

# Exploring Semi-interactive Post-editing for Literary Translation

**Julia Rieser**

University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria

Email: [julia.rieser@univie.ac.at](mailto:julia.rieser@univie.ac.at)

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## Abstract:

This dissertation project investigates semi-interactive post-editing (SIPE) as a novel mode of human–computer interaction in literary translation. SIPE involves post-editing a machine-generated first draft of a literary translation using the interactivity function offered by the neural machine translation engine DeepL. The study assesses the viability of SIPE as an alternative to traditional post-editing (PE), which is typically carried out in Word, and examines whether SIPE allows literary translators to engage more creatively with the machine and maintain their individual style and voice.

This research presents findings from an ongoing empirical study. To the best of the author’s knowledge, it is the first study to examine SIPE of literary texts as a distinct form of human–computer interaction and to directly compare it to traditional PE. It focuses on two short stories by 19th-century American author Willa Cather, “A Singer’s Romance” and “The Affair at Grover Station,” which were translated from English into German using DeepL. Four professional literary translators post-edited two excerpts (870 and 892 words) in two conditions: (1) SIPE using the DeepL interface, and (2) traditional PE in Microsoft Word.

The study is grounded in a cognitive translation studies framework and adopts a process-oriented research design that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods. Data were collected through screen recordings, keystroke logging, think-aloud protocols, and post-task interviews. Post-editing effort is examined across its three commonly studied dimensions: temporal, technical, and cognitive.

**Keywords:** semi-interactive post-editing, post-editing, literary machine translation, machine translation

