 6	15	32	59	941.4476784
TwitterUser 219	10	9	16	895.8233843
TwitterUser 140	79	48	31	881.1704852
TwitterUser 136	3	27	43	855.2616652
TwitterUser 342	3	5	12	855.2258653
TwitterUser 86	16	17	41	849.9011619
TwitterUser 85	7	34	33	774.343859
TwitterUser 102	4	24	23	743.3204265
TwitterUser 351	5	12	5	741.8526551
TwitterUser 61	5	14	57	697.4808758
TwitterUser 10	42	6	12	657.2630772
TwitterUser 107	3	18	7	640.9909364
TwitterUser 146	3	39	40	624.5005027
TwitterUser 287	15	11	15	602.9671194
TwitterUser 237	117	15	28	597.890189
TwitterUser 56	25	45	24	581.9577083
TwitterUser 9	15	8	24	572.101801
TwitterUser 309	58	18	31	570.6000676
TwitterUser 141	7	30	34	560.1010486
TwitterUser 99	21	44	41	555.8434351
TwitterUser 143	4	20	41	544.1643537
TwitterUser 512	12	5	1	510
TwitterUser 360	15	42	16	484.789985

TwitterUser 157	47	27	57	482.4277295
TwitterUser 364	11	6	5	466.2957979
TwitterUser 195	6	11	13	464.3342486
TwitterUser 306	17	20	18	460.8388531
TwitterUser 180	5	36	17	450.1945528
TwitterUser 57	3	26	30	447.4309354
TwitterUser 204	1	22	19	437.7879799
TwitterUser 111	3	18	9	420.8285073
TwitterUser 198	3	19	21	407.2859128
TwitterUser 375	79	23	23	401.229568
TwitterUser 101	1	17	26	400.3384102
TwitterUser 400	4	8	6	371.2807154
TwitterUser 145	3	22	27	334.2354141
TwitterUser 108	3	22	39	323.0391017
TwitterUser 25	9	37	24	302.1596079
TwitterUser 163	4	35	17	297.2866017
TwitterUser 203	7	22	14	291.5960034
TwitterUser 429	27	88	7	270.3668642
TwitterUser 62	17	9	35	258.3879776
TwitterUser 253	34	8	31	251.4119359
TwitterUser 361	8	4	8	240.9671801
TwitterUser 32	3	11	36	234.4175761
TwitterUser 104	4	17	25	231.8894644
TwitterUser 373	16	37	14	230.1686913
TwitterUser 425	3	4	2	229.2723147
TwitterUser 200	33	102	11	220.6271905
TwitterUser 189	4	13	16	220.0408425
TwitterUser 3	3	10	24	210.2130348
TwitterUser 178	2	9	14	200.6033138
TwitterUser 485	8	5	4	200.4041407
TwitterUser 91	28	17	31	189.5535124
TwitterUser 63	3	12	23	172.7510015
TwitterUser 185	9	19	7	165.0596011
TwitterUser 272	8	3	5	152.6270303
TwitterUser 135	5	14	27	151.0715378
TwitterUser 94	8	11	25	148.750342
TwitterUser 221	6	22	19	148.2683483
TwitterUser 324	54	12	12	147.2134475
TwitterUser 345	12	20	21	143.0809225
TwitterUser 87	8	14	8	140.2369629
TwitterUser 64	83	7	38	135.3347807
TwitterUser 129	2	17	27	133.461808
TwitterUser 313	4	6	5	130.6759272
TwitterUser 218	10	5	13	125.3385334
TwitterUser 110	8	5	5	116.6875456
TwitterUser 121	6	11	37	114.5598756
TwitterUser 465	10	6	2	114.3116467
TwitterUser 23	10	15	33	114.2559302

TwitterUser 387	44	3	7	112.8482796
TwitterUser 59	10	10	18	111.1385473
TwitterUser 19	7	6	26	110.0735288
TwitterUser 28	10	12	29	105.0898154
TwitterUser 39	5	11	18	98.99593526
TwitterUser 2	8	11	21	98.62784502
TwitterUser 196	8	18	17	98.04315081
TwitterUser 278	7	16	6	97.28718624
TwitterUser 266	19	12	21	96.99722077
TwitterUser 106	8	7	6	95.63856989
TwitterUser 396	6	8	7	91.69667264
TwitterUser 298	6	2	11	89.946391
TwitterUser 381	20	27	10	88.23815186
TwitterUser 194	8	17	12	85.92697611
TwitterUser 269	21	23	11	85.16779264
TwitterUser 40	3	9	22	83.29450706
TwitterUser 33	3	13	18	80.86364478
TwitterUser 125	6	17	19	77.91175707
TwitterUser 96	8	15	30	77.41493324
TwitterUser 134	23	14	16	77.30347621
TwitterUser 229	5	17	11	68.55500378
TwitterUser 153	2	3	16	67.10912241
TwitterUser 49	10	16	19	63.98667252
TwitterUser 5	6	11	22	56.39701754
TwitterUser 210	1	5	24	55.26518907
TwitterUser 222	8	18	16	55.03643178
TwitterUser 34	3	9	12	53.10088135
TwitterUser 260	7	2	9	49.35132713
TwitterUser 206	3	22	9	48.86433773
TwitterUser 179	3	16	9	48.21712404
TwitterUser 37	3	23	15	47.6518909
TwitterUser 201	8	22	12	47.54305647
TwitterUser 79	12	5	22	47.47275883
TwitterUser 52	9	9	12	47.41292606
TwitterUser 171	8	11	23	44.2234947
TwitterUser 215	3	20	12	43.0900728
TwitterUser 370	7	3	8	40.20212644
TwitterUser 170	9	9	17	38.56773713
TwitterUser 191	3	15	16	36.99847302
TwitterUser 193	3	9	19	35.75750043
TwitterUser 21	8	5	20	35.50775439
TwitterUser 8	33	12	14	34.13269472
TwitterUser 208	8	10	18	30.96448642
TwitterUser 376	5	5	4	30.84797518
TwitterUser 382	8	21	4	30.2702612
TwitterUser 346	2	6	8	29.54328138
TwitterUser 424	8	2	3	29.09660425
TwitterUser 326	36	3	7	28.28466543

TwitterUser 363	9	12	11	28.25193647
TwitterUser 213	8	32	7	27.85651445
TwitterUser 115	2	9	31	25.51789813
TwitterUser 399	8	13	4	25.46748976
TwitterUser 12	6	1	7	24.75324951
TwitterUser 18	2	6	12	24.66263799
TwitterUser 48	5	7	18	24.5526022
TwitterUser 55	8	13	15	23.3742776
TwitterUser 60	4	11	12	23.18086059
TwitterUser 67	3	7	19	23.16135116
TwitterUser 245	6	12	8	22.96559155
TwitterUser 358	8	17	7	22.22387136
TwitterUser 415	11	5	1	22.11446715
TwitterUser 328	25	7	17	21.78971957
TwitterUser 186	9	8	14	21.4997589
TwitterUser 274	4	3	8	21.23702585
TwitterUser 275	5	4	8	20.62295494
TwitterUser 109	6	13	19	20.54219187
TwitterUser 142	4	7	11	19.96811576
TwitterUser 45	3	4	21	19.92699073
TwitterUser 283	6	7	8	19.80531874
TwitterUser 83	4	6	12	19.6951873
TwitterUser 264	10	11	10	19.48158279
TwitterUser 226	2	7	10	19.41910067
TwitterUser 123	7	14	16	19.17295931
TwitterUser 202	4	12	21	19.1236631
TwitterUser 466	4	2	3	18.79929508
TwitterUser 404	6	8	6	18.65554757
TwitterUser 270	8	8	17	18.30351845
TwitterUser 368	3	8	6	17.25621477
TwitterUser 173	9	16	12	16.39226907
TwitterUser 166	3	6	15	16.37117877
TwitterUser 73	3	8	19	16.18138289
TwitterUser 227	3	11	11	15.798977
TwitterUser 88	25	10	11	15.23669896
TwitterUser 160	2	17	10	15.21842642
TwitterUser 113	2	6	11	15.04529624
TwitterUser 393	8	12	2	14.88039239
TwitterUser 281	5	10	7	14.84790288
TwitterUser 254	8	4	11	14.81091229
TwitterUser 148	4	3	11	14.62373692
TwitterUser 98	6	9	10	14.52413852
TwitterUser 334	12	1	4	13.95824692
TwitterUser 35	2	2	19	13.67770447
TwitterUser 46	2	4	9	13.52216964
TwitterUser 50	22	5	25	13.33537083
TwitterUser 268	2	4	10	13.09125807
TwitterUser 289	2	1	4	13.05194311

TwitterUser 164	5	4	12	12.89088744
TwitterUser 249	2	8	8	12.18651066
TwitterUser 42	3	7	13	12.12400452
TwitterUser 335	1	6	3	12.12239711
TwitterUser 126	2	4	12	12.06624535
TwitterUser 127	5	10	12	11.38087413
TwitterUser 398	4	4	5	11.25706831
TwitterUser 365	10	10	7	10.92651758
TwitterUser 137	6	6	13	10.89574238
TwitterUser 238	8	2	11	9.838635535
TwitterUser 41	9	5	13	9.59634314
TwitterUser 44	4	4	9	8.803488922
TwitterUser 277	4	7	10	8.089646602
TwitterUser 74	2	2	14	8.045271249
TwitterUser 31	3	8	11	7.915972071
TwitterUser 176	4	1	16	7.604179916
TwitterUser 89	5	10	8	7.535110873
TwitterUser 165	8	6	11	7.465337382
TwitterUser 183	2	5	9	7.193284642
TwitterUser 128	4	2	2	7.057874135
TwitterUser 120	4	8	15	6.987417095
TwitterUser 228	2	1	8	6.846555076
TwitterUser 285	10	2	10	6.831085329
TwitterUser 295	3	3	11	6.781959632
TwitterUser 286	4	2	4	6.703423191
TwitterUser 199	6	3	6	6.665731724
TwitterUser 168	10	4	7	6.517321244
TwitterUser 243	4	3	11	6.476069292
TwitterUser 353	8	10	4	6.420549729
TwitterUser 384	2	2	3	6.301396402
TwitterUser 209	3	3	10	6.127875789
TwitterUser 29	4	5	11	5.892071129
TwitterUser 240	3	5	13	5.861635991
TwitterUser 70	4	10	9	5.855376015
TwitterUser 17	11	10	10	5.840771239
TwitterUser 407	29	8	4	5.654488552
TwitterUser 389	4	6	4	5.280784468
TwitterUser 492	2	4	2	5.19830732
TwitterUser 187	2	5	5	5.178248081
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TwitterUser 112	3	4	17	4.110043007
TwitterUser 401	3	3	6	4.099580886

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TwitterUser 207	8	4	16	2.49624103
TwitterUser 103	6	7	10	2.400593096
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Appendix D. Links for R code

The code used in this thesis is stored in publicly available repositories online on the well-known programming website GitHub. This is stored on my profile at the following link: https://github.com/EmmaLS. Otherwise, the code can be accessed directly using the links below.

Link for social network analysis code: https://github.com/EmmaLS/SNA_thesis

Link for text mining code: https://github.com/EmmaLS/Text_mining_thesis

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