At first, ATA deliberately remained neutral on this issue while gathering more information about its potential impacts. For instance, we know that while the majority of our members are freelancers by choice, some would prefer to be employees if given the opportunity to do so. However, as AB5 progressed through the legislative process, we began hearing from ATA members in California about significant negative repercussions, most importantly a direct loss of work. Given that California often leads the U.S. in legislative changes, we felt that it was time to amend our position and clarify the complexities of the language services market pertaining to freelance translators and interpreters.

Board members Madalena Sanchez Zamparlo and John Milan led the effort to write an ATA statement of position on AB5, requesting an exemption (or "carve-out") from this bill for translators and interpreters who choose to be freelancers. You can read the full statement at http://bit.ly/ATA-AB5. The most important points of our position are:

- **AB5 is overbroad:** In attempting to protect workers who are misclassified as contractors, it lumps them together with those who have made a deliberate choice to provide freelance services.
- Translators and interpreters who work for a single employer that controls their working conditions, schedule, pay, etc., should have the right to be considered employees.
- **The majority of ATA’s members work for multiple clients:** They decide when, for whom, and how much to charge. They should have the right to remain independent contractors.

With this statement, we hope that the California Assembly will grant an exception to AB5 for our members who choose to be freelancers. We support the right of all our members to create their own business arrangements, and we feel that if AB5 is enforced in its current form, most language services companies in California may simply choose to work with freelancers outside California. We’ll keep you updated as this initiative progresses!

California Assembly Bill 5: ATA Takes a Stand

California Assembly Bill 5 (AB5) has been in the news a great deal lately. This bill seeks to solidify and codify the so-called “Dynamex” decision on the classification of contractors and employees in California.

The Dynamex decision was a significant departure from the generally accepted definition of contractors and employees. It created a standard whereby workers are presumed to be employees until proven otherwise, and—perhaps more strikingly—specified that contractors must “perform work that is outside the usual course of the hiring entity’s business.” In practice, this means that a translation or interpreting company could hire a freelance web designer, but not freelance translators or interpreters.

Under AB5, the hiring entity must establish each of the following three factors, commonly known as the “ABC test”:

A. That the worker is free from the control and direction of the hiring entity in connection with the performance of the work, both under the contract for the performance of the work and in fact; and

B. That the worker performs work that is outside the usual course of the hiring entity’s business; and

C. That the worker is customarily engaged in an independently established trade, occupation, or business of the same nature as the work performed.
FEATURES

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ATA 2019 Elections: Candidate Statements
Calling all Voting members! Participating in ATA’s annual elections is your opportunity to help shape the future of the Association. Learn what this year’s candidates for ATA’s Board of Directors have to say, and remember to vote in October!

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Are You Getting the Most from Your ATA Directory Profile?
To enable potential clients to make the most effective use of the Directory of Translators and Interpreters, ATA members should strive to keep their profiles up to date. Members should also take advantage of all the Directory options that allow an individual to highlight their services.

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Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and the Future-Proofed Translator: What I Learned from TAUS
As language specialists, we tend to think of machine translation and artificial intelligence as the monsters under the bed. But if we’re willing to embrace these monsters, we can use them to our advantage.

COLUMNS

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Striving for Better Communication

“What we’ve got here is failure to communicate.” The context in which Strother Martin said this to Paul Newman and the rest of the road gang in Road Prison 36, the setting for the film Cool Hand Luke, in no way applies to ATA. Still, I think it’s important to acknowledge the existence of such a failure with regard to information that ATA’s Board of Directors has provided to you, the members. At least in some respects.

Therefore, instead of using my last column as president-elect to promote ATA60 in Palm Springs, I would like to presage what I hope will become my norm for the president’s column. Recent events have made it clear that the Board has failed to fully communicate with the membership about some policy changes, especially with regard to opening the certification exam to nonmembers. As a director and officer for the past eight years, I played a part in that failure, and as incoming president I apologize for not striving for better communication. I also promise that I will do a better job informing the membership about the Board’s actions and policy decisions.

This is not to criticize past officers and directors. Every member of the Boards on which I have served for the past eight years has volunteered countless hours of their time in an honest and sincere effort to do what’s best for ATA and for you, its members. While one may legitimately criticize certain policy decisions or specific actions, I believe no one has cause to criticize the sincerity and selflessness of the volunteers who comprise ATA’s leadership.

We’re facing profound changes and challenges in our industry, our profession, and in our Association. ATA must find ways to meet these challenges and adapt to a changing environment. Among the issues that the Board will grapple with over the next two years are declining membership, the structure and cost of the Annual and other conferences, the financial challenges resulting from the former two items, and the growth and structure of divisions, and others as yet unseen.

I will encourage discussion about these issues and solicit your input. To that end, I encourage you to join the ATAtalk listserv, which is intended as an online forum for the discussion of ATA issues between members. While it is not intended as a forum to debate with the Board, Board members will answer questions when necessary, in particular to correct misstatements and misunderstandings. To join ATAtalk, send an email with your ATA membership number or your name and email address on file with ATA to atatalk-subscribe@yahooogroups.com. As the group is restricted to ATA members, your request will be checked against the membership database before approval.

Here are some issues for upcoming Board discussion:

Membership: After years of growth, ATA has seen a small but steady decline in membership in recent years. How do we reverse this trend? How do we attract and retain new members? How can we better promote the benefits of ATA membership? How do we communicate the value proposition?

Conferences: Can we improve the already high quality of our Annual Conference? How can we provide smaller, more affordable “Conferences Other Than Annual” (COTAs) for those members who cannot attend the Annual Conference? How do we make conferences and seminars as affordable as possible while not sustaining a financial loss?

Finances: After turning our finances around over the past five years, we’re now forecasting losses for the next few years due to declining revenues from conferences and membership. In addition to addressing the first two issues above, what else can we do to bolster our financial situation? Which member benefits should be subsidized by membership dues, and to what extent? Which benefits should be primarily on a “pay to use” basis?

Divisions: Divisions are the “home within the home” for many members. How can we make divisions an even better home? Are there any structural changes necessary? Should large divisions be treated differently than small divisions? Should the Interpreters Division remain as is, or break itself up into specific fields of practice, such as medical, community, legal, etc.?

These are just some of the issues that the Board and ATA’s leadership will be dealing with in the near future. I invite you to provide us with your thoughts on these and any other issues that are of concern to you. I would especially welcome any thoughts you have on how we can do a better job of communicating with you.

It’s Not Too Late to Make Plans for ATA60!

Come to ATA’s 60th Annual Conference, October 23–26, in Palm Springs, California! If you’ve never been to an Annual Conference, you don’t know what you’ve been missing. If you have attended in the past, you know exactly what a great conference you’ll miss if you don’t attend. At $199/night, you would be hard-pressed to find a more affordable hotel rate in any major city. The weather will be great, and the sessions will be even greater. And don’t forget to get your collector’s pin at the ATAWare table! Register now at www.atanet.org/conf/2019/register!
**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

*To Make a Living or to Translate | Valerij Tomarenko*

After reading Valerij Tomarenko’s article “Translate Differently and Don’t Fear,” I felt the need to intone a dirge.

Tomarenko says “I personally have been making a decent living off my translations for more than two decades.” Well, so have I, for the past three decades, in fact. But that has come to a screeching halt.

It’s my own fault. Luckily, I no longer have to make a living translating, because I refuse to use CAT tools, or anything else that reduces translating to some form of mechanical exercise. So my opportunities are reduced, but at least those that come my way let me do the joyful business of applying my language skills to whole texts and to create from them other whole texts.

My mentor in the Boston College Slavic Languages Department, Professor Michael Connolly, who knew that I was pursuing my master’s degree in Russian to become a translator, stated flatly, “Translation is mechanical.” I rejected that indignantly. I still reject it indignantly, however much it has been realized in the mundane world of the “translation industry.”

Humpty-Dumpty had a great fall . . .

Elliott B. Urdang | Providence, Rhode Island

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**FEATURED FACEBOOK POST**

American Translators Association
August 22

Understanding the challenging world of the literary translator

“English translations of Japanese books have found an enthusiastic audience around the world, but the contribution of the translator is sometimes overlooked in discussions and reviews in the English media. While the author is undoubtedly the star of the show, the translator’s role is much more than that of a bit player. The job comes with its own set of challenges.”

Read on—

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**TOP TWEETS**

- Understanding Language Loss | Psychology Today
  AUG 21/ @ATANET / #1NT #XL8

- The new edition of Translatio, the newsletter of the International Federation of Translators, is out.
  http://ow.ly/5EB730pj4MW
  AUG 16/ @ATANET / #1NT #XL8
The American Translators Association’s Board of Directors met August 3–4, 2019, in Denver, Colorado. Here are some highlights from the Board meeting.

Final Budget: The Board approved the July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020 final budget and the 2020–2022 draft budgets. The approved budget is $3.2 million. This compares to last year’s budget of $3.24 million. The difference is due in part to a projected smaller Annual Conference in Palm Springs than last year’s conference in New Orleans.

Proposed Bylaws Amendment: The Board approved presenting proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation to recognize interpreters and to allow ATA to receive donations. (Please see page 13 for more information.)

Date of Record: The Board set September 23, 2019, as the date of record for the 2019 elections. This means that if you wanted to participate in this year’s elections, you needed to be a Voting member by September 23.

ATA Board Elections Policy: The Board approved revisions to ATA’s Board Elections Policy. Specifically, the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee (NLDC) shall put forward at least two candidates for all officer and director positions, although in exceptional cases the NLDC can put forward one candidate.

Continuing Education Requirements: The Board approved the Certification Committee's recommended changes to the continuing education requirements, including requiring continuing education for translators over 60 years of age. Currently, once translators turn 60, they no longer need to submit Continuing Education Points. The reality is that many translators work well into their 70s and beyond, so continuing education remains relevant. Current members born before 1960 will be grandfathered in. The Board also approved minor changes to the requirements themselves.

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

The next Board meeting is set for October 26–27, 2019, in conjunction with ATA’s Annual Conference in Palm Springs, California. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WALTER BACAK, CAE
walter@atanet.org

Board Meeting Highlights

Standing from left: Directors Evelyn Yang Garland, Tony Guerra, Geoff Koby, Melinda Gonzalez-Hibner, Eve Lindemuth Bodeux, Cristina Helmerichs, Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo, Elena Langdon, and Meghan (McCallum) Konkol.
Seated from left: Treasurer John Milan, President-Elect Ted Wozniak, President Corinne McKay, and Secretary Karen Tkaczyk.

Proposed Articles of Incorporation Amendments: The Board approved presenting proposed amendments to the Articles of Incorporation to recognize interpreters and to allow ATA to receive donations. (Please see page 13 for more information.)
ATA 2019 Elections: Candidate Statements

ATA will hold its regularly scheduled elections at the upcoming 2019 ATA Annual Conference in Palm Springs, California, to elect a president-elect, secretary, and treasurer for a two-year term, as well as three directors for a three-year term. In addition, members will vote on proposed revisions to ATA’s Bylaws and its Articles of Incorporation.

PRESIDENT-ELECT (TWO-YEAR TERM)

GEOFF KOBY | kobytranslation@yahoo.com

It has been my honor and privilege to serve ATA on the Board for five years. My experience there and my professional qualifications have given me the perspective that allows me to serve ATA well as president-elect.

As president-elect, I would focus on advocacy, public relations, certification, and education. Enhancing and expanding support for public relations and advocacy is a fundamental task of our Association—to communicate for members and raise the profile of professional translation and interpreting. With contacts to many stakeholders, I can advocate effectively for our profession, communicating the message “to get it right, you need a professional translator or interpreter!” Credentials indicate quality and professionalism, so certification of both translators and interpreters is important. ATA must continue to advocate for high professional quality standards. Finally, the education system is where we develop new translation and interpreting professionals. I will continue to advocate for best practices in educational curricula.

Twenty-five years ago, I joined the faculty of Kent State University as a translator trainer, earning tenure in 2002. I also started freelancing in legal, business, and finance translation, and became ATA-certified in German>English (1996) and Dutch>English (2004). This helped build credibility with my students and represent the profession, since I believe a translation professor should also do translation.

Over the years for ATA, I have presented at the Annual Conference, written articles for The ATA Chronicle, and founded and served as president of the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association. I joined ATA’s Certification Program in 2006 as a grader for German>English exams, then served on the Certification Committee as secretary and then chair until I was elected to the Board. As chair, I partnered with interpreters in submitting a paper on best practices for interpreting and translation to the Department of Homeland Security that became part of the language access plan of its Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

As a Board member, I serve in many ways: I lead quarterly meetings of The ATA Chronicle Editorial Board; I help draft new policies and bylaws on the Governance and Communications Committee; I helped write a National Endowment for the Humanities grant with the Education & Pedagogy Committee; and I have been working with the Certification Committee on a project to automate grading. I became president of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation in 2018, which has co-sponsored a summer school for translation graduate students and launched a scholarship program for students wishing to attend ATA’s Annual Conference. I also meet regularly with an ASTM International standards group working to develop a new standard guide for translation quality assurance. Finally, I am currently heading a committee revising ATA’s Translation and Interpreting Compensation Services Survey questionnaire.

ATA is strong because of its members, who volunteer their time to advance the profession. I promise to work for all members across all languages. I ask for your vote for me, and, as I have done since volunteering with ATA in 2002, I promise to serve faithfully in the future.
I am humbled and honored to be a candidate for president-elect. I take great pride in my career and the exciting journey it has taken me over the years. After starting out as a medical interpreter, I gradually honed my translation skills and began working as a full-time freelance translator in Spanish and Portuguese. A few years later, I opened a small agency. These roles have allowed me to see our profession from different perspectives, which has proven immensely beneficial to my work within various programs in ATA and to the Association as a whole.

It has been my pleasure to serve ATA members since 2011. I served as administrator of ATA’s Medical Division for two terms (2011–2015), and worked closely with the Interpreters Division during that time. Together, we developed the Medical Interpreter Information Initiative. In 2014, I became chair of ATA’s Public Relations (PR) Committee and was elected as an ATA director.

During my four years as chair of the PR Committee, I led the committee to re-energize the PR program with a more sustainable strategy. We trained media spokespersons and event speakers to reach end clients directly at the professional conferences of ACES: Society for Editing, the Society for Technical Communication, and the International Association of Business Communicators. I also launched our PR Writers Group, which pens original articles to educate the public about the value of using professional interpreters and translators. As chair of the PR Committee, I fielded calls from media outlets such as ABC, the Associated Press, CNN, National Public Radio, PBS, and USA Today, and helped coordinate a television segment on CNBC.

In my current roles as ATA director and chair of ATA’s Membership Committee, I am focusing my efforts on ensuring that ATA has the services and benefits to help satisfy the needs of our current members and attract new members.

If elected, I will continue to champion the needs of individual translators and interpreters and uphold ATA’s mission to promote you, provide you with opportunities, and advocate on your behalf. I will work with the Board to ensure that ATA provides more and better resources for all stages of your career—whether you are entering the profession, seeking mid-career support, or nearing retirement. I will also work with fellow Board members to find the best ways to support you during a time when technology and budget woes are shaking up our profession. This means listening to your concerns and taking action. It means seeing the big picture and providing you with valuable programming and professional development opportunities throughout the year. It means advocating on your behalf. It means helping ATA equip you to do your job with the support of an association of professionals. And it means conveying to the public that our Association is the resource to find professionals who will provide the most value.

ATA is one of our profession's leading organizations, and I am proud to be part of it. I hope to continue representing and supporting you, and I respectfully ask for your vote so we can pursue this work together.

I am honored to be nominated to run as secretary and welcome the opportunity to serve a second two-year term in this role.

I have volunteered extensively for our profession since I became a freelance translator in 2005. Within ATA, I started with divisions. I was one of three people who re-established the Science and Technology Division in 2010, and I served as its administrator from then until 2015. I have participated in nominating committees for the French Language Division and Language Technology Division. I was chair of the Divisions Committee from 2011–2015, so I worked extensively with all divisions.

One of my achievements during that time was to lead a project to revamp and restructure the existing Divisions Handbook, a guide for leaders on how to get things done, and then to update it annually. I served on ATA’s Nominating and Leadership Development Committee from 2011–2015. That role gave me insight into what it takes to be an effective ATA leader. From 2016–2018, I was on the Professional Development Committee and ran ATA’s webinar program. Currently, I chair the ad hoc Website Committee to revamp ATA’s website. That role will end when the new website is launched. Earlier in 2019, I took on the challenge to review ATA’s Honors and Awards program and will continue to work on that.

In my local associations, I was vice president and then president of the Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association from 2007–2011. During that time, opportunities for progress and change abounded. Among other achievements, we grew the membership and became an ATA Affiliate. I now live in Colorado, where I participate in the activities of the Colorado Translators Association. I have also proctored ATA certification exams for several years now.

My volunteer experience has covered everything from policy and procedural matters to event planning and motivating other volunteers. I often hold the secretary position in committees (in my community, for instance). I am well-practiced at taking effective notes and producing meaningful, accurate minutes while still participating in discussions. I have worked well with the Executive Committee over the past two years, and I look forward to being part of an effective and productive team of officers for the next two years if I am elected. My focus will be to continue to carefully communicate Board decisions so that ATA’s written records are clear and precise. I will also still continue to work in other areas that the Board handles...
and that I care about. When I ran two years ago, I said that I particularly enjoy improving the processes that the Board, other volunteers, and Headquarters use to work together. That still stands. I thrive when presented with issues and challenges where I can bring new energy and a fresh perspective. I aim for outcomes that are clear and consistent with the goals of the Association as a whole and of its diverse members.

I look forward to using my calm temperament and orderly approach to work productively with everyone involved. Thank you for considering me.

**TREASURER (TWO-YEAR TERM)**

**JOHN M. MILAN | john@milanlanguageservices.com**

ATA is at a curious crossroads. Our Association is financially sound in terms of its balance sheet, investments, and strategic reserves, with good governance, policies, and forward-thinking actions in recent years having prepared us for uncertain times. Yet, technology and a shifting marketplace have left many translators and interpreters scratching their heads about our profession’s future. With ATA membership no longer growing and conference attendance trending smaller, we need to manage our finances prudently, making sure that funds are optimally allocated to prepare for this new reality, while best serving our members’ interests and objectives.

This has been my position since being elected treasurer in 2017, and it will continue to guide my decision-making and actions if I am re-elected to this post for another two-year term.

For those who don’t know me, I am an ATA-certified Portuguese>English translator, economist, consultant, and former adjunct professor with nearly 25 years of professional experience in multiple countries. I have served on ATA’s Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) since 2015, chairing it since I became treasurer. As part of this committee, I helped develop a conference-costing tool that analyzes our past revenue and expenses and uses that information to help the Board plan and budget for future conferences.

In terms of my background, I have an MS in applied microeconomics from Ohio State University, where I was a foreign-language fellow specializing in Portuguese translation and linguistics. I also have undergraduate degrees in Spanish and international political economy from Indiana University, in addition to having studied in Madrid, Spain, at the Institute of European Studies. For nearly 11 years I lived in Brazil, where I was on the faculty of a university in São Paulo, while concomitantly working as a freelance translator, interpreter, editor, and consultant. Among other relevant experience, I was the financial administrator of a nonprofit organization that employed eight people with a $1 million budget, and I have run three businesses, one of which had 45 people on staff and a $3 million budget.

From 2009–2016, I served on the board of directors of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (an ATA chapter) as director, vice president, and president. During that time, we developed a local mentoring program, expanded outreach efforts to universities, held quarterly meetups for translators and interpreters, updated and digitized our operating procedures, took the chapter paperless, and, most significantly, organized well-attended annual conferences in partnership with foreign-language and interpreter training programs in the region.

I have drawn on all this experience to ensure that ATA has a solid budget, sufficient funding, accurate financial statements, and an open channel of communication with the membership. If re-elected treasurer, I shall continue to seek out ways to improve the stewardship of ATA’s resources, ensuring that our Association remains financially sound, transparent, and duly audited.

I look forward to this opportunity and am honored to be considered once again for this position.

**DIRECTOR (THREE-YEAR TERM)**

**ALAINA BRANDT | alaina@afterwords-t9n.com**

I am an assistant professor of professional practice in the Translation and Localization Management Program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, where I teach both fundamental and advanced topics in project management, including terminology, talent, and quality management. I have an MA in language, literature, and translation, specializing in Spanish>English translation, from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am a Spanish>English translator and the chief executive officer, founder, and data security officer of Afterwords Translations, LLC.

I serve on ASTM International’s Committee F43 on Language Services and Products (Technical Advisory Group to Technical Committee 37 Language and Terminology of the International Organization for Standardization). I am a member of the Advisory Board of the Translation Technology Education Society of China.

I also served as director of the Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters (an ATA chapter) for four years. As a director, I revived our newsletter and successfully published quarterly newsletters from 2013–2016. I managed our social media and blog and contributed other content to our newly designed website.

I have been an ATA member for six years and now serve as assistant administrator of the Translation Company Division (TCD). As assistant administrator, I spearheaded the publication of our division newsletter. (We’ve published two issues.) I have contributed website content and am working on documentation structures. I have also had articles published in *The ATA Chronicle* and given presentations at ATA conferences.

If elected to the Board, I would gear my work toward the following efforts:

- Having the opportunity to comment on ATA’s position on such topics as machine translation is a major benefit of...
I would like to contribute to the further standardization of the services delivered by each division so that members receive the same services no matter the division. As the assistant administrator of ATA’s TCD, I have focused on implementing data collection systems to capture important operating tasks, roles, and internet protocol produced by our division. I plan to use that experience as a case study to investigate ways we can further standardize the working procedures of all divisions.

As an ATA member, I have been given countless opportunities that have positively impacted my career growth and trajectory—opportunities I would not otherwise have had. As a director, I would like to contribute to membership recruitment from university programs in translation and localization, in part by communicating the many benefits that come from membership in this great association!

I have gained so much through my affiliation with ATA, and I would be so honored for the opportunity to contribute to this organization as a director.

**DIRECTOR (THREE-YEAR TERM)**

**VERONIKA DEMICHELIS | veronika@veronikademichelis.com**

A native Russian, I grew up in Moscow and spent summers in Saint Petersburg and Volgograd. I was a Soviet child, a teenager in turbulent perestroika times, and a millennial in Vladimir Putin’s Russia.

I was so interested in languages and cultures at school that I chose to get a master’s degree in linguistics. As a sophomore, I was offered a summer job. My employer turned out to be a Fortune 500 company, and my temporary gig turned out to be an 18-year-long career. I had many opportunities to interpret and translate, but discovered I had other talents. I got an MBA and worked in human resources, corporate communications, health, safety, and environment, and social responsibility. I even learned Norwegian and French.

When my family moved to Houston, Texas, in 2012, I decided to leave the corporate world and start my own business as a freelance translator. With two little kids, this journey has not been easy, but I couldn’t be more excited about my work and the community to which I now belong. I am an ATA-certified English>Russian translator, and my areas of specialization reflect my professional experience.

Over the past few years, I have been an active advocate for our profession and steadily increased my involvement in ATA and my local association, the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA). As HITA’s professional development director, I organize training opportunities for our members and serve as a bridge to other professional associations, including ATA.

I also helped ATA’s Slavic Languages Division start its own podcast and serve as a co-host. With a plethora of interesting guests, we discuss topics related to professional development and the business aspects of freelancing, unspecific to Slavic languages. I encourage you to check it out: www.ata-divisions.org/SLD/podcast.

I also volunteer on ATA’s Membership Committee, where we develop tools and resources to help retain our members and recruit new ones. We want ATA’s membership to be relevant and useful to our members, and I am very excited to be involved.

I am passionate about educational opportunities both for beginners and seasoned professionals. As an adjunct professor in the Translation and Interpreting Program at Houston Community College, I know that high quality, relevant, and innovative training is critical for our profession and the success of those who embark on this career path.

My personal values are integrity, courage, and cooperation. I am deeply interested in social responsibility, a subject I believe is very relevant for the translation and interpreting professions, especially considering global market opportunities and developments in artificial intelligence and translation technology. I would love to bring this perspective to ATA’s Board. My background and experience have been tremendously helpful in my work, and I am confident that they would also be beneficial to the Board.

I am very thankful to the Nominating and Leadership Committee for their recommendation. I would be honored to get your vote, represent you on ATA’s Board, and apply my expertise and skills for the benefit of our Association and our profession.

**DIRECTOR (THREE-YEAR TERM)**

**TONY GUERRA | aeguerra@aol.com**

During the past two years, it has been my honor to serve on ATA’s Board of Directors. Having learned so much, I am delighted to have the opportunity to run for another term and to continue making progress on promises made during last year’s election, in addition to tackling new challenges.

The business acumen I acquired while working as a director of interpreting services, combined with my passion as a practicing freelance interpreter, have given me a substantive foundation to contribute significantly to the Board. My current ATA activities include:
ATA Public Relations Committee, Speakers Bureau (2015–2019)
■ Selected to take a lead role on the PR Committee, generating speaking opportunities for members of the Speakers Bureau. By targeting organizations and associations interested in professional language services, the members of the Bureau aim to leverage our talent pool of interpreters nationwide.
■ Actively represented ATA as part of the newly-formed Philadelphia Language Access Task Force, made up of a group of key government, educational, and health care organizations mobilized to address the shortfall of qualified interpreters in my home city.

■ Served as a member of IPAC since it was established, contributing to policy, strategy, and goals. IPAC continues to promote greater equity and representation for ATA interpreters by addressing issues and trends nationwide through research, advocacy, and upholding standards.

ATA Chapters Committee Chair (2016–2019)
■ Served as the national liaison between ATA Headquarters and all ATA chapter and affiliate groups, helping to solve any issues and answer questions. I have also helped organize leadership training at the past three ATA Annual Conferences. These trainings covered such universal issues as conflict resolution, conducting effective meetings, and maximizing productivity.
■ Launched ATA’s Chapters Best Practices Initiative, an online compilation of national resources, links, forms, and processes available to all ATA chapters to facilitate expedited, efficient, and consistent systems of operation.

ATA Membership Committee (2018–2019)
■ Represented the interests of ATA chapters and affiliates in outreach efforts, developing initiatives to communicate how ATA supplements the services and function of local associations to further engage and recruit new members to ATA.

My previous involvement with ATA has included two terms as assistant administrator of the Medical Division, serving on the ATA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee, and participating in the Mentoring Program since 2014. Most significantly, my recent experience as a director over the past two years has given me a broader understanding of how all ATA programs and committees function, and how all of the individual efforts of the Board and Headquarters are combined under the banner of our mission statement toward one common goal. These efforts include advocacy, promotion and recognition of the profession, raising the standards of practice, professional development, and facilitating communication. My tenure has allowed me to take an interdisciplinary approach to my work across the various committees on which I serve to support these efforts and to collaborate more effectively with my colleagues on the Board.

I thank you for your vote and your deliberation of my candidacy.

JAMIE HARTZ | jamie@tildelanguage.com

Background: I am an ATA-certified Spanish>English translator specializing in legal and commercial translation. Having experienced a taste of the academic, in-house, and freelance worlds of translation while completing my master’s degree in translation at Kent State University, I began freelancing in 2013 and went full-time in 2015. I am grateful to be part of this growing profession and feel that ATA is a vital part of my career because of the ways it supports, mentors, and promotes us as translators and interpreters. I look forward to helping shape the ever-evolving landscape of our profession.

Volunteer Experience: Since joining ATA in 2012, I have served in several volunteer roles, acting as the student involvement representative for the Spanish Language Division and co-founding The Savvy Newcomer blog and the Buddies Welcome Newbies Program in 2013. In addition to serving as a blog author and editor and speaking at the Buddies Welcome Newbies conference sessions for the past six years, I also served on the board of my local ATA chapter, the Delaware Valley Translators Association, as its secretary from 2016–2018. I joined ATA’s ad hoc Website Committee in 2017, which has made great strides toward producing a more modern and user-friendly ATA website. Since 2018, I have also served on the Membership Committee as part of the team that shapes member communications, serves the people in our Association, and encourages active engagement with ATA. Finally, I am part of the small team of volunteers that developed a new initiative in 2018 for ATA to celebrate International Translation Day with messages of information and inspiration aimed to educate the general public about translation and interpreting through concentrated social media outreach.

Goals: As a representative of ATA, I would like to see our organization harness the power of our collective passion, volunteer power, and strengths to pave new roads into the future of our profession. To do this, I would promote: 1) increasing awareness of translation and interpreting in the U.S. through a strong online presence and publicity; 2) improving organizational efficiency; and 3) growing membership in ATA through outreach and enhanced paths for professional growth. I believe it is crucial for ATA to focus on awareness, optimization, and growth as we seek to resolve the challenges of today and define the outlook for the translators and interpreters who will come after us.

I would be honored to help guide ATA into the future and look forward to drawing on the experience I have gained through volunteering, observing, and collaborating with so many of you to grow our organization and serve our members.
DIRECTOR (THREE-YEAR TERM)

AARON HEBENSTREIT | aarontranslate@gmail.com

It is an honor to be nominated for a position on ATA’s Board of Directors. I have been a member of ATA since 2016, and attended my first ATA Annual Conference in 2017 in Washington, DC. The atmosphere was friendly and inspiring, and I knew that I would be attending every conference after that. Although I am a relative newcomer, I have been keenly observing the work of ATA and its members and believe I could make a valuable contribution.

I have also been involved with my local ATA chapter, the New York Circle of Translators (NYCT), since 2016. I was nominated for a position on NYCT’s board of directors in 2017, and have been serving as the chapter’s program director since early 2018. During my term of service, NYCT has expanded its membership and continued to provide valuable programming to colleagues from the New York City metropolitan area and beyond. Working with my fellow NYCT board members, we have offered sessions by experts in many fields, including patent translation, specialized note-taking techniques, entrepreneurship for linguists, ATA exam preparation, languages of limited diffusion, machine translation, and computer-assisted translation tools, as well as insights by the chief executive officer of a major language services provider. Thanks to a generous bequest left to NYCT, we have also begun to offer financial assistance for professional development to local member linguists, beginning with ATA’s Law Seminar in February 2019.

In addition, I have been participating in ATA’s Chinese Language Division (CLD) since 2017, and have worked with colleagues to invite CLD distinguished speakers to ATA’s Annual Conference. At the 2018 conference, I was invited to co-present a session on patent translation for liberal arts majors.

I was born and raised in Connecticut and received my undergraduate degrees in mechanical engineering and German from the University of Rhode Island, where I also began studying Chinese. I have lived, worked, and studied in France, Switzerland, Germany, mainland China, and Taiwan, and volunteered in Israel and Palestine. I earned my MA in translation from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey in 2014. I translate from Chinese, French, and German for international organizations such as the United Nations, World Intellectual Property Organization, and International Monetary Fund, among other clients, and work as a Mandarin<>English conference interpreter in the private sector. An ATA-certified Chinese<>English translator, I am also an adjunct instructor and faculty advisor in that subject in the MS in Translation Program at the New York University School of Professional Studies. I have spoken at several events in New York relating to the translation and interpreting field and have done outreach work at schools and universities.

I take the confidence placed in me during this election cycle very seriously. If elected, I plan to work to increase the visibility of ATA and continue to advocate for high professional standards across all areas of translation and interpreting. I am aware of a few issues of concern discussed on the listservs and elsewhere, and I would be happy to learn more from members like you about what the highest priorities of the Board should be. I would be most grateful for your support.

DIRECTOR (THREE-YEAR TERM)

CRISTINA HELMERICHSD. | cristina@cristinahelmerichsd.com

As these three years on ATA’s Board of Directors draw to an end, I thank all those who voted for me. I hope I have lived up to your expectations. It has been a pleasure to work with the dedicated professionals on ATA’s Board, as they are fully committed to ATA being the Association that represents the interests of its members and this profession. The majority of our members are freelancers, which is why I am committed to assuring that ATA advocates on behalf of the individual practitioner.

I started as a state court interpreter and contract translator for several state agencies in Texas, including the Texas Department of Transportation and Texas Health Facilities Commission. I am still a freelance translator as well as a conference and court interpreter certified by the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and the United States Courts. Throughout my career, I have actively worked on behalf of our professions. I am active in NAJIT and a member of ATA’s Interpreters Division Leadership Council. I am a member of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association and a founding member of the Texas Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators.

When I first joined the Board, ATA did not have a clearly defined mission statement. I was part of the initial ad-hoc committee that helped draft ATA’s first formal mission statement, and during this term I again helped draft the mission update.

Also during that initial term, Naomi Sutcliffe de Moraes, Virginia Perez-Santalla, and I first proposed the idea of recognizing credentialed interpreters in our directory. As I was chair of the Interpretation Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC), we were tasked with investigating how this could be implemented. Through IPAC, I continued working on this and it has now come to fruition.

I offer you this steadfast commitment to advocacy and advancement. I have worked at both the state and national levels to further the recognition of our professions and protect our interests. During these last three years, ATA has become more visible on the national stage defending the interests of our professions. Two examples of this are ATA’s response to changes proposed by Houston’s chief of police regarding the provision of interpreters, and ATA’s assistance in a successful campaign to prevent the Texas legislature from changing the minimum standards required for interpreters to work in courts of record.

If re-elected, I will work to advance ATA’s advocacy efforts. One of my goals is that the General Services Administration (GSA) updates how our professions are defined in the GSA
Schedule, which will improve the conditions under which
government agencies contract interpreters and translators.
I ask for your vote so that I may continue to listen to the
membership as we move forward in this ever-changing world
and work with those who seek positive, proactive measures
to promote and protect our professions. I will work with
my fellow directors, Headquarters, and ATAs divisions and
committees to ensure that ATA offers its members even more
valuable services and support.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws to be Presented to the Membership for Voting in October 2019

In addition to electing Board officers and directors, voting
members will also vote on a proposed Bylaws amendment.
The proposed change appears below and is posted online at
www.atanet.org/bylaws_change.php. Please note that material
proposed to be deleted is struck through; material proposed to
be added is underlined. ATA’s Bylaws may be altered, amended,
or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the voting members.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS

Proposed: Article V, Section 1
No President shall be elected to serve more than one full term,
and no Secretary or Treasurer shall be elected to serve more than two full terms in that office.

The ATA Board of Directors recommends approval.

Commentary: The current term limits specific to the position of secretary and treasurer are anachronistic and redundant and no longer serve their original purpose. A primary purpose was to mitigate the possibility of conspiracy and possible fraud between the individuals holding those offices by preventing the same individuals from serving for an extensive period. This made sense when the secretary actually received and handled correspondence, especially invoices and payments via postal mail, and the treasurer actually wrote and signed checks to pay bills. But that has not been the case for many years since ATA Headquarters staff has assumed those functions. The term limits have therefore been overtaken by administrative developments in that the safeguards against fraud now rest elsewhere in the Association.

In addition, for the treasurer in particular, most individuals serving in that capacity need one full two-year term simply to become familiar and comfortable with the duties incumbent on that office. After an additional two-year term, when those individuals have just become comfortable and efficient at their duties, they are barred from remaining in that office.

Proposed Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation to be Presented to the Membership for Voting in October 2019

In addition to electing Board officers and directors, voting
members will also vote on proposed amendments to the Articles
of Incorporation. The proposed amendments appear below and
are posted online at www.atanet.org/incorporation_change.php.
Please note that material proposed to be deleted is struck through; material proposed to be added is underlined. ATA’s Articles of Incorporation may be altered, amended, or repealed by a two-thirds vote of the voting members.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

We, the undersigned, desiring to form a corporation pursuant to
the provisions of the Membership Corporations Law of the State of
New York, do hereby certify that:

First The name of the proposed corporation (hereinafter called the corporation) is the AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Second The purposes for which the corporation is to be formed shall be:

a. To advocate and promote the recognition of translation and interpreting as a profession.

b. To formulate and maintain standards of professional ethics, practices and competence.

c. To improve the standards, quality, and rewards of translation and interpreting.

d. To establish a system of mutual assistance, including a reference library, and such other aids and conveniences for its members.

e. To publish periodicals, bulletins, notices, glossaries, dictionaries, reports, and any other publications that may advance translation and interpreting and the interests of translators and interpreters.

f. To promote social and professional relations among its members.

g. To organize and support the training of translators and interpreters by lectures, courses, or otherwise.

h. To provide a medium for collaboration with persons in allied professions.

i. To hold periodic meetings.

j. To conduct any and all other activities designed to effect and further the above named purposes and to promote the general welfare of the Association and its members.

k. To receive and maintain a fund or funds, to have control and manage such fund or funds, change the investments thereof, to invest and reinvest the same and the proceeds thereof, and to collect and receive the income and profits thereof and therefrom.

www.atanet.org
l. To apply the income and principal thereof exclusively to the free and voluntary aid and assistance of organizations, agencies, and institutions which are organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes; said funds to be so allocated and maintained in a segregated account and used for no other purpose; no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, nor part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and which does not participate or distribute or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) of any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

m. To take by bequest, devise, gift, purchase, lease or otherwise, and to hold the same, for the corporate purposes, any property real or personal insofar as the same may be held by a corporation organized under the Membership Corporations Law, and to convey, sell, or dispose of such property and to invest and reinvest the principal and deal with and expend the income therefrom in such manner as may be permitted by law.

n. The corporation shall not make any solicitation for funds or contributions.

Nothing herein contained in this certificate shall authorize or empower the corporation to perform or engage in any acts or practices prohibited by Article 22 of the General Business Law or other anti-monopoly statute of this State, or as set forth in Section 11 of the Membership Corporation Law or Section 35 of the Social Welfare Law of the State of New York.

Third

No officer, member, or employee of the corporation may receive any pecuniary profit from the operations of the corporation or upon the dissolution of the corporation, except reasonable compensation for services rendered the corporation in effecting one or more of the purposes set forth in Article “SECOND” hereinafore. In the event of voluntary dissolution of the corporation pursuant to the laws of the State of New York, or in the event of dissolution due to such other circumstances as are permitted or required by law, the funds and assets of the corporation then belonging to it shall, after proper payment of liabilities, be distributed in accordance with the law to the free and voluntary aid and assistance of activities, agencies, and institutions which are organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, subject to the laws of the State of New York, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, no part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Fourth

The territory in which the operations of the corporation are principally to be conducted is the State of New York and elsewhere throughout the United States.

Fifth

For purposes of Section 402 (a)(3) of the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, the office of the corporation is to be located in the County of New York in the State of New York.

Sixth

The number of directors of the corporation shall be provided in the Bylaws of the corporation, but in no event shall the number of directors be less than three (3).

Seventh

The name and residence of each of the directors of the corporation until the first annual meeting are:

Henry Fischbach 141 East 44th Street New York, NY
Alexander Gode Finney Farm Croton-on-Hudson, NY
Ruth Levy 433 West 34th Street New York, NY
Henry F. Mins 130 West 57th Street New York, NY
Theodore M. Purdy 36 Sutton Place S. New York, NY

Eighth

All of the subscribers to this certificate are of full age; at least two-thirds of them are citizens of the United States; at least one of them is a resident of the State of New York; and of the persons named as directors at least one is a citizen of the United States and a resident of the State of New York.

Ninth

Any person made a party to any action, suit, or proceeding by any reason of the fact that he, his testator or intestate, is or was a director, officer, or employee of the corporation or of any corporation which he served as such at the request of the corporation shall be indemnified by the corporation against the reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and necessarily incurred by him in connection with the defense of such action, suit, or proceeding, or in connection with any appeal therein, except in relation to matters as to which it shall be adjudged in such action, suit, or proceeding that such officer, director, or employee is liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of his duties. The foregoing right of indemnification shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which any officer, director, or employee may be entitled apart from the provisions of this section.

Tenth

The corporation designates the New York Secretary of State as agent of the corporation upon whom process against the corporation may be served and designates 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 as its address to which the New York Secretary of State shall mail a copy of any process against the corporation served upon the Secretary of State.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, we have made and subscribed this certificate on this 13th day of July, 1962

Henry Fischbach
Alexander Gode
Ruth Levy
Henry Mins
Theodore Purdy

The ATA Board of Directors recommends approval.

Commentary: These amendments to the Articles of Incorporation recognize the importance of interpreting to ATA and eliminate an outdated clause preventing ATA from soliciting donations.
OUTREACH REPORT | BY EVE LINDEMUTH BODEUX

ATA at the New York Rights Fair and Book Expo

A subscription-based database, but rather a free resource. One attendee who stopped by our table was Mat Edelson, a medical journalist and founder of InformAll, a nonprofit that uses audiobooks, podcasts, and new media to provide accessible health and wellness information to the public. He was enthusiastic about our members’ services, telling ATA by email, “I’m very impressed with the ATA directory; it’s a wonderful resource for both translators and interpreters and folks such as myself who need to hire them! [...] I have a feeling I’m going to be using it a lot in the coming months and years.”

We took turns making sure that ATA’s table was always staffed while others of our team fanned out throughout the event, directly approaching publishing houses and other attendees.

These comments reflect the very positive feedback we received from attendees, including a representative from Overdrive, a large player in digital content for libraries, and representatives from several university presses who are expanding their catalogs outside their own university communities and who often publish works in translation. We were also quite pleased when several people from HarperVia, the new imprint of HarperCollins devoted to international literature in English translation, stopped by our table to learn more about translation, interpreting, and, specifically, how to find the right ATA member for future projects.

SHOWCASING ATA’S ONLINE DIRECTORY

We took turns making sure that the ATA table was always staffed while others of our team fanned out throughout the event, directly approaching publishing houses and other attendees, including cultural representatives promoting publishing content from Canada, China, France, the Netherlands, Italy, and South Korea. In a sign of the changing publishing landscape, there were also representatives of self-publishing platforms and even an interactive fiction app.

We had a steady stream of visitors to our table as well. Visitors scooped up ATA-branded sticky notes and copies of Getting It Right, a publication that offers tips on how to hire language professionals. People were excited to learn that ATA’s online Directory of Translators and Interpreters is not a subscription-based database, but rather a free resource. One attendee who stopped by our table was Mat Edelson, a medical journalist and founder of InformAll, a nonprofit that uses audiobooks, podcasts, and new media to provide accessible health and wellness information to the public. He was enthusiastic about our members’ services, telling ATA by email, “I’m very impressed with the ATA directory; it’s a wonderful resource for both translators and interpreters and folks such as myself who need to hire them! [...] I have a feeling I’m going to be using it a lot in the coming months and years.”

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We used a computer connected to ATA’s online directory to show...
visitors how they could find the right professionals for their projects. We demonstrated how to search using criteria such as language pair, location, keyword, certification status (translators), credential status (interpreters), specialization, and more. ATA members should note that in their profiles they can add free-form information in the “Additional Information” section that users of the directory can then search using the “keywords” field on the search interface. This is a way for members to add helpful information about expertise or background that may not be covered in the more structured sections of the directory.

For example, one visitor was looking for a translator who worked from English into Korean and who specialized in yachting. In this case, “yachting” would be a good keyword to add to your profile if applicable. We also suggested to attendees that if they could not find the specialization they were searching for in a specific language pair, it could be fruitful to contact an ATA language division as a way to get the word out about their project.

WHAT LANGUAGES ARE PUBLISHERS LOOKING FOR?
The publishing industry professionals we encountered were interested in a wide variety of language pairs, including English to and from French, German, Dutch, Korean, Polish, and others. In fact, English into U.S. Spanish was the most talked about language pair at the show. Given how publishing rights work, in addition to Spanish, U.S. publishers most often look for translators who work from other languages into English. Moreover, publishers in other countries most often look for translators who work into the language of their particular country. However, from talking to publishing professionals, we found that these are not hard-and-fast rules and they also may have need for interpreters.

For example, in addition to book translations, the companies we met may need translations of contracts, communications materials, marketing materials, and interpreting services both to and from English. As an example, we spoke to the Taipei Book Fair Foundation, which supports the work of Taiwanese authors by sending them to book fairs in other countries. They hire interpreters for these events.

THINK BEYOND LITERARY WHEN MARKETING
While within our own industry, we obviously see the merits of using professional translators and interpreters and ATA members for language-related projects in the business space, we were thrilled and even a bit surprised at the reaction from publishing professionals.

On one hand, the welcome extended to us was quite encouraging. On the other, it’s a bit disconcerting that a readily available, free resource for finding professional translators and interpreters was virtually unknown to event participants who are often in search of translation services. This should encourage us all, as an organization and individually, to continue our efforts to promote the translating and interpreting professions to the wider business community.

Furthermore, it’s important to recognize the wide variety of publishers who were present. These included those who might most readily come to mind when one thinks of “book publishing,” such as publishers of fiction, literary works, and children’s literature. But there were also publishers from many other categories at the event, including numerous nonfiction publishers in fields like medicine, religion, business, crafting, gardening, leisure activities, and sports. Attendees also mentioned that translators are often found by word of mouth and that they often have difficulties finding the right translator. ATA translators and interpreters should take a tip here and realize that there are various types of publishers that might need their services. Think “outside the box” when marketing: remember, “publishing” doesn’t just mean “literary.”

Attendees repeatedly mentioned their concern with finding a quality translator who has the right expertise for their particular project. For example, one publisher said he was looking for a French into English translator who was an expert at knitting and crocheting to translate craft books. In another instance, a publisher of mainstream Protestant religious materials was satisfied with the
quality of the day-to-day translations for promotional brochures, but was still seeking English into Spanish translators who could translate official texts used during church services in the proper register. In addition, Expo attendees readily acknowledged their need for both translation and interpreting services, the latter for international publishing events and events where international authors are present and promoted, to name a few.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITERATURE IN TRANSLATION

We were also pleased to see that, during the first day of the conference, all sessions were focused on literature in translation, how international books are discovered, and how foreign rights are purchased. In addition, presenters indicated that translated works are becoming more accepted by the U.S. publishing industry as a whole. However, according to one panelist, only about 3% of all books published in the U.S. are translations. The industry is still fighting the misconception that foreign fiction is exclusive or highbrow, or, as one panelist put it, “for people wearing berets.”

An international network of literary agents and scouts play a crucial role in finding books to be translated for the U.S. audience. “Partials” (partial translations) of a work are also an important tool for encouraging publishers to purchase the rights to foreign-language content. Panelists who spoke represented works translated from Korean, Italian, and Swedish that have become “blockbusters” in the U.S. market.

During these panel presentations, each speaker stressed the importance of the quality of the translation product for translated works that had become successful in the U.S. market. They used phrases like “gorgeous translation,” “really great translation,” and “excellent translation” as being one of the keys to the success of international books. In addition, panelists mentioned that even popular international fiction writers may need more than one translator if they write books in more than one style or genre.

A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

ATA’s presence at the New York Rights Fair and Book Expo was a resounding success. The enthusiastic responses we received from potential clients reveal a wealth of opportunities for our members in the publishing industries, both in the U.S. and abroad.

(Kate Deimling, Lucy Gunderson, Kristin Kamm, Stephanie Delozier Strobel, and Valeriya Yermishova contributed to this article.)

NOTES

2. Email received from event management dated May 9, 2019.
3. The panel, which took place on May 29, 2019, was entitled “International Literature: Promoting and Finding Audiences.”
4. The panel, which took place on May 29, 2019, was entitled “Inside the World of Foreign Rights Sales and Scouting.”

Eve Lindemuth Bodeux, CT is an ATA director and an ATA-certified French>English translator. She is the owner of Bodeux International, a company that offers multilingual project management and other language services to clients worldwide. She has served as chair of ATA’s Public Relations Committee since 2018. She also served as administrator of ATA’s French Language Division (2014–2018), as well as two terms as vice president of the Colorado Translators Association (2008–2012). She has a BA in French and political science from Lebanon Valley College, an MA in international relations from the University of Virginia, and a graduate degree in European studies from the Université de Lorraine in France. She co-hosts the Speaking of Translation podcast. Contact: eve@bodeuxinternational.com.
Are You Getting the Most from Your ATA Directory Profile?

Knowing what search options are offered in ATA’s Directory of Translators and Interpreters can help you craft a profile that fully maximizes the types of searches one could make.

A key benefit of being a member of ATA is the ability to have a profile in the Association’s online Directory of Translators and Interpreters. In contrast to many online directories or member lists in other professions, ATA provides potential clients free access to its directory. This serves to encourage potential clients (including agencies, end clients, or other buyers of language services) to explore the profiles and match a translator or interpreter with their job specifications.

To enable potential clients to make the most effective use of the directory, ATA members should strive to be consistent about updating their profiles.

Members should also take advantage of the various specializations and language services that the profile format allows them to showcase.

Before you update your profile, visit the Advanced Search page¹ to see what options are offered to directory users when they’re trying to find a language professional for their project. Knowing what search options are offered can help you craft a profile that fully maximizes the types of searches users can make. These include searches by geographic location, language combination, certification and other professional credentials, areas of specialization, and more.

Keep users of the directory in mind when writing your profile and think about key phrases that a potential client might enter as search terms.

SECTION 1 CONTACT INFORMATION

It may seem obvious that contact information should be kept up to date so that potential clients can get in touch with members about their services, but this is often not the case. Don’t lose out on potential contacts because of an email that bounces or a landline number that’s been dropped in favor of a mobile line.

To avoid this easy-to-correct but serious impediment to being contacted by potential clients, be sure to schedule time at least once or twice a year to review your profile. In addition, scheduling this review will help you keep other sections of the profile up to date as well, ensuring that all the information you share with potential clients reflects your current expertise, offerings, and what makes you unique.

Within the address section of the profile, it’s important to note that to enable geographic searches (if a client seeks a provider in a specific geographic area), you should enter your physical address even if you don’t want it displayed in the directory for public view. This way, your profile will appear in the search results when you match a specific geographic area. If you don’t want your full address displayed, you...
can choose this option when setting up or modifying your profile by checking the appropriate boxes under the “Please do not include the following items in my directory profile” option. You may also completely hide your entire profile using the “Please do NOT list my directory profile” option. However, be aware that by making this last selection, you will prevent any potential clients from seeing your profile.

SECTION 2 | AVAILABILITY DATES
Another great feature of the directory is the ability to let potential clients know when you’ll be unavailable. However, if you plan to check email when you’re away, we suggest leaving these dates blank so that potential clients will still be encouraged to contact you.

SECTION 3 | LANGUAGE INFORMATION
When you’re creating a profile, you must manually add the language combinations you would like to include. You may add up to seven language combinations using ATA’s dropdown list. If you would like to add additional languages or dialects, you may do so in the related searchable, free-form field. Make sure to list only those language pairs in which you work professionally to avoid diluting the power of your profile. Your goal is to receive work in the languages where your expertise and knowledge will shine. You should avoid listing “all” languages you know if they are not languages for which you offer professional services. Note that you can also set the order in which you would like multiple language pairs to appear. The default setting is alphabetical, but you can modify this to emphasize one language pair over another.

SECTION 4 | SERVICES, EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE, TOOLS, ETC.
This section allows you to provide additional information about the services you offer, your background and tools, as well as the types of payment and currencies you accept. This section uses dropdown lists, file uploads, option buttons, and free-form fields to gather information from you.

To start, list the services you provide. For both translation and interpreting, you may indicate multiple services. To do so, use CTRL + click (for PC) or Command + click (for Mac) to make your selections. If there is a service listed that you don’t offer, simply don’t select it and it will not appear in your public profile.

You’ll also be asked to indicate the highest level of education completed, whether you have a degree in translation or interpreting, and how many years of experience you’ve worked as a translator or interpreter. Select one of the options listed for each of these categories. Please note that you can skip these questions entirely as they are not required. If you leave these fields blank, the information will not show up in your profile.

If you provide voice work, you may include a prerecorded voice sample along with your directory profile. Simply describe the sample in the field provided and upload the audio file for access by those viewing your profile. Note that when you upload an audio file, a new window opens. Once you’ve completed the file upload, return to the previous tab to continue modifying your profile.

To personalize your profile, you have the option to upload your résumé or link to it directly with a URL that you provide. If you choose to upload a résumé, review it before posting to ensure that it effectively shows your expertise for the areas in which you’re seeking projects. You may decide to upload a version of your résumé that you’ve specifically prepared for your ATA profile. If you chose to hide some of your contact information from your public ATA profile as described in Section 1, you should also consider what contact information you would like to include in a résumé that may
be downloaded by visitors to your profile. Note that the content of your résumé is not included in “keyword searches” by users.

You may also upload a photo to further personalize the profile. This is optional. If you decide to use this feature, be sure to use a professional, business-focused photo that clearly shows your face. If you don’t have a suitable photo, just skip this step.

Finally, there is a free-form field in this section with the label “Would you like to include additional information about your services, education, and experience?” This field allows you to add or clarify any information. Use this space to emphasize particular expertise that may not have been covered elsewhere in your profile and to highlight what makes you unique. For example, do you have niche areas of expertise that you would like to highlight that are not included in ATA’s dropdown list of subject-matter expertise, or specific services you offer that are not listed? If so, be sure to add them to the “Additional Information” field. Note that areas of specialization appear in Section 5, so you may wish to review them and then return to the “Additional Information” field to ensure that you are using it most effectively.

The “Additional Information” field and all the text you enter into it are searchable by users of the directory in the “keyword” field on the Advanced Search page. Keep users in mind when writing this section and think about key phrases that a potential client might enter as search terms for your profile. (You can also choose to search using other criteria that match your profile.) Once your name appears in the search, click on it to access your public profile, just as a potential client would. Review the information it contains in this format. If you wish to make any changes, make sure you’re still logged in to your ATA account, return to the Member Center® page, and modify your profile until you’re satisfied.

Don’t forget to schedule a six-month review to verify that your contact information, areas of specialization, and additional information, along with all the other items in your profile, are current. Remember to update this information as you evolve as a language professional.

**FINAL STEPS**  REVIEW THE PUBLIC ADVANCED SEARCH PAGE AND SCHEDULE A SIX-MONTH REVIEW

As we mentioned previously, it’s always a good idea to view your profile as a user of the directory will see it, rather than as you see it when updating or creating it. To do this, return to the public Advanced Search page, choose “Search by Last Name,” and enter your last name to locate your public profile. (You can also choose to search using other criteria that match your profile.) Once your name appears in the search, click on it to access your public profile, just as a potential client would. Review the information it contains in this format. If you wish to make any changes, make sure you’re still logged in to your ATA account, return to the Member Center® page, and modify your profile until you’re satisfied.

Schedule time at least once or twice a year to review your profile.

**BONUS TIP!** Request the Individual Member logo—or use your ATA-certified translator (CT) seal® or credentialed interpreter (CI) designation—and link to your profile in the **Directory of Translators and Interpreters** from your website.

### AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

In this section, you may list up to 12 areas of expertise for your translation or interpreting practice. If you feel that you have more than 12 areas of expertise in sub-areas, prioritize them so that you list the areas you focus on in your business. You can also add your areas of expertise to the “Additional Information” box that appears at the end of this section.

Once you’ve completed Section 5, use the Submit button to finalize your changes. You will then see a summary of your current profile. Review it and click on the “Change My Contact Information” or “Change My Profile” link at the bottom of the page if you would like to make additional changes using the process outlined above. (Note: you should avoid using your browser’s back and forward buttons at this stage to ensure that your updates are not lost.) When you’re satisfied with the information contained in the profile, you can continue to the final steps.

### SECTION 5 AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

**NOTES**

4. In addition, if you’ve been using the “Save” or “Save and Continue” buttons for each section of your profile, each section has also been finalized individually.
6. www.atanet.org/membersonly

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How to Successfully Tackle Translation Tests

If approached with the right mindset, translation tests can be a professionally enriching experience for translators.

It’s safe to say that most translators don’t consider translation tests to be their favorite part of the job. In fact, it might be the most dreaded part of a translator’s day. But it doesn’t have to be that way! As we all know, translation tests are the way most companies judge our work and ultimately hire us, so they’re here to stay. When approached with the right mindset, these tests can actually be a professionally enriching experience (seriously!). And you must be mindful that there’s a lot more being judged than your translation ability.

When I first launched my career as a freelance translator, I had so many questions about what clients really wanted from a translation test. After many years working as a full-time translator, and now with a rather large number of translation tests under my belt, I’ve learned that both failure and success on these tests can be great teachers.

READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
This first tip seems obvious, but it cannot be taken for granted (in fact, it’s worth spending two full paragraphs covering it!). Before you work on any translation test you need to know exactly what the client wants you to do. Does the translation test have a deadline? In what format should it be returned? Are there character restrictions? Are there any specific instructions included with the test package? Companies are testing your ability to follow instructions as much as your translation skills. Make sure you review the email exchange and follow any instructions included in the body of the email as well as in the document itself. Sometimes instructions are included in the translation file.

WARNING: review Excel files carefully because one of those tabs might include your instructions.

You should also think about the unstated expectations based on your background knowledge of the client. Some clients seek a creative translation, while others might care about the localization for a specific target market. Knowing that information ahead of time will help you meet, and hopefully exceed, the client’s expectations.

WHEN IN DOUBT, JUST ASK!
If anything in the instructions isn’t clear, make sure you ask for clarification—don’t take anything for granted. If the client didn’t provide reference material, a glossary, a style guide, special instructions about the language variant, or the level of formality of the translation test—ask about it! The client might not be able to provide you with any of this information, but it never hurts to ask. By asking for a confirmation or clarification, it shows that you’re being attentive to the instructions and striving to meet their expectations. Additionally, it shows that you realize extra material may be necessary when working on a project.

For many years I assumed that companies didn’t send any additional material because they wanted to see how I was able to “fend for myself,” but this assumption has cost me. On one occasion, I didn’t pass a very important translation test because the terminology was not what the client wanted. I went back to the client and explained that...
I hadn’t been sent a terminology list and that was why I couldn’t use their preferred lexicon. They told me that I should have asked for a glossary, and that they would have given it to me had I asked for it.

Looking back, I now realize that the company was testing whether or not I would be proactive in requesting whatever I needed to render an accurate translation that met their terminology preferences. So, when in doubt, ask for more references and specifics. The worst thing that can happen is that they won’t give you any. However, taking the initiative to be proactive can make all the difference!

**RESEARCH SMART**

If you’re not provided with any reference material, you’ll need to use your ability to do online research following commonly accepted guidelines. It’s important that you refer to official glossaries and that you’re able to cite references to the terminology you use, should this be required. By researching, you might be able to find out where the text has been extracted from online. While this scenario isn’t likely, I have seen it happen more than once! This deep-dive for company intel can give you more information about the client’s background and terminology preferences. In fact, having a curious spirit is one of the most important traits of a successful translator.

Translation tests can have specific terminology on an obscure subject matter, and even though you won’t always be an expert on the topic, what matters is your ability to research and find accurate terminology.

**ATTENTION TO DETAIL**

A translator’s attention to detail is as much on display as anything else. Translation tests are bound to have tricky sentences, segments that cannot be translated directly and might need complete rewording in the target language, etc. It’s your job to identify those areas and resolve them to the best of your knowledge and ability. In an ambiguous situation, it’s sometimes a good idea to leave a comment. I suggest you leave a sentence or two explaining why you chose a certain word or phrase, such as “More context is required here in order to make the best possible translation. Could you please clarify the ambiguity in the part that reads [ . . . ]?” Include the note in the body of the delivery email or use track changes to mark it up within the file you send back.

What are some details to ensure your success? You may need to flag a mistake in the source text, segments that need to be “transcreated” entirely (here, your choice needs to be explained), the use of character restrictions, reference links in need of localization, or even the gender of the target audience. Other details to keep in mind are how acronyms should be treated, measurements, and alphabetical order.

**THE TWO Ps: PROOFREAD AND BE PUNCTUAL!**

Your work is not finished after you’re done with the translation. Once you’ve got it all down on paper, you reach the most critical part of the job: proofreading. Proofreading your own work is important in any translation project, but it’s an absolutely critical stage to passing a translation test. Ideally, try to step away from the project and come back to it the next day, allowing you to examine your work with fresh eyes. If there’s no specific deadline, take advantage of the extra time to proofread your work well. The best case scenario allows you to proofread more than once with intervals of time in between each readthrough.

Resist the temptation to have your work proofread by another translator. The test is meant to judge your translation skills alone. Unless you plan to work with a particular proofreader on all of your projects, you need to recreate the real scenario and produce the translation quality that you’ll be able to live up to consistently.

I cannot stress the importance of punctuality enough. If the translation test has a set deadline, you need to meet it. Companies are testing you on your ability to meet deadlines, because...
deadlines are often as important to the client as the quality of your translation. If the test doesn’t have a set deadline, make sure you take a reasonable amount of time to get it back to the client. In my opinion, a good rule of thumb is to send it back between three to five days after you receive it. This timeline is reasonable for a translation test of 500 words or less, but it depends on your schedule and the client’s schedule.

**ALWAYS ASK FOR FEEDBACK**
Whatever the outcome of your test, always ask for feedback. Feedback is a great way to learn more about the client’s expectations and, frankly, it’s also a great way to learn from any mistakes you might have made. Some companies will be very open with their feedback. They might even give you a markup of the document and show you the comments their reviewer made on your work. Other companies are more secretive. They might not tell you anything about your results on the test, but it’s always worth it to ask.

If you’ve passed a translation test, it’s an excellent opportunity to learn about what you’re doing right. Did you get any comments back? What aspects of your translation did they like the most? Any phrases or particular terms that they would ask you to change the next time?

**PRACTICE AND LEARN**
Translation tests don’t have to be a burden. Approached the right way, they’re just great practice. Consider each one as an opportunity to demonstrate what a great translator you are and to learn about your strengths and weaknesses. Even if you don’t agree with the reviewer’s comments, you can, for example, learn that the client is not a good fit. That’s valuable information! Take each translation test and make it a fun challenge to learn from the experience.

Translation tests are only a small window into what it could be like to work for a particular client, and for the client to get a sense of what it could be like to work with you. The real test will be an actual project you undertake, with a set deadline, and specific instructions and guidelines to follow. Only then will you finally know if the relationship will prosper.

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Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, and the Future-Proofed Translator: What I Learned from TAUS

With machine learning on the rise, most of us think that the need for skilled translators will decrease. That couldn’t be further from the truth.

I was fortunate enough to be one of the 130 participants to attend the Translation Automation User Society (TAUS) Global Content Conference in June 2019 (and the only freelance translator). The two-day event was full of networking, knowledge sharing, and inspirational speeches.

The TAUS Global Content Conference focuses on big questions, including the progress of machine translation (MT) technology, whether human parity is possible, how machine learning (ML) will impact global communication, and what the rise of technology means for freelance translators.

What follows are my takeaways from the conference and how what I learned could affect translators around the world. For additional information, check out the footnotes for the 2019 conference.¹

LESSON 1  NEURAL MACHINE TRANSLATION (NML) WILL FUNDAMENTALLY ALTER THE TRANSLATION PROCESS

Although we’ve had to deal with the rise of computer-assisted translation (CAT) and other early MT tools, most of these left the basic tenets of translation untouched. Jobs were still priced on a per-word basis and the translator was the only link between the source and final content. In short, the flowchart of a freelance translator’s tasks looked much the same as it did 20 or 30 years ago. Nowadays, though, that’s no longer the case. Here are a few ways that upcoming technologies will permanently alter the translation process:

- **Pricing on a per-word basis may no longer be practical.** Instead, calculating rates and payments may work better using hourly fees or project-based fees.

- **For some jobs, you’re more likely to serve as a proofreader.** While people might not be willing to pay a high-end translator to do the grunt work, they’re still open to bringing you on for an editing role.

- **Your next project manager might be an algorithm.** With automatically generated content, where deadlines and algorithms drive decisions, the need for dedicated project managers will shrink. The data generated from algorithms will then be used to drive recruitment, predict market readiness, and determine translation needs. In other words, a computer could be your boss one day.

- **Multimedia translation is the future.** With voice recognition and augmented reality on the rise, the need for translators willing to adapt to these new technologies will increase. Translators who are willing to embrace these different platforms, including voice-assisted search for online queries, will benefit.

LESSON 2  THE PROPER APPLICATION OF MT AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN YOUR WORKFLOW CAN SET YOU APART FROM THE COMPETITION

As language specialists, we tend to think of MT and artificial intelligence (AI) as the monsters under the bed. But if we’re willing to embrace these monsters, we can use them to our advantage. Having an efficient MT tool on hand can help cut costs and drastically increase our production ability, at least if we know how and when to use it.
LESSON 3  FIND YOUR NICHE TO FUTURE-PROOF YOUR BUSINESS

John Tinsley, chief executive officer of Iconic Translation Machines and an expert in the MT field, opened his session with a startling statistic: “99% of today’s global content is translated by MT without any human intervention.” Hearing numbers like that is enough to leave most translators waking up in a cold sweat, but I’m not one of them. My research shows that there’s plenty of room for both machine and human translators in the marketplace. In fact, the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the employment outlook for translators and interpreters will increase 29% by 2024. Of course, many of you are probably wondering what you can do to ensure that you are positioned for growth.

Generalists and low-quality content mills will be the main casualties in this battle of man versus machine. To succeed in the future, you’ll need to specialize in a field that values accuracy and creativity over speed and volume. Examples of these fields include medical oncology research, renewable energy development, and automotive patent law, as well as more creative fields such as marketing. Transcreators, because of their ability to merge copywriting with nuance and emotion, will also be well-positioned against the rising tide of automation.

There is also a new field of specialization that merits your attention. International companies are hungry for freelance translators with experience in digital marketing and social media. They need people who understand local search marketing and can adjust their messaging to meet the needs of customers and search engines alike. Even if an oncology degree is out of reach, the internet is awash with knowledge about customer service, search engine optimization, and social media management.

LESSON 4  THERE’S A NEW TRANSLATION BUSINESS MODEL ON THE RISE

Up until a few years ago, there were two prominent business models translators followed: they either collaborated directly with clients or worked for language services providers. Many freelance translators make a living straddling the line between the two. These two ways of working demand different technologies, processes, and timelines. Now, many translators will be forced to contend with a third translation model: crowdsourcing.

In this model, popularized by platforms such as Smartcat and Gengo, end clients plug their content into a virtual translator community. The platform then automates job management on both sides. By removing the geographical barriers between the translator and the end client, the crowdsourcing model opens the market to lower-cost providers in markets where the cost of living is much lower. These lower costs will ultimately hurt those language services providers stuck in the middle. This new business model gives you even more reason to specialize and find your niche.

LESSON 5  MACHINE LEARNING IS CREATING NEW ROLES FOR TRANSLATORS

If generalists and low-quality translators will lose their place in the market, then new, more specialized people will take their place. In the next few years we expect to see a sharp increase in the demand for:

- **Post-Editors of MT:** While some companies don’t mind machines doing the lion’s share, they’re skittish about releasing raw MT content into the market. Therefore, they’ll want someone to read over the outputted text for mistakes. The corrections will then be fed back into the data pipeline to further improve the machine’s output. This is a possible field for translators willing to take it on, which could even create a new type of translator.

- **Transcreators:** Machines still struggle to combine culture, language, and emotion into a creative and compelling text. To get that done right, you need a human. Machines also have a difficult time understanding cultural nuances, emotions, and the psychology involved in proper translation, all of which are vital to sales and marketing. For that reason, transcreators should weather the digital transformation just fine.

- **Spoken Content Specialists:** Audio is being hyped as the new communication platform. Over time, text interfaces are being replaced with voice-powered assistants like Google Home, Alexa, and Siri. Podcasts are also growing in popularity. This shift to audio requires a different sort of translator. Those who work in this field must find ways to convey the importance of social, gender,
and emotive markers in the work they produce. They must also be prepared to work with speakers of various dialects to create more localized, regionalized content.

- **Brand Ambassadors:** With more of the world coming online, globalized branding is becoming increasingly important. Worldwide retailers will need help ensuring that their company’s values and beliefs are effectively communicated across geographical borders. This will require translators who are willing to act as product testers and advise companies on how best to adjust their products to meet the needs of their target markets.

- **Local Storytellers:** Good marketing is built around good narratives. Simply translating these stories into a target language rarely has the desired impact that companies want. That's why these groups are looking for people who know how to craft a good tale. This is a perfect role for translators who dream of a career as a creative writer. With the demand for personalization growing, the need for this type of work will only increase.

- **Conversational Agent Consultants:** Like it or not, chatbots are here to stay. While much of their development has happened in English-speaking countries, they’re now being deployed in markets all around the world. Still, these “conversational agents” need a human to help fine-tune and perfect them. People in this position will need a good understanding of human psychology, machine logic, and customer service to succeed.

**LESSON 6  MACHINE LEARNING WILL GIVE YOU INSIGHT INTO YOUR WORK**

Translators, as connected professionals, will eventually benefit from the datafication of their work. The rise of algorithm and MT will make it easier for us to analyze our work habits, performance levels, and productivity. Eventually, ML could allow us to build a data narrative of our past choices and spell check preferences. It could then use that data to make suggestions to improve the overall quality of our work. With this data at our fingertips, we’ll also have a new way to quantify our value to clients and potential employers.

**LESSON 7  TRADITIONAL TRAINING ISN’T ENOUGH**

Academic training for translators usually consists of two things: translation theory and practical translation. The latter tends to focus on CAT tools and general customer service. The former focuses more on ethics, linguistics, and sociology. The topic of MT is barely more than a footnote in these areas. The curriculum rarely makes room for the advanced algorithmic knowledge, specialized skill sets, and advanced information technology tools required for the future. Until more universities adapt to this, new translators will have to turn to industry mentors and less traditional sources to help prepare them for the future of the industry.

To succeed in the future, you’ll need to specialize in a field that values accuracy and creativity over speed and volume.

**LESSON 8  WE NEED TO STOP BEING AFRAID OF MT AND STEP UP TO HELP SHAPE IT**

Machine translation tools are often built by software engineers with little to no knowledge of the industry itself. This often results in tools that are clunky, complicated, and poorly designed for the translation process. But just like we did with bilingual print dictionaries and translation memories, we have a chance to change that. We can reach out to designers and engineers and provide our insights to help bring about needed change that will enhance the efficiency of these tools in our work. Or perhaps we can join a group or become guinea pigs for the next generation of tools coming down the pipeline. Whatever you do, don’t let the advent of ML leave you voiceless. Do everything you can to make sure that the end product you use is well suited to your work.

**LESSON 9  THE NEED FOR GLOBALIZED CONTENT HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER**

With ML on the rise, most of us think that the need for skilled translators will decrease, but that couldn’t be further from the truth. As large population centers become increasingly digitized, there’s now an insatiable need for translators willing to work in those markets. Furthermore, with all that big data flying around, there’s a huge need for people to translate and make decisions across cultural lines. In short, while machines will take away a lot of the grunt work, freelance translators will be given more opportunities to make a difference.

**WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE US?**

Based on what I learned from TAUS, translators need to up their game, focus on niche markets, use MT as a tool to boost productivity and provide ancillary services, and consider adjusting their business models or pricing schemes to keep their use of MT profitable.

Attending TAUS was an eye-opening experience, being the “linguist” among technology companies. I not only learned a lot about the present state of the industry, but also gained many insights into what’s coming. If we specialize and use our human powers to our advantage, we have no reason to fear MT and its associated impact.

**NOTES**


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Of Translators and Librarians

This was the title of a short article I wrote a little more than 10 years ago, in 2008. The point of the article was to highlight the remarkable speed with which librarians had accepted technology (unlike translators at that point). I contrasted the well-known “The Bookworm” painting by Carl Spitzweg of 1850 with this then-current description of how librarians approach technology in Wikipedia:

The increasing role of technology in libraries has a significant impact on the changing roles of librarians. (. . .) Increasing technological advance has presented the possibility of automating some aspects of traditional libraries. In 2004, a group of researchers in Spain developed (. . .) a robot [that] is able to navigate the library, look for the specified book, and deliver it to the user. Because of the robot’s extremely limited function, its introduction into libraries poses little risk to the employment of librarians, whose duties are [no longer] defined by menial tasks such as the retrieval of books.1

In my article, I came to the following conclusion:

There’s a great contrast between Spitzweg’s wonderful “Bookworm” painting of 1850 and the 2008 Wikipedia description of the use of technology by librarians. While the “Bookworm” provokes a poetic image, librarians today have been able to master and accept technology and thus still play an important role today. In sharp contrast, the language industry—whose main character, the translator, has a historically similar poetic and romantic image—has chosen a different path. That’s why our industry is currently experiencing such heavy turbulences.2

A lot has changed since 2008. The majority of translators have embraced some translation-related technologies and have recognized that there are ways to distinguish themselves other than rehashing already-translated materials.

But what struck me on several recent occasions is that the job of the librarian has once again changed as well, and once again those changes have been embraced with readiness and grace.

My wife and I spent our annual vacation-mainstay at our family’s lake cabin in rural northeastern Washington. The cabin is hermetically cut off from any electronic connection, and we leave only a few times to go into “town,” which happens to be Colville, a struggling blue-collar community about a 30-minute drive from our cabin. During those treks, we typically drop by the library to check our electronic correspondence.

The library in that little town is amazing. It’s staffed by three or four librarians who run a large range of activities, some of which have to do with books and all of which have to do with people. The Colville library is a place for toddlers to be read to, for older kids to play video games, for the homeless to cool down from the heat or escape from the wildfire smoke in the air, for travelers to check in, for the elderly to meet, and, yes, for just anyone to borrow books or games or log onto the internet. It’s as much of a cross-section of society as you can possibly get, and it’s all guided by the librarians who spend so much of their time with social interactions and do it brilliantly. (In the past few years, I’ve always made sure to personally thank them for their services and tell them how much I admire them for what they do.)

Now, I don’t think the Colville library is all that different from other libraries. It’s just what librarians do, and so often do well.

All this reminded me of a report on National Public Radio (the U.S. lifeline for, well, just about anyone who likes to listen to the radio and wants to stay informed) that discussed exactly that. Only this report specifically mentioned social workers employed in libraries, which clearly is not in the budget for most libraries. Even the 2019 Wikipedia entry on “Librarians” reflects the social work reality:

Traditionally, a librarian is associated with collections of books, as demonstrated by the etymology of the word “librarian” (from the Latin liber, “book”). The role of a librarian is continually evolving to meet social and technological needs. A modern librarian may deal with the provision and maintenance of information in many formats, including books, electronic resources, magazines, newspapers, audio and video recordings, maps, manuscripts, photographs and other graphic material, bibliographic databases, and web-based and digital resources. A librarian may also provide other information services, including information literacy instruction, computer provision and training, coordinating with community groups to host public programs, provide assistive technology for people with...
It seems unlikely that “social work” is part of the future service offerings for translators (interpreters might be a different story, but I’ll leave those speculations to more knowledgeable people). But as part of our services, we’ll have to continue to market our skills of meaningfully interfacing with people (clients, colleagues, and the general public) and to continue to be open to changes.

In spite of what we like to say (“translation is the second oldest profession in the world”), the translation profession as we know it today (excluding literary and religious translation) is very young and still in its formative stages. While I believe that we may have almost reached a plateau in its development, changes will still be necessary for many. And you know what the beauty of change is? Changing skills doesn’t mean giving up one skill in exchange for another, but adding skills to an already impressive array.

That’s what librarians continue to do, and that’s what we’ll have to do as well. After all, St. Jerome is the patron saint for both of those professions for a good reason.

NOTES
Five years ago, I discovered a tragic shortage of free online Chinese>Hungarian dictionaries. I soon decided that it was my mission to fill this gap. There was just one small problem I had to overcome: I don’t really speak Chinese.

Here, then, is what I learned about the translation industry as I created the Chinese-Hungarian Dictionary and Corpus (CHDICT), an online open-source, collaboratively edited Chinese>Hungarian dictionary.¹

WHAT IS CHDICT?
It’s any and all of the following:

■ A downloadable text file with an open public license, where each line contains one Chinese word and its meaning in Hungarian.

■ A website where you can look up Chinese or Hungarian words or find the meaning of hand-drawn Chinese characters.

■ The translation into Hungarian of the English senses in CC-CEDICT, an established Chinese-English dictionary, and the inspiration for my own project.²

■ An online collaboration space where people add, improve, and correct dictionary entries.

I compiled the core portion of CHDICT between February 2015 and May 2017, by translating around 11,000 entries from the venerable CC-CEDICT and the Chinese>German Dictionary HanDeDict, another free online collaborative dictionary.³ My main objective during this initial phase was to translate the English section of CC-CEDICT, focusing on the most frequently used Chinese words, plus those lesser known terms that are included in the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi, the People’s Republic of China’s official Chinese Proficiency Test.

In a subsequent phase, I used machine learning to extract bilingual vocabulary from three million Chinese>Hungarian movie subtitles. In this way I was able to manually review and add another 4,000 entries to CHDICT in only a few months. Over the same period, the dictionary began to attract contributors, who added or amended hundreds of entries on their own.

I want to use this opportunity to share what the process of developing a dictionary for niche language combinations has taught me about professional translation.

EVERYTHING YOU TRANSLATE IS ANOTHER TRANSLATOR’S INPUT
A dictionary is typically an input that you use as a translator, and not the output of your work. When you translate a dictionary, it turns everything upside down. As I thought more about this, I realized that most of our output as translators is a direct input into the work of other translators. That’s clearly the case when you build a shared glossary. But even when you just commit segments into a translation memory, you’re growing a resource that another translator will probably use later. From this angle, translating a dictionary no longer seems particularly special.

And here’s the thing: every translation that’s stored digitally will eventually be vacuumed up by a machine translation (MT) engine. Certainly that will happen to every piece of content published on the internet. You can rest assured, however, that even highly confidential internal-use-only texts will find their way into the inner parameter space of a highly confidential, internal-use-only MT engine.

CLARITY ABOUT INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT IS SUPER IMPORTANT
I couldn’t have created CHDICT, or at least not in the way that I did, were it not for CC-CEDICT’s public license. Intriguingly, that license was not always in place. The original CEDICT operated without any explicit license until 2007, when the individual running the project simply disappeared. That was a really tough spot to be in for the people who wanted to carry on the torch! Things were eventually sorted out, though, and those who took over the dictionary added “CC” to highlight the now-official Creative Commons license.

But what sort of intellectual property (IP) is a dictionary? Language is a common good; nobody owns the words in its lexicon. Think of it like this: nobody owns gravity, but the physicist who writes a book about gravity does own the book’s IP.

While modern dictionary-making has always been a commercial enterprise in the U.K. and the U.S., it’s typically an academic pursuit elsewhere. In both cases, it’s clear that the dictionary stands as a work on its own, and its IP...
MY TAKEAWAYS FROM TRANSLATING A CHINESE DICTIONARY FROM ENGLISH continued

is jealously guarded by the holders of private licenses.

What is the IP in the case of a translation, whether it’s a translation of a dictionary or any other content? The fact that this question was never properly resolved represents a major disadvantage to the translation industry. The active conversations on this subject from 10–15 years ago simply subsided. And now that it’s become clear that every translation is somebody else’s input, we’re in a situation where MT services can fill millions of translation requests per day and not pay a cent to the creators of the sentence pairs on which the MT engines are trained.

A PUBLIC LICENSE IS THE BEST GUARANTEE FOR A WORK’S SURVIVAL IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Before the digital revolution, humanity’s knowledge was stored in libraries in the form of physical books. Today, humanity’s knowledge is stored digitally, online.

Online digital content has very different survival patterns from printed books. If you stop maintaining your server, the content is gone (think link rot). On the other hand, copies long outlive the original (think Google never forgets). The best strategy for the long-time survival of any digital work, then, is a copy-free public license.

If I get run over by a bus, replicas of CHDICT’s data file will still be stored in many places, and eventually someone else will revive the project and republish the dictionary.

Contrast that with the thousands of out-of-print books that the publisher has no incentive to reprint. Or with a non-public digital work whose copyright holder gets run over by a bus.

I witnessed a unicorn kind of event while working on CHDICT: the open-sourcing of Taiwan’s “official” online Chinese dictionary, MOEDICT. That came about as a result of Taiwan’s 2014 Sunflower Student Movement, during which young protesters upended the island’s political landscape by temporarily seizing control of the national legislature. Urged by the students occupying Parliament, the government created a digital ministry, appointed an anarchist hacker to lead it, and started accommodating regular “gov0” hackathons. One of these hackathons examined MOEDICT. The results of this examination convinced officials that the information the online dictionary contained classified it as a public good (i.e., not a restricted access site) and to publish it under an open license. Now, don’t tell me dictionaries are boring stuff!

LINGUISTS WILL BECOME NATURAL LANGUAGE PROCESSING WIZARDS

Okay, I’m obviously a geek, and one obsessed with CAT tools. I coded my own dictionary translation environment to make translating CC-CEDICT entries extremely efficient. To see what this environment looks like, see Figure 1 above.

The functionality is slightly different from a regular CAT tool, but, yes, the goal is to make all the items on the left in Figure 1 turn green. And yes, the shortcut to confirm an entry is Ctrl+Enter.
I’m not suggesting that all linguists will be coding their own CAT tools in the future. But the real underlying work regarding CHDICT, particularly in the second phase of its development, was about mobilizing natural language processing techniques to tease lexical information out of heaps of bilingual and even monolingual data. The details would be tedious to recount here, but if you’re really into this stuff, I wrote an article about it.

My situation was that I only knew my domain (the Chinese lexicon) superficially, so I had to do lots of research to understand what my source words meant. That’s not unlike what happens in a normal translation setting. At the outset, we’re not experts in the domain of a particular text, so we do research to make sure we get it right. Then we reproduce the text’s message and intent in the target language (and between us, we have an extremely good command of that target language). In other words, Translation = Research + Mastery of the Target Language.

Natural language processing techniques give you superpowers for the research part. It’s like your brain is augmented to access the information encoded in millions of segment pairs. Actual understanding, and artful expression, are the human privilege in this mix.

**TOOLS ENCODE THE SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF COLLABORATION**

You would normally think of a dictionary’s users as those who look up words in it. However, because CHDICT is a collaborative, open dictionary, the smaller number of users who add to it and edit the entries are equally important.

How that contribution and collaboration happens is directly driven by the website. For example, English Wikipedia is a free-for-all: anyone can make an edit with a single click, and the change is immediately published. (This method apparently works with a very large pool of contributors.) CC-CEDICT, on the other hand, uses a pretty rigid process: only registered users can submit edits and new entries. Edits and new submissions get queued up and only go live if someone from a small, closed circle of reviewers processes them. This seems to work fine for CC-CEDICT, although the dictionary’s been getting less activity in recent years.

For CHDICT, I knew I could count on a much smaller pool of contributors. I chose not to add many obstacles before someone could start contributing, but there is still a mechanism in place that drives changes through a four-eyes review process for quality.

The meta-story here is that the forms of engagement, authority, power relations, and overall social dynamics are all coded into the tools we use to collaborate. Since translation has become a fully collaborative online process, that gives tools such as CHDICT immense power to shape the industry’s dynamics. As such, tool developers would be well advised to wield this power wisely and ethically.

**While modern dictionary-making has always been a commercial enterprise in the U.K. and the U.S., it’s typically an academic pursuit elsewhere.**

**SOME OF THE BEST THINGS DON’T HAVE A BUSINESS MODEL**

CHDICT has been online for over two years now, and I have a pretty good idea about its usage statistics. It has over 100 monthly users who spend an average of 20 minutes on the site for each visit. Roughly 2,000 words are looked up each week. These statistics are in line with my original expectations, which I based on the usage statistics of HanDeDict and on a rough estimate of Hungarian speakers who are professionally interested in Chinese.

CHDICT is open to all free of charge, so it’s not a money-maker, but that’s fine with me. Most of the best things in life don’t come with a viable business model. I only wish that, as a society, we could figure out a way to better compensate, in particular, amazing translators of truly complex texts. I mean the likes of well-known literary translators like Emily Wilson or Ken Liu, but also the hundreds of highly skilled people who translate valuable works that don’t make it to the bestseller lists.

**NOTES**

1. You can access the Chinese-Hungarian Dictionary and Corpus (CHDICT) at https://chdict.zydeo.net/en.
3. You can access the Chinese-German dictionary HanDeDict at https://handedict.zydeo.net/de.
4. You can access MOEDICT, a free online dictionary provided by Taiwan’s Ministry of Education, at www.moedict.tw.
ATA certification continues to be a sought-after credential. As a way to prepare for this demanding exam, ATA has been offering practice tests for many years, which are real exam passages that have been “retired.” In addition to the practice test, ATA has been offering exam preparation workshops taught by ATA exam graders to help candidates better understand how to prepare for the exam. In the past three years, ATA has offered regional workshops in Boston, Alexandria, Houston, and Mexico City. These workshops are also offered at ATA’s Annual Conference, including this year in Palm Springs.

The three-hour workshop for Spanish<>English includes an analysis of the different error categories and a practice test that registered participants are invited to complete and submit prior to the workshop. The graded practice tests are returned during the workshop and used as the basis for discussion of the passage. Here are some of the most common errors made by candidates in the English>Spanish combination.

Mimicking English Syntax: Many candidates mimic the English syntax without stopping to consider that Spanish sentences often have to be organized differently. English is a more concise language than Spanish, and sometimes it’s necessary to change word order in a translation, or to provide a verb or an article that is not present in English. Common errors include the absence of definite and indefinite articles, the mimicking of the passive voice, and the use of prepositions that don’t reflect Spanish usage.

False Friends: These are English words that resemble Spanish words in their spelling, but have a different, sometimes opposite, meaning. As their name indicates, these words are very untrustworthy. Many candidates tend to choose the word that looks like the English for their translation, and, in so doing, make a transfer error. The more an English word resembles a Spanish one, the more necessary it is to verify that the meaning is the one that we need in the target language. Always confirm this using a monolingual dictionary.

Incorrect Use of Present Continuous Tense and Gerund/Present Participle: This is one aspect of grammar that’s very different in English and Spanish. Most of the time, in Spanish we cannot imitate the use of the present continuous tense or gerund/present participle. In fact, this is an aspect of Spanish grammar that requires study and practice. Just because you see a verb ending in -ing in English doesn’t mean you can replicate it in Spanish. Candidates lose a lot of points because they don’t understand the correct use of the present continuous tense and gerund/present participle in Spanish.

Mechanical Errors: These are what we call “controllable” errors. Mechanical errors are those evident to a Spanish reader without having to compare the text to the English original. Such errors include punctuation, capitalization, spelling, diacritical marks, grammar, and syntax. I say they are “controllable” because ATAs certification exam is an open-book exam. It is therefore possible, and encouraged, for candidates to consult dictionaries, grammar books, and style manuals during the exam. As graders, we’ve found a number of candidates who fail due to mechanical errors. In other words, the candidate transfers the meaning well from English into Spanish, but makes too many mechanical errors.

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**

If you’re planning to take the certification exam in the English>Spanish combination, a practice test is the place to start. Brush up on your Spanish grammar and consult some style manuals to guide you in avoiding mechanical errors. And if you’re able, attend one of the regional workshops that are being offered a few times a year in different parts of the country and at ATA’s Annual Conference in the fall.

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If you haven’t made your own translation glossaries yet, you need to create one right now. You’re not just missing out, you’re doing yourself a disservice.

The benefits of creating and maintaining your own glossaries cannot be understated, from increased productivity to better translation quality. They are essential tools for all translators that can be put to use on every single project. Need a little convincing? Below are five reasons you shouldn’t spend another minute without creating your own glossary (or glossaries!).

**Glossaries Are Worth Their Weight in Gold: **Conservatively, let’s say your first glossary has about 100 terms in it and that you spent an average of five minutes researching each term. If your hourly rate is $50, that glossary is “worth” just over $400. Now, picture this: my master Chinese>English glossary, which I consult for every project that crosses my desk, currently has 1,258 terms. One product glossary a client provided for a project contained 16,383 terms in five languages. Imagine how much time and money went into creating that glossary! By maintaining your own glossary, you’re capturing value, like a bank account whose balance never decreases.

**Glossaries Help You Work Better:**

Now imagine how much more accurately you could work with the help of an impeccably researched 16,000-term glossary. It goes without saying that time is money. If you never have to research the same term twice, you’ll be able to work more consistently and ensure higher quality—all while saving time. Translators who want to compete effectively in our ever more discerning industry must compete on quality, and glossaries are an effective way to do that.

**The benefits of creating and maintaining your own glossary(ies) cannot be understated, from increased productivity to better translation quality.**

**Glossaries Are Not Difficult to Create:**

Actually creating the glossary is the easy part. If you use a computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool, it will usually have an integrated feature for adding terms and their equivalents. Some products, like SDL MultiTerm Extract, will identify and extract terms from a corpus of texts for you (at a cost), while tools like memoQ QTerm have a free integrated term extraction feature. Don’t use a CAT tool? No problem! A glossary can easily be made in Microsoft Excel or in a free spreadsheet application, such as those published by OpenOffice or Google. A glossary can be made with just two columns: source language and target language. You can also add any number of additional columns for context, definitions, an explanation of where you found the term, the date you added the term, and more. You can then alphabetize columns by either the source or target language and search for specific terms as needed.

**Glossary Creation Can Be Monetized:**

In addition to being a great resource for yourself, glossaries are a great product you can sell to new or existing clients. Some notable translators have even offered to create glossaries to win a new discerning client or used them as a prospecting tool. Glossaries provide a host of benefits, and you should be able to sell your clients on those same benefits: fewer term issues, increased accuracy, better consistency, and a valuable asset that they own and can control (with your help, of course).

**Glossaries Evolve:**

Glossaries, like languages, are living things. You’ll never be able to take a glossary, put a bow on it, and call it done. As you, your clients, your areas of expertise, and your knowledge evolve, your glossaries will undoubtedly grow, change, and improve. New realities in your field will become new glossary entries. You very well may find a better term for an entry you added last week or even last year, and that’s not only okay—it’s great! As time passes, your glossaries will become an increasingly valuable asset for you and for your clients.

Convinced yet? The bottom line is that glossaries are invaluable resources for all language professionals. If you don’t have one yet, make creating one the first thing you do after reading this. The effort you put in will pay you back 10 times over, guaranteed. ☁️

**NOTES**

1. SDL MultiTerm Extract,
2. memoQ QTerm,

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We humans are biologically programmed to walk into a situation and immediately start to assess it, right? In fact, what we see around us will often dictate how we conduct ourselves—a true testament to our nature as social beings.

As interpreters, this pre-set mechanism can cause a reaction in us that can backfire and be really embarrassing, uncomfortable, or even downright unprofessional. In my years as a court and medical interpreter, I’ve learned to proceed with caution. I have a few anecdotes I hope will serve as reminders in this battle against our instinctive urge to make assumptions.

**CAUTION: THE UNEXPECTED COMETH!**

I was once interpreting in a hospital clinic when I was called to assist an intern. We began with friendly greetings because we hadn’t worked together in a while, and it was a very pleasant moment right outside the exam room door. Our smiles, friendly tones, and the skip in our step continued as we entered to see the patient. Unbeknownst to me, the intern had been tasked with confirming a woman’s cancer diagnosis, and she was about to begin moaning and weeping uncontrollably at the most terrifying news of her life. There was an instant mood change just moments after we walked in the room.

**CAUTION: LOVEBIRDS IN A NOSEDIVE!**

In family court, couples sitting together waiting for their cases to be called are often a soon-to-be-divorced spouse and his or her new love interest. There are also situations where a pair has started a divorce case, only to realize that they are still willing to drop the matter and give the marriage another go. Either way, people who sit together are seen as amicable, right?

So, I remember having to read a particular “couple” some mediation reports prior to their hearing. They had been sitting together when I pulled them from the courtroom and sat together when I read them the report. They were very sweet, smiling a lot, and I thought, hmm, maybe this will be another surprise request for dismissal of the case. Quite the contrary happened, and the hearing ended up being unusually contentious. They argued over everything, so there was certainly not going to be any reconciliation that day! I still don’t know how they could do such an about-face with each other, but I was sure glad that I didn’t make the small talk I was tempted to engage in about how love conquers all, etc. Beyond the ethical dilemma, it would have turned into such a messy pre-hearing conversation. Awkward!

**CAUTION: HIDDEN HEARTBREAK NEARBY!**

One of the tasks I’m charged with as a staff interpreter is getting the limited-English crowd organized in our misdemeanor courts before the doors open. This requires me to make announcements in a busy hallway. I’ve learned it’s best to make a little speech in English first so that the court customers don’t wonder why only a certain group is being addressed. I guess I’m a pretty cheerful person in the morning (thank you, Starbucks), and so on more than one occasion I’ve had to hold back the urge to be extra chatty as people greet me. You would think that this is not a big deal, right? I mean, gosh, what we deal with in misdemeanor court can be pretty run-of-the-mill and a little levity might be a nice way to start the day.

Unfortunately, not all members of these morning crowds are there for those average cases. I remember a particular family that came to court many times after a terrible tragedy—the death of the defendant’s child after a child seat violation in an accident. Here again is a reason to resist the temptation to be overly friendly. Just imagine being in the habit of trying to make everybody smile and feel relaxed—meaning well, of course—and then having to interpret in a very painful situation for some of those same people. I’ve found it safer to have a demeanor that stays a bit more neutral, remembering that a routine
morning for me could be somebody else’s worst morning ever.

**SAFETY IN ABIDING BY OUR ETHICS**

The ethical standards we practice give us guidance that, when followed, help prevent us from walking head-on into uncomfortable situations. After all, not only are we tasked with being the voice of another, but it’s imperative that those we serve not be distracted by our behavior. Notice that my anecdotes above were all based on good faith and positive conduct, and yet the situations described simply didn’t call for certain attitudes to be present—whether shown or not—in the interpreter.

Something I’ve noticed is that as professionals mature, both as a function of age and experience, it’s easier to be wise in our attitudes and conduct. However, because the nature of our role is helpful and can be seen as positive, the lines between neutral, safe conduct and entering into the danger zone can become blurred. As interpreters in the judiciary, we’re expected to be ready to adjust and adapt to others, rather than make it our task to guide those we help to some happier place. Often, something just slightly more than a Mona Lisa smile has to suffice.

Something else to consider is the dual-role of staff member and interpreter. Might it be that keeping a professional distance is easier for interpreters who work as contractors? After all, we may start getting so comfortable in our daily routines and locations that our guard is let down. Caution! We sometimes need that official reminder that we work in a solemn environment, and for the sake of those who may be the exception and not the rule, we are wise to keep our conduct in check and to review our ethical duties list every so often.

**OOPS, I TRIPPED AND KNOCKED OVER THE CAUTION SIGN. NOW WHAT?**

So, what if we goof up? What if we have opened our mouths and deftly inserted our foot, causing a situation to change direction unexpectedly? For sure, we have to acknowledge whatever we’ve done to those it affects. Once I thought a hearing was over when the judge repeatedly thanked a litigant in an effort to silence him. I started to get up from where we were seated and the litigant followed suit. Because of me, the guy started getting scolded for attempting to leave the hearing! I immediately indicated to the judge that I had misunderstood that the hearing was over and apologized that my movement (aka: my assumption) caused difficulty for somebody else.

When we take mistakes in stride and truly feel badly for any time our conduct makes a situation go sour, it makes us stronger as individuals, as interpreters, and as a representative of our profession.

Really, this is all about assumptions, and we all know what those do! We often associate assumptions with the negative, but remember that assumptions even about the positive can lead to situations we don’t want to find ourselves in. We assume we know where a conversation is going, what others need to turn that frown upside down, what a contentious couple should look like. Just remember the anecdotes: happiness can turn into instant sorrow; a cordial moment can turn into a boxing match; and the sunny hello can be followed by talk of tragic regret. The safety zone: no assumptions, a neutral attitude, and solid application of ethics. We’ve got this!

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