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Comparing professional translators and social scientists when producing questionnaire translations from scratch vs. based on machine translation output

The comparability of questionnaire translations in social survey research is a requirement for valid conclusions. Sound methodology and relevant experiences of translation personnel are crucial for producing comparable translations, but how does machine translation fit in here? We present on the research project TransBack, where both professional translators and social scientists produced item translations from scratch as well as based on machine translations. The presentation focuses on the experimental set-up as well as first results, notably providing insights into the use(fulness) of machine translation.