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Looking for Member News and Humor and Translation? These columns are found in the Chronicle-Online edition: www.ata-chronicle.online!
As we near the end of the second quarter of 2022, I’m pleased to tell you that this year has already been a busy one in the best possible way.

The Board of Directors met in Alexandria, Virginia, for its Spring Board meeting in April in conjunction with the Certification Committee and Language Chairs meetings. In addition to reading and hearing about the activities of ATA divisions, chapters, affiliates, and committees in recent months, the Board discussed the draft budget for the next fiscal year as well as plans to make some changes that will affect the Association in the months and years to come. Here are some of the decisions made at the Board meeting and what they mean for members.

Elections Policy Revision
This year, the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) had their work cut out for them as they put together a slate of candidates to elect three director positions for three-year terms and one director position for a one-year term (the latter to fill the director position that became vacant last year when President-Elect Veronika Demichelis was elected to her current officer position). The NLDC proposed a change to the Ballots section of the Elections Policy, which the Board approved. The change is outlined with an example below.

In the past, ATA has listed candidates running for a one-year term or two-year term as a separate ballot item. Going forward, all candidates for director positions will appear under the same ballot item, with longer positions being filled successively by candidates who receive the highest number of votes and the shorter, unexpired term positions being filled by the candidate(s) receiving the next highest number of votes.

In other words, if there are three regular (three-year) director positions, and two unexpired terms (one one-year position and one two-year position) to be filled, the NLDC would nominate at least 10 candidates for these five positions. The top three vote recipients would fill the three three-year positions, while the candidate receiving the fourth highest number of votes would fill the two-year position, and candidate receiving the fifth highest number of votes the one-year position.

The single ballot item means that voting members, not the NLDC, select the individuals to fill any unexpired terms. This policy change applies to elections only and has no impact on current policy or procedures for the temporary appointment of individuals to fill a vacancy on the Board when it occurs.

ATA Annual Conference
Planning for our Annual Conference in Los Angeles (October 12-15, 2022) is well underway. President-Elect Demichelis will update you with more details in her column (see page 6), so I’ll stick to some changes the Board is considering with regard to this conference and future conferences.

As Treasurer John Milan informed the Board, this
While cost-cutting measures may seem like a negative development to some, we see them as necessary to maintain the financial health of the Association going forward.

year’s conference is likely to be well attended but also costly to put on. With the rising cost of food and beverage (F&B) throughout the U.S., it’s no surprise that our F&B expense is currently projected to be higher than what we originally budgeted. In an effort to keep F&B costs under control, the Board is thinking of creative ways to provide our usual events where food and drinks are served without increasing the cost for attendees and without spending beyond our means. So, if you see some changes at breakfast or the Welcome Celebration, for example, please understand that these changes are one of several efforts to keep costs under control while still offering an unforgettable and valuable experience to attendees.

In addition to small changes to F&B at our next conference, I’ve asked the Board to consider the possibility of updating our conference model going forward. While we do have conference locations already booked for the next several years, we need to think about the lower attendance we’ve seen over the past four or five with an eye toward what’s in the Association’s best financial interest. It’s incredibly expensive to put on a conference, so by assuming fewer than 1,200–1,500 attendees, we’re able to look at hotel spaces in tier-1 cities (the ones we all love to visit!) with a more compact space than what we’ve contracted for the past several years. This means we could potentially reduce the space we need for sessions and events as well as the room block, which would make our conference less expensive to put on. As we gain more attendees over the years, we can increase the size of the spaces and room blocks we need. I see this as a win for everyone.

### ATA Headquarters Location

Our office lease for ATA Headquarters (HQ) is expiring later this year. With the majority of staff working remotely since the start of the pandemic, the possibility of having a smaller footprint for our HQ offices is a reality. While ATA must maintain a physical space of some size, the Executive Committee has asked Executive Director Walter Bacak to look for a significantly smaller office space that will allow our staff to come into the office to handle any administrative work that must be done at HQ and continue to work remotely. This change means savings across the board for ATA. The Board agreed that such a change makes sense given the new landscape of remote work and the goal to keep expenses in check.

### Savings that Open Doors in the Future

While cost-cutting measures may seem like a negative development to some, we see them as necessary to maintain the financial health of the Association going forward. These changes open a door for ATA to be nimbler in the future. Spending less on some of the nice-to-haves means we have more resources to dedicate toward the must-haves and the programs that continue to offer our members the benefits and experiences that have a direct effect on their businesses and professional development. The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to disburse ATA funds prudently and for the benefit of the entire Association, and I’m confident these efforts will pay off (no pun intended!) for years to come.
ATA63 Will Be an Event to Remember!

The call for proposals for ATA’s 63rd Annual Conference in Los Angeles, California, closed on March 1. We received 400 proposals for regular conference sessions and 39 proposals for Advanced Skills & Training (AST) sessions. This is very exciting because we’re back to our pre-pandemic number of conference proposals—which I take as a sign that we’re all excited to meet in person again!

On the flipside, the task of selecting conference proposals was challenging to say the least. At ATA63, we’ll have 168 slots for regular sessions and 16 slots for AST sessions. I’m incredibly grateful to our amazing team of volunteers and subject matter experts who helped review session proposals and shared their recommendations. The final decision rests with the conference organizer, which is a task I don’t take lightly. My goal is to ensure that we offer a balanced, attractive selection of conference sessions that reflect the needs and interests of a wide variety of conference attendees.

Selecting conference sessions is becoming more challenging every year (as each conference organizer before me will attest). ATA has 22 divisions, and each of them is invited to nominate a distinguished speaker to present two one-hour sessions. This dramatically decreases the number of conference slots available for regular sessions. With the current system of almost 30 language- and subject-specific conference tracks, it’s becoming increasingly difficult to schedule something for everyone and offer a variety of sessions for beginners and veterans alike.

So, we’ll soon need to rethink our conference tracks—in fact, you may see this change at next year’s conference.

Everyone who submitted a session proposal has now been informed if their proposal was accepted, waitlisted, or declined. A huge thanks to all the colleagues who submitted a proposal this year! With the growth of ATA’s Professional Development program, we can now offer high-quality, accessible continuing education opportunities year-round. If your conference proposal was not accepted this year (and I know how disappointing that can be), I hope you’ll consider submitting a webinar or virtual workshop proposal. You can submit a proposal online at https://bit.ly/ATAproposal and it will be considered by ATA’s Professional Development Committee.

And now back to ATA63. The conference website is live at www.ata63.org! Head to the website to learn more about this year’s conference events and find useful information. Our conference hotel block is open. You can book your room at the Westin Bonaventure at the discounted rate of $249 (single/double occupancy), $269 (triple), and $289 (quadruple) directly from the conference website. ATA rates are available until September 16, 2022, or as space allows. Your room rate includes wireless internet, access to the fitness center, and discounted valet parking. Are you looking for a roommate, a ride, or need some other information? The ATA63 Conference blog is your go-to place for planning and interaction: https://ata-conference.blogspot.com.

I know you must be curious about the ATA63 conference schedule, so let me give you a sneak peek.

Wednesday (October 12):
Registration opens and you can receive your conference badge. (Note: If you arrive early, you can register on Tuesday afternoon.) We’ll also host AST sessions in the morning and afternoon. Along with many great interactive and in-depth training sessions from expert translators and interpreters, there will also be sessions dedicated to preparing for ATA’s English into Spanish and Spanish into English certification exams. There will also be an in-person ATA certification exam sitting on Wednesday afternoon. We’ll wrap up the day with the popular Buddies Welcome Newbies session in the evening, followed by the Welcome Celebration.

FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

VERONIKA DEMICHELIS
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Thursday (October 13): You can start the day off right with Zumba and Mindful Movement. During breakfast, there will be tables for the student meetup and for those who would like to meet the candidates running for the Board in this year’s ATA election. The Opening Session will be followed by the Annual Meeting of Voting Members and Election. As usual, all Voting members will be able to cast their votes online. There will be no in-person voting.

The day will continue with 42 educational sessions, coffee breaks, and lunch between 12:00 noon and 2:00 pm. We’re excited to bring the Book Fair back, and this time it will take place during the lunch break. You can close the day of learning by attending the Stronger Together Networking session—this is your chance to meet like-minded colleagues, share new business ideas, and discuss collaboration opportunities.

Friday (October 14): Begin the day with Zumba and Mindful Movement, followed by Breakfast with the Board, our popular Tweetup, and Mentors and Mentees breakfast. We’ll have the Annual Meeting of All Members in the morning and then honor this year’s winners of several ATA awards and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) student scholarships during the Annual Awards Presentation. (For more information about this year’s awards, please see the links in the sidebar.)

We’ll have 56 educational sessions on Friday, with two coffee breaks and lunch on your own. Our popular Job Fair will be back in person this year during the lunch break, where you can meet with companies looking for translators and interpreters. We’ll close the day with Brainstorm Networking and the After Hours Café.

Saturday (October 15): This will be your final chance to start the day bright and early with Zumba and Mindful Movement. There will be breakfast tables for the Military Veterans Circle Meetup, Buddies and Newbies, and (new this year!) the Sleep-Deprived Parents Meetup, where you can chat with colleagues who can relate to the ups and downs of raising kids while building your translation or interpreting business.

After breakfast, you can choose from 70 educational sessions, with coffee breaks and lunch in between. There will be another opportunity to take the ATA certification exam on Saturday morning. Our popular Speed Networking event will be hosted during the lunch break this year. You are also welcome to attend the ATA Board meeting in the afternoon. And before you know it, we’ll meet at the Closing Session to recap ATA63 and look ahead to next year’s Annual Conference in Miami, Florida. We’ll wrap up the day with the Closing Reception, the AFTI Game Night, and the Conference Dance Party.

What Else?

There will be 30-minute breaks between sessions to allow the hotel staff to clean the rooms. The conference hotel is big, so you’ll appreciate that extra bit of time to get coffee, freshen up, and chat with friends and colleagues. The Exhibit Hall will be open throughout the conference, and there will be Tool Support Stations, the Dictionary Exchange, and an opportunity to get your headshots done by a professional photographer.

And don’t forget to take some time to stop by our Hospitality Desk and Chapter tables. We’re very grateful to the Northern California Translators Association and the Association of Translators and Interpreters in the San Diego Area for serving as hospitality groups this year! That being said, we would love to get some help from colleagues who are local to the Los Angeles area! If you are based in California and would be willing to help us spread the word about ATA63 to local translators and interpreters, please let me know. We’re eager to welcome new colleagues to ATA63 and show them what a great professional home ATA can be for them.

As I shared in my previous column, we’re not live streaming or recording conference sessions this year to avoid the high cost related to this.

The hotel staff are working with us to make sure that we all feel safe throughout our stay, and we’ll be following the Los Angeles County health and safety requirements closely.

I look forward to seeing you all in Los Angeles this fall!
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Board Meeting Highlights

The American Translators Association’s Board of Directors met April 9-10, 2022 in Alexandria, Virginia. The Board met in conjunction with the Certification Committee and Language Chairs meetings. (Each exam language combination has a language chair administering the passage selection and graders. ATA currently offers testing in 32 language combinations.) Here are some highlights from the Board meeting.

Working Budget: The Board approved the July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023 working budget and the 2023–24 draft budget. The approved working budget is $3 million. The working budget provides an interim financial framework. By using this interim budget, changes and revisions can be made based on the actual year-end figures. The final budget will be approved at the next Board meeting.

Elections Policy: The Board approved revisions to the Elections Policy to codify filling vacancies beyond the usual rotation of three directors’ positions. The Board will continue to approve the appointment of any vacancies between elections.

Certification: Certification Committee Chair David Stephenson updated the Board on the Certification Committee’s activities and the online on-demand certification exam. The Board approved adding English into Korean to the Certification Program. (Korean into English was added at the last Board meeting.) English into Korean practice tests and exams are available now.

Professional Development Committee: The Board approved the appointment of Nora Díaz as chair of the Professional Development Committee. The Board thanked outgoing Chair Veronika Demichelis for her work in dramatically growing the program. Veronika will remain on the committee.

Proposed Changes to Membership: The Board reviewed and discussed the latest version of proposed changes to the membership categories and benefits. This version incorporated the feedback received from members. The Board will review and approve the next version to be circulated to the membership for feedback. The final version will be part of a Bylaws revision vote by the membership—likely in 2023.

Certification–Machine Translation Post-Editing Study: The Board discussed the recently approved study to look at the correlation between performance on ATA’s certification exam and proficiency in machine translation post-editing. The principal investigators—Geoff Koby (Certification Committee member, former Certification Committee chair, and former ATA director) and Larry Bogoslaw (Certification Committee deputy chair)—answered the Board’s questions and elaborated on the study. The study gets underway this summer.

Special Interest Groups: The Board discussed formally establishing special interest groups (SIGs) for groups starting out that may or may not evolve into divisions or as subsets within a division, such as a Project Managers SIG within the Translation Company Division. An ad hoc committee will be established to investigate the options and submit their recommendations to the Board.

The Board meeting summary is posted online. The minutes will be posted once they are approved at the next Board meeting. Past meeting summaries and minutes are also posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php.

The next Board meeting is set for August 6–7, 2022 in Chicago, Illinois. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

Last Print Edition of The ATA Chronicle/ Moving Fully Online

This issue marks the last print edition of The ATA Chronicle. The magazine will continue to be published, just online. The format will look the same. Besides the environmental benefits and cost savings, the number of members opting for the digital version has grown over the years, leading to the decision to stop printing a physical copy of the magazine. The magazine is available as a flipbook (allowing you to view it on mobile devices, download, search, and add notes) or PDF, or you can also read the content directly on the Chronicle Online website (www.ata-chronicle.online). You can find more info and timely updates online at www.atanet.org/news/the-ata-chronicle.
The member-exclusive, ATA-endorsed Professional Liability Insurance Program protects translators and interpreters against claims-related errors, omissions, and/or negligence arising from their professional services. This comprehensive solution, commonly known as errors and omissions liability insurance (E&O), covers defense costs and settlements and provides a valuable layer of additional coverage that includes:

**Coverage for a Broad Definition of Translation/Interpreting Services**
Covers nearly all activities relevant to a translator or interpreter, such as editing, publishing, proofreading, printing, and computer software localization. Also covers the transcription and editing of documents that have been translated by another translator.

**Coverage for Contingent Bodily Injury and/or Property Damage**
Covers errors in rendering translation/interpreting services that result in bodily injury and/or property damage. These types of claims are typically excluded by generic professional liability policies.

**Coverage for Fines and Penalties Associated with HIPAA/HITECH Violations**
Cover fines and penalties as specified in the HIPAA/HITECH Act assessed against third parties who make a claim against you for indemnification or contribution for such fines or penalties.

We also have options for a stand-alone cyber liability and general liability (GL) policy. We make the process of finding the right professional liability insurance coverage as quick and easy as possible.
Does identity play a role in how we translate? The short answer is yes.

By Ray Valido

(Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect U.S. Department of State policy.)

In early 2021, a debate erupted in several European countries about who was qualified to translate “The Hill We Climb,” a stirring poem delivered at the inauguration of U.S. President Joe Biden by the young African American poet Amanda Gorman. After the task of translating the poem had been assigned to a White Dutch translator, there was a backlash from those who argued that a person of color should do the translation. Similar criticisms were voiced in other countries where translations were being undertaken, while some voices decried the role of “identity politics” in the selection of translators.¹ The story continued to generate interest the following year when a Hungarian Roma translator recounted how belonging to a marginalized community gave her deeper insight as she translated Gorman’s poem into Hungarian.²

Around the same time this translation controversy was hitting the press, I came across the translation of a document aimed at educating readers on issues of diversity. As I read it, I was pretty shocked to encounter an instance in which the English word straight (as in heterosexual) was rendered in the target language as “normal or natural man/woman.” Aside from taking offense at the suggestion that as a gay man I was somehow not normal or natural, I found myself asking if a translator who identified as LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and others) would ever render the word straight in this way.

One might view Amanda Gorman’s poem as a simple text without any difficult vocabulary or concepts that would make translation challenging. Yet the poem emerges from experiences of racial inequality and marginalization that underlie every line. Can a translator render a faithful rendition without being deeply in touch with the poet’s worldview? More importantly, isn’t it possible for translators who don’t personally have to deal with racism or discrimination on a daily basis to inadvertently insert personal beliefs or ideologies in their choice of vocabulary or in the way they express certain concepts?
The way in which we render words in a target language is affected by our histories, perspectives, and biases, whether we’re aware of them or not.

Does identity play a role in how we translate? The short answer is yes. As we go about the work of translation, we bring far more than the skills we’ve learned. We bring a lifetime of experiences along with attitudes that were formed in childhood and beyond. We come to our work with assumptions and biases embedded in the cultures of our families and communities beyond what we may realize. The way in which we render words in a target language is affected by our histories, perspectives, and biases, whether we’re aware of them or not.

Identity plays a particularly crucial role today in translating texts that deal with or include vocabulary related to race, women’s issues, or LGBTQ+ persons. Most translators who are women, who identify as LGBTQ+, or who come from communities of color are already sensitive to how words are used—both positively and negatively—in relation to their own experiences. Other translators need to deepen their awareness of the nuances of words in the source text so that terms can be expressed appropriately, faithfully, and respectfully in the target language.

For instance, how would you translate the term *woke*?

As it’s used in the U.S. today, the term has come to mean more than one thing. In marginalized communities and among allies, the word originally signified a deep awareness of racial, economic, and gender disparities. Over time, however, it has also come to be appropriated by others as a pejorative term suggesting knee-jerk political correctness. Translators who come across this word need to understand its context and the nuances of the author’s intent.

Here’s another example. Texts dealing with issues of race, gender, and other areas of disparity often include the term *intersectionality*. This term is used to describe overlap within various social identities of the ways in which the concerns of different marginalized communities often intersect and relate to one another. How do translators find the right word(s) to convey the complex social, economic, and political dynamics implied by this term?

Let’s turn now to some specific examples related to race, women’s issues, and LGBTQ+ persons. How can we find translation solutions that take into account the nuances of the following terms?

**Race**

**Black:** In “The Hill We Climb,” Amanda Gorman wrote this memorable line: “where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president only to find herself reciting for one.” This one simple word, *Black*, has been used in the U.S. with both derision and pride. How can a translator discern the author’s intent and contextualize it in such a way that the author’s or speaker’s intent is communicated in the target language? One can only create an authentic translation after gaining a deep familiarization not only with the source text, but with the author, their life story, their concerns, and their context.

**Karen:** Unfortunately for people named Karen, this word has become a symbol of racism attributed to entitled White women who call the police on Black people entering their own homes or engaging in other normal, everyday activities. The term came into wider use in the wake of videos portraying appalling racist behavior, such as the woman who called the New York City police and made a false accusation against a Black birdwatcher in Central Park. Translators face the challenge of finding the word(s) that describe the satirical character of this term and express its various elements. In Spain, at least some of the nuances of the American “Karen” are being expressed with the name “Charo.” It’s important to know if a similar phenomenon is happening in your language combination.

**Women’s Issues**

**Mansplaining:** I’m completely aware that as a man, I may be on shaky ground in trying to explain this term and its implications. Words We’re Watching from the
Identity plays a particularly crucial role today in translating texts that deal with or include vocabulary related to race, women’s issues, or LGBTQ+ persons.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines mansplaining this way: “When a man talks condescendingly to someone (especially a woman) about something he has incomplete knowledge of, with the mistaken assumption that he knows more about it than the person he’s talking to does.”

Machoexplicación in Spanish, mecsplanation or pénisplication in French, and Herrklären in German are translation solutions for this term that have already been adopted, albeit informally. Is there a way to express this very specific kind of sexist behavior in your target language?

Professions: When translating the names of various professions, does the target language default to a gendered word based on social expectations? In gendered languages, are doctor, lawyer, and president assigned masculine nouns/ pronouns, while nurse, teacher, and secretary are assigned female nouns/ pronouns? If the source text doesn’t make gender assumptions about these professions, can a translation be faithful if they’re expressed as gendered in the target language?

Pro-life, Anti-abortion, Pro-choice: Can the translator find ways to express the different nuances of these terms when they appear in the source text? When a text is dealing with attitudes and policies on abortion, translators need to carefully assess the context and the author’s intent when using words like pro-choice, pro-life, and anti-abortion, since the terms themselves may be used in different ways. For example, pro-life is used by some only when referring to the unborn, while others may use it in a broader sense to express support for groups such as women, children, elders, persons with disabilities, or inmates on death row. A good translator will take account of these kinds of nuances when choosing vocabulary in the target language.

Feminism, Feminist: Do the most commonly used translations for these words suggest judgmental nuances in the target language? In some countries, the word feminism has inappropriately been likened to misandry (i.e., hatred, dislike, or mistrust of men). Translators should be careful to make sure that nuances that aren’t present in the vocabulary of the source text aren’t inadvertently transferred into the target.
LGBTQ, LGBTQ+, LGBTQIA2S+ are used. Versions of the acronym that identify as a part of these communities, different who identify as a part of these communities, different genders and/or sexualities and/or non-conforming gender identities used by members of the community.

- **LGBTQIA2S+**: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual, two spirit, and other people with non-conforming sexualities and/or gender identities.

Translators need to gain a clear understanding of each letter in the various renderings and research the acronyms in use among people who speak the target language and identify as members of the community.

**Straight, Queer, Gay:** Many languages simply use the English words or their transliterations. Translators need to exercise great care not to choose words in the target language with a pejorative connotation when the source text is using the word in a neutral way or in a way that expresses pride. Pejorative equivalents are appropriate only when the source text is using one of these words as a slur. In most instances straight shouldn’t be translated to mean normal or natural, nor should gay or queer be translated with a word that LGBTQ+ persons would find offensive. Writing in *The Atlantic*, Steve Clemens shows how translations into Arabic (for example, in movie subtitles) sometimes distort the meaning of gay by using equivalents for pervert or deviant when there are words available that avoid making negative judgments and would more accurately reflect the nuances of the source language.

**Cisgender, Heteronormative, Cishet:** While cognates may be a ready translation solution in Romance languages, these words can pose a challenge in many other languages that aren’t based in Latin or Greek. If translators opt to use a transliteration or simply to employ the English word, they should consider if the reader will grasp the full meaning of these words and then perform the plausibility check to ensure that the translation solution is bias-free. A short explanation may be needed to alert the reader to the meaning of the transliterated or English word.

**Non-Binary:** This is an adjective used to describe a person who doesn’t identify exclusively as a man or a woman. Non-binary persons may identify as being both male and female, somewhere in between, or as falling completely outside these categories. While many also identify as transgender, not all non-binary persons do. Non-binary can also be used as an umbrella term encompassing identities such as agender, bigender, genderqueer, or gender-fluid.

Translators need to deepen their awareness of the nuances of words in the source text.

**Queer:** While historically pejorative, this word has been reappropriated in recent years to express inclusivity and pride. Some LGBTQ+ persons find it helpful to use this term to describe persons who don’t quite fit with any of the other letters and yet identify as other than cisgender heterosexual. Queer is used by some as an umbrella term that includes all the other letters (e.g., Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, etc.)

**Further Enrichment**

The struggles for racial equality, gender equity, and LGBTQ+ rights are hardly confined to the U.S. or other Western democracies. Black Lives Matter and the #MeToo movement have had an impact in various countries. There are organizations around the globe that represent minority and marginalized

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**RESOURCES FOR TERMINOLOGY**

Following these groups and checking out their websites can be a great way to learn terminology and about the different perspectives of people who speak and write in our target languages.

- Helem (Lebanon)  
  [www.helem.net](http://www.helem.net)
- Yaaj (Mexico)  
  [www.yaajmexico.org](http://www.yaajmexico.org)
- Russian LGBT Network  
  [https://lgbinet.org](https://lgbinet.org)
- HaengSeongln (South Korea)  
  [http://lgbtpride.or.kr/xe](http://lgbtpride.or.kr/xe)
- Human Rights Campaign (U.S.)  
  [Glossary of Terms in English](https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms)
- National Immigrant Justice Center (U.S.)  
- Asian Health Services (U.S.)  
- HaengSeongln (South Korea)  
  [https://lgbtnet.org](https://lgbtnet.org)
- Russian LGBT Network  
  [www.yaajmexico.org](http://www.yaajmexico.org)
- Yaaj (Mexico)  
  [www.yaajmexico.org](http://www.yaajmexico.org)
- Helem (Lebanon)  
  [www.helem.net](http://www.helem.net)

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organizations. Following these groups and checking out their websites can be a great way to help us learn terminology and about the different perspectives of people who speak and write in our target languages. For example, LGBTQ+ organizations in many countries—and not just in places you might expect—have a presence on the web and in social media. Take, for example, Helem in Lebanon, Yaaj in Mexico, the Russian LGBT Network, and HaengSeongIn in South Korea. These organizations’ websites can be very useful in learning more about appropriate vocabulary in other languages. The Human Rights Campaign also has a glossary of terms in English on its website, the National Immigrant Justice Center offers a list of Arabic LGBTQ terminology for interpreters and staff, and Asian Health Services in Oakland, California, has published an LGBTQ Glossary in Chinese, Vietnamese, Burmese, and Korean. (See sidebar on page 14 for links to these organizations.)

It’s sometimes the case that language authorities such as the Académie Française or Real Academia Española might not acknowledge—and will often reject—resources and linguistic solutions that will help you navigate issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Our training as professional translators can lead us to feel that we’ve overstepped a boundary if we deviate from their guidance. However, when dealing with race, women’s issues, and LGBTQ+ persons, it’s often the community organizations that are the real subject matter experts. When in doubt, trust the experts—namely, those who are living these realities.

Words matter. Identity matters. For translators who aren’t members of marginalized communities, the first step is to recognize our own privilege, to acknowledge our own limitations, and to broaden our perspective regarding communities of color, women, and LGBTQ+ persons. Only with a recognition of that privilege can we produce translations that help readers in the target language access the experience of those living on the underside of privilege.

NOTES
12. Cisgender: A term used to describe a person whose gender identity aligns with those typically associated with the sex assigned to them at birth. Heteronormative: The assumption of heterosexuality as the given or default sexual orientation instead of one of many possibilities, and that the preferred or default relationship is between two people of “opposite” genders. Cis/Non-Cis: This term refers to the assumption that heterosexuality and being cisgender are the norm, which plays out in interpersonal interactions and society, and furthers the marginalization of queer and gender diverse people. Source: Human Rights Campaign, “Welcoming Schools: Definitions to Help Understand Gender and Sexual Orientation,”https://bit.ly/HRC-gender-sexual-orientation.

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There’s certainly a lot to be careful about, but in the end it’s an amazing experience to witness the journey of a child who faces the challenge of learning two languages while having hearing loss.

By María Baker

Learning a language is an admirable feat for anyone. It’s amazing to watch how easily children seem to learn their first language at such an early age. This process can become more difficult, however, if the child has hearing loss. In some cases, there’s another added challenge: learning two languages at once!

Interpreters play a key role for these hard of hearing future multilinguals as they receive services from audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs). We’re also instrumental to their families when communicating with school systems so they can ensure their child receives the services to which they’re entitled.

How can interpreters complement and aid other professionals in their tasks? How do we help families along this journey without making it our own? Here’s some advice that stems from my experience and that of other professionals in the field.

What to Know

In the areas of knowledge and terminology, here are a few things with which you need to be familiar:

• **Procedures and Tests Used in the Field**: It’s important to be familiar with audiology tests and procedures commonly used in speech and language evaluations (e.g., auditory brainstem response tests), devices, and assistive technology (e.g., types of hearing aids, cochlear implants, etc.). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website is a good place to start.
getting oriented regarding the types of tests used. To learn more about cochlear implants, for example, providers such as Cochlear or Med-El are good resources, and sometimes offer information in several languages.

- **How the Family Communicates:** It’s important for the child to receive the same linguistic input at home and during therapy. This means interpreters have to learn the family’s “dialect.” This includes their nonverbal communication (Do they shake hands? How do they greet each other?) and the terminology the family uses to discuss everything from medical conditions to everyday objects.

- **The Family’s Cultural Beliefs:** Sometimes a family has different beliefs about gender roles, medical interventions, or child rearing. It’s important to know as much as possible about a family’s beliefs so we can better respond to their needs and facilitate mutual understanding with other professionals working with them.

- **Federal and State Laws about Hearing Loss:** Ideally, you should not advocate for the family. In case you do, and in order to better interpret the information that families receive at school and at medical offices, it’s important to know what rights and obligations the family has under the law in your state. There may be a situation in which a family needs a certain resource that you know where to find or how to approach. My suggestion is to always discuss this information with the provider first.

There are also other aspects of this field that aren’t critical but that you might want to be acquainted with.

- **Phonetic Transcription:** This is the visual representation of speech sounds by means of written symbols. The most common type of phonetic transcription uses a phonetic alphabet, such as the International Phonetic Alphabet, which was developed to accurately represent the pronunciation of languages. This type of transcription can be useful to indicate to the therapist or audiologist when the patient has produced or missed a sound during an evaluative test.

- **Dialectal Variation and Nonverbal Communication:** These are aspects that may vary in different cultures. As I mentioned earlier, it’s best to focus on the pragmatics of each particular family, but always be aware of cultural differences. You may need to work with families from various cultural groups and observe different norms.

**Some Practical Advice**

Children who have hearing loss are no less smart! They become very resourceful at communicating in other ways, especially in a visual manner. This has some implications for interpreters:

- If other people are covering their mouths to speak, do the same when you interpret for the child. Of course, the advent of the mask era has made this much easier!

- When you hear a noise in the background, don’t react to it. Act as if you heard nothing. If the child sees your reaction, they might imitate it and “trick” the audiologist or SLP into thinking that they heard the stimulus.

- We might also be asked to participate in an activity during testing. For example, we may be required to receive a toy when the professional asks the child to give it to us. These interventions on our part are minor and should not lead to us taking over the interaction. (See the discussion on ethical considerations on page 18.)

Where the interpreter is placed in the room can make a difference. In some cases, the professional will want to position the interpreter as close as possible to the child or their assistive technology. In other cases, especially for testing purposes, they might want the interpreter a little farther away. As you can imagine, the pandemic changed things a bit. The interpreter couldn’t be too close to the child, and we had to adapt along with the professionals and families.
to ensure that children were receiving as much auditory input as possible in a safe manner. As an interpreter, I haven’t provided services in this specific situation via video, but I imagine that this is a route that some providers have taken.

In this and other aspects, it’s key to be flexible and open to learning from the professionals we work with. Interpreters must establish a relationship of trust between the audiologist or SLP and the patient. For example, knowing the goals that the provider has for each session can help guide our performance. When our services adjust to what the provider wants to accomplish, they begin to see us as team members with a specific task. In this way, they can better understand the limitations of our role and we can collaborate, within these role constraints, to accommodate the needs of these professionals, and especially, of the patient.

What Not to Do
Michael Douglas, a speech-language pathologist who served as principal of the Mama Lere Hearing School at Vanderbilt University, has described some of the main issues he has encountered when working with interpreters. These include:

The interpreter says more or less than what’s being said. We know how important accurate and transparency are in our profession. The family cannot afford to miss out on any of the information being shared, so omit nothing. When it comes to adding information, neutrality comes into play. We have to remember that this is not our message to transmit, and we should not make it ours or take over by adding to it.

The ethical issue

The interpreter takes the leading role instead of remaining neutral. It’s one thing to manage the flow of conversation, but an entirely different thing to make ourselves the center of this conversation. Remember, the family needs to establish a relationship with the professional assisting them, not with us.

The interpreter the family brought doesn’t agree with the professional. As I’ve already mentioned, professional interpreters leave their opinions at the door. Allow me to repeat this: it’s not our conversation, our relationship, or our story. The best way to empower the family is to place ourselves in the background and facilitate them taking over the situation and making the choices that only they can make for their child.

The Ethical Issue
When working with hard of hearing children who are bilingual and bicultural, sticking to our professional ethical principles is especially important. Here are some ethical tenets to keep in mind:

- **Accuracy:** We need to learn terminology (medical and non-
medical) so that we can be as accurate as possible. As mentioned previously, we need to focus on not changing the message we’re conveying.

- **Professionalism:** As with other aspects in our field, it’s essential to devote ourselves to professional development. Hearing technology continues to evolve and so do tests and methods of intervention. Stay abreast of this evolution and be open to learning more from the professionals and families you work with. We’re not required to know it all, but we’re expected to always be willing to learn.

- **Impartiality and Neutrality:** We will not always agree with the decisions families make for their children, but these are *their* decisions. We may be frustrated by what we consider a lack of understanding on their part, but let’s not underestimate our patients. If we’ve done our job correctly, they’ll have the information they need. It’s also true that sometimes we get attached to a patient, especially if we get to work with them through many appointments in their journey. This is a completely natural thing, and we don’t necessarily need to suppress it or be ashamed. The key is not to let this attachment show outwardly. We need to treat all patients the same, regardless of who we like best. On this same token, remember that, as far as patients and professionals are concerned, we have no opinions.

- **Role Boundaries:** In connection with impartiality, we need to remember that as interpreters, our main job is to interpret. If we’re doing something else, we need to ask ourselves if we should be there at all. Beyond minor participation, we’re not a part of the conversations being had or the decisions being made.

- **Confidentiality:** Some appointments will be emotional and take a toll on us. In these instances, we’ll need to debrief with a colleague or talk to a friend or family member. Please remember to always protect the information of the family. Don’t mention any protected health information. If necessary, make up a name for the child and the professional with whom you’re working.

### A Very Rewarding Experience

There’s certainly a lot to be careful about, but in the end it’s an amazing experience to witness the journey of a child who faces the challenge of learning two languages while having hearing loss. There’s no doubt that these children and their families work extra hard for communication, and we’re there to facilitate that. This gives us a “superhero” feeling and makes us very aware of the importance of our role. Let’s live up to this wonderful opportunity to empower these very special children!

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
  - [www.asha.org](http://www.asha.org)
- Beginnings
  - [www.ncbegin.org](http://www.ncbegin.org)
  - (Nonprofit that helps parents understand hearing loss and the needs of children who are deaf and hard of hearing)
- International Medical Interpreters Association
  - IMIA Guide to Ethical Conduct

### NOTES


### Maria Baker, CT

Maria Baker, CT received her MA in Spanish and teaching English to speakers of other languages at West Virginia University in 2013. Passionate about professional development, she has nine years of experience in interpreting and translation. She became a certified medical interpreter in 2014 and a certified health care interpreter in 2018. She became an ATA-certified English>Spanish translator in 2021. She has conducted training for health care providers on interpreting and delivered workshops for interpreters. She is vice president of the Interpreters and Translators Association of Alabama. She is a former editor of Caduceus, the newsletter of ATA’s Medical Division, volunteers on the Social Media Committee of ATA’s Spanish Language Division, and is a member of the Professional Development Committee. *info@maria-baker.com*
Half a lifetime ago, I decided I wanted to be an interpreter. It was a lofty goal, especially given the fact that I barely spoke English and not much else. But I had taken my first language class and that was that. Accidentally, a passion had been born.

I began with Spanish, and for many years that was the language that dominated, although I continued to dabble in French. I spent a year in Honduras after I graduated from Rutgers University. Upon my return, I purchased all the interpreting materials I could find and studied like a fiend. Eventually, I began freelancing. I also started to pass certification exams as a court and health care interpreter.

Ten years into my journey, I decided to pursue French as a third language for interpreting. That’s when I realized how much I had been taking everything for granted. In the words of Canadian-American singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell, I didn’t know what I’d “got ‘til it was gone.”

Lots of Resources for LOTS Interpreters

If you interpret a language of lesser diffusion and cannot find practice materials specific to your language, you’ll need to think smart, collaborate, and above all, don’t reinvent the wheel!

By Athena L. Matilsky

“Don’t it always seem to go/that you don’t know what you got ‘til it’s gone…”

–Joni Mitchell, Big Yellow Taxi
The LOTS Dilemma

It was for precisely this reason that I focused on languages other than Spanish (LOTS) resources for my session at ATA’s 62nd Annual Conference in Minneapolis. I began the session, as always, with a question: “What unique challenges face LOTS interpreters?”

People were hesitant to respond at first, but then finally one person raised her hand. “The lack of materials!” she stated bluntly. Colleagues to her left and right began to nod and murmur emphatically.

What I hadn’t realized at the beginning of my career was how lucky I was. As a Spanish interpreter, you have access to an array of training materials. Simulated court and medical scenarios are accompanied by their corresponding transcripts, and glossaries and example interpretations are readily available. In short, somebody has already done the work for you.

Much to my dismay, this was not the case for French interpreting. Nor is it the case for Japanese, Twi, Swahili, Cape Verdean, or any of the hundreds of languages you may encounter over the course of an interpreting lifetime. So, what’s a LOTS interpreter to do?

Creating Materials for Deliberate Practice

My conference session focused on maximizing our resources in an attempt not to reinvent the wheel. The first thing I discussed was deliberate study. Interpreting along with a YouTube video or TV program is all well and good, but it doesn’t constitute interpreting practice. To improve as an interpreter, you must analyze your performance in micro detail. You need to record your interpretations and, most importantly, be able to compare your rendition with a transcript. In short, you need training materials. But what’s a LOTS interpreter to do when there are no training materials?

The good news is, while there may not be language-specific materials in your language, there are language-neutral (English only) materials. Here are a just a few companies that sell them:

Interpretrain
https://interpretrain.com
Interpretrain offers innovative self-study tools that include vocabulary drills and practice labs you can grade so you know exactly how well you’re doing. They also sell The Note-Taking Manual, which is an incredible resource for consecutive interpreting.

ACEBO
https://acebo.myshopify.com
In addition to language-specific materials in Arabic, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Polish, Korean, Russian, and Cantonese, ACEBO sells The Interpreter’s Edge Generic Edition, which can be used for practice with any language.

The Confident Interpreter
www.theconfidentinterpreter.com
This company sells language-neutral practice labs that are great for court and medical interpreters.

Interpreting along with a YouTube video or TV program is all well and good, but it doesn’t constitute interpreting practice.

De la Mora Institute of Interpretation
https://delamorainstitute.com
They offer a variety of online classes geared to beginner, intermediate, and advanced interpreters of all languages.

If you interpret a language of lesser diffusion and cannot find practice materials specific to your language, language-neutral materials are the way to go as they provide you with most of what you need for your language. For example, to practice simultaneous interpreting, you only need simultaneous practice materials from English into your other language. That’s because court interpreters don’t interpret simultaneously into English. This means you can use any simultaneous practice in English and simply interpret into your other language.

What’s missing, then, is sight translation from other languages into English and a true consecutive dialogue that consists of questions in English and answers in your other language. Here are some tricks on how to cover these two areas.

Create Your Own Materials for Sight Translation: The sight translation dilemma is simple enough. Just do a Google search for wills, police reports, medical
To improve as an interpreter, you must analyze your performance in micro detail.

histories, or other material in your language relevant to your work. You’re sure to find documents appropriate for sight translation. If you have relatives in other countries where your languages are spoken, ask them to send you copies of legal documents (e.g., wills, property deeds, and birth and marriage certificates) and even police reports if they have a friend or relative in law enforcement. Newspaper stories about crimes also contain good material for sight translation practice.

Look for documents where the terminology isn’t too complex. Shorter segments are better. How short? Well, around 225 words is a good length for practice, which is pretty close to the length of the passages you’ll find on an interpreting certification exam. (It’s always a good idea to practice with documents similar to the type that appear on certification exams.)

When I was studying for French court certification, I found Le rapport d’intervention on the Centre collégial de développement de matériel didactique site (managed by the Collège de Maisonneuve in Canada) to be very helpful. It contains various police report texts of the exact length and type found on certification exams (https://bit.ly/Lerapport).

While we’re at it, look for a resource to practice shadowing (i.e., when you follow the speaker word for word in the same language). It’s a great way to improve your ability to multitask, work on lag (i.e., how far you’re behind the speaker) and delivery, and make sure your speech isn’t influenced by English. For a great resource in multiple languages, try visiting the Cleveland Municipal Court website: https://bit.ly/Cleveland-Municipal

Create Your Own Materials for Consecutive Interpreting:

When you buy self-study materials only in English, you end up with practice dialogue that’s (surprise, surprise!) all in English. To be fair, this is a fine way to practice interpreting. There are multiple elements that must be isolated for consecutive interpreting, including but not limited to listening skills, delivery, grammar/syntax, memory, visualization, and note-taking. So, simply practicing English-to-English, or unidirectionally from English into your other language, isn’t bad.

Still, though, it’s helpful to practice simulating an actual multilingual dialogue. To do this, simply create a written translation of the answers to the questions contained in the practice dialogue. Then record yourself reading off the English questions and the non-English answers. After that, wait a few weeks until you’ve forgotten the content, and voila! You now have a true simulated dialogue to practice with, complete with a transcript.

It’s even better if you can work with a study buddy. Have your partner translate one of the study exercises so the content will be new to you. You can do the same for them. Here’s an example for consecutive interpreting in French:
This becomes:

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Leblanc. How are you today?

**Answer:** Terrible. I’m here right now, aren’t I?

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Leblanc. How are you today?

**Answer:** Très mal. Je suis ici en ce moment, n’est-ce pas?

### Study Partners

Having a study partner is an incredible way to stay motivated, share resources, and bring awareness to problems (and solutions!) you may not have thought of on your own. It can also be a nice way to validate your interpreting skills because we’re often our own harshest critics. It can be a relief to hear from a colleague about the things that we’re doing well.

Especially if you speak a language of more limited diffusion, resource sharing is even more vital. I’ve been able to find resources and study partners through Facebook groups. I manage the ones below, which you’re welcome to join:

**French Interpreting Corner (Facebook)**


A group for French interpreters to share resources and network.

**Interpreters:**

**Certification or Bust**


This group allows people to discuss topics related to certification exams.

**Athena Sky Interpreting**


Here you’ll find resources, blogs, and information about interpreting workshops.

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**Whether online, on social media, or in person, sharing study tools is an efficient way to make the most of resources we already have at our disposal.**

It can take time to find a study partner who is a good fit. Once you do, though, you’re golden. It’s also important to establish a procedure for how a study session will go. I’ve had some of the best conversations with study partners who evolve into friends. That said, 45 minutes of chatting doesn’t count as studying! You must also be vigilant about not allowing vocabulary discussions to derail your efforts. Words are just a tiny piece of interpreting, and that’s what dictionaries are for.

Your partner should be your sidekick as you go about the detective work of determining your weaknesses and strengths. Look for patterns. For example, what sort of mistakes are made repeatedly? Those are the ones to pay attention to.

Above all, be specific with the feedback you provide. For example, telling your partner to “Watch your grammar” isn’t very helpful. I am watching my grammar. If I make a mistake, it’s often because I didn’t realize what I was saying was wrong. So, if you can be specific, as in, “You said the ball was lying in the floor, but the correct preposition would be on the floor,” I’ll benefit from that explanation.

A study practice session should follow these steps:

1. Interpreter A interprets. Interpreter B takes notes.
2. Interpreter A continues until the exercise is finished. Interpreter B doesn’t help them out!
3. Interpreter A debriefs, starting with what went well.
4. Interpreter A then points out places where they felt stuck or frustrated.
5. Interpreter B debriefs, pointing out what went well.
6. Interpreter B points out specific patterns of mistakes, along with specific solutions.
7. The partners swap roles.

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**Pooling Resources**

Whether online, on social media, or in person, sharing study tools is an efficient way to make the most of resources we already have at our disposal. It doesn’t make sense to reinvent the wheel, so if you have glossaries, websites, or online groups you find useful, share them with your colleagues and they’ll do the same. I keep a running list of resources on my website ([https://athenskyinterpreting.com/resources](https://athenskyinterpreting.com/resources)). If you find more that you would like to have added, just let me know!

**Learn to Think Smart and Maximize Your Resources**

I wish you all the best in your professional development! It may be true that you don’t always know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone, but in the words of another great set of musicians, The Beatles, “I’ll get by with a little help from my friends.”

Allow your colleagues to be your friends. Think smart and don’t reinvent the wheel. Good luck!

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FORMING A PEER STUDY GROUP

to Prepare for ATA’s Certification Exam

One approach to preparing for ATA’s certification exam that has proven highly effective is working on short translations with colleagues in peer-based study groups.

By Jason Knapp

ATA certification is one of the industry’s most respected and recognized credentials for translators. It’s also one of the only widely recognized measures of competence for translation in the U.S.¹

To earn ATA certification, a translator must pass a challenging three-hour proctored in-person or online exam. The exam assesses the language skills of a professional translator, including comprehension of the source-language text, translation techniques, and writing in the target language. The current pass rate is less than 20%.²

One approach to preparing for the exam that has proven highly effective is working on short translations with colleagues in peer-based study groups. In the Spring of 2021, I decided to launch an initiative with members of ATA’s Spanish Language Division (SPD) and posted a message on the division’s listserv asking if there was any interest in forming a study group. The response was overwhelmingly positive, so I began researching approaches to organizing a large study group. I found a 2017 article in The ATA Chronicle by Maria Guzenko and Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya outlining the steps they took with members of the Slavic Languages Division to form and administer a peer-based study group¹, and I’m very
grateful to them for the suggestions. I also want to acknowledge interpreting colleague Rony Gao for his helpful guidance on organizing peer-based study groups.

Over 60 people responded to my initial inquiry on the SPD listserv. Gauging interest might be manageable for one person, but I knew successfully organizing a study group of that size would be a team effort. Due to the number of participants, a coordination team of five people was formed to help with organizing and administering the group, with four more people added later as organizational needs increased. We sent a survey (using Google Forms) to collect the particulars of each participant: name, email, education, work experience, ATA certification status, and their desired language direction in which to take the exam. It would have been good if we had also asked who had taken either a practice test or the actual exam.

What follows are the steps our coordination team took to form and administer the peer study group. Those wishing to form similar groups might find themselves following a different approach depending on various factors, including group size, language combinations, practice format, etc. Our approach was based on the following conditions: 1) we had a large number of participants, 2) we worked in only one language pair, and 3) our participants committed from the start to a six-month practice period.

**Tools**

One of the first decisions to be made was how to communicate within the study group. We found a number of free, easy-to-use cloud-based apps available for Mac, PC, and mobile devices.

- **Communication (Slack, WhatsApp, email, etc.):** We found email to be too cumbersome for a group this size. WhatsApp is ubiquitous and easy to use but lacks the feature richness of a proper business collaboration tool. We chose Slack because it has asynchronous communication for collaborating across different time zones, file uploading and sharing instead of email attachments, and third-party application integration.

- **File Sharing (Google Drive, Dropbox, OneDrive, Box, etc.):** We opted for Google Drive since it integrated better with some of the other tools we were using such as Google forms, docs, and sheets. That allowed us to post content (e.g., passages to be translated) in one location and then post the link in Slack.

- **Video Conferencing (Zoom, Hangouts, Skype, Teams, etc.):** Zoom was selected as a video conferencing tool because of its ubiquity. Organizational meetings were held with the coordination team, a kick-off meeting was held at the beginning of the study group program, followed by monthly group and other ad hoc meetings.

We created custom channels on Slack for posting exam resources, exam sitting announcements, translator training opportunities, water cooler conversations, a moderator channel, and a series of channels used for our translation feedback and discussion workflow. (See Figure 1.) Some participants had trouble setting up Slack or joining the necessary channels. Training videos from the Slack website were posted on a “welcome” channel. Some personalized training was also necessary to get everyone up to speed with the tool.

**Structure**

We used a two-week modular format: one week for translating the passage, and one week for feedback and discussion among group participants. (See Figure 2 on page 26.)

**Week 1:** On Monday, the group moderator provided a link to the passage for the module. Group participants were given until Sunday to complete their translation and send it to the moderator, who then compiled the translations in a spreadsheet. The first column of the spreadsheet contained the source-language text. Each participant had one column designated for their translation and one column designated for peers to provide written feedback. We found it advantageous to keep all translations for a given language direction together on a single sheet of the spreadsheet. However, we discovered that the sheet became difficult to navigate after 12-15 participants had been entered, so creating additional sheets is recommended.

**Week 2:** The moderator provided participants with a link to the feedback spreadsheet. Participant translation submissions were pasted in columns and a second adjacent column...
was left blank for feedback comments. Participants were expected to provide feedback on their peers’ translations pasted in the columns on either side of their own in the spreadsheet. Participants were also encouraged to discuss the passage and translation choices in Slack.

### Selection of Passages for Translation

Passages were selected from online sources such as news articles and journals. An effort was made to duplicate the exam passage selection criteria used for ATA’s exam. Passages were generally 225 to 275 words. To be consistent with ATA’s certification practices, all passages were typically written at a university reading level but avoided “highly specialized terminology requiring research.” While they included terminology challenges, these could be met with “a good general dictionary.”

Since ours was a six-month program, 12 sets of passages were selected for translation from English into Spanish and another 12 from Spanish into English. An effort was made to choose a wide variety of topics that would be challenging and represent a level of difficulty comparable to that of the exam without being overly technical or esoteric.

### Recommendations for Translation

We estimate 1.5 hours to complete the translation of a single passage. We recommend replicating the conditions for ATA’s exam as much as possible. This means completing the translation in one sitting. If taking the online exam is anticipated, we encourage participants to review ATA’s guidelines for the computerized exam. We also recommend encouraging participants to use the same laptop they’ll be using for the exam. Only resources that would be allowed during the exam are to be used.

Another suggestion is to have participants take note of the areas of the translation where they feel confident and the areas where they feel unsure. This is a helpful way for participants to compare their self-assessment with the peer feedback they receive later.

### Recommendations for Feedback and Discussion

We feel that the feedback and discussion part of this activity is one of the most beneficial components and one which cannot be done on your own. Coming together with peers is an opportunity for participants both to learn from others’ knowledge and to share their own. When reviewing a peer’s work, participants are encouraged to follow ATA’s error marking framework. Since this is a peer-based study group, participants are asked to focus their written feedback on substantive translation errors rather than stylistic issues that may not constitute errors. (See ATA’s website for an explanation of error categories.) Various stylistic and other points can be discussed privately or as a group in the Slack channels.

### Participant Engagement

We had 65 participants enrolled when we began the study group in May 2021. In general, we were able to maintain our schedule: one week to translate and one week to comment and discuss. Pauses in the schedule were incorporated in conjunction with holidays. By the end of the sixth module, participation had diminished to a steady 12 to 15 participants per module in each language direction. This was true until the program ended in October 2021.

The following are some lessons learned:

- During the first two cycles, some participants realized that they either didn’t have the time to dedicate consistently to the group or were not otherwise ready to take the exam. Some discontinued their participation.
- To benefit from and contribute to a peer-based study group, participants should be expected to meet ATA’s minimum proficiency levels. For
Based on a one-month cycle, but only if enough participants are enrolled to meet their minimum threshold.

**Takeaways**

An exit survey was conducted at the conclusion of the program with 30 participants responding. Questions were asked relating to time commitments, subject matter used for translation passages, general comments on feedback practices, technology tools, and whether or not their expectations were met.

The majority of participants completed between 10 and 11 modules out of a total of 12. While most participants were satisfied that the six-month program was an appropriate length, there was also significant interest in a shorter but more intensive two- to three-month program. A majority of participants found that Slack was a helpful tool for this type of study group. Interestingly, even after the initiative was completed, most participants were not sure if they would take the certification exam within the next six months. We’re happy to report that two of the group’s participants subsequently took the certification exam and passed.

Overall, the experience of this peer study group was gratifying and beneficial, especially for participants who stayed until the end. Many participants expressed interest in continuing with the study group, and anecdotally there seems to be an appetite for peer-based study groups. We hope the information presented here can serve as a model for any such future endeavors.

I would like to acknowledge the indispensable contributions of Angela Bustos, Erin Riddle, Michele Bantz, Deborah Bentolila-Hahn, Helena Senatore, and Rafael Treviño, both in administrating the study group and in preparing this article.

**NOTES**

2. Ibid.
9. The Interagency Language Roundtable is an unfunded federal organization. It’s where government employees interested in languages can come together with counterparts inside and outside government to discuss and share information and address concerns. See: https://bit.ly/ILR-about.

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Two important meetings were held in conjunction with ATA’s 62nd Annual Conference, where ATA members and representatives from its sister organizations shared information and discussed issues of common concern.

On October 26, just before ATA62 officially kicked off, Bill Rivers, principal of WP Rivers & Associates and a long-time ATA member, convened the annual Translation and Interpreting Summit at the conference hotel. Due to the pandemic, this was the first such meeting since ATA60 in Palm Springs. The Summit is an informal gathering of language stakeholders, including ATA, the International Federation of Translators (FIT), National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, Globalization and Localization Association, Association of Language Companies, ASTM International’s Technical Committee F43 on Language Services and Products, the Interagency Language Roundtable, and many others. This group has met yearly for almost 15 years in conjunction with ATA’s Annual Conference to discuss key issues and share information on initiatives and collaborations.

A few days later on October 29, Caitilin Walsh, a past ATA president and current chair of ATA’s Education and Pedagogy Committee, led the first Translation and Interpreting Education Summit, gathering industry association stakeholders in informal discussions.
concerning educational initiatives for translators and interpreters (T&I), with topics including pedagogy, curriculum, and talent development.

In all, over 40 association representatives participated on-site and online during two three-hour meetings with broad community interaction. The following offers a glimpse of the high points of these meetings.

**Policy and Legislation**

Policy and legislation continue to drive and shape much of the T&I industry, which has benefitted from such initiatives as Federal Executive Order (EO) 13166/Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). EO 13166 requires federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to the LEP community, and develop and implement a system to provide meaningful access to those services. It also requires recipients of federal funding to do the same. One of the outcomes of EO 13166 has been the establishment of enduring language access programs at the state and institutional levels that offer translator certification and interpreter credentialing opportunities.

The T&I industry has also faced challenges and potential disruptions from legislation such as California Assembly Bill–5 (AB–5) and H.R. 842/Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), making it more difficult for individuals to claim independent contractor status. In practice, shortfalls commonly exist in efforts to meet the spirit and intent of legislation to deliver T&I services to the LEP community. For example, the transition to online education and training during the pandemic has been difficult for many LEP parents and students as technology guidelines and content are provided principally in English. Accordingly, children of LEP parents continue to be underrepresented in advanced, accelerated, and extracurricular programs, likely due to a lack of access to information in their languages.

It was noted during the meetings that the U.S. Department of Education may support additional policy and legislative initiatives to enhance language access for the LEP community in educational settings, buoyed by U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona’s background in bilingual and bicultural education. This may involve a campaign to inform members of the LEP community of their language access rights as well as the development of best practices and standards for language services, particularly in educational settings.

ATA’s Advocacy Committee and Interpretation Policy Advisory Committee continue to be focal points for leveraging practical industry experience and subject matter expertise as it relates to policy and legislation. (www.atanet.org/news/advocacy-and-outreach).

**Technology**

Technology and its applications continue to influence and shape the T&I industry—again, with advantages and challenges. Advances in technology often lead to enhanced quality in conjunction with streamlined workflows. However, practitioners commonly face challenges in incorporating new technologies and procedures, some of which generate excess cognitive load.

Technology’s influence on the T&I industry often requires clarifications for clients as well as practitioners. Nowhere is this more apparent than the application of machine translation (MT) and its implications for the T&I industry. In this regard, the International Federation of Translators published a position paper on post-editing risks and consequences. A provocative “think piece” on “Translation Economics in the 2020s” in the July/August 2021 edition of MultiLingual magazine invited “healthy debate across the industry” on the pace and degree to which future improvements in MT will affect the translation sector. Weighty concepts of singularity, data ownership, intellectual property, and functional limitations in artificial intelligence are relevant to this debate as we feel the shock waves of an industry reconfiguration driven by radical digitization, human reskilling, and exponential data intelligence. In point-counterpoint fashion, MultiLingual
published a rebuttal to the July/August article in its November/December 2021 edition entitled “Data: Of Course! MT: Useful or Risky. Translators: Here to Stay!”

One of the conclusions of this article was that current MT systems are based on the mechanical manipulation of data. These systems don’t understand the purpose of a translation and don’t respond to questions about why they translated the way they did. Therefore, human translators will play a significant role in every professional translation process for the foreseeable future.

### Professional Development and Specialization

Professional development and specialization continue to be prominent aspects of the T&I industry. Opportunities for development increased during the pandemic, principally through more numerous and varied online webinars and networking opportunities. Of particular interest are topics involving the integration of technologies into language services operations.

Attendees at the meetings noted that training in the use and integration of remote simultaneous interpreting platforms was prominent. Although remote interpreting has existed since the 1970s, advances in technology and the pandemic have pushed new methodologies onto the market without any established industry-wide standards. Coupled with the unique challenges of working on new platforms, the loss of context and the speaker’s nonverbal cues in their workplace, and increased demand for offsite services, interpreters have struggled to make sense of expectations and best practices when working remotely. Additional client education may also be needed regarding the incorporation of these technologies and the proper remuneration for remote professional language services. Last year, ATA released a position paper on remote interpreting with the purpose of identifying differences between on-site and remote interpreting and offering best practices for effective remote interpreting.

Legal/court interpreters also benefitted from a series of Zoom webinars on the use of technology in courtrooms arranged by the National Center for State Courts. Notably, there is a lack of industry standards or guidelines for the provision of legal/court interpreting services in remote settings.

Regarding industry specialization, the American Association of Interpreters and Translators in Education (AAITE) was formally established in 2021. AAITE is engaging in many initiatives as it develops, including a “white paper” job task analysis project and a workshop program for its members. The intent is that such work will refine occupational capacities and competencies and lead to specialized credentialing programs for interpreters and translators who work in educational settings.

### Education and Training

Education and training are crucial to the T&I industry, involving current practitioners as well as young individuals who may join the community in the future.

Greater interorganizational interaction is a notable trend involving stakeholders of the T&I industry. In this regard, ATA is collaborating with the Association of Language Companies (ALC) to develop and share industry information and employment opportunities with students considering careers as translators and interpreters.

The ALC Bridge involves developing connections among associations, community commons, academia, and industry—to include clarifications on practitioner knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well as efforts to identify and create internship and mentorship programs.

Other interorganizational collaborative initiatives involve industry and academic...
The Need for Continued Interorganizational Engagement, Collaboration, and Advocacy

Throughout both meetings, it was clear that interorganizational engagement, collaboration, and advocacy involving coalitions and individuals are crucial to the success and outlook of the T&I industry. This reflects the continued importance of active participation among representatives of the extended family of T&I stakeholders, including professional associations, community groups, academic institutions, and industry partners. Interconnections are key to shaping legislation and policy, facilitating technology and its integration, and crafting education and training in ways that benefit the T&I industry and the greater language enterprise. Such is the exceptional role of member volunteer work from ATA and its sister organizations—as lofty as that may seem.

Does this type of discussion pique your interest? Are you eager to get involved? If so, consider opportunities to participate in future T&I industry stakeholder meetings. For questions and information on upcoming meetings, or to request a copy of the “Joint Communiqué—2021 Translation and Interpreting Summit” containing the complete notes of the event, please feel free to contact me at russ4ata@yahoo.com.

NOTES


7. For a complete list of webinars, along with downloadable resources, visit the National Center for State Courts webinar page at https://bit.ly/NCSC-webinars.


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Selling Data

In 2004, I started a company with Donna Parrish, one of the co-owners and co-organizers of the LocWorld conferences (https://locworld.com), called TM Marketplace. The idea behind the company was to facilitate the leasing of translation memories (TMs) between parties. These TMs could either be used for traditional TM lookup services or as training material for the then-blossoming statistical machine translation (MT) engines. The company didn’t survive very long, but I mention this here because I want to tell you a story connected with it.

One of the underlying ideas of allowing partners and even competitors to use TMs is that it really is in everyone’s interest. Localizing a first-of-its-kind product in a given language market involves a steep investment, especially with terminology that has to be researched and coined. The leasing of those materials to others might allow the leasing party to recoup some of that investment, but, more importantly, it might also give them a certain amount of power and prestige because their terminology would likely be used without highly company-specific or trademarked terms. Plus, because product owners believe their products compare favorably with the competition, it only makes sense to have everyone use similar terminology to create a more even playing field.

At a LocWorld conference in 2005, the heads of the translation divisions of SAP and Oracle were present. SAP had just announced they were about to release a Vietnamese version of their flagship product. While SAP and Oracle are very different companies, their core products are rather similar. (In fact, if you read through their Wikipedia pages, the description of their range of products is almost word-for-word the same).

Of course, I saw this as a great opportunity for TM Marketplace. It seemed a no-brainer to me that SAP would be more than willing to use our services so their data could be leased to Oracle and other partners and competitors.

I was essentially laughed out of the room by the SAP representative—who asked why in the world they would ever do that. The Oracle representative, while acknowledging that they were indeed gearing up for their own Vietnamese localization, also just shook his head at my naivety. That simply wasn’t how things were done!
Needless to say, I felt rather stupid, and, as you can see, I’ve certainly never forgotten the episode. But I’ve always felt that maybe I wasn’t the one who missed out on something there. (My reason for retelling this story will become apparent in a moment.)

I recently had an opportunity to speak to Thomas Wienold, head of the Language Experience Lab at SAP, about a tool that’s been around since 2017 but has seen some interesting development in just the past few weeks. The tool is called SAP Translation Hub (https://bit.ly/SAP-Hub), a cloud-based solution that allows for the translation of documents and user interface files into 39 languages. It accomplishes this by sending files through a two-tiered process, where the tool searches within SAP’s “multilingual text repository” (MLTR) for a proposed translation and displays it along with a quality index so that the end user can decide if it’s a good translation and if they want to use it. The remaining strings are filled with MT suggestions that originate from SAP’s own neural MT engine, which has also been trained with its MLTR. The cost for all this is approximately the same as you would pay for other generic application programming interface–based MT engines (2.42 €, or USD 3.34 per 100,000 characters), but the expected quality is naturally significantly better. In other words, users can expect correct and consistent terminology.

Both SAP’s MT engine and its MLTR are updated constantly and reflect the assets that SAP uses for its own internal purposes. Furthermore, the MLTR makes heavy use of metadata, which allows for industry-specific employment of that data. This is something that can even be improved by the possibility of adding a company’s (here SAP’s) own bilingual data to train the MT engine even more specifically for their purposes.

Once processed by the system, users can then edit the strings in a simple and proprietary interface.

What’s new and makes this even more attractive to anyone working with SAP’s data is that it’s now also available via the XTM Cloud interface and licensed via the SAP Store (the company’s online marketplace where customers can discover, try, buy, and renew solutions from SAP and its trusted partners). The XTM Cloud interface provides access to SAP’s specifically trained MT engine, just like any other application programming interface–based MT engine, whereas the application offered in the SAP Store contains the MLTR lookup feature combined with SAP’s MT engine via the two–step process mentioned earlier supporting user interface translations. You can expect other translation environment tools to also offer this as a possibility in the future.

I asked Wienold whether he sees SAP Translation Hub as a “profit center” now or at some point in the future. He responded that he sees the tool more as an “enabler” for its users. The tool is open to anyone, including competitors, to which he has no objection. Nor should he, in my opinion. In fact, I think this is a fabulous solution that other companies could emulate, especially those like SAP with a lot of customers that develop their own extensions and products to fit into their respective ecosystems.

Plus, I just really love innovative ways to look at translation. And this is a prime example.

There clearly was (and is) a steep investment in localizing a first-of-its-kind product in a given language market, especially with terminology that has to be researched and coined.
Choose Your Platform

When choosing a tablet, you’re probably wondering whether to opt for an iPad, Android, or Windows device.

Android tablets come in many shapes and sizes from various manufacturers but lack powerful tablet-specific applications. (In my opinion, Samsung is probably your best bet.)

Microsoft’s first “tablet PCs” never really took off, but the current touch-optimized Surface devices are pretty swell. They’ll run Windows apps (which is great if you also translate with a computer-assisted translation tool), and the built-in kickstand, optional fold-away keyboard, and Surface pen are extremely useful accessories.

My hands-down favorite tablet is the iPad. It’s polished, easy to use, and offers countless high-quality apps. And the Apple Pencil and Smart Keyboard pair seamlessly with your iPad and offer an all-around stellar experience.

Let’s review some key factors to consider when choosing your iPad.

The Right Size

Apple currently offers four models: the 8.3” iPad Mini (starting price: $499), the 10.2” standard iPad ($329+), the 10.9” iPad Air ($599+), and the 12.9” top-of-the-line iPad Pro ($1,099+). Simply put, the iPad Pro is about the size of a large sheet of paper, while the iPad and iPad Air are closer to a notepad you would use for consecutive interpreting, and the iPad Mini is even smaller.

In my opinion, the Mini is fine for consecutive, on-the-go interpreting but simply too small as an interpreting all-rounder. It’s just big enough for note-taking and can be held comfortably with one hand (maybe using a case with a hand loop). But as soon as you want to split your screen to simultaneously see your notes, glossary, fact sheet, or reference documents, the Mini will likely be too small.

The large iPad Pro, on the other hand, comes with a huge screen, but it’s really intended to be used at a desk and will be too big for a cramped mobile booth. So,

Which iPad Is Best for Interpreting?

In this column, I’ll answer a question I encounter at least once a month: “Which tablet is best for interpreting?” After sharing why I’m a big iPad fan, I’ll give you a rundown of all the options on the market. Here’s the good news. You don’t have to spend a fortune to get an excellent iPad to use for interpreting!

Note: Apple updates its tablet range once a year. All prices reflect the Apple retail price in USD at the time of this writing.
for most interpreters, we’ve already narrowed the choice to the mid-sized options: the 10.2” iPad or 10.9” iPad Air.

Is Wi-Fi Enough?
When purchasing an iPad, you’ll need to choose between Wi-Fi-only and cellular models. The cellular model isn’t cheap. In addition to a higher initial cost ($130 to $200 more), you’ll also need a monthly cellular internet (or pay-as-you-go) plan.

This one is an easy call: you don’t need cellular. Since you can set up a personal hotspot on your phone and connect to it when you’re on the go, there’s no need to pay extra!

Features
iPads offer a range of features, such as the camera, connectivity, and display. But to be completely honest, if you’re buying a new iPad primarily for interpreting, these features don’t matter all that much.

For starters, all iPad cameras feature at least an 8 megapixel sensor, which is more than enough for our purposes. (We’re not professional photographers or videographers.) Also, although iPads come with either a USB-C connector or Apple’s proprietary Lightning port, it’s easy enough to buy the right cables and adapters for your tablet. Finally, displays across the entire iPad lineup deliver a crisp, clear image. In short, the main features on all iPads are sufficiently robust for interpreters!

Storage
You can never have enough storage, and if you use your tablet for other purposes, like storing lots of movies or photos, you’ve probably run out of memory before. I always recommend splurging here. Get as much storage as you can afford and don’t go below 128 GB of capacity. Your future self will thank you.

Stylus
A stylus unlocks the ability to take consecutive notes and annotate speeches, presentations, and other documents. Although you can purchase inexpensive non-Apple keyboards and styluses, I strongly recommend you pick up an Apple Pencil and Apple keyboard. Both pair seamlessly with your device and offer an all-around excellent experience.

While the second-generation Apple Pencil ($129) offers more bells and whistles—wireless charging, a magnet to attach to your iPad, nicer handling, and a programmable virtual button—the first-generation Pencil ($99) also works well. Since each iPad only supports one of the two options, just pick the stylus that pairs with your device.

Keyboard
Sure, you can enter text by tapping away on the screen or by dictating, but ultimately a keyboard is still the quickest way to type a long email, fire off an online search, or control your device with keyboard shortcuts. A keyboard will also free up screen real estate since it makes the software keyboard obsolete!

Here, too, choose the keyboard that goes with your device. The standard iPad works with the Smart Keyboard ($159), while the iPad Air and Pro pair with either the Smart Keyboard Folio ($179–$199) or Magic Keyboard ($299–$349). All Apple keyboards now feature the Smart Connector, which is better and more reliable than a Bluetooth keyboard. (Note that there’s currently no Apple keyboard specifically designed for the Mini.)

Which iPad for Interpreting?
Until a few years ago, I always recommended the iPad Pro, which was the only model that worked with an Apple Pencil. But that setup cost a pretty penny. Thankfully, the 10.2” iPad now offers all the features most interpreters need.

It’s the perfect balance of size, weight, and features, while still coming in at a reasonable price point ($479 for 256 GB). Pick up the Apple Pencil ($99) and Smart Keyboard ($159) for a best-in-class experience.

Although the iPad Air also ticks all my boxes for size and weight, it’s significantly more expensive ($649 for 256 GB), plus you’ll need to purchase a slightly more expensive Pencil and Keyboard. And the benefits are limited: a slightly larger screen, slightly thinner and lighter device, and a more powerful processor.

The 10.2” iPad offers much better value and will do just about everything the average interpreter needs. Unless you’re planning to edit a ton of videos on your tablet, you don’t need the Pro or Air.

In short, if you’re in the market for a new iPad, pick up the 10.2” iPad with an Apple Pencil and Smart Keyboard, and, if possible, 256 GB of storage. You’ll get the best form factor and most bang for your buck, without breaking the bank!

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If you have any ideas and/or suggestions regarding helpful resources or tools you would like to see featured, please e-mail Jost Zetzsche at jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com.
Can Clients Find You? Help Them With Google My Business

The following was originally published on Next Level: The ATA Business Practices Blog. This initiative by ATA’s Business Practices Education Committee provides information for both freelancers and company owners to use in all aspects of their careers, from improving their privacy protections to planning for retirement. Visit: www.atanet.org/career-education/next-level.

I’m willing to bet that marketing your translation or interpreting services to potential clients isn’t something you look forward to. Most of us usually dread or postpone this task. Wouldn’t it be nice if clients came to you instead?

Well, it’s possible to get closer to that goal with a Google My Business (GMB) profile. In the following I’ll be sharing my personal experience using GMB to make it easier for clients to find me online.

People often look for service providers on the go or through their mobile devices. Having a GMB page makes you more visible to those searching for the type of services you provide. Think about the last time you searched for a professional service. Chances are you started by typing in the name of that service in your favorite search engine. For most people, that’s Google. If you’re looking for someone local, you probably used Google Maps.

“But I can’t compete with agencies that invest time and money on search engine optimization! They’ll always be at the top of the search results.”

Well, that’s not necessarily true anymore. Google is focusing more and more on bringing the most relevant search results to the user. That means pulling information from Google Maps, social media sites (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook, etc.), and other online sources. In fact, when Google looks up information for someone searching for, say, a certified Russian translator, it takes into account three criteria:

- **Relevance**: Does this business offer the service that the user is searching for?
- **Distance**: Is this business located in the same area as the user, or does it provide services in this area?
- **Prominence**: Does this business appear to be legitimate?

By creating a GMB profile, you can make sure you tick all the boxes. Google will put your business listing at the top of search results, right after the listings marked as ads, in the Google Maps section. Here, your potential client will see the name.
of your business and your contact information.

More than half of new clients who contact me tell me they found my information through a Google Search. And no, those aren’t just individual clients looking for official document translations. Thanks to this strategy, I started working with local law firms, digital marketing agencies, and other businesses that need translation or localization services.

“But isn’t GMB meant to promote brick-and-mortar businesses? I don’t want to make my home address visible online!”

That’s a valid concern for those of us who work from home. You do need to provide your physical address to create a GMB profile, but as soon as it’s verified you can edit your business location and delete your home address. Your business will then be marked as “no location; deliveries and home services only.”

But how does this affect the distance criteria mentioned earlier? To make sure your business listing appears in the Google Map search results, you’ll need to list your service areas. Think about your ideal clients and where they may be located. You can enter up to 20 service areas using zip codes or names of counties, cities, or states.

While completing your GMB profile, it’s important to think like a potential client would and complete all the sections of your profile that will help them see you’re the right person for the job. This will also help establish your relevance in Google Search results.

To help your clients (and the Google Search algorithm) see if you’re the right fit, you should complete these sections of your GMB profile:

Business Hours: Are you open on weekends? Can clients reach you after 6:00 pm? If your profile says you’re open on weekdays and a client is searching for a French interpreter on a Sunday, Google may still include you in search results but will mark your business as “Currently closed.” If you would rather still receive the client’s inquiry, it’s a good idea to list your online service hours. They may differ from your preferred business hours and give a client a nudge to contact you.

Website: If you have a website for your translation or interpreting business, add the link to your GMB profile. It helps establish prominence (important for search results!) and helps your website search engine optimization. If you don’t have a website yet, add a link to your ATA directory listing or another membership association you would like your clients to contact you through. The website link appears right next to the business listing in Google Maps results, so people can go straight to your website (or your ATA directory listing).

Services: Make sure to list all the services you provide. Again, think as a client and use the search terms they would use. It’s a good idea to be specific: list your language pair, what type of translation or interpreting services you offer, in what settings you interpret, and what types of documents or content you translate or localize. The more specific your service list is, the more relevant your listing will be to your potential client’s search results.

From the Business: This is another opportunity to describe your translation or interpreting services and how you can help your ideal clients. Be clear and specific. What you write in this section not only tells clients if you appear to be trustworthy and a good fit for them, but it also provides keywords for Google Searches.

Phone Number: You can list your business phone in this section or, if you’re not comfortable receiving phone calls from clients, you can leave it blank. One thing to keep in mind is that people who search for professional services on the go usually like it if they can simply click that “Call” button next to the business listing and talk to someone right away.

One of the main questions that potential clients have is: Can I trust this service provider? This is why the Reviews section of your GMB profile is so important. It satisfies the prominence criteria of Google Search, which tells the search engine that your business appears to be legitimate, and it helps the potential client feel they can trust you.

When a client thanks you for a job well done, ask if they would be willing to write a brief review for your GMB profile and send them a direct link to the review form. You can get it from the home page of your GMB profile. When you receive a nice review, it helps boost your ranking in search results and brings more clients. Plus, now you have a testimonial you can also use on your website!

There are many ways of attracting new clients, and a well-maintained GMB profile has been a great addition to my marketing toolbox. If you have a website, a completed GMB profile also works in favor of your website search engine optimization. That’s a win–win in my book!

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The Certification Exam: In Demand and on Demand!

ATA recently launched its second year of offering the certification exam online. In 2021, we began partnering with ExamRoom.AI, an international remote testing platform, to allow candidates to take the exam from home. After some initial hiccups, this proved to be a successful and popular collaboration. In all, 150 candidates took the online exam, whereas fewer than 100 attended in-person sittings. In both cases, capacity bottlenecks forced us to turn away a number of people interested in becoming certified. The plan this year is to greatly expand the availability of the online exam, which entails a few key changes.

Last year, ATA scheduled virtual sittings (i.e., set times at which a limited number of candidates took the exam remotely). They were monitored by proctors from ExamRoom—who provided technical support and also watched for obvious prohibited behavior, such as cell phone use or talking to someone off-camera—as well as ATA proctors, who watched for unauthorized internet use.1

This year, candidates will do initial registration via ATA, selecting their language pair and making payment, and then be passed on to ExamRoom to schedule the exam at a time of the candidate’s choosing. This means that for the first time ever, candidates will be able to schedule their own exam sitting. Moreover, there’s virtually no limit on the number of candidates who can take the exam.

The second key change is that instead of allowing candidates to access all of the internet apart from specifically prohibited sites (such as DeepL or sites with chat or forums), this year we’re flipping that around and allowing candidates to use only a long list of allowed resource sites. Everything else will be blocked automatically—and thus there’s no longer any need for ATA proctors to monitor internet usage. (These two approaches to internet access used to be known by the implicitly racist terms “blacklist” and “whitelist.”)

The new “Allow List” for 2022 has been carefully selected by graders with outside input. It includes monolingual English and non–English resources, bilingual dictionary sites, and some multilingual sites. We believe this will be much less confusing for candidates, as they’ll know in advance and during the exam exactly which sites they can use. It will also even out expectations, as both graders and candidates can be confident that qualified candidates, by applying their knowledge and skills and using the allowed list of resources, can successfully address the challenges present in the exam.

In addition to the on-demand online exam, we’re still allowing local groups to organize in-person sittings. Be advised that candidates taking the in-person exam will also be limited to the same Allow List of internet resources as other candidates. And finally, all print resources continue to be permitted for both the online and in-person exam, and candidates are also free to use glossaries stored on their computer/laptop, as long as they aren’t contained within a computer-assisted translation program.

There are sure to be some additional sites that individuals would like to see on the Allow List. The Certification Committee is open to suggestions, but it remains the final arbiter of what makes it onto the list. Before you send in a suggestion for an additional site, bear in mind that the exam is not a vocabulary drill, and that the passages are of general subject matter. Gone are the days when we had semi–technical texts that might have necessitated an array of specialized dictionaries. My advice to candidates regarding the Allow List is to consider the sites already permitted very carefully and focus on the ones that provide the most practical assistance. If there’s a site missing that you think should absolutely be permitted, we’ll consider adding it to the list, but any changes will not take effect until 2023.

Everyone in the Certification Program is excited by this new prospect of unlimited access to the exam. Getting to this point has required a huge effort by current and former members of the Certification Committee, graders, proctors, and especially Certification Program Manager Caron Bailey and the late Michèle Hansen, Certification Committee Chair from 2020 to 2021. Kudos to everyone involved. Everyone in the Certification Program is excited by this new prospect of unlimited access to the exam. Getting to this point has required a huge effort by current and former members of the Certification Committee, graders, proctors, and especially Certification Program Manager Caron Bailey and the late Michèle Hansen, Certification Committee Chair from 2020 to 2021. Kudos to everyone involved.!

NOTES
1. Besides live monitoring, all sessions are recorded for later review if necessary.
2. Subject to grader capacity for processing completed exams.
4. Send to certification@atanet.org.

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WHEN WE CONNECT  We explore our shared experience to gain a broader perspective and overcome challenges. We encourage and inspire each other to reach farther than we ever could alone. We discover a community dedicated to effecting change and achieving real growth.  WE CONNECT AT ATA63

ATA 63rd Annual Conference
October 12-15, 2022  ●  Los Angeles, California

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American Translators Association  www.atanet.org/conference
Better than ever

What does it mean that Trados now comes to you from RWS? Simply that we're in an even stronger and more stable position to bring you the innovation you expect.

Our mission remains the same

We'll continue to develop the market’s leading translation technology. From desktop to cloud, Trados will give you the flexibility to work the way you want. But more than that, we'll help you make the most of the technology.

With you every step of the way

Our people – our greatest asset – are dedicated to helping you meet the challenging demands of a digital-first world. We've been supporting the translation industry for more than 35 years, and our commitment to doing so is as strong as ever.

Have questions? Then why not get in touch:

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