

## **Linking Bibliographic Data to Hidden Knowledge Workers, Translators**

### **Background and Rationale**

Translators serve as vital mediators in transferring literary works from one cultural environment to another. Yet, their contributions often remain overshadowed by the original authors. This underrepresentation of translators is also noticeable in the ongoing project of building a bibliographic database for Korean translations of German literature. Launched in 2019, this project moved into its second phase from 2022 to 2025 (Park & Kim, 2021).

While this project has accumulated accomplished critical reviews of German literature translated into Korean and has gathered a rich set of bibliographic data of translated works, the primary focus is predominantly on the original works and their authors, not the translators. The translators' names are often merely recorded as simple textual data, lacking distinct differentiation.

This situation underscores the pressing need for a structured database dedicated to the translators and their body of translated works, enabling a more comprehensive documentation and detailed analysis of their efforts. The proposed study aims to highlight the crucial role of these "hidden knowledge workers" by linking bibliographic data to the translators, thereby amplifying their visibility and recognition within the field.

### **Aims and Objectives**

This research is initiated with the goal of creating a detailed and comprehensive database that includes Korean translators of German literature. The study revolves around three main aims:

- 1) To identify groups of significant German literary works that have been translated into Korean.
- 2) To pinpoint the key translators who have been crucial in translating these selected works.
- 3) To systematically compile a comprehensive list of works translated by these main translators.

By focusing this database on the translators, we hope to give them a recognition similar to that of authors, thereby increasing their visibility within the realm of literary studies.

### **Methods**

Our methodological approach includes the following three stages:

- 1) We separated the translator field in the existing bibliographic data into a distinct table. Unique identifiers (Translator IDs) were then assigned to each translator, ensuring each translator or translation organization was distinctly recognized. This process allowed us to identify translator names and connect the translators' information through a separate sheet in the bibliographic file.
- 2) In addition to the Translator ID from our database, we incorporated the name authority number designated by the National Library of Korea for the translators for reference in the national bibliography. Given the challenges in inputting all the necessary attributes to identify each translator, we opted to use the authorized information in the national name authority records.
- 3) After creating basic lists and linking authority numbers with the national name authority files, we endeavored to identify major translator groups that had translated numerous works. We then concentrated on collecting additional information for these specific groups. Through this process, we were able to create groups of translated works by these key translators.

### **Preliminary Findings**

Our preliminary findings suggest several critical points:

- 1) The lists of works translated by individual translators represent significant intellectual and artistic effort. As such, these lists merit a systematic approach to their documentation and analysis.
- 2) By analyzing the lists of translated works grouped by translators, we can gain valuable insights into the translators' preferences and their curated collections of translated works.
- 3) Linking translator information to the corresponding name authority record in the National Library of Korea allows us to manage the Translator ID more accurately and add additional authorized information that we cannot provide within the research team.

These initial insights underscore the necessity for a paradigm shift in our understanding and recognition of translators. We propose viewing translators as 'hidden knowledge workers', whose considerable contributions to the field of literature demand further recognition and comprehensive investigation.

### **Conclusion**

The creation of this database enables a structured and systematic exploration of the often invisible realm of translators. This research is anticipated to make a significant contribution not only to the academic field of Translation Studies but also to the broader culture of reading literary works. By offering readers an additional perspective to appreciate translated works and their translators, it further enriches our understanding and appreciation of literary translation.

### **References**

Ziyoung Park & Yoonwhan Kim. 2021. Organizing bibliographic information of Korean translations of German literature. Presentation at NKOS Consolidated Workshop 2021. Sept. 23. 2021.