

Open-access vs. paywalled journals in translation and interpreting studies: is it the time to abolish stumbling blocks?

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Abstract

The present research bibliometrically analyses the trend of free/open-accessibility of published documents in translation and interpreting (T&I) studies. To assess open-access trends, data was gathered from 106 translation-interpreting and translation-related journals from 1956 to 2020. A total of 321,964 entries (published documents) were extracted, of which 19,271 (open-access and non-open-access) entries were in the fields of T&I studies. Simply put, only 3,758 (1.16%) of entries in 106 journals were open-access (OA). This research paper used linear regression analysis to prognosticate the trend of OA in T&I studies. According to the provided regression equation, T&I paywalled journals require 53 years to fully become OA, which is indispensably regarded as a critical juncture in T&I scholarly outputs. In this light, it is time to remove any stumbling blocks through a worldly summation of open-access by translation and interpreting scholars/researchers across the globe. In the meantime, additional investigations are required to assess whether ongoing business models of publishing academic outputs foster an open-accessibility movement or impose indispensable constraints.

Keywords: bibliometric; open accessibility; T&I studies; paywalled journals; worldly-summation.

1. Introduction

Budapest Open-access Initiative (BOAI hereafter) is a general principle associated with “open access to the research literature” (BOAI, 2015). Based on different rationales, the BOAI is often considered a genesis of the Open-access (OA) Movement (Wenzler, 2017), which has thus far been restricted to “a small portion of the journal literature” (BOAI, 2015). Many initiatives based on a set of rules, strategies, and commitments have demonstrated that the application of the OA is economically workable (Miguel et al., 2016). The OA movement gives readers the power to realize pertinent literature (state-of-the-art), and likewise, it prepares the ground for authors’ works to be seen as visible and vast. To do so, the BOAI calls on all interested organizations and institutions to join the OA campaign and pull out stumbling blocks, exceptionally the price hurdles. As noted by the BOAI (2015):

The literature that should be freely accessible online is that which scholars give the world without expectation of payment. Primarily this category encompasses their peer-reviewed journal articles, but it also includes any unreviewed preprints that they might wish to put online for comment or to alert colleagues to important research findings. There are many degrees and kinds of wider and easier access to this literature. By ‘open access’ to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full text of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purposes without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.

Crisis in scientific publishing, as mentioned by Berlin (Max Planck Institute, 2003) and Bethesda Statement of Open-access (Earlham College, 2003) initiatives, take place as an outcome of “high prices for subscription, libraries’ reduced budgets and the consequent cancellation of subscriptions and restrictions on access to the articles by the scientific community” (Drott, 2006; Miguel et al., 2016). In line with the BOAI, Forrester (2015) has noted that open-access publications should be freely accessible and pose no hurdles to readers. As far as peer-reviewed scholarly articles must be available online without paying all readers, it is not gratis to produce. Nevertheless, the overall cost of maintaining OA scholarly articles is far less than their dissemination costs. Since 2002, diamond, green, gold, and hybrid roads have opened up a new trend in the OA movement (Rizor & Holley, 2014). In this direction, several journals in various fields of study have joined to OA movement. Likewise, they consider this movement an advantage; however, the number of OA journals is still low. This is because the vast majority of journals are not satisfied with the OA movement to the extent that the percentage of open-access scholarly articles indexed in both Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus is scarcely 23% under the category of green and gold types (Björk et al., 2014: 244).

This research paper is an attempt to firstly identify OA documents (e.g., book reviews, original articles, conference proceedings, etc.) in the Scopus indexing system and secondly figure

out the trends of OA within the fields of translation and interpreting (T&I) scholarly journals due to their rigorous altercation in the last few decades.

2. Open-access (OA) generalities and specificities

2.1. Overview

As noted earlier, the OA maintains fast and worldwide access to different research outputs at no cost to readers across the globe. Eisen and Shockey (2019) have pointed out that:

It's so irrational to think that scientists ... are paid by the government to do research and to discover things and distribute that. And then two years of work by 20 people are going to be compressed into a paper and then not made available to people. It just doesn't make any sense.

To achieve OA, the BOAI recommends two strategies, namely (i) self-archiving and (ii) open-access journals. The former is associated with tools and assistance to deposit scholars' "refereed articles in open electronic archives" (BOAI, 2015). When these archives comply with Open Archive Initiative standards, search engines and online platforms can "treat the separate archives as one" (ibid.). The latter is associated with launching new generations of OA journals. The second strategy encourages existing journals to join the OA campaign. This is due to the fact that knowledge is borderless, and journal articles must be distributed as widely and commonly as possible. These new journals "will no longer invoke copyright to restrict access to and use of the material they publish" (ibid.). However, these new journals will use copyright to secure the OA for all research and scholarly articles they produce.

2.2. Types of the OA journals

There are several alternatives to OA research articles based on "user rights, the timing of availability, the funding of OA publishing, and whether the reader finds the original or a manuscript copy of the article" (Willinsky, 2005; Björk et al., 2014). Green and gold open-access variations had arisen much earlier. Green OA is associated with self-archiving (Esposito, 2008). As stated by Springer (2019),

[g]reen open-access is the practice of placing a version of an author's manuscript into a repository, making it freely accessible for everyone. The version that can be deposited into a repository is dependent on the funder or publisher.

Houghton and Swan (2013) have pinpointed that green OA journals are the most inexpensive and cost-effective means for funders, universities, and institutions to take one step toward open-access. From another point of view, green OA alludes to the post-print of an article. In this direction, three basic green version types are available for a research article to be self-archived:

TABLE 1

Three basic versions of green types (Swoger, 2013)

PRE-PRINTS	The author's copy of the article before it's been reviewed by the publisher or pre-reviewed.
POST-PRINTS	The author's copy of the article after it's been reviewed and corrected but before the publisher has formatted it for publication or post-reviewed.
PUBLISHER'S VERSION	The version that is formatted and appears in print or online.

Another type of OA is gold, associated with publishing all scholarly articles (fully accessible OA journals after an embargo period) and pertinent content for gratis instantly on a journal's website. In the gold OA, all published research articles are licensed through Creative Common (CC) license. Schmitz (2019) has stated that

[o]verall, gold open-access has the key advantage of making publications freely accessible right from the moment they are first published, which means they can be used immediately. In addition, the open-content licenses associated with gold open-access grant wide-ranging exploitation rights, plus the immediate availability, also achieves a level of visibility which has a positive impact on how widely a publication is disseminated and how frequently it is cited.

Delabastita (2018) has pointed out that gold OA journals are sometimes categorized under predatory publishers based on Beall's list of predatory journals and publishers; therefore, care must be taken not to submit original research and scholarly articles to these predatory journals. Elsevier (2019) makes a comparison regarding gold and green OA resources as table 2 shows (below).

Another type of the OA is paid open-access(hybrid), which is concerned with "subscription journals with open-access to individual articles when a fee is paid to the publisher or journal by the author, the author's organization, or the research funder" (Georgia State University, 2019). To pay the article processing charge (APC) of hybrid journals, several universities have a pool of funding available for original research articles. In the hybrid OA, research and scholarly articles are available at no cost, while the remainders are available only to subscribers (Gamsby, 2020).

Last but not least, platinum or diamond OA (DOA) is another type that is associated with non-commercial and not-for-profit organizations. DOA is free of charge for production and consultation for both authors and readers. Besides, the final version of an accepted research article is free at the point of discussion. The cost of an accepted manuscript is fully covered/paid by a university, publisher, foundation, and so forth (Delabastita, 2018). According to Fuchs and Sandoval (2013: 428),

TABLE 2

Gold vs. green OA (Elsevier, 2019)

Gold Open-Access	Green Open-Access
Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish in an open-access journal - Or in a journal that supports open-access 	Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link to your article - Select a journal that features an open archive - Select a journal that participates in CHORUS¹ - Self-archive a version of your article
Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public access is to the final published article - Access is immediate 	Access: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free access to a version of your article - The time delay may apply (embargo period)
Fee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The open-access fee is paid by the author, or on their behalf, for example, by their institution or funding body. - Free-range from \$150 and \$6000 US Dollars excluding tax, depending on a journal, with the price displayed on the Article Processing Charge (APC) list and journal homepages. 	Fee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No fee is payable by the author, as publishing costs are covered by library subscriptions
Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authors can choose between commercial and noncommercial user licenses. 	Use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accepted manuscripts should attach a CC-BY-NC-ND² user license - Authors retain the rights to reuse their articles for a wide range of purposes

Diamond Open-access is a non-profit academic publishing model that makes academic knowledge a common good, reclaims the common character of the academic system, and entails the possibility for fostering job security by creating public service publishing jobs. Existing concepts, such as gold open access, have serious conceptual limits that can be overcome by introducing the new term of diamond open access.

Diamond open-access can discern the pure essence of academia, which generates and transfers academic knowledge in an open process. Publishing and producing commons through DOA require public approaches and funding that institutionalize research grants on the diamond model.

1 A service leverages which preserves peer-reviewed articles.

2 Creative Common Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivs: It allows users to copy and circulate a research article (not for commercial purposes).

2.3. Altercations over the OA

Debates over OA are considered the most critical issues in the profession at the moment. Squabbles over OA are rotating around who must pay for the publication. Journals would gain their income by charging subscription costs that librarians and authors incur. With the advent of digital technology, organizations, institutions, and universities advocate the movement towards digital policies for research/scholarly articles, where access to journals can be maintained by electronic subscription versions (Crowley, 2019). Crowley (2019) has stated that

[n]evertheless, as with the print version of journals, subscription costs were often high, and not all universities would subscribe to all journals of interest in a particular field, citing cost factors as an essential issue. This meant that many researchers and students did not have access to all the material they desired. Journals would subsequently offer the opportunity to purchase, for a limited time, access to individual articles, but again, this would be costly.

“Free flow of information” and “free access to information and knowledge” are the two cardinal issues in the OA (Ghanbari Baghestan & Hassan, 2009). In this vein, both issues have been discussed at national and international fora since 1940 and involve “the freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers” (Cate, 1989). Regarding the brief descriptions mentioned above, translation and interpreting (T&I) studies are highly anticipated to provide a route to the open-access movement, especially in scholarly productions. In this light, after passing fifteen years of the open-access campaign, it is highly recommended to assess/evaluate the volume of open-access in translation and interpreting (T&I) studies to determine if there is a calamity in the OA movement (Miguel et al., 2016).

3. Methodology

A bibliometric study was carried out to assess the trends of open-handiness to scientific productions in translation and interpreting studies. According to IGI-Global (2020), the bibliometric study or analysis is

[a]n attempt to quantitatively assess the academic quality of journals or authors by statistical methods such as citation rules. Care must be taken to firstly suitably define quality criteria and then suitably implement them by selecting a suitable empirical base.

A vast body of research has used bibliometrics in the field of arts and humanities and social sciences (e.g., Ghanbari Baghestan et al., 2019; Riazi et al., 2019) especially T&I studies (e.g., Xiu Yan et al., 2015; Akbari, 2018) in order to appraise scientific advancement. In this direction, bibliometric analyses are conducted based on several indexes, such as the number of

publication trends, evaluation of publications regarding a particular subject, citations, and average citations per annum (Farahmand et al., 2018; IGI-Global, 2020). Web-based databases such as Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) are often utilized for obtaining bibliometric data. Scopus is the biggest and the most significant abstracting and indexing database on peer-reviewed state-of-the-art (literature reviews), scientific journals, scientific books, and scientific conference proceedings. Scopus features different tools to analyze and track further research in many disciplines (e.g., science, arts and humanities, technology, etc.) (Elsevier, 2020).

The present research data were extracted from Scopus according to a group search “translation and interpreting” in November 2019. The Scopus database was chosen for the following reasons, namely (i) it has a powerful search system that contributes scholars to find and search results from fifty-seven million records (Elsevier, 2018); (ii) Scopus can uncover and track trends, key sources, pertinent research, etc.; (iii) the Scopus provides “users with analytical tools, such as graphical displays, charts, diagrams, and tables” for further information (Elsevier, 2018); (iv) the Scopus covers the top peer-reviewed and high-quality journals which are highly anticipated to be open-access (OA); and (v) the Scopus combines “its sophisticated analytical capabilities with its unbiased and broad content coverage” to help a researcher to construct priceless insights (Elsevier, 2018). To assess the rank of T&I group documents within the Scopus database, the whole number of publications, including OA research articles, OA editorial preface, OA book reviews, OA errata (corrigenda), non-OA articles, non-OA book reviews, and non-OA errata were single-handedly checked and jotted down per annum. The documents were derived from (106 translation/interpreting and translation-related journals from) 1956 to 2020. To differentiate between OA and non-OA, the extracted publications were thoroughly analyzed and comingled in a dataset in terms of the language of the publications, the country of publications, and the kind of documents (OA or non-OA). To put the present research into a statistical perspective, tests such as the Chi-square test for independence and frequency table were employed to determine any correlation between OA and non-OA documents regarding the type of documents, languages, and OA trends from 1988 to 2020. Eventually, this research employed a linear regression equation using Statistica to prognosticate OA trends in T&I studies.

4. Results and discussion

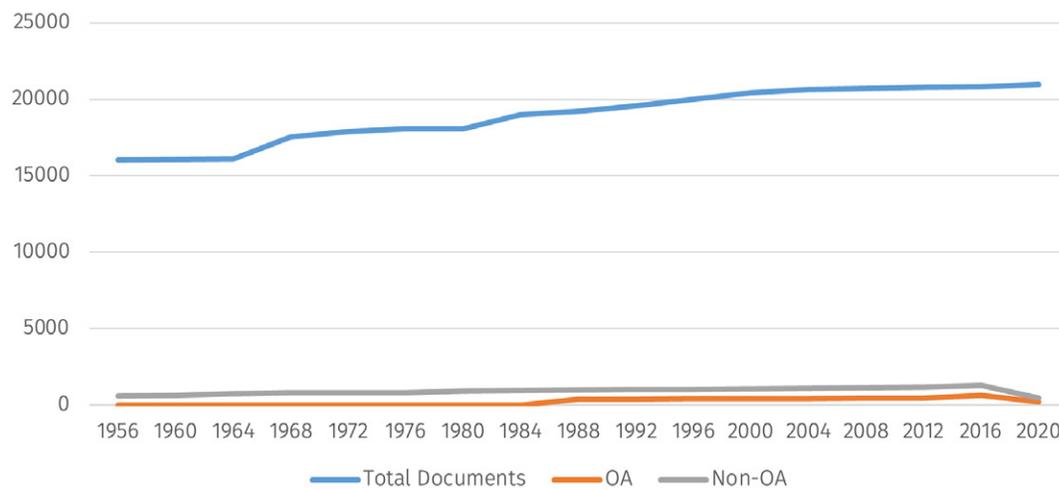
This paper analyzed 321,964 documents from 106 translation/interpreting and translation-related journals from 1956 to 2020 indexed in the Scopus database. Of 321,964 entries, 3,758 (1.16%) and 15,513 (4.81%) entries, including research papers, editorial materials, and book reviews, were sufficiently concerned with open-access (OA) and non-open-access (non-OA) T&I studies respectively.

4.1. Open-access (OA) trend in T&I studies

Based on extracted results, before 1988, no OA articles/documents were published in the classification of translation and interpreting according to the Scopus database (figure 1). Even though the first OA issues emerged in the year 1988, there did not exist any particular upturn from 1988 to 2016. An imperceptibly positive trend/progress can be observed in the last four years, 2012 and 2016.

FIGURE 1

The trend of OA and non-OA documents from 1956 to 2020



4.2. OA and non-OA: type of publications/documents

To compare and evaluate distinctions between non-OA and OA types of documents, a chi-square test for independence was carried out to juxtapose the pattern between non-OA and OA documents. The reason for selecting the chi-square test for independence is that it compares two nominal variables in a contingency table to check whether or not they are related. In other words, the chi-square test for independence is used to see “whether distributions of categorical variables differ from each other” (Statistics How To, 2020). Figure 2 demonstrates the results concerning OA and non-OA types of documents. Table 3 shows a significant difference between OA and non-OA regarding articles, editorial materials, and book reviews.

4.3. Geographical coverage of the OA: Top 15 countries

Top-fifteen countries in OA published materials were identified. Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate the most active countries regarding open-access articles, editorial materials, and open-access book reviews. Based on the provided findings, Spain (12.25%) and the United Kingdom (11.62%) are the most active countries concerning OA articles and OA book reviews, respectively.

FIGURE 2

OA and non-OA trends based on the type of documents

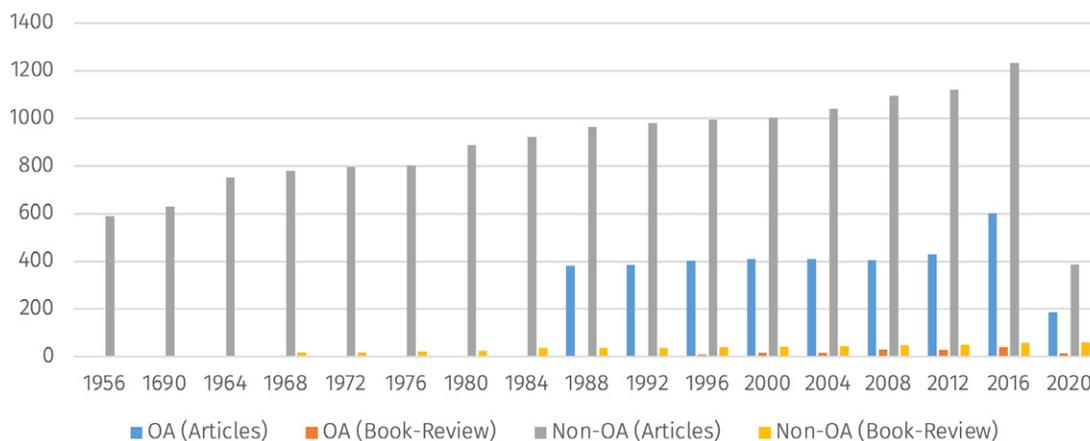


TABLE 3

OA and non-OA comparison based on the type of documents

TYPE OF PUBLICATIONS				
Type of documents	OA	N-OA	X ²	p-value
Articles + Editorial Materials	3606	14980	429.77	<0.001
Book Reviews	152	533		
Total count	3758	15513		

FIGURE 3

Active regions in terms of OA articles

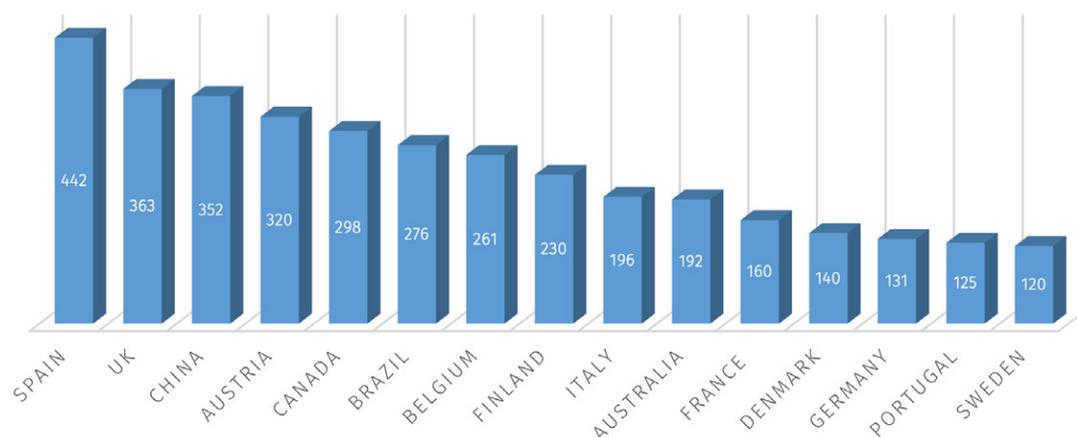
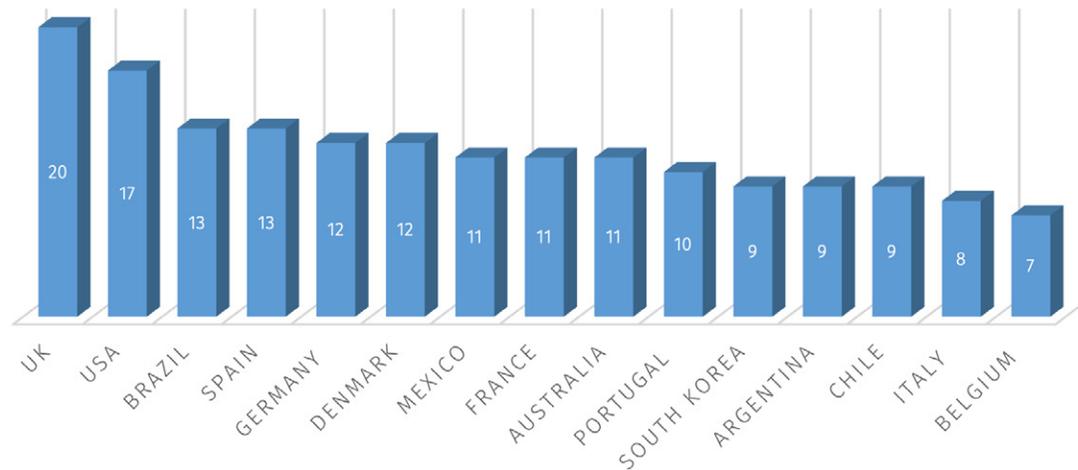


FIGURE 4

Active regions in terms of OA book-reviews



4.4. Language coverage of the OA and non-OA documents

Active languages covered by the OA and non-OA were classified into five groups: English, Spanish, French, German, and other languages. In this direction, the chi-square test for independence was used to juxtapose the pattern of languages between OA and non-OA documents. According to figures 5 and 6 and table 4, a significant difference existed between open-access and non-open-access documents concerning active languages. As demonstrated in table 4, the frequency of English publications was higher for both OA and non-OA documents revealing that the English language overcomes both OA and non-OA publications. Besides, the frequency of Spanish documents was higher in OA documents, while its counterpart (French) was higher in non-OA publications.

TABLE 4

OA and non-OA comparison based on language coverage

Languages	TYPE OF PUBLICATIONS		X ²	p-value
	OA	N-OA		
English	1486	12258	514.24	<0.001
French	689	1115		
Spanish	1002	980		
German	461	320		
Other	120	797		

FIGURE 5

Non-open-access frequent languages

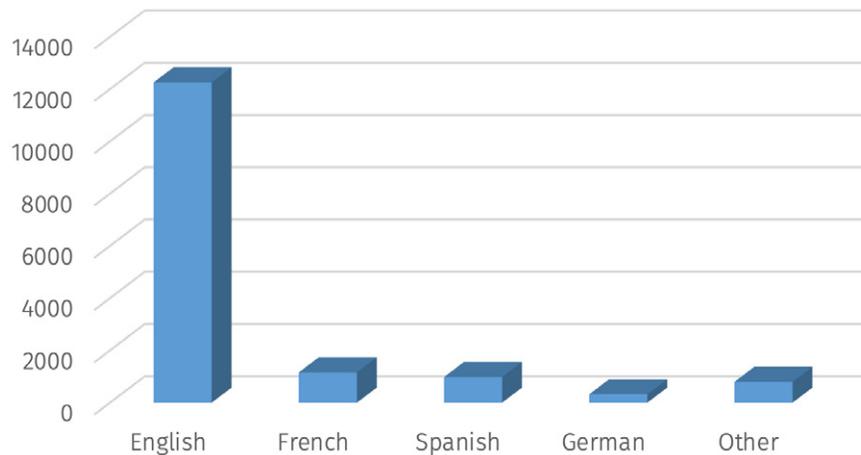
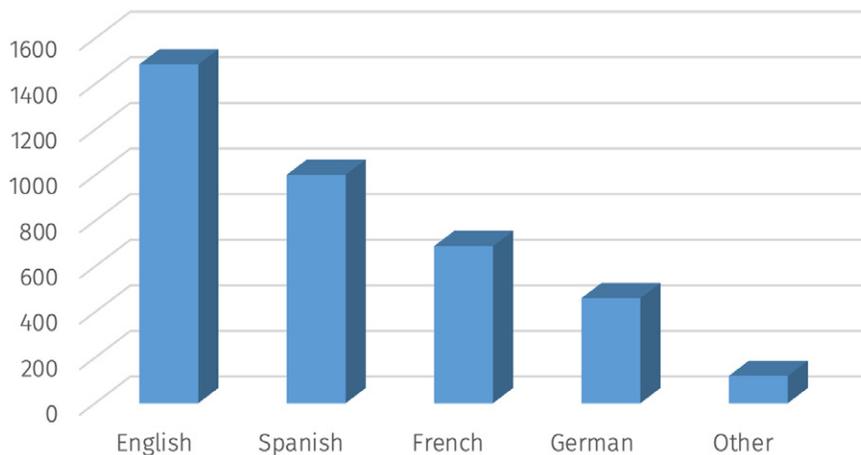


FIGURE 6

Open-access frequent languages



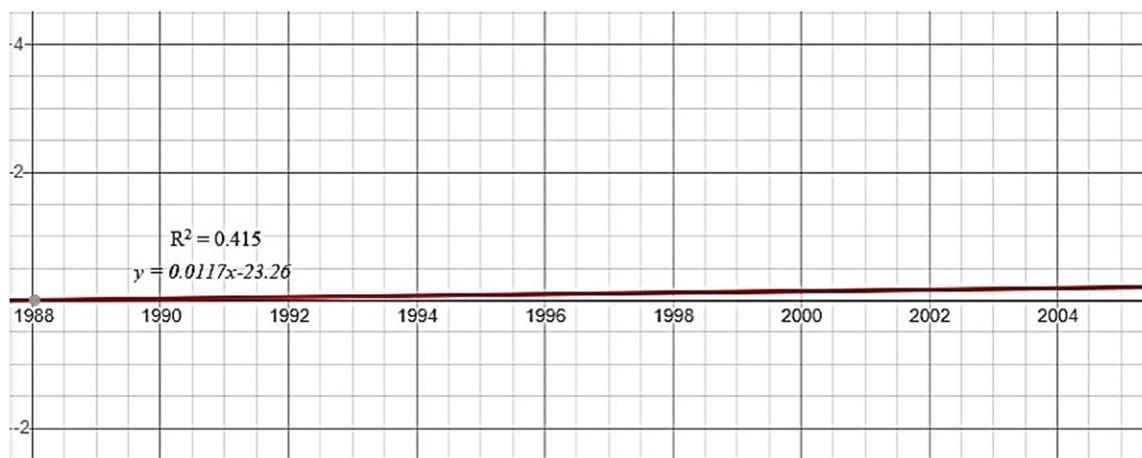
4.5. Global summation for OA: how many years remain?

In order to evaluate the trends of OA growth in the following years, the total number of OA publications is divided into the total number of published documents from 1956 to 2020. Based on figure 2, there are three periods of open-access development in translation and interpreting. The first period is considered dormant before 1988, when no OA-published materials were recorded in the Scopus database. The second period is regarded as the constant growth of OA-published documents commenced in 1988 and continued until 2012. The third period is the flourishing years of open-access documents, which started in 2012. To

predict the growth rate of OA-published materials according to the extracted data, a linear regression analysis (figure 7) was carried out through Statistica software. Figure 7 shows a positive slope (trends) ($y = 0.0117x - 23.26$) between open-access published documents and years with a moderate R-squared value (0.41) based on the linear regression analysis. According to the equation, OA-published documents in the domains of T&I studies are anticipated to reach 100 percent by 2073 if supervening the ongoing trend.

FIGURE 7

OA growth started in 1998



5. Conclusion

A great deal is left to be desired in open-access T&I growth. Even though the fields of translation and interpreting academic outputs involve a relatively diminutive proportion among all language and linguistics peer-reviewed journals indexed in the Scopus database, its level of free-availability is much less than average (of 321,964 total published documents, only 19,271 entries belonged to T&I studies). Regarding the simmering dispute and endeavors to secure the right of free availability or free-accessibility (Miguel et al., 2016) to information in this field, no plausible reasons/motives can be reached to substantiate such results. Regarding augury (future-trend prognostication), the suggested equation for open-accessibility of T&I published documents demonstrates that via the existing trend in translation and interpreting, it will take 53 years until T&I studies can be fully-fledged open-accessed, for which there can be a crisis for pay-walled journals. In the context of the above, it is the time for a universal summation of the free-availability of scholarly outputs by translation and interpreter scholars/researchers/professors across the globe. To expedite the open-accessibility movement, further research is needed on the “epistemological and ontological aspects” of such trends (Ghanbari Baghestan et al., 2019). Besides, additional investiga-

tions are required to address business models of publishing scholarly materials. Assessing whether ongoing business models of publishing academic outputs foster an open-accessibility movement or impose indispensable constraints (owing to subscription and publication costs) on information and knowledge advancement is significant.

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