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Cover Feature
Password Management and General Cybersecurity: Keep Yourself and Your Clients Safe
If you follow tech news, you know that it’s not at all difficult to find reports of major companies being hacked and having data stolen. Losing control of your personal information is bad enough, leaving you vulnerable to crimes like identity theft and credit card fraud. But members of the T&I community are also trusted with our clients’ information. We need to protect their secrets as well as our own. In a cyberworld that seems increasingly more dangerous, how can we keep our secrets safe? For language services providers, this is not just an academic question.

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ATA ADVOCACY
Educating government officials and the public about the role of translators, interpreters, and language access in our society is a central part of ATA’s mission. These efforts are led in part by ATA's Advocacy Committee. The committee is proud to have been able to lend its collective expertise on language access and interpreting to many important endeavors this year, including this one undertaken with NAJIT and the ACLU of New Jersey.

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ATA 2023 Elections: Candidate Statements and Proposed Bylaws Amendments
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. In addition, members will vote on proposed amendments to ATA’s Bylaws. The Annual Meeting of Voting Members and Election will be held October 26, 2023.

Are you hoping to complete an internship in the language services industry but aren’t sure where to start? I was in this boat recently, but I doubled down, changed my game plan, and in the end created a dream internship where I learned so much and made an impact in my area of interest.

Getting Started with ChatGPT to Boost Your Productivity

Your livelihood as a linguist is not threatened by AI, but by AI-enabled linguists. Experiment with AI now and discover your productive use cases in translation, terminology, research, and admin.

Got Standards?

We cannot underestimate the power of standards when it comes to educating clients! Not only are we adhering to international standards, but we are also following the best practices in our profession to guarantee accuracy, consistency, and professionalism.

ATA’s Language Technology Division Members Reflect: Language as a Technology?

Members of the Leadership Council of ATA’s Language Technology Division found some intriguing ideas contained within an article in Bloomberg’s Tech Daily entitled “Language Was the Original Technology, and It’s Under Threat.” Here, they respond with some novel and personal reflections on the subject, most especially on a key takeaway which, not surprisingly, elicited some very different perspectives.
O
f all the columns one could write as ATA president, it seems the last one is perhaps the hardest to draft in terms of what to say and how to “sign off.” Nothing prepares you for the final months leading up to handing over the baton to the very capable hands of the next president and Board. It’s a “limbo” period in which you find yourself still making decisions and offering guidance, but also realizing that the next leaders will be affected by the foundation you lay. I suppose you could say this is the case for the entire term of the president and those serving on our ATA Board, but the last few months really make clear the effect one set of leaders have on the next, and thus, the Association as a whole.

If there’s anything I’m proud of when it comes to my time on the Board and my term as president, it’s the fact that we’ve evolved as an association and have demonstrated incredible resiliency. At our latest ATA Board meeting in Seattle, Washington, I heard Board members say over and over again that we’re leaving the Association better than we found it. That’s not to say ATA was in rough shape before, but rather, the goal is to leave behind an even stronger foundation on which more of the good stuff can be built for the next group of leaders and members.

Over the past few years, we’ve seen some major changes within ATA and the T&I world. Things have been shaken up, and we’ve landed on our feet. In fact, I would say we’re even stronger than before.

We made it through a pandemic with a very healthy outlook, all things considered. We’ve become a more modern association in many ways, meeting our members where they are and striving to continue to offer benefits and programs that evolve with our members. We embrace technology and offer programming that reflects an openness to possibilities instead of fear of the unknown. We have a diverse and welcoming community within ATA that is truly unparalleled.

Finally, our Headquarters team has risen to the challenge of our ever-evolving professional world. This group of professionals brings a wide range of expertise, and they’re enthusiastic about where ATA is headed. They’re creative, dynamic, and inspired, with a strong vision for a future that supports our members’ interests and the work of our Board, committees, divisions, and ATA groups.

I’m confident in the team Executive Director Kelli Baxter is leading to support ATA for several years to come. It is truly humbling when members of an association like ATA trust you to lead and advocate on their behalf. I want to thank you all for the trust you’ve placed in me over the years. From administrator of ATA’s Medical Division to chair of various ATA committees, to serving on ATA’s Board, I’ve spent nearly 15 years volunteering in ATA, serving with and getting to know some of the greatest professionals I’ve come across. I’ll continue to think of ATA as my professional home and look forward to supporting the efforts of our future ATA leaders and members.

It has been an honor to serve as ATA president for the past two years. Here’s to our beloved Association’s many more years of growth, resiliency, and success!
Here is still time to register for ATA’s 64th Annual Conference! I look forward to seeing many familiar faces and meeting new colleagues in Miami on October 25–28, 2023. Our room block at the Hyatt Regency Miami has sold out, so we’ve added a list of nearby hotels and a link to additional hotels in the area. Please contact these hotels directly for room rates and to book a room.

If you’re wondering whether ATA64 is worth the investment, here are 11 reasons you should attend!

**Learn and Grow:** Choose among 190 sessions in 30 language- and subject-specific tracks and gain new insights from subject matter experts in all areas of translation, interpreting, and localization. We have several new tracks this year, so you’ll find plenty of interesting sessions no matter which field you specialize in or what skills you would like to improve.

With new formats like 30- and 60-minute sessions as well as 15-minute ATA MicroTalks, you can build your own schedule and attend as many sessions as you’d like. Gain inspiration from our Distinguished Speakers, participate in interactive Advanced Skills and Training Day courses, and earn continuing education credits approved by ATA and various interpreter credentialing organizations.

**Get Comfortable with New Technology:** Do you feel lost in a sea of new tools or uncertain about the future of your career in the age of new technology and artificial intelligence? With a dedicated language technology track and many fantastic sessions on tools and technology, we’ve got you covered this year. Discover tips and tricks from technology experts and experienced professionals on how to leverage technology in translation, interpreting, and localization to future-proof your career.

**Connect with Colleagues:** Don’t go it alone—come face to face with colleagues who share you professional interests. Meet old friends and make new ones at the Welcome Celebration, the Divisions and Special Interest Groups Mix and Mingle, and several off-site events. Discuss important issues related to your specializations and services in our Professional Forums and enjoy conversations during coffee breaks and over lunch. You’ll feel re-energized and inspired!

**Network with Ease:** There will be many opportunities to network with colleagues and potential clients during ATA64! Our fun and interactive networking sessions will leave you wanting more. From Buddies Welcome Newbies to Stronger Together Networking, Brainstorm Networking, and themed breakfast tables—you can make important connections and find opportunities to collaborate.

**Discover New Resources and Tools:** Find tools and resources that will help you improve your skills or do your job more efficiently. Discover new products, services, and opportunities when you visit the Exhibit Hall, or attend the T&I Book and Resource Fair to meet colleagues who double as authors or book translators, host podcasts or blogs, or offer training and other resources.

**Meet and Celebrate Multitalented Colleagues—and Showcase Your Own Talents:** Attend the Awards Ceremony to celebrate colleagues who have demonstrated extraordinary achievements.
Congratulations to all ATA members who received ATA64 attendees the opportunity to contribute to local organizations in Miami that make a difference in people’s lives. We invite you to use this campaign to offset any tax spending in Miami by supporting local charities that align with your values. Visit our SocialOffset page to make your donation.

Join us at ATA64 to support the diversity of Miami and the state of Florida, share the diversity and values of ATA, and experience Miami’s multicultural history, warmth, and hospitality.

ATA64: The Importance of Gathering in Miami

As a professional association that brings together thousands of language experts of diverse backgrounds, many of whom work directly with historically underserved and marginalized communities, ATA is committed to promoting and facilitating diversity, equity, inclusion, and communication.

ATA would like to acknowledge that Florida may not seem like a welcoming place right now for many members of our community. We also recognize that hundreds of thousands of Floridians have been affected by recent controversial legislative actions—and they do not have the privilege of choosing not to visit. We believe that it is more important than ever to gather in Miami and to show our support for those impacted. By showing up, sharing our values, and being a vocal presence advocating for openness, kindness, and togetherness, ATA members can send a powerful message that we stand for justice and equity.

The very nature of our professions as translators and interpreters is to break through communication barriers that disadvantage or marginalize people of diverse backgrounds. Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion is affirmed through ATA’s resolution supporting diversity and a statement on racism and inequality. This commitment is further reflected in this year’s Annual Conference program, which features many sessions covering language access, inclusive language, language justice, languages of limited diffusion, and more. Diversity is in our DNA, and it’s in Miami’s DNA, too.

Our conference hotel, the Hyatt Regency Miami, is a unionized hotel that is likewise committed to DEI&A and is dedicated to ensuring all guests feel welcome and safe.

ATA has partnered with SocialOffset to offer ATA64 attendees the opportunity to contribute to local organizations in Miami that make a difference in people’s lives. We invite you to use this campaign to offset any tax spending in Miami by supporting local charities that align with your values. Visit our SocialOffset page to make your donation.

Join us at ATA64 to support the diversity of Miami and the state of Florida, share the diversity and values of ATA, and experience Miami’s multicultural history, warmth, and hospitality.
members, and potentially offer your help as a volunteer. Meet ATA Board members at the Welcome Celebration and Breakfast with the Board. Meet the candidates for this year’s open Board positions and vote in ATA’s Elections during the Annual Meeting of Voting Members. Attend the Annual Meeting of All Members to hear updates about ATA activities and share feedback with the Board. If you’re a division officer, committee chair, or leader of an ATA chapter or affiliate, attend the ATA Leadership Summit to clarify tasks, discuss common issues, share experiences, offer guidance, and brainstorm ideas. Attend the ATA Board meeting to learn how ATA governance works and get a front row seat to what’s happening in the Association.

**Take Your Business to the Next Level:**

After last year’s Annual Conference, I read a testimonial from one of the conference attendees who referred to ATA’s Annual Conferences as “a pit stop, a place where I can refuel, dust off, take a minute to strategize and re-evaluate, and make some tweaks here and there, just so I can go at it again, better and faster.” I completely agree with this description! By attending ATA64, you’ll take some much-needed time to work on your business, not in your business, get a birds-eye view of your professional environment, acquire new skills, and feel inspired to make some changes in your business while future-proofing your career.

**Enjoy the sun and have fun!** If you read Itzaris Weyman’s article “Welcome to the Magic City” in the May–June issue, you know how much there is to do and see in Miami! Explore the Miami beaches, parks, arts and entertainment, and discover the culinary diversity of Miami’s restaurants. Make sure to check out the Miami Travel Guide on the ATA64 website. Thanks to the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Florida (ATIF), our ATA64 hospitality group, you’ll also find friendly faces in the registration area, where ATIF volunteers will be happy to answer your questions and offer you advice and directions.

**Never Attended an ATA Annual Conference?**

Listen to this webinar on how to prepare for ATA64, which includes a question-and-answer session and virtual networking. (The webinar is free to ATA members!) Don’t forget to claim your first-time attendee discount when you register for the conference and sign up for the Buddies Welcome Newbies session to be partnered with a seasoned attendee who will help you get the most out of your conference experience. Connect with members of ATA divisions and ask for tips for your first ATA Annual Conference, watch the ATA63 recap video, and check out the ATA64 teaser for a glimpse of what to expect. Finally, listen to Episode 91 of The ATA Podcast for an overview of all things ATA64-related.
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

KELLI C. BAXTER
kelli@atanet.org

ATA Membership: What’s Your Why?

ATA members are the heart and soul of the T&I industry. As the largest professional association of interpreters and translators in the U.S., our membership consists of more than 8,000 members working in 50 languages, with more than 3,000 of those members being professional interpreters. Next year, ATA will celebrate 65 years in T&I, and as we prepare to celebrate, we’re working to enhance your member experience.

The Headquarters team has faced many challenges and endured much change, including the departure of several team members who served the Association for many years. Among them, Jamie Padula, manager of divisions and chapter relations, moved on after dedicating more than 16 years of professional service to the T&I industry. With staff departures this year, I’ve received questions and comments that prompted me to provide you with an update on our ATA staff changes and new leadership.

For the first time this summer, the Headquarters team took the opportunity to meet with our chapter and division leadership. These virtual meetings provided a unique opportunity to formally introduce the Headquarters team to our volunteer leaders and field questions from chapter and division representatives. We discussed the challenges encountered with division websites, while sharing the new enhancements with internal operations in documenting department processes. We listen to you and are dedicated to the success of our divisions and chapters by keeping the lines of communication open with more virtual meetings to hear your concerns and help solve any problems. Stay tuned for more interaction with the Headquarters team—they will also be formally introduced this year at AATA64. Here is an update on the current team:

Kelli Baxter
Executive Director

Adrian Aleckna, CMP
Director, Professional Development and Events

Caron Bailey, CAE
Manager, Certification Program

Kathryn DeVito
Manager, Membership, Divisions and Chapter Relations

Stacy Fowler
Manager, Information Systems

Cat Kenol
Professional Development and Events Coordinator

Maddie Mayuga
Membership Administrative Specialist

Trenton “TJ” Morgan
Social Media and Communications Coordinator

Jeff Sanfacon
Manager, Publications

Chelsey Sleeter
Executive Assistant

Throughout the summer, committees were very active in advocacy efforts, standards development, professional development, and more. The 2023 mid-year membership campaign produced more than 300 new and returning members since June of 2022.

We’ll now set our sights on the fall new member campaign and the 2024 renewal season. Do you have a friend or associate who could benefit from ATA membership? Invite them to join today and receive the rest of your 2023 membership free!

ATA’s 65th year will bring new and improved membership benefits. Our new association management system (AMS) is scheduled to be launched by the end of this year. We look forward to enhanced features for our members, including a new online directory. Additional member benefits will include online communities for volunteers to collaborate with each other. Corporate members will enjoy new year-round sponsorship opportunities to brand their business.

But we need to hear from you! We would like to gain better insights into what our members need and want to see and how you would like to receive ATA communications. You can make your voice heard by participating in an upcoming communications survey.

As always, your support of ATA and the Headquarters team is valued and appreciated! I encourage members to reach out to the Headquarters team with any questions or for any assistance needed. See you in Miami! 

The ATA Chronicle Receives APEX Award

The ATA Chronicle has been awarded the 2023 APEX Award for Publication Excellence in Magazines, Journals, and Tabloids. ATA’s flagship publication, The ATA Chronicle provides in-depth articles covering vital aspects of the translation and interpreting industry.

About the APEX Awards

Established in 1988, the Annual Awards for Publication Excellence (APEX) is an annual competition for publishers, editors, writers, and designers who create print, web, electronic, and social media. It is open to communicators in corporate, nonprofit, and independent settings.

In April, ATA joined forces with the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of New Jersey to draft an amicus brief in an urgent matter related to language access and the use of remote interpreting in a high-stakes jury trial.

The case (The State v. Juracan–Juracan) involves a criminal prosecution against a defendant who speaks Kaqchikel, a rare Indigenous Mayan language originating in what is now Guatemala. The trial court was unable to find a Kaqchikel–English interpreter and needed to resort to relay interpreting with a Spanish–English interpreter and a Kaqchikel–Spanish interpreter. Even though the Kaqchikel–Spanish interpreter told the judge they could not adequately interpret remotely, the judge decided to order remote interpreting for the upcoming trial. The defendant appealed that ruling, arguing that the lack of in-person interpreting violated his right to participate effectively in his own defense. After the appellate court upheld the decision, the matter went before the New Jersey Supreme Court.

The brief, filed with the New Jersey Supreme Court on April 28, 2023, compiled the collective expertise of professional interpreters and highlighted issues that are critically important to ensuring the rights of limited-English-proficient (LEP) defendants in criminal trials and to professional interpreters’ ability to meet professional standards and codes of ethics.

Oral arguments were presented on June 1, 2023, and a replay of those arguments may be viewed here. The ACLU, on behalf of ATA and NAJIT, argued that remote interpreting...
in a criminal trial would undermine the accuracy and completeness of the interpreting, create serious ethical risks for the interpreters, and ultimately impair the courts’ ability to recruit interpreters. The ACLU urged the court to defer to the interpreter’s professional judgment as to whether a proposed plan for interpreting services permits them to meet their professional standards. It also advocated for a per-se rule in favor of in-person interpreting in line with defense counsel.

The Supreme Court issued its decision on August 15, 2023, which can be read here.

Advocacy Works!
On August 21, 2023, NAJIT issued an analysis of the decision, highlighting that there should be a presumption of in-person interpreting services for criminal jury trials. The high court also laid out new guidelines for when courts should use in-person interpreters, taking into consideration factors like the complexity of the trial and whether the defendant plans to testify.

We consider this a victory for meaningful language access. ATA’s Advocacy Committee is proud to have been able to lend our collective expertise on language access and interpreting to this important effort.

Learn More about ATA’s Advocacy Efforts
Educating government officials and the public about the role of translators and interpreters and language access in our society is a central part of ATA’s mission. These efforts are led in part by ATA’s Advocacy Committee, which works on behalf of ATA members—and all language professionals—to specifically tackle policy and legislative language issues. The committee is charged with:

- Monitoring the activities of local, state, and national legislative and regulatory bodies
- Providing recommendations for responding to requests from these bodies
- Providing information regarding government activities to the Board and the general membership
- Addressing international regulatory issues, as appropriate

ATA’s advocacy campaigns have included supporting interpreters seeking fair pay in Nevada, working with a coalition to restore language access rights in the Affordable Care Act, warning the Santa Maria City Council (California) about the risks of unqualified interpreting services, advising Oregon that its plan to require credentialed interpreters is flawed, supporting striking interpreters in Nebraska, supporting higher pay and better working conditions in South Carolina, and urging the Department of Labor to reconsider its proposed changes to the classification of independent contractors.

Visit ATA’s Advocacy and Outreach page for more information on these efforts.
One of the chief purposes of a professional association is to create a network where members can find both support and knowledge. In 2022, ATA’s Board approved a pilot program for special interest groups, or SIGs, a new kind of community within ATA. Currently, three SIGs have been established: the Interpreters and Translators in Education SIG, the Financial Translators SIG, and the Southeast Asian Languages SIG. The pilot period will extend through 2023, and, depending on member interest and the activity level within each SIG, the Board will vote to continue or dissolve the SIGs at that time.

What Are SIGs?

SIGs were created to fill a void. Some ATA members were seeking groups catering to their particular professional interests but, crucially, didn’t have the numbers necessary to form a division. SIGs serve as a midway point. They are similar to divisions in that they offer a source of community and conversation around an area of focus, but they do not have the formal

Like ATA as a whole, SIGs aim to increase language access for all and help their members gain visibility, recognition, and respect not only within the T&I community, but also among other professionals and the public at large.

By Andie Ho
SIGs are similar to divisions in that they offer a source of community and conversation around an area of focus, but they do not have the formal structure or membership numbers of a division.

**Introducing the SIGs**

All three SIGs share the goal of giving their members a supportive place to gather and discuss terminology, the latest news, and changes to the business landscape. They also hope to advertise and offer training opportunities and resources. Like ATA as a whole, SIGs aim to increase language access for all and help their members gain visibility, recognition, and respect not only within the T&I community, but also among other professionals and the public at large.

**The Interpreters and Translators in Education Special Interest Group (ITE SIG):** This group is moderated by Giovanna Carriero-Contreras, Mary Castellanos, and Alex Mendez. The ITE SIG was established with a vision to enhance the visibility of interpreters and translators within the educational sector. The goal is to unite those professionals involved in education, creating a collaborative platform where members can share their unique initiatives, interests, and contributions to the ITE community.

**The Financial Translators Special Interest Group (FT SIG):** This group is moderated by Silvana Debonis, Graciela Alita Steinberg, and Analía Bogdan. The concept of financial translation covers a wide range of fields and industries, including investment, taxation, banking, insurance, and fintech. All these fields are sophisticated and constantly evolving, so translators need to keep abreast of new concepts, new terminology, and new legislation.

**The Southeast Asian Languages Special Interest Group (SEAL SIG):** This group is moderated by Tram Bui, Ryan Le, and Susi Rakhmawati. Southeast Asia is one of the most linguistically diverse areas of the world. There are over 1,000 languages in daily use in the 11 countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar [formerly Burma], Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste, and Vietnam) that make up the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). With centuries of trade and common experiences, there are also strong cultural similarities that transcend languages among these countries. While a small number of languages within the ASEAN are used widely, many other language pairs do not have the number of speakers among ATA members necessary to establish language-specific divisions within ATA. There is strong commercial and government demand, but a surprisingly small number of ATA members work in these languages. SEAL SIG offers a home for these members.

**How to Join**

To join a SIG, email itesig@atanet.org (for Interpreters and Translators in Education), ftsig@atanet.org (for Financial Translators), or sealsig@atanet.org (for Southeast Asian Languages). You’ll also find SIGs listed with divisions on ATA’s website. You can meet the SIG moderators in person at ATA’s 64th Annual Conference in Miami. A Divisions & SIGs Mix and Mingle will be held on Wednesday, October 25 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., directly after the Welcome Celebration.

SIGs are a welcome sign of ATA’s willingness and ability to bring members together, meet members’ needs, and help us grow professionally and develop our careers. I hope to see you in a SIG group soon!

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**Andie Ho**, CT is an ATA-certified French>English translator based in the Houston, Texas, metro area. After graduating from Kent State University’s MA in translation program, she worked as a project manager for five years before becoming a full-time freelancer in 2011. Her specialties include the food industry and contracts, and she is also a part-time audiobook narrator. She is a past administrator of ATA’s French Language Division and the current chair of the ad hoc Special Interest Groups Committee. andie@andiehotranslations.com
GEOFF KOBY, CT
Geoff@KobyTranslation.com

I am honored to have been nominated for president–elect. I am proud of my career as a translator and translation teacher, working with many gifted translators since joining ATA in 1994. I have experienced the ups and downs in the profession—ATA’s rapid growth in the 1990s and 2000s, but also the drop in business after 9/11, financial challenges during the pandemic, and recent declines in membership.

If elected, I will devote my energy and enthusiasm to ATA. Specifically, I will:

- Strive to benefit individual translators/interpreters, maintain open communication, and emphasize fairness, equality, dialogue, and teamwork.
- Seek to provide excellent Annual Conference sessions and educational opportunities for members, with sound finances.
- Assemble a diverse group to study AI/ChatGPT and develop best practices for working with it so that AI becomes another tool for translators, rather than replacing us.
- Work with the Strategy Committee to develop responses to industry changes due to post-editing and AI to position our members for success.
- Work with the Public Relations Committee to communicate that ATA translators are the choice for translation.
Work with the Education and Pedagogy Committee to develop materials for members to enhance their skills for the future.

My first translations were articles for researchers while in college. After some training, I started my freelance business translating German/Dutch into English and training translators. My professional home is in ATA, particularly the Certification Committee and the German and Dutch Language Divisions. I have worked in the Exhibits Hall at ATA conferences, graded certification exams, worked in/chaired committees, served on the Board, and am president of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI), ATA’s foundation. I have presented at ATA conferences, spoken about translation and ATA to government agencies, organized conferences, and worked on standards committees. Certification Trainer Larry Bogoslaw and I are researching post-editing versus translation using ATA grading (come to our ATA64 session!).

I am proud that AFTI now provides scholarships for students attending ATA’s Annual Conference, and I have helped develop ATA’s Membership Diversity Award (made possible through a generous gift by Lucy Gunderson). I am aware of Board activities and finances from serving on the Governance and Communications Committee (GCC) and the Finance and Audit Committee. The GCC has worked for years on proposed revisions to ATA’s membership structure, drafting and revising language, reviewing member feedback, and making the revisions inclusive and reflective of ATA’s founding values while staying relevant. I believe ATA and its members will benefit from these revisions. I will be honored to chair the GCC and move this project forward toward a Bylaws amendment vote.

I am passionate about giving back because I value the members who make the words work. I love working with ATA’s caring and dedicated volunteers to improve our profession. In my work on the Board and other committees, people have made the difference — making ATA a better association for us all. My experience is a point of stability during a time of rapid change at ATA. I am proud to have served ATA in so many ways over the years and, if elected, promise to serve ATA with continued enthusiasm. I respectfully ask for your support.

MEGHAN MCCALLUM, CT
meghan@fr-en.com

I am honored to be nominated as president–elect. I am confident in what we can accomplish together in the coming years as we focus on progress for our Association, and it would be my privilege to serve as ATA’s president–elect during this time.

I joined ATA in 2010 and have been actively involved ever since. My volunteer roles within ATA include serving as director, leading the Membership Committee, creating ATA’s School Outreach Program, serving on ATA’s Governance and Communications Committee, and writing for ATA’s client-facing blog, The ATA Compass. I greatly enjoy collaborating with colleagues for the benefit of all ATA members and welcome the opportunity to continue this service as your president–elect.

I have served on ATA’s Board of Directors since 2018. Over these past five years, we have navigated changes both inside and outside the organization. We have adapted our programs and resources to new realities, emerging technologies, and the evolving landscape of our professions. Through our collaboration with ATA Headquarters staff and our Association’s many incredible volunteers, ATA’s Board has provided guidance on the Annual Conference, educational programs and resources, communications with our members, advocacy, membership structuring, and more.

As a Board member, I keep an open mind and seek to identify actions we can take to respond to members’ needs and concerns. And with the many collaborations that take place across our organization, I know we have the dedication and energy to make ATA even better. Although change can be challenging, I also see it as an opportunity for us to take stock of who we are and where we want to go in the future. I believe we have implemented many positive changes within ATA in recent years and look forward to continuing this progress.

If elected to serve as president–elect, I will continue to seek opportunities for improvement and encourage input from all members, whether they have just joined our community or are longtime ATA members. From our programs and benefits to advocacy and outreach, we have no shortage of opportunities to support our members, and I look forward to hearing from you about how ATA can better serve you.

As chair of the Membership Committee, I know that diversity is one of ATA’s greatest assets. Our committee strives to provide the best possible experience for all members, as well as actively recruiting and welcoming new members to our Association. In my time leading this committee, we created and conducted a membership survey to better understand who our members are and what benefits are most valuable to you. This information helps us adapt and grow ATA’s programs and resources so we can continue to evolve with your realities.

As president–elect, I will continue looking forward to ATA’s future through ongoing and new opportunities for professional development, networking, and advocacy. I will support diversity in ATA’s membership and leadership and prioritize accessibility of ATA’s benefits and programs to further
strengthen our community of language professionals. Thank you for your consideration.

EVE BODEUX, CT
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I am honored to have been nominated for the position of secretary. As an ATA-certified French>English translator, I specialize in international development, corporate communications, tech marketing, as well as official documents. I have been involved with the organization for over 25 years, serving as an ATA director for the past five.

It would be a privilege to be elected to serve on the Executive Board as secretary and, in that role, maintain open communication with the membership about the Board’s actions, help document the organization’s activities for the historical record, and continue to contribute to effective governance of the Association.

Since becoming a Board member, I have been actively involved in ATA’s Public Relations Committee. I served as chair of that committee from 2018 to 2021 and have continued to be involved in PR through the present day. Most recently, I worked diligently with current PR Committee Chair Jamie Hartz to develop ATA’s soon-to-be published Guide to Buying Translation Services for potential clients, to educate them about the translation profession and to promote ATA’s members to those who need translation services.

I am also active in the Governance and Communications Committee (2018–present). This committee evaluates ATA policies and procedures to ensure efficient governance, in collaboration with ATA’s Board. I was also a member of the Divisions Committee (2015–2019), assisting division administrators and establishing policies for the divisions to run more smoothly.

Over my decades of involvement at ATA, I also served as the French Language Division (FLD) newsletter editor (1998–2001) and two terms as FLD administrator (2014–2018), bringing the division into the modern age by activating its social media channels.

My longtime support of professional T&I organizations includes two terms (2008–2012) as vice president of the Colorado Translators Association (now the Colorado Interpreters and Translators Association – CITa), an ATA chapter, as well as numerous other positions in the CITa throughout the years. In addition to my work as a professional translator, personal endeavors related to translation include authoring Maintaining Your Second Language, a book for language professionals, and co-hosting the podcast Speaking of Translation, which ran from 2008 to 2021.

Considering the position of ATA secretary, I recognize the weight of the responsibilities that accompany the role as part of both ATA’s Executive Committee and the Board. The secretary’s role is to support the Board and the organization’s members by quickly and accurately capturing information during the Board’s meetings and interactions. My wide-ranging professional experience has included working through and transcribing thousands of pages and audio hours and synthesizing complex information for easy readability, similar to the tasks required of ATA’s secretary. This relevant experience, along with my knowledge of ATA as a longtime member, volunteer, and Board member, will help me produce the accurate and useful communications required by ATA.

Throughout my career, I have been dedicated to supporting ATA and hope to receive your vote to continue to do so in the role of secretary. Thank you.

JAIME RUSSELL, CT
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I am an ATA-certified Spanish>English translator and certified Spanish health care interpreter (Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters). Originally from the Washington, DC, metro area, I lived in Argentina for 15 years (where my T&I experience began) and currently reside outside Raleigh, North Carolina.

I work full-time as the interpreter services education specialist at UNC Health, the largest health care network in North Carolina. At UNC Health, I develop in–house training for staff interpreters, language access education for hospital employees, and language vetting protocols and assessments for providers. Prior to UNC Health, I was a freelance medical translator and interpreter for many agencies around the world. I also spent many years working in nonprofits and philanthropy, so I am well aware of the ins and outs of that sector.

In terms of my involvement with ATA, I am a member of ATA’s Spanish Language Division, Interpreters Division, and Medical Division. I also serve as secretary on the board of directors of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters, an ATA chapter. I believe strongly in the power of professional associations and know that without people advocating for our professions and carrying out such important work, our professional standing in the sector will suffer.

I am extremely excited to have been nominated to run for secretary and would be honored to join ATA’s Board. It is important that we continue strengthening and broadening the benefits...
ATA offers its members and related professionals, as well as increasing the visibility of our professions. ATA truly is the voice of translators and interpreters, not only in the U.S. but around the world.

**Treasurer | Two-Year Term**

**ROBIN BONTHRONE, CT**
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I would like to start by thanking the members of ATA’s Nominating and Leadership Development Committee for nominating me as a candidate for treasurer in this year’s election. And my particular thanks go to the many friends and colleagues who have told me they are backing my candidacy.

I have been a full-time professional financial and legal translator from German to English for well over 30 years, specializing in financial accounting and reporting, management accounting, tax law, audit, assurance, and advisory, financial legislation, financial markets, financial supervision and regulation, and corporate legal documents.

I am intimately familiar with all aspects of corporate financial accounting and reporting. In my position as president of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA) since January 2021, I have gained sound knowledge of the aspects of nonprofit accounting in the U.S. relevant for professional associations such as AATIA and ATA.

Additionally, I have been a member of ATA’s Finance and Audit Committee (FAC) since early 2020, which has given me an inside view on the structure and composition of ATA’s finances. I have been able to see firsthand how our financial reports are compiled, and I am very grateful to departing ATA Treasurer John Milan for his willingness to share his expertise and experiences with the other members of the FAC.

Finally, as an investor myself, I know how to read and assess investment reports, and now have several years of familiarity with the reports produced by ATA’s own investment manager. I am convinced that my participation in the FAC is an ideal grounding for anybody seeking to become ATA’s treasurer. But it needs to be stressed that the treasurer is not the Association’s accountant or bookkeeper, but rather has a supervisory role, as well as preparing the quarterly reports for the Board and the annual treasurer’s report for the members.

I have been a member of ATA since 2004, when I was living and working in Germany, and have actively served our Association in various capacities since I moved to the U.S. in 2017. I have been a member of the Business Practices, Standards, and Honors and Awards Committees, and am currently a member of the Professional Development Committee, in which capacity I played an active role on the subcommittee that developed and managed our hugely successful Virtual Conference in May this year. In addition to my participation in the FAC, I have chaired the Ethics Committee since October 2021.

Despite the challenges we have faced in recent years, departing Treasurer John Milan is leaving ATA with healthy finances, and it is my goal to ensure continuity in this respect. I will also work together with the other Board members and the executive director to explore new ways to halt the decline in ATA membership and increase Annual Conference attendance, hence ensuring stable finances well into the future.

Thank you in advance for your vote and your support.

**MARIAN S. GREENFIELD, CT**
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I am very pleased to have been nominated by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee to run for ATA treasurer.

While past presidents are barred by ATA’s Bylaws from running for president-elect once they have served their term as president of ATA, it is not unprecedented for a past president to run for and serve as ATA treasurer.

At this time of so much turnover at ATA Headquarters and with much of ATA’s current Board relatively new to serving the Association, I think I will be able to contribute a great deal as a steadying hand and by providing institutional memory. I don’t think ATA should be stuck in the past, but I also think it is good to be mindful of our history, both so we continue along proven paths to success and to avoid past pitfalls.

Having served as treasurer of the New York Circle of Translators (prior to serving as its president-elect and then president) and as a member of ATA’s Finance and Audit Committee, as well as having been responsible for budgeting, budget execution, and cost cutting in my role as (worldwide) manager of translation at J.P. Morgan and exercising my craft as a financial translator for over 40 years, I believe I have demonstrated the necessary budget, finance, and investment analysis skills to provide useful input as ATA treasurer.

These are challenging times for the translation industry in general and for our Association as well. During the years I served on ATA’s Board and eventually as president and for several years after, we were continually building our membership base, topping out at around 11,000 in the early 2010s. Unfortunately, that trend has reversed. Our
numbers have been declining by a few hundred per year for several years now and several hundred this year, with current membership at around 7,000. We need to focus on stanching that decline by helping our members build their translation, interpreting, and business skills. As the founder of the current Professional Development program and the organizer of the first ATA webinars and one-day and multi-day industry-specific seminars and conferences, I believe I can contribute to membership-building skills development opportunities.

When I was running for president-elect years ago, I said I wanted ATA to become such a vibrant organization that any respectable client will demand ATA credentials, and any serious translator will agree with our colleague Márcio Badra, who says: “The best investment I ever made in my life was to join ATA.” We have made great strides in this direction, with many U.S. multilanguage vendor and government agency clients requiring ATA certification for their translations and many newer translators finding a home, collegiality, and continuous learning opportunities in ATA. I would like to help ATA continue to burnish the certification credential and its value to academics and both clients and translators and interpreters.

Thank you for taking the time to read this statement and consider the skills and experience I have to offer ATA in the position of treasurer.

YASMIN ALKASHEF, CT
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It is an honor to be nominated to run for reelection to ATA’s Board of Directors. It is a privilege to serve ATA members in this capacity.

I am an ATA-certified Arabic>English translator, a certified court interpreter, and a conference interpreter originally from Cairo, Egypt. I have an MA and a PhD in translation and interpreting studies from Ain Shams University, Egypt. I worked in academia and as a conference interpreter for 10+ years in the Middle East before my family moved to the U.S. in 2015.

Faced with the challenge of market access, I thought the gateway to the U.S. market started with ATA, and I was right. Upon passing ATA’s certification exam, clients started finding me through ATA’s directory. I am grateful for all the opportunities and support ATA has offered me as a freelance translator and interpreter. Now I also teach interpreting at New York University and the University of Massachusetts as an adjunct faculty.

Over the past few years, I have volunteered for ATA in several capacities.

I am a member of the Interpreters Division (ID) Leadership Council, where I help organize Interpreter Connections, a bimonthly casual meetup in which ID members discuss topics of interest to interpreters of all specialties.

I am the assistant administrator of ATA’s Arabic Language Division (2021–2023). I help organize online events for members. I also proposed and helped organize the first ALD Arabic interpreting scenarios contest, an initiative aimed at addressing the scarcity of training material for Arabic interpreters. This year, I helped organize ATA’s first professional development webinar on Arabic editing for translators.

Last year, I was elected to ATA’s Board for a one-year term. I promised to work on growing the membership and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities, especially those targeting newcomers to the profession and languages less commonly represented in leadership circles. As a member ATA’s Professional Development Committee, I am working with colleagues on a new on-demand course for the newcomers to the T&I industry. As a member of ATA’s Membership Committee, I am part of the team working on reaching out to T&I higher education programs and trying to promote ATA membership to students and graduates, a category of members that promises to shape our industry’s future. I was also ATA’s representative at the Mid-America Chapter of ATA’s annual conference this year, where I delivered a keynote presentation in which I promoted ATA membership.

If reelected, I would like to see our organization forge ahead building on our passion for the profession, eagerness to volunteer, and current ATA strengths. I would like to work on increasing awareness of the profession via targeted outreach activities, growing the membership through PR initiatives, and offering members a real return on their investment through the visibility, networking, and CPD opportunities ATA provides as a community of practice. I would be honored to get your vote and represent you again on ATA’s Board.

ANALÍA BOGDAN
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I am truly humbled and honored to have been nominated to serve on ATA’s Board of Directors.

My journey as a translator began in Argentina, where I became a licensed sworn translator and honed my skills in the financial sector by working in the banking industry for 10 years and obtaining my certification as a mutual fund advisor in that country. This enabled me to understand and convey complex financial concepts accurately and with cultural nuance.
I quickly became a member of several professional associations, including ATA, and started another life-changing journey: connecting with like-minded professionals, exchanging knowledge, and learning from diverse perspectives. I learned that associations are the very bedrock where positive impact lies for our profession.

My specialization, considered of national interest in the U.S., led to my permanent residency in this country, which has allowed me to thrive in the diverse linguistic landscape of this great nation. After settling in the U.S., I worked for different markets and communities, which reinforced the crucial role translators and interpreters play in bridging communication gaps among diverse communities. This refueled my passion for advocating and elevating the importance of our profession.

Serving as the treasurer for the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Florida, an ATA chapter, for two years has given me invaluable insights into the inner workings of an association and the needs of our fellow professionals. I strongly believe a successful association relies on transparency, commitment, and shared vision, and I will carry these principles forward in my candidacy for the director’s position.

The first time I attended an ATA Annual Conference I left with a heart full of motivation and a personal determination to contribute to this incredible community. Soon after, I was selected as a speaker for ATA conferences in 2019, 2021, and 2022 (when I was honored with the Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award).

If elected director, I hope to achieve the following key objectives during my term:

- **Raise the Bar of Our Profession:** I will advocate for the recognition and appreciation of translators and interpreters through effective education and communication to stakeholders, highlighting the importance of cultural understanding, industry expertise, and regulatory compliance, among other tangible benefits of professional translation.

- **Embrace Technology:** I will remain committed to exploring, integrating, and adapting technology to our profession, helping members overcome technological challenges to improve their productivity and quality.

- **Promote Membership Commitment:** I will remain dedicated to supporting membership commitment. Initiatives like mentorship programs, forums, and networking events encourage meaningful connections among our members, promoting collaboration and growth.

- **Enhance Professional Development:** I will aim to develop comprehensive and useful professional development programs that address the diverse needs of our members.

- **Elevate the ATA Annual Conference Experience:**

  - I will strive to ensure ATA’s Annual Conference remains the gold standard for knowledge-sharing, professional growth, and showcasing the importance of our profession.

  - I am convinced I can offer experience, enthusiasm, commitment, and hard work to ATA’s Board of Directors. Thank you for your trust and consideration.

2023 not only marks the fifth year of my ATA membership, but also the fifth anniversary of my full-time freelance translation and interpreting career. While there is still a lot for me to learn so I can grow with the Association, being a relatively young professional has allowed me the unique perspective to engage in outside-of-the-box thinking.

In our work as translators, we are all too familiar with the “tunnel vision” phenomenon. I can be that pair of fresh eyes to make constructive suggestions to help guide our Association toward its mission and vision in the constantly changing landscape of the translation and interpreting professions.

My story with ATA is a personal one. Unlike many members who found ATA to be helpful only to their career, my stumbling upon it was life-changing and its impact extends far beyond just my career. ATA offered a brand-new mindset that enabled me to build a career. A well-known Chinese proverb says that the frog at the bottom of the well thinks the sky is only as big as the mouth of the well. ATA is the ladder that led me to a world of possibilities I didn’t know existed. It is something my heart holds near and dear, and I wholeheartedly want to keep building and helping guide this great organization so it can be the inspiration for many others!

I joined ATA’s Strategy Committee in 2022 because I wanted to make a bigger contribution. Aligned with my vision for ATA, I proposed and now spearhead the conference outreach effort to T&I institutions to increase awareness of ATA among potential T&I professionals through ATA’s Annual Conference. Also in 2022, I was brought onto the Membership Committee, where I work alongside established interpreters to compile resources for new interpreting professionals! Not in my wildest dreams did I ever think of doing or being capable of undertaking anything like these professional activities when I first joined ATA. But when opportunities present themselves, the passion that drives me tells me I have more to give.

An organization is only as strong as its members. The stronger the organization, the prouder its members feel belonging to it, and the more likely they are to contribute...
to make the organization even stronger. ATA has done its part for me and now it is my turn to help build it. With your trust and faith, I would work very hard to make the day come when ATA becomes the symbol of prestige and authority in the translation and interpreting sphere, and the welcoming professional home to all of us!

**Central Role of Technology:** For most of us, embracing technology is going to be central to maintaining a lucrative language business into the future. Various technologies are set to transform our industry in ways we cannot yet fully foresee. Our future, though uncertain, is exciting and we have the power to shape it. Technology in the hands of skilled experts like us can help increase productivity and help our professions add more value for our clients or employers in this era of ubiquitous machine translation. ATA, as one of the largest professional associations in our industry worldwide, can and should lead the way into this future. If elected, I pledge to steer our Association toward an industry that embraces the meaningful, productive, and ethical use of language technology.

**Navigating Transition at ATA Headquarters:** I am keenly aware of the many disruptions brought about by the transition at ATA Headquarters. If elected, I will ask questions and challenge decisions with a view to achieving maximum efficiency of Headquarters processes and ensuring member services are provided predictably and on time.

**Engaging Our Members, Expanding Our Membership:** ATA membership has been trending downward for years. If elected, I will work to address the reasons why past members have left and why young professionals are hesitant to join. This may require highlighting existing member benefits in an engaging way, but also designing new member benefits and positioning ATA as the go-to platform in this era of tech-powered language services.

**Cooperation with Other Industry Bodies:** With our newly found confidence as a thought leader in a tech-forward industry, we have a lot to offer our counterparts in other countries (language associations outside the U.S.) and adjacent industries (machine translation, language data, etc.) and can benefit from synergies with them. As a member of a variety of industry bodies and with my global outlook, I will advocate for any meaningful cooperation.

I am looking forward to this opportunity to serve the Association, if elected.

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**ROBERT SETTE, CT**

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I am pleased to accept the nomination of my colleagues for reelection to ATA’s Board. I have been a full-time freelance translator for 34 years. I am ATA-certified from Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Italian into English and also work from Catalan into English. I live in Denver, Colorado, where I currently serve as president of the Colorado Interpreters and Translators Association (CITA), an ATA chapter.

As an ATA volunteer, I have been a frequent presenter at ATA conferences and other conferences in the U.S. and Europe (such as the one hosted by the European Language Industry Association). During my current term on ATA’s Board, I chaired the committee that organized ATA’s one-day Virtual Conference this past May. I also serve on the Professional Development Committee and on the Leadership Council of the Language Technology Division, and I have been working on establishing ATA’s Special Interest Groups (SIGs) during the past year. I have also served as a conference “buddy” for newbies, a member and chair of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee, a Spanish>English grader, and a mentor.

Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) are changing and transforming our professions at breakneck speed. As we adapt to these new challenges, ATA’s client education efforts are more crucial than ever. We must
make clear and unwavering statements to buyers of translation and interpreting services about the value of the human translators/interpreters in the loop. We can also provide our members with tools to educate direct clients and end users about the hazards of blindly trusting AI output. We are seeing many clients in the language industry treating our work as a commodity, and this has exerted downward pressure on rates. As an association, we must be vocal and determined in educating clients on the value of working with professional certified translators and interpreters.

ATA certification is well-respected and one of the primary ways we are recognized worldwide. Focusing on our credential’s value is a concrete way we can raise the prominence of our professions. We must promote certification, encourage aspiring translators to pursue ATA certification, and facilitate our members earning credentials that are recognized through ATA’s credentialed interpreter status. These T&I credentials help our members to stand out in a crowded field of interpreters and translators.

ATA’s webinars, virtual workshops, and conferences are a great benefit for all members: from “Business Basics” webinars that help us improve our business acumen, to skills-specific workshops, to events like our successful Virtual Conference, Translating & Interpreting the Future, for which over 500 ATA members registered. These continuing education offerings set ATA apart and give us a competitive advantage as professionals.

I have had the privilege of collaborating with many exceptional language professionals and industry leaders within ATA. My involvement as a certification exam grader and member of the Basic Credential Committee has deepened my dedication to ATA and the translation profession, becoming an integral part of my career.

Equipped with an MBA and a PhD in business administration, I have a proven track record of entrepreneurship, community service, and leadership. Within academia, I have fostered invaluable partnerships and played a significant role in program development at my university. Additionally, as the founding chair of Triad International Studies Academy, Asian American Advancing Leadership, and the Carolinas chapter of the Asian Pacific Islander American Public Affairs Association, and as a founding board member for East Voyager Academy of Charlotte, I have demonstrated my unwavering commitment to language and culture education, leadership, and supporting minority communities. These experiences underscore my ability to effectively lead NGOs and accomplish substantial objectives.

Given the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, if elected, I will prioritize the following three agenda items as a Board member:

- Strengthening ATA’s collaboration and partnership with prominent language services companies, AI firms, and government agencies.
- Providing enhanced career support and development opportunities to our members, supporting their growth and success in the AI era.
- Together, we can navigate the dynamic landscape ahead, embracing the opportunities presented by AI and positioning ATA at the forefront of our evolving profession. I genuinely appreciate your consideration and eagerly look forward to the opportunity to contribute my skills, passion, and dedication to ATA.

CHAOWEI ZHU, CT
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I am deeply honored to have been nominated for a position on ATA’s Board of Directors. As the translation and interpreting profession experiences significant transformation with the advent of new technologies like ChatGPT and other AI tools, I recognize the pressing need for fresh ideas and innovative leadership. Drawing upon my extensive 20-year background as a translator, educator, business owner, non-governmental organization (NGO) founder, and board director, I am wholeheartedly committed to utilizing my expertise for the continued success of ATA.

Since becoming a member of ATA in 2014 and obtaining ATA certification in the English-Chinese language pair during that same year, I have had the opportunity to explore the possibility of developing an ATA standard for AI translation.
Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws to be Presented to the Membership for Voting in October 2023

In addition to electing Board directors, Voting members will also vote on proposed Bylaws amendments. The proposed changes appear below. Please note that text proposed to be deleted is struck through; text 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
Article VII “Other Committees,” Section 2 “Standing and Other Committees; Purposes,” Subsection a, “Finance and Audit Committee”:

a. Finance and Audit. The Finance and Audit Committee shall include, but not be limited to,

- examining quarterly revenue/expense reports,
- monitoring investments,
- reviewing the annual audit,
- and drawing up a budget in conjunction with the

The ATA Board of Directors recommends approval.

Commentary
The purpose of the proposed amendment is to reflect the current reality of the Treasurer position and the Finance and Audit Committee more accurately, in terms of duties and responsibilities pertaining to overseeing the Association’s finances.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws:
Article VII “Other Committees,” Section 2 “Standing and Other Committees; Purposes,” Subsection c, “Membership”:

c. Membership Development. The Membership Development Committee shall examine applications for Active and Corresponding membership, as set forth in Article III of these Bylaws and in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Board. Committee recommendations to reject Active membership applications shall be forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval, with notification of such determinations made by Association Headquarters, in accordance with policies and procedures adopted by the Board. The Membership Committee shall also actively recommend and pursue
policies to recruit, attract, and retain members, including developing and supporting programming and benefits to serve ATA members’ interests, educating current and prospective members about the Association and membership benefits, providing resources to inform, recruit, and retain ATA members, and collecting information pertinent to membership.

Commentary
For several decades, becoming an Active member has been a process of self-reporting with random audits performed by ATA staff. The wording in the Bylaws is outdated and describes a process that has not been in place for many years.

The purpose of the proposed amendment is to reflect the current reality of the Membership Committee’s duties and responsibilities pertaining to membership retention and growth. This task is of critical importance to ATA to attract and retain members and to ensure sufficient resources to serve our members and fulfill the Association’s mission.

To reflect the committee’s updated charge, the proposed name now includes the membership development focus.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws
Article VII “Other Committees,” Section 2 “Standing and Other Committees; Purposes,”

Subsection d, “Nominating and Leadership Development”:
3) Further nominations, accompanied by the written acceptance of the nominees, may be entered by petition in writing endorsed by the signature of at least sixty other voting members and shall be received by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee not later than thirty calendar days after publication by the Board of Directors of the names of the candidates the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee has proposed.

Commentary
The purpose of the proposed amendment is to clarify the required number of signatures for nominations by petition for ATA Board of Directors positions. Naturally, a petitioner for nomination supports their own candidacy. The purpose of the signature threshold is to demonstrate sufficient support by 60 additional voting members for that person’s candidacy.

Proposed Amendment to the Bylaws:
Article III “Membership,” Section 6 “Disciplinary Actions”:

a. Disciplinary actions, including censure, suspension, or expulsion from membership, may be taken for any of the following causes:

1) Conviction of a felony or other crime of moral turpitude under federal or state law in a matter related to the practice of, or qualifications for, professional activity;
2) Gross negligence or willful misconduct in the performance of professional services, or other unethical or unprofessional conduct based on demonstrable and serious violations of the ATA Code of Ethics and Professional Practice;
3) Fraud or misrepresentation in the application for or maintenance of ATA membership, professional certification, or other professional recognition or credential.

Commentary
The purpose of the proposed amendment is to reflect the updated title of the ATA Code of Ethics, which was revised by the Ethics Committee and approved by ATA’s Board of Directors in 2022. As part of the revision, the title was changed from Code of Ethics and Professional Practice to Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility. The revised code went into effect on January 1, 2023, under the new title, Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility.
Password management and cybersecurity measures are essential tools for protecting sensitive information. Use these tips to check your own security practices.

Disclaimer: Although a previous version of this article was reviewed by a cybersecurity professional, be advised that I’m not a cybersecurity expert, and the advice given in this article is for educational purposes only. If you need assistance with cybersecurity matters, please consult an expert.

By Danielle Maxson

We all say we want more work, but we mean the paying kind, not the kind I had earlier this year. I learned a company I trusted to store sensitive information had suffered a “security incident.” Many accounts I use for business—email, banking, file storage, and others—were likely at risk, so I needed to start changing passwords and making sure my accounts were safe.

At the time this article was submitted for publication, I had seen no evidence that any of my accounts had been hacked, but plugging such a sizable security hole took far too much time I didn’t have. Even worse, in my eyes, was the response of the company I had trusted. When they learned their systems were breached, they delayed and downplayed news about the incident, so customers didn’t have the information they needed to keep their personal data protected. When the true nature of the security issue was finally made public, I felt I had lost precious time to respond and protect myself.

I wish this were an isolated incident. If you follow tech news, however, you know that it’s not at all difficult to find reports of major companies being hacked and having data stolen. In a cyberworld that seems increasingly more dangerous, how can we keep our secrets safe?

For language services providers, this is not just an academic question. Losing control of your personal information is bad enough, leaving you vulnerable to crimes like identity theft and credit card fraud. But members of the T&I community are also trusted with our clients’ information. We need to protect their secrets as well as our own. If the password to your cloud storage service is hacked, the criminal who accesses your files will also have any client information you’ve stored. If you’ve signed non-disclosure agreements or need to comply with any one of a host of privacy regulations, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), reporting requirements may be triggered if a hacker gets into files that contain client information.

What should translators and interpreters do about these threats? Any time is a great time to run a full review of your own cybersecurity measures. Start today with your passwords and password management system, then look at your other...
If the password to your cloud storage service is hacked, the criminal who accesses your files will also have any client information you’ve stored.

cybersecurity measures so you can shore up any weak points. I’d like to repeat the disclaimer at the beginning of the article here: I’m not a cybersecurity expert. The following tips are based on my own research and preferences. Please seek out expert advice that applies to your situation.

For Password Management

- **Use a password manager:** Despite bleak news that some password management companies have been hacked, password managers are still considered effective tools. If you don’t have a password manager yet, research the options to find one you’re comfortable with. Wikipedia has a list to get you started, and online tech magazines like CNET, PCMag, PCWorld, and Wired offer reviews and rankings. If you have been using a service you no longer trust, check for instructions on how to export your password vault so you can move it to a new service.

- **Make sure your password manager is effective:** Most password managers should have strong encryption like the Advanced Encryption Standard AES-256. You should also look for zero-knowledge architecture — meaning not even the password management company can read the information you store — and multi-factor authentication to access your password vault. Check expert reviews, like the ones provided in the links above, for the pros and cons of the password manager you have in mind.

- **Use a strong master password:** The master password opens your password vault. A hacker who cracks your master password will have access to all your online information, so this password may be the most important one you have. Pick a unique password or phrase with several characters and a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols. Most importantly, don’t reuse this password anywhere.

- **Implement all available security features:** Some services will generate passwords for you, tell you if passwords are too weak, offer multi-factor authentication, or provide other security measures. Learn to use these features since they do you no good if you can’t use them effectively.

- **Change your passwords:** If you believe your passwords may have been hacked, it’s time to change them. Changing one password is not too difficult, but if you’ve reused one password with multiple accounts, or if you believe several passwords have been hacked, the job will be more difficult. Start with the most important ones (e.g., email accounts, banks and credit cards, and cloud storage) and change a handful every day until you’ve gone through all vulnerable passwords. If you’re migrating from one password manager to another, don’t assume that just using a new service will keep you safe. Migrate your records, then change the passwords and only store the changed versions in the new vault.

Other Cybersecurity Measures

- **Keep your operating system (OS) and software updated:** OS updates often include security patches, so make sure to implement them when available. Consider enabling automatic updates for your OS and any crucial programs. And don’t stick with an older operating system just because you like it or don’t want to spend the money to upgrade. An OS that’s no longer supported by its manufacturer is not receiving security patches. By failing to upgrade, you open yourself up to risk.

- **Enable multi-factor authentication on your accounts:** To access accounts that use measures like two-factor authentication or biometric authentication, you’ll need to complete an additional security step after entering your password. This can be annoying, but it also prevents criminals from getting into your account and stealing your information.

- **Control physical access to your devices:** Keep computers, hard drives, and any other devices under lock and key when possible. At the very least, make sure you know what you own and where it is. Losing a thumb drive full of customer data can be just as bad as an online breach.
• Keep multiple backups: One concern with storage, both local and in the cloud, is the possibility of ransomware attacks, which deprive you of access to your files unless you offer payment. Keeping multiple backups protects you against losing all your data. Many experts suggest following the 3–2–1 rule: keep three copies of your data, two of them on different local media and at least one off-site. One caveat: if you need to follow industry regulations like HIPAA, check the rules carefully. Cloud storage of your files may require extra precautions and/or signed agreements with clients to generate a paper trail for your security measures.

• Encrypt stored data: Even for files that remain on your hard drive, it’s a good idea to make sure they can’t be read by unauthorized persons. Password protecting a file is a start, but passwords can be cracked. Consider encrypting individual files, folders, or your entire hard drive to prevent access by anyone other than you. If you encrypt your files, definitely keep backups—and don’t forget to encrypt them, too.

• Use security software: Options like antivirus programs, firewalls, and virtual private networks (VPNs) provide additional layers of protection for any data you store or transmit—either yours or your clients’.

• Don’t forget about your smartphone: If you lose your mobile device, make sure it’s encrypted and protected with a passcode at the very least. Also consider enabling security options like tools you can use to track a lost phone and erase the data remotely. And don’t forget to update your phone when software updates come out, especially if you use it to access files and accounts for your business.

• Watch your money: If your financial information is hacked, bank accounts could be emptied and credit cards could be used for someone else’s purchases. Make sure to change these passwords. You may also need to set fraud alerts, freeze your credit, and take other identity theft countermeasures.

• Keep up with tech news: Make it a habit to watch for announcements about what’s happening in the IT industry. If the companies that make your software have blogs or newsletters, consider subscribing to keep up with their news.

You Got Hacked! What Now?
Unfortunately, the answer to this question could be an entire book. The pamphlet version might start with: Do everything listed above, but do it faster. The steps you need to take will likely depend on what type of information or equipment was compromised and how. You could be looking at an attack on:
• One or more email accounts.
• One or more social media accounts.

• Other online accounts: password manager, cloud storage, etc.
• Your finances: bank account, credit card, or online payment services like PayPal or Venmo.
• Your Social Security number or other identifying documentation, including answers to security questions (e.g., mother’s maiden name).
• Your computer or phone via viruses, malware, ransomware, etc.
• Any combination of these items and/or others not included in this list.

Changing passwords and setting up multi-factor authentication for vulnerable accounts will usually be a good starting point. After that, look for information specific to your situation. If your bank account or credit card was compromised, for example, you may need to freeze payments or place a fraud alert on your credit report. For a social media hack, you’ll need to regain control over your account, make sure to delete any new information the hacker may have added, and let friends and contacts know you were hacked so they don’t get taken in by any sudden requests for money.

For examples of general steps to take, tech sites like Wired can offer advice. You can also find resources for dealing with more specific issues like malware on either a computer or a phone. Banks, software makers, IT security services like Norton, and other companies you use for your IT needs may also have helpful information in their online support documentation. For U.S.-based colleagues, the Federal Trade Commission offers a wealth of advice for consumers. If you want guidance for a complete cybersecurity plan, the Federal Communications Commission offers a checklist for small businesses. Some cybersecurity companies also offer guidance on their websites.

Whatever You Do, Do It Now
Is any of this fun or easy? No, not really, but admitting to clients that you weren’t able to keep their information confidential would be far more harrowing than changing some passwords or taking an extra step to log into your accounts. Taking steps now to protect your local and online resources will give you peace of mind when a potential issue arises. Start today to keep all those secrets—yours and your clients’—under lock and key.

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To find an internship in the language services industry, I designed my own and proposed it to the owner of a language services provider that had a project I was interested in.

By Anees Gharzita

Are you hoping to complete an internship in the language services industry but aren’t sure where to start? I was in this boat recently while working on my master’s degree in translation and interpreting. My initial efforts to find the right opportunity didn’t pan out, but I doubled down, changed my game plan, and in the end created a dream internship where I learned so much and made an impact in my area of interest. The pathway that worked best was designing my own internship and proposing it to someone in my professional network.

In this article, I’ll take a chronological approach and describe what I was looking for in an internship, tell you about my efforts that were unsuccessful, and then lay out how I finally achieved my goals.

My Internship Goals

As a French->English translation student and a U.S. citizen, I loved expanding my knowledge of Canadian French and French–Canadian culture, but I recognized that there was a gap in my practical understanding of the translation market in Canada. Below are the items from my wish list.

1. I wanted an internship with a Canadian language services provider (LSP).
2. I wanted a business that did at least some technical translation.
3. I wanted to learn the best practices of running a translation business.
4. I wanted a mentor who would share their experience and insights with me.

Ultimately, I designed an internship that checked all these boxes, but my initial efforts didn’t get me there. Here’s what I did that didn’t work out for me.
What Didn’t Work
During the first year of my master’s program, I put together a plan to find a summer internship. Here are the steps I took that didn’t work.

- **Applying to an In-House Program:** I applied to an established in-house French>English translation internship program. With support from my school’s career center, I crafted a tailored résumé and cover letter. The company expressed enthusiasm about my application, but in the end they cancelled the entire program that year for business reasons.

- **Sending Cold Emails:** I undertook a small cold-emailing campaign, contacting eight LSPs that specialized mostly in technical translation. I chose companies based on the information presented on their websites. There were no takers.

Looking back on this plan, I’m left wondering: Should I have reached out to more companies? Were my goals too narrowly defined? In other words, was I too picky? I may never know. I do know that I got discouraged by the outcome, stopped pursuing an internship, and signed up for summer courses instead.

What Worked: My Recommendations to Students
Attend translation industry events and get to know your colleagues. Of course, it’s important to share information about yourself and your goals when networking, but it’s also important to listen to your colleagues and get to know them. Keep your ears open: What languages do your colleagues work in? What subjects do they specialize in? What areas of the language services industry are they involved in?

I’ve been guilty of thinking about what I’m going to say next rather than focusing on listening to what a person is saying. When I get out of my own head and pay close attention to the speaker, I learn more, ask better questions, and come away with a more meaningful interaction.

Early on in my time as a student, I began attending virtual networking events hosted by ATA’s French Language Division. I learned what made each person unique. Members had different backgrounds, interests, goals, business strategies, and approaches to work-life balance. To be clear, my intention in attending ATA events was simply to listen, learn, and expand my network, not to propose an internship to anyone. However, by getting to know my colleagues I was inspired to do just that.

Find someone with a project, obstacle, or opportunity for improvement that you’re interested in. As you get to know your colleagues, ask yourself: Are they working on a project that’s exciting to you? Are they facing an obstacle that you’d be interested in learning more about? Do you see an opportunity for improvement they might be open to hearing about? Even better, is the project, obstacle, or opportunity something you can help with?

I found myself drawn to topics raised by Natalie Pavey, who runs NP Translations, a Canadian LSP focusing on French<>English translation. In particular, she spoke about process improvements within her business. She was investigating the roles that technology can play in managing projects and processes.

During the time I was learning more about Natalie’s business through networking events, I had already completed and enjoyed courses in translation project management and translation technologies. I was intensely curious to see what solutions she was considering and wanted to hear more about her decision-making process.

**Engage in conversations about your area of interest.** If you have questions or ideas in the moment, consider sharing them in a natural, conversational way. If the timing just isn’t right and the conversation moves too quickly, consider reaching out by email or LinkedIn to follow up.

I remember asking Natalie a few questions during networking events and even throwing out a few ideas for her consideration. I can’t remember the details today, but the discussion did set off a lightbulb for me: Would Natalie be open to working with me on her process improvement initiative?

It’s important to share information about yourself and your goals when networking, but it’s also important to listen to your colleagues and get to know them.
Think about how you can contribute. If you find yourself inspired by someone in your network, write down what specifically about their business is exciting to you. Brainstorm a list of opportunities you could help them with and, for each one, list possible actions you could take. Be honest with yourself about what skills you bring to the table and what skills you would need to learn.

In my case, I had participated in and led process improvement projects during my time as a regulatory affairs specialist in the world of medical device manufacturing. I could contribute my skills related to process mapping and my knowledge of Lean Six Sigma concepts, a process improvement approach that uses a collaborative team effort to improve performance. It was a great match.

In addition, I was curious about the possibility of using the ISO 17100—Requirements for Translation Services standard as a guide to implementing best practices in the translation project management process. I had years of experience navigating various ISO standards and had performed a gap analysis using the ISO 13485—Medical Devices—Quality Management Systems—Requirements for Regulatory Purposes standard, so I considered that a strength that could potentially benefit Natalie’s initiative—if she were interested.

Think about what skills, experience, and knowledge you’ve acquired from different aspects of your life, such as those gained from a university course, time abroad, a summer job, or a previous or current career. Do you have experience with relevant software? Did you learn about a specific method that could be applicable? Did you do a project on a related topic? Narrow the list down to two or three of your best ideas.

Reach out. Be general, then be specific. When you reach out to someone with an idea for a potential project collaboration, have a general idea of the time frame involved and their potential time commitment. In your opening email, just give some basic info and gauge their interest.

In the fall of 2021, I emailed Natalie to see if she was interested in and available to have me complete a translation project management internship for the 2022 spring semester. After a positive response, I sent her three specific ideas, and she wanted to move forward with two of them: 1) surveying several translation project management technologies and evaluating their usefulness to improving processes at NP Translations, and 2) performing a gap analysis comparing business practices at NP Translations to the recommendations in the ISO 17100 standard. Eventually, we ironed out the finer details, including the start date, end date, any school breaks or holidays in between, and the number of hours per week.

I was seeking an internship grant through my career center, which I was fortunate to receive, so I did have to make sure my proposal met the center’s criteria. I wasn’t seeking academic credit, but if you are, then make sure your proposal fulfills those requirements.

If at First You Don’t Succeed, Keep Trying!

If you’d like to read about the details of the internship, you can do so here. For the purposes of this article, I’ll just say that I’m grateful I gained not only knowledge and experience in areas of the language services industry that I’m passionate about, but I gained a mentor as well.

If you’re having difficulty finding an internship in the language services industry, I hope my story gives you the encouragement you need to keep trying. Think creatively, put in the effort, keep your eyes and ears open, and you might uncover a valuable partnership that could benefit you both.

Anees Gharzita is a French>English technical translator. She has bachelor’s degrees in biology and French from Hartwick College and a master’s degree in translation and interpreting from New York University. She has worked in regulatory affairs and quality assurance in the medical field for over seven years. She is a member of ATA’s Medical and French Language Divisions, serves on the Leadership Council of the Science and Technology Division, and is a member of the Delaware Valley Translator’s Association, an ATA chapter. aneesgharzita@gmail.com
I don’t think any linguists are going to lose their livelihoods to AI. But I firmly believe there’s a very significant risk that many linguists will, over time, lose their jobs to their competitors who know how to use AI to their advantage.

By Daniel Sebesta

If you find yourself reading this article to learn more about ChatGPT, you probably don’t think artificial intelligence (AI) is all doom and gloom. You don’t have to believe AI is 100% perfect.

Just like with machine translation, we need to abandon the misconception that technology is only useful if it’s perfect and that it’s useless if it isn’t perfect. The space in between those extremes is exactly where we can make productive use of the technology.

I don’t think any linguists are going to lose their livelihoods to AI. But I firmly believe there’s a very significant risk that many linguists will, over time, lose their jobs to their competitors who know how to use AI to their advantage. If you’re still reading, you likely know which of the two sides you aspire to be on.

Getting Started

The GPT in ChatGPT obviously does not stand for general-purpose technology, but it COULD because it really is a general-purpose technology. (It officially stands for generative pre-trained transformer.)

As linguists, we’ve been working with an AI-like technology, machine translation (MT), for years. This is very narrowly specialized AI, built to do nothing else than translate. In the case of ChatGPT and other generative AI (Gen AI) services, we’re working with something much more versatile, where MT is just one of the infinite number of possible use cases, almost just a byproduct. At this point in the development of Gen AI, it’s important for us to experiment and develop a feel for what it can do well, what it can do so-so, and what it cannot do—yet.

The fact that ChatGPT can do something doesn’t mean you have to use it for that task. If you enjoy doing something manually, with your own brainpower, with your own creativity, and if the work fills you with joy and pride, by all means do it yourself, manually. I’m the last person to persuade you to use ChatGPT for such tasks.

But I’m always going to advocate for using technology to help reduce the work you do not want to do. The tedious and repetitive parts or the activities that add little value to your final product. Gen AI can also be very helpful if you ever experience a creative block or whenever you just don’t want to start from scratch.

Gen AI, as we know it today, needs a lot of guidance from humans. Yet it’s very powerful on its own. Now imagine its power in the hands of professionals who are great at what they do and great at guiding this AI toward even greater work, with greater productivity. That is: augmented, amplified expert human skill.

You must also consider the learning curve. If you’re new to prompting, the
productivity gains may not materialize overnight. Don’t get discouraged if every use case takes you a number of iterations before you see the kind of results you want, and certainly before you develop a new routine.

**Pitfalls**

Large language models, such as GPT, the model underpinning ChatGPT, are exactly that: models of language. They aren’t models of the real world. Yes, they certainly know a lot about the real world because we as humans have written about the real world extensively and the models have learned from our texts. Nevertheless, they do have gaps in their representation of the real world.

In very simplified terms, ChatGPT is a next-word predictor. It’s not built for accuracy or factual correctness. When ChatGPT blatantly and confidently “lies” to us, we say it “hallucinates.” But hallucinations are a feature of the models rather than a flaw. This means that fact-checking and critical thinking are an essential skill when working with Gen AI. As a result, ChatGPT is not (really) a search engine. You should not use it in place of Google unless you’re using GPT-4 with browsing capabilities through your paid subscription. That way, ChatGPT can actually be utilized as a (slow) search engine.

There are concerns about privacy and confidentiality. Especially in the chat interface (i.e., without using an application programming interface, or API, to access the GPT model), you certainly shouldn’t enter anything confidential. OpenAI does use the information entered in the chat interface for further training of the model.

Then there’s the question of copyright. Who owns the copyright to AI-generated output? Does authoring the prompt make you the author of the output? Does editing the output make you the author? What degree of editing do you need to perform for you to be considered the author? The answers to these questions are widely debated and only just emerging.

You may also be concerned about availability. Much of the service is a “research preview” with no guaranteed uptime. Initially, ChatGPT suffered from unexplained outages. Those are now largely a thing of the past, but features can come and go without notice. Real-time web browsing with GPT-4 was disabled without explanation and has now been missing for months.

We also don’t know what the imminent regulation may bring in various countries around the world. While the model is very multilingual, it’s not equally strong across the languages it supports. If you work with long-tail languages, chances are you’ll be disappointed with ChatGPT.

**Prompting**

If you’ve used ChatGPT before, you’ll have noticed that it doesn’t always produce great results. More often than not, the quality of the results is directly proportional to the quality of the prompt you provide.

What makes a good prompt? You need to be very specific about what you want. The more gaps you leave in your wording, the more room you’re leaving for ChatGPT to make assumptions. And those can be wrong. Every word matters. ChatGPT will typically do exactly what you ask it to do. Not what you want in your head, but what you ask it to do in your words.

Just like with machine translation, we need to abandon the misconception that technology is only useful if it’s perfect and that it’s useless if it isn’t perfect.

Assign a role to ChatGPT to give it a better idea of which of the possible worlds you want it to focus on. If you say “you are a medical translator,” it will likely give you a different response than if you say “you are a surgeon.” Provide the context of your question or request. State what you know that anybody trying to answer the question should know. This could be things you’d find in a project brief from your client, but also things you consider obvious but that may not be obvious to someone who doesn’t do your work every day.

Similarly, it may be helpful to define the audience for the task you’re trying to accomplish. The role, discussed earlier, is who you are or who you want ChatGPT to impersonate. But the audience is who the output is intended for or who you’re trying to talk to. You may also want to tell ChatGPT what you’re trying to achieve with the output (i.e., set a goal).

You can set any technical restrictions, such as format or length. Do you want a tweet, a formal letter, or a fairy tale? Do you want 10 words, 200 words, or it doesn’t really matter? You can encourage follow-up questions by instructing ChatGPT to request additional information if something is unclear in your prompt or if something would likely improve the quality of the output.

And finally, test and iterate. Even if you’re not new to prompting in general but you’re trying out prompts in a new area, it’s very likely your prompts will not produce the desired results right away.

**Use Cases**

You can use GPT for simple, plain translation. GPT is one additional MT engine you can consider. However, this is not where the true added value of GPT lies. These models are not a dedicated MT engine. They can do much more and that’s what we should focus on.

Let’s call it “enriched translation.” You can’t tell a generic, off-the-shelf MT engine that you’re working on a medical text rather than a legal text. You can’t tell MT that you’re writing for children or for scholars. You have limited options to give MT a glossary or style guide with which to work. You can’t
really ask MT to observe a length limit or avoid letters with diacritics. Many MT engines also won’t give you multiple options for the same source-language string. And they won’t typically translate into a specific flavor of a language, such as Colombian Spanish, Austrian German, or 19th-century Czech. But GPT will! And here we start seeing the added value.

You can also consider ChatGPT for all kinds of editing and proofreading. Source-text editing may be useful if you’re working with a sloppily written source text or a text written by a non-native speaker. Cleaning it up first might very well make it a better fit for your preferred MT engine or any other workflow.

You can adapt an existing translation if the target audience changes. This can be the case for some informed consent forms, for example, where you talk to different age brackets and use a different form of address. You can also use it for transcreation where you need to produce several options, back translations, and rationales—all in a table format.

MT quality estimation is another possible use case, and some computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and translation management systems (TMSs) are already doing this through an API. Also, if you realize how helpful regular expressions can be for your quality assurance but can never remember the syntax, you can ask ChatGPT for help in natural language.

In the realm of terminology, you can:

- Feed a text into ChatGPT and have any technical terms and/or acronyms extracted.
- Ask for definitions in context.
- Research and produce glossaries for various fields as you branch out into a new field of specialization or review your vocabulary ahead of an interpreting assignment.
- Have an unformatted glossary (such as random notes in Word) converted into a table format with predefined columns.
- Or even superimpose new terminology onto an existing translation when there’s a terminology change that affects legacy translations.

Just like you can ask for in-context definitions of terminology, you can also ask for context-aware synonyms. This is great for unfamiliar words, for additional ideas in transcreation, or just to build your vocabulary in another language. You can ask ChatGPT to rephrase, paraphrase or just parse convoluted sentences. This is a fantastic help for lengthy legal language where every word matters and must be accounted for.

With web browsing enabled in the paid version, you can get the latest information on a certain topic, which can, again, be a great time-saver for interpreters. You can ask ChatGPT to summarize texts or, better yet, extract information relevant to a particular purpose. ChatGPT is also great at multilingual research; provide a prompt in one language and you can receive an output in another language. You can also use ChatGPT to research a customer you would like to market your services to, a lead you want to engage with, or an industry that’s piquing your interest.

As your personal office assistant, ChatGPT can: polish emails before you hit send (and with that I mean more than correcting typos); turn bullet points into continuous text, and vice versa, summarize notes (e.g., from a meeting); highlight and explain changes, for instance, when a reference document has been updated; simulate a negotiation to help you prepare for a meeting with a customer or supplier; help with travel planning when you’re going to a conference (there are several useful plugins for that in the paid version); and, very importantly, help you get more prompts that are relevant to your situation.

**Outlook**

We can expect incremental improvements to GPT-4 as more people use it. If there ever is a GPT-5, we can expect it to be even more powerful. Because there is limited additional data that a potential GPT-5 could be trained on, we’ll probably see a lot of smaller, narrowly specialized, perhaps industry-specific models.

We’re going to see ever more APIs. That is, other apps and other services will be connecting to the GPT models without using the chat interface of ChatGPT that most of us know as consumers. This is already happening in a number of CAT tools and TMSs.

We’re going to see a wider use of semi-autonomous AI agents, such as Auto-GPT. I would also expect to see increasingly many on-premise or private-cloud solutions for big buyers concerned about security, privacy, and confidentiality. And we’re going to use more multimodal models (i.e., models that work with image, text, audio, video, and more; ChatGPT added voice and vision in late September).

What can you do to prepare now for that future? Experiment, if you haven’t already. If you have, experiment more. Develop those foundational skills. It’s like working with the internet, with computers, or with electricity in the early days of those inventions. Build your AI literacy. Develop a feel for what’s real and what’s AI. Work on your critical thinking. And perhaps most importantly, stay curious and adaptable. **The pace of change will never be this slow again.**

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As members of ATA, we understand that effective communication across languages is paramount in an increasingly interconnected world. We know that translators and interpreters serve as a bridge, facilitating understanding between diverse cultures and enabling the exchange of ideas and information. Yet, some in our profession may be unaware that international standards have been developed to ensure accuracy, consistency, and quality in the translation process. This article serves to identify those standards and the two key organizations that promulgate them. It’s imperative for language professionals to be knowledgeable of these international standards to maintain their competitive advantage.

The Importance of International Standards

Guaranteeing Accuracy and Consistency: The standards detailed here establish guidelines and best practices that ensure accuracy and consistency in translation and interpreting. By adhering to these best practices, language services providers can guarantee that their deliverables meet the highest linguistic, cultural, and technical standards. This means your client can expect translations and interpreting services that accurately convey the intended message, thus fostering effective communication between all parties.

Elevating Professionalism and Credibility: Compliance with international standards enhances professionalism and credibility in the translation and interpreting professions. These standards act as certificates of excellence, signifying that language services providers adhere to recognized industry practices. By choosing professionals who follow recognized standards, your client can have confidence in your expertise, knowledge, and commitment to delivering top-notch language services.

Facilitating Global Recognition: These standards are internationally recognized and serve as a common language for evaluating translation and interpreting services across borders. This global recognition fosters trust and allows businesses and individuals to work confidently with language services providers worldwide. While some standards focus

By outlining the complexities and nuances involved in the translation process, we ensure that clients have realistic expectations regarding turnaround times, costs, and the investment required to produce accurate and culturally appropriate translations.

By Andy Benzo
primarily on the U.S. market, they are widely acknowledged and respected, making them influential references for quality language services worldwide.

Understanding ISO and ASTM
The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) are prominent organizations that have established standards addressing various aspects of translation and interpreting.

The International Organization for Standardization, commonly known as ISO, is an independent international body that develops and publishes standards across various industries and sectors. Founded in 1947, ISO has set the bar for quality and excellence, fostering trust and standardization worldwide. Its standards are globally recognized and provide a framework for ensuring best practices, consistency, and quality control.

ASTM International, formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials, is an international standards organization that focuses on creating voluntary consensus standards. Since its inception in 1898, ASTM has been a leading force in developing guidelines and specifications for diverse industries. Its standards promote safety, quality, and technological advancement.

ISO Standards in Translation and Interpreting
ISO has developed several standards tailored specifically to translation and interpreting services. Let’s explore some of these standards and their significance.

ISO 17100 — The gold standard of translation services: This standard outlines the requirements for translation projects, including translator competence, project management, revision processes, and basic quality assurance measures. Compliance with ISO 17100 ensures that translation services maintain professionalism, accuracy, and consistency, resulting in high-quality deliverables.

ISO/DIS 5060 — Evaluating the translation project: This standard was written mainly for those who request translation services. To render a translation that meets the anticipated requirements, it’s essential that both parties (the requester and the translation provider) convert requirements into defined and agreed-upon translation project specifications. Its main purpose is to ensure efficiency and quality in a translation project.

ISO 18587 — Adapting to the era of machine translation: This standard focuses on post-editing practices,
providing guidelines for the qualifications and skills required for post-editors. This standard differentiates between light post-editing and full post-editing. It also distinguishes preproduction, production, and post-production processes.

ISO 18841 — Setting the bar for interpreting services: This standard outlines the requirements for interpreting services. It offers basic conditions for interpreting assignments and the qualifications and competencies related to interpreting. This standard emphasizes professionalism, subject matter expertise, and cultural sensitivity in the world of interpreting, ensuring that language barriers are effectively overcome.

ISO 21998 — Addressing the health care system: This standard addresses the rights of patients deprived of linguistic access to health care services and health care professionals. As interpreters bridge the health care community’s cultural and linguistic gap, this standard aims to provide information for users of those interpreting services and establish professional working conditions for health care interpreters.

ASTM Standards in Translation and Interpreting
ASTM standards also play a crucial role in elevating translation and interpreting services. Let’s explore some of these standards:

ASTM F2575 — Translation with precision: This standard identifies factors relevant to each phase of a translation project (preproduction, production, and post-production). It’s designed to provide a framework for agreement on specifications for translation projects that will meet the needs and expectations of the end user. It also outlines guidelines for assessing the qualifications and linguistic expertise of translators.

ASTM F2089 — Ensuring quality in interpreting services: This standard focuses on quality assurance in language interpreting services. It provides guidelines for evaluating the competency of interpreters, including their linguistic proficiency, certification, and credentials. It also defines modalities of interpreting and working conditions. Compliance with ASTM F2089 supports professionalism and guarantees quality in interpreting workflows.

ASTM F3130 — Languages services companies explained: This standard specifies basic policies, processes, procedures, and resources needed by a language services company to provide quality services required by its clients. It establishes a language services company’s minimum management infrastructure, operations, and development requirements to deliver consistent and reliable language service products.

ISO and ASTM Standards in Translation and Interpreting Are Game Changers
We cannot underestimate the power of standards when it comes to educating clients! Not only are we adhering to international standards, but we also follow the best practices in our profession to guarantee accuracy, consistency, and professionalism.

Furthermore, educating clients about translation and interpreting standards allows us to manage their expectations effectively. By outlining the complexities and nuances involved in the translation process, we ensure that clients have realistic expectations regarding turnaround times, costs, and the investment required to produce accurate and culturally appropriate translations.

The power of ISO and ASTM standards lies in their ability to elevate the standards of the entire industry, setting benchmarks that push professionals to deliver exceptional language services. By employing these standards, we not only demonstrate to our clients that we will bridge the language gap, but also that the quality and accuracy of services provided will now be on an international level.

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Members of the Leadership Council of ATA’s Language Technology Division (LTD) were recently asked to contemplate and respond to an intriguing prompt. With so much swirling and whirling in the area of emerging language technologies, including Gen AI, ChatGPT, business model pivoting, career sustainability, and beyond, we opted to take a step back—as individuals and as a “tech” council—to ponder our origins as linguists and what, in fact, drew us into the profession many of us love to the core.

In March 2023, Bloomberg’s Tech Daily featured an interesting piece entitled “Language Was the Original Technology, and It’s Under Threat.” LTD members found this article contained welcome food for thought on many levels. Encouraged by the division’s administrator to “take it home and write your feelings,” LTD Leadership Council members responded with some novel and personal takes, most especially on a key takeaway which, not surprisingly, elicited some very different perspectives.

“Language itself is a technology; it’s the first one we created. Living in the modern world means increasingly relying on all sorts of things whose inner workings we don’t understand at all, whether it’s our smartphone, the microwave on the kitchen counter, or the autopilot flying the plane we’re on.

It would be a shame if language became another
If language is like technology, and also like art, then it’s not just “like” either, it’s both.

technology like that. Language isn’t complicated in the ways those things are complicated, but it’s complicated in other ways. It can be misused, and it can be weaponized. It’s a lot easier to see how if you’ve spent time wrestling with it.”
—Drake Bennett

In this tech-dominated moment in the history of our industry, we hope you’ll find the following reflections regarding the quote above thought-provoking, and perhaps even a little comforting.

Bridget Hylak, LTD Administrator

When I first read Drake Bennett’s quote, “Language itself is a technology,” something resonated deep inside. After decades in this industry, I knew his words to be true. Yet curiously enough, almost simultaneously, I thought, “It’s also an art.”

The perfect synergy between technology (or science) and art in the process of producing truly beautiful and accurate linguistic products is something I’ve been preaching to clients for years. Helping them understand the broad yet spectacular concept of a “marriage” between statistics and style, grammar and growth, craft and creativity, intellect and inspiration, training and talent, punctuation and peculiarity, rules and exceptions, has been a labor of love that our own marketing department has taken seriously—with great reward.

To quote the YouTube Bachata dance team sensation Jamie and Zoë, “Every touch [when we dance] is like a word, and so it becomes a true conversation on the dance floor….” Perhaps quoting a Bachata dance team to make a point here is a stretch, or is it?

If language is like technology, and also like art, then it’s not just “like” either, it’s both. Jamie and Zoë are incredible artists and amazing technicians. They haven’t gone viral for nothing (just check them out online—wow!). Likewise, rising to the challenge of excellent communication requires the same blend of trained technician and dedicated artist. Tell this to your clients! If the concept doesn’t speak volumes to convincing unknowing buyers of the need for experts in the loop, then nothing will.

Daniel Sebesta, LTD Assistant Administrator

Structuralism, a strong influence on my journey as a linguist-in-training, regards language as a structured system with rules governing its use. This school of linguistic research highlights the multifaceted relationships among sounds, morphemes, words, clauses, sentences, or separable components of meaning. As proficient users of our respective native and non-native languages, we often navigate these complexities without fully understanding their inner mechanics.

Similarly, language technology, including machine translation, large language models, and voice recognition, adds another layer of intricate yet useful machinery to this picture. Embracing language as a technology invites us to explore its potential while acknowledging its mysteries.

Claudio Cambon, LTD Consultant

If language is a technology, we must remember that a tool is only as good as its user, and that an automated tool can help this user, but it cannot necessarily replace them. It merely frees them from performing repetitive tasks so they can focus on a forward-looking, creative kind of decision-making, of which machines are inherently incapable. Autopilot has been in airplane cockpits for 50 years, but we still have two pilots, and for good reason. We translators remain essential. Tools can help us, but they can’t do the core of what we do so well. That remains our job.

Viktoryia Baum, LTD F&D Researcher

When exploring the concept of language as a technology, and how it has shaped our human lives over the millions of years enabling our ability to communicate, I feel the urge to flip the switch. If language is a technology, then technology is a language. A machine speaks. It wants to be heard and discovered. And no, I don’t mean an “Alexa, turn on the lights” sort of thing. Think further—the beeping of the dishwasher to tell us...
that it has completed its cycle, the smooth humming of an engine to indicate normal operation versus sputtering to let you know it has been taken by an unknown illness, the flickering of an incandescent light bulb to warn of its impending doom—this connection between human and robot, language and technology, is and has been intertwined for centuries, progressing rapidly to the infinity of their ultimate merge.

Bob Makovei, LTD Consultant
As we grow up, we normally pick up our native language with no effort or pain. Throughout our formative years, we then polish it to certain levels mostly influenced first by our closer environment, then by subject matters we like. If we choose occupations where language is a primary means of doing the work, we will soon face the fact that we can only flourish if we have passed a certain threshold in mastering language—not only foreign but native as well. And then we do exactly the same with the primary tools technology gives us: follow the evolving and keep up.

Andy Benzo, LTD AP Researcher
When you think about technology, what comes to mind? Would you have ever thought of language? Both language and technology have enabled evolution and progress. Both are a creation of the human mind. Both are instrumental in the dissemination of knowledge and education.

Language is the foundation of human communication; through it, we have shared knowledge and experiences from generation to generation. Technology helped us record that knowledge, increased productivity, and simplified daily tasks. Both have evolved over time. Language has allowed us to communicate abstract concepts, express emotions, and collaborate on complex tasks, which in turn resulted in the development of tools, machines, and digital systems. Both have permitted us to achieve goals we once considered impossible. It’s essential that we use both tools carefully, considering their profound impact on our lives and the world at large.

Carlos Fasola, LTD Consultant
If technology involves human engineering, language is not a technology, since it’s just a state of the language faculty, developing like any innate human ability without conscious effort. Nevertheless, the construction of terminology is a technology—an important one, permitting, or at least reinforcing, conceptual distinctions.

Karen Leube, LTD Consultant
When I think of language, I think of creativity. When I think of technology, I think of mechanics without creativity. Yet it appears we have reached the point in which the two concepts can be married in a way that brings out the best of both—with a human in the driver’s seat. ChatGPT can be prompted to produce a poem on the most esoteric topic in iambic pentameter at a level of creativity that few of us humans can match on our own. Yet without the human creating a prompt, no such poem will come to life—or will it? Expounding on “language as technology” is difficult, but on “language with technology”—why not?

Blaise Hylak, LTD Consultant and Social Media Coordinator
Though it sounds strange at first, language can be considered one the world’s oldest technologies, perhaps right alongside fire. According to USHistory.org, “By definition, technology refers to the ‘practical application of knowledge in a certain area,’ [so] learning how to tame and use fire proved an invaluable technological advance in human development.” The Oxford dictionary defines technology as, “The application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes.” In that light, if you ponder the dawn of mankind, language was indeed a technological “tool” that prompted early humans to form communities and later whole civilizations—very “practical purposes,” indeed! In modern times, language undoubtedly holds the key to interconnectivity, local flavor, and true global understanding. It drives creativity and innovation, while simultaneously fostering love and meaning. However, miscommunication (i.e., misuse of language) can elicit just the opposite result. How can this “tool” do both, and what might the takeaway be? Perhaps, as with any truly useful tech tool, “Handle with care” (and include the experts!).

NOTE

Embracing language as a technology invites us to explore its potential while acknowledging its mysteries.
ATA’s Interpreters Division
Interpreter Connections

(Interpreters are a vital part of ATA. This column is designed to offer insights and perspectives from professional interpreters. The following was originally published on the blog of ATA’s Interpreters Division.)

There were six of us in the Zoom breakout room: all of us interpreters, all members of ATA’s Interpreters Division, and all logged in to spend some time with colleagues in the division’s Interpreter Connections. One interpreter in that breakout room had recently moved to the U.S. She had questions about practices and protocols in her new home state but didn’t know anyone local. As it turned out, three other attendees lived in her area—one even shared a language pair. By the end of the session, contact information had been exchanged and plans were being made.

Disconnection

For a group of professionals who devote their time and expertise to facilitating communication, we interpreters can end up rather disconnected ourselves. It’s not surprising, really. We occupy a chair in a booth, space beside a witness stand, a seat in a medical office, and all our focus is on other people’s words and messages. And then, we leave. If we’re lucky, a colleague might be working nearby and have time to meet for coffee. And it used to be that the only real chance we had to connect with our own professional community was at association meetings, an annual conference or two, or the occasional workshop.

When the pandemic surfaced in 2020 and led to quarantines and isolation, socializing with our colleagues was certainly not our first concern. But as the months went by, the effects on emotional and mental health became palpable. Human beings were not meant to be disconnected. Social connections—even virtual ones—contribute to longevity and boost the immune system, while the lack thereof has been shown to negatively impact our physical and psychological health. In addition, according to Vivien Williams of The Mayo Clinic Minute, “Socializing... helps sharpen memory and cognitive skills...”

Reconnection

Seeing the effects of isolation, ATA’s Interpreters Division decided to take Interpreter Connections virtual in December of 2020. Sessions are hosted on Zoom and the format is simple. A topic is introduced, then attendees gather in small breakout rooms for a more intimate discussion before returning to the main room to share with the rest. If the conversation moves off topic, that’s fine. “Moderating the Interpreter Connections has been a real joy,” shares Yasmin Alkashef, one of the hosts. “I usually come out of the meeting with notes and tips I learned from my colleagues. I think our most successful event was when we discussed long-term career and retirement planning. It seemed to be a topic everyone related to so strongly, but no one had discussed it enough and very few had acted yet on their long-term/retirement plans. I remember that for a few days after this session I kept thinking about what everyone said. This shed light on another aspect of being a solo entrepreneur.”

While Helen Eby, Flávia Lima, Maggie Hong, Elena...
Langdon, and Pamela Pizzurro have helped at different times, Yasmin Alkashef and Daniela Obregón are the longest-serving hosts of Interpreter Connections.

When asked about her experience, Daniela said, “Since our profession as freelancers can sometimes be lonely, I’m always looking for opportunities to meet with colleagues (either in person or virtually). Spending time with interpreters who have a passion for our profession and are willing to share ideas on how to improve our work creates a space with so much information that it makes me feel eager to put what I’ve heard into practice. Personally, Interpreter Connections is a way for me to continue that cycle of sharing knowledge with like-minded colleagues and with those who might have a different opinion. Connecting and networking with other interpreters makes me want to keep moderating Interpreter Connections to continue learning from others.”

**Staying Connected**
The rise of social media and virtual platforms and events over the past three years has changed the landscape in many ways. For brief interactions, we have T&I Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, a few fun TikTok accounts, and a range of Facebook groups. We meet in online conferences, webinars, and workshops. Geography is no longer an impediment to finding our “tribe.”

But in the midst of this plenty, we still need to find times to sit with our colleagues and let the conversation flow where it may. Our work allows others to connect; we mustn’t ignore our own need to do likewise.

The next Interpreter Connections event will be announced shortly and we hope to see you there! Until then, here’s to being connected!

ATA’s Interpreters Division blog team includes Andreea Boscor, Julie Burns, Helen Eby, Maggie Hong, Paula Irisity, Gaby Penrod, and Carol Shaw, editor.

**NOTES**
Can You Build Your Own Neural Machine Translation Engine?

Spoiler alert: No. But it is possible to adapt an existing neural machine translation engine with your own translation memory, a process known as fine-tuning. If you are a solo translator with a sufficient amount of translation memory data, the result can be quite good. In some cases, it may even be better than “off-the-shelf” machine translation engines or large language models (such as ChatGPT), because the fine-tuned engine will adhere much better to your terminology and your style.

Of course, the previous statement comes with several caveats. First, not every type of text lends itself to machine translation (MT), neural, statistical, or otherwise. The more formulaic and less creative a text is, the better suited it is for MT. Second, the phrase “a sufficient amount” in the paragraph above may also depend on the type of text and on the quality of your translation memory (TM). And all of this, of course, depends on the language combination as well. Generally speaking, for reasonably good results, you will probably need a bilingual corpus in a fairly narrow subject area that corresponds to several years’ worth of work for one translator. Obviously, the fine-tuned engine will then work well for that particular subject matter but may not perform well for texts of a different subject matter.

I performed the experiment discussed here with about 10 years’ worth of patent translation data between English and German. I first cleaned the TM in my computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool to remove duplicates and other problematic segments. This netted me about 150k segments with nearly four million source words. While a TM with several million words is by far not sufficient to train a neural machine translation engine from scratch (I tried and failed miserably, as expected, due to lack of data), it was quite sufficient to fine-tune an existing engine.

Now, there are a number of commercial services out there that offer the option to fine-tune a MT engine. However, since the aforementioned TM contained confidential information, using these services was not an option. You may not have that problem and may be able to use one of these services that are basically plug-and-play (or plug-in-your-TM-and-translate). In the following, I’ll explain how to use a free (!!) tool called Opus-CAT to fine-tune the Opus-CAT engine with your TM, after possibly cleaning and repairing your TM file with another free tool called Olifant. Opus-CAT and Olifant are both Windows programs, and Opus-CAT also offers several plugins for popular CAT tools such as RWS Trados Studio, MemoQ, OmegaT, and others.
The advantage of using Opus-CAT is that it can be fine-tuned and runs locally on your machine, and no data aside from the “raw” (i.e., trained but not fine-tuned) language models downloaded from the Opus-CAT repository is exchanged online. Thus, data privacy is ensured, if you are working with intellectual property texts, texts falling under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or texts containing other personally identifying information. This is not always the case when using other translation services (read the fine print!). With Opus-CAT, you can turn off the internet, and it still works just fine, unless, of course, you’re using it as a plugin with a cloud-based CAT tool.

In the following, I’ll explain how to prepare your TM file and then fine-tune the Opus-CAT engine with that file. For the visual types, I made a video with detailed explanations, which you can watch here: bit.ly/opuscat.

Translation Memory Preparation

To start, you will need to collect all your TM data into one file. As previously mentioned, the data should be in a relatively narrow subject area. You then export that TM as a TMX file. TMX is short for Translation Memory eXchange, and all reasonable CAT tools are capable of handling this file format.

In many cases, however, the TMX file contains invalid characters, which can cause trouble, particularly with larger files like we are handling here. Many CAT tools or quality assurance tools such as Xbench have an option to repair TMX files and remove invalid characters, so you may be able to repair your TMX file with one of these tools.

In the following exercise, we’ll use Olifant, a free Windows program, to repair the TMX file and remove any invalid characters with the help of Olifant and a plain text editor such as Notepad or TextEdit for Mac. To install Olifant, go to the Okapi download page, click on “Download Olifant—....zip,” and download and unpack the zip file. The resulting file is a Windows installer, which installs Olifant after you double-click on it.

Next, start Olifant and import your TMX file, by going to File > Import. Make sure the checkbox “Check for invalid XML characters” is checked. If all goes well, Olifant can repair/remove the invalid characters. You can then save the imported TM file as a repaired TMX file.

In my case, however, I got an error message, as shown in Figure 1. The file contains invalid characters (“0x1E”), which Olifant first encountered on line 33702, as shown in the error log above, which couldn’t be removed even though I had the aforementioned checkbox checked. To remove the offending character(s), first close the file in Olifant and open it in Notepad (on Windows) or TextEdit (on a Mac). Turn off Word Wrap, if applicable. Then go to the offending line, here line 33702, and look for the invalid character. Usually, the hexadecimal character is displayed as “&#xcode;,” in your text editor instead of “0xcode” in the Olifant log. That is in the present case, we’re looking for “&#x1E;” instead of “0x1E” (i.e., “#” instead of the “o” and an appended
The more formulaic and less creative a text is, the better suited it is for machine translation.

Fine-Tuning Opus-CAT

Now we are ready to run Opus-CAT. You can download it from the Opus-CAT page. Again, the download is in the form of a zip file, which you can unpack. The result is a directory with all the necessary files, including the main Opus-CATMTEngine.exe file. You may want to move that directory from your Downloads folder to a location from where you’ll run the files in the future.

Initially, the main “Models” window will be empty, because you will have to download a pretrained model in your language pair(s) from the web. To do so, click on “Install OPUS model from web,” select the desired model(s) from the list in the tab that opens, and click on “Install model locally.” Once that is done, select the pretrained model you want to fine-tune in the “Models” tab and click on “Fine-tune selected model,” load the TMX file you prepared in the previous step, enter a name for the fine-tuned model at the bottom of the window, and click the button “Fine-tune.” The fine-tuning may take several hours or even longer, depending on the TMX file size and your computer system, so you may want to start the process at night or at another time when you are not using the computer.

If you run into any trouble, follow the instructions on the Opus-CAT site.

Using the Fine-Tuned Model

You can use Opus-CAT and the fine-tuned model via a plugin in your CAT tool of choice. A list of available CAT tool plugins can be found here. There are plugins for RWS Trados Studio, memoQ, OmegaT, and others. Note that for RWS Trados Studio, the older plugins and the one for Studio 2022 are not available from the
RWS AppStore but can be downloaded from the Opus-CAT Github repository. Somewhat annoyingly, you will have to manually approve the plugin every time you start Trados.

Once the plugin is installed, you can use Opus-CAT simply like any other MT or TM provider in your preferred CAT tool, as in Figure 2 showing RWS Trados Studio as an example. It must be noted, however, that you need to run Opus-CAT in the background (by running the Opus-CATMTEngine.exe file, as discussed in the previous section) whenever you want to use the plugin, otherwise you will get an error message. Once selected as a translation provider, the Opus-CAT MT results will be displayed like any other translation result in the corresponding window, as shown in Figure 3 (again, the example shown is RWS Trados Studio).

**Final Remarks**

After reading this, the entire process may seem daunting, but, at least for me, it turned out to be well worth it. Given the relatively large TM I used for fine-tuning the pretrained model, Opus-CAT delivers really good results, especially considering that all the software is free. Another advantage is that Opus-CAT runs locally on your machine, thereby no data is transmitted over the internet. This is particularly important for those of us who take data privacy and the intellectual property of our clients seriously. And finally, by using my own TM on my own machine, I am able to leverage my expertise to further my productivity. This means my intellectual property stays with me instead of transmitting it to somebody else and possibly even training their engine in the process.

**QUICK REFERENCE LIST**

- Opus-CAT website with installation instructions
- Opus-CAT Github repository with various CAT tool plugins
- Olifant download page
- Instruction video for the entire process

**NOTE**

For Olifant, a platform-independent version is in development, which may work on other operating systems. I have not tried the new version so cannot comment on its functionality.

**Carola F. Berger, CT** is an ATA-certified German<>English patent and technical translator with a PhD in physics and a master’s degree in engineering physics. She became interested in the topic of artificial intelligence (AI) after reading about the allegedly impending robot apocalypse. To prepare for the uprising of the machines, she has taken courses on AI, neural networks, and natural language processing, and even coded her own machine translation engine. To prepare others, she has given numerous presentations and written many articles on the topic. info@cfbtranslations.com
The Knapp Review Three Years On: Upward and Onward!

In early 2020, ATA’s Board engaged Knapp & Associates International, Inc., a firm specializing in certification and credentialing, to perform a review of the Certification Program. Besides presenting an opinion on “decoupling” (making ATA certification independent of ATA membership), Knapp also made more than 30 recommendations for improving ATA’s certification system. That July, ATA’s Certification Committee created a roadmap for implementing those recommendations (or, as the case may be, rejecting them), and this has been a major focus of the committee ever since. The following is a summary of what’s been decided and done in the intervening three years.

A number of recommendations from the Knapp review have been implemented in full:

- Identify the Certification Committee on the certification page of ATA’s website: Implemented in 2020.
- Include an Americans with Disabilities Act accommodation statement in printed literature for all candidates: This was already in place at the time of the Knapp review.
- Create a more definitive statement describing the level of performance targeted by the credential—entry level, mid-level, or advanced—and communicate this definitive statement effectively to the community: This statement was created in 2021–2022 and published in the July/August 2022 issue of The ATA Chronicle.
- Review current exam appeals policy and reconsider having the grader who reviewed the exam previously serve on the appeal panel: A new appeal panel structure that doesn’t include the reviewer took effect in 2023.
- Periodically reevaluate and update procedures and criteria for selecting graders: This review and update was performed in 2021.
- Identify three to five high-level strategic goals for the Certification Program over the next three to five years: The following goals were identified in May 2023: creating an online grading portal, offering the practice test online, improving grader consistency, devising demographic profiles of passing/failing candidates through a new association management system, and attracting a larger percentage of qualified candidates.

Work on several recommendations is still in progress:

- Provide candidates with more information about their exam performance: A task force is working on a feedback matrix intended to automatically convert exam markings into plain-language performance descriptions based on error categories and point scores.
- Include a description of what certification means for potential users of translation services in ATA’s online language services directory: The Certification Committee plans to work with the Public Relations Committee to supplement the client-facing content on ATA’s website with pertinent information about certification.
- Institute a formal periodic review process for reviewing the grading work of all graders in all language combinations: The Certification Committee is devising policies and procedures for performing routine audits of grader performance.

The Certification Committee has also rejected several of Knapp’s recommendations. These deserve a more detailed explanation.

- Evaluate whether the pass rate truly reflects the competency level of the larger population of professional translators and interpreters: The Certification Committee believes that determining the competency level of the larger population of professional translators and interpreters is not possible without an unreasonable investment of time and resources and may in fact be impossible. Although the U.S. government’s Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) has developed skill level descriptions for translation performance, there is no standardized test or measurement for translation quality in the population of translators as a whole. Nor are there any statistics or data on the larger population that are publicly available from other sources, such as translation agencies or clients. ATA doesn’t have the resources to assemble such data itself, especially since the translation industry encompasses many languages that are not ATA-certifiable.
- Develop a formal and comprehensive communication strategy: This is beyond the scope of the Certification Program, although we do maintain
The Certification Committee is dedicated to enhancing ATA certification as a credential and will continue to implement ideas that have merit, whether they originate with a credentialing expert or elsewhere.

- **Prohibit current graders from participating in candidate preparation and training:** The Certification Committee believes that it is appropriate for graders to participate in candidate preparation and training. Our certification exam differs from other types of testing because it doesn’t have discrete items that have right or wrong answers. Instead, the certification exam tests translation skills. It also differs from other exams of writing skill because it doesn’t have a prompt from which candidates write their own work. Therefore, it is impossible for graders to reveal answers or test items. Moreover, only graders can adequately explain such things as the passage selection process, text-level or sentence-level challenges, or the grading approach. When teaching candidate preparation classes, graders work with retired passages and explain general principles, but candidates will get completely different passages on their actual exams, so candidate preparation and training doesn’t confer unfair advantages.

- **Identify language chairs (LCs) on ATA’s website:** The Certification Committee members are identified on ATA’s website. LCs are not administrators but internal coordinators with no decision-making power beyond that of other graders. In addition, the LC position rotates frequently, so it would be impractical to update the website whenever any group switches LCs. A more critical point is that anonymity is an important aspect of the Certification Program. To avoid favoritism or antipathy, graders are not told who the candidates are, and candidates don’t know who the graders are. The Certification Program manager provides an appropriate buffer between graders and candidates as needed.

- **Periodically evaluate whether maintaining existing language pairs is appropriate in terms of the market and cost:** There is value in having as many languages represented as possible. The discontinuation of a testing pair is problematic (some people have certification while others no longer have the possibility of earning it). The growing availability of online testing means that some low-volume language pairs may experience an increase due to marketing the exam in the target countries, thus extending ATA’s reach and credibility worldwide. The Certification Program does have a stringent process for establishing new language pairs, which in recent years has kept out new pairs for which there is very little demand and/or adequate human resources to keep going.

- **Add an experience/educational eligibility requirement:** The eligibility requirement system that was in force for over 10 years—which was similar to what Knapp proposed—proved ineffectual in screening out unprepared candidates and thus improving the pass rate. A proposal by the Certification Committee in 2022 to require candidates to take a practice test was abandoned in the face of opposition from the Board. However, consideration is being given to a pre-test or screening test that is separate from the practice test.

The Certification Committee is dedicated to enhancing ATA certification as a credential and will continue to implement ideas that have merit, whether they originate with a credentialing expert or elsewhere. Upward and onward!

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**Notes**


   Note: A bylaws amendment that would have enabled this change was defeated in 2019.


4. Each of the 34 language pairs has a designated language chair who directs activities and oversees the other graders. This is a rotating position.

5. ATA Certification Program Procedure for Establishing a New Language Combination.

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David Stephenson, CT is chair of ATA’s Certification Committee. An ATA-certified German>English, Dutch>English, and Croatian>English translator, he has been an independent translator for over 30 years, specializing in civil litigation and creative nonfiction. He was the 2022 recipient of ATA’s Impact Award. david@bullcitylang.com
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