

The Translator Training Textbook

By Adriana Tassini



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About the Author



Adriana Tassini is the author of *The Translator Guide*, which has now been read by over 35,000 industry professionals. Adriana also founded the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, an industry-leading translator training and certification program.

Adriana first developed the CTP designation after speaking with many translators and finding that there was no global self-paced training program available in the translation industry. She now helps manage the structure, examination, and overall resources of the CTP program. To date, Adriana has helped the CTP program to attract more than 3000 global members; and you can learn more about it at <http://TranslatorCertification.com>.

Adriana is half Brazilian and half Italian, but she resides in Key Biscayne, Florida on the East Coast of the United States. Adriana speaks multiple languages and is a Harvard University alumna. Her background is in international relations and translation work in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Boston, Massachusetts (USA).

About CTP



The Certified Translation Professional (CTP) Program is a professional certification program catering to translation professionals around the world.

The CTP is sponsored and was created by the Global Translation Institute in order to offer a certification program for translators which can be completed from anywhere in the world and is offered 100% online. The CTP is the only designation program available online for the translation industry and is earned by both seasoned industry professionals as well as those looking to become a freelance or in-house corporate translator.

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Legal Disclaimer

No advice given or implied in this book should be considered a replacement for professional legal, insurance, business, or tax advice. Before taking any action to become a translator or to form a translation agency or business, please consult the appropriate professional.

Furthermore, the laws and customs regulating translation professionals differ throughout the world. It is imperative that you thoroughly research your local, regional, and national laws and business norms before following any suggestions implied or written in this book.

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Introduction

Seen on the Internet...

A bar in Norway: LADIES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN IN THE BAR.

Airline ticket office, Copenhagen: WE TAKE YOUR BAGS AND SEND THEM IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

Hotel, Vienna: IN CASE OF FIRE, DO YOUR UTMOST TO ALARM THE HOTEL PORTER.

Hotel, Bucharest: THE LIFT IS BEING FIXED FOR THE NEXT DAY. DURING THAT TIME, WE REGRET THAT YOU WILL BE UNBEARABLE.

Doctor's office, Rome: SPECIALIST IN WOMEN AND OTHER DISEASES

Laundry, Rome: LADIES, LEAVE YOUR CLOTHES HERE AND SPEND THE AFTERNOON HAVING A GOOD TIME.

What do all these quotes have in common? Are they the punchlines for comedy skits that flopped? Maybe, but they are also examples of bad translations.

Another example...

Imagine a tourist takes a vacation to the nonexistent country of Noland. After a long day of seeing the incredible sights of Noland City, the Noland Statue, the Noland Memorial Dairy Farm, and the National Museum of Cheese Making and hiking through the Nolandia National Park, she and her family are starving, not to mention exhausted.

When they walk into the hotel restaurant, they see the following short snack menu:

yxzq riwwyw	Cheese soap
riwwyw qxj	Pot cheese
yedu otbc h lxowm	Sweetened sour milk

Somewhat mystified, they nonetheless thank their lucky stars that they all adore cheese. Since they haven't had a bite to eat all day and are feeling adventurous, they order all three items and are pleasantly surprised when the waiter brings cheese soup, Welsh rarebit (melted cheese served in a pot), and yogurt with honey.

When the Nolandish restaurant owner comes out to ask the tourists how they liked the meal, he proudly tells them that his nephew recently started a business as a freelance translator and did the menu translations. The tourists can't bring themselves to hurt his feelings by telling him how confusing the menu actually was.

Although Noland doesn't exist, our cheese-loving tourist family encountered an all too common situation, one in which a mistranslation, an amateur translation, or even a translation by a well-meaning or under-trained professional working outside their native language impedes meaning instead of enabling it. In these cases, the original message gets lost in translation.

And that's just an example of why the work of well-trained translation professionals are so important.

Note: Throughout this book, you will see links to multimedia content, including videos and an audio interview with an expert translator. It is important to note that the URL links provided to these resources are case sensitive, so if you see the URL, <https://translatorcertification.com/video1/> you must type that in as seen. If you try to access the video by going to <https://translatorcertification.com/video1> it will not work.

Enjoy the book!

Chapter 1: What Is Translation?

1.1 What Is Translation?

Normally, people do not think about translations unless either a translated text is incomprehensible or awful or unless they, too, are translators. In fact, the best translations are invisible.

So, if the best translations are invisible, what then, is a translation?

Translation is the act of moving written text from one language to another. Sounds simple, right?

Wrong.

In reality, translation is a very difficult task. As any language student knows, to his or her dismay, words, phrases, idioms, and expressions in one language do not necessarily correspond to those in another, as all the unfortunate examples in the introduction illustrate. At the most basic level, there are the obvious pitfalls of false cognates or false friends, reversed word order, pictograms versus alphabets, and so forth. Even when there is a one-to-one correspondence between two languages, the underlying meaning in each given phrase may still differ due to variations in cultural norms, changes over time, etc. For example, the same words that create an offensive curse in one language may barely sting in another. Plus, languages are the active creations of living, breathing human beings, and as a result, languages evolve and morph. This often causes the underlying meaning of a word or expression to drift.

Unsurprisingly, researchers have recently concluded that translating from one language to another is one of the most complex, higher-order activities of the human brain.

In the end, translation is not about words; it's all about communicating meaning, an extremely complicated task indeed. And when more than one language gets involved, the task grows exponentially harder, often resulting in a true Tower of Babel.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of “A Typical Day Working as a Translator.”

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video: <https://translatorcertification.com/video1/>

1.2 A Brief Overview of the History of Translation

We don't know when the very first translators began plying their craft. It may well have involved trade between two distant tribes or perhaps something else entirely.

Probably the two earliest known extant examples of translation include the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh* (around 2000 BCE) and the Jewish *Septuagint* or Old Testament (200 or 300 BCE).

One of the earliest known translation artifacts is the Rosetta Stone. In today's world, Rosetta Stone is the name of a multi-million-dollar corporation that sells one of the best-known language-learning software programs in the world. But the corporation took its name from an Egyptian slab dated to 200 BCE that was rediscovered by a French soldier shortly before 1800 CE. The original Rosetta Stone is a trilingual text, with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics, ancient Egyptian script (demotic), and ancient Greek, that took translators decades to decode. When the Rosetta Stone was finally deciphered by Jean-Francois Champollion, a French Egyptologist, it proved to be the key to reading hieroglyphics.

The Rosetta Stone is not the only bilingual or even trilingual remnant in the world, but it remains the most famous.

The translation of the Old Testament is part of a larger phenomenon: transferring core tenets from one religion to another. This has proved to be one of the primary reasons for making a translation across the centuries and millennia. Thus, we find the *Septuagint*, a translation of

the sacred Hebrew words into the Greek that was spoken in Egypt. In fourth century Europe, St. Jerome translated the Hebrew and Greek Bible into Latin, creating the Latin Vulgate version that was the primary Bible for centuries. (It's no surprise that St. Jerome is considered to be the patron saint of translators.) Later, in the ninth century, the Bible was translated into a number of local vernacular languages, including French, German, and what would become Russian and the other Slavic languages, due to the efforts of St. Cyril, who invented the Cyrillic alphabet in order to transmit the Bible to those cultures. From Martin Luther in Germany and Jakub Wujek in Poland in the sixteenth century to the King James Bible of seventeenth century England and the twentieth century Vatican II, the Bible (whether Old or New Testament) has continued to be an important focus for translation and retranslation. Likewise, in Asia, translation is associated with the spread of Buddhism. Only in the late Medieval Arab world was translation more associated with the scholarly works, such as Greek and Latin treatises, and less with the Qur'an. Although the Qur'an has been translated in more recent years, historically it was only read in Arabic.

In today's world, translation is part of the larger, global trend toward increasing automation and use of computers. This began in the 1960s for the field of translation as an outshoot of the Automated Language Processing Advisory Committee (ALPAC). Computer-aided translation (CAT) and machine translation, while still imperfect at best, have been making great strides forward in accuracy and utility and can be considered as part of the larger push toward true artificial intelligence.

1.3 Major Languages of the World

The exact number of languages spoken in the world is hard to determine as the difference between a language and a dialect can be hard to pinpoint. Furthermore, the distinction between two languages is often based on geographical, religious, or political parameters rather than vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation.

In the middle part of the last century, linguist Barbara Grimes put together a database of the world's living languages, the *Ethnologue*. Now in its 22nd edition as of 2020, the list has grown to nearly 7,111

languages and is owned by SIL International (Summer Institute of Linguistics, <https://www.ethnologue.com>). The database is available both in print and online, and the statistics in the following section are derived from it.

When tallied according to number of native speakers, the ten largest languages in the world are the native (original) languages for nearly half of the world's population would be the following¹:

1. **English:** 1.132 billion speakers
2. **Mandarin:** 1.117 billion speakers
3. **Hindi:** 615 million speakers
4. **Spanish:** 534 million speakers
5. **French:** 280 million speakers
6. **Standart Arabic:** 274 million speakers
7. **Bengali:** 265 million speakers
8. **Russian:** 258 million speakers
9. **Portuguese:** 234 million speakers
10. **Indonesian:** 199 million speakers

Therefore, if all speakers who learned a language as a foreign language were included in the above list, would be at the very top by far more millions speakers, as it has become today's de facto lingua franca.

1.4 Language Families

The branch of linguistics called comparative philology has classified the world's languages into different language families. The languages within a family usually share a common or root language from which they developed. However, sometimes languages are considered to be related simply because they happen to be geographically close to one another.

¹ <https://www.ethnologue.com/guides/ethnologue200>

1.4.1 The Indo-European Language Family

The **Indo-European** language family is the most fully researched of all the language families. The languages in this family are spoken in India, Pakistan, Iran, and nearly all of Europe. The Indo-European language family has been split into smaller language groups:

- **Indo-Iranian** has about 1.5 billion speakers and includes languages such as Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, and Punjabi. These languages are spoken in northern India and in Pakistan. Persian and Kurdish are also a part of the Indo-Iranian language group. As an aside, the ancient Indian language Sanskrit has had an enormous impact on historical language research. Systematic similarities between Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek were noted as early as the 18th century CE.
- **Romance** languages developed from Latin and have about 800 million speakers in Europe and Latin America. Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian, and Romanian belong to this language group.
- **Germanic** languages have about 524 million speakers in Europe and North America. The Scandinavian languages (Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Icelandic, and Faroese) belong to this group, along with English, German, Dutch, Flemish (which is spoken in a part of Belgium), and Afrikaans (which is related to Dutch and is spoken in South Africa).
- **Slavic** languages are primarily confined to Eastern Europe and have about 300 million speakers. Russian is the most widely spoken language in this group. Other Slavic languages include Belarusian, Ukrainian, Polish, Czech, Slovakian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian.
- **Baltic** languages are represented by Latvian and Lithuanian.
- **Greek** includes modern Greek along with the various older forms of Greek.
- **Celtic** languages were once spoken all over Europe, but now they only comprise a small number of languages: Breton, Irish Gaelic, Welsh, and Scottish Gaelic.

1.4.2 Other European Language Families

There are several other language families represented in Europe. The two most widely spoken ones are the **Turkic language group**, spoken by about 200 million speakers in Turkey, and the **Finnno-Ugric language group**, which includes Finnish, Estonian, Sami, and Hungarian.

Finally, there is an interesting European language, **Basque** (*Euskara*). Spoken in the Basque region of northern Spain and in a small part of southwestern France, Basque has no known relatives (715,000 speakers with Basque as a first language).

1.4.3 The Four Language Families in Africa

The languages in Africa are usually divided into four language families:

- **Niger-Congo** is usually divided into ten subgroups, each of which includes several hundred languages. Nearly half of the Niger-Congo languages are made up of different Bantu languages. These are spoken by about 700 million people in sub-Saharan Africa. Swahili is the best known and most widely spread of the Bantu languages.
- **Khoisan** is spoken by roughly 250,000 people in southern Africa, particularly in the Kalahari Desert in Namibia and Botswana. Because the Khoisan languages include click sounds, they are usually referred to as “click” languages. The Khoisan family is divided into three subgroups: North, Central, and South. In earlier times, this language family only consisted of two main groups: Hottentots (herders) and Bushmen (nomads).
- **Afro-Asian** is found in the northern and eastern parts of Africa, from Mauritania in the west to Somalia in the east. This family is usually divided into five subgroups. Semitic is the most commonly used and best understood subgroup thanks to the spread of Arabic, which is understood throughout North Africa. Arabic is commonly used for education purposes in North Africa and is understood by about 150 million people. Other important Semitic languages are Amharic, Hebrew, and Tigrinya, which are spoken by about 34 million Ethiopians. The

long extinct Egyptian language, which is known for its hieroglyphics, is considered to have belonged to the Afro-Asian language family.

- **Nilo-Saharan** is a catch-all family that consists of all the languages that were “left over” when Africa’s language families were first established. Nilo languages include roughly 150 languages spoken by approximately 8 million people in East Africa. Saharan languages comprise 10 languages and have about 5 million speakers in Chad, Niger, and Libya.

1.4.4 The Sino-Tibetan Language Family

The Sino-Tibetan language family has the largest number of speakers in the world, with an estimated 1 billion speakers.

- Spoken by about 1.35 billion people in northern China, Mandarin is the largest language within this family. Other major languages in this group include Hakka, Wu, and Yuen (Cantonese), all of which are spoken in China. All three share the same written language, which is why they are all sometimes called Chinese, yet the people who speak these different languages cannot understand each another.
- Other languages in the Sino-Tibetan family are Burmese, Tibetan, and Taiwanese. The relationships between the languages of this family are unclear and often disputed.

1.4.5 The Malayo-Polynesian Language Family

Malayo-Polynesian, another large language family in Asia and Oceania, has about 385 million speakers and covers a vast geographical area, from Madagascar to Indonesia and Hawaii. After Indo-European, this is the most widespread language family in the world.

- **The Indonesian (West)** branch of the group includes the most widely spoken languages within the Malayo-Polynesian language family. These are Javanese, Indonesian, Tagalog (found in the Philippines), and Malay.
- **The Polynesian (East)** branch is usually divided up into Micronesian, Polynesian, and Melanesian languages,

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which also include Fiji and Maori (the latter spoken in New Zealand).

1.4.6 The Dravidian Language Family

The **Dravidian language family** is spoken by 215 million speakers in southern India.

- **Tamil and Telugu** are the most widely spoken languages in this family, with about 75 million speakers each.

1.4.7 The Australian Language Family

The **Australian language family** has significantly fewer speakers than any of the others noted above. Its languages are spoken by Australian Aborigines.

1.4.8 The American Indian Language Family

Only a few of the languages that were spoken by the original inhabitants of North and South America are still spoken today. These are usually grouped together under the name **American Indian languages**, a term that covers 20 different families with several languages in each.

The American Indian languages with the most speakers are:

- **Quechua** (spoken in Bolivia and Peru) and
- **Guaraní** (spoken in Paraguay).

1.4.9 Other Languages

- **Papuan**, the language family of New Guinea, numbers about 700 languages. These are grouped together only for convenience due to the geographic location. The relationships of the languages in this family with each other and with other language families are unclear.
- There are also a number of languages whose relationships have not been thoroughly investigated. The most widely spoken of these are all Asian:

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- **Japanese** (125 million speakers)
- **Korean** (77 million speakers)
- **Vietnamese** (74 million speakers)
- **Thai** (66 million speakers)

Thai and Vietnamese are considered distant relatives, but neither Japanese nor Korean has any known relatives.

1.5 Five Common Misconceptions About Translation

There are a number of widespread misconceptions about the act of translation. These misconceptions impede the understanding of what the profession is all about and what it requires. Furthermore, they give someone interested in joining the profession a false sense of what it involves.

1.5.1 Misconception #1: Anyone Can Translate

Many “lay” people think that if you know a foreign language, you can translate. This is possibly the most misleading of all the misconceptions about the field, on a number of levels.

First of all, many people truly do not understand what it means to “know a language” as a translation professional. To know a language well enough to translate into it is a considerably different enterprise than simply understanding it. If millions of people have difficulty composing a text in their own language, how, then, can they be expected to be able to do so in a foreign language?

Second, to be able to translate, you need to be proficient in at least two languages: your native language and another, foreign language. You must understand the grammar of all your working languages. Moreover, you should have a talent for playing with verbal nuances, and you should be interested in languages—not to mention that you should also be familiar with the cultural differences and environments typical of where your languages are spoken.

1.5.2 Misconception #2: Translation Is a Fast Process

Although it may seem natural when performed by skilled professionals, translation is an art, and it requires a good deal of thought. Generally, translating a text will always take as long as or longer than it took to write that text. And even the best translators often find phrases, words, or structures that make them pause. These pauses can increase translation time.

1.5.3 Misconception #3: It Is Easy to Translate

Most activities look easy when performed by skilled, experienced professionals. However, those professionals took years to achieve such ease and accomplishment. Think of an Olympic athlete or a ballerina.

The work of translating requires a high level of concentration. Each word, phrase, preposition, structure, figure of speech, idiom, etc., in both the source and the target language, must be carefully considered during the translation process. In a sense, it is like having two different centers of thought in your mind; the only way to make them communicate is if the interface between them remains active. Yet there are times when even the most experienced of translation experts can find this exhausting and difficult.

1.5.4 Misconception #4: Translation Is Natural and Requires Little Study

Many people think that you do not need to study to become a translator.

False.

Becoming a translator requires an immense amount of study, and it can literally take a lifetime to learn a language. No matter how proficient you are, you continue learning more with each new translation project. Meanwhile, you're also learning numerous new ideas related to the field and subject of the translation material. The job of a translator is much like that of a doctor: keeping your quality high and producing never-failing professional performance requires lifelong learning.

1.5.5 Misconception #5: All Subjects Are Equal

Many people—even project managers for agencies—think that once you become a translator, you can translate any kind of text.

False.

While this would be wonderful, it simply is not true. A translator can only translate texts within his or her own scope of knowledge. It is impossible to analyze a source text unless you understand every word of it. Therefore, source texts in specialized or technical fields are best translated by people with expertise in these fields.

1.6 Conclusion

It's no exaggeration to say that translation is as old as civilization itself, a crucial activity throughout the world and throughout time. Translators are involved in nearly all interactions between foreign nations, from peace treaties to trade agreements, political marriages between sovereigns, and negotiations over territory.

So, who are the professionals who perform this important work? Let's next turn our attention to them and take a look.

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Review Questions

1. What is translation?
2. Is translation a complicated activity?
3. What is the act of translation primarily about?
4. What are two of the earliest known translated documents?
5. Name the 12 major language families in the world.
6. Roughly how many languages are there in the world today?
7. What ten languages have the most native speakers, as of the last tally?
8. What global trend is translation a part of?
9. Name the five most commonly held misconceptions about translation.
10. Fill in the blank: The best translations are _____.

Answers

1. Translation is the act of moving written text from one language to another.
2. Yes, researchers have recently concluded that translating from one language to another is one of the most complex, high-order activities of the human brain.
3. Meaning and not just words.
4. The Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh* and the Jewish *Septuagint* (Old Testament)
5. Indo-European, Other European, Niger-Congo, Khoisan, Afro-Asian, Nilo-Saharan, Sino-Tibetan, Malayo-Polynesian, Dravidian, Australian, American Indian, Papuan. There are also several languages in a separate "other" group.
6. Just over 7,100 at last count.
7. From the largest number of speakers to the fewest, the top ten are English, Mandarin, Spanish, Hindi, Spanish, French, Standard Arabic, Bengali, Russian, Portuguese, Indonesian.
8. Automation and an increasing use of computers.
9. 1) Anyone can translate. 2) It is fast. 3) It is easy. 4) It is natural and requires little study. 5) All subjects are equal for a translator.
10. The best translations are "invisible."

Chapter 2: Who Are Translators?

2.1 Who Are Translators?

Translators come from all walks of life and, by necessity, all parts of the world. Translators can be male or female, disabled or able-bodied, short or tall, fat or thin, rich or poor, unfashionable or fashionista, etc. Translation is truly an equal opportunity occupation, with advancement based on achievement.

So, do translators have anything at all in common? Yes.

Despite all their differences, one of the things translators share is a love of language. A good translation professional is fascinated by language, by its permutations, and by how to best express those different shades of meaning. In other words, language itself is generally one of a translator's passions.

2.2 What Personality Traits Should a Translator Have?

To survive and do well in the long term, translators should be all or most of the following:

- Reliable
- Trustworthy and ethical
- Self-disciplined
- Punctual
- Organized
- Responsible

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- Aware of their strengths and weaknesses, with good judgment about where their competence lies and at what point their incompetence starts
- Conscientious about doing their best and getting things right. A translator cares deeply about getting something right and intensely about arriving at the deeper meaning in a sentence, a phrase, a paragraph, and a word.
- Patient. This is a very labor-intensive and time-consuming job.
- Detail-oriented
- Diligent and hard-working, as translation is a good deal of work, although the work is often fun for those who love doing it
- Humble and self-effacing, as they must make their translation and writing style match what someone else has written
- Confident but self-critical
- Communicative, in order to be able to discuss questions and matters with their employers or clients
- Helpful and concerned about helping people
- Love learning. To stay at the top of their game, translators must keep learning. The career requires "life-long learning," a modern phrase that describes the process of continuous acquisition and storage of knowledge.

Translators should also have:

- A good memory
- Concentration and the ability to focus deeply

These are the typical personality *traits*, and yet, interestingly enough, the personality *types* of translators vary extensively.

One image of a translator is that of a solitary human being hunched over a dictionary, laboring over an arcane, beautiful work of literature for years before finally delivering it to the public. Another image is of an interpreter playing verbal ping-pong while doing simultaneous translation. Both are valid images, and there are many, many more in between. What other occupation allows for so many different personality types?

2.3 What Skills Does a Translator Need?

Because translators work with the written word, they need to read the language they are translating *FROM* very well.

Translators also need to be able to write well in the language that they translate *INTO*. In other words, if you are going to translate the written word, you either must start out as a good writer or learn to be one. This is not an impossible task, as writing is a skill that can be learned. Take some classes if this is not your strength.

If your grammar is shaky and your notion of spelling even scarier, you'll have even more work cut out for you. But you can overcome these weaknesses with education, a good partner, a dictionary and style guide, and perpetual vigilance. Over time, you may no longer have to think about them, or you may always need to do so.

It should go without saying that translation requires linguistic skills. A translator should be able to understand and analyze written text as a basic intellectual skill—instead of just trying to translate word for word. A good translator must first clearly understand a text and then, at each step, analyze it and transform it into a second language.

Last but not least, a translator should know at least two languages very well, preferably fluently. Does this mean they need to be bilingual? Read on.

Free Bonus Audio MP3 Content: Our team recorded an expert translator audio interview with Paulo Eduardo Rodrigues da Silva on the topic of "How to Succeed as a Translator."

This audio was originally produced as one of the 10 expert translator audio interview modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can listen to it for free by typing this into your web browser:

MP3: <http://translatorcertification.com/Audio1/>

2.4 Are All Translators Bilingual?

Not necessarily.

There are as many definitions of bilingual as there are linguists in the world, and how fluent one must be to be considered bilingual is the subject of considerable debate. Since languages are a moving target and the human brain is constantly learning and, sadly enough, forgetting, a person may feel more fluent on one day and less on another.

In this handbook, we will refer to someone as being completely **bilingual** when they are completely fluent in two languages, so much so that a native speaker wouldn't be able to perceive any difference in either language (other than, perhaps, a trace of an accent).

For the purposes of the translation profession, a **bilingual** person can understand or speak two languages well, either because they learned both as a child or because they thoroughly learned a second language later on. And a **multilingual** person, sometimes called a **polyglot**, speaks or understands three or more languages.

Although the bilingual person may be fluent in two languages and the polyglot in many, more often than not, one language is still the strongest. Under most circumstances, that strongest language is the one that the translator spoke throughout his or her childhood, unless the person spoke two languages in the home from very early on. (In an increasingly multicultural, global world, this is happening more and more often.)

It is a myth that a bilingual speaker is best at translation. Translation is a separate skill set from learning or speaking a second or third language; it requires different, additional abilities. Indeed, the two skill sets often do not coexist in the same person.

2.5 A Translator's Native Language

The language—or languages—that someone spoke throughout childhood is called his or her **native language** or **mother tongue**. With very few exceptions—such as when someone is completely bilingual or has lived in a different country for decades—translators can translate *out of* many languages but should only translate *into* their native language.

Why is this?

Once again, unless a person spoke two languages throughout childhood and is completely bilingual, he or she may understand a second or third language very well but will still make an occasional mistake in that second or third language when he or she writes or speaks it as passive language skills are acquired much more quickly than active ones. Moreover, the syntax, phrasing, and subtle details in that second language are generally at least slightly non-native, either from time to time or often—and often glaringly so.

It is almost always possible to figure out when someone is working in a language other than his or her mother tongue. So, to reiterate, with rare exceptions, a translator should always, always, always, **ONLY** translate into their native language.

As an aside, it goes without saying that a translator had best be flawless in their native language—or else they won't be much of a

professional at all.

2.6 How Many Languages Should a Translator Work In?

Given that a translator will only translate *into* his or her native language(s), can he or she translate out of more than one language?

Of course—if they are qualified.

In general, it is easier to learn a third language, or even a fourth, than a second one. If one speaks a related language, one can, in fact, translate out of a language that one isn't fluent in, for example, Czech for a Slovakian speaker.

Ideally, all translators are fluent or near fluent in at least two languages. Nonetheless, there is no universal prescription about the number of languages a translator should know. It depends on his or her personal career path, linguistic talent and experience, desired specializations, and, of course, the market.

So, the answer to the question really is, as many languages as they can translate well.

2.7 What Are the Benefits of Being a Translator?

Translation, particularly as a freelance translator, is a job that combines *freedom and flexibility*—and it can be as flexible an occupation as you want to make it. If you want to work regular hours and draw a regular paycheck, you can choose to be an in-house translator for a firm that uses translators or for an agency. Or, if you prefer to follow your own schedule, working as a freelance translator will let you do so. If you like organizing and managing, you could become a project manager. If you prefer to work at the beach or in cut-offs, being a freelance translator lets you do both.

A translator's workload can be as *varied* as he or she desires. If you prefer to become an expert on all the aspects of one subject and want to deal with that all the time, you can. Even in a specific field such as the legal or medical fields, the topics that arise within that

field can be endless—and endlessly fascinating, should that field fascinate you. But if you have more of a broad-based intelligence and prefer to be a generalist, translation is one place where a generalist can earn a living doing varied work.

The profession of translation is *dynamic*; it's constantly changing, particularly with the increasing numbers of computer tools available to those in the field. Therefore, another benefit is that you're working in a dynamic field.

Translation can be *fascinating*. How many occupations pay you to read and learn more about your favorite subject(s) or new and interesting subjects and then communicate what you just learned and read to someone else—all while getting to play with language? Teaching fits some of this description but not all of it. So, if this job description entices you, then translation might be a perfect fit—and when a job is a perfect fit, that provides lifelong satisfaction.

Translation can be *creative*. Despite the inroads that CAT tools and machine translation are making into the field, translating is ultimately an extremely creative occupation. A translator is a writer or communicator in one language and a reader in a second language. He or she takes whatever communication is given to him or her and transfers its meaning, style, and flavor into a new creation that is a close reinterpretation of the original. At its best, translation is a combination of *art and craft* and much more of those than it is a science.

Translation allows a person to be *altruistic* and to help others. Surprised? While translation doesn't strike everyone as perhaps the most obvious occupation in which to help others, as opposed to, say, social work, medicine, psychology, or spiritual advising, translators help others in a great many ways.

One clear way to help others as a translator is to volunteer to do *pro bono* work as a translator for NGOs such as Translators without Borders or as an interpreter. But as a translation professional, you can still earn a living and help others immensely. For example, someone who doesn't speak English will be at a complete loss if they are forced to deal with the local legal system, either on a criminal or civil basis. Your ability to step in and interpret, or to translate documents for them, can be considered humanitarian aid. Another example is a translator that provides crucial translations for

patients who do not speak English so that they may communicate with the medical staff.

A translator gets to *travel*. Do you like to travel or live in a foreign country for an extended period of time? Translators and interpreters have many opportunities for travel, from being a tour guide to attending committee meetings and sessions of the EU to living as an ex-pat in an exotic locale. The possibilities are endless and worldwide—yet another of the many benefits of being a professional translator.

Translation is also *emotionally rewarding*. Translating can be a very satisfying occupation. Finding a good solution to a tricky terminological puzzle can be immensely satisfying. And finishing a project or turning in a translation can feel great. When a job is a good fit, it provides a person with long-term satisfaction.

Translation is also *financially rewarding*. If you're a good translator and do a decent job of leveraging your skills, you can demand a decent rate and earn a good living. How much might you earn?

2.8 Is Translation Financially Rewarding?

How much do translators earn? Are you well paid for your efforts? Good questions. The truth is simple: If you want to earn as much as a pop star does, you should become one. If you want to make a good living as a translator, you can do so—but be prepared to do a serious amount of work. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics projects a 42% increase in translation and interpreting jobs between 2012 and 2022².

The level of income you can earn depends largely on how you are positioned in the market. The 2007 American Translators Association's Translation and Compensation Survey provides us with some useful Figures³:

2006 Average Gross Income by Employment Classification (U.S.-Based Respondents)

Full-time, In-house, Private Sector: \$59,472
Part-time, In-house, Private Sector: \$24,304
Full-time, Independent Contractor: \$60,423
Part-time, Independent Contractor: \$22,935
Translation and Interpreting Company Owner: \$67,559
Educator: \$50,958
Government Employee: \$59,924
Median pay (from 2018 stats): \$49,930 per year (or 24\$ per hour)
Professional, scientific, and technical services: \$55,450
Government Employee: \$54,940
Hospital, local, state and private: \$49,530
Educational services, state, local and private: \$47,940

Of course, those are averages, and from 2018. There are many factors that determine a translator's financial success, some more tangible than others. Nonetheless, if you have the right skills, mindset, marketing ability, and personality type, these numbers paint a clear picture: You can earn your living as a translator and enjoy it.

²(source American translators Association:
<https://www.atanet.org/careers/>)

³ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/interpreters-and-translators.htm>

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Review Questions

1. True or False: All translators come from upper-class backgrounds.
2. What do translators have in common?
3. Name 10 personality traits a translator needs.
4. What was the average annual salary for a full-time translator in the most recent study?
5. What four skills must a translator have?
6. Does a translator need to be bilingual or multilingual, and what does that mean?
7. What does "native language" mean, and what's another term for this?
8. How many languages should a translation professional translate from?
9. Name 10 benefits of being a translator.
10. What language should a translation professional translate into and why?

Answers

1. False: Translators come from all walks of life.
2. A love and passion for language.
3. Any and all of the following: reliable, trustworthy, ethical, self-disciplined, punctual, organized, responsible, aware of their strengths and weaknesses, conscientious, patient, detail-oriented, diligent, hard-working, self-effacing, communicative, helpful, concerned about people, and confident but self-critical
4. Roughly \$50,000 on average
5. The ability to: 1) read one language well, 2) write in another language well, 3) analyze a text well, and 4) understand at least two languages well
6. Definitions vary, but the answer is no. Being bilingual (essentially fluent in two languages) or multilingual (essentially fluent in more than two languages) is not required, just the ability to read, write, and/or understand two or more languages well. Indeed, a bilingual person is not necessarily the best-equipped person to become a translator.
7. A person's native language is the primary language they grew up speaking in childhood and is also called one's "mother tongue." If two languages were spoken in the home or if a person moved to another country at a young age, he or she can have two native languages.
8. As many or as few as he or she knows well enough to do a good job translating
9. The following adjectives and descriptions: freedom, flexibility, creative, dynamic, an opportunity to help others, fascinating, varied, the opportunity for travel, emotionally rewarding, and financially rewarding
10. A translation professional should ALWAYS translate only into his or her native language because even if they are very near fluent in a second language, they are still very likely to make small errors that will instantly be readily apparent to a native speaker.

Chapter 3: A Career in Translation

3.1 What Kind of Projects Do Translators Work On?

Translators work on a wide variety of projects. A short sampling includes the following:

- Contracts
- Speeches
- Transcripts of speeches
- Movies
- Blogs
- Correspondence
- Degrees
- Instruction manuals
- Poetry
- Song lyrics
- Articles
- Stories
- Conferences
- Travel guides
- Software
- Books
- Websites
- Video games
- Advertising
- Press releases

...and the list goes on and on. If a human activity involves words and text in at least some way, a translator is probably also involved.

3.2 Where Do Translators Work?

Translators can be found in varied work environments of all shapes, sizes, and types. Many translators are self-employed as freelancers; others work as independent contractors for translation agencies or NGOs. Some translators work directly for agencies or NGOs, either as a translator or project manager. Yet other translators are employed by large non-translation firms either to provide in-house translations or to translate in the course of pursuing another specialized occupation. And finally, translators also work for governments and governmental organizations. Translators also can be volunteers working *pro bono*.

3.3 Translation vs. Interpretation

3.3.1 What Is the Difference Between a Translator and an Interpreter?

A translator works with the written word, while interpreters deal with the spoken word.

3.3.2. Types of Interpreters

There are two basic types of interpretation, simultaneous or consecutive.

Consecutive interpreters listen and then translate *after* something has been said. They often work as guides or travel escorts.

Simultaneous interpreters listen and interpret *while* something is still being said—with very little delay. They often work in conference settings, for business meetings, and at diplomatic conventions, particularly for multilingual international governmental organizations such as the United Nations. Of all the things that translators and interpreters do, this is perhaps what the “lay person” thinks of when they think of a translation professional. One variety of simultaneous translation is **Chuchotage**—whispered translation.

Another way of breaking down the field is to look at the setting in

which the interpretation occurs. This includes the following:

Conference interpretation can be either simultaneous or consecutive. **Escort interpretation** as a travel guide or delegate escort is an example. **Court interpretation** occurs in a judicial or legal setting.

Phone interpretation takes place over the phone and is generally simultaneous. As the line between the phone and the Internet continues to blur, this will also lead to more video conferencing interpreting as well.

Interpreters typically talk about **A, B, and C languages**. What do those mean?

Your **A language** is your native language. If you were raised bilingually, you'll have two A languages, but typically, an interpreter only has one A language.

Your **B language(s)** is a language you are fluent or near fluent in. You will have near-native ability in this language, but it is not your mother tongue.

Some interpreters have one or more **C languages**, which are languages they understand well and can interpret from, but not into.

3.4 In Which Sectors Can Translation Professionals Be Found?

There are countless areas that require specialized translation expertise. Indeed, each business sector has its own philosophy and style.

Legal, Court, and Judicial: This field requires knowledge of legal terminology, the legal process, the court system, and, for interpreters, oral fluency in both languages. Professionals in this field deal with contracts, patents, compliance regulations, disclaimers, disclosures, and other legal documents. The ability to stay cool in tense situations is an added plus. At times, judicial interpreters will need to be comfortable and able to read aloud in one or more of their languages in a court

setting. This is not the right field for someone without a legal or paralegal background, as legal terms have specialized meanings that require advanced knowledge. A basic knowledge of Latin is useful as well.

Medical/Healthcare and Social Services: This field requires interpreters who help patients and medical providers who do not share fluency in the same language to communicate with each other clearly and sensitively. The healthcare and social services industry also uses translators to convert medical care instructions, consent forms, clinical trial information, brochures, medical histories, insurance records, and other written information from one language to another. Those working in this field need to have adequate medical knowledge and to know medical and lay terminology in both their target and source languages.

Financial: Translators in this field should have a good understanding of finance and business. Financial institutions have translators prepare documents for their foreign clients as well as communicate with partners and associates in other countries. Such institutions often need professional translators to work on business reports, research, minutes, agreements, annual reports, stockholder statements, and so on. Translators who are also financial professionals are often in demand as bankers, stockbrokers, insurance agents, etc.

Human Resources: Any training manuals, compliance instructions, employee notifications, etc., in a multinational corporation will need to be translated into the languages of the various countries in which the corporation has branches or headquarters.

Corporate & Business: This is a vast field as businesses generate more than simply HR documents. They also generate letters (to stockholders, other businesses, etc.), communiqués, and more.

Marketing & Public Relations: Translators in this field work with marketing documents, catalogs, investment information documentation, web pages, press releases, consumer surveys, and media communications.

Technical translating is another broad category with several subsectors.

- **Engineering/Scientific:** As in the field of legal translation, engineering and scientific translations require specialized knowledge. This is not the place for a generalist.
- **IT/Technology:** Translators who work in this area can perform a number of different tasks. They translate multilingual manuals for a wide variety of technical devices and appliances—from vacuum cleaners to cell phones and more. They also can localize software and Internet websites so that in all of their aspects and functions, they feel and act native to the target language and culture.
- **Industrial/Automotive:** Each industrial or manufacturing field requires different, specialized knowledge, and the automotive industry is no exception. Translators work on machine and factory specifications, processing instructions, user manuals, and so forth.

Quality control and standards: These have become a hot field in the international business community, particularly with the establishment and growth of the EU. Each quality system features its own vocabulary and

terminology. In addition, quality systems and standards translators are often involved in certification for those organizations.

Education: Translators can teach English as a Second Language (ESL) as well as a foreign language. In addition, translators and interpreters work on multilingual documents for school boards, etc.

Travel and tourism: The travel industry has a wide range of needs for translators and interpreters, from airline companies to travel agencies, museum guides to rental car agencies—anywhere that international travelers may call, visit, or consult.

Literary/Publishing: Literary translators work for publishing houses, edit translations, or translate literature. While style, vocabulary, and reader level are always something to pay attention

to in all translations, they are crucial aspects of good literary translations. This is, perhaps, one of the better-known sectors of the translation industry.

- **Poetry/ Song Lyrics:** This is a very tricky sub-sector of literary translation, where meaning is not the only criteria, as the translator must honor the poet or lyricist's choices for rhyme, meter, and scansion. Often a compromise is the only solution. Ideally a poetry translator is himself or herself at least somewhat of a poet.

3.5 What Else Do Translators Do?

Translation professionals translate and/or interpret. But they also teach, as noted above. In addition, a translator with graphic design experience might offer **DTP** (i.e., desktop publishing), and a translator with website and/or software experience and training might offer **localization, web design, and/or SEO services** (more on localization below.) A translator trained as a writer might be a **copywriter** or **editor**; if he or she has editorial training or experience, he or she can also be a **copy editor**. Especially detail-oriented translators can **proofread** or compile **abstracts**. If a translator is a trained actor or voice talent, they might do foreign language **voice-overs**. Or, if they have the right kind of software and interest, translators can also do **transcription, dubbing, or subtitling**. Finally, a translator who has excellent organizational and people skills can also become a **project manager**, someone who coordinates and organizes projects for other translators or groups of translators.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of “Top 5 Translation Career Mistakes.”

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing the following into your web browser:

Video <http://translatorcertification.com/Audio1/>

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Review Questions

1. Name at least 10 types of projects translators work on.
2. What does an interpreter do, and what's the difference between an interpreter and a translator?
3. Describe 5 types of interpreting.
4. Name 10 sectors in which translators work.
5. Which letters of the alphabet are used by interpreters to speak about languages, and what do those letters mean?
6. What type of translation or interpretation jobs require a translation professional to be cool under pressure?
7. Translators translate. Name 10 other jobs they might also do.
8. What do the acronyms NGO, SEO, and DTP mean?
9. What is *Chuchotage*?
10. True or False: There's no place for translators in the public sector.

Answers

1. The list includes contracts, speeches, transcripts of speeches, movies, blogs, correspondence, degrees, instruction manuals, poetry, song lyrics, articles, stories, books, conferences, tour and travel guides, software, websites, video games, advertising, marketing surveys, and press releases, among many others.

2. Interpreters render the spoken word from one language into another. Translators work with the written word; interpreters work with the spoken word.

3. Consecutive interpreters listen to what is said and interpret afterward.

Simultaneous interpreters translate at the same time that they are listening to what they're translating. Conference interpretation takes place at meetings, conferences, etc. Escort interpreters escort someone who doesn't speak the local language, for example, as a tour guide or delegate escort. Court interpreters work in a legal setting. Phone interpreters interpret over the phone. With the line between phone and the Internet continuing to blur, this can include video interpreting as well.

4. The list includes health care, legal, technical, scientific, literary, financial, human resources, quality control, marketing, public relations, engineering, corporate, business, education, travel and tourism, industrial, automotive, and publishing.

5. A, B, C. An interpreter's A language is their native language. An interpreter's B language is their second one, a language that they speak fluently or nearly fluently. The C language is a third language, which the interpreter understands and speaks well enough to work from but not into. Not all interpreters have a C language, but some have more than one.

6. Simultaneous and legal/ judicial interpreting, among others, for obvious reasons

7. Translators also do DTP, localization, copy writing, transcription, dubbing, subtitling, editing, proofreading, copy editing, writing abstracts, and project management.

8. NGO is short for non-governmental organization. These are generally not-for-profit organizations. SEO stands for search engine optimization. DTP stands for desktop publishing.

9. *Chuchotage* means whispered translation.

10. False

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Chapter 4: How to Translate: The Tools of the Trade

4.1 Nuts & Bolts: A Few Basic Terms

Appendix 1 lists the top 65 translation terms a translator should know about. But to discuss the nuts and bolts of translation, there are a few terms we must introduce now.

4.1.1 Source Language

The **source language** is the language of the original document (i.e., the language that you are translating *from*).

4.1.2 Target Language

The **target language** is the language of the translation (i.e., the language that you are translating *into*). While there is normally only one source language, there can be many target languages for a document.

4.1.3 Transliteration

Transliteration is the spelling of words in one language with the alphabet of another language. In other words, one takes the words or characters from a text that uses an alphabet or set of symbols different from those used in the target language and transcribes or transfers them to the target alphabet and system of characters. There are standards and systems for transliteration; those who are interested in exploring this topic can visit <http://www.transliteration.com> to learn more about the tools and standards involved in this topic.

Most transliteration systems map the letters of the source script to letters pronounced similarly in the target script. If letters and sounds correspond in a similar way in both languages, a transliteration may be nearly the same as a transcription (see below).

No system is perfect, however, as it is hardly possible to reduce the variety of different sounds specific to a language to the limited graphic representation of letters existing in the alphabet of another language.

Names and proper nouns can be especially tricky.

4.1.4 Transcription

While translation is the transfer of meaning from one language to another, **transcription** is the written representation of speech in writing. In the context of translation, a transcription generally involves taking the spoken words of an audio or video recording and converting them into text on a page. In the field of linguistics, transcription is an integral part of phonetics, conversation analyses, dialectology, and sociolinguistics.

Outside the world of linguistics, one can find transcription used in many situations, such as the proceedings of a court hearing, a criminal trial (by a court reporter), or a physician's recorded notes (medical transcription).

Conference speeches are often transcribed into written texts, as are marketing surveys and consumer interviews.

Converting spoken language into a written text may seem easy. Nonetheless, it still has a few traps. The difficulty or ease of transcribing largely depends on the speaker and how clearly, they talk. So, if a speaker's articulation is not particularly distinct, it can be quite a difficult task to accomplish. Before the digital age, analog recordings often caused many transcribing difficulties due to poor recording quality, background noise, pace of speech, and so on. Today's recordings are primarily done via digital audio or video files that are transcribed into electronic documents.

Unlike translation, in which the translator is required to engage all of their creativity and world knowledge in order to make the translated text as close to the target audience as possible, transcription allows for virtually no freedom or creativity. It should be as close to the spoken original as possible.

4.1.5 Localization

The Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA) defines localization as follows: “**Localization** involves taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold.” Until its demise in 2011, LISA was the organization that focused on this territory. As of this writing, LISA’s archived newsletter, *Globalization Insider*, is still available online at <http://www.lisa.org>.

A good translation uses the appropriate terminology geared to the right level. Localization goes beyond that by making sure that the terminology is current and that it fits the desired market. Thus, localization goes beyond mere translation. But the difference is subtle and the boundary

line is fuzzy and imprecise, for a good, thorough translator does adapt his or her work to the cultural norms, context, and reader level of the target translation. In a sense, then, a good translation involves some localization, and an intelligent translator can include localization in his or her process. Indeed, a growing number of technologies that used to be delegated to localization specialists are now finding their way into the traditional translation industry.

The term “localization” first became widespread with the growth of the Internet and globalization and was related to the translation and adaptation of software or a website to another language, which included the software application itself as well as all related product documentation. The term comes from the word “locale,” which traditionally means a small area or vicinity. Many different definitions and descriptions for *localization* are used in the software and translation industry.

In the context of websites and software, localization also involves making sure that the menus, buttons, instructions, templates, etc., are in the target language and that the software coding—such as HTML for example—are rendered in such a way that they retain their validity.

Along with rendering text from one language to another, localization will normally include terminology research, editing, proofreading, and page layout. Contemporary localization often includes multilingual project management targeted to markets in different regions. These may go hand in hand with software and online help files, as well as testing, converting translated documentation to different formats, translation memory alignment and management, multilingual product support, and translation strategy consulting. Tasks like these are typically managed by large multi-language localization agencies.

A properly localized translation should look like a text originally produced specifically for the target market. Along with language, there are a number of other things to be considered in that relation: paper sizes, fonts, default font selection, case differences, character sets, sorting, word separation and hyphenation, measuring units, number formats, address formats, time and date formats (long and short), local regulations, copyright issues, data protection, payment methods, currency conversion, taxes, etc. And that's just the words. The graphics, symbols, and everything else as well need to feel native to the target culture.

4.1.6 Back Translation

Back translation involves taking a text that has been translated and then translating it back into the original language. The back translation can then be compared to the original. Back translation is one of several methods of proofreading.

4.2 Types of Translation

Normally, one translates an entire document. But sometimes translators will be called to summarize a text or to give its overall gist. Not surprisingly, this is called a **gist translation**.

4.2.1 Literal and Direct Translation

Literal translation, or **direct translation**, is when the text in one language is rendered into another language word for word (*verbum pro verbo* in Latin) rather than conveying the *sense* of the source text. In other words, each individual word in the source text is

translated into the target text while the sentence structure is often kept the same.

Literal translation can sometimes suffice for understanding a text, but often a literal translation does not accurately convey the sense of a phrase or paragraph. And if the word-for-word approach is applied to the sentence structure, the effect can be disastrous. A brilliant example of word-for-word translation is a person trying to translate a text from a language he does not know with the help of a dictionary. Most language learners go through this phase.

If a literal translation does not convey the complete sense, is it at all useful? Yes.

There are some situations where a literal translation is crucial. For example, if an opera singer is learning a new aria in a language they've never spoken, they need to know the exact meaning of each and every little word they sing. Only a literal translation will give that information. Nonetheless, that same opera singer will also need a full translation for meaning as he or she must understand the overall meaning of what is being sung.

Not surprisingly, experts in the translation industry say that the best translations are not literal translations but rather invisible adaptations.

4.2.2 Adaptation Translations

Adaptation, as opposed to literal translation, seeks to capture and convey the essence, meaning, and message of an original text without being literal. Adaptation is always oriented to the target readership. As opposed to word-for-word translation, adaptation is a freer approach whereby idioms and other figures of speech in the source language are not "lost in the translation," sentence structure is changed to reflect the usual standard of the target language, and literalism is avoided as being amateurish.

The approach you take to your translation work depends largely on the purpose of the translation and the client's request. But whether you're translating literally or more loosely, you'll need paper tools, online tools, and computer tools.

4.3 Dictionaries and Glossaries

No human being, even the most erudite, linguistically talented, or brilliant, can know all the words in a language. Thus, dictionaries are crucial to the translator's trade, and good dictionaries are a translator's best friends. Before the Internet took hold, translators' bookshelves used to sag with a huge number of dictionaries, thesauruses, and other reference books, which the translation professional consulted frequently. Now those same dictionaries can be easily found online. Nevertheless, I challenge you to find a good professional translator without at least one or two written publications that they consult periodically.

Dictionaries give a wide variety of the different meanings a word may have—hopefully all, although that's a Herculean task. Dictionaries are enormously helpful to a translator's work. For example, sometimes a translator may encounter a familiar word in a source text that doesn't seem to fit in the context. Either this was a typo or an error or the word is being used in a different way or with a different meaning from what the translator was used to. However, using a dictionary to research the word can provide the answer.

There are three types of dictionaries useful to a translator. First, and most obviously, there are monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. Second, specialist dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual, can also be useful. Third, a translator may at times use thesauruses, word menus, rhyme dictionaries, and other word reference tools. In addition, a translator may also keep personal glossaries that may be project or field specific.

Although they are wonderful reference tools, dictionaries are often heavy and expensive. That is why in today's world, online and/or electronic dictionaries have rapidly supplanted a number of printed publications.

Each language combination will have its best electronic dictionary or dictionaries, and there are some polyglot online dictionaries as well. A quick search will turn up the most useful

resources here.

New terms are always just ahead of dictionaries, just as new computer viruses are always ahead of anti-virus software. Fields in the process of rapid growth and expansion, particularly technical fields, are especially prone to this phenomenon. Furthermore, translators are sometimes the first people to introduce a new technical word in a highly specialized professional field into their native language—the “early adopters,” so to speak. In these cases, it can be exceptionally useful for a translator to consult an expert in the field.

One basic caveat: Dictionary and glossary authors fall into two major categories: amateur word databases and highly professional research-based work. Amateur lexicons and dictionaries may contain a lot of fresh new words and terms as they take a shorter time to compose. Be careful: Always question their credibility and double check new or unusual meanings.

Whether online or in print, dictionaries published by big universities or research establishments are generally trustworthy—although every language has dictionaried that native speakers consider better than others. A reputable reference dictionary may cost more, but it is worth investing in books or software that will help you build self-confidence and a good reputation.

As you begin to work as a translation professional, you will probably find it useful to make your own glossaries. Computers and modern translation software will help you do this. You can also use the online glossaries based on shared experience that exist on many of the translation community websites and forums. Glossaries can be tricky because the same term often has completely different meanings in different fields of specialization and different contexts.

In a sense, talking about electronic dictionaries before discussing the computers and devices they can be read with is putting the cart before the horse. Let’s look at that horse, or rather at computers.

4.4 Computers

4.4.1 Computers—A Necessary Tool

A translator needs to have a computer in today's world. Just as typewriters were necessary for this occupation in the past, so too are computers today.

What is the best configuration?

You may want to have a laptop, tablet, or smartphone so you can work while traveling or commuting. This can be in addition to or as a replacement of a traditional desktop.

Invest in software that is best oriented to your needs. An office package is something you cannot do without, and currently that is still Microsoft Office, although there are open source and other office packages around. You will need a word processor and a spreadsheet plus perhaps other types of office software. Ask the online community of your peers for their advice, and if you work for an agency, they may have a required standard.

Other crucial software includes PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat, as well as an Internet browser.

4.5 Machine Translation

Machine translation (MT) was first invented in the middle of the twentieth century; the developers hoped to accomplish the ambitious task of replacing the costly role of human experts in translating texts from one natural language to another. For decades, the power of software engineering has helped us inch closer and closer to that goal, although computers have not yet been able to master the magic of words completely. Although still far from their goal, some MT tools have made great strides and have achieved some success. They are not yet good enough, however, for a client to accept an entire translation merely produced by MT without any human interaction.

What has been attained thus far in the field of machine translation should not be underestimated. Machine translations are quite impressive and often good enough to translate simple texts with a

basic structure and achieve a comprehensible result. But there is still a good deal of work to do before adequate quality is achieved. Indeed, a fast-growing niche market in the translation business—particularly, at the moment, for freelancers working for agencies from Asia—is editing or revising texts produced via machine translation.

4.6 CAT (Computer-Assisted/ Aided Translation) Software

Computer-assisted or computer-aided translation software provides support and facilitation of the translation process. This is a broad term encompassing a variety of tools of different levels of sophistication—from fairly simple to substantial, complicated systems. CAT software segments the information in a convenient way. This also includes MT Tools “Machine translation” software which is used to translate a vast amount of information at one time.

The purpose of CAT tools is to increase the efficiency and quality of the translation process. There is a wide variety of translation software available on the market. Some translation memory programs function as standalone environments, while others function as an add-on or macro to commercially available word-processing or other business software programs. Some CAT packages provide translation clients with the opportunity to track repetitions, thus enabling them to negotiate a lower price for the translations they commission. Such clients will often require that translation providers use the specific type of translation software that they are accustomed to.

CAT tools range from simple computer software to complicated translation suites and include the following:

- Spell checkers
- Grammar checkers
- Terminology managers, which allow translators to manage their own databases of terminology, thus ensuring consistency within large projects. There are three types of things that can help translators to manage terminology in their work:

- Professional expertise in the subject matter that is being translated
- Translation experience as it helps to widen one's knowledge in many fields
- Terminology management and translation memory software that allows a professional to build a glossary specific to each project. This allows for consistency within and across translations for a specific client.

There is a clear advantage to having good terminology management software for large projects that include repetitive phrases.

- Full-text search tools enabling the user to check previously translated texts
- Project management software, which allows translation project managers to distribute and allocate large translation projects to multiple translators (i.e., crowd-source them) and to monitor the progress of each unit
- Translation memory managers, which are databases of segmented texts in a source language and their translations in a target language. TM software captures translation as the work is performed so that the same sentence never needs to be translated twice. As a project is translated, each segment is accumulated in the translation memory. Whenever a text segment in the translation memory matches a new segment in the source document in progress, the translation memory manager suggests it as a solution. TM software is especially useful for texts that contain a good deal of repetition. It ensures translation consistency, quality, and customer satisfaction in these types of projects.
- Nearly automatic systems or so-called human-aided machine translation tools are similar to machine translation and yet allow the user to decide in ambiguous cases.

- Localization software tools allow a translator to deal with embedded coding, among many other issues.

CAT tools help you to accomplish the following:

- Manage translation segments
- Handle technical terms with the use of the glossary that you build
- Readily achieve a translation that treats terminology consistently
- Save time if there are repeated phrases or texts
- Appear more reliable in the eyes of many of your clients
- Attract some agencies as clients if you're a freelancer as certain agencies will only work with certain CAT tools

It is worth saying, however, that no computer tool can replace a translator's ability to analyze and use his or her imagination. CAT software can only be the crutch on which you lean; it helps you, but just like a crutch, it cannot walk if you do not do the work yourself. A CAT tool cannot add a bit of experience or talent to your work. If, however, you are talented and experienced, it can be of great help in saving time.

As of this writing, the most popular CAT tools are the following:

- The best-known package around is SDL Trados. More agencies use SDL Trados than any other program. Some translators swear by it; others swear at it. Few are neutral. (Note that SDL and Trados were once separate entities—but they're now joined at the hip.)
- Déjà Vu by Atril is considered very stable, and this is a very popular tool for repetitive texts especially.
- Star Transit is greatly liked by those who use it, although it's said to be complicated.
- Wordfast is easy to use and free for some usage.

- OmegaT is open source.
- Other CAT programs worth mentioning include CafeTran, CatsCradle, Fusion, Heartsome, MetaTaxis, Multitrans, MemoQ, Memsource and Swordfish.

There are other categories or types of CAT tools available to the techie or non-techie translator as well. For example, some companies take a different approach to translation software. Instead of selling a program license, they sell a monthly or annual subscription. Another mode is to make the software free, or free in its most basic implementation and/or in the cloud (i.e., via the Internet). These tools include, among others, the following:

- DeepL
- Across
- Similis
- Logiterm
- Wordbee
- Google Translator Toolkit
- XTM Cloud
- Wordfast Anywhere

Several of these are available in both freestanding and web versions. Other types of CAT tools worth mentioning include the following:

- 1) Alignment tools, which help align segments:
 - ABBY Alignment Software
 - YouAlign
 - Align Factory

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- Wordfast Plus Tools
- 2) Terminology management/extraction/concordance software. The best-known software programs in this arena are currently the following:
- Synchoterm
 - AntConc
 - Wordfast Plus Tools
- 3) Localization tools:

SDL Passolo

- Alchemy Catalyst
 - LingoBit Localizer
 - ENLASO Localization Tools
 - Logiterm
 - Lingotek
 - RCWin-Trans
 - Lokalise
 - Crowdin
 - PhraseApp
 - Transifex
- 4) Translation memory software

There are a wide variety of computer-aided translation tools featuring translation memory that are offered on the market. These can make a translator's life easier by managing the "logistics" of the translation process.

Choosing a tool is not an easy task as they all have their pros and cons. The choice depends on your potential clients and on your financial situation. The ability to build TM is a key function of most CAT tools, so it's only worth mentioning here that Wordfast currently offers its online translation memory, VLTM, free to users.

- 5) Software for difficult formats:
 - AutoCAD drawing files
 - TRANS (an add-on utility)
 - TranslateCAD
- 6) Project management for translators:
 - Translation Office 3000 version 3D

CAT software will not make you a better translator. It is human controlled and cannot work miracles. While it can make your life easier by automatically offering solutions as you are doing your work, it will not make your work faster or more consistent—unless you translate texts with a high level of repetition. Sometimes it may even play tricks on you if there is a very small difference in a sentence that seems to repeat. On the other hand, CAT tools' concordance and glossary functions are effective ways of keeping track of all sorts of information that is often client-specific or difficult to find via a search engine or in dictionaries.

Just like any other software or computer tool, CAT tools have supporters and opponents. Many translators find some CAT tools difficult to manage and problematic. Others find them extremely useful. There is no universal truth, at least where software is concerned. Therefore, a decision to invest time and money in specific CAT software should come after you weigh all positive and negative aspects, possible future projects and clients, their probable preferences, and peers' comments in online forums and blogs. Take advantage of what's available at no cost too. Some of the tools are

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free, and others have free trial versions, all of which can help with your decision process. In general, though, buying translation software can be a costly decision. Don't be swayed by others' needs; before you decide to invest, carefully analyze the pros and cons for your own usage. In some cases working for an agency, they will take on the expense for software. As a freelancer, clients may provide access to software. If both options are not viable, the cost can be included into the translation cost as mastering the software is part of the translation skill provided to the client.

4.7 What Affects Translation Speed?

Translation is a highly time-consuming job. It can often take longer to translate a page than it might have taken to write that same page of text. Translation speed depends on a number of factors:

- Text complexity, in terms of style, material, and level. There are times it can take as much as 15-20 minutes to translate a single sentence, although luckily that's the exception and not the rule. Sometimes you may need to ask someone more experienced or a professional in a specific field for help.
- Translator's experience. It is only natural that the longer you've been in the translation business, the more knowledge and skill you accumulate and, therefore, the shorter the time it takes you to translate a document.
- Text layout. If your source text is simple, without any intricate formatting or tables, it's easier to zoom through.
- Text format. If you receive your text in a word processing file, translating it goes more quickly than if you have to read a handwritten document or a faxed page or if you have to convert a text that's in a PDF or graphics file into a Word document. It is important to discuss format when negotiating rate for translation.
- Text legibility. A bad or illegible copy will slow you down.
- Typing skills. The faster a touch typist you are, the faster you'll generally be as a translator.
- Your physical and/or emotional condition. Sometimes you will

have a hard time focusing while translating. When this happens, your translation rate per minute declines. It helps if you try to improve your mood: Take a nap, take a short walk outdoors in the fresh air, listen to some music, or go work out. For some people, it even depends on the time of the day and on the weather. Some work faster in the morning, others in the evening. With most translators, their speed increases when there is sunshine coming through the window. Make sure you've taken care of your own needs: Get enough sleep, eat a good diet and regular meals, check the ergonomics of your workstation, etc.

- Whether or not you use CAT software. This can help you improve your translation speed, depending on the software and your ability to use it.
- When they start out at the beginning of their careers, translators normally take an hour to render around 200-250 words (roughly one typed page) if the source text is clear and simple. Experienced translators can easily double that and can even do more if they are under pressure. A word to the wise: Few translators can constantly work at their maximum pace under pressure without becoming exhausted—and even burning out. As a general rule of thumb, an experienced translator will typically produce 2000-5000 words a day.

4.8 Editing and Proofreading

Once you've translated a text, you're all done, right?

Wrong.

Translating a text from the source language to the target language is only the first part of the job. While it's the most important part, you still need to check your work and fine-tune it for quality and correctness.

In other words, once a translation is finished, it must be proofread. This involves checking for typos, or "surface errors," as some people call them. You must check for spelling, punctuation, grammar,

proper nouns, capitalization, acronyms, and word choice. You also need to make sure that the formatting is correct, the style and diction reflect that of the original, and the translation sounds “native” and not like a translation.

How should you proofread?

The first thing to do is check the spelling. Software is exceptionally useful here as it will help you find errors that you might fail to see. Nonetheless, never trust your spell checker completely, as it isn't even close to 100% accurate on several levels: It won't catch homonyms or a wrong word that's correctly spelled. It also won't be able to deal with any words that aren't in the software's word list.

Next check the grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and so forth. Use the grammar checker but follow its advice with a huge grain of salt.

Once you have checked the spelling and grammar using the software, print your translation and proofread it on paper. You will be surprised to see how many small errors you find. Even when working with a team, it is a good practice to proofread your translation and double check continuity. The most common surface errors can be grouped in the following ways:

Spelling: As good as your typing skills may be, spelling errors may still occur in the raw text. Even after you have used the spell checker, you will still probably find typos when you read the printed translation.

Punctuation: Here again, spell and/or grammar checkers may fail to detect punctuation errors. Look especially for double periods and commas, extra spaces, and so forth. A very tricky element of the translation process is the difference between punctuation rules in different languages. When you're focusing on building correct phrases and choosing the correct words, you may fail to focus on punctuation. As a result, you may, at times, just automatically transfer source language punctuation into your translation. It is a good idea to have a style book with punctuation and grammar rules always available on your computer or desk in order to look things up if you are not sure about the use of punctuation marks. For English language rules, one of the most commonly used grammar reference

guides is *The Chicago Manual of Style*. If you prefer to follow MLA or APA style (two of the best-known ones for English), there are a number of online resources available as well. Use the “find and replace” feature of your word processing software to look for repeated punctuation marks (commas, question marks, periods) as well as spaces before punctuation marks that are either missing if the target language uses them or present if a language omits them.

Do not choose the “replace all” option. Instead, take the necessary time to check each issue spot individually.

Verb agreement and tenses: Most languages are very much idiomatic in the way they use different systems for tenses. Failure to use correct verb tenses in the translated text may make your translation ambiguous or just plain wrong. When proofreading for verb tense errors, you should check all the verbs in your work to make sure that you haven’t changed tense unintentionally. In addition, be aware that some languages use passive constructions more than others.

Pronouns: Check your pronouns, making sure you’ve used the right one, in the right gender. Also make sure that you’ve followed the rules for relative clauses and relative pronouns as well as gender issues, particularly when going from or to a language that attributes gender to all words.

Other grammatical errors, sentence fragments, and wrong words: Make sure that you’ve followed the rules for antecedents, clauses, and fragments. In addition, be aware that some languages are considerably more flowery or indirect than others; if your translation is too faithful to the original sentence structure, it will read like a translation.

Check all names, figures, and facts as well as acronyms: It helps if you read the translated text out loud. Your ear will detect errors that your eyes have failed to see. It’s also a good idea to use your dictionary to check the meaning of words you’re not sure about and also to check the use of prepositions and irregular verb forms if you’re not at all sure. Sometimes it can also help to read your text out loud and backward at the same time. This may sound awkward—but that’s the point. By reading backward you will not naturally skip over words by trying to edit too quickly.

Once you've finished proofreading, the next step is editing or, as some people call it, revising. You should edit for terminology, clarity, style, and readability in the new language.

CAT tools can be a big help in ensuring consistency in terminology. Particularly in technical work, you want to make sure that the same word is translated the same way each time. You should also revise anything in which the meaning is unclear; often the sentence will have to change for this.

In non-technical translation, the terminology should be revised for stylistic consistency and word choice. You'll want to make sure that the style, diction, and overall vocabulary level match the source text. Whether you like the source text or not, it's not your job to change that text but rather to make the translation as close to the original as is feasible. Maintaining the style and meaning of the source text while making a translation native sounding and well written is a demanding task. While revising, you should focus on the target language only. When you find something in the style that irritates you, check it with the source text.

Another focus of translation editing is word choice. You may have used the same word repeatedly in your translation. If that is not the case in the source text, do your best to replace those repeated words with synonyms.

Just as with proofreading, editing often works much better when one uses a printed text as opposed to one on a screen. There are many things you will fail to see if you only read the text on the computer.

After you've edited and revised, proofread again as you may have introduced typos and other grammatical errors. Then read through the text one last time, making sure that everything reads absolutely as it should.

Finally, one other way to proofread and check a translation involves **back translation**. This is much like what one does when checking an arithmetic problem: go backward from the solution to the problem. In the case of back translation, translate from the target to the source language and then compare the original with the back-translated text. Obviously, they won't be exactly the same, but they should be close, and the meaning *should* be the same.

Even if you are fed up with a translation and bored to tears, don't skip the proofreading/editing/revising phase or cut it short. The quality of your work will suffer, and a translator's reputation can be ruined by bad quality (or late) work.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of "Three Types of Proofreading for Translators."

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video: <http://translatorcertification.com/Video3/>

4.9 Advanced Topics in Translation

4.9.1 Tricky Issues

Some situations and types of translation are especially tricky, requiring special handling. These advanced tricky issues include:

- Jokes and puns. Humor can be especially challenging across languages and requires a deft touch. Wordplay is one of the trickiest things to translate.
- Curse words. Finding the exact equivalent that matches the level of offensiveness, tone, and feeling of the original can be difficult. In certain cultures, and situations, a curse may be too strong for the target language and context—and yet a translator must also remain honest to the original without resorting to Victorianisms or bowdlerizing the text.
- Slang and colloquial expressions, as well as non-standard language, which includes spoken language (not necessarily slang), non-native diction, regional expressions and dialects, and so forth. Getting the right flavor for these can be

challenging and requires a very deep knowledge of both the source and target languages.

- Culturally dependent idioms. Some things just don't translate from one culture to another, and this goes far beyond idioms. A good translator finds the best equivalent.
- Language that reflects gender or class usage. When to make sure these differences are retained in the target language—and how to do so—is sometimes clear and sometimes not easy at all.
- Rhyme, meter, and scansion. These are elements of poetic translation, which is a specialty field. But rhyme—internal and otherwise—can crop up in all sorts of non-poetic contexts. In a sense, rhyme is another sort of wordplay, which we've already noted is one of the hardest things to translate.

4.9.2 Cultural Awareness

Languages are like living beings that exist and develop in their own environments. They reflect their own milieu and are at the same time part of a larger cultural picture. Unthinkingly transferring the context of the source language into the target language without adequately considering the target cultural environment may lead to ridiculous blunders and unpredictable consequences.

Cross-cultural communication has become a matter of substantial importance in our world of global networking. Failure to convey a message in a way that is appropriate to the target environment may easily have an adverse effect and is, in essence, a bad translation. Global businesses pay substantial amounts of money to people who are familiar with their target market so as to ensure that cultural differences have not been disregarded, as that could jeopardize their success. Languages correlate to cultural norms, values, traditions, non-verbal communication, etiquette, religion, and so forth. Hence retaining one's familiarity and awareness of these cultural issues in both the target and source languages and their cultures is critical for quality professional translation.

One very basic example is the word *ciao*, which means both hello and goodbye in Italian. But in many countries, *ciao* is used in colloquial speech only for goodbye. Therefore, if you say *ciao* in one of those countries when you meet an acquaintance, it's wrong. Translators with little world knowledge might well mistranslate this expression, making far more mistakes than those translators with deep multicultural awareness. Basic skill set and background studies will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

4.9.3 Cultural References

As noted above, a translator should have a high level of awareness of the cultural references in the text he or she works on and the skill to transfer these references into the target language. There are a variety of approaches to transferring cultural references.

- When a cultural phenomenon has no equivalent in the target language, an explanation may be necessary. Depending on the translator's creativity, such an addition can either be integrated into the translated text with brackets to indicate an addition or, preferably, added as a translator's footnote or endnote. In either case, it is crucial that the reader easily perceives that this is not part of the original text.
- The word or phrase can be retained from the source language with no changes in the translation at all, providing that the context makes the meaning clear of course.
- Cultural transplantation can be used (i.e., the reference can be fully adapted to the target culture or replaced by a reference more meaningful to the target audience). One of the best examples of this is the translation of proverbs, sayings, and aphorisms.
- The cultural referent can be borrowed and phonetically modified in the target language.
- Cultural referents may be added to the target language to make the text better adapted to target readers. A simple example of this is when the word "please" gets added to the English translation of signs giving instructions in public places in some countries.

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Awareness of cultural differences comes with experience. However, it takes much longer to achieve than linguistic competence does. If a translator or linguist is unable to spend enough time in the culture where his or her target language is spoken, he or she must make a special effort and invest some time and money in developing and training him- or herself to a professional level of cross-cultural awareness.

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Review Questions

1. Define source and target languages.
2. What are transcription and transliteration, and how are they similar and different?
3. What is localization? Name three types of projects that might benefit from localization.
4. What is back translation, and how is it most often used?
5. Define literal and direct translation as well as adaptation. Name one situation where the same client will need both.
6. Name at least ten things to do for good proofreading.
7. Identify the difference between CAT and MT; define them both. What are five types of translation situations in which CAT tools can be especially helpful?
8. Name six tricky issues in translation.
9. Identify five factors that can affect a translator's speed.
10. What does gist mean in the context of translating?

Answers

1. The source language and source document are the originals that a translator works FROM. The target language is the language a translator works INTO, and the target document is the result.
2. Transcription involves transferring the spoken word into writing, no matter the original source. Transliteration involves taking the characters and letters from one language and representing them with letters from another language or equivalent and agreed-upon symbols that someone who speaks the second language can understand. Both transcription and transliteration involve transferring something from one medium to another: either spoken to written words or one set of written symbols to another.
3. According to LISA, localization involves “taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold.” Websites, advertising campaigns, product branding, video games, and software are a few examples of projects that benefit from localization.
4. Back translation involves re-translating a document back from the target language into its source language. It is most often used as a method of proofreading and is especially beneficial as a quality control mechanism for agencies and corporations that want to verify the overall level of multilingual document translation.
5. Literal translation and direct translation both mean word-for-word translation. Adaptation means a free or loose translation, one that adapts the translated words to the overall meaning. Who might need both? A singer working outside their own language or a musician accompanying a singer. Ideally, both need to know the overall, literary meaning of a text as well as the meaning of every single word.
6. Check spelling, verb tense agreement within a sentence and within a section or paragraph, verb-subject agreement, punctuation, capitalization, pronoun agreement, antecedent/consequent errors, fragments and run- on sentences, other grammar issues, proper

nouns, and numbers/figures, and look for homonyms. Use the “find and replace” feature of your word processing software to look for repeated/double punctuation marks (commas, question marks, periods) and spaces before punctuation marks that are either missing if the target language uses them or present if a language omits them. Then read for content, style, and idiomatic usage. How do you proofread? Use your spell checker, use your grammar checker, read aloud, read a printed version, back translate, and compare the target to the source.

7. MT is machine translation without human intervention. CAT means computer-aided -assisted translation with a human being acting as the interface between the software and the final project. Texts with a good deal of repetition benefit from CAT tools, for example, instruction manuals, human resource documents, organizational charts, quality control standards, software programs, engineering specifications, and legal contract boilerplate, to name only a few.

8. The list includes slang, jokes, puns, wordplay, poetry, cursing, culturally dependent idioms, proverbs, or gender- or class-language structure that doesn't exist in both languages.

9. Text complexity, topic, layout, format, and legibility; translator's experience; typing skills; and physical condition; and mental condition

10. A summary or “gist” of the document and its meaning

Chapter 5: Learning to Be a Translator: What & Where to Study

5.1 So, You Want to Be a Translator: Now What?

People who speak one or more foreign languages frequently ask that question—and it's a tricky one as understanding and speaking more than one language is only one of the basic requirements for becoming a translation professional.

How do you know if you have the talent to be a translator or if you'll even like doing it? In one sense, the question is easier to answer empirically and in retrospect: If you think you've got what it takes, become a translator. If you enjoy what you're doing and find that those who hire you like your work, then probably you are a gifted translation professional.

But how do you get from here to there? Let's review the basic skills a translator needs to have.

5.2 Basic Skills a Translator Must Have

You know a foreign language or two very well and are interested in becoming a translator. Do you have the other basics? Here are some questions you should ask yourself:

- How well do I know my native language?
- Do I enjoy writing?
- Am I at least proficient at both?
- How long can I spend reading and writing?

A sober evaluation of your honest answers to these questions may give you a key to deciding whether or not to embark on the journey to becoming a translation professional. If you can't answer yes to these questions and still want to pursue translation

as a career, you'd best get some additional basic education before continuing.

Even if you need that basic education, though, desire can trump many weaknesses if you study and work hard. So, if you yearn to enter this profession, try to analyze what you still need to acquire—and then go for it. Get the targeted training you lack, and bring your basic chops up to par.

How?

- Read as much as you can—and not just the newspaper or the Internet. Read good writing. Reading masterpieces of literature can help you not only improve your writing and linguistic abilities, but your mind will begin to absorb the beauty of well-written expression as well.
- Edit and revise texts—all kinds of texts, anywhere. While reading a newspaper article, try to reword it. This is a very good exercise as it keeps your mind responsive and tuned up.
- Listen carefully, and while listening, try to translate everything in your mind. This is another useful exercise.

Let's say that you already were a good reader, listener, and writer, or if you weren't, you've now beefed up your skills in those basic areas. Where do you go next on your journey to become a translation professional? What would a good plan include?

Education.

Getting some training in your desired profession should be the next part of your plan. As you study, the areas in translation that come easier to you may give you hints as to where your natural strengths in the field lie.

5.3 Is a Translation Degree Necessary?

Education is one of the primary ways to gain the skills to become a translator. Does that mean that an aspiring translation professional needs a degree in the field?

No.

While there are certain jobs and specific clients that will require such a degree, there are a number of options to choose for your education, and they are not all mutually exclusive either.

- High school courses in foreign languages may be a good place to start building your knowledge base and translator skill set. Good translation requires life language experience supported by systematic work and a never-ending learning process.
- In college, you can major in linguistics, which will give you a good theoretical background. It will also provide you with ample reading material to enrich your vocabulary and useful knowledge in the history, grammar, and style of languages.
- Or you can take college/university classes in translation. Here you'll begin learning translation techniques and work systematically on building your approach to translation. The advantages here are multiple: You'll remain completely focused on learning, studying and working in groups helps you learn from other people's mistakes, and being in a community of peers builds a feeling of support. The disadvantages: a time- and money consuming enterprise; in most cases, you have to temporarily move to a distant place to take university courses or pursue your degree; and how quickly you can advance will be limited by the time frame of the courses or college degree requirements.
- Online courses and training programs such as the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program (<https://translatorcertification.com/>) are a very attractive possibility. Indeed, you can learn useful techniques and approaches, do homework and have it checked, and communicate with virtual peers just as easily online as in person at a traditional brick-and-mortar institution of education. For example, with traditional training courses, customer service and support are generally only available during work hours. With online programs, you can get your answers immediately via online forums, FAQs, etc., regardless of the time of day or night.

In addition, with an online training program, you set your own schedule, so you can decide on the length of each training session, just the way it suits you best: You can skip segments you already know about and focus on what you need to learn; online courses based on video and audio resources are adaptive and creative; and, finally, online training saves valuable time and money as you do not have to go anywhere, waste time in traffic, or buy fuel for your car or even nice new clothes for class. Would you rather attend class in your shorts or pajamas? Why not? With online training, you can go to class comfortably from your own home—or wherever you prefer. A park or a mountain—anywhere you can access the online material. In sum, there are myriads of advantages: Online training is highly affordable, incredibly flexible in terms of time and timing, and offered at a convenient location. The disadvantages: very, very few.

- Finally, there are a few low-residency programs that try to offer the best of both worlds (i.e., primarily online learning with occasional in-person classes). But the disadvantage is that you still periodically have to go far away at a specific time to get the degree or certification.

Let's first look at how to decide what kind of school and/or certificate program to pursue and then focus on where one might follow these options in a little more detail.

5.4 Translation Certification Programs

A translator certification program confirms a translation professional's experience and/or knowledge. A number of translation certificate programs are offered by various organizations.

Why might such a program be useful—and to whom? While many translators believe that they are experienced enough and there isn't anything much they will learn from a translation certification program; this is far from being the case. In addition, a certification gives neutral, external verification of a translation professional's qualifications. For example, imagine that you are a business owner who needs something translated. You have two or three or even four possible providers, all of whom have the same level of experience

and offer roughly the same price. What if one of them is certified? Whom will you choose?

The certified translation professional.

Why? Because the certification shows that the translator:

- Has a systematic knowledge of the field.
- Upholds the various different aspects of translation quality.
- Is competent, with skills, knowledge, and abilities that have been verified by experts in the field.
- Continues to strive for improvement.

Even if you are an experienced translator, if you decide to complete a certification course, you will still be amazed to find out how much useful information you will learn about best practices, marketing skills, common work practices, industry tools, professional ethics, and so forth.

And inexperienced, beginning translators should not be afraid that certification programs are only for experienced professionals, as that is simply not the case; indeed, it is always better to begin a career with an adequate grounding and thorough knowledge of the field one has chosen to enter. So, for a novice translator, a certificate helps in two ways: The certificate can help with new client acquisition and/or finding a first job in the field, plus it gives the newbie much-needed information.

You can choose to attend in-person training courses organized by colleges, universities, associations, and other organizations. Along with the certification, the benefit of such programs is that you have the possibility of communicating face to face with your peers. Likewise, you can decide to start an online training program like Global Translation Institute's CTP program (Certified Translation Professional, see below) for example. If you choose to get your certification via an online program, you lose the possibility of having face-to-face communication with your peers. On the other hand, you gain some very attractive benefits.

Whatever approach you decide on, you will be taking an important step forward as you will be investing in your future career improvement.

5.5 Global Translation Institute (GTI)

The Global Translation Institute (GTI) is a fast-growing international professional networking association. GTI was founded to create an international forum of translation professionals who openly help and offer resources to others in order to advance their careers and business interests.

GTI sponsors the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program. This is the only online training and certification program available in the industry (<https://translatorcertification.com/>). The institute currently provides many career and business development benefits to those members who have completed the CTP program. For example, all CTP program alumni gain free exclusive access to a global database of over 500 translation agencies; they also have the right to publish their own original content at BecomeATranslator.com.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of “CTP Program Review.”

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video: <http://TranslationCertification.com/Video4>

5.6 Institutions with Certification or Degree Training Programs

Many colleges and universities offer post-graduate translation or interpreting courses that lead to a recognized qualification or certification (Master of Arts, Ph.D., diploma, certificate, etc.). These are either linguistics-oriented courses, which try to build general

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translation skills, or courses focused on translating in specialized fields.

While completing a translation course will not automatically turn you into a professional translator, it will, however, equip you with relevant knowledge and skills that you can build on.

There are ample resources on the Internet concerning translation and interpretation courses. Below is a partial list of training programs for translators that lead to a degree or certification. In addition, there are many continuing education courses and training resources available.

Note: Some—but not all—of the information below, particularly concerning international programs, the Master Portal.³

United States

Adelphi University

(Long Island, NY) Offers an online English/Spanish Translation Certificate program

Bellevue College

(Bellevue, WA) BC offers a comprehensive evening certificate program in translation and interpreting in partnership with the Translation & Interpretation Institute. Weekend workshops in translation, localization, and interpreting are also available.

Boston University

(Boston, MA) Offers weekend classes in a certificate program for legal, medical, and community interpreting for Cantonese, Mandarin, Portuguese, or Spanish. BU also has an Interpreting Internship Program for their graduates.

Center for Interpretation and Translation Studies (CITS)

University of Hawaii at Manoa

³<https://www.mastersportal.com/search/#q=ci-82|di-310|lv-master>

Center for Translation Studies

University of Texas at Dallas

City College of San Francisco

Has partnered with Kaiser Permanente for a Health Care Interpreters Certificate program

College of Charleston

(Charleston, SC) Offers graduate certificates in medical interpreting and legal interpreting. Students can take a court certification exam as their Master's examination for the program.

Cross Cultural Health Care Program

(Seattle, WA) CCHCP offers a 40-hour basic training course in medical interpreting.

Georgia State University

The Department of Modern and Classical Languages offers a Certificate in Translation in French, German, and Spanish and in Interpretation (Spanish only, both simultaneous and consecutive).

The Institute for Health Professionals at Portland

Community College (Portland, OR) Offers numerous medical-interpreting courses, including Spanish Medical Terminology, Healthcare Interpreting Practicum, and English Medical Terminology.

Kent State University

(Kent, OH) The university's Institute for Applied Linguistics offers a two-year Master of Arts degree in translation, focusing on French/German/Spanish to English translation, with a few extra options.

Monterey Institute of International Studies

(Monterey, CA) MA programs in translation and interpretation, conference interpretation, and translation; also offers certificate programs

New York University

(New York, NY) The NYU School of Continuing and Professional

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Studies offers a Certificate in Translation in four areas: Court Interpreting Spanish/English, Simultaneous Interpreting French/English, Medical Interpreting. Translation in [one of about a half dozen language pairs] or General Translation.

Puget Sound Skills Center

(Burien, WA) The Puget Sound Skills Center (PSSC) teaches professional interpreting skills and ethics to heritage language high school students and offers career exploration opportunities for bilingual students interested in using their languages in the future.

San Francisco State University

(San Francisco, CA) The College of Extended Learning offers a Spanish/English Legal/Court Interpretation Certificate.

The School of World Studies at Virginia Commonwealth

University (Richmond, VA) Offers an undergraduate certificate in Spanish/English translation and interpretation

Seattle Central Community College

(Seattle, WA) Courses offered on interpreter training for Sign Language

Southern California School of Interpretation

(Santa Fe Springs, CA) Offers interpretation and continuing education courses in medical, administrative hearing, telephone, federal, and court programs

Translation and Interpretation Institute

(Bellevue, WA) Offers a variety of practical courses in translation, interpretation, business ethics and practices, and technology for translation and interpretation and also offers a comprehensive certificate program in both translation and interpretation in several language pairs

Translation Research Group

(Provo, UT) Brigham Young University

University of Arizona's National Center for Interpretation

A research and public service unit that works with all aspects of language services along their theoretical, practical, and

pedagogical dimensions

University of Chicago's Graham School of General Studies

Offers an online Certificate in Translation Studies in about half a dozen language pairs

University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Offers a certificate in Spanish<-> English translation

A Few Other Certification and Testing Programs in the U.S.

The State of Washington offers a language testing and certification program in a number of language pairs for its health and social workers (www.dshs.wa.gov).

The State of California's Personnel Board has a testing program for oral bilingual fluency in a number of languages (www.spb.ca.gov).

For ASL (American Sign Language) and interpreting in various venues for the deaf and hard of hearing, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (www.RID.org) has a certification testing program for this field.

National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (www.NAJIT.org)

Federal Courts (<https://www.uscourts.gov/services-forms/federal-court-interpreters/federal-court-interpreter-certification-examination>)

National Center for State Courts (www.ncsc.org)

The Court Interpreters Program (CIP) through the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) in the California Courts (<http://www.courts.ca.gov/programs-interpreters.htm>)

The Texas Judicial Branch has a Licensed Court Interpreters Exam. (<https://www.txcourts.gov/jbcc/licensed-court-interpreters/exams/>)

The Oregon Judicial Department has a Court Interpreter Services
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(CIS) and Testing Program

<https://www.courts.oregon.gov/programs/interpreters/want-to-be/Pages/default.aspx>.

Both the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) (<http://www.healthcareinterpretercertification.org/>) and the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (www.ncihc.org) have been working on establishing training standards and developing a certification process.

You can also find a partial list of state court certification information at www.hg.org.

Finally, Lexicoool online has a large list of academic translation degree or certificate programs in the U.S. (<http://www.lexicoool.com>).

Canada

Court and Health Care Interpreting Programs

Vancouver Community College in British Columbia offers five certificate programs in interpreting—Court Interpreting, Health Care and Community Services Interpreting, Community Interpreting (web-based), Para-legal and Conference interpretation—in addition to professional development courses for translators and interpreters. (<https://www.vansit.com/series>)

School of Interpretation and Translation

University of Ottawa
(<https://arts.uottawa.ca/translation/programs>)

University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies

Offers a long- distance program that leads to a certificate in translation in roughly half a dozen language pairs
(<https://learn.utoronto.ca/programs-courses/languages-and-translation>)

Central and South America

Escuela Profesional de Traducción e Interpretación (EPTI)

Guatemala, <https://epti-translation.com/>

Europe

Conférence internationale permanente d'instituts universitaires de traducteurs et interprètes (CIUTI)

A listing of languages offered at member institutions in Europe
<https://www.ciuti.org/members/>

Institut für Übersetzer- und Dolmetscherausbildung

Graz, Austria

Institut für Übersetzer- und Dolmetscherausbildung

Institute of Translation and Interpretation at the University of Innsbruck, Austria

Institut supérieur de traducteurs et interprètes (ISTI)

Brussels, Belgium

Ecole d'Interprètes Internationaux

Part of the Haute Ecole du Hainaut in Belgium

Savonlinna School of Translation Studies

Finland

Department of Translation Studies

University of Tampere, Finland

Translation courses at the British Institute in Paris

University of London; Paris, France

Ecole Supérieure d'Interprètes et de Traducteurs (ESIT)

(Paris, France) Université de Paris 3 (Sorbonne Nouvelle)

Institut Supérieur d'Interprétation et de Traduction (ISIT)

(Paris, France) A four-year theory-intensive program with an emphasis on financial terminology

Neophilologische Fakultät (Modern Philology)

(Heidelberg, Germany) Institut für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen, Ruprecht- Karls-Universität

FASK-Germersheim

Universität Mainz, Germany

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Studiengang Technikübersetzen

Flensburg, Germany

Studiengang Übersetzen und Dolmetschen

Köln, Germany

Diplomstudiengang Internationale Fachkommunikation

Universität Hildesheim, Germany

Fachbereich Fachkommunikation

Fachhochschule Magdeburg, Germany

School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies

Dublin City University, Ireland

Scuola Superiore di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori (SSLIMIT)

Bologna/Forlì, Italy

Università degli studi di Parma, Dipartimento di Lingue e Letterature Straniere

Parma, Italy

Online University Master's Program in Technical and Scientific Translation from English, French, and German into Italian

The Universities of Bari, Genoa, and Pisa (IT) in cooperation with ICoN (Consortium Italian Culture on the Net)

Traducción e Interpretación - UAX

Universidad Alfonso X el Sabio, Madrid, Spain

Instituto Español Murallas de Ávila

(Ávila, Spain) A small, commercial institute with an advanced Spanish course focused on translation

Instituto Universitario de Lenguas Modernas y Traductores

Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain

UAB Facultat de Traducció i d'Interpretació Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

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Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo

Madrid, Spain

Ecole de traduction et d'interprétation

Université de Genève, Switzerland

Department of Modern Languages

University of Bradford, UK

Department of Language Engineering

University of Science and Technology in Manchester, UK

Department of Linguistic and International Studies

University of Surrey, UK

Department of European Studies and Modern Language

University of Bath, UK, offers an MA/diploma in translating.

University of Leeds

(Leeds, UK) School of Modern Languages, MA in Applied Translation Studies

Africa École

Supérieure Roi Fahd de Traduction

Tangier, Morocco

University of South Africa

(Pretoria, South Africa) The Department of Linguistics offers distance learning courses in translation.

Australi

a Translation and Linguistics

Courses

University of Western Sydney Macarthur, Australia

Deakin University

(Melbourne, Australia) Deakin has a National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia (NLLIA) Center for Research and

Development of Interpreting and Translating (CRDIT).

University of Queensland

(Brisbane, Australia) Offers an MA in Japanese interpreting and translation

5.7 A Few Other Non-Certificate Training Resources

[Ascebo](#) offers for-sale (i.e., commercial) translator and interpreter training material only.

[www.proz.com](#) is a translators' network and website that has a wealth of free and for-pay training and career resources available, including Wiki articles on a number of topics of interest; webinars; on-demand, online courses; and scheduled courses—both online and location specific.

[www.translatorstraining.com](#) is an e-learning platform for CAT tools put together by Jost Zetzsche, an expert on translation software. The website offers both for-pay and free training videos.

<http://transref.org> (The Translation Reference Center) has a few lists of CAT training resources.

5.8 The Next Step: Professional Training

What might be a good idea to study or learn next? Let's assume you've acquired ample proficiency in a foreign language, are a decent writer in your own native language, and have whatever certification or translation degree you want for the moment.

Getting a professional background in a completely different field will actually be a big advantage. For example, if you are a linguist or are fluent in a foreign language and have a degree in law, medicine, mining, construction, forestry, etc., you are very likely to be a much-valued employee for a translation agency or other corporation.

5.9 Internships: Before, During, and After Your Degree or Certificate

5.9.1 Bridging the Experience Gap with On-the-Job Training

Many high school and college graduates face a serious dilemma: They are enthusiastic and full of energy in their desire to work. Still, there is virtually no way for them to have enough adequate experience to make them attractive to potential employers. Internships can help young and/or new professionals bridge the experience gap.

Many organizations offer internships as interns are an excellent labor resource: They are hardworking and intelligent employees and, due to their lack of experience, also lack the fixed practices and expectations of experienced staff. And they are willing to work for very little pay. An internship is also a way for a company to train its future workforce.

5.9.2 Why You Should Consider an Internship

Why should you consider an internship? The reasons are myriad:

- An internship helps you become informed about the job in detail, thus giving you the opportunity to decide if translation is what you really want to do for a career—and what aspect of the field might suit you best.
- You receive training in the context of a bona fide working environment, thus learning little tricks and secrets that you can learn in no other way.
- You start building your resume.
- You can learn from experienced colleagues and adopt some of their successful approaches.
- You make connections and begin your professional network.
- Depending on where you do your internship, you may even begin to acquire a specialization. For example, you might consider your interests and hobbies first and then look for a translation traineeship in the relevant industry.
- If you intern at a large international organization such as the UN or UNESCO, for example, you will have an excellent

possibility to see that organization from within, learn its ways,

- and think about whether you'd be interested in working for that organization or a comparable one in the future.
- You might get paid while you build experience and learn.
- Even if the internship is not paid, remember that many companies and organizations willingly invest in training and supporting interns who are doing a good job and that you may well even be offered a position later on in that company when you graduate. Whether your internship is paid or not, at the end of the day, you will receive some valuable training without having to pay a cent for it.

5.9.3 Where You Might Want to Try to Intern

Any internship that is vaguely related to your career goal is worth pursuing, even if it's an unpaid internship—as they generally are. But if you have a choice between internships, put some thought into what kind of experience you'd like to gain or company you'd like to work with:

- A big translation agency
- A small boutique firm
- A company that has a translation department (and in what field—do you have a bit of a specialty already?) that has a translation department
- A hospital (or legal firm or the federal courts) that hires translation professionals
- As a translator or an interpreter—and if so, what kind (simultaneous, etc.)?
- And more, as there are so many options...

5.9.4 How to Find an Internship, Part I

Your school is an excellent resource. Check with your college or university to see if they have an internship placement program for

students through their career center, especially if you're getting your degree in translation or in a foreign language. This is the most common and most successful method of all by far. Don't forget to update your profile at LinkedIn at the same time.

See if your school's career center has a list of current or past job listings with local translation companies or agencies. Then call or visit to see if those companies might be interested in an intern. Even if they've never had one before, friendly politeness might be persuasive.

Likewise, your college or university's alumni association often will have a program where alumni offer internships to selected students. One of my alma maters sends out an annual notice asking for alumni who are interested in signing up.

Ask your favorite professors if they have any contacts, they'd be willing to share or if they'd be willing to write you a letter of introduction. Perhaps they'd be willing to let you use their name as a reference. Or—and here is where you might hit the jackpot—perhaps they might be willing to call or email a professional colleague for you!

Besides your school contacts and career center, your personal or family connections can be of help as well. You may have developed other connections; if so, use them tactfully—but do consider using them.

Look in the phone book or an online phone book for translation agencies or companies in your town. Do some research and visit the ones that seem interesting—and safe, of course.

Check with the regional branch of the national and international translation associations.

Are you interested in literary or academic translation? Is there a university, academic, or bilingual/multilingual press in town? Call, e-mail or visit.

Or are you interested in legal translation? Look for bilingual law firms, city hall, state and federal websites local, state, and federal courts.

What about medical interpretation? Check out your local hospital.

They may have liability issues that preclude you're doing anything beyond carrying paperwork and shadowing, but you'll still learn a good deal and develop your professional network.

Are you perhaps interested in politics? Do you live in your state capital? Go to the state website to see what possibilities might be there for translators and interpreters. (Ballots come in multilingual editions for example).

Be creative and open your eyes to the immense possibilities around you. Consider, for example, NGOs and nonprofit organizations. According to the United Nations Programme for Youth (<https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/>), the United Nations does not hire interns. However, there is a specific department, the UN Headquarters Internship Programme, which does take interns from time to time through the individual offices. The website has a list that internship-seekers can investigate (<https://careers.un.org/lbw/home.aspx?viewtype=IP&lang=en-US>). Another possibility is UNESCO (www.unesco.org). Finally, look for other non-profit organizations and NGOs, such as ICVolunteers (<http://www.icvolunteers.org/jobs>).

You may luck out and get an internship right off the bat from your school's career center. But if not, you'll be cold calling or, at best, warm calling. It's not fun, and you have to be prepared for rejection. Be polite and develop a thick skin for rejection. Even when someone turns you down, ask if there's another company, agency, or avenue they would suggest you pursue.

Thank everyone at every stage of the search. Be polite, and politely persist. Always ask if you may leave a copy of your resume and do so if allowed. Even if the firm has no immediate interest or need, it's amazing how often an opportunity may crop up. (Yes, it may wind up in the bin of the circular file, i.e., shredded and recycled, but you never know).

Follow up on everything; don't drop the ball. If anyone says to call back or get back in touch in a few weeks or months, do so—even if only to say that you've found an internship elsewhere, should that be the case. You never know when a sympathetic connection will help you in the future. And if a potential contact isn't sure if they'll need someone, ask when you can check back—and then do so. Again,

always follow up all leads.

5.9.5 How to Get an Internship, Part II

To get a translation internship, you will usually need to search the available position(s), see what the requirements are, fill out an application, and compose a cover letter and resume tailored to each employer and each position, making sure to mention things that will be attractive to your prospective employer, such as the following:

- Why you are interested in translation
- Your goals in the field
- Your writing and reading skills in the source and target languages
- Your enthusiasm, flexibility, and ability to learn
- Why you are interested in that particular company or organization (just because they have an internship is not a good enough reason)
- Why you'd make a good intern and/or why you are a good fit for the company

Depending on the company's stated preference—find out if the application does not say—mail or email your materials to the specific person responsible for recruitment in the Human Resources department, or whoever the appropriate person may be. If you are approved as an intern, remember to learn about the things the company offers, such as working conditions, working hours, benefits, and so on.

Be professional in your materials. Make sure that your cover letter is clear, with concise, to-the-point statements, and free of spelling or grammar mistakes. It is best if you have someone proofread your resume for you.

Two sets of eyes are better than one. Make sure your resume has your name and contact information prominently displayed.

With any luck, the perfect internship will lead to a wonderful first job. But in a worst-case scenario, you will have begun to fill in your resume and learned about your chosen profession. Not bad for a

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summer's work, and most internships are, indeed, summer jobs.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of *“How to Get a Translation Internship.”*

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video:

<http://translatorcertification.com/Video5/>

Review Questions

1. True or False: Ideally, no matter how skilled a translator you may be, you should have a degree in translation to be an excellent, respected translation professional.
2. What educational paths are beneficial for a translator?
3. What does a certification show?
4. What does the acronym GTI stand for?
5. Name at least 10 institutions in the United States that have graduate, undergraduate, or certification programs in translation and/or interpretation.
6. Name at least 4 states that have specialized translating testing or certificates.
7. List 10 universities and/or training programs in Europe and Africa.
8. List 10 colleges or universities in Canada, Australia, and the UK that have translation degrees or programs.
9. List 5 online associations that have translation training available.
10. True or False: Internships are rarely worth the time and energy spent pursuing one.

Answers

1. False
2. In high school, college, and graduate school, take courses in languages, linguistics, and translation. 2) Online certification programs 3) Online degree programs 4) Low-residency certification and degree programs 5) Online webinars, blogs, and training, both paid and free.
3. It shows that a translation professional: 1) has systematic knowledge of the field, 2) has specific training in the field, 3) cares about continuing to learn his or her craft, and 4) upholds the different aspects of translation quality.
4. Global Translation Institute. Global Translation Institute (GTI) is a fast-growing international professional networking association. Its CTP (Certified Translation Professional) program is the only online certification and training program available in the industry.
5. See the list on pp. 82-85.
6. California, Oregon, Texas, Washington
7. See the list on pp. 87-89.
8. Vancouver Community College, University of Ottawa, University of Toronto, University of Surrey, University of Bradford, University of Leeds, University of Bath, Deakin University, University of Queensland, University of West Sydney, and University of Science and Technology in Manchester
9. Global Translation Institute (GTI)
<https://translatorcertification.com/> Proz.com, Transref.org, ATAnet.org, and Acebo.
10. False, a good internship is an opportunity worth its weight in gold—if it had any weight at all, of course.

Chapter 6: Finding Work as a Translator

6.1 What Type of Employment Is Right for You?

Translation professionals have many opportunities for employment. These can be broken into three basic types: salaried (in-house), freelance, and agencies.

In-house translators normally work in companies or organizations and have their workspace at their place of employment. They must work the hours that their employer specifies, and they may have to follow a dress code. Because they work in a specific field and professional work environment, these translators easily learn terminology as they can get detailed information about all work-related processes. In addition, some employers will supply a CAT tool and training, which is a big advantage as these translators will be able to learn how to use it without having to pay for that training. The job usually comes with benefits (insurance, vacation, retirement accounts, employee discounts, etc.).

Freelance translators are a different story. As a freelancer, you have all the freedom that a salaried translator may wish to have, but no one pays you a salary, which means that you can only earn as much as you manage to contract to do. Therefore, you have to make sure you are able to attract as many projects as necessary to earn a living at the level you want.

One of the greatest advantages of working from home as a freelancer is that your time is flexible. You can work as many hours as you want, but no one expects you to work from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.—unless you do. You can work in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening, or at night—anytime you feel most efficient or that suits your clients or your family life. You can take on different commitments and plan your work time accordingly. This flexibility makes freelance translation an attractive career option for people with young children or those people who just want to work part time.

Another advantage is that you do not have to think about any dress code. You are free to wear your favorite pink pajamas, your hair can be a mess, there is no need to wear heels or tight shoes, and you will save on stockings, makeup, and perfume. Unless you meet with clients online or in person, your personal grooming and appearance are up to you.

Translation agencies normally have offices where they meet clients and service providers. Their role is to mediate between clients and translators. Employment in a translation agency is a good opportunity to learn about the business and gain translation skills. Moreover, your employer will know exactly how much you can do and how far your competency extends. With any luck and a good employer, therefore, you will not be given impossible tasks to perform. You will learn bit by bit, starting with easy assignments and going to more difficult texts over time.

Thus, a translator on the threshold of his or her business career who does not want to work in house has a difficult decision to make: Should he or she choose the career of a freelancer or work for a translation agency? The two are not opposed, however, as freelancers often provide their services to agencies. Each of these options has its advantages and disadvantages.

Please see the table on the following page.

Freelancing	Working for translation agencies
You need to find and retain clients. You must be your own “rainmaker.”	You do not have to find clients. Once you’ve found a suitable agency, you should have a reliable workflow.
You have your freedom and independence. You set your own rates.	The rates you get from agencies can be considerably lower than market rates as agencies have to make a profit to survive as businesses.
You can earn a good income once your professional performance attracts a sufficient number of clients and orders.	Once you become well established as a reliable provider for an agency, you will probably have a constant flow of work—a big relief compared to having to attract business yourself.
There is ongoing pressure to attract clients and an unwritten rule that a freelancer with no clients is not a good translator and a good translator never stays without work. Nevertheless, your regular flow of orders depends on your marketing and business skills to attract clients, offer your services to potential clients, and build up networks.	Big companies seldom go to freelancers. They prefer working with agencies.

<p>Once you have attracted enough clients and your business has become sustainable, you may face the challenge of insufficient capacity.</p>	<p>Working with an agency, you will not have a capacity problem, as the agency takes care of that. By absorbing big clients and distributing translation work to different translators, agencies enable you to gain specific experience of their organization and terminology without necessarily having to do all their translations. This way, not only your capacity but also your professional specialization may benefit from working for agencies.</p>
<p>With private clients, it is far more difficult to specialize in any particular area as the pool of clients to pick from is generally much smaller compared with those of a larger agency.</p>	<p>A true advantage of translation agencies is that they will enable you to specialize in particular areas.</p>
<p>By working directly with your clients, you have the opportunity to make your services visible to other clients as well.</p>	<p>It is not acceptable for you to establish direct relationships with the agency's clients and/or begin to work for them directly. You are dependent on the agency for any and all assignments.</p>
<p>You have direct access to your clients and can discuss terminology, questions, and other matters with them.</p>	<p>It can be difficult to discuss terminology matters and other questions, as you won't speak with the client directly.</p>

The decision about which way to go depends on who you are and how you feel about this: Would you rather be more independent and pay the price by handling a variety of challenges or would you prefer to focus on only translating and let someone else handle business-related challenges for you?

6.2 Where Will You Find a Job?

As a new or experienced translator, you can look for jobs in a wide variety of places. These include companies in the private sector, governmental organizations, freelance websites, and online translator networks and forums.

6.3 Companies in the Private Sector

Some private companies outsource translation projects on a regular basis, others may only need translation services sporadically, and others need translation services regularly enough that they have their own in-house employees that they hire to do translations. In most cases, private sector companies' translation projects are specialized, focusing on their own industry.

The universe of private companies is huge. Once you have decided on the area of knowledge you will specialize in, promote your services to companies active in that field.

6.4 Governmental Agencies and International Organizations

Governmental agencies and international organizations outsource a huge amount of translation work. Be prepared to deliver translations that use their specific organizational language and terminology as well as to follow their organizational charts. Visit appropriate websites and read documents and reports to see the terminology and phraseology that they use. Linguee (<https://www.linguee.com/>) might also be a good resource to know what is the right word or expression already in use in already-translated reports at several international organizations and NGO. For translation into Canada, check Termium, a government-run database of terms, official terms and definitions in use worldwide

(<https://www.btb.termiuplus.gc.ca/tpv2alpha/alpha-eng.html?lang=eng>).

Quality control of a specific type, in terms of consistency and standardization across documents and time, is crucial for this group of clients. They are very demanding of high quality. To be able to sell your services to them, you ideally should provide them with evidence of your translation quality, such as certificates, credentials, references, a good portfolio, etc.

Although this is a great sector to work in, one drawback is payment: Be prepared for long payment procedures and timelines.

Governmental, non-governmental, and international organizations require translators with knowledge in the specific language that they use. This is a growing business for translation agencies and freelance translators.

Finding a translation job in a governmental organization is a good opportunity for a translator at the start of his or her career.

6.4.1 How to Get Governmental Translation Jobs

Government institutions can be a good place to find a translation job. You should, of course, be prepared to abide by strict office hours, dress codes, an institutional hierarchy, etc. You will undoubtedly work in an office and report to a supervisor who monitors your work. You will receive a steady paycheck and have access to health insurance.

Government jobs listings generally are not found in quite the same venues that jobs in the private sector tend to be. Nonetheless, the approach is still the same. Use your favorite search engine. You will find the actual entries for government positions online maintained by the government or governmental agency, as translation jobs can be found in many departments and even in local governments. Once you have found a suitable job posting, make sure you find out exactly what it is that the department or governmental agency wants in terms of application documents.

Governmental institutions have their own set of employment application procedures; if you do not follow them strictly, your application will be rejected. Therefore, if you want a job with them, do not improvise or get creative with the application procedure. Follow every instruction rigorously—and make sure you meet all the job requirements specified in the posting. Also make sure that you mention your job-related education, credentials, and experience. Generally, governmental bodies will only hire translators with some evidence of proficiency, such as a professional translator certification credential obtained by completing a certification training program and taking a certification exam.

As is the case in the private sector, government translations vary in nature, ranging from simple correspondence, memos, conference papers, and immigration documents to complete websites, defense contracts, and highly classified materials. The subject matter can often be highly specialized. Depending on the job, it may be necessary for you to undergo a background check for any possible criminal past or anything that may present a security risk.

In addition, many government offices and agencies will outsource translation work to experienced translation agencies specialized in translations for public bodies. If you are determined to become a translator for the government, you can start by learning the requirements such translation agencies have for the translators they use.

6.4.2 A Special Case: Working for the United Nations

Translation at the United Nations is a major part of the work performed by the UN. All six official UN languages—Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish—are considered equal and binding. Thus, there is an elaborate system in place to select top translators from all over the world, guide them through an apprenticeship, and equip them with all the appropriate translation tools. UN translators produce hundreds of pages in the UN's languages daily.

Translation at the UN is performed by the Translation Services of the Documentation Division. This is where all the official United Nations' documents, meeting records, and correspondence are translated into and from Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian,

and Spanish. Some official documents are also translated into German. The English, French, Russian, and Spanish Translation Services also prepare the summary records of meetings of intergovernmental bodies, which give an account of proceedings.

All United Nations translators must have a perfect command of their first language and an excellent knowledge of at least two of the other official languages. They must also be able to write clearly, cleanly, and correctly in their first language. Since many of those who read United Nations documents, in particular the representatives of the member states, will be working in a language other than their own, the goal of the Translation Services is to produce documents that are readily understandable to all.

And although texts are generally translated for immediate use, they are maintained to serve as historic records. The United Nations Translation Services use many modern tools for their work, such as terminological databases, document repositories with full-text search capabilities, bi-text alignment tools, translation memory managers, and voice-recognition software. They are currently using eLUNA computer-assisted translation tool. They actively track new developments, such as machine translation for example.

United Nations translators may work in New York, Geneva, Vienna, and Nairobi. They may also be posted in UN regional commissions in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, and Santiago, depending on the translator's language combination(s).

Contractual Translation Unit – Because the translation and text-processing workload of the Department exceeds the capacity of the translation staff at the UN headquarters and other stations—by design, in order to ensure full utilization of in-house resources—up to 25% of the work is done by outside translators and text-processors on a contractual basis. The work may involve parliamentary documentation, publications, and legal agreements, among other types of texts, and is in the hands of the Contractual Translation Unit (CTU). In recent years, the CTU has been handling over 20% of the Department's annual translation workload.

The CTU's staff members assess translation and word-processing capacities, negotiate with contractors in assigning jobs, prepare

contracts, monitor and respond to queries, consult with submitting departments, release completed jobs to the next service, and prepare payment requests for the Accounts Division. Above all, they strive to ensure that all jobs are completed properly, with a high-quality level, and on time.

All United Nations translators, wherever they are based and whether they are in house or freelance, must have either a university degree or a translation diploma from a recognized translation school.

Job applicants for permanent posts must be capable of translating from two or more of the official languages into one of those (their native or principal language of education). The only exceptions to this rule are Chinese translators, who sometimes work in both directions between Chinese and English, and people with specialized knowledge of use to the UN, such as those who hold degrees in international law. Such specialists are sometimes recruited to work from one language only. And except for those capable of working from Arabic or Chinese, applicants for freelance positions should preferably also have two passive languages. Since most United Nations documents nowadays are written in English, knowledge of that language is a prime requirement for translators into any of the other languages.

Permanent translators are hired via competitive examinations, which are held at irregular intervals and can be at UN stations or, subject to demand, other major cities.

Freelance translators are recruited through informal tests that generally last half a day and can be arranged at short notice. Usually, candidates take their test at the station where they hope to work. Freelance salary scales and conditions of service are set by agreement with the International Association of Conference Translators.

Like permanent translators, freelancers can work at a variety of levels, from junior translator to senior reviser. Freelancers who are capable of working unsupervised may be offered work to do at home, but most freelance contracts are for in-housework over periods ranging from a few weeks to several months. Depending on the distance from their home to their principal posting, freelancers who work in house are classified as "local" or "non-local," the chief

difference being that non-locals receive travel and subsistence allowances in addition to their base salary. For obvious budgetary reasons, the United Nations prefers to hire locals whenever possible.

Openings for temporary employment arise all the time; openings for permanent employment are expected to be numerous within the next few years, and freelancing is an excellent way of preparing for them. However, getting a job as a translator at the UN is highly competitive. Thousands of job seekers apply annually, but only the best succeed in finding employment.⁴

6.5 Translation Agencies

Successful translation agencies often have access to big clients and big translation projects beyond the capacity of one translator only. There are a number of aspects involved in providing services to translation agencies:

- If the agency is happy with your performance, you will have the possibility of a regular workflow, without the need to market your services any further.
- When you work for a big agency, you may be able to specialize in a specific field, thus focusing your terminology learning efforts in one area and enhancing your professional development.
- Deadlines are critical for translation agencies as they are an indicator of their reliability. If, for any reason, you are unable to meet their deadlines, you should either inform them early enough for them to find a solution or subcontract to someone after you have their approval to do so.
- As noted above, if you work for translation agencies, you should be prepared to be paid at lower rates. Translation agencies operate at competitive prices, and they have to retain part of the price in order to cover their expenses and, of course, make at least a minimal profit.

⁴www.un.org and www.unog.ch

6.6 Online Resources

6.6.1 Online: Introduction

Brick-and-mortar businesses are one aspect of finding a translation job; translation agencies are another. And online communities, freelancer websites, forums, and the like are yet another.

With the ever-increasing time dedicated to web-based communities, there is already massive online collaboration focused on translation projects.

This highly publicized approach to translation work is often in the framework of a specific context, for example, the fans of a specific game who share a strong emotional bond to the content being translated.

Project managers and Wiki organizers have systems in place for splitting translation projects into small pieces and distributing them across large crowds of mostly volunteer translators. This is a very good opportunity for novice translators to practice their skills and learn from their peers.

Experienced professional translators can have some fun translating something that they enjoy. Crowd-sourced translation projects can be supported by flexible Wiki-like collaboration tools that enable multidisciplinary teams of translators, domain specialists, proofreaders, and managers to collaborate on big translation projects. Participation in such translation projects facilitates community building, networking, and teamwork skills through process monitoring and forum activities.

Moving beyond Wiki projects and crowd sourcing, there are a number of resources online for finding translation work.

6.6.2 Online: Part I

Most companies, whether brick and mortar or electronically based, have a presence on the Internet. Cold calling and/or emailing them is

a low-result approach, and it's not loads of fun. But it never hurts to try this approach; every once in a while, you can get lucky.

How do you go about doing this?

It's easy.

Using your favorite search engine and best Internet search skills and tools, look online for companies, organizations, or government agencies that clearly have an in-house translation department or that periodically hire translators. Look especially for multinational or local/regional corporations in your specialty fields. Use keywords to help focus your search and target your specializations, language pairs, etc. Use your imagination to think of companies that might be appropriate.

Many of the organizations you find will have a section of their website entitled "Work for Us" or "Careers." Check those out. If they list translation—or bilingual jobs in your field—you've struck it rich. Even if they don't, there may be indications that they either work with freelance translators and/or are looking to hire bilingual/multilingual. Then do your normal employment-seeking routine: Send an email and resume, follow up, etc.

For translation agencies, use the same approach as outlined above, but instead, look online for translation company websites. Use keywords to help focus your search and target your specializations, language pairs, etc. Some translator forums and associations even have lists for members or for sale.

Many of the agencies you find will have a page on their site that you can fill in to submit your information for future consideration. If they don't (and even if they do, perhaps), consider sending an email with a cover letter and resume.

6.6.3 Online: Part II

There is a wealth of job-finding help online through freelance websites. These are freelance job marketplaces that act as matchmakers for providers and employers. They are similar to, but not quite the same as, temp agencies for a wide variety of jobs and fields. Such website "agencies" may take a cut of the proceeds

and/or charge a membership fee. Generally, members or higher-paying members get priority in listings or in hearing about work for bidding. One of the most respected freelancing platform available out there is Upwork (<https://www.upwork.com>). Another resource is Guru (<https://www.guru.com/>).

6.6.4 Online: Part III

Online translators' networks, associations, and forums are possibly the most useful type of resource of all because they are where translators and agencies "hang out"—their online water coolers, so to speak. As a result, be aware that competition will be at its stiffest here but that the best of these websites have translators' interests at their heart. Be aware that they vary in both the quality and type of work offered for bid as well as the level of payer that they attract. As with the freelance websites, most translator networks and forums have paying and non-paying memberships; you will need to sort out what you can afford and what you feel will be worth paying for given your language pairs, specialization(s), and/or business plan. Generally, members get more services and/or priority for bidding or for having their bids listed.

The many large freelance translator websites are equally handy for translation providers and clients. These websites are platforms where a translator can:

- Advertise his or her services via a well-developed profile.
- Find interesting projects and bid on them.
- Enjoy a transparent competition process and learn from successful bidders.
- Trace a client's order history and see other providers' comments about them, which helps a translation professional get a better idea of the client's preferences, interests, and reliability as a payer.
- Use the website's systems for guaranteed payment.
- Find relevant information about the most recent developments

in the freelance industry.

- Get training on various software platforms and help on tricky phrases.
- Join the global translation community.

The best-known and arguably the most well-respected translator network is www.ProZ.com. Founded in 1999, ProZ calls itself “the world’s largest community of translators.” The website is very responsive to its members’ needs and includes an immense panoply of resources, including a way to ask other translators for help with tricky translation terms. The name ProZ stands for Professionals and is pronounced either like “prose” or sometimes like “Pro-Zee.” But no matter how you pronounce it, ProZ is an excellent resource.

Four other very good translator network websites are:

- Translators Café, www.translatorscafe.com. Their slogan is “Where linguists and their clients meet.”
- Traduguide, www.traduguide.com. Their slogan is “Your guide to Translators and Translation Agencies.”
- Translation Directory, www.translationdirectory.com. Their slogan is “Portal for Language Professionals and Their Clients.”
- Aquariusnet, <https://aquarius.net/>. Founded in 1995, their slogan reads, “The longest standing online marketplace for translation and localization projects.”

There is also a social network that is targeting the translation business, www.langmates.com. Still relatively new, time will tell whether or not this develops into a useful resource.

6.7 Two Associations to Know About

6.7.1 The ATA

One additional online association worth mentioning is also a physical

organization that we've brought up before: the American Translators Association (www.atanet.org). The ATA keeps a list of translator members and associate members. This list is available online to those looking to hire a translator and is especially useful to those translation professionals who choose to work as freelancers. Moreover, the ATA has a number of resources available to its members, including *ATA Compass*, *ATA Chronicle*, *ATA Bulletin*, *Beacons* (literary translation), division newsletters, pamphlets about succeeding as a freelance translator, client education, discounts on its scholarly monograph series, a newcomer's guide, an annual conference, a handbook, and much more.

6.7.2 The FIT

The International Federation of Translators (FIT - <https://www.fit-ift.org/>) is an international federation of more than 100 associations of translators, interpreters, and terminology experts worldwide. It represents the interests of translators on every continent, promotes professionalism in the field, attempts to address conditions of translation professionals worldwide, and works to defend translators' rights and freedom of speech. It also seeks to advance the recognition of translation as a profession, enhance the status of the translator in society, and further public appreciation of translation as a science and an art.

The FIT offers conferences, workshops, and two regular periodicals, *BABEL* and *Translation*.

6.8 Conclusion

In sum, whether you are a new translation professional or a world-weary and experienced member of the profession, there are many places you can look for a job. If, however, you've decided to be a freelance translator, you will need to set up your freelance business—which is the focus of the next chapter.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of "Using the Power of Authority to Market Yourself as a Translator."

This video was originally produced for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video <http://translatorcertification.com/Video6/>

Review Questions

1. Name 5 advantages of being a freelance translator.
2. Name 5 advantages of working as an in-house translator or for an agency.
3. Are there any special things you need to do to get a job with a government agency?
4. What is the CTU, and why should a translator care?
5. What are the six official languages of the UN, and what does that mean for a translator?
6. If you're looking on a company's website, where might you find their "help wanted ads"?
7. Name 5 online translators' networks where you can bid on projects as a freelancer.
8. Name 2 online freelancer networks (for all sorts of freelancers) where you can bid on projects.
9. What do the acronyms FIT and ATA stand for? What are 5 journals that they publish?
10. True or False: It is generally a mistake to look for translation work in your community, as local businesses can never pay as much as big translation agencies can.

Answers

1. 1) Freedom: You set your own hours, choose how you dress, etc. 2) You set your own rates. 3) You are your own boss. 4) You work directly with your clients, so they can refer you to other clients and you can talk to the client directly if something in a document or project isn't clear. 5) Your workload is very likely to be varied.

2. 1) You don't have to worry about bringing in clients or projects; someone else does this. 2) You don't have to take care of running a business in terms of billing, invoicing, insurance, etc. 3) You may be able to specialize in a highly focused niche subject that you love. 4) Once you're established with an agency or hired by a company to work in house, your workflow will probably be regular and stable. 5) You often get access to enterprise software, extra training, and conference travel as part of your job.

3. Yes. Make sure you fit the requirements of the job exactly and follow their application instructions precisely at each and every step. Look for these jobs via the government agency's website, through traditional employment listings, and/or through online search engines as they seldom list their jobs and projects at online translation agencies.

4. Contractual Translation Unit. It is the part of the Translation Services department of the United Nations Document Division, which hires and contracts with freelance translators when the UN needs to subcontract out some of its translation work. Up to 25% of the UN's translation projects can be assigned through the CTU.

5. English, French, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. A UN translator needs to be completely fluent in one of these 6 languages and able to translate from 2 of the others. The only exception to this is for specialists in certain subjects and also for Chinese <-> English translators, who can work in both directions for the two languages.

6. "About us," "Careers," and "Jobs" are the most common menu headings.

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7. Traduguide, Translator's Café, Translation Directory, ProZ, and Aquarius.net

8. Upwork.com and Guru.com

9. Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (International Federation of Translators) and the American Translators Association. The ATA publishes *Beacons*, the *ATA Chronicle*, the *ATA Compass*, and the *ATA Bulletin*; FIT has *BABEL* and *Translation*.

10. False

Chapter 7: How to Start a Freelance Translation Business

7.1 Who Becomes a Freelance Translator?

Think that a freelance translator is just someone who couldn't get a translation job elsewhere?

Think again.

Most freelance translators are highly qualified professionals who prefer the freedom—and responsibility—of working freelance. We've already outlined the advantages and disadvantages, in general, in the previous chapter. If you're responsible, organized, and ready to take the plunge, here's a thumbnail sketch of how to do it.

Please note, however, that neither this chapter nor this book is intended as a substitute for advice from legal, accounting, insurance, or other professionals. Be smart: Laws and customs vary greatly. Consult the appropriate professionals and learn what you need to do to start and operate your business safely and legally.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of "Tips on Starting a Freelance Translation Business."

This video was originally produced for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by using the URL below:

Video: <http://translatorcertification.com/Video7/>

7.2 Setting Up a Business: Business 101

While many freelance professionals have an office in their home, some prefer to work away from where they live and maintain a separate office. You only really need one office though. The downside to an office outside the home is higher operating expenses because you're already paying for your home anyway. Indeed, home freelancers don't have to have an office anywhere. Realistically, as long as a translation professional has good filing and backup systems, a computer, a phone number, a mailing address, and a good Internet connection, he or she is completely portable.

7.2.1 Be Legal

Every municipality or state has its own rules and regulations for starting a business. Find out what you need to do to be legal in your town or state. You may need to file a business permit (with tax regulations and declaration), get a variance (to do business in your home), file a fictitious business name statement (if you name your business something other than your own name), register the name of your business, open a (business) bank account or set up a business mailing address—or you may not have to do any of these.

What kinds of insurance do you need, if any? What is recommended but not required? What kinds of records do you need to keep your local and federal governments happy? What kind of taxes do you need to file—and when will they be due?

Any business, small as it can be, exists in the legal environment of the place in which it operates. Learning the basic regulations concerning translation services in the area and country in which you live will help you grow your business and stay out of trouble.

Don't assume you know all the answers to these questions and other related ones, even if they seem obvious and you think you do. Take the time to find out, and then do what you need to do.

7.2.2 What Will Your Business Do?

Have you decided what your business will focus on? Do you have a specialty, say, medical or legal, for example? Or do you plan to

provide additional services such as DTP (desktop publishing) or dubbing? Research your local market as well as regional and global trends. Find out what people need, and then figure out how that intersects with your skills and interests.

Draw up a business plan with an idea of what you want to do now, in a year, in five years. You don't have to adhere to it, and you can change the plan anytime you want to do so. Indeed, staying flexible enough to adapt to what the market wants of you is the hallmark of a successful freelance professional. But if you don't have a plan at all, you may find yourself wandering through a translation forest, desperately hoping for breadcrumbs to guide your business, much like Hansel and Gretel.

7.2.3 It Is All in the Name

So, you now know what you want your business to focus on, you've developed a business model and/or plan, and you've figured out what your legal, financial, tax, and other business requirements are.

Have you thought about the name of your business? You want something catchy, something memorable, something that can be spelled, and—perhaps most important of all—something that search engines will quickly and readily pick up on.

While search engine optimization (SEO) is a field in its own right, one far beyond the purview of this book, there are a few things you can do to make sure that you name your business strategically. You may be tempted to name your business after yourself, and that's certainly the easiest way. But the name "John Smith, Inc." tells potential customers and search engines very little. "John Smith Translations" says more; "John Smith Premium Translations" implies a good deal more. Of course, "John Smith A-1 Premium Translation Services" may be a little too much of a good thing to be successful.

You want your business name to say what you do and, if possible, imply that you do it very well.

What if your name is impossible to spell, either because it's unusual, is ethnically rare in your area, uses an unusual spelling, or—the flip side—is too common or has too many possible spellings? Then you

might consider naming your business in a different way. On the other hand, a rare spelling and pronunciation can become your calling card, and it can help ensure that your potential customers come to you and you alone.

Think about your reaction to the following potential

names:

#1 Translations

Worldwide Translations, Inc.

ABC Translations

A Translation Business

Best Translations

Each has a positive connotation. Each either starts with a low number (but not zero), is near the start of the alphabet, or implies an international business scope. Big corporations spend thousands upon thousands of dollars when they change their names or name a product. There's no reason you have to do the same thing for your freelance business, but do put some thought into what you put on that shingle you're about to hang.

And while we're talking about names, make sure your email address is professional. While Hotmama@yahoo.com, Studmuffin@gmail.com, or redsoxfan@gmail.com may be fine for your personal email correspondence, they simply will not do for any business other than an escort service or sports-affiliated business respectively.

7.2.3 Paperwork

Although you may intend to spend most of your marketing mojo on an online presence, don't forget about the traditional paper tools involved in marketing. With digital printing, it's easy to get inexpensive, professional- looking business cards. Then don't forget to use them; exchange them with other professionals and businesspeople every chance you get.

Don't know what a good business card looks like in your neck of the woods? You have three options:

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- 1) Pay a graphic designer to design one for you.
- 2) Take a week to study every business card that you can find, and then put one together using your favorite aspects as a template.
- 3) Use a template that an online or in-person printer has for your kind of business. For Internet printers, be careful that your cards conform to your region's business norms.

What other paper materials might you want for your business?

You may want a brochure or a flyer. If you are graphically gifted, you can do this yourself.

If you have an office outside the home, you may want or need a sign. Check the local requirements and variances.

What about letterhead? You can design simple letterhead to print on your computer paper anytime you send something, whether by email or by paper—and that may well suffice. Are you going to send out paper invoices? Not all translators need to do this anymore with so much business being done online via email. Even if you do send paper invoices, you can print them onto your letterhead using your invoicing or word processing software.

Think about what you consider professional and what you can afford. If your initial expenses are too high for your savings or earnings to sustain, you may never get your business off the ground. If you don't put sufficient effort into marketing yourself, however, your business may never take off.

If you use paper materials, nice paper can make a difference. Study local business norms and decide what you like. Again, there's no need to spend a fortune here.

Finally, think about your resume or C.V. The letters C.V. stand for *curriculum vitae*, or course of life in Latin. In the U.S. it is a blow-by-blow professional summary that is generally reserved for scholars and academics. In the European Union, however, a C.V. is typically what Americans call a resume.

Call it what you like, the professional resume is a summary of relevant experience and training that you send (with a cover letter) when you're applying for a job or bidding on a project. As you do new and interesting projects, don't forget to update your resume, which means that you'll need to drop older or less interesting information after a while. A resume should not exceed a page and should be on good paper stock that is thicker (24 or 32 weight) than normal business paper. And while there are trends and fashions for resume paper, white is a classic color for paper that never goes out of style.

Important: Make sure that the paper works in your printer as you will be tailoring your resume to highlight what you've done for each bid or job and then printing a copy if you're applying via snail mail or in person.

7.2.4 Websites, Blogs, and Social Media

You have your business name, your paper, and your paperwork. What else do you need?

A website for your business.

A website is today's equivalent of an online business card. Would you patronize a professional service or business that doesn't have a website or has an amateur one?

Probably not.

Do you have to be a web designer on top of everything

else? Not at all.

If you are so inclined, you can always hire a web designer—but don't forget about that all-important bottom line for your start-up costs.

If you know how to code HTML and so forth, have the right software and know how to use it, and/or have art or graphic design experience, you can design your website yourself.

There's another solution that's a perfectly good compromise between these two extremes, however. Many translators' networks and associations will host your website, either for a fee or as part of your membership fee, and they often have several professional-looking templates that you can use. That may be all you need for now.

What about a blog? Could that help your business?

One strategy for driving more business to your door is to become an expert either on a specialty topic or an interesting source of information

relevant to your trade. A blog is one way to become known as an expert. The more scattershot the blog, the less likely you are to gain regular readers, and those readers' eyeballs are money in your pocket. On the other hand, an overly arcane topic may not gain enough readership to be worth your effort unless you're absolutely passionate about the topic, in which case you and your expertise will shine.

One caveat: Today's digitation expects regular and frequent blogging. If you don't think you'll be able to sustain a daily or weekly contribution to your blog, it probably won't be worth your while.

What about social media? At the moment, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and so forth are all useful—even crucial—for a business. This landscape shifts regularly and often: Keep an eye out for Internet tectonics as change can be fast here.

7.2.5 Translator Profiles

There are a number of translator forums, networks, and web portals on the Internet, a number of which we discussed earlier. Most have at least two tiers of memberships—paid and free—and most encourage you to have a translator profile. Whether you choose a free membership or upgrade to a paid one, it's worth joining and filling out your profile. Then make sure to keep it updated.

7.3 Ouch! Pay Attention to Ergonomics

Translation can be a fascinating job. When you start working on a project, time flies, and you may fail to feel the pain in your back, the strain in your eyes, or the stiffness in your elbows, wrists, and hands—until it's far too late. Always bear in mind that your body suffers when you sit in the same position for hours on end; your eyes get hurt by working on the computer for hours without a break.

Make yourself take breaks. You'll remain productive and efficient—and you'll feel better. For your break, get some exercise, do some stretches, or just take a walk outside to get some fresh air. As for the eyes, it's a good idea to exercise them, and you can find many websites with eye exercises.

When you're a freelancer, your income is completely dependent on your productivity and health. Whether you set up shop at the beach, at your local coffee shop, in a pricey office, or in a home office, pay attention to the ergonomics of your workspace. Your body and your mind are your working tools; keep them in a good shape.

The field of ergonomics is an important specialty and not one that we can advise you about successfully in this book. However, as a few pointers, pay attention to:

- Your desk height: Does it fit your body when you are writing? Can you adjust the height when you are at the computer?
- Your chair height, seat back angle, etc.: Do they fit you and work with your desk and computer? Would a footrest help?
- Your computer screen: height, type, angle, and glare level. Do they cause you to squint and/or tilt your head and neck?
- Your keyboard and mouse: type, angle, and ease of operation. Do your hands feel good after you've typed and used your mouse all day long?
- Your keyboard and mouse tray or desktop: Are the angle and height good for your hands and neck?
- Light: Is it bright enough? So bright that there's glare?

Coming from the wrong angle or direction?

- Laptop: Do you hurt after you use it?
- Are you squinting? Nearsighted or farsighted? Do you need to check your eyeglass prescription (if you wear glasses) or get your eyes checked? Even the most eagle-eyed person can develop eyestrain. You only have one set of eyes. Take care of them.

Beyond these tips, there are stores, professionals, books, and websites that focus on this crucial aspect of being a translation professional. Pay attention. Your health is your livelihood.

7.4 What Skills Does a Freelance Translator Need?

A fundamental principle in the translation industry is that language proficiency alone is not enough for a good translation. The translation process integrates a variety of skills and knowledge from different fields.

- Research skills to support the translation process may involve the use of dictionaries, glossaries, reference books, phrase search on the Internet, clarification of technical terms, and/or understanding processes. Every experienced translator has a number of resources that he or she has identified as most useful.
- Reading comprehension and analytical skills are a prerequisite. If you can't read, analyze, and understand a text, you will find it difficult to translate it.
- Writing skills are crucial. If you are unable to compose clear and clearly understandable sentences in your target language, your translations will be substandard. You should know how to avoid redundant words, how to choose the most suitable words, how to select the proper grammatical structures, what parts of speech to use, and how to construct the whole sentence.

- Translation is unthinkable, of course, without language proficiency. Needless to say, this includes a profound knowledge of grammar, a rich vocabulary, and use of synonyms, idioms, figures of speech, etc.
- Depth of culture makes translation work easier and more enjoyable. This can be developed by extensive reading and learning and comes with experience. Traveling and communicating with people from other cultures can also be good sources of knowledge.
- Technical knowledge in a specialized field such as medicine, law, geology, forestry, engineering, etc., for example, is an asset. Translations containing highly specialized technical information are extremely difficult for those translators who do not have technical knowledge in the corresponding field.
- Computer literacy is certainly necessary as written translation today is virtually unimaginable without computers. Furthermore, most of today's communication with clients takes place via email. Learn all the features of your word processing software and your email program. Proficiency with Excel spreadsheets, Adobe Reader, PowerPoint presentations, and other software that your clients might use will always be to your advantage.
- Having some basic marketing and communication skills will help you market your services and keep your clients. If you have not already reviewed the videos inside the members' area of Translator Training (<https://www.translator-training.com/>), many of these are helpful in improving your marketing skills.

7.5 Specialization

The translation industry offers good prospects for top professionals. If you're a freelancer, you should have mastery of one or more additional fields in order to be competitive.

Which fields?

Ideally your interests and training will intersect with the market's needs. For example, are you an athlete with expertise in sports

terminology? Journals and associations in your sport may need someone to translate articles into a common language.

Did you get your degree in civil engineering? Naval design? Nuclear physics? Congratulations! You may well be able to parlay that into specialized work with building codes, permits, industrial construction for multinationals, etc.

Like languages, some specialties are more marketable than others, and thus some will bring a better income than others. But all allow you to separate your fledgling freelance business from the competition.

7.6 What Equipment Do You Need?

First of all, you should have a computer of some kind, whether it's a desktop, laptop, or some more mobile device. A hardworking translation professional is unlikely to find today's smartphone up to the task. But soon enough, who knows? A tablet plus an external keyboard might suffice in the very near future. Mac vs. PC vs. who knows... Your choice.

Next, you'll need a fast, reliable Internet connection. If you have frequent problems with your email and people can't get a hold of you, clients and potential clients may question your reliability and may hesitate to entrust you with their business.

Back up your work onto a backup hard drive, a USB memory stick, an SD card, or into cloud storage. In fact, it's a good idea to buy a USB memory stick and always keep it with you when visiting clients. You never know when a printer might jam or an Internet connection might fail. With space on your portable storage device, you can always transfer a document to take with you.

Printers are also useful, both for reading documents off the computer and also for printing out contracts that need to be signed, etc. Scanners are highly useful, especially if you have a client at a distance and you have to send signed papers on a regular basis. In addition, they provide you with the opportunity to transform a paper source document into a computer version, which is easier to handle. Often, you'll be able to use the same peripheral to print, scan, and copy.

A magnifying glass will be very helpful if you get texts that are written in tiny fonts or include itsy-bitsy footnotes.

You'll undoubtedly want a variety of dictionaries, whether online, electronic, or paper, and will probably have a combination of these.

Finally, you'll need software. The most basic combination would be a word processor, PDF reader and editor, and web browser. You may well want to add an Office program that includes a spreadsheet and presentation program, such as MS Office or Open Office. If you're not using cloud storage and/or online services for your email, you'll also want an email program.

Go back to the discussion earlier of CAT tools and contemplate which—if any—you want to have now or in the future. Ideally, this was part of your business or five-year plan, but if not, think about it at this point.

Remember that the more software and the more equipment you invest in, the more you have to earn to cover your daily and/or start-up costs.

But what should you charge so that you can cover those costs and keep your business afloat?

7.7 How Do Translators Charge?

While there are some variations, as discussed below, normally translation rates are based on the word count in the source text. Other factors involved may include the complexity of the project, the volume, the timeline, the translator's training and expertise in the field, the use of any special software, certification, and other possibly relevant variables such as the taxes you will pay, depending on your legal status. For example, sometimes if the target language is foreign locally, the rate will be higher than it would be for translating into the local language.

Why use the source and not the target word count?

Simple.

The target word count is a moving target. Do you want to quibble with a client about how to word things just to keep their costs

down? With some leeway for discussion, the number of words in the source document is a fixed, knowable quantity at the start—and it shouldn't change.

Different languages have different prices. Translations from or into foreign languages regarded as “common” in a certain area are less expensive than translations into or from languages regarded as “rare” in that area. This is simply supply and demand, a result of much or little competition.

Translation service payment can be based on different principles:

- Per word, as noted above. A typical computer or typed page has 250 words. The word count feature of word processing software is generally adequate for this task, although it can be imperfect in some cases.
- Per hour. This is more typically the case for proofreading or editing than for translation, although it's not unheard of for translations.
- A flat rate, most typically for small projects. Many translators, especially experienced ones, will have a minimum rate for small projects.
- Per hour payment for interpretation services. Again, the rate depends on the complexity, publicity, and expected expertise.
- Per word in the target text. Not recommended and rarely used.
- Per characters with spaces in the source text. A standard page in some countries has 1800 characters with spaces.
- Per characters with spaces in the target text. Not recommended.

A good rule of thumb is that an experienced translator can translate up to two standard pages of simple source text per hour. If the source text is technical and requires expertise, one standard page per hour is normal. For a beginner, the pace of work is much slower. Clearly, a translator's earning power depends greatly on his or her level of experience and expertise.

Some translators have a minimum fee for turning on their

computer; others do not. Decide for yourself, but when starting out, small projects are an excellent opportunity to form relationships with new clients.

Other issues for you to decide: Will you work on weekends? Over holidays? What about rush jobs? And if so, how do you define those, and do you want to add a surcharge for them? Many translators do, but there are some who do not. Again, a novice translator can win new clients by working when other, more experienced translation professionals might not.

What about return customers? Consider giving them a small discount as it will keep them returning, assuming you keep your quality high as well.

What about large projects? Many agencies will want a discount if the project is a large one as they feel they should get a reward for bringing you a considerable amount of business. Should you agree to this? You're doing the same amount of work for less...but it might still create client gratitude.

Finally, several agencies will request a discount for matches above a certain percentage when you're working with translation software. This is controversial but widespread—and it's another decision you will have to make.

One last note: Rates for DTP, dubbing, voice-overs, subtitling, and editing are more often arranged per hour than per word as most of these involve specialty equipment, specific software, or a slightly different skill set. Proofreading is a gray area in that roughly 50% of the time you'll be paid by the word and the other 50% by the hour.

7.8 What Do Translators Charge? Setting Your Rates

Translation rates are a specific aspect of supply and demand. They are the intersection of the following factors:

- 1) Your cost of doing business

- 2) How much you want to earn and how much you are willing to work
- 3) Your competition

Only you can determine what your costs are as well as your desired income and amount of work.

The market (i.e., competition) is involved in the third factor.

For example, if your language combination is rare and in great demand, you can charge more than if it is common or seldom needed. This is a classic imbalance of supply and demand. Enjoy it while you can but expect competition to zoom in to fill the vacuum as quickly as possible.

Another factor involved in competition is versatility. Can you do many things well? Translate in a large number of fields? This can help your workload be more regular than if you can only translate in one field. But being a jack of all trades is a double-edged sword, to mix metaphors disastrously. Do too much, and you can't keep up with terminology, changes in the field, etc.

Do you have a field of expertise or specialization in which there is a high demand? Demand changes with changing market trends, but when you have a specialty, you can generally charge more, especially when your field is a hot commodity. If that happens, once again, enjoy it while you can, and don't gouge your customers. If you do, they'll quickly flee as soon as they can. But if you've provided good service for a reasonable rate, they are more likely to stay with someone they know and trust. Be proactive: Make sure that's you.

Your area or region makes a difference too. If you have access to a limited market—in your local community, for example—how can you expect big revenues? It is usually best to find ways to enlarge your market.

Your competition is also affected by the following:

- 1) Your experience level

- 2) Your reputation
- 3) Repeat clients
- 4) Ongoing projects

To figure out your best rate, you can lurk on translator network websites and study what other professionals say. Many translator forums post average rates for each language combination and field. Study those as well. ATA does offer seminars, webinars, and other tools (e.g., CalPro) to help its members calculate their fees and rates based on their respective costs (fixed and variable).

When all is said and done, money is only one aspect of job satisfaction. Getting a translation project requires good marketing efforts, timing, and luck. You can identify your priority preferences and focus energy there. Nevertheless, do not ignore other possibilities, as any job you find will give you useful experience.

7.9 A Few Tips on Bidding

When you're first starting out, begin to bid carefully, keeping in mind that you're a beginner or just starting out in your business. At first, you may bid low to get work, but be aware that eventually that will be unsustainable; at some point, you'll need to charge a living wage. In addition, your low-budget clients may well flee when your rates go up as they probably are very cost-sensitive. Nevertheless, it's not a terrible strategy for getting some work on your resume.

Always pay attention to the deadline, whether you're bidding on a job for a new client or whether an established client asks for an estimate. So often agency and corporate clients have no idea how long it takes to do a project, and they're used to pushing until they get some unfortunate soul—or sucker—willing or able to burn the midnight oil or do a mediocre job very quickly.

Do good-quality work and give good-quality service. This involves not just the quality of the translated text but also timely delivery, accurate formatting, and communicating with your client. When

accepting a translation assignment, make a realistic assessment of how long it will take to finish it. If the volume is big and you have to work 12-14 hours a day to get it done, you are probably in trouble. You can only do that for 2 or 3 days before your quality starts to drop.

How can you know whether you can finish a project in time? Especially when you are just starting out? Go through the following steps:

- Look at the number of work hours per day before the deadline.
- Subtract out a reasonable percentage of time for running your business (see below).
- Calculate how many hours or days the actual translation will take. As mentioned earlier, no matter how fast you want to be, you generally can churn out an average of two standard pages (i.e., 500 words or 3600 characters with spaces) per hour—and less when you're a beginner or working on tricky technical material.
- Even then, you can never spend 100% of your translating time on the translation. You will need some moments to stretch, go to the bathroom, drink some coffee or water, and have a bite to eat or a snack. Plan these small breaks in your timeline.
- Furthermore, no matter how smooth and easy the translation process can be, you may be surprised at any time by a difficult word or expression, an obscure paragraph, or something else in the text that will require some thinking time. Do not get caught flat footed; plan for that as well. You can always be pleasantly surprised if you don't need that time. Clients love well-done projects that come in early.
- Last, but not least, is the time you should plan for proofreading and revising your translation. Skipping this step may seriously jeopardize your translation quality.

If there's no way you can make a deadline, don't bid on a project or say so politely, no matter whether the deadline is reasonable or not.

Ask if there's any flexibility with the deadline or offer to take on part of the project. If you have experience as a project manager or are willing to learn to do so, offer. Note that if the deadline is super-tight, this is not the time to try your hand at project management for the very first time; when you try a new skill, give yourself a margin of safety. And if this is a new skill for you, always tell the client before you take on the job, whatever it is.

Indeed, whenever you're expanding into a new skill area, whether it is software, specialization, or something else, your client deserves to know, both in terms of how you bid and what you say when you bid.

Finally, when a client comes to you, discuss the work in detail and ask all kinds of questions related to the assignment. But let the client be the first to start talking about money, unless they've asked you for an estimate, at which point, don't play games; just give them your best bid. As a rule of thumb, it is generally felt that whoever mentions money first in negotiations loses. Besides, it makes a bad impression to think less of the professional details of a project and start off with how much something will cost.

Always make sure that payment terms (rate, method of payment, payment deadline, currency, etc.) are specified in the bid or contract. Do not start in on a project until you have the client's official go ahead or PO, no matter how enthusiastic you feel about it.

One last thought about bidding and payments: Do not be afraid to take on voluntary or pro-bono projects. They are an excellent way to develop your skills and build your resume. In addition, it's important to give back to the community when you can.

7.10 Being Professional

You cannot offer competitive translation services if you do not know what your clients expect. Ask your clients how you could better serve them, and read industry newsletters, articles, and blogs. Also, do some research on your local and national competition. How are other translators promising to deliver value to their clients? If you are losing out on bids all the time, consider asking a client who turned you down for feedback; if you choose carefully and ask politely, you might get some very useful information.

Once your bid has been accepted and you're working on a project, there are times when you'll want to communicate with the agency or client. For example, when you first get or begin the project, skim through the document, making sure that everything is legible and nothing puzzling. If you see potential issues, now is a good time to query your client as you have the most time possible to get a useful answer.

Of course, should something arise that will imperil your delivering the project on time, let the client know immediately—the sooner, the better. That will give them time to find a solution. If you wait until the last minute, they will have more trouble replacing you. Don't just disappear out of embarrassment or anxiety. Be a responsible professional and give them a timely heads-up. You may lose the client permanently either way, but if you've told them what's going on, you stand a chance of having them come back.

Remember this: Client acquisition can be daunting, but it is considerably harder if not impossible to woo back a client once you lose them. Why waste all the effort you spent acquiring their business in the first place? Unless they are terrible payers or follow dreadful business practices, keep them happy. Turn in good-quality work, on time or even early, and communicate all snags in a timely fashion.

Finally, be professional in everything you do. Even if your freelance business is run out of your home and you "go to work" in your pj's, take your work seriously and be businesslike in word and action. Act like the professional that you are. In other words, do what you say you'll do, when and how you said you'd do it. Follow up properly, and always do your best work. Your clients and your reputation deserve nothing less.

7.11 An Average Week

A freelance translation professional is also a small business owner. Hence, he or she only spends part of each business week doing what he or she loves best: translating. An average work week will also include bidding on projects, looking for new clients, invoicing and recordkeeping, continuing education, reading and learning, equipment

repair, and learning about new software.

In other words, some 20-30% of your time will be taken up by running your business. If you're spending too much time on ancillary activities, however, you won't have time to earn your living and do your job—which is what you love doing and why you chose a career in translation in the first place. If that happens, take a look and see if you can streamline your office procedures.

7.12 A Word About Payment Practices

If you are working for a new client on a large project, they are within their right—and smart—to ask for a small portion of the translation early on or half of the translation at a midpoint. This allows them to make sure you are performing at the level they want and can reassure them that you'll make the deadline. Some clients will do the same check by starting you out with a small project that they pay for or even a test translation, which they usually will not pay for.

Likewise, if you are turning in work midway through a large, long-term project with a new client, it is reasonable to ask for a partial payment.

A word to the wise: Just as there are conscientious translators and less professional ones, there are also excellent agencies and clients and ones that are not reliable payers. Check your translators' forums for bad reviews or red flags before taking on a new client or agency. No matter how desperate you are for work, if you don't get paid, all your efforts are for naught.

After the project is turned in, is your work done? Not if you're a conscientious freelancer. Check back in a week or so to make sure everything is fine.

Next turn in an accurate invoice (proofread that too). Some clients prefer that you invoice per project; others prefer you invoice per month or per larger project. Don't guess: Ask their preference and follow it—if you can and it's reasonable.

Being a freelance translator can be a fun, creative, and confidence-building career. When you work for the pleasure of working, money will usually come.

The Translator Training Textbook by Adriana Tassini

Review Questions

1. True or False: Freelancing is the occupation of last resort for the average translator.
2. What are some of the items to investigate when starting your own translation business?
3. True or False: A website is today's business card.
4. What is a resume? What is a C.V.? What's the difference?
5. What 3-5 types of paper materials might you want for your business?
6. Name at least 6 things to watch out for when considering the ergonomics of where you work.
7. Name 3 reasons to specialize.
8. What 3 types of equipment are the bare minimum for today's translator?
9. What is the most common way to charge for translating in the U.S.? What about in the U.K.?
10. True or False: You can count on spending 90-100% of your work week translating.

Answers

1. False
2. Business zoning and permitting requirements for your city, county, and state; tax requirements for your city, county, state, and country; regulations for naming your business; the costs of office space; recommended or required insurance; post office requirements if there are any; banking account requirements
3. True
4. A resume is a one-page summary of your work, education, and qualifications for a job. It should include your name and what type of work you're looking for as well. Outside the U.S., a C.V., *curriculum vitae* (literally, course of life), is the same as a resume. In the U.S., a C.V. is a complete listing of all relevant professional accomplishments and is most often used for job hunting in academia.
5. Business cards, brochures, flyers, letterhead, and invoices
6. Lighting; desk height; monitor height and angle; chair height, depth, width, and position; keyboard and mouse height and angle
7. Specialization decreases the competition, allows you to focus on subjects that you like, and can lead to your being able to charge higher rates.
8. A computer of some kind, an Internet connection, and word processing software
9. U.S.: per source word; U.K.: per 1000 source words
10. False

Chapter 8: Build Your Business & Grow Your Career

8.1 What to Do Next

You've gotten a job in the translation business or started your freelance business successfully.

Are you set for life? Good to go?

Absolutely not.

Now it's time for you to direct your career and build your business, shepherding it along, so to speak. Otherwise you and your career will never grow the way you'd like and hope.

8.2 Six Mistakes Translators Make

As you begin to develop and expand your career, learn from other translators, and do your best to avoid these career-stalling mistakes.

8.2.1 Taking on Too Much Work

Although it's hard to turn work down, if you take on more than you can handle, you split your energies. If you can't get all the work done in time, you potentially can let everyone down: yourself, your clients, and your clients' clients, if you're working for an agency. And if you don't make your deadline, you may never see that client again. Remember: It's far easier to get a client than to win one back after you've lost them. Do yourself a favor: If you're getting so much work that you can't cover it all, consider getting a partner, hiring an assistant, or referring business to a trusted colleague. Your potential client will be grateful, as will the other translator, and if you're lucky, you'll get work from both in the future.

8.2.2 Lack of Cultural Knowledge

If you lose familiarity with your target or source cultures, your translations will lose their “native” feel. A simple example of the importance of cultural knowledge is the word “gypsy.” Until the late twentieth century, this was the most common way to refer to a specific ethnic group. It wasn’t necessarily considered derogatory. Over time, this has come to be considered a prejudiced and stigmatizing slur, one that stereotypes the people it refers to. It’s been replaced by the name “Roma” or “Romany/Romani” to designate those people who speak the Romani language. Thus, the term “gypsy” is not considered a polite term in most contexts any longer. Would you know that if you hadn’t stayed in touch with both your target and source language cultures?

Perhaps, but perhaps not.

In sum, languages and cultures are dynamic, so you must keep track of ongoing language changes. Just as in any other field, there are “fashions” in linguistic styles, phrases, and words. Always check “trendy” wording in the target language; ask yourself whether you’ll still like your translation in a few years or whether you’ll wince with embarrassment.

Reading newspapers and magazines and listening to the news are both useful ways to keep up to date.

8.2.3 Not Specializing

Just as in mistake #2, you want to separate yourself from the herd of competent translators, some of whom can work considerably more cheaply than you can, and vaguely adequate machine translation programs.

How do you do this?

Simple: Specialize and pick your specialty carefully.

For example, would anyone hire a bilingual mechanic to write up or translate a legal contract, even if he had terrific writing

skills? Can you expect a literary translator to understand the terminology involved in documents from the mining industry?

If, however, you have expertise in a specific technical field, specialize in it! Focus your efforts on improving your language skills, and market your highly specialized translation expertise.

This is all well and good, however, if you already have expertise in a specialty field. But what if you don't? Or what if you want to expand into a field that's in more demand than your current specialization?

To render accurate translations, competent professional translators specialize in different fields of knowledge. A translator specialized in a certain field of knowledge can be a real asset to many translation companies or to companies in a certain industry. Sometimes technical expertise precedes linguistic skills, but the reverse can also be true: It often happens that linguistic skills come before technical specialization. If you already have language proficiency and you are planning to focus your efforts on specializing in a certain area, you need to take some steps:

- Think of a promising area corresponding to your personal interests. This way, the process of learning new information is easy and pleasant.
- Make a plan about the way you will invest your time, effort, and money. Think of all the possible sources of information you can use, such as professional associations and publications, specialized glossaries and dictionaries, trade shows, recognized specialists, fellow translators, companies and annual reports, etc. Take translation courses that focus on the industry you have chosen.
- Make a plan about the way you will market your new skills. Try to get to know a specific field of business better. Seek out ways to look at it from the inside and become familiar with it; your target field will then know about you and will be more positive about the possibility of using your services.

If you are interested in a certain field and have some amateur knowledge in it, devote some time and money to extra training.

8.2.4 Stretching the Truth

Don't claim expertise you don't possess. It's perfectly acceptable to branch into a new area or specialty, but let the client know. In fact, give them a discount rate to help you learn as you earn, so to speak. They'll be grateful for the lower price, and you'll probably get more work in that field in the future. Moreover, if you've only done a couple of projects in a specialty or language, don't claim to be an expert. If you can't live up to your billing, you damage your reputation and potentially put your client in a bad light.

8.2.5 Forgetting About Your Community

So many translators focus solely on getting their work online. Yet most major cities have businesses that need translation services, and for these local brick-and-mortar businesses, the fact that YOU are local will often be a huge advantage for you. Look in the yellowbook.com, visit your Chamber of Commerce, and build a list of the top 20-30 companies in your city that could use translation services. Then contact them and see if you can develop a provider relationship. It may take some nurturing, but local businesses will often pay much better than online agencies, which can pull from a pool of translators from across the globe.

8.2.6 Resting on Your Laurels

Translating is a dynamic, actively growing field. Keep your career in motion by continuing to learn. Take courses or webinars, go to conferences or online meetings, read articles in journals about translation and about your specialty field(s), read translation blogs, widen your knowledge of the world, learn about new software, get a certification, etc.

8.3 How to Boost Your Career

Whatever a translator's achievements are, there is always room for improvement. Are you looking to increase your list of clients? Or maybe your workload is adequate, but you yearn to work on topics that are more inspiring to translate. Or perhaps you're finding that managing projects fascinates you, in which case you may want to consider becoming a PM (project manager). Or perhaps your

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workload has grown so large on a regular basis that you need to consider adding a partner or partners, hiring an assistant, or becoming a small agency.

Before trying to boost your translation career, clearly define in your mind exactly what you want. The following are some steps, ideas, and thought processes to consider:

- Add extra services if you have the skills. For example, one way to expand your business is to offer **notarized or certified translations**. A notarized translation is a translation that is signed and dated by the translator in the presence of a notary public. It is the official translation of documents that are required by public authorities for official and/or legal purposes.

Each country and many states have their own laws on notarized translations. As a general rule of thumb, although a non-notarized or non-certified translation may allow the translator to have somewhat of a personalized approach to the target text in order to make it more readable to the target readership, with notarized translations, the translated text should stay as close to the source text as possible. Nevertheless, notarized translations should not be word for word if that produces an obscure meaning.

A translation that is notarized carries the authenticated signature of the translator authorized to sign it, and the signature of a notary public witnessing the signature, accompanied by an impression of his or her official notary seal. A notary public makes no representation as to the accuracy of the translated document content. The translator bears legal responsibility for the accuracy of a translation, usually by certifying a target language translation as a true and correct translation of the source text.

In general, in order to be accepted by the courts and/or public authorities, notarized translations must include a statement written by the translator certifying the correctness of the translated text vis-a-vis the source text, together with a signature and/or seal. Phrases such as "Official translation," "Certifying the correctness of the translation," "Certifying word-by-word compliance of the translation," etc., may or may not be officially

recognized certification clauses depending on the laws in force in a given jurisdiction. Caveat: In many jurisdictions, when a translation is notarized or certified, any deliberate or unintended error in the translated text that changes the meaning of the source text makes the translator legally responsible for any consequences arising from such an error. Therefore, translators should carefully check their translation before they sign it in the presence of a notary.

- Specialization can significantly advance your career if you have a field in which you can focus. The more you specialize in the field, the greater your translation accuracy. Specialization will enable you to work faster as you will not have to waste time decoding the meaning of terminology. This will increase your productivity, hence your revenues.
- Marketing is a good tool to find work. Design and upload your website, start your blog, "garnish" your portfolio with a list of interesting projects and high-profile clients you have had (with their permission of course), and make your pricing principles clear to let your future clients understand the cost of your services.
- Speaking of marketing, whenever possible, ask your clients if you can use them as references, assuming your clients are satisfied with your work of course.
- Education in the translation industry is a never-ending process; there is always another level of knowledge for you to obtain. To become a better translator, consider completing a translation certification program, live training seminar, language studies course, or workshop. In general, customers will have more confidence in assigning their job to those who are better trained or are certified translators as a certificate is evidence of a translator's training. Also, translators holding university degrees can appear more trustworthy to customers as such training is evidence of a reliable linguistic background.

Experience as a translator is another important factor for a customer who needs to invest in translation services. Well-organized resumes and portfolios are a good tool for translators to attract customers. How can you build your resume? Start with

education and/or a certification, add some pro bono work and/or an internship, and then dip your toes into your new field.

Learning or gaining expertise in a specialized or technical field is something that clients in certain industries or services demand. Mastering specialized terminology is of utmost importance here so that clients can use the translations that they've paid for.

With increasingly fierce competition and the world getting smaller through globalizing markets and communications, a growing number of businesses invest major resources in conveying their messages to customers in foreign markets. Good translation service providers enable a much more effective commercial communication. As a result, the translation industry is experiencing rapid growth, which by no means undermines the importance of highly professional translation performance, with a special focus on quality and detail. Translators and agencies able to prove they can perform up to their customers' expectations can be highly successful.

- Passion is contagious. If you lack passion for your job, change your job as soon as you can. Passion triggers enthusiasm, which attracts clients. A positive attitude about the work you are doing is a key to success.
- Try to improve in some way on a daily basis. You can improve your typing skills, your vocabulary, your command of terminology, your ability to communicate with clients, your marketing skills, your translation tools, etc.
- Networking within the community is very important. You can become a member of a translation association, visit translation community websites, participate in community events, do volunteer work, and so on.

Never forget that networking is part of promoting your services and your business. Cooperate with other agencies. Share subcontractors with them and negative information on providers or clients. Discuss trends. Sharing strengthens your industry's community.

At the same time, if you spend all your time being active in the

online translation community, you won't get your own work done. Choose to spend more time there when you have idle periods or else discipline yourself to a specific number of minutes each day.

- Ethics are fundamental to every human activity, including business. Follow the Golden Rule: *Do unto others as you would have others do unto you*. Do not undermine other people's business, do not malign your colleagues gratuitously, do not cheat clients, take on only projects within your field of knowledge and expertise, do not mislead colleagues, do not forget to support and help your peers, do not change the meaning in your translation without the client's agreement, do not avoid informing your clients about errors you have detected in their texts or your translations, do not disclose proprietary information, and so on.
- Cooperation makes business easier. If you see that you will not meet a deadline, subcontract part or the entire project to a trusted colleague. If a colleague needs a subcontractor, give a helping hand and be that subcontractor if you have the skills. Or what if you know terminology that someone needs for his or her work? Don't act like it's a trade secret; help out by sharing it. And if a client is not a reliable payer, inform the community.

A career is a process and a project in progress. It may come to a standstill for a moment, but you can and must drive it to where you want to go next—and to wind up where you want to be. As with most road trips, you need your map. Sit and think of everything you do and do not do and see what changes you need to make.

Finally, a career that isn't moving is a career that risks stalling and dying, much like the great white shark. Be like the shark and stay in motion.

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of “How to Start a Translation Agency Business.”

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video: <http://translatorcertification.com/Video8/>

The Translator Training Textbook by Adriana Tassini

Review Questions

1. What are 6 mistakes translators make?
2. Name at least 3 things you might want to do to increase the amount of business you do.
3. True or False: Client referrals are always important.
4. What is the golden rule, and how does it apply to a translator?
5. What is a notarized translation?
6. True or False: Continuing education is very important for a translation professional.
7. How important is it to grow your business or career?
8. What's a PM, and why should a translation professional know about this term?
9. Is specialization worth the time and effort involved?
10. Name 5 ways to promote your business.

Answers

1. Resting on their laurels, stretching the truth, taking on too much work, forgetting their community, lack of cultural knowledge, and not specializing
2. Add a specialization, add extra services, pursue continuing education, and network
3. True
4. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Treat your clients, competitors, colleagues, and business community well: Don't slander or badmouth, don't be obnoxious, help where you can, don't cheat your clients or your suppliers, pay your debts on time, and don't mislead others.
5. A translation that has been brought to a notary public, who verifies whatever aspects of the translation a notary public is legally allowed to verify in that part of the world and then stamps it with an official seal
6. True
7. Very important. The maxim is that a business that isn't growing is dying.
8. Project Manager. A translation professional who contracts with an agency or works for one will probably be dealing with project managers, and at some point, a translator may be interested in becoming a PM as the next career step.
9. Absolutely
10. Network with colleagues online and offline, do pro bono work, add a blog, update or improve your website, get client referrals, and more

Chapter 9: Quality and Ethics

9.1 Business and Personal Ethics

Ethics are defined as a system of moral principles and also as the rules of conduct recognized with respect to a particular type of human action or a particular group, culture, etc.

When thinking of professional ethics, people will normally think about doctors, lawyers, politicians, etc. Because the activities of a translation professional primarily take place out of the public eye, the ethical code translators have to follow also remains somewhat hidden from the general public. Nonetheless, the code exists and is crucial.

Good business practices and ethics cover a wide variety of situations, ranging from applying the golden rule to those you encounter to having a sense of honor in how you act and speak. Treat everyone the way you'd wish to be treated. Never lose sight of the fact that someone you work for may hire you again or recommend you for future work to someone else. Never turn in shoddy work; always give your best effort.

Be honest and honorable; say what you'll do and then do it. If circumstances force you to back out on a client—and that should be a rare occurrence—let that person or agency know as soon as possible so that they can find a replacement. Never simply disappear on a client.

Be courteous, friendly, and kind. Avoid online “flame” wars. It's easy to get cranky and curmudgeonly when one is hunched over a computer for hours on end, parsing and splitting hairs in the meaning of words. When you feel a need to snap at people, take a break and get some exercise.

Be helpful to others. Reach out to your fellow professionals and help with tricky terminology when you have time. Give back to your community. Badmouthing colleagues and their work reflect badly on you—and it will tend to boomerang. This is not to say that you

should avoid correcting flaws in someone else's translation if asked to do so, nor should you simply lavish praise over mediocre work. Instead, find diplomatic ways to discuss that with your client. "Judge not lest ye be judged" is a very sound principle—and an extension of the golden rule. Encourage, mentor, and assist beginners. It is very important to support and guide young professionals and give them a chance to learn. It is wrong to see them as competitors.

Behave with professional integrity. Don't claim knowledge you lack, don't lie about what you've done or not done, and don't take on projects if you don't have the requisite skill set. This simply is not professional. Few translators are proficient in all possible fields. Is an amateur translation of any use to anyone? Of course, this is different from telling a client that you are branching into a new area, however, or that you've done a little work in a field but not a lot.

Only take on projects that you can bring to a successful conclusion. If for any reason you feel you don't have adequate resources to complete a project, it is wiser to send your client to another agency or translator than to accept the work.

Pay your suppliers on time, and if you can't, let them know and set up a payment plan so that they aren't left in the lurch.

Be responsible. Adhere to your deadlines. To do so, you must adequately plan and manage your work progress. If you must subcontract out your work to colleagues due to tight deadlines, for example, make sure that your client is aware of this. And be careful that the subcontractor is professional and able to maintain confidentiality.

Ethics can impact pricing as well. Every translator or agency has a system of rates for different projects but taking advantage of clients' lack of experience or desperate straits is unacceptable. Don't gouge: Clients expect that they will be charged honestly and fairly. This is not to say that it's wrong to charge extra for rush or holiday work. These are perfectly reasonable surcharges, although not required ones.

On the other hand, some feel that it is unethical to work for substandard fees as this undermines the prices that the rest of the

translation industry can charge in the community. This is, for some translators, a controversial stance, and not all agree that this is unethical; a substandard fee in one part of the world may well be a princely sum in another. And a beginner should, of course, charge less than an experienced expert.

Should you agree to take on a translation project or text that conflicts with your personal beliefs? Every translator has a different perspective here. In all likelihood, you may have to decide this on a case-by-case basis, and it may or may not arise for you during your career.

9.2 Translation and Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important aspect of translator ethics. Because of the nature of their job, translators often learn information that is personal or proprietary. Disclosing such information to anyone is wrong and could lead to adverse consequences for the client. Moreover, if a translator is known as being unable to keep information confidential, it could well lead to a substantial drop in his or her business.

Confidentiality applies on a number of levels. A translator should never:

- Use a paid-for project as a work sample without a client's permission.
- Include proprietary names, places, or pertinent details when getting help from other translators.
- Use a client's name as a reference without their explicit permission.
- Talk, blog, or gossip about what a client is doing.
- Use information learned from a translation document.
- Share a client's translation with anyone else without the client's explicit permission—preferably in writing.

Imagine you have commissioned an agency to translate a private agreement critical for your business, and you suddenly see

details from that agreement discussed in the media. What would you think and how would you feel?

Probably your first thought would either be “I should have signed a confidentiality agreement” or “I will never go near that company again.” Such a breach of confidentiality can even be actionable under certain circumstances.

Every client has the right to have his or her documents translated with the utmost care and confidentiality, which means non-disclosure of any personal or sensitive proprietary information to third parties.

Basic ethical awareness and good business practices are also supported by the use of secure servers, computers, and electronic systems.

Last but not least, confidentiality can be used as a service selling point. Some clients will ask a professional to sign an NDA (non-disclosure agreement) or confidentiality agreement. It is to your advantage to do so. Maybe add that this NDA is also applicable to all sample’s translator might give to a new client, based on a former work made for a previous client. These practices have to be avoided at all price and any sample have to be anonymized to avoid lacking precious information related to a previous client.

9.3 What Translators Do Not Do

Translators do not change or amend the documents they are translating. That is the responsibility of the organization or writer who created the original document. Nor is it a translator’s responsibility to put things right in a translation either if he or she finds an error. A conscientious translator will point that error out to the client, depending on the kind of error, the amount of time involved in the translation, and how that error might affect the translation. But a translator is neither a copy editor nor a fact checker.

Translators do not give professional advice in the fields in which they translate in the course of translating. If they are already specialists in a field and do so in a separate context, that is, of course, a different story. In a sense, it is much like the situation of an actor on a TV show who plays a doctor: He or she may accumulate a world of medical knowledge, but he or she never went to medical school,

never took the examinations to become a doctor, and is not an M.D. A little knowledge can be dangerous in this type of situation.

A translator does not make personal comments within the text. One can make comments if any clarification is needed, but that is best done via translators' notes. These are preferably placed as footnotes or endnotes so as not to disturb the original formatting.

A translator never changes the style of a text, unless explicitly asked to do so. One's own personal taste, preferences, or knowledge doesn't give a translator the right to amend or bowdlerize. Naturally, this gets tricky in certain circumstances, particularly when trying to make a translation fit the culture one is translating into. And sometimes the original meaning can be obscure. But in general, the closer one adheres to the original style, voice, tone, and diction—while still making the translation understandable—the better. This does not mean, however, that literal translation is the goal. It is not.

Finally, a translator never deliberately changes or distorts meaning.

9.4 Some Thoughts on Quality

What does quality mean? How can one recognize good quality? And most importantly, how can you deliver quality? The following are some thoughts on this elusive but crucial aspect of translation.

Quality in translation, along with language skills and linguistic competence, requires the following:

- Self-discipline and organization
- Self-criticism so that you always strive to improve your work and your skills
- Objective judgment of your competence and the ability to say no if a task is beyond your skills
- Continuous learning to increase your world knowledge and language skills
- Careful attention to formatting your work. If you use CAT tools, they can help you follow the formatting in the source

text. Even if you are not using a CAT tool, your translation should maintain the formatting of the source text.

One typical beginner's formatting error involves tables and tabs. If you want to write something that looks like a table but has no lines, a beginner will generally use spaces and tabulation. But if the formatting gets changed for any reason, the table becomes a mess. The solution? Use the formatting capabilities of your software to create the table, and then the table will stay a table.

Here are some other tips for maintaining quality.

When writing a translation, never compromise on quality. Written words stay on paper forever. If you come to a difficult word or term, highlight it and leave it for later.

Even if you use a CAT tool that you feel is particularly good, never skip proofreading. Review the final text. And read it on paper as it's easy to overlook small errors and typos on a computer screen.

If you have the time—and try to make sure you do—put the translation aside for a day or two before proofreading and editing it. That way your mind will be fresh, and it will no longer be analyzing the source text. Your focus will be on correctness and style only.

When revising a translated text, if it is not technical or legal, make sure that your choice of words and of sentence structure really correspond to the patterns in the target language. Always keep the following question in mind: "Will I like this translation several years from now?"

Offer completely finalized translations. Producing a multiple-choice translation with the hope that your client will choose the word that suits him, or her best is less than ideal, although there are occasional situations where that is an acceptable and even appropriate choice.

Communicate with your client regarding terminology. Do not be afraid to ask questions that will clarify the source text. It is not wrong to ask; it is wrong not to ask.

Do not tolerate mediocre quality. Clients appreciate high quality. If your agency has the reputation of delivering top quality, you will find that even competitors will sometimes refer clients to you.

Whenever forced by circumstances to split a project into sections and subcontract them to different providers, make sure that everyone works at the same quality level and with the same glossary and terminology. Define formatting parameters. Define a way for all to achieve consistent terminology in the target language. A shared CAT tool can be extremely useful here. Make sure there is enough time left at the end for editing the whole text—which preferably should be done by one person only—plus a final proofreading.

Adequate use of terminology is a major issue in the translation industry. Nearly every field that needs translation—with the conditional exception of literary translation—requires accurate handling of terminology.

Incorrectly translated terminology can cause immense problems and unforeseen ramifications. It can ruin other professionals' localization efforts. Wrong medical terminology in the target language version of a medical text, for example, can have disastrous effects on people's health or lives. If delicate legal issues are erroneously translated, the consequences can also be dire. Poorly translated paragraphs about engineering processes can create confusion, and so forth.

One of the most famous examples of this type of error, in this case more of a localization issue than an actual translation, arose with the Hubble Space Telescope, which needed a huge mirror, one that had to be assembled from many pieces. No one discovered until it was far too late that the scientists on one continent were using the metric system for their measurements and those from the other continent were not. The results were disastrous, although eventually a work-around was invented and the Hubble went on to be an invaluable tool.

In the process of proofreading technical translations, always check for appropriate terminology in the target language. However, in highly specialized texts, CATs and glossaries will not help the translator analyze and understand the process descriptions nor

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translate them correctly unless he or she is an expert in the subject matter. But ponder this question: If the translator is not an expert in the subject matter, should he or she be translating highly specialized texts in the first place?

9.5 Dealing with Organizational Terminology

Organizational terminology is a unique case of specialized terminology, one that has a strong impact on translations for organizations, associations, and bureaucracies.

Each new professional environment has its specific features and vocabulary that you will need to learn should you translate for that environment. Moreover, certain kinds of organizations and associations develop their own brand of in-house lingo. NGOs and governmental bureaucracies are particularly prone to this development.

Have you ever tried to decode the contents of a document released by the government and transform it into common speech? How many times have you faced the challenge of rewording institutional documents in order to make them understandable to people who are unable to grasp the meaning behind the words? Have you ever wondered why on earth officers in governmental and intergovernmental establishments use such muddy, obfuscating language?

All organizations produce texts and documents in the organizational language targeted to their possible readers, that is, other people, organizations, and institutions. Diverse as the organizations that compose texts and documents are, the style in which they write tends to become similar: bureaucratized.

It is not an easy job to translate such documents from a foreign language for the very simple reason that the style of the source text should find a parallel in the target text, while the style of organizational languages may vary largely between different regions in the world. Also, it's usually stiff and often dense. The organizational language of a region or a country depends substantially on the local culture, economic development, religion, and, last but not least, political developments. For a translation of organizational texts and documents to be successful, the translator

should be very well informed about the organizational affairs of the area where the target language is in use. To achieve a satisfactory level of information on the use of organizational language, translators of organizational texts should read the organization's newsletters, ezines, and house communications.

Unsurprisingly, translating organizational documents is not a field in which unbridled linguistic creativity may be exhibited or even appreciated.

9.6 Rewarding Quality: Translator Awards and Prizes

While the work of the translator can often be lonely and inadequately acknowledged, translator awards are one way to reward quality and celebrate excellence in translation. Many can offer a translator worldwide recognition, and most even include a monetary prize, sometimes even a princely sum.

There are a number of translation awards, prizes, and competitions. Many are language specific; most are for literary translation, and some are also genre specific. The following is an extensive but no means exhaustive list of translation awards.

1) The PEN American Center gives out several different translation prizes and grants:

- Poetry in Translation
- Book of the Month Club Translation Prize for a book-length translation into English (from any language)
- Edward and Lily Tuck Award for Paraguayan Literature
- Translation Fund Grants for translating into English book-length works of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or drama that haven't already been translated into English or that have only appeared in a very bad version
- PEN/Ralph Manheim Medal for Translation is given to a

literary translator for lifetime achievements.

2) Astrid Lindgren Prizes: There are two prizes honoring Swedish writer Astrid Lindgren.

- The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, from the Swedish Authors Union, is for the best published translation into Swedish of a book in any genre honoring the spirit of Astrid Lindgren.
- The Astrid Lindgren Prize, awarded by the FIT (International Federation of Translators), is given to a translator of books for children and young adults for either a single translation or a body of work.

3) The FIT gives a number of translation prizes in addition to the Astrid Lindgren Prize. These are:

- Pierre François Caillé Medal, for someone who has promoted the status of the translation profession.
- Aurora Borealis—two different prizes:
 - Fiction—Sponsored by the Norwegian Association of Literary Translators for either a single work or a body of work.
 - Nonfiction—Sponsored by the Norwegian Association of Nonfiction Writers and Translators (NFF), this can be either for a single outstanding translation or a body of work.
- Karel Čapek Medal, given for the literary translation of a less- commonly spoken language (language of limited diffusion), either for a single translation or a body of work.
- Best Periodical.
- Best Website.

4) The Society of Authors (supported by Arts Council England) gives out prizes for published translations available in the U.K., although the translator may come from anywhere:

- Saif Ghobash-Banipal Prize for Arabic into English
- Vondel Prize for Dutch or Flemish into English
- Scott Moncrieff Prize for French into English
- Schlegel Tieck Prize for German into English
- The Hellenic Foundation for Culture Translation Prize for modern Greek into English
- TLS-Risa Domb Porjes Prize for Hebrew into English
- John Florio Prize for Italian into English
- Calouste Gulbenkian Prize for Portuguese into English
- Premio Valle Inclán for Spanish into English
- Bernard Shaw Prize for Swedish into English

5) The German Embassy Award for Translators is a new prize co-sponsored by the German Embassy, the Goethe Institute, and the Society of Authors for literary translators working in the U.K. on German to English translations.

6) The Academia Rossica Prize awards two prizes for excellence in Russian to English Literary translation:

- The Rossica Prize, split between the translator and the publisher
- The Rossica Young Translators Prize, for a young translator

7) The Lois Roth Prize for Literary Translation is given for a translation from Persian (including Tajik) into English. The prize is administered by the American Institute of Iranian Studies and funded by the Lois Roth Endowment.

8) The Modern Language Association (MLA) has three prizes:

- The Lois Roth Award for a book-length translation of literature. This is different from the Lois Roth *Prize*, above.
- The Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for the translation of scholarly study of literature. Books translated can be in the fields of literary history, literary criticism, philology, or literary theory.
- The Fenia and Yaakov Leviant Memorial Prize in Yiddish Studies for will be awarded alternately to an outstanding translation or an outstanding scholarly work in the field of Yiddish.

9) The Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture (Columbia University) gives an award to the best translation or translations of modern or classical Japanese literature into English with its Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Prize.

10) Another prize for Japanese into English is the Kurodahan Press Translation Prize for a short story.

11) The American Scandinavian Foundation awards two prizes for translations of fiction, prose, drama, or poetry that were originally written in a Nordic language:

- The Translation Prize
- The Lief and Inger Sjöberg Award, for someone who is previously unpublished as a literary translator

12) The Times Stephen Spender Prize for Poetry Translation is an award for the translation of a poem from any modern or classical language into English.

13) The Robert Fagles Translation Prize is given by the National Poetry Association to a translator who has shown exceptional ability

The Translator Training Textbook by Adriana Tassini

in translating poetry into English. It is coordinated by the PEN Translation Fund and Columbia University's Center for Literary Translation.

14) The Jules Chametsky Prize for Literary Translation rewards the best translations of poetry and prose to appear in the *Massachusetts Review*.

15) The Susan Sontag Prize for Translation, technically a grant and not a prize, is for a proposed literary translation (poetry or prose) from Italian into English.

16) The John Glassco Translation Prize is awarded by the Literary Association of Canada for a translator's first book-length literary translation published into French or English in Canada. The translator must be Canadian or a permanent resident.

17) The Austrian Cultural Forum awards its Translation Prize to support translations of modern Austrian fiction, poetry, and drama that have preferably not been translated into English before. The prize is a collaboration between the ACF, Words without Borders, and the Dietrich Botstiber Foundation.

18) The Sol-Plaatje Prize, named after Solomon Tshekisho Plaatje (1875- 1932) and awarded by the English Academy of South Africa, is awarded for a translation from any of South Africa's other official languages of a work of poetry or prose.

19) The Prix du Meilleur Livre Étranger gives two awards—one for an essay and one for a novel—for literature translated into French.

20) The European Center for the Translation of Literature and the Human Sciences, in coordination with the British Council, gives the European Literary Translation Award for the translation into Greek of contemporary literature (novel, poem, play, or short story) that was published in the United Kingdom.

21) The Oxford-Weidenfeld Prize is given for a translation of a book into English from any living European language.

- 22) The Marsh Award for Children's Literature in Translation is given for a translation into English of a work for young readers.
- 23) The Raiziss/de Palchi Award is for American translators who have rendered modern Italian poetry into English.
- 24) The Harold Morton Landon Award is awarded for a translation into English of a book of poetry that is at least 40 pages long.
- 25) The Tchernikovsky Award is an award from Israel given for translations into Hebrew.
- 26) The Arkansas Arabic Translation Award is given to a book-length piece of literature translated from Arabic into English.
- 27) The Bastian Prize is actually two prizes, one for children's literature and one for "regular" literature, awarded for translating a published work into Norwegian.
- 28) The Best Translated Book Award gives two prizes, one for poetry and one for fiction, for translations into English.
- 29) The Mildred Batchelder Award is awarded to a publisher for a work of children's literature translated into English.
- 30) The International Dagger (formerly Duncan Lawrie International Dagger) is given by the Crime Writers Association for the best translation of a crime book.
- 31) The International Literature Award is given for the first time a work is translated into English from German.
- 32) The Willis Barnstone Translation Prize is for a poem translated into English.
- 33) The Helen and Kurt Wolff Translation Prize is awarded for a work of literature translated into English from German.
- 34) *The Independent* Foreign Fiction Prize is given for a work of contemporary fiction translated into English, published in the U.K.,

and accomplished by a translator while the author is still living.

35) The Noma Award for the Translation of Japanese Literature is given to a new translation of modern Japanese literature.

36) The Lucien Stryk Asian Translation Prize recognizes book-length translations into English of Asian poetry or Zen Buddhism.

37) The National Translation Award is given by the American Literary Translators Association for a book-length work.

38) The Science Fiction and Fantasy Translation Award rewards speculative long and short fiction translated into English.

39) The Alfred Jurkowski Award is given to translations of Polish literature into English.

40) The Sati Prizes are given by the South African Translator's Institute for the translation of literature into or out of any of South Africa's official languages.

41) Ars Translationis, Mykola Lukash Award, for translating a work of literature into Ukrainian.

9.7 Educating First-Time Clients

There is a first time for everything, including hiring a translator. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that first-time clients often have no idea whatsoever about what a translation job involves. Thus, it will help you if you help your clients learn about your work. With any luck, a pinch of polite education will lead to a cure of repeat business.

- Explain to your first-time clients about page size standards or the basis on which you set your rates. Make it very clear to them that depending on the page set up, the font, the formatting, etc., a text that seems "just one page" can, in fact, be much more than a standard page. If you find it appropriate, you can even demonstrate on your computer how you count words or characters. A "per word" can also be applied for more

accurate billing in lieu of a "per page" standard.

- Discuss terminology issues with new clients if necessary. Some first-time clients do not realize that terms and terminology can be a very delicate matter.
- Sometimes it is necessary to teach first-time clients that the work of translation is a process. Try to make it clear that it often takes longer to translate a page than to write it.
- Explain how many pages per day a translator can normally translate. Make sure that you explain about different levels of difficulty and specialization. That way your new client will understand your pricing principles, including the principle of higher pay for urgent jobs—should you choose to charge a pre-approved surcharge. Never apply a surcharge without first getting your client's permission.
- Provide your first-time clients with a general explanation of what a poor translation means. This will build confidence in them about your quality level and will also help them understand why they should not trust the cheapest of cheap providers.

Informing your first-time clients about such things will help them to adjust their expectations to realistic parameters, and it will also ensure their cooperation should you need it.

Consider putting together a PDF file (Adobe Acrobat Reader) that you can post on your website and give or email to new, first-time clients. Doing so will go far in positioning you as the experienced expert in your field as well as someone who has now provided them with value before even charging a cent.

Despite the fact that you may need to educate first-time clients about translating, your task is not to educate your clients about their own field (i.e., how to do their jobs or write about it) when you translate source texts they have written—unless they ask for your help or opinion of course. Remember that you are by no means superior to your client. Their wording may be imperfect, but it's worth remembering that they are professionals in their field and you are not. Do not be patronizing toward them about text writing skills.

Instead, try to ask ample questions so that you will be able to do a good translation.

9.8 Tips on Hiring a Translator

Many people know foreign languages. A large number of them also believe they can translate. In the beginning of their translation careers, they contact translation agencies in their search for potential jobs. Once a translator proves his or her capacity to deliver good service and has a sufficient workload, he or she sometimes stops contacting new translation agencies, although he or she should not do so.

If you are just starting your translation business and you need to offer your services as a freelancer, you should be aware of approaches employed by translation agencies in recruiting new translators in different languages and should see whether you fall into any of the categories mentioned below.

Agencies will do some or all of the following when trying to hire a new translator or contracting with a brand-new freelancer. How does one go about finding a translator?

- Ask someone in the translation business community for references. Regardless of the strong competition, people who have been in this industry long enough are not afraid of newcomers; indeed, experienced translators are more afraid of someone who may slash prices and then deliver inadequate work.

If you do get a recommendation, however, be aware that even if your references are excellent, few agencies will trust those recommendations 100%. You will still have to prove your reliability and professional skills.

- Do some reconnaissance among their possible target clientele, searching for the translators that they use on a regular basis. If you happen to be one of those translators, they will probably contact you. As a rule, freelance translators are generally open to new clients. Do not

disappoint your new or old clients; do your best to meet or exceed their expectations.

- Search for professionals on freelance websites. One can learn a good deal there. An agency will either hire a beginning online provider with a promising portfolio or an experienced online provider with excellent references, a good portfolio, and/or a stellar resume.
- Place an ad in newspaper, publications other media, specifying their criteria. Normally, many potential applicants will call. It may be reasonable to hire young people in the beginning of their career if the agency is prepared to invest some time and energy in educating them about performance and giving them quality- related skills. Young people may lack experience, but they can be very committed, energetic, and flexible.
- Contact colleges or universities locally, looking for foreign students who might be interested in an internship or willing to become freelance translators. Educational institutions in the area that offer language courses, particularly ESL courses, can be a very good pool of young enthusiasts. However, because of their lack of experience, these enthusiasts will need detailed instructions on how to do their work as well as close supervision. Moreover, they will only be able to take on general translation work.
- Hire translators who have credentials that verify their language skills and who also demonstrate deep cultural knowledge or interests in many fields. A translator interested in learning new things may be able to handle translations in different fields. Agencies often try to design a system to test this.
- Avoid hiring translators who talk about money first and for whom work details seem to be less important than money as that may be a source of trouble.
- Be cautious in hiring translators who claim they can translate in all possible fields as it may turn out that they are a jack of all trades, with a few skills in many areas but mastery in none.

- Keep from hiring translators who do not ask questions about the job assigned to them, as they may be so overconfident that they cannot perform to the necessary level of quality.
- Avoid hiring translators who cannot provide any evidence of their language skills. Translation requires an equally high level of literacy in the source and target languages. Being bilingual does not necessarily mean that a person will translate well. An undergraduate or master's degree in any field can be a real asset.

Whether the translators they hire are young or old, experienced or just starting, agencies will make sure their providers know how important quality of service is for them as well as how important deadlines and the ability to follow instructions are.

One last note: In many countries, it is illegal to hire based on age or even to ask about it. Basing your hiring preferences on stereotypes alone is bad business; try to judge professional translators strictly upon their skills.

Review Questions

1. True or False: A code of ethics is unimportant for translators, as opposed to doctors, lawyers, etc.
2. Name at least 5 things a translator should never do, as they violate a client's confidentiality.
3. What are 4 additional things a translator never should do (that don't involve confidentiality)?
4. What does the acronym NDA stand for?
5. What common formatting error do beginners often make?
6. What step should a translator never skip?
7. List 10 translation prizes for literary translations into English.
8. List 5 translation prizes for translations into a language other than English.
9. Should you take on projects that conflict with your personal beliefs?
10. When hiring a translator or other professional from around the world, can you ask about their age, marital status, or race?

Answers

1. False
2. Use a paid-for project as a work sample without a client's permission; include proprietary names, places, or pertinent details when getting help from other translators; use a client's name as a reference without their explicit permission; talk, blog, write, or gossip about what a client is doing; use information learned from a translation document; share a client's translation with anyone else without the client's explicit permission— preferably in writing
3. Change or amend documents, give professional advice outside the field of translation, make personal comments within the text, change or distort meaning
4. Nondisclosure Agreement, also known as a confidentiality agreement
5. Using tabs in a table
6. Proofreading, preferably on paper and not on a monitor
- 7-8. See pp. 178-184.
9. That is a personal choice and a matter for you to decide for yourself.
10. No, in many countries, it is illegal to discriminate in hiring based on these characteristics, and in some countries, it's illegal even to ask.

Chapter 10: Final Thoughts

...seen on the Internet

From Italy: PERSONS ARE PROHIBITED FROM PICKING FLOWERS FROM ANY BUT THEIR OWN GRAVES.

From Switzerland: OUR WINES LEAVE YOU NOTHING TO HOPE FOR.

From Russia: YOU ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE CEMETERY WHERE FAMOUS RUSSIAN AND SOVIET COMPOSERS, ARTISTS, AND WRITERS ARE BURIED DAILY EXCEPT THURSDAY.

From Poland: SALAD A FIRM'S OWN MAKE; LIMPID RED BEET SOUP WITH CHEESY DUMPLINGS IN THE FORM OF A FINGER; ROASTED DUCK LET LOOSE; BEEF RASHERS BEATEN IN THE COUNTRY PEOPLE'S FASHION.

From the Czech Republic: TAKE ONE OF OUR HORSE-DRIVEN CITY TOURS. WE GUARANTEE NO MISCARRIAGES.

From Hong Kong: TEETH EXTRACTED BY THE LATEST METHODISTS.

From Japan: COOLES AND HEATES; IF YOU WANT CONDITION OF WARM AIR IN YOUR ROOM, PLEASE CONTROL YOURSELF.

From Japan: WHILE SOLUTION IS NOT TOXIC IT WILL NOT MAKE CHILD EDIBLE.

From Thailand: PLEASE DO NOT BRING SOLICITORS INTO YOUR ROOM.

From East Africa: A NEW SWIMMING POOL IS RAPIDLY TAKING SHAPE SINCE THE CONTRACTORS HAVE THROWN IN THE BULK OF THEIR WORKERS.

From South Africa: MENTAL HEALTH PREVENTION CENTER

And so, we come full circle, returning to where we started this book—with egregious mistranslations. While unfortunate examples like these make great reading, they are miniature cautionary tales of translators who did a bad job through overconfidence, typos, carelessness, amateurism, working too quickly, or under-training.

Don't let your translations become yet one more online joke. Study, learn, and be professional—with all that implies.

What kinds of jobs do children dream about? In most of the cases, along with many other considerations, these are jobs in which they can be recognized by their community. Typically, professionals in any field receive respect and recognition. In general, professional attainments in the translation industry are praiseworthy and worthy of recognition.

There are many reasons for a professional translator to be proud of the job he or she does. A translator helps people communicate with foreign business partners, consumers use foreign technologies and products, members of various industries sell their products in foreign markets, individuals survive in a foreign country, cultures all over the world promote their attainments, and more.

The more a translator realizes the importance of this kind of work, the higher his or her sense of responsibility is when working on different projects. There is a saying in the theater that goes, "There are no small roles, only small actors." Restating this expression for the translation industry, there are no insignificant translations. Even the simplest translation of a bachelor's degree or birth certificate requires a responsible attitude because it may either build a career or ruin the harmony of someone's life.

Professional pride and professional quality are interrelated. When you deliver professional quality, you can feel proud of your work. When you are proud of your work, you want everyone to appreciate what you are doing, and you continue to deliver professional quality in order not to compromise your work.

Professional translation is unlikely to make you fabulously rich. But when you are a good translator with faithful clientele and a solid

reputation as a dedicated, easy to work with, patient, and understanding expert in translation, you should have a good workload and be able to earn a good living.

The first thing you need in order to succeed as a professional translator is desire. Do you want to translate because this is the job of your dreams? If your answer is yes, you are on the right track to success. Do you want to translate because this is a relatively well-paid job? If that is the only reason—if you see coins, banknotes, and checks when you think of translation—you are on the road to failure.

No one is born a translator. Once you start, you build your skills on a day- to-day basis. However, you should be sure that this job is exactly what you want. If you force yourself to work and do not enjoy it, do not waste your time. Of course, there will be assignments that are not exactly in line with what you enjoy working on, but they can serve as great experience while you are building your career.

The job of translation professional is not for untrained enthusiasts or unprepared amateurs. You can only translate well if you have a good command of a foreign language as well as your own. But that's only the beginning of the skills you need. If you want to become a translator, learn your craft, consider getting some kind of certification or credential, and then start into the career. Once you start doing the job successfully, your self-esteem will grow as your skills increase.

Your success will be substantially facilitated by your enthusiasm. If you adjust your attitude so that you see a desirable challenge in each project you take on and you're driven by enthusiasm for the job you're doing, your clients will take notice. Each successfully completed project will add to your skills and self-confidence. So in your early stages, it is very important to avoid taking on projects with a doubtful possibility of success. If the project is not in your range of expertise or the time limits are really pressing and you see that quality will be compromised, just do not take it. Any little failure in your early development will lower your self-confidence or self-esteem as a beginning professional. This in turn may lower the level of your enthusiasm and how you present yourself, which can have a negative effect on your clients' opinion of you.

The Translator Training Textbook by Adriana Tassini

Everyone has to start somewhere. Work hard, work smart, and work consistently, and you'll stand a good chance of becoming a highly successful, satisfied translation professional.

Good luck!

Free Bonus Video Content: Our team recorded a video on the topic of "Seven Habits of Highly Successful Translators."

This video was originally produced as one of the 50 video modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

Video: <http://translatorcertification.com/Video9/>

Chapter 11: Expert Translator Interview Transcripts

Our team has now conducted expert audio interviews over the phone with 10 translators who have six or more years of experience each in the industry. The translators we interviewed come from many different countries. Each interview was recorded in audio MP3 format and may be downloaded to your computer if you are a Certified Translation Professional (CTP) Designation member through our TranslatorTraining.com website.

Even if you are not a CTP Designation member, you may still read the transcripts of these interviews in this chapter of the book.

Expert Translator Interview #1: Carmela Reyes

Adriana: “My name is Adriana Tassini, and I am the head of the Certified Translation Professional program, which is an online program for translators. And as part of running this program, we have interviewed many translation experts so that we can offer this audio interview to all of our participants within the CTP program. Today we are interviewing Carmela from the United States of America, who is an expert in translation. And with that, let us get started with the interview. So, Carmela, once again, thank you for taking the time to do this interview with us.”

Carmela: “Well, thank you for inviting me, and I am honored and pleased to do this.”

Adriana: “Well, that’s good to know. Thank you! So, to begin, can you tell us how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Carmela: “Certainly. Let me start with a little bit of history. At the age of six, I started translating and interpreting for my parents, friends, and neighbors. They would take me to offices such as doctor offices and utility companies to read letters, forms, etc. That was when I first had my ah-ha moment when I reached the age of seven.”

“When I was seven, I went with a neighbor to the gas company to help her find out something about her bill. At the end of that interaction, the neighbor gave me a dollar bill and asked me to have it changed because she wanted to give me something for being so helpful. I gave it to the gas company employee, and I asked him, ‘Please change the bill.’ He took it in his hands and then kept running his hands over the bill and saying, ‘Poof! Change into a rabbit. Poof! Change into a flower.’ And then he looked at me and said, ‘Well, little girl, what do you want me to change it to?’ So, I looked at him and I told him, ‘Quarters, dimes, and nickels.’ I mean, it was obvious to me. So, then he went and got the change, gave it to me, and said, ‘Next time, you should ask me to break the bill.’”

“I took the change in my little hands and gave it to the neighbor lady and turned and looked back at the man, and I told him, ‘Hey, mister, how is it, then, that we have the change in our hand, and the dollar is still in one piece? You didn’t break it.’ That morning I

learned a life-long lesson that there is always more than one way to say something and get the same result. So since then, I look for all the options when translating and always choose the best possible one.

“Now flash-forward to when I was fifteen years old, and I was at an attorney’s office and he was having problems with a Hispanic couple. They were trying to get the proper documents from them. So, I went over to help them understand what the attorney was asking them for. The attorney then asked me if I could come back with them on their next appointment to help translate not only for the conversations but help with translating the documents as well. On that appointment, I was hired as a part-time student worker and was earning as much as his legal secretary because from that point on, he was able to triple his clientele with my skills in his office. So, I graduated from high school and went to work for the government in California for thirty years. Throughout my career, I have translated a plethora of documents having to do with policies, procedures, manuals, information brochures, legal forms, etc. So, to answer your question, taking the long way, I have been paid as a translator for forty- four years.”

Adriana: “Oh wow. That is very impressive. You definitely started in the industry at a very early age, and apparently you really like what you do.”

Carmela: “You have to love what you are doing. You have to be willing to do it for no pay if it is something you love.”

Adriana: “That’s right. And can you tell us how many languages you are able to translate for?”

Carmela: “I translate Spanish to English and English to Spanish.”

Adriana: “Perfect.”

Carmela: “I speak a little bit of French but not enough to do translations.”

Adriana: “I see. Very good. Do you have any formal education or background in the field of translation?”

Carmela: “Well, back in the days when I formally started in the government, there were not many classes that you could sign up for.

So my education at that time was reading periodicals, magazines, dictionaries, listening to television and radio... And then I did start taking courses, not college courses, on my own. And I was very lucky that in my work environment, I worked with people from Spain, Peru, Argentina, Cuba, Portugal, Puerto Rico, and El Salvador. So whenever I would have to do a translation, I could go to them and have them read it and give me knowledgeable feedback based on their culture and knowledge of the countries and customs. That way I could use all of their input to create a generic version, which I knew anybody in L.A. would be able to read and understand."

Adriana: "Wow, that's great. So, what are the day-to-day responsibilities of your translation job?"

Carmela: "Well, what I see as my biggest responsibility is that every time I start to work on a translation job, I remind myself that I am not the author of that document. The next is to maintain my self-discipline to stay focused on the job that is in front of me—not to think of other jobs or chores that are waiting. I also try to maintain a disciplined work schedule so that I can minimize distractions, because the more interruptions you have, the greater the possibility of errors."

Adriana: "Right. And what are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?"

Carmela: "I would say that personally I have found that the number one ability needed is to be a good listener. The documents that I translate have a voice, and the voice is that of the writer. My gift is to bring the writer's voice or meaning into the targeted language exactly as the writer, not I, wanted the reader to comprehend it. So don't be afraid to correct obvious grammar or punctuation mistakes to make the best and most accurate translation that you can, but keep in mind that the written work is not your work."

Adriana: "Right. And do you use any specific language dictionaries or materials to do all of these translations?"

Carmela: "Yes. I usually work on Microsoft Office Suite, PowerPoint, and Adobe Reader, along with online translations and

dictionaries that can be accessed anywhere.”

Adriana: “Right. Perfect. Now, you have been in the industry for a long time, so can you tell us what kind of work one can expect to be doing within the first one to three years of their career?”

Carmela: “Well, I live in California, and there has been an explosion of having everything become translated. So, there are things such as public information brochures, handouts, marketing letters, legal forms, advertisements, cultural events, government programs, and the list goes on and on.”

Adriana: “Right. And when starting out a career as a translator, on average, what are the rates that you think a freelance translator should charge to a translation company or to an independent client?”

Carmela: “What I have seen is that rates can vary from 1 cent to 16 cents per word, so it is hard to pinpoint a specific price. I would also say that it depends on the document that you are translating and the industry that it is for, the length of the document, and the desired completion time. There are more variables than just a price per word when you are negotiating a price with a client.”

Adriana: “Right. Perfect. So, for you, what is the most appealing aspect of working as a translator?”

Carmela: “Well for me, it would have to be that I will never get to the point where I will feel that I know everything. Or that I will get bored doing what I do. Also, I get an adrenaline rush when I complete the various documents for all of the various industries and clientele I work with.”

Adriana: “Right. And what is the worst, and maybe the most challenging, part about working as a translator?”

Carmela: “Well, I would say that the most challenging part is to not allow yourself or the job to isolate you. It can be a very lonely place when day in and day out the voices you are interacting with are only sheets of paper, electronic programs, or translation dictionaries. I feel that it is important for people to join clubs or organizations. They don’t have to be connected to translation. It is so you can have face-

to-face contact and establish your own personal network.”

Adriana: “Right, that sounds like great advice. And what are your top three tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career in the industry?”

Carmela: “Well, my three tips would be: (1) The quality of your translations have to be as high as the quality of your customer service. (2) Maintain respect for both the source language and target language. There are no deeper roots than those found in the culture and religion of a culture and people. (3) Without strong confidence in your skills, knowledge, and abilities as a translator, you will undoubtedly fail in achieving success in this field.”

Adriana: “Right. Those are very good tips. Thank you. And what is the number one most costly mistake that you have made within your translation career that you could share with others to help them avoid making those same mistakes? Do any come to mind that our program participants could learn from?”

Carmela: “Oh, definitely. Recently, I did a 500-page manual translation. I would say don’t underestimate the amount of time the project is going to take. When you and the client decide upon an agreed timeline, always account for and add in extra time for proofreading and re- proofreading.”

“My experience was the night before I was to turn in the job, I had to go and look at the document. When I did, the computer had for some reason changed around the formatting of the text of five pages of the manual.”

Adriana: “Oh wow.”

Carmela: “So luckily for me, I went back in and was able to catch that mistake. It had been perfect earlier when I had filed it, but I don’t know what happened. The thing is that the night before I was to turn it in, I was burning the midnight oil making all of those corrections.

“My second insight would be to make sure that you always periodically back up your work in case there is a power failure or if

your computer crashes. Thousands of dollars have been lost because lost data has had to have been recreated. Also, future contracts can be lost that way.”

Adriana: “That’s right. In your position right now as a successful translator, what recommendations would you give to someone who would like to start their own career as a translator?”

Carmela: “Well, I’ll keep this one nice and simple and right to the point. All of the above.”

Adriana: “Perfect! So hopefully everyone has been paying attention to this interview very carefully.”

“So many professionals pay hundreds of dollars to complete our translation program, so what is one last piece of advice that would be worth above and beyond their registration cost? Or is there something to emphasize from the interview that you feel is so important and integral to every translation professional career throughout the length of their career?”

Carmela: “Certainly. When my friends and family ask me how I am doing in my career, my current response is ‘Well, the latest in Carmela’s never- ending school of learning is that I am studying with CTP to test and become a Certified Translation Professional.’ I am the best and most secure investment that I know these days in the current state of the economy worldwide. I can accurately predict that I will get a return on my investment no less than six times over. The reason I can do that is that I have been able to make money without being certified. So, my strategy is in place to manifest greater success once I am a Certified Translation Professional.”

Adriana: “Of course! That is wonderful. Thank you once again for taking the time to share your professional insights and experiences in the translation field.”

Expert Translator Interview #2: Emma Ratcliffe

Adriana: “Hi! As you know, we are completing this translator expert interview series so that we can get best practices and lessons from people who have been in the industry a long time. That way people enrolled in the CTP Designation can get advice from others who have gone through challenges within the industry and that they themselves might soon face.”

Emma: “Okay. Sounds great.”

Adriana: “All right, so first off, could you share with us how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Emma: “As a professional translator, I have been translating for about six years. But I have been working in bilingual environments all my life. So English and Spanish are my two languages.”

Adriana: “Spanish and English...all right. And you are actually based in Mexico? Is that right?”

Emma: “Yes. I’m Mexican born, but I am also a British subject.”

Adriana: “Oh. Okay. And do you have any formal educational background or training in translating? Or any courses that you have completed in this area?”

Emma: “As for a college degree, no. I have been training all my life in the work that I have had because of the need. But I try to train myself in certain things and areas that I am working on for example. That way it is always helping my translations.”

Adriana: “Right. That makes sense. I think most of the people that we interview mention the same thing. They had never taken formal training but they had been practicing multiple languages their whole lives.”

Emma: “Yes. Sometimes you get a degree in something else, such as accounting, or have a degree in fashion design. When you are

translating, your degree might sometimes have nothing to do with your career, but there you are translating.”

Adriana: “Right, of course. I think in the future there will be an even higher demand for translators as countries continue to increase their interactions. Especially with a worldwide online presence.”

Emma: “Yes, yes. That’s true.”

Adriana: “So what are some of the day-to-day responsibilities within your job?”

Emma: “Well, regularly, what I initially do is always begin with checking my email. It is very important; you can’t live without that. And based on that, I check if I have messages from my clients to work on something and then go to see if there are new clients that are seeking translation work. I am a member of a couple of translator websites, and they often post new jobs that can be accessed online every day. If there is something interesting, I’ll submit my bid and a proposal to the client.”

Adriana: “I see.”

Emma: “That’s the basic initial part. And then afterwards, if I am working on a client’s project, I will continue on with the translation work throughout the day. If I finish it, then I will spend time proofreading the document, verifying the grammar, punctuation, or any corrections that need to be made, so that the text is fluid and properly written. Once that document has been corrected, I will then submit it to my client via email, usually. If I don’t have any work at all with translations, I’ll work on future projects that I know need to be done at some point—creating special glossaries and term bases for those projects—and then, if nothing of the above is going on, I do administrative work. I go to see my accountant. I prepare invoices for pending delivery. I check my bank balances or other accounts that I work with just to verify that things are going okay and nothing is behind.”

Adriana: “I see. It sounds like you keep pretty busy.”

Emma: “Yes, I try to. I don’t like to be sitting down watching television all day.”

Adriana: “That’s great. So, what are some of the skills that you believe are really necessary to be successful in this area? What is one or two of the most important skills that you think all translators should have?”

Emma: “Well, I think that the most important thing is that a person has to really specialize on a specific field of their knowledge. We all say we are translators, but I don’t translate certain fields. I don’t think I am prepared for every field, for example, the medical field.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Emma: “Some people might have been working as social workers, and so their translation career should focus and specialize in that. I work more in the accounting field. However, in the last years, my focus has been more in the engineering areas—nothing to do with what I had studied. But I have become very skilled in this area.”

Adriana: “I see.”

Emma: “So the main thing is to be able to specialize in the fields that you worked in, studied, or ones that you like. Those are the three areas to help you focus your translation career, which I find very important.”

“The second piece of advice would be to always try to translate into your ‘mother tongue.’ If you translate from Spanish to English and your mother tongue is English, then you should always try to have more projects that translate from Spanish to English. This way you have the ability and the facility of working in your mother tongue. The terminology is always important, so always try to use your stronger language for the translation.”

Adriana: “Right, that makes sense. So you mentioned that you have built certain glossaries yourself, but is there a certain brand or type of glossary that you like to use, such as an online one or one that you have purchased?”

Emma: “Oh, well, I use the Internet, and usually when I need dictionaries, I go to a page called Word Magic (<https://www.wordmagicsoft.com/dictionary/tools/index.php>). It is English to Spanish and Spanish to English. It is very good. It is very accurate as well for terminology and gives you a lot of terminology in terms of cultural usage. I like that. I also use a couple of different ones for Spanish that give more examples of synonyms and antonyms. It will always depend on what area or field you are currently working on for translations.”

Adriana: “Right. Okay. That makes perfect sense. So, what about when somebody is starting out as a translator and is in their first few years, what are the types of projects that they would be able to begin working on? When they first start out, what type of projects should they anticipate working on?”

Emma: “Well, when you are starting off, you should really try simple materials, something that is not too complicated or technical. Then, as you acquire more experience, you can begin to move on to harder translations. The simpler, the better—that’s the rule.”

Adriana: “And for people that are working as freelance translators, some of them might be working by themselves, from their own homes, and might even feel isolated from other translators. We often hear that freelance translators find it hard to determine what price to charge clients due to this lack of interaction with other translators. My question is, what prices should a translator charge during the first one to three years of their translation careers?”

Emma: “Well, usually what happens is that when you show that you do not have enough experience, outsourcers or clients can take advantage of that. They might then offer you a smaller rate, or a lower rate. I know from sources that the ATA says that the minimum should be 12 cents per word. Well, when you are beginning, you can lower that down and work it out with the client. Then, as you go on, increase it as you think it should increase based on your translation quality.”

Adriana: “Of course.”

Emma: “Yes. Now, for someone with three years or so of experience,

the rate should be between seven and nine cents per word.”

Adriana: “Sure, okay. And now, in terms of your job as a professional translator, what do think the best thing is about your job? Working from home? Choosing your clients? The ability to specialize in a field that you like?”

Emma: “Well, for me, the translation field has become something more like a challenge. It is a challenge for me. Every single project I receive, I know that it could be anything. So, it becomes a challenge being able to produce a good translation that uses the most accurate terms and provides the best words. In general, all new projects become a new and exciting challenge. This is one of the things that I like about translations.”

Adriana: “Ah, I see. Now, my next question is, what is the biggest challenge of your work? After hearing you speak, it sounds like it might be that every translation is different.”

Emma: “Well, yes, that would be one. But I think that the other major challenge, and maybe the biggest challenge, is deadlines. Deadlines, I think, are the most challenging aspect for all translators. Some clients have these unrealistic deadlines. A translator must work together with the client to decide upon a realistic deadline because, sometimes, no matter how many computer tools you have, how fast you type, or how good of a translator you are, you will not be able to make unrealistic deadlines. You have to be sincere about it. So, I love what I do, but the worst challenge is trying to reach the deadline.”

Adriana: “I understand completely. Now what about for someone who is doing well as a translator but is interested in career coaching or career advice from someone with more experience? What are your top two or three tips for becoming a more successful translator?”

Emma: “Always be truthful about what you know. Don’t accept jobs that you can’t really handle or within fields that you don’t really work in, because it will create a burden on you and you will spend much more time working on it than choosing work within your field of knowledge and expertise—this would be number one.

“Number two would be to focus on being sincere. Be sincere with
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your clients in terms of deadlines, content, and informing them of your strengths and weaknesses so that there are no misunderstandings." "Remember that as a translator, you should always strive to remain in constant contact with the client."

Adriana: "Right, of course. Now on the other side of that, there are always mistakes that each professional has made in their career or something that they could have done differently, and some people might want to learn from someone more experienced and avoid some of the common mistakes or the most costly mistakes, so I was wondering if you had a mistake that either you have made or seen another translator make that others could learn about by you sharing it?"

Emma: "Yes, it happened to me with a client that I have. He proposed a deadline and I said yes, and I delivered but when I reviewed the work again, I looked at it and some of the wording wasn't as correct as it should have been. But because I wanted to deliver on the deadline, I missed the precise wording. So, at the end, I made a commitment to myself to really review everything and really make the text as fluid as it should be, of course trying not to hurt the process of meeting the deadline. But I sometimes believe that because of the deadlines, you sometimes tackle a lot of failures within the text. So, it is better sometimes to be sincere with a client and tell them to give you another hour to finish proofreading to make it as good as possible for you. I think that is important."

Adriana: "Right. It sounds like a lot of this is managing and having many different projects going on and many different client demands, so then managing that while also doing a great job at the same time."

Emma: "Exactly, yes. So it is always important to meet the deadline, yes, but try to always have the best translation coming out of your work as possible, and even if it has to be an hour, or probably a half a day, or probably a day, in the end, a client will understand that it is better because they have a great text."

Adriana: "Okay, that makes sense. And running the Certified Translation Professional program, we sometimes work with people who have over 10 years of experience in two different languages and maybe have done a little bit of in-house corporate translation

work on the side, but they never have really worked as a translator. And some of them go through our program to make that jump. So, I was wondering, in your position, what recommendations would you have for someone who would like to get their career started as a translator or move over their career to the path of being a translator?”

Emma: “Well, if you are very young, let’s say 20–22 years old, I think sometimes in-house work is a good way to start because you acquire the knowledge of how it works: the administration, how it all moves, everybody’s work, the flow of it. And then probably from there, you can move on to being an independent freelance translator, or you can begin being a freelancer. One thing is that it can become very frustrating for a person to begin as a freelancer because you really have to get to do a lot of work to be known and prove that you are good at it, while working as an in-house translator, projects come in all the time. So that would be the difference between one and the other. And you can become specialized either as an in-house translator or as a freelance translator; it doesn’t matter. I always believed that being an in-house makes you waste time because maybe you are not always working, and you are there. You have to be there. As a freelancer, you can do other things.”

Adriana: “Right, that makes sense. Okay, and I heard you mention things like Word Magic, and Proz, and Translatorsbase, and TranslatorsCafé. Are there any other really great websites that you have found really helpful if you’re a translator that you should know about or maybe a couple that you might know about that others may have missed out there?”

Emma: “Well, you can go to the ATA’s website at www.atanet.org, which is great, or you can go to the British one, that is, the ETE or the ITI. The French have a wonderful website for their linguistic members, so it all depends on the area and the languages that you handle, of course. I don’t get much involved in French because I speak the minimum. If I were a translator for French or spoke French, I would be there. I have no knowledge of any other languages, but probably there are many others out there. So, it all depends on the language you handle.”

Adriana: “And then, many people pay a few hundred dollars to

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complete the Certified Translation Professional program, the CTP program, and we were just wondering here at the end of this interview if you had one last piece of advice that in your mind you think would be worth 400 dollars or more. And this is just something that you may have already mentioned in this interview, or maybe you have not mentioned, but what is your most valuable piece of advice that if people forget everything else from this interview today, if they just remember one thing, what would be the most valuable thing to remember?"

Emma: "Well, you have to be aware that it is a slow process to be known, so it takes time. We sometimes bid on jobs that we think will be just won for us. If you don't get it, don't worry. There are many jobs out there. So, don't lose your drive, and continue in the industry; it's all worth working for. And the satisfaction you get when you see your work afterwards when it is published probably anywhere, for me, the final word is always flabbergasted."

Adriana: "Yeah! That's a great piece of advice. I know that many people might have a friend or two that they work with, or many people work by themselves as freelance translators, so getting this type of direct advice or encouragement from you is probably very helpful to many of them, I'm sure!"

Emma: "Thank you!"

Expert Translator Interview #3: Ignacio Caballero

Adriana: “Hi! My name is Adriana Tassini, and I am the head of the Certified Translation Professional program. This is an online training program for translators, and as part of this program, we are interviewing many translation experts so that we can offer audio recordings of these interviews to the participants within our program. Today we are interviewing Ignacio from Bolivia, who is an expert in translation. With that, let’s get started with the interview!”

Ignacio: “Okay, fine! Thank you!”

Adriana: “Yes! Thank you for taking the time! So, Ignacio, can you tell me how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Ignacio: “Well, I have over 20 years of experience working as a translator. I am almost fully bilingual, and I was very fortunate in my schooling and have a command of the English language and have a very sufficient command of Spanish. So, I worked as a translator during my student years on and off, and now I have been translating permanently for the past five years.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect. Thank you! And how many languages can you translate into? Just English to Spanish? Or do you also translate into a different language?”

Ignacio: “I translate from Spanish to English and naturally from English to Spanish.”

Adriana: “Nice. So, do you have any formal education and background in the field of translation?”

Ignacio: “I have studied English formally, but I have no academic background in translation, just experience. As I said before, I have all kinds of documents and literary work but no formal education in translation.”

Adriana: “All right. Can you tell us a little bit of the day-to-day

responsibilities of the translation job?"

Ignacio: "Well, the day-to-day responsibilities are assigned to accumulate a sufficient number of clients to fill your time then trying to deliver the highest quality of translation possible and to meet those terrible deadlines that most translation clients put to the assignment."

Adriana: "For you, what are some of the skills and abilities necessary in order to succeed in this job?"

Ignacio: "Well, one of them is to be very proficient in both languages, and the other is to be very accurate and to sustain the quality of translation at a given level. I think that those are the most important. Do you have a more specific question?"

Adriana: "Yes! We can move forward, and you can clarify even more. Now, you have been working in the industry for a very long time. Do you use any specific language dictionary?"

Ignacio: "I use several dictionaries. Besides the classical English to Spanish dictionary, I use the Babylon National Online Dictionary, which I think is very good. I also use another set of very nice dictionaries called Word Magic; I think those are very good. Of course, there are a lot of very specialized closer reads you can get online from different institutions, governments, etc. I think you have to use all of them and combine them with your basic skills."

Adriana: "Right! Now, for someone who is starting in the industry right now, what work can a translator be expecting to do for their first one to three years of their career? Is this the same type of work they can be expecting to do after five to six years of experience, or does it change over time,"

Ignacio: "Well, when I started out as a translator, I mostly did translation for local agencies here in Bolivia, which included most of the international agencies throughout the world, like World Bank, American Development Bank, the United Nations, etc. But now I think it is much more efficient because to work internationally, most available jobs are in the field of general translation, so I think that translators starting out need to be quite good and quite confident in

general translation at the beginning and afterwards, he or she should try to specialize in specific fields to which

Adriana: “That makes sense. Many translators and participants in our programs ask about compensation levels in the industry. What do you think a translator in the industry should expect to receive after around three years of work as a translator? What would be realistic?”

Ignacio: “Well, I think translation is a very good field, a very good option. It is very competitive, and there is a lot of demand that has grown with globalization. Also, the requirements for translation have also grown. I think that to be realistic, the normal rates in the industry start out about three cents per word, up to fifteen cents in very specialized fields. I think that halfway in that scale and range would be quite reasonable for a beginning translator to do. How many words can he do per day, month, year is up to how he markets and the quality and possibilities of the translator.”

Adriana: “Does the rate change after you have been working in the industry for seven to ten years, or does it stay the same— around three to fifteen cents per word depending on the field?”

Ignacio: “It depends. If he has several clients and if they are recurrent as translation assignments, he can increase his rate. But as I said before, it is a very competitive industry, so you have to estimate how much he can raise and still be competitive. So, it is a permanent synchronization as to what the demand is and what he or she can offer. It is a really interesting field to get into for young people.”

Adriana: “Okay, thank you! For you, what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator?”

Ignacio: “It is always something new, it is always something challenging, and it is always something that really gets your brain to work. I think that is the most challenging thing, and there is always such liberty to make the best quality you can produce. I think that translation needs a lot of patience and 110% strength.”

Adriana: “Right, quality translation is very important for someone to succeed in this industry.”

Ignacio: “Yes, very important. Your presentation card needs to be at the highest standard that you can manage.”

Adriana: “Yes. And do you have a few tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career in the translation industry?”

Ignacio: “Well, I think that one of the most important things is to study the language as much as you can and practice a lot. When I started out, I was translating poetry, and many of my works were published that were just for the pleasure of translating. Another tip would be to really study the market and to be patient.”

Adriana: “Right, that makes sense. What do you think has been the costliest mistake that you have made in your translation career that you could share with others to help them avoid making the same mistake?”

Ignacio: “Well, I think that one of the most terrible mistakes that you can make is receiving more than what you can do at a given time frame by the client—overloading yourself, thinking you can manage the amount of work. I would advise any young translator against overbooking oneself with too much work.”

Adriana: “Right, because of deadlines, if you overload yourself with too much work, you won’t be able to deliver the work that you promised.”

Ignacio: “That is the easiest way to lose a client.”

Adriana: “That’s correct. Perfect. I have one last question for you. Many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete the Certified Translation Professional program. I was wondering if you had any last piece of advice that you could provide or would want to emphasize from the interview today that would be worth at least 400 dollars to translators over the length of their career. Do you have a 400-dollar piece of advice for people listening today?”

Ignacio: “Well, I have been thinking about this question, and it is hard for me to think of a 400-dollar question. But I think that what I said before is very important and that your program offers a great

opportunity, especially for translators who are starting out and who might not have experience or funds for costlier programs that are offered online. Become certified as soon as possible and accumulate materials so that you will have the most academic support that you can have on hand. That's why I think a certification program such as yours is a really good opportunity for most translators all over the world."

Adriana: "That's perfect. Thank you very much, Ignacio, for sharing with us today!"

Ignacio: "Well, it was a pleasure, and I am very happy to participate in your program. Have a great day!"

Adriana: "Thank you! You too! Bye-bye!"

Ignacio: "Bye-bye!"

Expert Translator Interview #4: Jean Richedor

Adriana: “As part of running the CTP program, we have interviewed many translation experts in the past so we can offer audio recordings of these interviews to participants in our certification program. Today we are interviewing Jean Richedor, who is from Ivory Coast and an expert in translation, so with that, let’s get started with the interview! Jean, thank you so much for taking the time to complete this small interview with us.”

Jean: “Of course!”

Adriana: “Can you tell us how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Jean: “I have six years of experience working as a professional translator, as a freelance translator, and as a consultant for many institutions and organizations as a translator.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect! And how many languages can you translate into?”

Jean: “Well, from English to French and then from French to English.”

Adriana: “Okay, and do you have any formal education or background in the field of translation?”

Jean: “Yeah, I have a diploma in translation, Institute of Linguistics in the United Kingdom.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect! And can you tell us the day-to-day responsibilities of a translation job?”

Jean: “Yes! It is to translate documents from French into English and from the English language also into French, ensuring the highest amount of accuracy in the content and quality for the organization.”

Adriana: “Okay, and do you use any specific dictionary to do these translations?”

Jean: “No, I don’t have any specific dictionary. What I do for more technical translations is I create a lexicon where I put some specific terms; for example, for the medical industry, I have a medical lexicon because most of the time they will use the same terms in the same field for translation. Most of the time, when I find a difficult word, I just look to my lexicon or ask them what it is that they mean by that word and then put it in my lexicon. I think that is the way that I manage that. I use a normal dictionary, but I prefer the lexicon method for every technical field that I translate for.”

Adriana: “I see. Very nice. You have been in the translation industry for a long time. Right now, you are certainly doing different translation projects, but can you tell us the type of work that a translator can expect to be doing the first one to two years of their career?”

Jean: “I think in the beginning, you just have to start translating documents. Anything that you can get for translation, you translate it. You can edit, and you check terminology. I think for one to three years, that’s what you can do for the most part. You can translate documents, edit translation, and check terminology. And maybe if you have a writer, you can send it to him to check for mistakes or for tenses that are not very clear to get their input. And maybe you can get a career through that when you become professional.”

Adriana: “Right. That sounds good. And many translators and participants in our certification program ask us about compensation levels in the industry, and in your opinion or your own experience, what should a translator expect to make after working for at least three years in the industry as a translator?”

Jean: “Well, it is hard for me to tell because this is Africa, and it is different from the U.S., it is different from Europe, it is different from the other continents. In Africa, I think a translator who is working for an international organization should be accepting certain standards comparable to the compensation in the U.S. or in Europe, and I think 50,000 U.S. dollars per year is acceptable for someone during their first three years, and from seven to ten years of experience, you can go up to 65,000 U.S. dollars. But when you are working for an organization like Africa Union (<https://au.int/>) or a bank for West African countries, in Africa, we as translators, get more than that. But

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this is an average compensation I am giving to you of 50,000 to 65,000 dollars per year depending on years of experience.”

Adriana: “Right. So, there is definitely some change depending on the location or who is giving the translation project as you go from time to time and place to place.”

Jean: “Yes.”

Adriana: “Okay, good! So, for you, what is the most appealing thing working as a translator?”

Jean: “For me, I think the most appealing thing is translating official documents because official documents do not take too many pages, and they are very lucrative if you have the type of schedule for that. It is also very gratifying to translate official documents. That is, for me. For others, I don’t know, but for me I like it, because they do not take too much time and I have time for other things. I am very happy to see someone who maybe is making a wedding certificate or to translate documents in coming up for a visa, and most of the time when you are applying for an American visa, they ask you for some translation, and when you translate documents for things like this, it makes you very happy, and I think it is great.”

Adriana: “That’s great! And for you, since translating documents is the most appealing thing for you, what do you think is the worst or most challenging part about working as a translator?”

Jean: “It is technical translation.”

Adriana: “Technical translation?”

Jean: “Yes, technical translation. I think there is a lot of difficulty in technical translation beyond the point of understanding what you are reading; that comes from understanding your native language. I have always considered myself to be a pretty decent writer but expressing someone else’s ideas and being true to the original in every small thing is harder than it looks. And I think that is where the problem is in technical translation: being true to the original content of the document. Because that is someone’s idea, and I think that is one of the big problems that I have with translating technical documents. And other

things, like not being used to the terms and such.”

Adriana: “Right. That makes sense. And in your position right now as a successful translator, in your opinion, what are your top three tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career as well in the translation industry?”

Jean: “I think that the first tip is that you should not take on assignments that you do not have the ability to complete. The more professional approach would be to turn the job down if you have no professional experience in those areas. The next would be honesty. To be honest with the client will go further than accepting the job and not following through. It shows your own limitations and that you can be trusted.”

“The next thing would be to ask questions. And the most important thing would be to remember that for professional translation, you should not try and assume what the client may mean but realize that the key is to identify any issues and work together with a client to resolve them. A common mistake for people who are starting their career as a translator is to think that a client will be impressed by your knowledge and to not ask questions when in fact you would appear more reasonable if you asked questions.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Jean: “I think that is one mistake that they make. And the third I think is when doing specialized professional translation, especially in the legal and medical fields, you have to remember that you have to imitate the original approach that the writer used. You must ensure that you take the meaning of the words and not the literal translations, because I think a lot of people make that mistake. And also to be in the mind that you start as a translator and are working in a wonderful environment because as for me, I love what I do, I love my job, and you have to make use of your resources. I would bet that there are some people willing to help you and keep you from making some mistakes. I am talking about maybe you have some elders who have been in the job for longer and that would be willing to help when you come to them. You should know that you are doing a great business and that you should be proud of what you are doing. I think it is important to build your confidence and make the most of your environment. These are things for translation

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professionals to have a very successful career.”

Adriana: “Those are great tips. Thank you for sharing with us today. I have one more question for you here. In your position now, what recommendations would you give someone to start their career as a translator? Do you think that those would be the same tips that you gave us for people who want to become better translators and have a more successful career?”

Jean: “Okay, well, most people say nothing is easy in this world; everything is difficult. But what you are doing now in true translation is really great because you can learn a lot. You know that someone who has never worked in a bank and who used to translate financial documents can tell you more about what is done in the bank only because he translates, even though he doesn't work in the bank.”

“Okay, now what I want to say to people is that they should learn from their mistakes. Because when you start something like this, in the beginning, you always make mistakes. Even when you have 20 years of professional work experience, you still make mistakes, but you learn from them. And also, they should be very honest because there are various aspects of translation, different areas, and most people go for the money; they are not looking for the quality of the job. I think they should put more emphasis on the quality of the job rather than the money. The quality of the job is very important.

“Also, they should attend seminars. You know, some people can tell you that they have their education, so they don't need to go to school, they don't need to go for classes again, and they don't need to go to seminars because they are a certified translator, period. I think that is very bad. I think we should be attending seminars and workshop training. It helps you with your knowledge and so many things.

“You know, when you have a paid technical translation—it may be environmental, it may be legal—what you have to do is when you do that type of translation, take your book and put down those terms, those words that you don't understand or that seem too difficult for you. You do your research, and you put their definitions side by side, and you will see when you have this same type of translation later, you don't need to think back; you just have to take your book and look in it and just see the words there to put them in.

Most words are very common in those translation fields, and I think that you should create a lexicon for every technical field of translation. That is what I mean by that. I think that is what I can say for now for them."

Adriana: "Those are good! Thank you very much for those tips! For our one last question here, many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete our certification program, and I was wondering, after everything that you have told us, if you had one last piece of advice that you could give us or something that you would like to emphasize from this interview that would be worth at least 400 dollars to most translators over the length of their career. Do you have a 400-dollar piece of advice that you could provide to everyone listening to you today?"

Jean: "The advice that I can give is that this certificate that you can get issued, I have been looking for it for a long time. It was very difficult for me to find a CTP program. They should do so in order to supplement their education and enrich their learning for when they are going to apply for jobs or are looking for opportunities; many people can be very confident that they are going to get a quality job.

"What I can also say, as I said about honesty before, is that if you can't do something, don't push it so hard to do it, and you should try to learn from your mistakes. This is very professional. And focus on the quality rather than the financial aspects of the job and looking for money. We are looking for money, but I think in translation, when you do a quality job, you are proud of yourself, you are happy when you read your translation, so quality instead of money."

Adriana: "Right, quality in translation is one of the most important things. Very good! So, Jean, thank you very much for sharing all that with us today! Thank you very much for taking all your time for this interview today!"

Jean: "Thank you very much!"

Adriana: "Have a good day, and I'll talk to you soon!"

Jean: "Have a good day too!"

Adriana: "Bye!"

Jean: "Bye-bye!"

Expert Translator Interview #5: Komi Atutonu

Adriana: “So today we are interviewing Komi Atutonu from Ghana, Africa, who is an expert in translation, and with that, let’s get started with the interview! So, Komi, thank you very much for agreeing to complete this phone interview with us today!”

Komi: “Yes!”

Adriana: “So can you tell us how many years you have been working as a translator?”

Komi: “Well, since around 2000. I am on my tenth year of translation. And I have experience in translating mostly documents in the field of economics, finance, business management, and law. Those are the specialties that I have. I did a little bit of work in agriculture translating documents also in the past. But I have spoken English as a second language for over 14 years.”

Adriana: “Okay, that’s very good. Thank you! And how many languages can you translate into?”

Komi: “I usually translate from English into French.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Komi: “But these last two years I have been translating from French into English too, and I think I have been coming out with very good documents for my clients.”

Adriana: “That’s great! Do you have any education or formal background in the field of translation?”

Komi: “No, I am a business management graduate. But I took in a foreign country and learned English in school, and because I went to a foreign country and worked, it was a kind of learning on the job to know about business management. I was a marketing officer, anyways, and I taught French, economics, liberal law, and managerial economics, all this in French, which gave me experience in the language before I started translating. Now I have translated so far for
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many international organizations, and you can go to their websites and see evidence of documents that I have translated. Apart from that, I have a bulk of documents that I have translated so far of more than 10,000 pages in the last 10 years."

Adriana: "Oh wow! That is very impressive!"

Komi: "I translated more than 10,000 pages."

Adriana: "Wow! And can you share with us what the day-to-day responsibilities of this job are?"

Komi: "Yes! For translation jobs, you have the documents from the client, you translate it, and then you proofread it. Sometimes I do give documents to people who are working with me who are training to do this in the same way; the process I pass onto them is the same when I train people to do so. So sometimes I do give them a document to guide them. But that basically was not very successful. I do train people who are translators to be, but I need to streamline and finetune my training process."

Adriana: "I see. Very good."

Komi: "And one of the realities that I saw in translation is that though everybody looks at it as a possibility for a language assignment, I have found translation to be mostly scientific, because to me, when I am translating, I am reasoning mathematically. That is how I see translation. And that may seem somehow strange to you, but this is how I see it because I think I understand English and French being my fifth language, so any statement that I see in English I understand it, and then I am in a better position to translate into French. This is how I do it, with an emphasis on some tense and statements.

"There are a lot of statements that are always bad to translate from one language to another, and I have a memo of tenses over here that I am even planning to put on my website to instruct people about them. There are some specific tenses that are always badly translated in documents that I am seeing from English into French because the translation is bent on reality. You don't translate the text; you translate the reality the text is describing. But in many institutions professionally, there are some realities that you find in

French, and you don't find the same reality in English. You have things of that sort in international trade. The reality is not in the different countries but in the market center.

"There is a kind of reset that we are constantly conducting to identify the structural differences in tense we have in professions such as accounting, finance, and mostly administration. Let me give you an example. When they say in English 'Minister of States,' it does not mean the same thing when directly translated into French. So we try to reset the tense in that sort of reality; we try to move the reality in a few instances. That is the kind of work that you do."

Adriana: "Right! That was a great example. Thank you! Can you tell us what kind of work a translator expects to be doing in the first one to three years of their career?"

Komi: "I think, in reality, a translator has a big stock of his or her weakness in a sense, and then this is something that should be probably assessed every quarter. Even after a particular assignment, we have to take stock of the processes that are being used as a translator in the profession and see if they are acceptable or not, especially when there are complaints about a document. We have to take care of the complaints. For the customers we had in the first year, we had a lot of new complaints back in 2000, but so far, all documents are nearly clean and these in the field of finance, economics, law, and business management, and, to a lesser extent, also in the agricultural management field."

Adriana: "Right. And when starting out a career as a translator, as an average, what are the rates that a freelance translator should charge a translation company or a freelance client?"

Komi: "Well, I think the rate depends on two things. It depends on, firstly, the technicality, which is easy to understand here because there is a certain level of relativity and subjectivity in the field because what is technical to you may not be technical to someone else. But there is a difference when you are translating a technical document. But as a professional, I make a difference when translating a technical document. It's like when a company presents accounts at the end of the year; the report from the auditor is surely a technical document. When there is a convergence report on a monetary union, it is a technical report.
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But when, for example, there is a report from a student on an attachment, it is not very technical, and documents talking about social facts tend to be more ordinary, as I look at it. And documents on, for example, city planning or, I don't know, some documents on some administrative work in maintenance, can be an ordinary work, but when I have a document on an assessment of inflation, the relationship between inflation and economic growth, that I see to be a technical document. An agreement is a technical document, and for an agreement, I think they should be 30 to 35 U.S. dollars per page—a page being 300 to 320 words."

Adriana: "Okay, that sounds fair."

Komi: "Yeah, and for these economic documents, about 25 U.S. dollars per page. That is a price that I think to be normal. But this is price, and prices apply to a market, so the market price is flexible. It is negotiable. But in any case at all, I don't think that a translator should work under 20 U.S. dollars per page."

Adriana: "Right. That's good. And many translators and participants within our certification program, they ask us about compensation trends in the industry. What do you think a translator should make in the industry after working for seven to 10 years? What would be a realistic amount?"

Komi: "For a rate for a translator who has worked for more than seven years, you say?"

Adriana: "Yes. After working for seven years in the field of translation, what do you think would be realistic for them to be making by then?"

Komi: "The hour, you mean?"

Adriana: "Yeah."

Komi: "I think a good translator having more than 7 years of experience should be able to translate three pages in two hours. And also, it depends on the method of the person. The method that I use is where I have a secretary who is very, very fast and who does not make a lot of mistakes, and I take the document in French or English, and I read it and I depict it to the secretary, who is

typing. I am training myself on some voice recognition software, but I am not yet using it. That is available. Yeah, so a good translator should be able to translate about three pages in two hours and then use some time to proofread. That is how I teach the profession. As to the price, I say not to let down to less than 20 dollars per page. That is how I see it."

Adriana: "So that would be pretty much 60 dollars for the full two hours of work?"

Komi: "Yeah, two hours and getting about 60 dollars. That would be the minimum. And for translation, you know, I am emphasizing areas like law, economics, finance, and business management. There are other areas of translation, and I have not tried those areas as such, but for the ones that I experience, this is how I see it. And also, for translation training, I believe I am of the few that think translation shouldn't be done by someone who is critically a language person. I believe someone who is specialized in a particular field—like I myself am specialized as a business management professional and already alongside the translation am practicing business management by way of producing business plans and all that sort of steady work that I used to do—so someone who specifically already has knowledge and experience is important, I think, to be a translator. If they want to take a formal training, like first a degree in translating or a master's in translation, I am seeing rather to take a translation course—like an accountant taking a translation course, a marketer taking a translation course, a lawyer taking a translation course—to be the ideal translator. That will really satisfy the needs of organizations that are in need of second language documents.

"We need to produce documents that are acceptable to the specialists who need them. The fact is that any document that is translated is going to be used by a professional in a second language, so the document has to be translated and reviewed by someone who is in the field so that the destination of the document will feel at ease. That is how I feel."

Adriana: "I see. For you, what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator?"

Komi: "Firstly, I think compared to other work, I am seeing that it is a highly rewarding work compared to other things that people do. Like, I have friends who are accountants in companies, friends who are marketers and lawyers and others, and I have found that if I have work to do constantly, then I can get up to 10 to 15 times the salary that they are getting. And also, it allows you to go over a lot of disciplines, areas, and reports. And one reality is that there are a lot of fields for which I translate, and they become a training tool and a database that I use to do other research works. I don't know if I am clear here, but the other opportunity in translation is that it is a learning opportunity that is available to you because by translating, you have read in a process, you understand it, and you use language processing in the other language, and then you try to see if the document you are producing stands with all the technical reality in the first language reflected accurately in the second language document you produced. That is very exciting, and when you review the document and people are happy, it is the most exciting thing in translating. You will be proud of yourself that you have brought something new out that people have accepted. And you have contributed to the good running of organizations because when you have a language problem, the whole system is blocked.

"I especially see this with the multicultural organizations we work with. Sometimes I see that they are really blocked because of language. They can't communicate with each other, and they can't move forward for a particular assignment, because of language. It is very exciting that you see yourself being in the middle to solve that problem and to catalyze the fastening of their organization. These are the things that I find exciting. It is a deep-thinking work. You have to be a deep thinker to align the scientific aspects. I have found the processes of translating to be more scientific than any other language assignment. To me, the scientific or business management requirements of translating are how I look at it. And there are some specific uses. The place where I put them and how I use them, to me, is like factorization in mathematics in a way. This is the way in my mind that I find the place it has to be, and I use other mathematical processes and reasoning in terms of translation. "

Adriana: "Right. That's good. Thank you! One last question here: In your position as a successful translator right now, what

recommendations would you give for someone who would like to start their career as a translator and would like to have a very successful career in the industry? What would you say?"

Komi: "Yeah, what I would advise someone who wants to start is what I say with my students, that there are two ways of translating. I didn't initially have a background in language; I have a baccalaureate in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, so I was lacking a typical language background. So later, I did business management, with a specialization in marketing, at the university. So, then I got to realize in my professional life that this is one piece for particular emphasis. But I believe that there are thousands of potential translators who have not identified themselves, so to me, if research is conducted to identify those translation capacities, it would be a plus for the industry.

"And now, when I come to the formal training, this is the second piece. As I have said, if I may repeat, my case is a particular case, and I believe that there are thousands of that sort in the world who are not practicing in translation. I know a few cases in Ghana here, but there are not many, only one or two other cases, okay, and they translate very well. But for the formal one, if I shall make a proposal for formal translation training, I would say the first condition should be that the person be a professional in a certain field before coming to learn the art of translation. This is how I feel. But the current practice is that translators are language persons. Fine, and because of this, I saw a lot of people who have a master's who must come to me to solve particular problems. And so far, I have reviewed similar cases for many people with a master's in translation. This means that there is something lacking somewhere for people who have a master's in translation. You understand what I mean? It means that there is something lacking somewhere for those who are particularly language people who are translating. I think that instead of being given the chance to become a professional bilingual, they should rather be given the chance to be bilingual professionals. I repeat, we should be bilingual professionals rather than become a professional bilingual, who is somebody who is a language person by training and has been only in language. He has the art of translation for an organization, but in every organization, you have to work in technical fields. One who is a pure language person does not have the technical knowledge, and in that way, to get to an accurate document, let's say in accounting or in law, I think it would be difficult

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to get to a document that would serve the professional industry.
That's how I feel. So that is my proposal."

Adriana: "That's great! Those are very valuable recommendations,
and
thank you very much for sharing all that today with us!"

Expert Translator Interview #6: Mamlakatoi Haidarova

Adriana: “Today we are interviewing Mamlakatoi directly from India, who is an expert in translation. And with that, let’s get started with the interview. So, thank you for taking the time to complete this phone interview today.”

Mamlakatoi: “You’re welcome. You’re welcome.”

Adriana: “So can you tell us how many years of experience you have as a translator?”

Mamlakatoi: “I have been working as a translator for the past eight years.”

Adriana: “All right, very good! I see, and do you have any formal education or background in the field of translation?”

Mamlakatoi: “No, I do not have any formal background.”

Adriana: “Okay.”

Mamlakatoi: “I initially got an offer for a translation project, and that is where I started from.”

Adriana: “I see. And can you share with us, what are the day-to-day responsibilities of your translation career? More specifically, what do you do daily for your job in translation?”

Mamlakatoi: “What I do daily in the field of translation is translation. I read a lot. I look up new words in the dictionary and their meaning every day. Basically, I focus on learning more every day.”

Adriana: “I bet! That’s good. And can you tell us some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?”

Mamlakatoi: “The main responsibility is to complete each project with

quality. For large and small projects, there can be many problems if something goes wrong or is translated improperly. Also, the translator should be able to translate exactly the meaning and words from the original language to the target language.”

Adriana: “Right. And what kind of work can a translator expect to be doing during the first, second, or third year of their translation career?”

Mamlakatoi: “The first year of their career is spent focusing on building up their list of contacts.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Mamlakatoi: “And focus on becoming experts in the technicalities of their field. Generalities are easy. Professional translators need to focus on technicalities.”

Adriana: “I see. Now, on average, when starting out a career as a translator, what are the rates that you think a freelance translator should charge a translation company or an independent client?”

Mamlakatoi: “Well, it’s nice to go through agencies instead of an independent client because of payment. Because when you are doing translations for an agency instead of an independent client, you are going to get paid. There is less risk.”

Adriana: “Right. So, at the beginning, it is better to go through a translation agency and do translations for them?”

Mamlakatoi: “Yes, initially. Then once you have started building contacts and you are confident of those contacts; you can become more independent. You can begin more translation projects for independent clients. Translation agencies do not pay much, at least not in India. Translation agencies pay translators only 1/5 of what they charge their clients for translations.”

Adriana: “I see, I see. And for you, what is the most appealing thing, the most exciting thing, about working as a translator?”

Mamlakatoj: “Oh, very interesting question. Before I started translating, I didn’t know what I wanted to do. But you will never get bored with translating. You will always be meeting people with each translation job. For me, I have two languages, so there are a lot of opportunities. I do translations for people. I do translations for banking. I do a lot. I come to know the terms of each language because that is a requirement for all translators. I need to be able to easily translate words and phrases for any translation project.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Mamlakatoj: “It’s not a boring job. You are never going to be doing the same thing each day. Each day is different. It’s exciting.”

Adriana: “That’s nice. Each day you are doing different projects and learning new things.”

Mamlakatoj: “Yes! That’s very correct. That’s right.”

Adriana: “And for you, what is the worst or maybe the most challenging part about working as a translator?”

Mamlakatoj: “The challenging part is that there are not always guaranteed translation projects available, because there is a lot of competition and some translators charge less in order to get a certain project. Those translators might not make a profit and often do not do a quality job of translating for the clients.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Mamlakatoj: “And another thing is that you never know the type of people who you are going to meet. It can be unexpected.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Mamlakatoj: “And sometimes you might have no clients, which means no payments.”

Adriana: “That’s right. Thank you for those insights. And what are your top tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career in the industry?”

Mamlakato: “The first thing I think they should do is make sure they are constantly up to date with all software and applications that are released. They should know what is available and be familiar with those systems. This helps a lot. There are always new programs that are coming out, which are easier, faster, and better for your translation career.”

“A second tip is to familiarize themselves with new words and terms. This will allow them to learn more about each language that they translate for. That’s another good thing.”

Adriana: “That’s right.”

Mamlakato: “For example, in my particular translation career, there are words that are currently in use within society and business that did not exist twenty years back. So they should constantly be memorizing and practicing new terms.”

Adriana: “Okay, very good tips. And for you, what is the number one most costly mistake that you have made in your translation career that you can share with others to help them avoid making the same mistakes? Does anything come to mind that others could learn from?”

Mamlakato: “Yes. The one mistake I would warn others about is when I first started translating, I first found it very confusing. I didn’t take the time to learn and understand every part of the languages I was translating for. I didn’t try hard enough. It was a hard habit to break, but I knew I needed to study and memorize more terms and definitions within each language. I knew that my job required that I translate exactly what the client wanted, and that is what inspired me to learn more terms and definitions. There were many clients that rejected me when I first started because my translations were not the best.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Mamlakato: “Because anyone can make bad translations. There are even machines that you can write in words and sentences, and it will give you bad translations. I did not want that to be me.”

Adriana: “Yes, and I believe that any translation that comes from a program will never be as accurate as translations that have been done in person.”

Mamlakato: “Yes.”

Adriana: “Yes, that was a good one. So, our last question here is that many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete the Certified Translation Professional Program. I was wondering if you had any one last piece of advice you could provide or something you want to emphasize from this interview today.”

Mamlakato: “I would emphasize hard work. They need to focus on hard work, but the most important thing is passion. Passion is the most important thing in a translation career. You must have passion; otherwise, it is not going to work. And it won’t last long.”

Adriana: “Right. Okay, that’s very good. So, thank you very much for sharing everything with us today in this interview. Thank you for taking the time to do this interview with us.”

Mamlakato: “You’re welcome! Thank you so much.”

Adriana: “Thank you. Goodbye.”

Mamlakato: “Bye!”

Expert Translator Interview#7: Meral Badawy

Adriana: “Hello! My name is Adriana Tassini, and I am the head of the Certified Translation Professional Program. This is an online training program for translators, and as part of this program, we have interviewed many translation experts so that we can offer audio recordings of these interviews to our program. And today we are interviewing Meral from Iraq, who is an expert in translation, and with that, let’s get started with the interview!”

Meral: “Okay, wonderful!”

Adriana: “So, Meral, thank you very much for taking the time to complete this phone interview with us!”

Meral: “Sure!”

Adriana: “Can you tell us how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Meral: “Yeah, I started in 2004, so that is about six to seven years almost, going on seven years.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect. And how many languages can you translate into?”

Meral: “I am only fluent in English and Arabic; I have native efficiency. But I have elementary capability in French and Farsi.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect! Do you have any formal background or education in the field of translation?”

Meral: “No, not in translation.”

Adriana: “Okay, and what are the day-to-day responsibilities of this job?”

Meral: “Well, the day-to-day responsibilities pretty much vary from simultaneous translation, where you are assigned to a specific person or sometimes a specific group. It could vary anywhere from one person to 10 people depending on your ability as a translator to handle a

crowd. It also may entail translating documents, videos, DVDs, recordings, or maybe sometimes even doing editing or QC, which means you are looking at the work of other people saying, 'This is good; this is not,' or 'This needs to be edited,' so there is a lot of variation to it. There is not a typical day, I can say, for a translator."

Adriana: "Okay, very good. What are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?"

Meral: "I would say the first thing is to be flexible because of the demand of it. You have to travel a lot, move a lot, and it's not always comfortable in an air-conditioned office. It's not necessarily a 9 to 5 job, so you have to have that flexibility, and you have to have patience also—patience because sometimes you are dealing with very complex material that requires the use of external methods like maybe a dictionary or the computer and Internet and also patience for the people you are working with. The person that you are translating for you must have patience with your sometimes because you are working on their time and their schedule. So, if they say I am not ready and to wait, that waiting period could be hours. But nonetheless, you are assigned to that person, for however long he needs you, until he completes his mission. Patience and flexibility are definitely key."

Adriana: "Okay, perfect! And do you use any specific language dictionary in particular?"

Meral: "No, not necessarily."

Adriana: "Not necessarily, okay. And what kind of work can a translator expect to be doing during the first one to three years of their career?"

Meral: "Well, probably the first one to three years is going to be basic, where you are supervised closely either by other translators or managers, and it will most likely be in an enclosed environment, meaning you won't be going out on missions or military missions, and it doesn't require much going around or traveling. It is going to be most likely an office setting where there is an opportunity for people to do quality assurance on your work."

Adriana: “Okay. And when starting out a career as a translator, what are the rates that a freelance translator should charge a company or an independent client? Can you give any suggestions to that?”

Meral: “I’m sorry. Can you repeat the question?”

Adriana: “Sure, no problem. So, when starting out a career as a translator, on average, what are the rates that a freelance translator should charge a company or an independent client?”

Meral: “Well, to be honest, I’m not really sure about freelancing, but to go off the top of my head, nowhere less than—some people charge by word, some people charge by page—I’m not really familiar with freelancing, but maybe a beginner should charge no less than 25 dollars per hour. And that is just right off the top of my head.”

Adriana: “Okay. And do you think it varies too from where you are located? Or do you not think that matters at all? Is the price still the same if you are in the Middle East, or the South, or North America?”

Meral: “No, I don’t think that will change much.”

Adriana: “Okay. Many translators and participants within our certification program ask about compensation levels within the industry after they are working in the industry six to seven years. What would be realistic, or what would you charge a company after being in the industry for that certain period of time?”

Meral: “Well, to be honest with you, the compensation is very rewarding once you are working for a company, once you do have maybe not even six to seven years; you could have two years’ experience, and that would automatically put you into the bracket of a six-figure salary. Of course, it depends. Some companies pay more than others depending on the size of the company, but also the location of where you are assigned because it will not be virtual work. You will probably be assigned to a certain geographic location, and in each country, the salary differs a little bit. But I can say that any translator with any decent experience, let’s say from two years and above, will likely make into six figures.”

Adriana: “Okay, very good. And for you, what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator?”

Meral: “I would say the flexibility and the traveling. But you know, the flexibility can be a double-edged sword. If you’re not able to adapt to the constantly changing environment, it could hurt you, but once you start to enjoy it and enjoy the fact that every day is different than the other and every assignment is different, then that is what’s appealing—the flexibility and the traveling.”

Adriana: “Okay, and for you, what is the worst, or maybe the most challenging, part of working as a translator?”

Meral: “It is being away from home for so long.”

Adriana: “Okay, and what is the number one most costly mistake that you have made in your career that you can tell us and others to help them from making the same mistake? Does anything come to mind that others could learn from?”

Meral: “Um, yes. Again, I cannot address enough the flexibility, and it is not always a comfortable situation, and they have to have good people skills because you work with a variety of different people. So, work on your interpersonal skills, personal skills, and also be adaptable. It’s not always going to be luxurious, you know? So, you have to be adaptable and be willing to go with the flow.”

Adriana: “Okay. And in your position as a successful translator right now, what recommendations would you give for someone who would like to start their career as a translator?”

Meral: “My number one advice would be to learn more than two languages. From my experience, it is not enough. You know, as I said, I am fluent in Arabic and English, but it’s not enough. It is always good to go the extra mile, like for me, for example, it would be very beneficial if I was fluent in Farsi as well as Arabic or fluent in Kurdish because of the region that I speak in. So, I would encourage every translator to go the extra mile and not just settle for English and something else. Go for that third and fourth language.”

Adriana: “Okay, very good! Very good tip. And our final question here: Many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete the Certified Translation Professional program, and I was wondering if you had any one last piece of advice or something that you would like to emphasize from this interview today that would be worth at least 400 dollars to most translators over the length of their career. So, Meral, do you have a 400-dollar piece of advice that you could provide to everyone listening today?”

Meral: “Yes. I would say don't be lazy and go ahead. Like I said, I am very eagerly studying to get the certificate that you offer because it is a competitive industry, especially these days; it has become a much more competitive industry in the past five years than it was, say, 10 years ago. So no, it is no longer enough; the fact that I am fluent in Arabic and English is no longer enough. So, I would advise people to go the extra mile. Obtain any additional certificates that you are able to. Obtain that extra education. Take a class. Get a degree in linguistics. Anything that you could add on is what is going to distinguish you. It is no longer enough that you are fluent in a target language and another language. So, like I said, your certificate would definitely be a plus on my resume and for employers also because many employers are asking, 'What kind of certificates do you have?' They don't stop at what's your degree and what languages do you speak. They want that translator that is distinguished, that went a little bit above and beyond the rest of the translators. So again, it is very competitive these days, so you have to distinguish yourself as a translator.”

Adriana: “Thank you very much! That was very good. I am sure that many of the participants in our program could benefit from the suggestion that you just gave us. So, Meral, thank you very much for sharing all of that today!”

Expert Translator Interview #8: Pilar Gracia

Adriana: "Today we are interviewing Pilar, who is an expert in translation from Bolivia. And with that, let's get started with the interview! So, Pilar, thank you for taking the time to complete the phone interview with us today!"

Pilar: "Thank you!"

Adriana: "And can you tell us how many years' experience you have working as a translator?"

Pilar: "Okay, I began translating in 1990, so that means I've been in the business around 20 years."

Adriana: "All right, and how many languages can you translate into?"

Pilar: "Spanish to English and English to Spanish."

Adriana: "That's great. Do you have any formal education or background in the field of translation?"

Pilar: "Well, I am an expert technician who graduated from Cedars of Lebanon Hospital in California. So, over the years, I continued to study English, but I did not have the chance to pursue a certification yet. That is what I am trying to do now. But I don't have a formal education in translation."

Adriana: "Right. And what are the day-to-day responsibilities of the translation job?"

Pilar: "Okay, I thought of three things. The first one is that the translation needs to be accurate. And it is the same for interoperation. You have to translate accurately, and you have to interoperate accurately, right?"

Adriana: "Right."

Pilar: "The second thing that I thought about is that you have to comply with the deadlines."

Adriana: “Right, that is a good one.”

Pilar: “And the third thing is you have to present your work tidy, very tidy and orderly. Those are the three things that I thought of.”

Adriana: “Very nice. So, what are some of the skills and abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job?”

Pilar: “Okay, the first and most important skill that I have found to be vital in this trade is that you have to have a full knowledge of your mother language, or mother tongue as it is said in some places, because it will enable you to better understand other languages in their written and oral form as well, even if they are different in structure. So, I think the translators need to be able to communicate in their own language first in order to perform a reliable job in other languages. If they cannot express themselves in their own language, then they are in trouble.”

Adriana: “Right! That makes sense.”

Pilar: “I have two other things that I have thought about. The second skill is to have an ample knowledge of the literary and common idiomatic use of the language you are translating into, and that has to come from a constant exposure to its pronunciation and written form. It is not very good to translate without listening to the language. And the third thing that I thought of, the third skill that you need, involves the easy use of the technical gadgets that are at hand, such as a computer, computer programs, Internet, dictionaries, and others. So, I thought of these three things.”

Adriana: “Right. Very good. Thank you! So, what particular computer equipment or software do you use daily?”

Pilar: “Well, I’m using a laptop now with programs like Microsoft Word XP, Excel, Adobe, PowerPoint, Publisher, and the Internet. The dictionaries I am using now are <https://www.wordreference.com/>, and I use the Granada University from Spain (Granada University) and a few others. It depends on what I am translating, right?”

Adriana: "Right, it depends on the job."

Pilar: "And then I have other manual dictionaries. They take up more time, but I rely a lot on the Appleton and the written ones as well."

Adriana: "Okay, very good! And what kind of work can a translator expect to be doing the first one to three years of their career?"

Pilar: "Okay, I would say it would depend mostly on the line of work that the translator is intending to work in. In general, I would say that a translator could expect to be translating articles, letters, short stories, reports, and even maybe some simple books, right? So, in my case, I have specialized in scientific and medical history and language arts because that is close to what I am right now."

Adriana: "Yes, correct! And many translators and participants in our CTP program ask us about compensation levels in the industry. So, what should a translator expect to make after working for three years in the industry? What would be realistic?"

Pilar: "Well, you know I live and work in Bolivia, therefore the standard compensation is not compatible with the fees that are set overseas. Yet because I have many years of experience in several fields, I charge the highest rates that are paid in my nation. And sometimes I am not even paid that; sometimes I am just asked to do it and asked to please lower the fee!"

Adriana: "Right!"

Pilar: "But as to the question as to how much translators should be paid between three to 10 years of service, I would expect them to receive top salaries since they generate many of the sources of employment, which are given through the translation of technical or machinery manuals, textbooks for students in different fields, or sometimes live translations in seminars. People benefit from all of that. Translation requires demanding thinking skills, it drains your brain and body, and it is very hard to do a good job several hours in a row. So, I think that translation should not be measured with the same standards as other jobs. Now, there are some countries that have laws that regulate how many hours someone can be translating

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because he or she should have resting periods. Some studies even say that no person has the ability to translate simultaneously in a very effective way for more than 30 minutes at a time. It usually takes three sessions of thirty minutes when doing simultaneous translation."

Adriana: "Right. I believe that's why when it is going to take projects over one to two hours, they must hire two interpreters because one is not able to handle the work, which is very true."

Pilar: "So since it is impossible to do such a task in a day, you can compare, let's say, three 30-minute periods to a normal eight-hour working day in a sense. I don't know any facts about translating texts, but it is definitely more demanding than other jobs. I would say that the first three years should be compared to the salary that a junior engineer receives. I hope that that answers your question in a sense."

Adriana: "Yes! For sure! And for you, what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator?"

Pilar: "To me, it is an opportunity to meet people while I am being exposed to new challenges in translating skills. Because you have a flexible schedule, it helps me from losing time while I am moving from my home to my job and vice versa because I live pretty far out of town. This is more like a job inside the house. I can take my laptop and translate wherever I am going. It is freelance; it is beautiful to do it that way. That is the most appealing thing."

Adriana: "And for you, what is the worst, or maybe most challenging, part of working as a translator?"

Pilar: "Meeting unrealistic deadlines through reckless planning!"

Adriana: "Right!"

Pilar: "We have a saying in Bolivia that people ask you for things for yesterday, you know? This I need for yesterday! That's what they say. An additional difficulty that I find is when the original text is not correct in either grammar or expression. This is the main hindrance you have when you are translating any type of written

text. If it is not written in a language you can understand, you are in trouble. That is what takes the most time; it is so challenging.”

Adriana: “Right. And what are your top three tips for translating professionals who want to have a very successful career in the industry?”

Pilar: “Okay, in my experience, it is to have technical tools at hand, for example, pencils and pens, pad, online dictionary, and printer. That would be the first thing. The second thing would be to print the translated text so that I can proofread it because mistakes are not evident on the screen but really jump out on the page. And the third would be to comply with your employers’ agreed deadlines. There is nothing more annoying than delays caused by a lack of responsible planning, for both parties, because sometimes that happens. So those would be my three tips, and they will be very successful if they comply with it.”

Adriana: “Very nice. What is the number one most costly mistake that you have made within your translation career that you could share with others that would help them avoid making the same mistakes? Does anything come to mind that others could learn from?”

Pilar: “Oh yeah. The most regretful mistake that I ever made as a translator was to engage in a translation that demanded more knowledge of the technicalities of the text, and I was in deep trouble with that. I believe now that it is good to first assess your knowledge of a subject to be translated and to be honest if you don’t know what to do with it and not attempt to do it. Because it is costly, it costs time for you and for the client as well. It will be a very bad job, and you will be stressed out for nothing in the end.”

Adriana: “Yes. And in your position right now as a successful translator, what recommendations would you give to someone who would like to start a career as a translator?”

Pilar: “Okay, I would advise the new translator to acknowledge the fact that this trade is possible only through a true love of languages. I love language because it is a service that provides for others. Then I think that if a translator lacks patience or time, they surely will not enjoy this kind of a job.”

Adriana: “I see. And lastly here, many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete the Certified Translation Professional program, and I was wondering if you had any one last piece of advice that you could provide or something you would like to emphasize from this interview today that would be worth at least 400 dollars to most translators over the length of their career. Do you have any one 400-dollar piece of advice you could provide for everyone right now?”

Pilar: “Yes, and I hope it will help you guys. Thank you, first of all, for the opportunity to share about my experiences in this trade. As for the piece of advice, something that started in my personal experience that is worth about 400 dollars is that translators should never translate materials that are offensive to gender or race or that spread vulgarity or have political implications that could endanger your own life or the lives of others, because our reputation as professional translators is at stake at all times. When people ask for translators in any given business, they have references about people, so this is very dangerous. I have found that.

“And in addition to that, I think that since languages are alive, translators should always be open to continued learning and updating. We don’t know everything. The language is always changing in Spanish and English and in all other languages. Because of the Internet and everything, there are always new words and idioms.

“I also want to say that as a single mother, I seriously advocated myself to be an example for my children and to others. This, I think, is very important for people to listen to because there were many times I had to reject projects that could have ensured my economy for a very long time but in turn violated my principles and integrity. So I think that is very important. I never lacked in opportunities to translate, even when I rejected work. I honestly think it is better to weigh the pros and the cons beforehand in order to succeed. That is what I would like to give to people, that piece of advice. I don’t know if it will serve others or not, but in my case, it was very important.”

Adriana: “Yeah, that’s great! And thank you very much for your time today!”

Pilar: “You are very welcome!”

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Expert Translator Interview #9: Yassir Kori

Adriana: “Today we are interviewing Yassir, who is an expert in translation, and with that, let’s get started with the interview! So once again, thank you for taking the time to complete this phone interview! Can you tell us how many years you have been working as a translator?”

Yassir: “I have worked a lot! Since 1996 I have been working as a translator, which now amounts to nearly 14 years.”

Adriana: “Fourteen years—that’s great! It has been a long time. And how many languages can you translate into?”

Yassir: “I translate in the three languages: English, Arabic, and my more native tribal language called Luba.”

Adriana: “Okay, perfect. And do you have any formal education or background in the field of translation?”

Yassir: “Not in terms of translation, but I do have an academic master’s degree in international law for the settlement of disputes and also now I am doing a master’s in leadership and Public Administration, plus various training and certification programs. I have a lot of different training courses.”

Adriana: “Right, that’s great. Can you tell us, what are the day-to-day responsibilities of a translation job?”

Yassir: “Daily, I am working with the immigration and refugee communities here, who come from different parts of the world and try to get jobs and need to fill out applications; I have to translate for them. Also, I translate for those who need to see doctors in hospitals or for those who go to court and have a problem there. I also do in-house. Those who receive documentation in the mail and they don’t understand what it means, I have to go and read it, and then I translate it for them. I do some translation with certificates. If someone is issued a foreign language

certificate in the mail and needs that to be translated, I can do that for them—birth certificates, passports, immunization records, anything that needs to be translated. In order to get an immunization here, they need to have the record from the other country because we cannot repeat the same immunizations. So, the doctors need that to be translated, and I translate those documents.”

Adriana: “I see, very nice. And for you, what are some of the skills or abilities necessary for someone to succeed in this job as a translator?”

Yassir: “One good thing to have in this field is that you are always interacting. When you interact with different communities, you learn a lot from them. Also, be careful for listening because each person may have a different accent that you may not understand. Pay attention to the accents and pronunciation; that is important for a person to succeed in this field.”

Adriana: “Right. And while you are doing the translation for these very important documents, as you said, birth certificates and so on, do you use any specific language dictionary?”

Yassir: “Sometimes I use a software program that I downloaded from a computer a long time ago. If I have a difficult word that I may not understand thoroughly, I use it to review. But basically, I have a lot of vocabulary that has been with me since a long time ago.”

Adriana: “Right, that’s great. And what kind of work can a translator expect to be doing during the first one to three years of their career? I know you have over 14 years of experience as a translator, but can you tell us what kind of work a translator would be doing when they are starting out their career as a translator?”

Yassir: “The first thing in the work that they do, this question maybe was not said, but they break the cycle of indifference. They break the cycle of indifference with people who sometimes are not aware of it. The translator, when they enter into that career, breaks the cycle of that indifference. You are bridging a gap between non-English speakers and English speakers. You are acting as a mediator there, and you bridge a gap between them. So it is a good career to be a part of that.”

Adriana: “That’s right. And many translators and participants with our certification program ask us about compensation levels in the industry, so what do you think a translator should expect to make after working for three years as a translator?”

Yassir: “Ah! It depends. Sometimes if you are working for a big corporation, you really become an asset for that corporation. In particular, with the American society here, people who are good with Iraq are needed to translate for soldiers because soldiers have been killed a lot. Normally in America, under normal conditions, I was in Georgia making \$150; whether I translated one hour or two hours, they would give me that \$150 as a minimum amount when the translator goes to the field. I did that a lot in Georgia. So, there is a minimum and a maximum, depending on the situation and emergency.”

Adriana: “Right. Does it also depend on how many years you have been in the industry? If a translator has over 10 years of experience, do you think that they should be making more than another translator who only has three years of experience?”

Yassir: “Yes. There is a difference between verbal translation with interpretation and documentation. When you are translating documents, they can be very important, like court orders that have taken place and need to be translated. They cannot be equaled with things that are translated verbally. So, it depends on that situation too.”

Adriana: “Okay, very good. And for you, what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator?”

Yassir: “Well, that would be that every day you are learning something new from different people when you translate. So, it is a cultural integration.”

Adriana: “Right. And for you, what is the worst, or maybe the most challenging thing about working as a translator?”

Yassir: “Probably the worst thing is when the message being translated is not clear. For security of conscience, you need to understand it for the translation to the next person to be accurate. If
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you translate inaccurately, it affects a lot. That is the worst thing to me.”

Adriana: “That’s great. And what are your top three tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career in the industry?”

Yassir: “Well, one is professional outlook. In order to be a good translator, you need to have a professional outlook because instead of just wording something, you are translating for somebody. And when people look at you, you don’t want people to change their attraction. So, I place professional outlook first. Then the person needs to be presentable. When you want to present something, you need to be presentable. And also, when you want to translate from a first party to a second party, look into the eyes of the first party, and when you transfer the message, look the second in the eyes. Look into the eyes thoroughly so you know the message gets to that destination. So, you need to do that professionally.”

Adriana: “Those are very good tips. Thank you! And what do you think is the number one most costly mistake that you have made in your translation career that you could share with others to help them avoid making the same mistake? Does anything come to mind that others could learn from?”

Yassir: “Well, there are a lot of things that can hurt when a person is trying to translate. I would highly recommend that when you translate, there is a literal translation and a meaning translation. Some people convey letter by letter, which can convey a different message. But when you translate from the meaning, you make a very good assessment that people should be able to understand because from culture to culture, words can have different meanings. Other cultures can mean different things. So, paying attention to the cultural barriers is very important. And don’t worry about the literal translation but focus on the meaning translation of the topic. Some people then realize how important it is to avoid too much emphasis on literal translation.”

Adriana: “Right, and I have one last question here for you. Many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete our certification program, and I was wondering if you had any one last piece of advice after everything that you have told us. Do you have

something else that you would like to emphasize in this interview today that would be worth at least 400 dollars to most translators over the length of their career? So, do you have an extra 400 dollar piece of advice that you could provide to everyone listening right now?"

Yassir: "Well, one piece of advice that I can add to what I have said already may take a different dimension. The first thing is understanding the culture. It is an important thing before you enter into translation. And the second thing is that literal translation is not as important as meaningful translation. To get the meaning is most important."

Adriana: "Very good! Those are very important pieces of advice, Yassir, so thank you very much for sharing all of that with us today. Those were very important, and I am sure that other translators will learn from what you told us today. And thank you very much for conducting this interview, and email me anytime, and have a good day!"

Yassir: "Thank you! My

pleasure!" **Adriana:** "All right!

Bye-bye!" **Yassir:** "Bye now!"

Expert Translator Interview #10: Paulo Eduardo

Adriana: “Hello! My name is Adriana, and I am head of the Certified Translation Professional program! This is an online training program for translators, and as part of this program, we have interviewed many translation experts so we can offer mp3 audio recording of these interviews to the participants within our certification program, so today we are interviewing Paulo Eduardo, who is an expert in translation, and with that, let’s get started with the interview!”

Paulo: “Okay!”

Adriana: “Thank you for taking the time to complete this phone interview with us!”

Paulo: “Thank you for calling!”

Adriana: “No problem! Can you tell us how many years of experience you have working as a translator?”

Paulo: “Well, I have been working strictly as a translator for eight years actually, but in my life, I have always been an international trader, so just over there, I have been translating several catalogs and technical specifications because I used to be a trader from Brazil and to Brazil.”

Adriana: “Oh wow!”

Paulo: “So these translations and interpretations had to be done. So as a translator eight years, but in my life, I have 32 years of experience translating.”

Adriana: “That’s great! Do you have any education or formal background in the field of translation?”

Paulo: “No, I don’t. I am an economist, I am an international trader, and I have a business administration degree, but that is why I am undergoing your certification program right now. Because of that—to get my certification in translation.”

Adriana: “That’s great! And can you tell us what the day-to-day responsibilities are for your translation job?”

Paulo: “Well, aside from translating, first you have to study a lot because you have to be very involved with the subject that you translate. So that is number one—always being updated with everything. Then, contacting eventual prospects and customers, undergoing tests for several agencies, but basically it’s administrating what you have and what you do—administrating the customers that you have, forwarding some translation to colleagues, receiving them back, and administrating and sending them. It’s a lot of work. It doesn’t seem so, but it is a lot of work.”

Adriana: “Yeah, we can tell that! And how many languages can you translate into? Only Portuguese into English or do you translate in other languages?”

Paulo: “Also Spanish.”

Adriana: “Okay, that’s great! What are some of the skills and abilities for someone to succeed in this job, besides what you have already told us? Is there anything you can share with us?”

Paulo: “Well, aside from the huge knowledge of the languages, you must be aware of the culture differences.”

Adriana: “That’s right.”

Paulo: “Because being able to interpret is not only to know the language but to know the culture that you are talking about, being that Latin American countries or European countries, you have to know their values, symbolism, and the original source. You have to be sensitive enough to understand the ideas that are subjected in the original because word for word, you have nothing translated.”

Adriana: “Right. So here we know we have up to eight years of work in translation. What kind of work can a translator expect to be doing the first one to three years of their career?”

Paulo: “Well, they have to contact several agencies. Hopefully, they are lucky enough to undergo a test and, after these tests, start translating for these companies. If they have other skills and abilities, they can use those, like I do voice-overs, I do interpretations, and I do some simultaneous translation as well.”

Adriana: “Right.”

Paulo: “So there are several things that you can do. But if you don’t study and you don’t know the market in which you specialize for translating, it doesn’t work. You have to study a lot, work a lot, and contact people a lot. That’s basically it.”

Adriana: “The first things... Right, that’s good. Now, many of our participants in the certification program ask us about compensation levels in the industry. So, what should a translator in the industry expect to make after working for three years in the industry?”

Paulo: “Well, I am not sure exactly what the calculations would be in dollars, and I don’t know if I was lucky, but after three years, I was making around 4,000 to 5,000 dollars a month.”

Adriana: “Right, that’s great! And could you notice any big difference after working for five to seven years as a translator? Did it increase the amount?”

Paulo: “Well, it has a little bit because I have some colleagues that are working with me. So, you could say that I have a small agency. So, it has a little bit. It is stable. Even with the crisis last year and beginning the year before, I did not see that crisis so much.”

Adriana: “Okay, that is good news!”

Paulo: “But there again, you have to have expertise in a certain kind of market. In Brazil, we have certain kinds of markets where there is no crisis: the automotive industry, the tooling industry, and the petroleum industry.”

Adriana: “Right. And what is the most appealing thing about working as a translator today?”

Paulo: “Learning new things every day. There is no boredom.”

Adriana: “No boredom—that’s good! And what is the most challenging part about working as a translator?”

Paulo: “The expectations and anxiety of getting new jobs. That is what we have to fight against—to not sit and wait for another job to come in. You have to go after it.”

Adriana: “That’s right. And what are your top three tips for translation professionals who want to have a very successful career in the industry?”

Paulo: “Study, and don’t overestimate your knowledge. That is the biggest challenge as well, by the way. Coming back a little bit, this is the aspect of availability and commitment because you have to respect the delivery terms. Sometimes the schedule is difficult to administrate. Sometimes you overestimate your words per day, your production. Then all of a sudden, the translation comes with terms that are more difficult or that are more specific for a certain market. So, you overestimate, and you may not deliver on time, and that’s when you are dead.”

Adriana: “Right. And what is the number one most costly mistake that you have made in your career that you could share with others to help them avoid making the same mistake? Does anything come to mind that others could learn from?”

Paulo: “Well, again, don’t overestimate your knowledge. If you don’t understand law, don’t try to understand legal translation. If you don’t understand mining, don’t try to translate for mining. Learn about it if you see the market is that one and go deep into it. But don’t try to do it if you cannot deliver and are not sure of what you can do. Or you can have a good tutor.”

Adriana: “A tutor is always very important to have, that’s very true. And now for our last question. Many professionals pay a few hundred dollars to complete the Certified Translation Professional program,
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the CTP, and I was wondering if you had one last piece of advice you could provide or something you would like to emphasize from the interview today that would be worth at least 400 dollars to most translators over the length of their career. Do you have a 400-dollar piece of advice that you could provide for everyone listening? I know you talked a lot about knowledge and how this is very important for you to succeed as a translator. Do you believe that this would be your 400-dollar piece of advice or do you have something else you want to share with us?"

Paulo: "Well, the CTP program is one of the most cost-beneficial programs that I have seen. I think it is the most cost beneficial that I have seen. In a very short while and for a very low cost, you get the certificate, and it makes a hell of a lot of difference."

Adriana: "That's good to hear! Thank you! So, Paulo, thank you very much for your time today! I think that we have reached the end of our interview."

Paulo: "Well, I thank you for calling me and having me be part of the interviews and the certificate. Anything that you need from Brazil, please don't hesitate."

Adriana: "Thank you very much for your time today!"

Paulo: "Thank you very much for calling again, Adriana! Have a nice day!"

Free Bonus Audio MP3 Content: Our team recorded an expert translator audio interview with Paulo Eduardo Rodrigues da Silva on the topic of "How to Succeed as a Translator."

This video was originally produced as one of the 10 expert translator audio interview modules for the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program, but you can watch it for free by typing this into your web browser:

MP3: <http://TranslationCertification.com/Audio1>

Chapter 12 Frequently Asked Questions

Are you:

- ✓ Fascinated by languages?
- ✓ Bilingual or multilingual—or at least fluent enough in more than one language to understand them both well?
- ✓ Just beginning a career or thinking about changing careers?
- ✓ Interested in entering the rewarding field of translation?
- ✓ Still wondering how to do so?
- ✓ Or still wondering about the profession and career of translation?

We sat down with a top industry expert on translation and asked her 100 questions about what it takes to be a successful translator today. All of our questions are based off of the over 5,000 emails we have received to date at the Global Translation Institute (GTI).

Here are the translator's answers to our top 100 questions:

1. How do I enter the translation industry?

There is no set path and no entry requirements.

- Some people enter the industry as students in an accredited translation program. There are a number of these around, and they come in many different flavors. Some are associated with a college or university; others are free-standing programs. Some have a residency requirement; others are available through distance learning or the Internet.
- Other people become translators or interpreters because they are bilingual or even multilingual and see a need in their own field, be it medicine, law, tourism, finance, or something else entirely. In this case, they might enter the industry through their own firm, by being hired by a multinational corporation, or even by being hired by a translation agency.

2. Is education an important part of the translation profession?

Yes, on a number of levels. First, you need to have learned to speak or at least read more than one language. And even if you learned both in the home as a child, at some point, you'll need to understand the requirements of the languages' grammar and syntax. And you can't get a degree or certification in translation without education and educational institutions—whether they're online, universities, or certification programs. Continuing education is also important as the field is a dynamic one. So, you have to stay up to date with the trends in the industry, which means that conferences—both virtual and physical ones—are important.

3. What is important to know about the translation profession when interviewing?

Translation professionals come in all shapes, sizes, sexes, and nationalities. So as long as you are a competent professional with good work credentials and references and/or a good educational background, you shouldn't encounter discrimination, which is a wonderful thing for someone looking for a job.

You can either go toward becoming a generalist, or cover many different fields and/or languages, or else you can specialize. In fact, many translators enter the industry in a "sideways" manner as a multilingual professional in another industry. The more technical the field, the more important this is. Engineers, physicists, lawyers, and so forth have a distinct advantage as translators in their own fields. Knowledge of software and linguistic and writing competency are crucial too.

4. What are employers looking for in a translation professional?

They want someone who is reliable, conscientious, and careful. A translation professional should be passionate about the art and craft of translation, about getting just the right nuance or flavor into the translation of any text they work with, no matter how mundane or dry. Ideally, a translator is a good writer in the language(s) he or she translates into and cares deeply about communication and meaning.

They also want an employee who takes painstaking care in detail work as a mistaken letter or punctuation mark can completely

change the meaning of a text. Finally, a good work ethic helps too: punctuality, hard work, and a strong sense of honor—all things an employer would look for in any profession.

5. What does a normal workday look like for a translation professional?

This depends a bit on whether you choose to work as a freelancer, for an agency, for a governmental organization such as the EU or the U.S. State Department, or within a translation department of a corporation.

Let's say you're a freelancer with multiple clients as that's what I'm most familiar with. If you live and work on the West Coast, you're getting up just as Europe is going home from the office, and you're roughly half a day behind Asia. So, as you're thinking about breakfast, you might be wise to power up your computer or laptop—or check your smartphone to see if anything urgent is waiting in your email.

Once you officially start your work day, you'll spend some 60–70% of your time actually doing your work of translating, proofreading, editing, etc.; another 20–25% prospecting for work (bidding for projects, sorting through offers, etc.); and about 5–10% of your day doing paperwork and billing. In the evening, you might do some reading to keep up in your field, do Internet research on new software, peruse some translation blogs, and so forth. All of this will vary from field to field and also where you are in your career cycle, of course.

6. Are there different kinds of translation job titles?

Yes and no. Most obviously, there are the titles you might expect for a translation professional. So, an interpreter could be called an interpreter, and therefore, someone who works as an interpreter in the legal system might also be called a court interpreter. An interpreter in the medical field would call him- or herself a medical or healthcare interpreter. For someone who's a translator, there's translator, literary translator, medical translator, judicial translator, freelance translator, and so forth. After that, it gets trickier. For example, you could be a project manager for a translation company,

so your job title would be Translation Project Manager.

7. What are the main functions of a translation professional?

A translation professional either translates or interprets. Their function is to take words that have been written or spoken in one language and render them understandable—and culturally appropriate—to someone who only understands a different language.

A translation professional can also function as a proofreader, taking someone else's translation or words and making sure that it is clear and understandable and that it is a decent representation of the original. And a translation professional can also summarize someone else's written or spoken words as well for a journal, an index, a medical history, or court document. In addition, some translation professionals' function as copy writers, editors, dubbing experts, or voice-over talents.

8. What are the responsibilities of a translation professional?

The responsibilities of a translation professional are myriad and varied, depending on where one is working, both in the profession and in the world. However, the bottom-line responsibilities are accuracy and attention to detail as well as timeliness and punctuality. In the case of the latter, for example, whatever the agreed-upon deadline is, it's crucial to meet it.

Basic responsibilities include communicating the meaning of a text in a different language or making sure that the text has been communicated properly, so a translation professional needs to hear or read a text or speech and then translate or interpret it. Being available via phone, email, or Skype is another responsibility, as is being available to answer questions or revise a document

9. How can I get an internship in the translation industry?

The best way is to build and use your network of relationships in the industry. If you're in school, go to your school's career center and look at what they have. List yourself with them and file a copy of your resume. Ask colleagues and parents if they know of anyone who

might be in your industry or future industry. Go to industry job fairs and virtual conferences if any are happening at your school. Talk to your professors. Whether you're in school or not, fill out a profile on LinkedIn, and say that

you're looking. Consider signing up on translators' forums such as Proz.com and posting a query about internships. Target firms in a specific branch of the industry or a region you're willing to work in, look up their contact information and HR department, and then cold contact—call, email, etc. Don't stalk but be politely persistent.

10. What are the top three questions employers might ask when interviewing a translation professional?
 - 1) Why do/did you want to become a translation professional—and has the field turned out to be what you expected? Another way to ask this is, "What do you like and dislike about being a translation professional and/or the field of translation?" These are targeted versions of the more traditional "Tell us about yourself."
 - 2) What talents, skills, and benefits would you bring to our firm as a translation professional?
 - 3) How would you handle an assignment that you don't feel suited for, don't think you understand, or don't have a requisite skill to handle? As an employer, I want to know if you'll tell me when you're over your head or need help—long before it's too late.
 - 4) And here's a bonus question that you may well have to answer: "Why us?" In other words, why do you want to work with us? "I need a job and you're hiring" is not an appropriate answer. Do your research. Make sure you know who they are and who you are—why you might be a good fit. Have two to three questions you can ask about the firm that will show your interest and your knowledge of the firm.

11. How do I become a translation professional?

The paths to entering the profession are as varied as there are people and languages. First, you could get a degree or certification in translation. Or you could get a degree in your second (or third) translation. Or you could get a degree in your second (or third)

language and then start to look for jobs in the translation industry.

A third route is to become a professional in another field and then work for a company that requires or appreciates your being bilingual and then asks you to translate or interpret. Or you could—at any point in any of the above—become interested in languages and translation and start looking for work on translators' forums and networks, of which there are many.

12. Are there any associations that I should join as a translation professional?

You should join your country's trade association. Globally, you can join the Global Translation Institute (GTI - <http://translationinstitute.org/index.html>) regardless of where you are based.

However, note that you don't need to become a full member, which can require testing, fees, etc. There are usually associate memberships and student memberships, and those are perfectly fine. There are also sector-specific associations, such as the American Literary Translator's Association (ALTA), the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT - <https://najit.org/>), the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA - <https://www.imiaweb.org/>), and so forth. Just google whatever type of translation or interpretation you want to specialize in and see if there's an association that seems major enough to be worth its membership fees. You'd be surprised at how many niche associations there are.... You might want to join the international association FIT (International Federation of Translators - <https://www.fit-ift.org/>), but that seems less important to a U.S.-based translator.

13. Where do translation professionals normally work?

Everywhere. A freelancer can work out of their home, or even at the beach, if they have good concentration skills and a bit of shade that allows them to read the screen of their laptop. If you work for an agency, you still may find yourself telecommuting. Or you might be cubicle/office based. If you choose to do medical or legal interpreting, you might find yourself working at a hospital or a medical center, at a courthouse, etc. If you work for the U.S. State Department, you might work in a governmental office, for an agency

with branches across the country, or even outside the U.S. And don't forget those ubiquitous interviews on the news that you hear translated everywhere—you might work for a local news group or a wire association such as the Associated Press. If you work for a company that's been hired by a governmental organization, such as the EU, you might well work at home and then periodically travel to a worksite.

Indeed, in many parts of the translation industry, you might travel periodically to onsite job locations. Really, the sky's the limit here.

14. Do translation professionals normally work in house or as a consultant?

I'm a freelancer, so my experience is skewed here as all my translation projects are as a consultant. So, from my perspective, translation professionals normally work that way (i.e., as consultants). However, there are numerous in-house translation jobs available. Again, this is just my experience, but I've found that most agencies seem to be comfortable having their translation professionals and even their project managers telecommute as consultants on a per-hire basis. Nonetheless, there are some agencies that want you in house, and more of them prefer that if you're a PM. Now, if you want to work for a large company that uses translation professionals, then that's undoubtedly a different situation, and you'd be more likely to be in house, at least from what I can see, as you'd work for that company.

15. What skills do I need to be a translation professional?

Surprisingly, a number of very basic ones. You need to be able to write well in your target language, and you need to be able to speak it well if you're interpreting. In other words, you need to be a good writer. You need to be able to read or understand your source language well. Good research skills to look up things such as unfamiliar terms are important too. Computer skills are well-nigh unavoidable at this point in time.

Project management skills are important so that you can turn your work in on time, whether you're a freelancer or working in house. You need to be self-motivated and an independent worker, but you also need to be a team player for those times when teamwork is involved.

16. What are some sources of information on becoming a translation professional?

The Internet is a wonderful place for getting information. Visit the websites of any of the following and you'll find a wealth of information: American Translators Association (ATA), Global Translation Institute (GTI), Proz.com, Translator's Café, LISA (Localization Industry Standards Association), and many translators' blogs. Or you could go to the websites of schools that offer a degree or certification in translation, such as Monterey Institute of International Studies. Or, if you feel bold, find a couple of translation agencies that look interesting and reputable. Research them and then call and ask if you could interview or shadow one of the principals; explain why and be humble and polite.

17. What benefits are there in being a translation specialist or professional?

There are so many. The field is dynamic, creative, intellectually challenging, and fascinating. You get to work with words, languages, communication, and meaning in not one but two or even three languages. You can set your own hours and run your own business. And you are in a profession where you can really help people, without having to go into government or social work, because there are always situations in which knowing exactly what is being said or meant is crucial for someone else's well-being. The field has so many nooks and crannies, varied aspects and varied specialties, that there's a place for almost everyone who's interested and a niche for anyone who wants to find one.

18. How can I become a great translation specialist?

Read, write, care, and stay connected. Read in all your languages. Write in your target language. Care about your customers, your texts, your deadlines, your quality, and the meaning of every word and phrase that comes from your keyboard, your pen, or your lips, professionally. Stay connected to all your languages and to their cultures as well. Stay connected to your specialized industry; don't let it drift from you, as the vocabulary can morph away from your knowledge in an amazingly short amount of time. It doesn't take that many words to

cover what it takes. It's not too hard to be good, but you have to really work and want to be great.

Ironically, the more niches your translation focuses on, the more valuable your translation clients within that niche will find your expertise. Typically, you can charge more as you become more specialized in one or two very specific areas of translation.

19. What characteristics are needed to become a well-respected translation specialist?

In some ways, you need the same things that you would need to be well respected in any profession. So, for example, you need to be reliable, conscientious, and professional. That means you do what you say you'll do, when you say you'll do it, and how you say you'll do it. You look ahead, and if you see unanticipated problems, you let your client or agency know about it if necessary and/or take measures to make sure that you'll stand by your word or your contract. You speak with respect and write politely—without letting others take advantage of you. You keep developing your skills, and you don't fake what you don't know.

20. What tools do translation professionals use every day?

Just about all translators use computers of some kind, whether we have a desktop, a laptop, a netbook, a tablet, or a smartphone and the Internet. And, of course, we all use the gray matter between our ears. The rest is optional. Some use paper and pencil; some use paper dictionaries, and others use online glossaries or online dictionaries. Some use CAT tools; others don't—although increasingly more of us do. I can't imagine not having the Internet at my disposal, and yet, there are corners of the world where perhaps that's the case. We all use word processing software of some kind. We all use the phone—although perhaps that's not really what you meant. And most of us use printers, although that's a bit up to personal preference.

21. What tools do translation professionals use every once in a while?

At this point, I'd say that my paper dictionaries are something that I only use once in a while. I still do use them very occasionally, but

most of the time I have better resources via the Internet. I rarely use my fax machine; again, this is something that was crucial when I started out but is almost outmoded.

22. How can a translation professional build their network?

Both old school and new school ways are effective. An older method of reaching out to translation professionals would be to attend industry conferences. At these events, you can meet with other translators, learn about the industry, and exchange business cards. Some other ideas include giving a talk at a conference or writing a series of helpful translation career articles for a trade journal, newsletter, or industry blog, such as <http://www.becomeatranslator.com/>. You may also want to register with the local chamber of commerce or business association.

Some more modern forms of networking include using translation industry forums, chat rooms, and social media websites. Write a regular blog on a topic that will be interesting to people in the field. Build a good website with content that you update regularly. Make sure that you've done good search engine optimization for your website and blog, and you will eventually get some traffic to your website if you produce valuable content.

23. Is networking important as a translation professional?

Yes, it definitely is. If you want to get referrals, instead of competing for work on the basis of who can do something the cheapest and the quickest, you want to build a network. The network you establish can help you when you're stuck, temporarily join you for teamwork, and potentially offer you opportunities for both short -and long-term work. Plus, translation can be a quiet, lonely job as opposed to interpreting, which is often less so of course. Having a network can be invaluable as they help you notice changes and trends as well.

24. How do translation professionals often find work?

Both traditional ways and newer information society ways. The online groups, such as Translators Café, Proz, GTI, and ATA, all have some sort of a translator bidding and/or referral services. New school: Hang out your shingle on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter—especially LinkedIn. Old school: Put an ad in the yellow pages. Get a
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small local paper to do a human interest story on you and your business; you'll have to find something that might be the hook for them, but if you make things interesting for them, you're off and running. Old school: Run an ad in the ATA journal. New school: Pay for Google ad placement. Both schools: Contact as many agencies as you can with your resume, cover letter, sample translation, etc. Old school would be via snail mail, new school via email. Agencies are ALWAYS in need of good, competent translators. Old school: Look for big multinational firms that might have a translation department. Contact them. Possibly ask the head of the department to mentor you if it's in a field you really want to work in and you have some kind of connection that might help. The list is endless.

25. If a translation professional works as a consultant, do they have to have their own firm?

My understanding is that if you work for yourself, you have your own firm. If you mean, do you have to do it full time as your official business with an office in an office building and incorporate yourself, etc., the answer to that is absolutely not. As long as you satisfy the zoning and tax reporting requirements of your city, as well as the legal and tax requirements of your state, county, and federal government, that's all you have to do, to my best understanding.

26. How do translation consultants find clients?

Everywhere. For brick-and-mortar clients, you can consult the yellow pages (online or paper) and the chamber of commerce. Online, you can contact companies that seem to need translation consultants. (There are many poorly translated websites out there; take someone else's bad job or a machine translation mishap and turn it into your own opportunity.) Online, there are a number of translators' forums and websites that have job listings for bidding (Proz, Translator's Café, Traduguide, GTI—even the ATA has a job referral site). And there are also Yahoo groups that list job opportunities. Finally, you can simply contact agencies with your resume, although the yield there will be slimmer.

27. What abilities do translation specialists and professionals need to work effectively in the translation field?

There are two sets of abilities a translation professional needs in order

to work effectively in the field. First, there are those general skills that promote job success in all industries. These would include things like conscientiousness, punctuality, honesty, honorability, collegial spirit, etc.

Second, there are the skills specific to the translation industry: a passion for language and communication, the ability to write well in the target language, the ability to read and understand or hear and understand a foreign language, and the ability to understand meaning in a holistic way for those many times that the individual words add up to so much more than their individual meaning.

28. What should a translation professional consider when being offered a job?

First, is the job a good fit and of interest? Without that, there's no point continuing. Second, is there a potential upward career path in that job, either within the company or elsewhere? Third, is the pay commensurate and appropriate, and will it allow the professional to live comfortably or to get to another position soon where that is possible? And what kind of raise policy does the firm have? If relocation is involved, do you like the new area? Will the firm pay to move you? Finally, and this is up to your own conscience, but is everything in the job description above board and honest? Are the working conditions safe?

29. What jobs should a translation professional apply for?

A translation professional can either apply within the translation industry or outside it. Examples of the former would be as a translator, interpreter, or project manager for an agency, a governmental agency, or a small translation business. Examples of the latter would be translation jobs for non-translation firms, in other words, in the foreign language division of a publishing company, the human resources department of a multinational corporation, the legal division of a large international firm, the office of a large financial institution that's in a major city with a large immigrant or visitor population, the touring department of a large travel company, the conference division of a meetings firm, etc. Honestly, the possibilities are endless.

30. How much do translation professionals often make when working?

The average figures I've seen vary, with starting salaries ranging somewhere between \$25,000 and \$40,000 and the mean somewhere around \$30,000. I've seen figures suggesting that established translation professionals can average around \$60,000–65,000 annually and have also read that translation professionals who are well respected, work in the highest-demand specializations and languages, and have been in the field for a while can earn in the low six figures.

Typically, as a freelancer, one charges per source word, which can vary widely. There's constant downward pressure due to the economy and offshore competition, and there are issues to consider, such as a rate for proofreading/ editing (one could charge by the word or by the hour) and whether one discounts fuzzy matches if one is using CAT software. But those are details and less helpful for the big picture.

31. Where can I find open positions for translation professionals?

First, let's take an opposite point of view: How can I make it so that project managers or others in the translation industry who might want to fill an open position can find me? The answer to this one's pretty obvious: List yourself on LinkedIn, at Proz, at GTI, etc. State that you're looking for a position and what kind of position you want as well. You'd be surprised how many of the big corporations look to hire from those sites. Once you've done that, go the traditional route: Look at job postings on translator sites, ask folks in your network to tell you about openings, find local translation agencies and see if they have listings, and look at online websites, such as Monster.com or even classified websites like Craigslist.org.

32. Are there other jobs in different industries that translation professionals would work well in?

Absolutely. Almost every sector has some use for a translation professional. I'm going to list just a few examples, but really, you can let your imagination roam free here. First, if you have any kind of financial background, are bilingual or multilingual, and are used to interfacing with the public, there is, at this point, a huge demand for your services. Think banking, investment services, stock brokerages, etc.

These firms often need someone to handle their client relationships

or client acquisitions, and they sometimes even have specific openings or divisions that deal with ex-pats of other countries or visitors to the U.S. You can look specifically for multinational, global firms that have a presence in the U.S. Another thought, also in the financial sector: wire departments and currency trading divisions in banks. Those seem obvious to me. Need I say more?

One more example should suffice to get folks going, and that's museum docents who give tours are much more able to serve a large portion of the visiting public if they can explain exhibits in several languages. Travel professionals who also speak or understand more than one language can work either as tour operators (on the interpretive end) or travel arrangers of interesting and exotic stays and/or meetings in foreign locales (on the translation end). So, whatever your specialization, should you have one, there's probably an industry that can use your translation skills.

33. What sort of educational requirements do hiring firms look for in potential candidates applying for translation positions?

Some firms want to see that you've taken specific courses, but they are more likely to look for a certified translator. This is tricky for U.S. translation professionals as we don't have a single official certification program. The result is that a translation professional who wants a certification will need to get one from one of the programs out there, such as the GTI certified translation program or the ATA's certification testing program. Or they can go to one of the other governmental organizations that have a testing and certification process, such as the federal courts or the courts in certain states. There are also some associations that have a certification process, such as RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf - <https://rid.org/>), among others. Finally, there are some schools, such as Adelphi, NYU, Chicago, and a number of others, that have a degree program that leads to a certificate. GTI has several training videos on this topic if you want more information.

34. Do translation professionals need to worry about continuing education?

Yes, very much so. You need to stay current on a number of levels:

- 1) Linguistic skills: Languages morph, and—at least for me—my ability to speak a language I'm not using daily can rust over surprisingly quickly. You need to keep your writing, reading, and speaking skills active in all your languages.
 - 2) Translation skills: You should be growing in your craft every time you take on a new project, but you still want to make sure there aren't better, more effective or innovative ways of accomplishing what you do on a regular basis.
 - 3) Industry-specific skills: If you're doing medical or judicial interpreting, there are industry-specific regulations that you need to be aware of. One of the biggest sea changes in the medical profession, for example, has been the new privacy regulations through HIPAA, and any professional involved even peripherally needs to be aware of them and their ramifications.
 - 4) Cultural knowledge: There are some fields where this is more relevant than others.
 - 5) Knowledge of the tools of the trade: This is currently a very dynamic part of the profession due to the inroads that computers, the Internet, cloud computing, and CAT tools have made.
 - 6) Marketing and business tools: If you want to grow your business instead of letting it stagnate or wither, these are good to keep abreast of, which leads us to the next question.
35. How important are social media and other methods of networking online to the translation industry?

I have gotten work via Facebook but not from LinkedIn, Twitter, etc. I know other folks who've gotten projects from LinkedIn, though, and not Facebook. So really, you never know which social media interface will be the one that does the trick for you on a given day, and you always want to have the pleasure of picking your projects instead of feeling so desperate that you'll take anything that comes your way. It probably depends on what you're trying to accomplish and whether you're looking to be a freelancer/consultant or an in-house translator in terms of which type of social media will be the best tool for you. In addition, online translation networks, such as Proz, Translator's Café, Traduguide, and more, are crucial, at least to my business model.

36. What are some steps I need to take to become a translation professional?

You first need to understand the translation business and know how the industry operates. If you're getting a degree or certificate, those steps will hopefully be clearly laid out by your program or your department. If you're bilingual or multilingual and a professional in another industry, then you may want to investigate what it might take to get a degree or a certificate. Or you could join some of the bigger translator networks (such as Proz, among others) and read through their forums. A number of them have good postings or even wikis on becoming a translation professional. There are other programs (such as the Global Translation Institute's CTP designation) that also lay out the steps you need. There are many paths to becoming a translation professional; find the one that suits your needs, your skills, and your experience the best.

37. When is the best time to apply for a translation job?

Be sure to be prepared for the job. Take your classes, get your degree, obtain your certification, and do whatever you need to do to feel like you can deliver a good service to your employer. Be aware that one never feels ready, especially at the start, and that some skills are gained on the job, so if you wait until you feel 100% comfortable, you may never get there. At the same time, if you try to get work—as an employee and not as an intern—before you have a modicum of training, you may be disappointed. Or you may find a job but then wash out when you can't meet the demands that it is placing on you. So, a good balance is necessary, which is why I say that when your skills are ready and you feel ready, then it's time. The other answer, "now," is because there is a great demand for translators due to ever-increasing globalization.

38. Is training or continuing education required to be a translation specialist? If not, why is it important to get it then?

Certainly, there is no training or continuing education required officially in the U.S. The somewhat scary, but also exciting, fact is that the door to becoming a translation specialist is wide open, and anyone can hang out their shingle as a translation specialist.

Therefore, it is, to some extent, very much a case of buyer beware, which is why training or continuing education is actually important, ironically, to separate yourself from the rest of the herd when you don't have any experience to boast of. To get started in the field, to get good-quality work, and to build a good reputation, it is definitely helpful to get some training and/or continuing education. Otherwise, you may make some awful mistakes in your early days—and your business and/or initial reputation may suffer. You may also hurt your first clients—and who wants to do that to people who are counting on you and who were kind enough to give a fledgling translation professional a chance?

39. What are some of the different job titles a translation professional might hold?

The most typical titles would be translator, court interpreter, judicial interpreter or translator, literary translator, freelance translator, project manager, translation project manager, health care interpreter, health services interpreter, interpreter for the deaf, etc. For those who ply their trade within the context of another profession, the sky's the limit. So, you might find a translation professional working as a publisher, a copy editor, a proofreader, a lawyer, a doctor, an LPN or RN, a paramedic, a community rights activist or representative for government, police and so forth, a stockbroker, an investment banker, a financial services rep, etc. I think you get the picture....

40. What sort of experience is needed for some of the more common translation positions?

For every job, there's always the same catch-22, and that is that it's always easier to get experience once you've got experience. So that makes starting out challenging. My advice would be to get that first experience (more on that in a second) in any way possible that's safe and legal—and that includes pro bono work and internships (more on that below as well). Okay, so what kind of experience might a translation professional normally need to get a standard position? Translating or interpreting, whichever is your specialty. For example, if you're going into literary translation, having already published some translations wouldn't hurt.

So how do you get that? It's hard but not as hard as it seems. There

are often specialty multilingual magazines, e-zines, and journals that need articles translated for pennies. And NGOs and charities often need help with translations as well. What if you can't get any work or pro bono opportunities? Then the next best thing is to do some sample translations targeted for your desired industry or for the type of work that the agency you're looking to work for does. Or perhaps you can put a notice up and/or a little ad in the flyer for your church or synagogue, offering to help your neighbors and parishioners. Be creative, and don't get caught by that catch-22.

41. Is it important to get an internship in the translation industry before applying for a larger position?

On the one hand, if you've got some experience and/or a degree or certification and good recommendations, why not try to get a paying job in the field? Or if you can, do some freelance work while you're getting your degree certification so that you come out of your program with paid experience. On the other hand, someone with little or no experience will often have trouble getting that larger position. So in that sense, it's extremely helpful and quite important to get an internship, whether paid or not, as that will provide you with experience, and that experience will stand you in good stead when you start looking for your first "real" paid job as a translation professional.

42. Do translation professionals need any sort of license to work in the translation industry?

There is no requirement in the U.S. for any credential in order to work as a professional translator or interpreter unless you are working for the court system with their own credential or for a particular client who requires a particular credential.

There are certain fields that require you to pass qualifying tests, but that's not a license. So, for example, the State Department has a testing process that's said to be quite rigorous, as do a number of state court systems. A number of organizations have a testing process as well, but again, that's not a license. Here in the U.S., we don't really have anything that corresponds to a sworn translator or interpreter, as they do in Europe and elsewhere. If you're a freelancer or consultant, however, you may well need a business license, which your municipality or county will generally regulate, so

you'll need to check into that before you start your business.

43. Is there a translation undergraduate degree option available at most schools?

No. There are probably several dozen schools that offer degrees or certifications in translation, and some of those programs are master's degrees. (See the next question.) Most schools offer an undergraduate degree in either a specific foreign language or a language cluster, such as Romance languages or East Asian languages, etc. But a degree in Spanish does not necessarily show that you're qualified to translate from Spanish into English let alone the opposite, from English into Spanish. It just means that you've studied the language, and, at least in theory, you can read, speak, and understand it tolerably well.

44. Is there a translation graduate degree option available at most schools?

I did an informal online polling of this, and from what I could see, there is a somewhat decent split between undergraduate and graduate programs that offer a translation degree, with the preponderance of programs offering a master's (graduate) degree. I didn't see very many doctoral programs in translation at all, and that makes sense, possibly, as someone who's interested in pursuing a doctorate in translation might well be more interested in language theory and the like, which is more what one might expect in a linguistics program. Likewise, someone who wants to get a doctorate in Chinese or Hebrew may well be much more interested in their literature than simply their language. And it makes perfect sense, at least to me, that one might want first to get an undergraduate degree in a specific field, followed by a master's degree in translation, before trying to put theory into practice as a translation professional.

45. Which schools offer the best translation education?

Looking only in the U.S., there are a number of schools that do this well. Perhaps the granddaddy of them all, in terms of reputation, is the Monterey Institute of International Studies in California, but there are

others as well. Frankly, I don't feel that I'm in a position to evaluate who offers the best translation education—and besides, as *U.S. News and World Report* readers and college-bound students across the nation have discovered, there's more than one way to determine the best school. Best bang for the buck? Highest salary upon graduation? Most graduates employed in the field within three months of graduation? Most undergraduates admitted to graduate school? Most publications by professors? Lowest ratio of students to professors? Or what?

46. How important is it to have a degree in translation to work in the translation industry?

I don't have one, and I don't feel the need to get one. On the other hand, I'm multilingual and have four degrees behind my name already in another field, plus being published in several arenas, so I may not be the best example. On the other hand, most translation professionals are individually unique and, as a group, highly accomplished. So, you might find, in an average group of translators, a number of folks with advanced and/or multiple degrees. What you wouldn't necessarily find, however, is a preponderance of folks with a translation degree. Now, to play devil's advocate, there are agencies and firms with in-house positions— particularly outside of the U.S., where translation is a more common profession—that will want that degree. So, if you're interested, it certainly won't hurt you. A certification might be just as important though.

47. Who do translation professionals interact with most in their position at a firm (for example, customers, media, employees, etc.)?

This depends entirely on what their job description is and where in the industry they work. So, for example, if you're a consultant working for agencies, you'll never interact with an end customer. If you're in the publicity department of a large corporation and you're translating press releases for dissemination in other countries or for media in other languages, you might well interact with the media. If you're a bilingual supervisor who oversees workers who need to hear one language and not another, you'll deal with employees. If you're a banker or broker who handles customer interactions, you'll deal with customers and so forth. Honestly, the list is endless.

48. How important is technology in the translation industry? Do translation professionals use the Internet, computers, etc.?

Crucial, and yes. The day of a translation professional slaving away for years on a literary masterpiece is gone. Today's translation professional who is an interpreter might be on the phone via a Skype connection (i.e., using a computer and the Internet) anywhere in the world. A translator might not just use a computer and the Internet but also CAT tools, an online dictionary and glossary, and online professional networks and forums and even participate in virtual conferences and virtual conference calls. He or she might use Google Hangouts or Skype messaging to communicate with clients, and he or she might well invoice a client using PayPal or Moneybookers as well as keeping the books with Quicken and the like. Finally, a translation professional would probably back up his or her files using cloud storage and perhaps might even use a cloud translation program.

49. How are translation professionals evaluated in a position?

I've always worked as a freelancer or consultant, so this will be based more on hearsay and the ISO standards (EN 15038, ISO 9000+) than personal experience. However, in general, a translator's work is evaluated by how accurate it is and how well the translator does his or her job of translation. Any work done by someone in an in-house translation position will be governed in some way by that firm's quality assurance protocols. Now, obviously, the easiest way to check how well and accurately someone has translated a text is to have a separate, independent proofreader go over the work. This is the case no matter whether a translator is in house or being contracted on a freelance basis. Some firms use back translation as an independent check instead, although I believe that's less reliable at the detail level. What a firm does when the translator has been accurate and reliable over a long period of time would, I must believe, be governed by their quality assurance procedures.

50. Is there a lot of room in a translation position for advancement or promotion?

There are two traditional ways that a translation professional working in house can advance. First, they can get bigger, more involved,

more extensive, and more interesting projects. Secondly, and this is where the notion of career advancement is involved, they can become a team project leader. Should that be of interest and if they do a good job, the next logical step would be to become a project manager and, after that, to move into middle and then upper management. Of course, another direction would also be client acquisition or, to use another term for it, sales.

51. How can I earn more money as a translation professional?

This is a multi-tiered answer as there are many ways to go about it. First, you could improve your productivity as your earnings are limited by how much you can accurately translate in a day. How do you increase productivity? Practice makes perfect, of course, but the easiest way is to enhance your technological capability: Learn to touch type if you don't already, get your dictionaries onto your computer (i.e., get electronic ones), start using the Internet for problematic phrases and word searches, and investigate CAT tools. Second, you can increase your skill set by specializing in an area that's in demand and pays more than general translation. Third, you can look to work for clients who can afford to pay more than the minimum. To do so, you'll need to have some experience and a portfolio of satisfied clients.

52. What are the first steps I should take while preparing to enter the translation industry?

It depends on where you are in your current career and training and what your current skills are. Let's say you've been in school and have just gotten a degree in a foreign language. You need to get practice translating as opposed to speaking or reading. It's a different skill set. Or let's say you've decided you want to be a health services interpreter. You need to evaluate your skill set and then look to see if there are any certifications available to you in your area. In general, you should start out by seeing what the market looks like, what your knowledge and skills are, and what you want to do. Then you should fill in any obvious or glaring gaps in your abilities and get whatever certification seems appropriate. See if you can get any pro bono work or recommendations by others in the industry. Go to translators' forums and see if you can answer some terminology questions to help someone else out in order to show your skills to those in the business.

53. If I want to switch my career over to working in translation, what should I do?

If you can, figure out what aspect of the translation industry interests you. If it's too early to tell, then you should evaluate yourself vis-a-vis the industry and the market. Start out by figuring out 1) what your skills are, 2) what skills you lack, 3) what certifications you must have, if any, and 4) what certifications would be helpful to have. Don't quit your day job, so to speak, until you can show a prospective client that you know what you're doing, either by having references, previous satisfied clients, a portfolio of translation projects, or a certification. If you're making the switch from something else, see if you can specialize in translating texts related to your previous business or career too as your years of knowledge in that field will give you a huge leg up on the competition.

54. Which courses, classes, or certification programs are expected if you are going to work as a translation professional?

Interestingly enough, at one level, the answer is "absolutely none at all." Surprised? However, in certain aspects of the industry, such as health services interpreting, working with the deaf, court interpreting, and others, there is either a state certification or an association version of it that it would behoove you to get. Now, if you're going to work in the EU, for example, they do have a more organized structure, and more is required officially. One more thought: Even though you don't have to take any courses or classes or get a certification through a program, it's still a good idea, and it can separate you from the rest of your fellow translators, which will allow you to charge more. Remember that you'll need to have either experience or qualifications or both to get ahead.

55. How can I make over \$100,000 a year working in translation?

You will need a combination of the following: Be efficient and productive, charge enough, provide extra services, and/or move into management. To be more productive, you need to make sure that your tools are sharpened and well honed, so to speak. In other words, do a lot of translating, get good at your typing and computer skills, possibly use CAT tools, have a clear list of regular clients whom you work for on a long-term basis so that you don't need to

spend as much extra time finding clients, etc. To charge enough, you need to work for clients who value your time as opposed to certain agencies that are always going to go for the fastest, cheapest set of hands available at any given moment. As for providing extra services, that works on two different levels. The rarer the extra services or specializations you offer, the more you can charge for it. Is DTP rare and valuable, for example? Move in that direction if it interests you. Are you able to give talks and write articles? That can up your income as well as your visibility and prestige, which generally will add to your bottom line over time as well. Moving into management speaks for itself.

56. What is the single most valuable piece of experience I could get that would help me have a successful long-term career in the translation industry?

I think that an internship could prove more valuable than any other single piece of experience. A close second might well be a certification program. Why these? You are looking for something that will lead to a successful and long-term career in the translation industry. To be successful in the translation industry, you need to know what you're doing, and both an internship and certification program will go far in that direction. To have a long-term career, you need to have picked the right type of job and subsector in the first place or else you may wind up dissatisfied in the long run. This argues for an internship, which will give you a good hands-on view from the inside before it's too late to change focus, or even to change careers, if the translation industry turns out not to be your cup of tea.

57. What are the top three most valuable books to read about translation?

I'm going to answer this by going a bit outside the box. Here are five books, three of which are not about translation at all but rather about writing because translators are writers, first and foremost. Admittedly, we don't always get a chance to put our writing skills into play, for example, when we're translating trilingual (or more) instruction manuals for cell phones or a legal contract, but this is still important. Book #1: *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White (from my alma mater and also of *Stuart Little* and *Charlotte's Web* fame). Book #2: Because incorrect grammar can kill a good

translation and grammar isn't always being taught in the schools these days, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* by Lynn Truss. Obviously, there are other issues involved in grammar, such as capitalization and so forth, but this is a light-hearted approach that makes it clear why a comma counts. I have seen another book called—and this is #3—*Woe Is I* that may well do the same thing for grammar. It's on my get-to-bookshelf reading list. #4: I recently read a book on translation that impressed me more than most books do with its practicality and usefulness despite its being written from a British perspective, *A Practical Guide for Translators* by Geoffrey

Samuelsson-Brown. Finally, there's one more book on my to-read bookshelf that I've heard excellent comments about, and that might well supplant G S-B: *Translation as a Profession* by Roger Chriss. This is #5.

58. Is there a job market out there for global or international translation experts?

The answer to this question is yes. Translation is one of the more easily globalized professions, but this is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, English is currently the *lingua franca* of the tech, medical, and business world, so anywhere there's business taking place across the globe is fair game for your services. On the other hand, it also means that anyone anywhere in the world who has ever taken an English course may feel, wrongfully or rightfully so, that he or she is now capable of hanging out a shingle as an English-language translator. So, your competition will be as global as you are. On yet another, third hand, this is a simple situation of buyer beware—and one where having stellar credentials will make you stand out.

59. If I want to work from home in the translation field, is that possible?

Yes. What with the advent of the Internet and computers, I'd hazard a guess that most freelancer translators do so. If you're not working in house for an agency or a corporation, there's very little need to have an actual storefront. So that is an expense that you can avoid completely, unless you really, truly need to separate your workspace from your

home space, which some people do need to do, psychologically, in order to be productive or to clear their minds from their work. But and this is only half in jest, there's always the corner Starbucks for that, right?

60. How could I start my own business or consulting firm while using my expertise and knowledge in translation?

If that's what you want to do, how could you not? The obvious way to do this is to start your own freelance translation company, which really is quite easy to do. You already know what languages you speak, right?

Have you decided whether you want to interpret or translate? You probably already have an answer to that as well. Now figure out what your strengths are, what your knowledge base is, what you want to focus on, and so forth. Do whatever your local, regional, state, and federal governments require you to do as a small business owner in terms of licensing, registration, certification, etc. Do some research and think about business strategies, come up with a plan and a model for your fledgling business, and just get going.

61. What is the #1 thing that holds back most people's careers in translation?

I'd say a bad marketing and promotion plan. So often we work in our little corners of the world and expect the world to come to us. Not so. Sure, there's some word-of-mouth business that will come across the transom, but if you don't have a plan and stay ahead of the market this way, you'll still be in your own little corner instead of growing your business. And since it's hard for me to just list one thing, I'd also say that resting on one's laurels, instead of constantly trying to grow, learn, and move forward, can also stymie most people's careers. If you need help constructing a marketing plan for your translation business, you should check out the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program; it is packed with business development strategies and marketing suggestions for translators.

62. What are the top six cities in the world to start and grow a new career in translation?

Assuming you're not working primarily over the Internet as a freelancer, you want to be somewhere where there are many cultures and languages bumping up against each other so that there will be a need for translation professionals. And you want to be in a culture that is open to other languages and that has a decent amount of immigration. You also want to be somewhere that has an actively growing, strong business economy. Now, one thing I can't address is the regulatory and business climate in any part of the world other than the U.S. in terms of starting a new business, so you'll need to take that into consideration. But off the top of my head, I'd suggest, New York, London, San Francisco, Paris, Singapore, and Berlin.

63. How is a translation resume different than a normal business resume? Is there anything unique about what you should put on a translation resume?

In some ways, it's exactly the same. You want to show your education, any certifications or diplomas, your job experience, your related-but-non-employment experience, your employment goal, and your contact information. You also should list: 1) the languages you translate to and from and 2) any experience living abroad, particularly studying, working, or whatever, in the country of your intended source language. Other possibilities that can be relevant: any publications (to show writing strength) and anything related to languages, translation, and the like. But really, beyond that, a resume is a resume. Keep it short, keep it simple, keep it informative, and keep it clear.

64. Do you have any specific tips for writing an effective translation cover letter?

A cover letter is a way to get someone to open up your materials instead of leaving them in the pile for another day or, even worse, tossing them without even taking a look at them. So, your cover letter needs to hook your reader in its first paragraph. Notice that I'm using "writer" terms here, as in "hook the reader." In that first paragraph, you want to make the prospective employer (i.e., the reader) want to keep reading. So, give him or her a strong reason to continue. What are strong reasons? For example, the name of the person who suggested you contact the employer, the fact that you

met the recruiter somewhere, the fact that you met someone in the company who referred you to the recruiter, the fact that you've specialized in exactly the area they're expanding into according to what you just read in an industry newsletter, etc. Make your pitch in that opening—and make it relevant to the prospective employer. Then go on to talk about your strengths, interests, qualifications—whatever things (out of your resume) are the strongest characteristics of your skill set and profile in terms of what that company will want. You can include general honors and kudos as well (such as voted the “best translator in 2005,” etc.). Don't forget to thank the recruiter or prospective boss at the end either.

65. Early on in my translation career, are there ways to really impress my boss or employer?

Well, sure. Do the job well, do it right, and do it on time or even early. Be polite and non-abrasive, eager, enthusiastic, helpful, and friendly. Don't gossip about your fellow employees or make personal comments that might be embarrassing or that might tip into the territory of harassment. These are all general tips for any new employee. Then, in terms of translation, know your stuff. Know what the resources available to you are and use them if you're allowed to do so. But don't brag about your knowledge or show off, which can be irritating and comes across as callow anyway.

66. If I have a degree in liberal arts, can I still work in translation?

Why not? If one posits that one of the most important skills a translator needs to have is the ability to read and write (more on this in a moment), then a liberal arts degree makes you uniquely qualified to work in the translation profession. And when I say read and write, isn't that a bit insulting to the profession? Not at all—a good translator is a good writer in their native language, which should be the target language for any translation they do. And a good translator is also a good reader in their source or original language (i.e., they understand the language well enough to understand the nuances of expression and interpretation in what they are reading). Both of these abilities, minus any linguistic aspects, are at the core of a good liberal arts education, particularly if you add in the ability to think about texts, another skill that can only help you in translation.

67. I am very passionate about translation and hungry to succeed. What advice can you provide that would help me channel this energy into actions that are really going to help my career?

Focus and be methodical. Focus your energy and your efforts so that you aren't just doing a scattershot approach. Start out by making sure you have what you need to succeed. Do you need extra qualifications, memberships, certifications, etc.? Go about getting them. Do you have a specialization? Have you figured out what your business model is and how you're going to attract customers? And once you have your first customers, make sure you focus on them and do a good job instead of immediately trying to get more work. If you dive in with all your energy and don't think ahead about where you're going, you'll just wind up spinning your wheels, hard. Keep the Latin adage in mind as you channel your passion: *festina lente* or make haste slowly.

68. How much is education versus experience valued in the translation industry?

Overall, I'd say that experience is valued more than education once you get going. But there are a couple of situations where education trumps. First, there are certain agencies, government jobs, and other situations where you're going to need to have a translation degree or certification. Sometimes you'll also need to have "x" number of years in the field as well. Second, and this may or may not be obvious, although it should be, when you're first starting out, your education will be of paramount importance. Why? Because unless you've been working your way through school in the translation industry or you've had an internship or two, you'll have lots of education but no experience. Thus, your education will have to serve as possible proof of your potential or competency as a new translator.

69. Do you believe that networking is an important component of being successful in the translation industry, or will I naturally meet valuable contacts throughout my work positions in the industry without having to try much?

In my experience, networking is only occasionally a serendipitous event. In other words, you have to make the effort to make networking happen.

And yes, networking can be a very important component of working in the industry. In that sense, it's no different from any other industry: Some of your work and forward progress will come from your own efforts, some will come from your network and mentors, and some will come from luck and being at the right place at the right time. And part of being at the right place at the right time is dependent on the first two factors: your own efforts as they intersect with the efforts of your network and mentors.

70. How can I find a valuable mentor to help me in my translation career?

The same way you would in any profession or career. Look for someone you admire in the field, either a professor if you're at school or a professional if you're out of school or finishing. Read journals, look online, peruse your profession, and see who in your area does work at a level you aspire to. Join your trade association or even the local business association or chamber of commerce. There are often association lunches and meetings aimed at helping small business owners, if you are one, or newbies in general.

If you're a woman, there's often a women's business owner or business association as well. Join. Meet people. Get to know them and find your target mentor. And if they're not interested or too busy, they might well

be able or willing to connect you with someone else who might turn out to be just right for you. Or just ask a person who might be a potential mentor if you can treat them to lunch and pick their brain about the industry. Do not, however, limit your mentor search to the translation industry. You might be surprised to find out that a mentor doesn't always have to be in your specific field, although it's good to have one mentor in your industry. And don't limit yourself to a high-profile individual. Mentors come in all shapes, sizes, and styles, and they are different at different points in your career.

71. Are there some little-known negative aspects about working in the translation industry that I should know about?

Yes, although they're not miserable ones. First of all, you'll probably spend a lot of time with your computer. That means you'd best pay attention to the ergonomics of your workstation or work situation from the get-go as you don't want to wind up crippled by carpal tunnel or

some other RSI injury. Secondly, it can be very lonely as you mostly work by yourself.

Even when you work with a team, they may not be with you physically. Third, you can get very much caught up in minutiae and details of language in such a way that you start to drive your friends and family crazy with your compulsiveness. Of course, that can happen in any field and might be worse if you became an English teacher.

72. I completed the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) program. I have a good fundamental base of translation knowledge now. What type of personal self-development work should I now focus on to further my career success in this field?

Good question. You could work with yourself in a number of different directions. Have you done a Myers-Briggs type personality test? Sometimes that can be a very useful way to find out where your personal strengths and weaknesses might be, assuming you haven't already figured this out. Are you shy? Try taking a Toastmaster's course to help you talk to clients on the phone or in person. Are you disorganized? Work on learning how to be organized. A procrastinator? Work on that. Feel timid with computers or just a little tentative with certain kinds of software?

Take some courses there. Wondering whether to start a website? The answer's yes of course—and it wouldn't kill you to learn a bit about the web and search engine optimization. In other words, figure out who you are, where you're strong, and what you lack, whether it seems related to translation, business, good work habits, or whatever. Oh, and get started with a regular program of getting some kind of exercise or fitness if that's missing from your life. If you're hunched over your computer all day, you're going to want and need a fitness routine. Remember: *mens sana in corpora sano* (Latin: a sound mind in a sound body). Learn to take care of yourself if you haven't already.

73. I am 47 years old. Am I too old to even try to switch careers and work in the translation industry?

Absolutely not. This is not a field in which prodigies or hot young

properties are valued. And if you're a translator, as opposed to an interpreter, no one may ever see you at all, which means, by the way, that youth, beauty, and sparkling white teeth will be pretty much irrelevant.

Nor can you charm your way into a good translation either. Experience counts, and gray hair shows experience, not that you may have any gray hair yet of course. So have no fear: Learn the business, hone your skills, and take the plunge. If it's the right choice for you, you'll be very happy that you did.

74. What is the best way to get potential employers to trust me enough to give me an entry-level translation job?

In my opinion, references speak louder than words. So, if you can, do some translating for a friend or neighbor or perhaps for a *pro bono* situation, such as for your church or other organization. Do it as a beginner and do it for free. Do it for the reference. Any pay you get will be miniscule compared to your ability to use their name, with their permission, as someone you've translated for or to list them as a reference. And if they're willing to pay you a pittance, how wonderful that will be too. Many of us did some of our early translating for Doctors Without Borders, but I don't believe they have taken beginner translators for years now. Nonetheless, there are undoubtedly other local organizations that would be grateful for your services.

75. Will anyone in the translation industry hire me if I have no real experience yet?

Yes, although it's always hard to get your foot in the door of any business. But everyone has to start somewhere, and people recognize that. If you don't have any experience, you should a) put together a portfolio of sample translations, b) get referrals, c) look for *pro bono* work, and d) start small and local by seeing if anyone in your circle of friends, family, and extended network could use your services for peanuts or even for free. Someone probably does, and that will be your first referral or your first client. Plus, when you're looking for work, you have to be persistent. Go for higher percentage success methods, for example, instead of just randomly sending your resume out to every translation company in town, although that can potentially work too if you have some patience and a thick skin.

76. How did you get your first entry-level translation position?

I've always been a freelancer as a translator; it suits my personality and the rest of my life perfectly, and I've always known that. My earliest translations were within my own (other) industry for myself and colleagues. When I decided I wanted to go into translation officially, I asked colleagues if they had any letters or documents they needed translating. I then expanded my portfolio by a) doing some *pro bono* work and b) bidding low to do diploma, resume, and letter translation. With those referrals in hand and my client list starting to grow, I became increasingly selective and was able to start to raise my rates. Soon, more interesting jobs came my way as well, and I had a list of clients who periodically and regularly sent me work.

77. Do you have any good stories or examples on how I can secure a translation internship?

List yourself and your resume at your college's career center, and make sure that your resume is one page and professional. Talk to your professors. Sign up for LinkedIn, put your qualifications in, and mention your goal is an internship. Talk to friends and relatives, teammates, and club colleagues. Network. Talk to anyone who might listen, including your boss at your school or summer job from the previous year. You may also want to approach small translation projects and ask to complete them for free just for the experience to build up your bio and resume in the industry. After 10–15 successful projects, you could then start charging money for your work. Cast your net wide, and you'll catch something.

78. How much can I expect to earn after working in the translation industry for five to seven years?

There's a pretty wide variation here, and it partly depends on your specialization and languages. But once you're an established translation professional (i.e., you've been working in the field for at least five to seven years or so, you can probably expect to earn, on an average, \$38,000–\$49,000 a year if you're salaried. Language specialists who work for the U.S. government earned an average of \$54,940 in 2018, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. Hospital, local, state and private earn approx. \$49,530. Educational services, state, local and private earn approx. \$47,940 In 2018 the

average translator earned around \$49,930, but that figure includes professionals of all levels, including beginners.

79. Who is my main competition as I look for a translation job?

This partly depends on whether we're talking about a job, per se, or a job as a onetime project or long-term collaboration (i.e., in house vs. consultant). Addressing the former first, your main competition is you; you're competing against others like you, and so you're going to want to stand out against them. So, you can polish your skills and get that degree or certification. Publish in trade journals, blog, etc. On the other hand, how you compete for a job, what you say, and how you style and target your application materials are all ways in which you compete. In terms of the latter (i.e., as a freelancer), you are also competing against translators across the globe. If you don't make yourself stand out, you'll be competing against translation professionals who can do your work considerably cheaper as their costs of living and doing business are nowhere near as high as yours may well be. So, make sure you stand out and don't compete on cost. Finally, it is somewhat useful and interesting, though, to think of it this way: You are only competing against yourself. Do your best, be your best, and put your best foot forward. That's all you can do—once you determine what your best is. The rest is out of your control.

80. How can I stand out from my competition when applying for translation jobs?

Specialize, specialize, and specialize. Be a good writer. Know different CAT tools and be savvy about computers and the Internet. Perhaps most important, though, is to establish a field that you know backward and forward in both your source and target languages so that you are as much of an expert as possible. Ideally, the field will be one in which your two languages are relevant and active, preferably it will be one that you have some expertise and interest in already, and also preferably it will be a field that enhances your potential employer's ability to attract new clients if the employer is an agency or to do good business or grow their business if they are a firm that's not specifically a translation company.

81. What else can I do to better my chances of finding a translation job?

My number one piece of advice for anyone who is looking for a translation job, as opposed to looking to be a freelancer or consultant, remains the following: Sign up for LinkedIn.com and fill out your profile in a way that targets your strengths, details what kind of work you want to do, and is appealing to someone who is looking to fill a translation job. Put yourself in the position of your potential employer. What might you want if you were them? Obviously you can't fulfill every ideal that an employer would be looking for, especially if you're just starting out, but if you put yourself in the mindset of your employer, how can you truthfully highlight what you've got to offer in such a way as to make them want to contact you and hopefully hire you?

82. Is there normal dress attire associated with a translation career?

It varies so widely and by region as well. If you're a freelancer, when you are meeting clients via the phone or Skype, you can often wear anything. If, however, working in casual clothes affects your professional attitude or your professionalism at work, then you should dress in such a way that encourages you to do your best work. If you're going out to meet clients in person or on Skype or if you're working in an office, you should generally wear what middle-level white collar workers in your city and region wear. The rule of thumb here is to emulate what you want to be, within reason of course. So, if you're wanting to be a PM at a big firm and are currently a translator, observe what the PMs are wearing and go more in that direction, assuming there's even a difference.

83. Are associations important to join as a translation professional?

Yes, for a number of reasons. Associations generally have professional standards that they publish, and that can help you figure out what the norms for professional behavior in the translation industry might be, should you not be sure. They also generally have a referral list that can help you get work. In addition, a good association usually publishes a newsletter or e-zine with industry news, tips for the trade, etc., and it may also publish a paper or electronic magazine that has useful information for an industry professional. Associations also tend to have conferences, where you can meet colleagues, agencies, and firms that are hiring, buy tools and software at a discount and find out what's hot and what's

not in the profession. Finally, you can meet other translation professionals via your association.

84. What associations are available to me as a translation specialist?

The best would be to join the Global Translation Institute (GTI) association; their website is <http://translationinstitute.org/index.html>. Translation professionals also have a union available to them, should they so desire, the Interpreters Guild of America (IGA), at <http://www.interpretersguild.org/the-translators-and-interpreters-guild-ttig-is-now-iga-interpreters-guild-of-america/>. This is associated with the Newspaper Guild (TNG) and the AFL-CIO.

After that, there are so many associations that have to do with specialization, which I've already mentioned above. These range from judicial translators to medical interpreters and from professionals who work with the deaf and hard of hearing to literary translators. Whatever your specialization, there is a good chance that an association exists for you. And before I forget, there are generally international versions of national associations as well.

85. How can I increase my chances of being hired for a translation position while I'm still in school?

I'd say that the number one way you can help yourself out here is to get an internship, whether it's paid or unpaid. Experience counts so much when you're job hunting, and employers know it. And once you've had an internship, you can often leverage those contacts and/or those companies into some kind of ongoing, paid work, assuming you have done a good job and the firm is happy with you. Don't ignore your school's career center, and absolutely make sure you sign up at LinkedIn. And don't just sign up; fill out your profile in a complete and entirely professional way.

86. What are some mistakes a newly hired translation professional might make?

It's so easy when you're just starting out to want to be everything to everyone and make a great impression. You're just building your new skill set, and you're eager, so you don't totally know what's possible for you to do and what might not be. So, learning to say no is important. A newly hired translation professional is more likely to

say, "Yes, of course," when there is no way they have the knowledge base, the time, or whatever is needed to do something properly. Perhaps this won't happen on their first project, but it's likely to happen on an early project, sometime in their first year. If they're lucky, they'll figure out that they're in over their head soon enough to get a colleague to bail them out before risking their own reputation, that of their firm, or that of the agency that gave them the project in good faith.

87. How important is it to create a good rapport with colleagues and peers as a translation professional?

Very much so. There are four levels where this applies:

- 1) Getting help from your peers or colleagues if you're stuck on a phrase
- 2) Getting referrals from colleagues if you want them to pass a client on if they (the colleague) are too busy
- 3) Creating teams if you want to branch out into new areas
- 4) Do you want to work for agencies? Most are run by your peers and colleagues. Whom do you think they'll call in a pinch? The curmudgeon who never replies to calls for availabilities, complains about every issue, and is difficult or the friendly professional who deals with them promptly and politely as well as competently?

And you never know when someone who was a peer will be in a position to hire you in the future as well. What goes around comes around.

88. How much do entry-level translation professionals make (starting wages)?

This really varies widely. One set of figures I've seen suggests that the starting wage for a translator today is roughly \$49,930/ year or \$24/hour. This will vary, of course, depending on whether you're a translator or an interpreter, which language or languages you work in, and what (if any) specializations you have. There is a relatively great disparity depending on those three things. But everything I've read recently suggests that somewhere around \$30,000 isn't an unreasonable number for an entry-level annual wage. And according to numbers I've seen from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S.

Department of Labor, in 2018 translation professionals earned roughly \$50,000 as their annual wages.

89. Are professionals in the translation industry more successful as a consultant with their own firm, or do they find more success in a bigger firm?

It depends on the personality of the particular professional (say that three times fast if you can). In other words, some people are better suited as entrepreneurs/running their own business, while other people work better as part of a larger firm or corporation. This is different from being a team player versus not, however, as all translation professionals need to be good team players in today's work environment. There are benefits to both kinds of careers and job types, and there's no reason why one should have to choose only once during one's career. The bottom line: You will be more successful, on average, if you choose to work in the employment situation that best suits your strengths. Hence the moral is: Translation professional, know thyself.

90. What is the fastest changing aspect of the translation industry?

Computer software for translation professionals has completely changed the playing field—and continues to change it. Although it's still possible to function as a translation professional without having or knowing how to use Trados, Wordfast, SDL, and the like, it's getting more and more important to at least have a passing understanding. And freelancers at least are starting to need to have at least one of the major software packages. Even this is tricky as the software scene is changing dynamically.

In addition, machine translation engines, such as Google Translate, which are another, very sophisticated side of software, in a sense are changing how people get their translations. Despite the potential for inaccuracies, the lay person is much more likely to use Google Translate than pay a professional to translate their small website for example.

91. How has the translation industry changed in the past 10 years?

There has been a virtual revolution in the translation industry in the past decade in three arenas, all of which mirror what has happened

in the rest of the working world.

- 1) The Internet: The Internet has refashioned the translation industry in so many ways, from the availability of competition across the globe to the possibility of finding work from far-off parts of the world. As a translation professional, I never meet my clients now. When I started out and the Internet was still somewhat young, I met about 30% of my clients in person and then probably another 40–50% over the phone. Now I can't think of the last client I met in person, and I met one of my clients both over the phone and via Skype messaging.
- 2) Computers: A translation professional needs to know what's going on with translation software and also with the most common types of business software. With computers having become so fast and powerful, what used to require special software and a huge computer no longer does, whether it's layout, word processing, or whatever.
- 3) Globalization

92. How does that change in the translation industry affect professionals looking to enter it?

First, a translation professional needs to have good computer skills and be able to keep pace with changes in software and the Internet. It's no longer necessary to shell out megabucks for huge, back-breaking sets of bilingual dictionaries, at least for most language combinations. With the Internet, there's now cloud storage and even cloud software.

This means that the computer itself is no longer as huge an investment either. I can work from a \$300 netbook that is more powerful than a computer from a decade ago, and even my smartphone has more processing power than many of my early computers. Second, the Internet has completely changed many aspects of how a translation professional advertises for work and networks, making websites the way we all get our names out there. Finally, globalization has increased the possibilities for networking and for finding clients across the globe as well as for competing for

work with other translation professionals across the world.

93. Are there any regulations or laws that translation specialists need to pay special attention to?

Translation specialists who work in the medical or legal industry probably need to be aware of liability issues and laws. Freelancers probably have the largest burden as they need to make sure they take care of the requirements set out by their municipality, county, and state as well as any federal regulations.

These requirements can include business licensing, paying income taxes, professional liability insurance, and the like. If a translator isn't a citizen of the U.S., they need to follow whatever the legal requirements are there, and if they hire workers, they need to make sure those workers or other translation professionals are also legally able to work in the U.S. as well as paying the appropriate taxes (payroll, Social Security, etc.). And if a translation professional works for the government, there may be, I believe, other regulations as well involving confidentiality, government secrets and security clearances, etc.

94. How fast is the translation industry growing?

The translation industry is an incredibly dynamic field. Globalization has been an important aspect of the world's economy since the '90s, and the growth has been logarithmic rather than geometrical. The translation field is participating in that surge, both in terms of the need for qualified translators in less traditional languages and the drastic increase in citizens and visitors to the U.S. who are not fluent in English. Schools, governments, companies, and so forth need to have their materials available in multiple languages, individuals who aren't fluent in English need help when they encounter the medical or judicial system, our post- 9/11 security requires a quick and deep understanding of communications from across the globe, and software makes it possible to handle double or triple the workload compared to a decade ago. These are just a few aspects of how the industry is growing—and there are many more.

95. Is translation something that is dealt with mostly in the U.S., or is it truly an international industry?

It's truly an international industry. If anything, I'd say that the U.S. lags here, as until recently, it was less important for parts of the U.S. than in parts of the world where nationals from one country cross boundaries daily. Now, though, in part as a result of 9/11 but also as one aspect of trends in immigration and globalization, translation is a virtual necessity for almost every corner of the globe. So an American translator may find him- or herself working in the U.S., but if they're interested, they might well find themselves traveling to and/or working in exotic locations or even familiar, more traditional ones, such as the EU. With China joining the global community with a bang in the last 10–15 years, the changes in the Middle East (the Nile revolution, for example), and the catastrophic events in Japan (the 2011 earthquake and tsunami), translation is dealt with everywhere.

96. Are jobs in translation fast paced? If so, why?

They can be—and often are. With translators from across the globe working for agencies that can be located half a world away, and with software allowing translation professionals to process double or triple their former workload or even more, translation professionals work hard, smart, and fast. Project managers have to be able to keep up with the quickly changing demands of varied projects, whether they work within a company or for an agency. And translation professionals who focus on localization have to be able to respond to the needs of different markets in a creative and timely fashion. Finally, if you're a freelance translation professional and get most of your work through an online network, you have to be ready to bid on an international project at a moment's notice—and then do it with a quick turnaround as well. And conference translation can be quite fast paced and demanding.

97. Are translation professionals' independent workers, or do they work in teams?

The answer is yes. Translation professionals must be able to work independently, particularly if they are freelancers but even if they aren't. But they also have to be able to work in teams, either as a group of back translation proofreaders, as a member of an agency, or even as a team that's working on a large text or large group of texts. Certain agencies, for example, have a constant flow of huge work, often involving contracts or litigation that needs to be translated as of

yesterday. Collaborating with fellow translators for such projects will be crucial, and that's only one way in which a team will be involved. It's also great to work with other professionals; each brings different skills to the table, and the many eyes involved, within reason, catch more errors than just one pair. So, both of those are true.

98. What have economic changes done to the translation industry?

There are two words that cover this: globalization and recession. Both, interestingly enough, have created some of the same pressures on the translation industry as they have elsewhere in the world. To put it bluntly, when someone who is desperate to work from another part of the world can do what you can do for less, it becomes harder to earn a living despite one's productivity or professionalism or the differing quality of the product. The recession has put some clients out of business as well and has put legitimate downward pressure on what one can ask a client to pay. So, a translation professional increasingly needs to either specialize or differentiate his- or herself in order to earn a decent living.

99. How well understood is the translation profession?

It's a mixed bag overall. Most people think a translation professional is a simultaneous interpreter. While some of us do that, it's a specific skill set, and not all of us possess it, either linguistically or temperamentally. The other common image of a translation professional is that of the solitary literary translator polishing his or her translation for years in a dusty, lonely attic garret. And then there's the whole misapprehension of knowing a language versus being able to translate it, another part of the profession in which someone who is multilingual may or may not possess the necessary skill set. Finally, there's the whole notion of what it means to be bilingual or multilingual anyway.

100. Where is the best place to find work as a translation professional?

The Internet is *the* marketplace. Business social networks, particularly LinkedIn, have taken over much of the function of the work wanted ads in the classified section of the newspaper. So, if you want to work for a corporation or an agency, your best bet is to search the Internet for potential employers and make sure you have

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a good, relevant profile online, especially on LinkedIn. Translation networks such as GTI and the ATA have sections where clients can search for a professional as well as for freelancers, and you can also get a large amount of work through online translator networks. Caveat emptor there of course.

Appendix 1

65 Terms a Translator Should Know

Just like any other industry, the translation industry also has its own terminology and business jargon related to different job types, translation categories, language skills, equipment and tools used in the industry and so on.

1. **“A” language:** A translation professional's native language or language of habitual use; terminology used more commonly by interpreters than translators
2. **Abstract:** A short summary of an article, book, or paper, often with a list of important terms
3. **Adaptation:** This term can mean a number of different things, but in the context of translation, it is generally a non-literal translation.
4. **“B” language:** Languages that a translation professional (usually an interpreter) can speak, read, and write almost as well as their native language and well enough to translate into as well as out of; terminology more often used by interpreters than translators
5. **Back translation:** A translation that has been translated *back* into the original language (i.e., a text that has been translated twice, once out of a specific language and then a second time back into that same language); often used as a way to proofread or check the accuracy of meaning in a translation
6. **Bilingual:** Someone with strong communicative skills in two languages. The term is often reserved for someone with native or near-native proficiency in two languages. How fluent one needs to be in order to be considered bilingual is a matter for discussion.

7. **“C” language:** A language that a translation professional can read and understand well enough to translate *out of* but cannot write or speak well enough to translate or interpret *into*; generally, a term used more for interpreting than translation
8. **CAT—Computer Assisted (sometimes Aided)**
Translation: CAT tools are software programs designed for and tailored to translators' needs.
9. **Certified translation:** A certified translation is one in which a translation agency or freelancer carries out a translation project and then certifies that they did the work in the form of an accompanying certificate or signature. Generally, the statement is then notarized. Certified translations are often necessary for official documents.
10. **Certified translator:** A translator who has earned or received a certificate from a school, association, or program
11. **Chuchotage:** Literally, whispered interpreting. The interpreter is posted beside the client and, in real time, discretely “whispers” his or her translation of the words being spoken.
12. **Conference interpreting:** Interpreting spoken words or speech at a conference, whether simultaneously or consecutively
13. **Consecutive interpreting:** Interpreting in which the interpreter starts to translate only after the speaker has finished his or her utterance; often used at smaller conferences, etc., and generally used in courtroom settings and speeches
14. **Copy editing:** Copy editing involves checking the formatting, facts, grammar, spelling, and accuracy of a text. If there is a style sheet or house style, the copy editor makes sure that the entire text conforms to it. He or she also keep an eye out for defamatory statements that could

create legal issues (libel). This is a separate step from proofreading or editing for content and style of writing itself.

15. **Copywriting:** Copywriting refers to the writing of text that will be used on brochures, websites, marketing materials, etc. It is always best to have copy for foreign countries written by experts from that country.
16. **Court interpreter:** A trained interpreter—who often has passed a state exam or certification process—who provides interpretation during legal proceedings. Requirements regarding accreditation and certification for court interpreting vary from country to country.
17. **DTP (Desktop publishing):** A service offered by some translation agencies and freelancers. A DTP expert can use foreign fonts for items such as typesetting and the creation of image files, brochures, company reports, etc.
18. **Dubbing:** The process of replacing the original spoken voices from the soundtrack to a video or film with new voices speaking the local language
19. **Editing:** Sometimes also called **Revising, Proofreading, or Reviewing**; reading a text to identify errors, inconsistencies, incorrect grammar and punctuation, and poor or inappropriate style. In the case of a translation, editing or proofreading also involves ensuring that the translated text matches the source text and correcting it when it does not. What exactly proofreading, revising, and editing entail and how they differ from each other is the subject of much debate. What is important is that the person commissioning the work communicates clearly what is expected of the editor.
20. **Escort interpreting:** An interpreter who accompanies a client, often in the field of travel or tourism
21. **Free translation:** A loose translation from the original. This term is used to contrast with a word-for-word or literal translation.

22. **Freelance translator:** A freelancer acts as an independent entity and is not considered an employee. Most translation agencies use freelance translators.
23. **Gist translation:** Clients may ask for a gist translation when they just want to get the gist of the meaning (i.e., a rough summary of a text) so that the most salient points can be understood.
24. **Glossary:** In the context of translation, a glossary is a specialized, single-language dictionary used by translators working on difficult text with specific terminology. It includes a term and its definition in the target language. For very specialized texts, clients are sometimes asked to provide a glossary to ensure the translation meets their needs.
25. **Hard copy:** Hard copy refers to the original paper source of a document that needs translation. Examples would be faxes, letters, and brochures, among others.
26. **In-house translators:** Translation professionals working as employees for a non-translation company, generally full time
27. **Interpreting:** Interpreting can be defined as the oral translation of spoken words as opposed to the written translation of written texts. It requires special skills (note taking, summarizing, language skills), a good memory, sheer mental stamina, and, often, arduous training. There are several types of interpreting: simultaneous, consecutive, conference, and liaison.
28. **Judicial translating or interpreting:** Another term for legal translating or court interpreting
29. **Language family:** A group of languages that can be shown to derive from a common root (for example, Indo-European)
30. **Language pairing** (also referred to as **Language combination**): The languages between which a translator or interpreter works

31. **Legal translation:** The translation of legal documents. Legal translation requires a variety of advanced skills: complete mastery of both source and target languages, a good knowledge of the two legal systems involved, knowledge of the relevant subareas of law, an awareness of any other relevant disciplines and subject matter (for example, steel and the processes involved in making it if the documents of a case concern a steelworks), and training in the art of translation itself.
32. **Liaison interpreting:** A generic name for business interpreting; also, general interpreting for trade conventions and other general business situations. It usually refers to the activities of a single interpreter who accompanies an individual or delegation around.
33. **Literal translation:** A word-for-word translation. It ignores things such as humor, sayings, puns, etc., that lose their meaning when translated word for word. As a result, a literal translation generally reads stiffly and is not idiomatic to the target language.
34. **Localization:** Localization involves taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target area (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold. Translation is only one of the activities involved in localization; in addition to translation, a localization project includes many other tasks, such as project management, software engineering, testing, and desktop publishing.
35. **Machine translation:** Machine translation (MT) is automatic translation in which a computer program takes over all the work of translating. Obviously, a computer will work much faster (and more cheaply) than a human being. It can be a useful method if the purpose of the translation is limited, for example, to get a rough idea—a gist—of what a text contains and/or to process large numbers of documents very rapidly.

36. **Machine-aided translation:** A range of specialized software tools developed to enhance the skills of translators
37. **Mother tongue** (also **Native language**): The language a person grows up speaking and knows “naturally.” It is, of course, possible to have translators with more than one mother tongue if they have parents from different countries or grow up in a foreign country.
38. **Multilingual:** A person who is fluent in more than two languages. See discussion of bilingual.
39. **Native language:** Another term for **mother tongue**
40. **Native-speaker competence:** Oral and written command of a language that is equivalent to that of a person who not only learned the language as a child and has continued to use it as his or her mother tongue but who also has had some language training
41. **Notarized translation:** A translation that has been taken to a notary and certified by the notary. What that involves varies from country to country.
42. **Phone interpreting:** Interpreting carried out over the phone or in a video conference using a three-way calling phone patch, Internet video conferencing, etc.
43. **Polyglot:** Someone who is **multilingual**
44. **Proofreading:** Strictly speaking, this is the act of checking a text before printing it or turning it in to a client in order to ensure that no mistakes have been made in typesetting. The term is often used to refer to the act of revising or editing a text, and in common parlance, proofreading refers to the revision, checking, and editing of a translated text. After a translation is complete, often a second translator will read through the document and compare it against the original. In addition to checking the quality of the translation he or she will also check for spelling, grammar, typos, punctuation, syntax, and so forth.

45. **Simultaneous interpreting:** The interpreter starts to translate before the speaker has finished his or her utterance. This is most often used at large events such as conferences and carried out by panels of at least two interpreters using special equipment. As this type of work is particularly tiring and stressful, the rule of thumb is that an interpreter should be able to take a break after 20 to 40 minutes of continuous work.
46. **Source language:** The language or document *from* which translation or interpretation is carried out
47. **Source text:** The document *from* which a translation is carried out
48. **Subtitles:** Written captions that run at the bottom of the screen for a video or film. They are an alternative to dubbing when one wants a video to be understood by those who speak a different language from the original.
49. **Supertitles:** Subtitles that are projected along the top or side of an opera stage or, in some situations, projected onto the seat in front of the audience member. By necessity, supertitles and subtitles are abbreviated versions of what is being sung.
50. **Sworn translator:** A translator or interpreter who has taken an oath and can therefore produce certified translations or interpretations in court
51. **Target audience:** The people that an interpreter addresses; used mostly in connection with simultaneous interpreting but sometimes used in the sense of target readership
52. **Target language:** The language or document *into* which a translation or interpretation is carried out
53. **Target readership:** The group of people for whom a text is translated, for example, subject experts, novices, prospective customers, etc.
54. **Target Text:** The document *into* which a translation has

been carried out

55. **Technical translation:** A technical translation is one in which the subject matter is specialized, technical, and involving technology due to the use of specialized vocabulary in a text. Topics such as engineering, software, manuals, etc., would all be considered technical translations.
56. **Tone Languages:** Languages that use pitch to distinguish words, either by meaning or grammatical function (for example, Chinese)
57. **Transcription:** Writing down exactly what was said in a recording or speech
58. **Translation:** The transfer of meaning from one language to another in writing. Translation takes place in writing, and interpreting is its oral counterpart. The two terms are often confused. At its best, a successful translation should read as if it were originally written in the new language.
59. **Translation memory:** A translation memory is a database in which a translator can record (usually semi-automatically) translations and terms for future reuse and easy searches. Although these programs are best classified under computer-aided/assisted translation, one must not confuse them with machine translation programs, as translation memory software does not translate anything by itself, whereas a machine translation system actively produces language and translations based on linguistic data, such as grammatical rules and glossaries.
60. **Translator:** A translator converts the written text of one language into another. Translators only deal with written media. Oral or audio translations are carried out by interpreters.
61. **Transliteration:** Transforming text from one script to another, usually based on phonetic equivalences. For example, Russian text might be transliterated into Latin script so that it can be pronounced by English speakers.

62. **Unit of translation:** The smallest entity in a text that carries a discrete meaning. It varies all the time, ranging from individual words to phrases and sentences and all the way up to entire paragraphs.
63. **Voice-over:** A recording of the spoken voice
64. **Word count:** A standard measure of the size of a text. Translation projects, for example, are often priced on a per-word (U.S.) or per- 1000-word (GB) basis.
65. **Word order:** The arrangement of words in a sentence. Word order is one aspect of how any individual language works.

About the Author



Adriana Tassini is the author of *The Translator Guide*, which has now been read by over 55,000 industry professionals. Adriana also founded the Certified Translation Professional (CTP) Program, an industry-leading translator training and certification program.

Adriana first developed the CTP designation after speaking with many translators and finding that there was no global self-paced training program available in the translation industry. She now helps manage the structure, examination, and overall resources of the CTP program. To date, Adriana has helped the CTP program to attract more than 3000 global members; and you can learn more about it at <http://TranslatorCertification.com>.

Adriana is half Brazilian and half Italian, but she resides in Key Biscayne, Florida on the east coast of the United States. Adriana speaks multiple languages and is a Harvard University Alumni. Her background is in international relations and translation work in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and Boston, Massachusetts (USA).

About CTP



The Certified Translation Professional (CTP) Program is a professional certification program catering to translation professionals around the world. The CTP is sponsored and was created by the Global Translation Institute in order to offer a certification program for translators which can be completed from anywhere in the world and is offered 100% online. The CTP is the only designation program available online for the translation industry and is earned by both seasoned industry professionals as well as those looking to become a freelance or in-house corporate translator.