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#191 Volume 31 Issue 5 September/October 2020

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Post Editing

Everything old is new again. It's been wild, putting together a magazine I've put together for over a decade in novel ways. We've revamped the news section, in keeping with the daily news we've been publishing on our website; we've also expanded our geopolitical coverage a bit. Behind the scenes, the staff has changed considerably. And yet we've insisted on keeping the things that have always been beloved in our magazine: the sense of goodwill we've fostered, the business neutrality, the in-depth exploration of topics. As Marjolein Groot Nibbelink says in our Takeaway, we have big shoes to fill now.

This issue covers Asia Pacific, and we have six articles that touch on China, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Southeast Asia, and India. We've also included three articles on minority language news, and a piece on Turkey's descent into dictatorship from the perspective of one refugee.

Enjoy the new, enjoy the old, and as always, let us know if you have feedback. We're listening, and we're curious. *m*

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About the Cover:
Men work in the rice fields in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia.

Focus:
Asia Pacific

Featured Reader

Would you introduce yourself?

Max Troyer, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS), associate professor and Program Chair of Translation and Localization Management. I'm also a freelance consultant.

Where do you live?

Monterey, California.

How did you get started in this industry?

I was a software engineer working at Arthur Andersen, which went down in flames thanks to the Enron scandal. Returning home from a much-needed vacation post-Enron, a guy came up to me at the airport and said my French was good for a boy from the Midwest. Later I learned he was an MIIS graduate, and he said I should consider becoming an interpreter and that the best path forward was at MIIS in Monterey. I ended up with a degree in French translation, but with my computer science background, was hooked by the localization industry and never looked back.

How long have you worked in the industry?

I graduated from MIIS in 2005, so I guess this is my 15th anniversary as a localizer!

What language(s) do you speak?

My native language is English, and my second language is French.

Whose industry social feeds (twitter, blog, LinkedIn, Facebook) do you follow?

I look forward to Jost's email newsletter, and am addicted to data analysis from Nimdzi and industry updates from Slator.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love singing vocal jazz and karaoke, and living in Monterey means access to world-class hiking trails.

What industry organizations and activities do you participate in?

I attend the occasional IMUG meeting and have been to many LocWorld conferences!

Do you have any social feeds of your own? Twitter handle, blog?

The closest thing I have to a social feed is the newsfeed go.miis.edu/tlm.

Why do you read* MultiLingual*?

MultiLingual is kind of like the glue that binds us localizers together. It's one of the first things I tell new students at MIIS — read *MultiLingual*!

Geopolitics

Federal Police Presence in Portland Highlights Fragmented American Cultures

Katie Botkin

Portland, Oregon, is known for its bicycle culture, its book culture, and its general funkiness. It has a reputation among many of its residents and visitors as a safe city — and indeed, its violent crime rate (5.27 per 1,000 residents) is lower than Dallas, Texas (7.76 per 1,000) and less than half that of Anchorage, Alaska (13.13 per 1,000).

The city is often painted differently in right-leaning media, however — Fox News, for example, recently described the city in terms of "violent protest" that is "destroying businesses, infrastructure and quality of life in Portland."

This doesn't sit well with many residents of the city. "I am consistently confused by the Fox News narrative every time they talk about my city because it's literally never unsafe here. I could walk my kids down every single street in downtown at any time," said longtime Portland resident Tori Douglass of the protests.

On Monday, President Trump claimed that Portland had become so violent that he'd had to send federal forces to quell protests. However, nationally-shown videos of "riots" are localized to a small portion of the downtown, according to Portland residents like singer-songwriter Asher Nathan Weinbaum.

The impact of protest on businesses has been virtually nil, said Weinbaum — Portland looks like any other US city in the middle of a pandemic. Many businesses had been working from home for months, given the situation with COVID-19. Localization company Welocalize has a substantial workforce in Portland, for example. The com-pany had already moved to working from home, and is currently operating as business as usual.

Although Portland protests have been ongoing since May, the oft-overbearing local police tactics did not contain them. Residents said the protests, which encompassed tens of thousands of people, were largely peaceful until unbadged federal forces showed up in fatigues, started beating people, deploying teargas, and

even grabbing protestors off the streets — and then, said residents, Portland started fighting back for real. On Sunday, the state's attorney general, Ellen Rosenblum, announced that she had filed a lawsuit against the federal agencies that had descended on Portland. Rosenblum said the tactics of this ad hoc occupying police force infringe on the civil rights of protesters.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler has additionally requested that the federal forces vacate the city, but the White House ignored that request. "What they are doing is sharply escalating the situation," Wheeler told CNN. "We want them to leave."

Protests have indeed escalated since federal agents started fighting civilians. Some protesters lit the Portland Police union headquarters on fire, and the protests grew to 2,000 people Monday night. "As a Monday tradition, we are all waiting to be assaulted by federal agents," conflict journalist Robert Evans, who covered the war in Iraq, quipped on Twitter.

The question remains: if the city was relatively safe, why did President Trump choose Portland as a testing ground for the deployment of federal troops against civilians?

The long history of protest in Portland

Quite separate from its crime scene, Portland has a long history of protest, and specifically, protesting Republican policy. In the 1990s, it earned the nickname "Little Beruit" for the protests against the First Gulf War that greeted George Bush Sr. upon his visit to the city. The city gentrified extensively in the following decades, trading punk music venues for whacky donuts and swank coffeeshops. But an underlying leftist streak remained. In the national

mind, the city still represented an upstart, anti-authoritarian ethos that had been blunted in other coastal cities like Seattle and San Francisco when the tech giants moved in. Where Portlandia celebrated the weirdness of Portland, Frasier toasted the intelligentsia of Seattle.

And importantly to Republican leadership, anarchy, as a belief system, was alive and well in Portland. Anarchists believe that society should ultimately be free from the rule of any government, and for Portland, that took the form of shared housing, activism for the houseless, and resistance to neo-Nazi presence. Evans, a gun-rights activist and journalist who has trained federal agents, has written about how cozy far-right groups are with Portland police, and how this has led to clashes between police and Portland residents.

A small riot in 1993 helped set the stage for what is currently happening in Portland. Protesters from the scene described tactics that have become familiar in many viral videos in recent months: police in riot gear surrounding a crowd they deemed suspicious — in the 1993 case, concert-goers who had exited the once-famous X-Ray Cafe music venue — refusing to let them leave, and then arresting them en masse when chaos ensued. Many of the concert-goers were self-described anarchists. Five were charged with felony riot.

Oregon law states that "A person commits the crime of riot if while participating with five or more other persons the person engages in tumultuous and violent conduct and thereby intentionally or recklessly creates a grave risk of causing public alarm."

The riot case was dismissed in 1994 because the judge deemed the statute to be overbroad — "a grave risk of causing public alarm" could mean just about anything, including the current actions of police themselves. However, the decision was reversed on appeal, and the statute is still in place in Oregon.

Being charged with rioting does not necessitate that participants engaged in otherwise illegal activity. Merely being in the vicinity of other people who vandalize property, for example, is enough for a riot charge, legally speaking. In Portland, protesters snatched off the street by federal police describe not knowing why they were being held, and not even necessarily being charged with anything.

The language of political opinion

The presence of federal agents in Portland cuts to the heart of a growing divide in America — a divide so deep, the factions speak different languages. For example, the claim that "Portland is full of anarchists" is true in one sense, and untrue in another. Language does not exist outside of historical precedent, and historically, worldwide, anarchists of various persuasions have been committed to fighting fascists — perhaps most notably during the Spanish Civil War, when they fought against dictator Francisco Franco. Most anarchists define their propensity for violence in the same terms that the average American would define it: fighting is only appropriate if it's against tyranny or in defense of the vulnerable.

If you define anarchism as a belief system protected by the First Amendment, Portland is indeed full of anarchists. But if you mean that Portland has committed itself to crime, lawlessness and burning down businesses, this is untrue. The challenge lies in the different cultural meanings of "anarchy," and the way language such as this is used to justify political policy.

"Our city has not been decimated by anarchy and violent upheaval. And for those of you outside Portland that believe that it has, you are being fed a repulsive and profoundly dangerous false narrative," said Portland resident Johnna Wells. "My city is under siege by a federal 'army' that the President of the United States has unleashed. A fascist move that I fear will carry forth into other cities as well." [M]

Industry News

Diligence by Linguists in California Pays Dividends in Relief Bill

An updated AB 2257, which benefits California interpreters and translators, is approved.

As reported in a previous online MultiLingual News article on August 10, California's AB 2257 is an attempt to loosen a previous gig economy clean-up bill. It was authored by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, who also championed AB 5, the general workers-rights gig economy bill that went into effect January 1 of this year. AB 5 states that most workers are employees, and as employees, they should be afforded labor protections such as minimum wage laws, sick leave, and unemployment and workers' compensation benefits — benefits that do not apply to independent contractors. However, actual independent contractors were alarmed

by the bill. Interpreters and translators in California were unhappy with AB 5, saying it had devastating effects on their ability to work in the state.

As a result, hundreds of California translators and interpreters formed a coalition to educate their lawmakers on the topic. Since fall 2019, before AB 5 even went into effect, they asked legislators to understand that imposing employee status on interpreters and translators is disastrous. Yesterday, their efforts proved successful.

Lorena Ortiz Schneider, founder of the Coalition of Practicing Translators and Interpreters of California (CoPTIC), once again offered an update — this time, after the California state Senate Appropriations Committee approved an updated version of AB 2257 on August 20. A previous version of AB 2257 was problematic and unclear.

Breakdown from Lorena Ortiz Schneider

Does using our voice with our lawmakers make a difference? The months-long advocacy campaign by interpreters and translators in California shows the answer is yes, especially when working together in a large and nimble coalition, focused on an urgent objective.

On August 20, the state Senate Appropriations Committee approved and sent to the floor, on a unanimous 7-0 vote, a vastly improved version of AB 2257, authored by Lorena Gonzalez, the architect of AB 5. As amended, the bill comes close to fulfilling the Coalition of Practicing Translators and Interpreters of California's (CoPTIC) goal to protect the livelihoods of interpreters and translators in the state and preserve language access for millions of Californians.

The committee action came three days after the hearing at which more than 50 members of the Coalition weighed in with a flood of remote testimony, reflecting nearly every area of interpreting and translation and from every part of California. The committee members, five Democrats and two Republicans, had to absorb the wave of unified comments to oppose the bill unless amended. Callers swamped the committee phone lines and stretched on for half an hour.

The bill aims to clean up several problems with the sweeping worker misclassification law that took effect this year, AB 5. In January, multiple bills sought to clarify and rectify the law. In the end, with interruptions in the legislative session caused by COVID and a docket reduced due to the legislature's diminished bandwidth, only one bill survived to accomplish all priorities of lawmakers: AB 2257.

The stakes were high for getting it right. The revised bill mostly does.

It explicitly recognizes individuals acting as sole proprietors, in three areas of exemption from the scope of AB 5 offered under the bill: for Professional Services; for Business to Business relationships; and for service providers through a Referral Agency.

It restores translators, and without restrictive conditions, under the exemption for Professional Services in the bill.

It exempts interpreters under the Referral Agency/Service Provider relationship, where captioners for the deaf and hard of hearing are also included. For interpreters to qualify, the terms require that the interpreter be registered or certified in a language with an available credential offered by a list of certifying bodies, associations and government entities. Languages without an available certification are also exempt under this section. It also allows for credentialing by other state-approved bodies, including educational institutions.

The request of a reasonable grace period to the terms of the new requirements affecting interpreters is in order, to allow for compliance and to protect language access. The progress achieved in the substance of the bill would be undercut without a reasonable on-ramp for implementation.

In the final phase of the fight over AB 2257, CoPTIC made inroads for its goals of preserving language access and removing the unfounded presumption by some lawmakers, including the author of AB 5, Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez, that misclassification was a common problem among linguists in California. A memo released in early August by the Coalition fact-checked a frequent claim by Gonzalez, that 4,111 interpreters were found to be misclassified in the state since 2015. Careful analysis of data from the state's Employment Development Department (EDD) revealed that the real number was less than 300, and encompassing both translators and interpreters, only about 6% of what the lawmaker claimed.

Appreciation for the major improvements in the bill extend from Senate President Pro Tem Toni Atkins and Labor Committee Chair Jerry Hill, who ends his long tenure in Sacramento this year. Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Anthony Portantino, who represents cities with diverse immigrant populations, including Glendale and South Pasadena, made a priority of improving the bill and delivered on that goal.

The work of the Coalition can be a blueprint for efforts to earn respect and relief for professional linguists from well-intended but overly sweeping bills on worker misclassification in other states. At the federal level, legislation similar to AB 5, the PRO Act, could be a priority for Democrats if they regain a Senate majority, having already gained approval by the House of Representatives. The all-but-conclusive victory earned in California shows that advocacy driven by constituents can reshape policy for the better, but it takes grassroots organizing, teamwork, careful strategy, and bold advocacy in order to prevail. [M]

Moscow Translation Club Transforms to RATC

The Moscow Translation Club has evolved into the Russian Association of Translation Companies — the localization industry's newest association.

The Russian Association of Translation Companies (RATC) was officially registered with the Russian Federation government in July, and is on track to join the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies (EUATC).

Active member and co-founder of the Moscow Translation Club (MTC) Janus Worldwide announced the official registration of the RATC, an association that complies with Russian law and begins with 12 companies from across the Russian Federation. MTC members will become primary members of the association, and will be presented in the first RATC board. Margarita Yegorova of MegaText — a translation agency and board member of MTC — will serve as president, supervise activity, and represent the RATC in an official capacity.

Moreover, the three vice presidents — Serge Gladkoff of Logrus Global, Konstantin Josseliani of Janus Worldwide, and Alexey Shesterikov of Awatera — will take over the responsibilities of setting up international operations. Chair of the board Nikolay Kulikov of AKM Translations will manage the board and the association, and coordinate its governing bodies.

Founded in 2014 by leading Russian translation companies, the MTC arranges events to discuss issues in the translation and localization industry. Members of the MTC came up with the idea to obtain legal status for the RATC to protect the interests of the industry and promote its development with legal standing.

As founder of the MTC and president of the largest translation company in Russia, Josseliani hopes to apply his experience to the RATC to benefit the translation industry as a whole. He will manage cooperation with Russian legal entities and social organizations, procedural work, and any other responsibilities deemed necessary by RATC members.

Now that the registration has taken place, the association is slated to join the EUATC, which will enable exchange in and representation of the Russian translation industry. "We have been working with leading members of the Moscow Translation Club since last year providing them with our guidance on how to go about forming an association," said Geoffrey Bowden, secretary of EUATC. "While there are some formalities to go through, we anticipate that the Russian Association will be admitted into membership of the EUATC at its next virtual General Meeting on September 18." [M]

For more news, updated daily, visit *www.multilingual.com/news*

Short News

RWS buys SDL to Become New Language Services Industry Leader

On August 27, 2020, the boards of RWS and SDL announced a deal that will see RWS buying SDL. In the UK's largest tech deal of the year, RWS has agreed to pay GBP 809 million ($1.066 billion) to buy SDL. While there are still a few more regulatory steps that need to be taken, including official shareholder votes, the details of the deal have already been released.

As it stands, RWS shareholders will own about two-thirds of the combined business, while SDL shareholders will own the remaining third. Over time, the SDL brand is set to disappear and the whole company will be placed under the RWS brand.

Microsoft Translator Now Supports Real-Time Translation for Odia

Microsoft Translator's addition of Odia to its real-time translation and transliteration brings the total number of Indian languages it supports to 11. Odia is spoken by 35 million people throughout India.

Alexa Translations Announces New Board of Advisors

Kent Jespersen will serve as chairman of the advisory board. Other new board members include Robert D. Brouwer, Caroline Codsi, Tracie Crook, Bindue Cudjoe, Jean Cumming, and Gordon D. Giffin.

Pairaphrase Awarded a HIPAA Compliance Audit Grant

Translation software company Pairaphrase was awarded a Business Accelerator Fund Grant (BAF) by the State of Michigan to help the company accelerate its path to revenues with highly regulated customers in healthcare.

The funds will go toward a third-party security HIPAA compliance audit and assessment of the web-based translation application that weaves machine learning into its translation software while providing various security measures to protect sensitive user data.

Globalese MT Partnered with Text&Form

Globalese MT has partnered with text&form to bring neural machine translation to the language services company. text&form will host the Globalese MT artificial translation on its servers. The neural machine translation will add to text&form's services, which include software localization, SAP translation, technical translation, and multimedia localization.

The Sharjah Book Authority (SBA) Receiving Applications

The Sharjah Book Authority (SBA) is receiving applications for the fourth edition of the Sharjah Translation Award, Turjaman Award. The award is open to international publishing houses that have published translations of an original publication in Arabic. The total value of the prize is AED 1.3 million ($350,000), distributed as 70% for the foreign publishing house that holds the translation rights and 30% for the Arab publishing house that holds the rights of the first edition of the book. The winner will be announced during the upcoming Sharjah International Book Fair, planned for November 4-14, 2020.

AI Translation Market Report Gets Global Treatment

A report on the global AI translation market has been released by BisReports. Information on the report just came out in French, but the report is offered in English. The report analyzes big players such as SoundAI, Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Alibaba, NetEase, Souhu, Tencent, and ByteDance.

Squadle Adds Spanish Translation to its Digital Food Safety Applications

Digital food safety company Squadle creates apps that enable multi-unit operators, convenience stores, and retailers to streamline food safety in the United States. It just added Spanish translation as part of a series of upgrade to its systems. Along with upgrades to dashboards, manager reporting software, a ZeroTouch food monitor, and a COVID-19 safety procedure checklist, the addition of Spanish-English translation should help restaurants deliver a safer dining experience.

Google's Gboard Keyboard is Updated

Google's Gboard keyboard will add real-time translation and transcription for voice dictation for Android users.

Eurotranslate Moves Offices

Eurotranslate has moved to a new office space. The new address is still in Zemun, Belgrade, at Glavna 26.

InterpretCloud Launches

InterpretCloud is a remote simultaneous interpreting solution that can connect with any meeting platform to support multilingual events, meetings and conferences anywhere — any size and in any language.

SDL launches SDL Trados Studio 2021 and SDL Trados Live

SDL announced the launch of SDL Trados Studio 2021, a hybrid translation solution offering flexibility for busy translators and project managers.

SDL Trados Live is powered by SDL Language Cloud and works with SDL Trados Studio to bring users an online translation editor, coupled with a web-based project management and revision experience. The SDL Trados Live Mobile App is available to download for free and gives users the flexibility of being able to manage translation projects from anywhere. SDL is now offering an annual subscription to SDL Trados Studio 2021 for both the professional and freelance editions.

For desktop users, the translation memory (TM) engine has been enhanced to deliver better results, and quality assurance (QA) checks are also improved due to new intelligent TM technology. [M]

TXTOmedia:

Watch instead of read

Probably most of us encounter situations where product, installation or maintenance support is needed. The once-good old paper manual was already forgotten a long time ago, or was not at hand, and browsing a bulky multilingual PDF on a smartphone is probably not everybody's favorite.

Searching online for the right support brings us often to user-generated videos, which are not always reliant. However, the more specific the topic, the harder to find the right video, especially when you search for videos in your preferred native language. User-generated content is especially preferred for product reviews and suggestions, but here there is a huge opportunity for brands to win back visitors by presenting trusted, reliable product support via video.

But why are these instruction videos not yet widespread as a publishing format within these enterprises yet?

Knowledge Management and Documentation Teams often manage the content in document management systems or Component Content Management Solutions (CCMS). Most of the content is written, it is text and is stored in some XML-format. The output formats are mainly text-based and the people creating the content are writers. In the digital era PDF and HTML-publishing replace paper, but the way the information is displayed has not changed that much; the PDF-files and HTML pages look like digital paper.

TXTOmedia is about to change this. Our technology turns the written XML-based support and installation topics into instruction videos automatically.

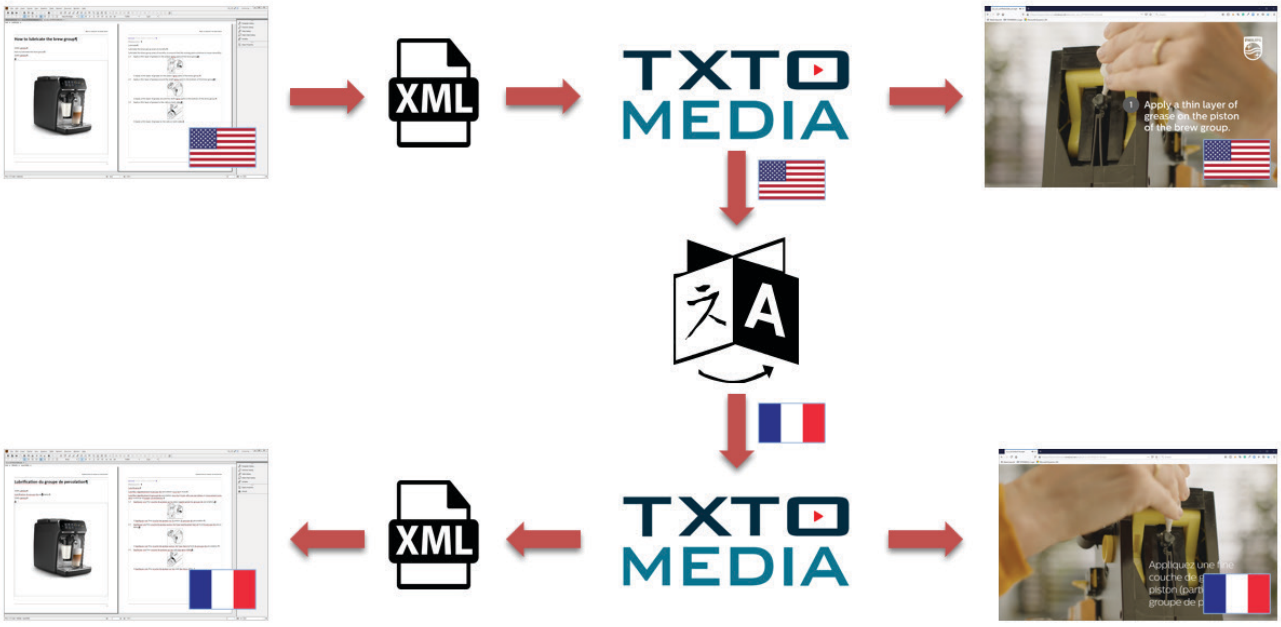
TXTOmedia brings text-to-speech in over 50 languages and reuses existing illustrations to create either animations or live action videos on-the-fly.

To create live action videos, existing topics are first turned into video production scripts, resulting in an overview of both reusable and missing video fragments. Once all fragments are available, the video is created or updated on the fly based on the (localized) content from the CCMS, resulting in (localized) videos.

Since the basis for creating the video is an XML file, TXTOmedia is also able to machine translate the content directly to additional languages and provide not only a draft video, but also its associated XML file, which can be edited and improved via the company's CCMS and additional systems for final editing and approval, before TXTOmedia generates the final version. This way content creators and translators can create and localize video in-context in real time.

For more information please visit

www.txtomedia.com or contact us at info@txtomedia.com.



September

The 12th International Conference on Third Language Acquisition and Multilingualism
September 9-12, 2020, Zagreb, Croatia
iam.wildapricot.org

#LocFromHome: The Online Language Industry Conference
September 9, 2020, Boston, MA, USA
smartcat.ai

Fall 2020 LSP Sales Process Workshop
September 15-17, 2020, Online
nimdzi.com

Considering a New Approach to Continuous i18n & L10n
September 17, 2020, Online
meetup.com

Global Ready Conference London
September 18, 2020, London, UK
smartling.com/globalready

GALA Connected 2020
September 22-25, 2020, Online
gala-global.org

The Translation and Localization Conference
September 25-27, 2020, Warsaw, Poland
translation-conference.com

New Trends in Translation and Technology
September 28-30, 2020, Rhodes, Greece
nettt-conference.com

All events are subject to change.

October

AMTA 2020 | Biennial Conference
October 6-9, 2020, Online
amtaweb.org

Meet Central Europe 2020
October 7-9, 2020, Innsbruck, Austria
meetcentraleurope.com

METM 2020
October 15-17, 2020, San Sebastián, Spain
metmeetings.org

Elia's Focus on Executives
October 19-20, 2020, Online
elia-association.org/our-events

61st ATA Conference
October 21-24, 2020, Boston, MA, USA
atanet.org/events

Demystifying the Chinese Language Market

Gabriel Karandyšovský

Gabriel Karandyšovský is the managing editor of Nimdzi Insights.

China is a country of tremendous business opportunity, spurred by the sheer size of the domestic Chinese market and by the continuous economic growth displayed by the world's most populous nation.

The Chinese economic reform, kickstarted in 1978 by Communist Party leader Deng Xiaoping, was a watershed moment for the country's language services market. The decades that followed have helped Chinese language services providers (LSPs) develop in both number and value. According to the Translators Association of China (TAC), there are over 369,000 companies that list language services among their fields of activity today, and the total revenue value of Chinese companies active in language services represents $5.29 billion.

The reasons for this are twofold. First of all, this growth has been achieved thanks to increased international demand. Perhaps more importantly, however, it is aided by a growing domestic demand of Chinese companies wanting to translate from Chinese into other foreign languages, as their activities expand across the borders.

No less crucial to the development of language services in China has been the Party's emphasis on the importance of language in projecting the image of China to the world. Externally, this has manifested itself by the creation of the TAC. International, high-profile events such as the 2008 Beijing Olympics have further supported the growth of domestic LSPs.

Foreign companies looking to develop their business in China should be aware that, given the heavy influence of the Communist Party in all aspects of social and economic life, they will always have a starting handicap compared to domestic businesses.

Looking at how Chinese LSPs perform internationally puts available market size information in much needed context — Chinese LSPs are still a way off from competing with the biggest players on an international level.

This does not necessarily mean they haven't been enjoying excellent growth — Lan-bridge (+32.4%), Sunyu (23%), and Pactera Technologies (20.5%) enjoyed very strong organic growth between 2018 and 2019, for example. Pactera is an interesting case, however, since it was the biggest Chinese LSP in 2019, but has since undergone a rebrand as Pactera EDGE. It's currently being listed as a US company.

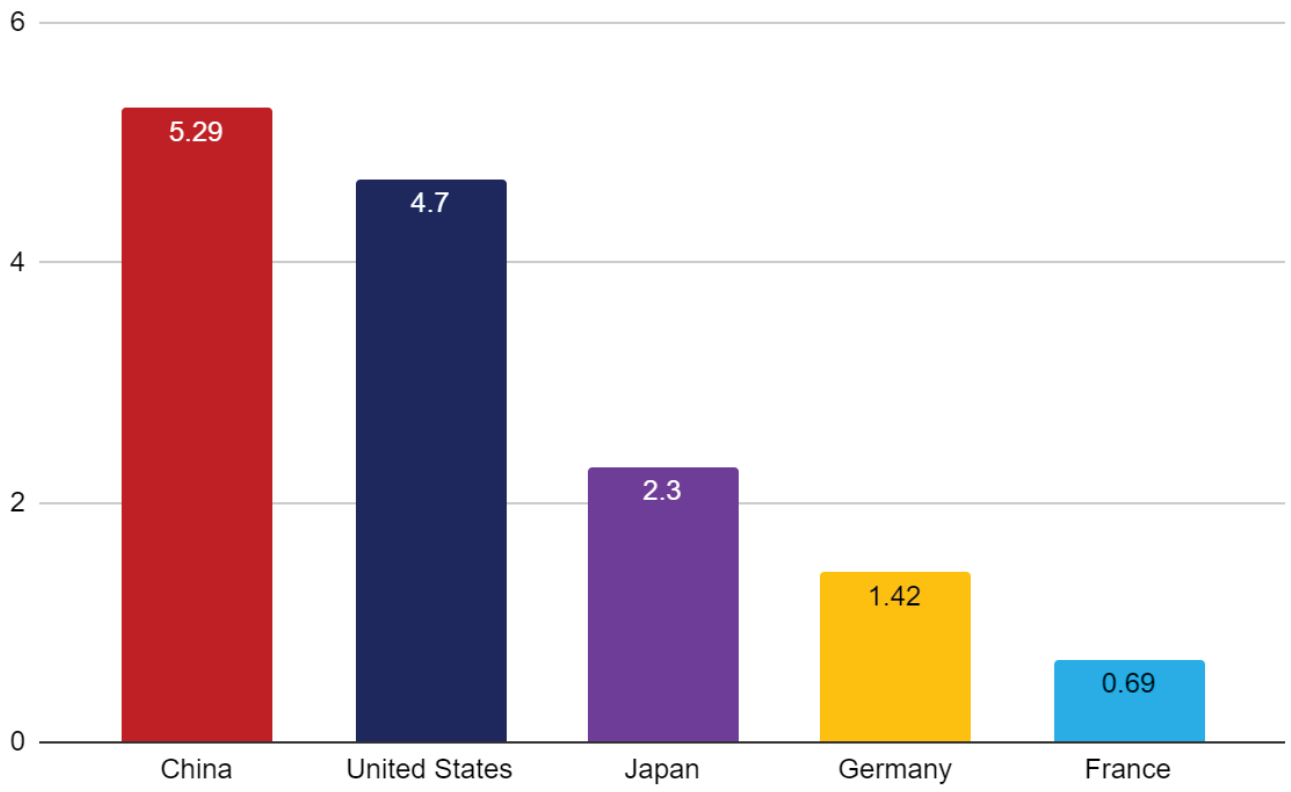


Figure 1: Estimated revenue from language services, worldwide. Source: Nimdzi Insights and TAC.

A large portion of the growth of Chinese LSPs is spurred by domestic clientele — Chinese businesses developing their affairs overseas, as well as government-supported projects. 50% of language services buyers have in-house translators on staff.

Chinese to English remains the main language combination (together with English to Chinese for inbound business opportunities), although domestic LSPs are increasingly tasked to support operations in emerging markets, for instance in EMEA or African regions. In terms of volume translated from Chinese into other foreign languages, the top five languages are English, French, Japanese, German and Russian.

The next wave of languages in high demand by domestic Chinese language buyers are Italian, Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai, Vietnamese, and Polish.

If we compare the figures offered by the TAC with data available from other territories in the world, China would earn the second spot worldwide in total estimated revenue from language services, ahead of the United States and only behind the cumulated revenue of countries forming the European Union.

If considered as individual countries, based on these estimations China would earn the top spot (Figure 1).

Beyond the fact that the numbers for China are difficult to verify, there is one important takeaway when you contrast information from China with data obtained independently: yes, the overall size of the Chinese language market is reportedly larger than any other country, but the top ten biggest Chinese LSPs account only for 4% of the total revenue tied to language services. The Chinese market is even more fragmented than the more established Western language markets.

Also, as with any market size information related to translation and interpreting services, it is important to keep in mind a portion of the revenue may be counted twice, once by the bigger LSPs and secondly by the freelancers and small- and medium-sized enterprises selling to them.

LSPs are present in all provinces/autonomous regions and municipalities, but mainly concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong, Jiangsu, and Shandong (Figure 2). Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong have the highest concentration of LSPs — 55.62% are concentrated in these three cities.

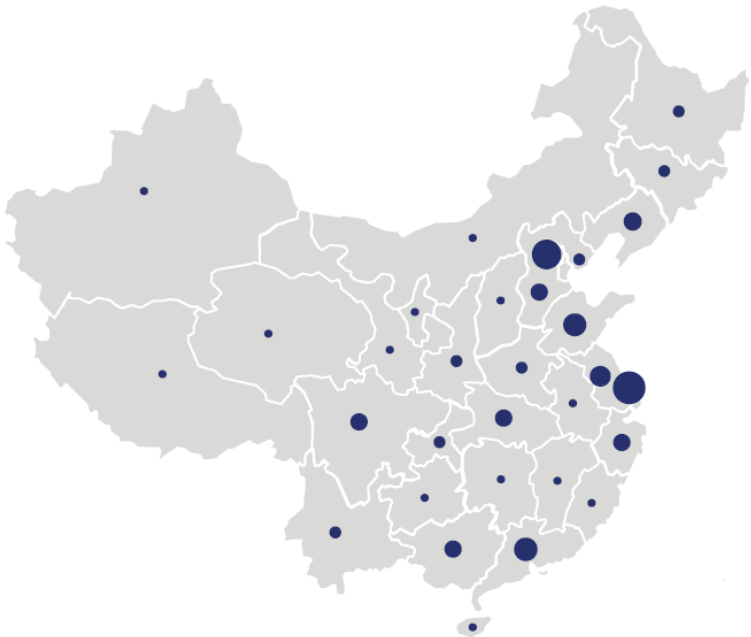


Figure 2: Chinese LSPs are concentrated in a few major cities.

Challenges of Chinese LSPs

Chinese LSPs are active in many different verticals (Figure 3), but that doesn't come without challenges. A few select Chinese LSPs offered insight into what the challenges are for them selling to foreign clientele. Their answers were interesting:

- Geopolitical context may be perceived as a blocker when developing relations with foreign language buyers.
- Certifications required to export their services overseas (how easy/difficult they are to obtain) can be a hindrance.
- Promoting their brand locally in Western markets is challenging.
- The time zone difference is a challenge for Chinese companies to solve. Coupled with a difficulty to physically expand operations in Western countries, Chinese LSPs may not be very flexible when scaling up, which is something a lot of language service buyers are looking for.

Marketing, especially, is a pain point for Chinese companies looking to sell overseas. The challenges from a communication and marketing standpoint include the fact that language skills are often below. expectation — the level of English proficiency of Chinese personnel is lacking.

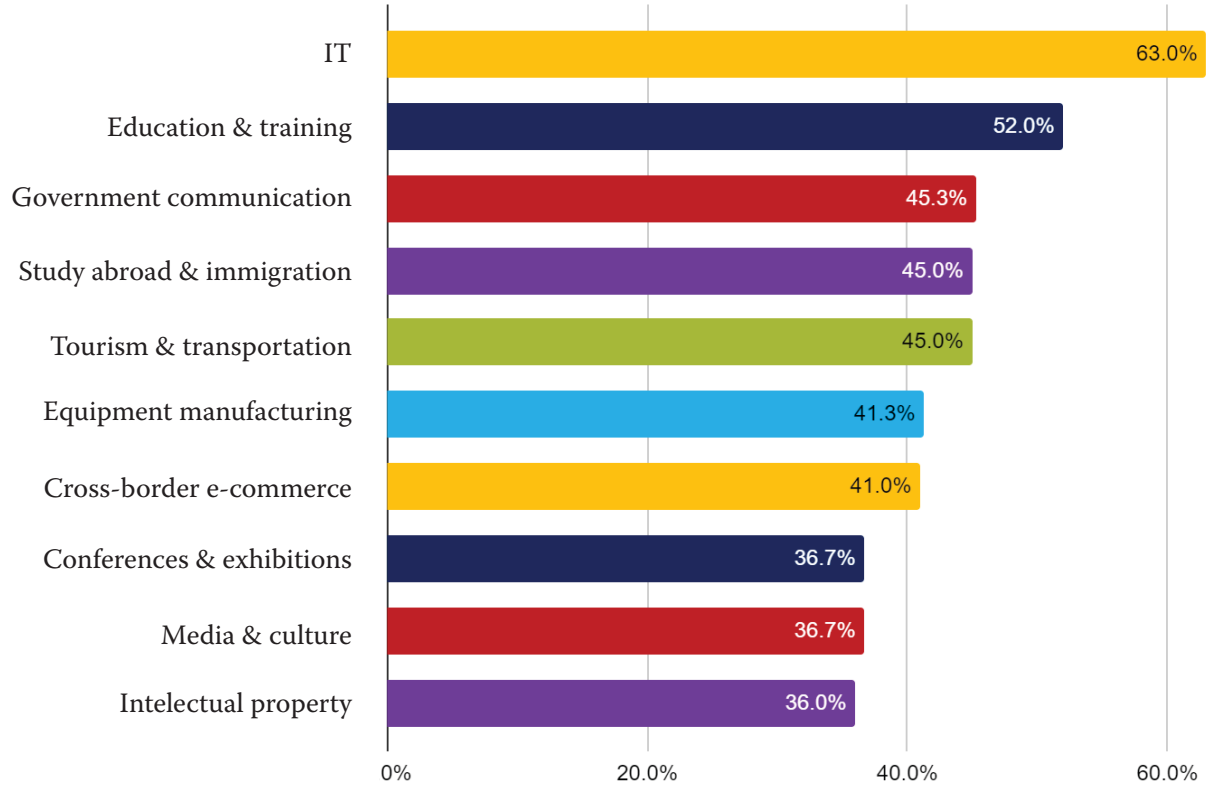


Figure 3: Top 10 verticals Chinese LSPs are active in. Source: TAC.

Also, for many buyers, the "Made in China" label is still synonymous with low cost and low quality. Additionally, China-centered decision-making is seen as a barrier for growth.

In multiple interviews with buyers, we heard a differentiator for Chinese LSPs is "competitive pricing" or "being cheaper than their competitors." While the answers may be biased, they are grounded in truth — Chinese LSPs are typically very price sensitive, trying to service the lower end of the language services market, aggressively selling to other LSPs.

Interestingly, the challenges perceived by Chinese companies wanting to develop their operations abroad closely mirror those of foreign businesses looking to gain a foothold in China. Both face the same set of issues.

Overall, it is easier for Chinese companies to do business in China, where they may benefit from local administrative and government support, while exporting out of China may be hindered, depending on where they want to export.

Technology

While Chinese LSPs have yet to make investments in foreign companies and assets, they are already building proprietary technology that will set them apart. China is a hotbed for technology development. IT giants such as Alibaba, Baidu and Tencent have all invested in language technology. Additionally, technology is seen as a key differentiator in the face of increased domestic and international competition.

Machine translation (MT) and AI respectively are key pieces of technology — there is a multitude of MT providers in China, and the development of both is supported by the Chinese government, which in 2017 issued "A Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan." Most of these providers focus on the economic, financial, patent, and legal sectors.

Another byproduct of intense technology development are wearable translation devices — somewhat of a specialty in Asia. GTCOM and Sogou sell such devices commercially.

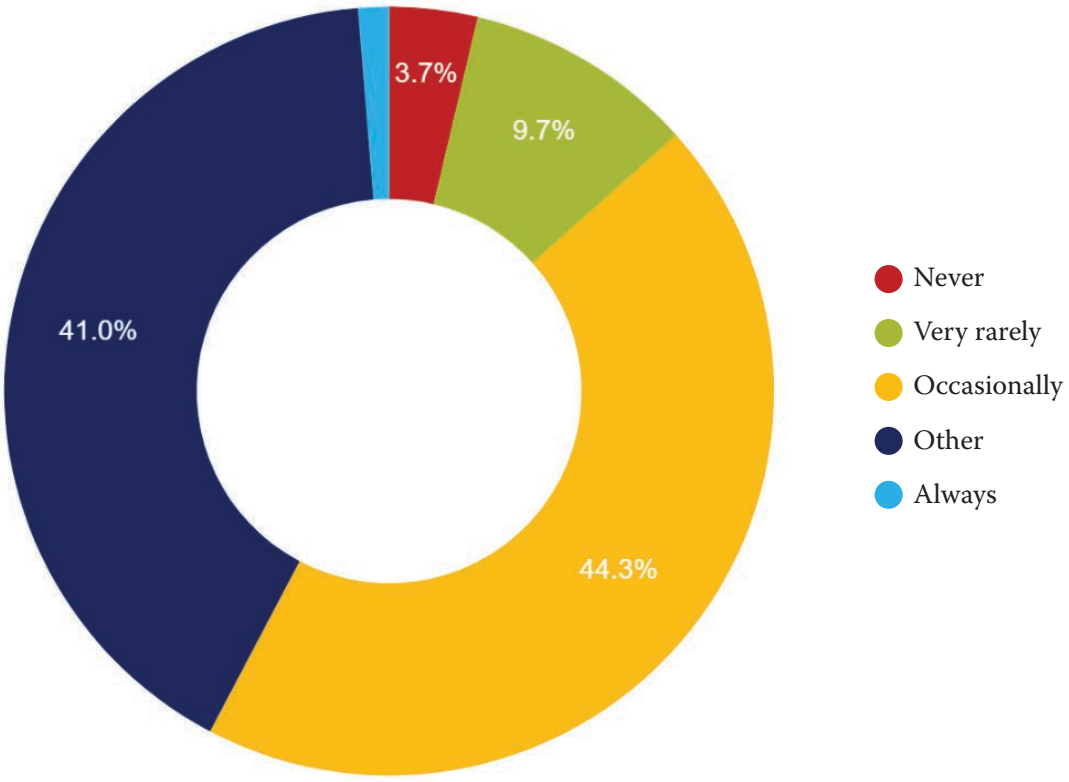


Figure 4: MT usage by Chinese LSPs. Source: TAC.

The technological buy-in rates both on the LSP and buyer sides are high (Figure 4). According to figures put forth by the TAC, it is high among individual translators too — 91% have already used or been asked to use MT technology.

Not only is language technology seen as a key competitive advantage, the adoption rates of technology among Chinese LSPs and buyers are high also.

Geocultural intelligence

China remains a difficult country to do business in, especially for foreign organizations, not the least due to the tight handle the Chinese government is exerting on all aspects of social and economic life in the country. Problems typically arise from issues of territorial sovereignty and trade policy, which can have lasting economic impact for foreign businesses. For example, consider the backlash the NBA and ESPN faced over support of the Hong Kong protesters and mishandling of geographical information.

While such cases may be of limited importance depending on the nature of the business you aim to develop in China, their consequences can be equally impactful and, at the very least, constitute a lesson to be learned and avoided. This is often the price of doing business in China.

Technology providers especially should be mindful of the approach to take when seeking to develop partnerships with local distributors and resellers — the threat of theft of intellectual property is real, and they ought to take necessary precautions to safeguard their source code.

China remains an appealing country for foreign businesses to invest in due to the size of the market. However, it remains a country difficult to navigate, given the ever-shifting geopolitical landscape and the still opaque nature of how things are done.

Foreign companies are required to partner with local resellers for their product — such is the case for the TMS provider MemoQ, for example. This allows them to minimize investment to deploy operations in-country and allows businesses to retain a degree of control over their IP, in theory. In practice, however, this is difficult to ensure, as the Chinese partner often retains 51% control of the business operation, resulting in loss of control for the foreign company — and potentially a loss of assets too, if they are not properly safeguarded. [M]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The Online Economic Importance of Japanese

Linguistic quality issues create opportunity for those who rise to the challenge

Arle Lommel

Arle Lommel is a senior analyst at CSA Research.

Although all languages have their idiosyncrasies that affect their rendering into other languages, a handful stand out as "difficult" for individuals used to working with common European languages. Japanese may not be the hardest major language to deal with for computer-centric translation practices — an honor that probably goes to Urdu — but it certainly ranks high on the list.

Japanese is a huge opportunity by any standard. CSA Research's analysis of the online value of languages shows that it is the sixth most-important language in terms of its economic potential (Figure 1) and, unlike those above it — with the exception of Chinese — its importance is concentrated in one country, which makes it easier to access than those split across multiple political boundaries. In addition, Japan is a market where English just won't cut it. As a result, the potential of Japanese is almost pure revenue uplift.

Our analysis of the effects of language on total addressable market for 35 vertical industries also revealed that it is among the top ten most-important languages in terms of revenue for every sector we evaluated. Additionally, in terms of revenue potential from native speakers, it ranks fifth in the world (Figure 2).

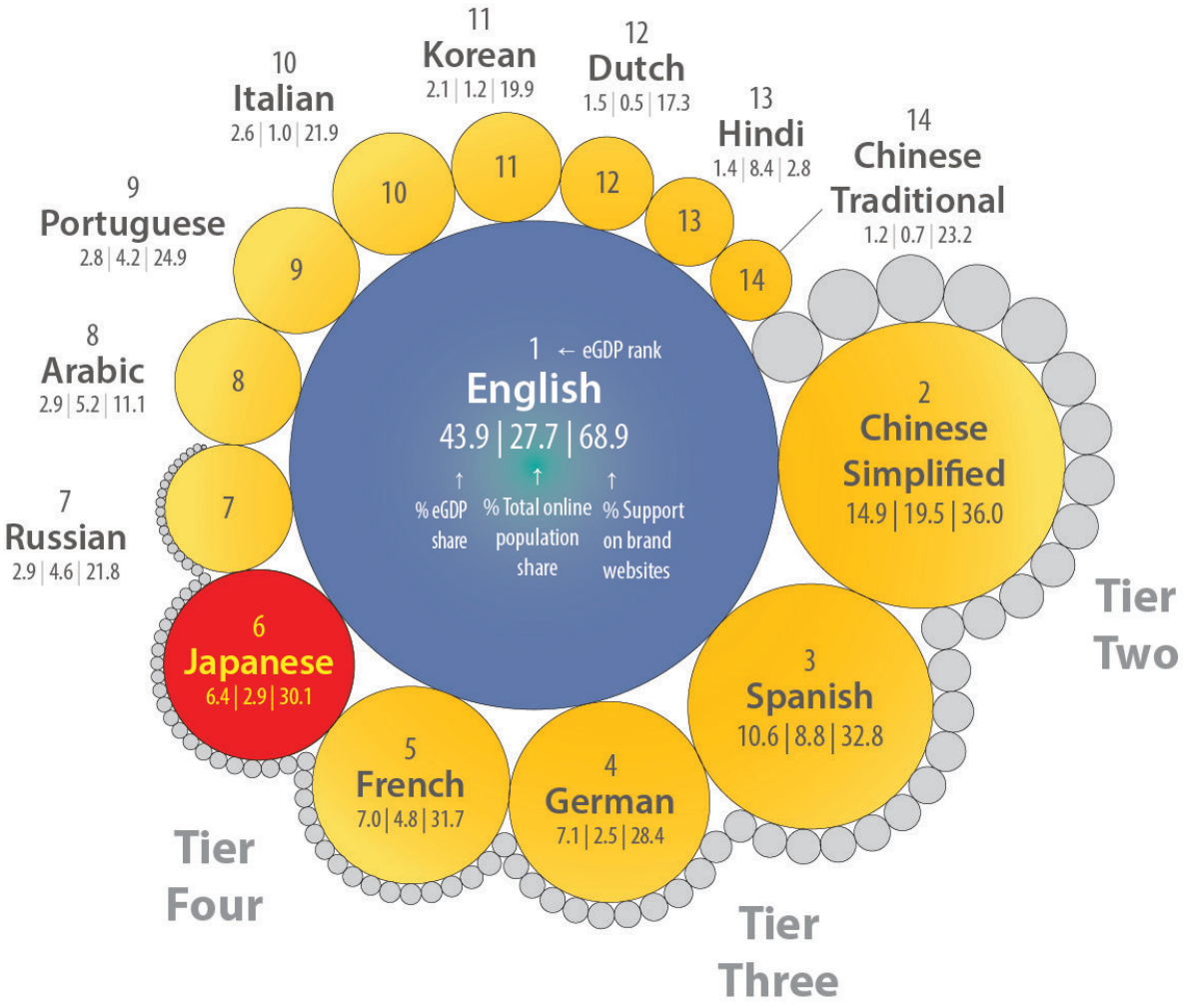

Figure 1: Language tiers and rankings for the top 100 online langauges. Copyright CSA research.

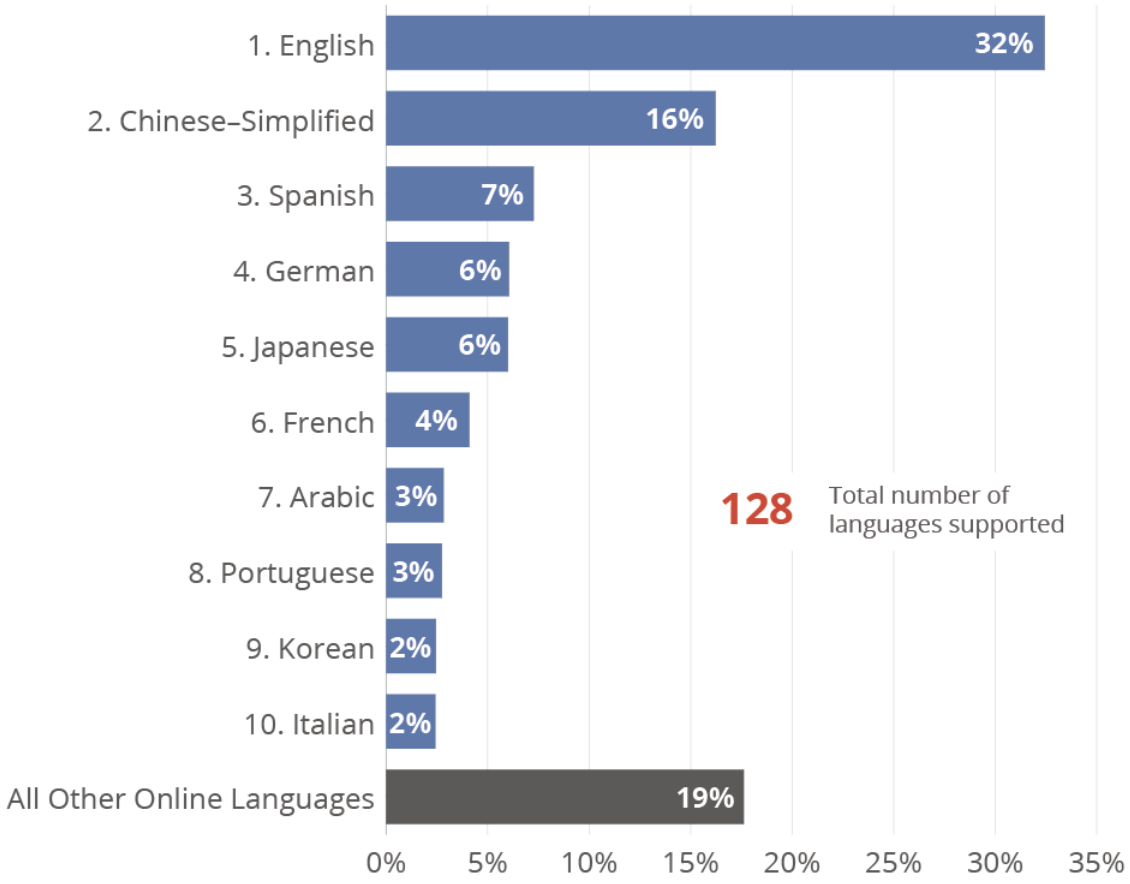

Figure 2: Japan ranks fifth in the world in potential revenue from native speakers. Copyright CSA Research.

A big opportunity, but you have to commit

It's almost a cliché that Japanese consumers differ from those of other regions in their high standards regarding product aesthetics, but it nonetheless captures something essential about the market: Japanese customers do expect text that speaks to them in their terms. Part of it is that Japanese readers have access to high-quality content created in their home market, and so have no need to settle for poorly localized content.

Another factor is that the variations in how different cultures express ideas are particularly pronounced in persuasive texts, such as advertising, and less crucial in technical texts that are focused on concrete sequences of events or actions. English texts, particularly those authored by American writers, tend to be highly deductive: they state a desired outcome, marshal supporting evidence in a systematic fashion, and then recap the initial point of the text. By contrast, Japanese writers tend to lay out conditions that lead the reader to a conclusion, which may not be stated directly. Westerners often find Japanese texts unclear, while their counterparts in Japan may view texts in European languages to be pedantic and overly direct.

As a result, product literature and collateral materials that are functional and reasonably attractive in other markets may not meet expectations in Japan. Poor style and presentation that don't abide by Japanese cultural norms may be borderline offensive. Because of this sensitivity, transcreation is likely to play a bigger role in your strategy for Japan than for other markets, and you may apply it to content types that you would normally translate.

Meeting local aesthetic preferences requires careful attention to the market and close work with local partners. Even when you have tested designs in other markets, carefully verify they will work well in Japan. Prepare to deliver more graphical content and expect to invest more in review cycles to get it right.

Structure your localization efforts to ensure success

So if you want to deliver the right content for Japan and to delight your customers, what actions should you take? As you plan for Japan, here are some suggestions of ways to succeed:

- Embrace dual authoring solutions, at least for non-technical content. In this approach, create a source text that serves as the basis for translation into most other languages, and a separate one for the Japanese market. You can supply this source text as a reference and have local partners transcreate it: that is, make a functionally equivalent text for consumption there.
- Plan for Japanese translations to require substantially more adaptation. These changes can include reordering of concepts, adopting a more "indirect" style, and altering the layout. Invest in LSP partners that have a strong cultural understanding of and experience in adapting text in Japanese. Be prepared for a reduced effectiveness of translation memory (TM) and machine translation, except for purely technical content.
- Decide whether centralization is the answer. Enterprises typically try to centralize control of their translation and localization processes as they grow. However, local partners in Japan often push for freedom to establish and monitor their own quality parameters. As long as processes meet larger corporate goals for revenue and brand continuity, consider letting Japan develop its own quality benchmarks and fund content adaptation, translation, and transcreation.
- Work with local vendors. If you work with multiple language service providers (LSPs), demand that reviews are carried out in Japan, particularly for creative content. Local providers or global providers with local branches are more likely to master the latest linguistic and market preferences. Involve them early on in the content design process and require them to document terminology choices.
- Open channels between translators and your Japanese staff. Your employees are aware of product concerns and customer feedback. Provide them with a direct line to translators and implement regular feedback sessions. Develop and document requirements for when to translate, transcreate, or re-author — and provide examples for each in your style guide.
- Give final authority to your reviewers. If you invest time and effort in all of the above but then allow other parties to undo the careful work you need for Japanese, you undermine your own goals. Avoid the temptation to "just make a few tweaks" or to change content after it has been reviewed.
- Plan for customer service from the beginning. Japanese customers expect and demand a top-notch customer experience. Make sure that your support channels live up to your promises. Treating support as an afterthought will only create more problems down the road.
- Expect to pay more. For Japanese localization, there is a closer link between quality and price than is found in some other languages. You need to pay for both specialized field experience and the language knowledge to avoid typical mistakes in style and layout.
- Allow more time for review. For any high-value content, review is likely to be an iterative process that involves discussion between your authoring team, localizers, local employees, and reviewers. The need for constant communication and revision is especially critical for the first translations you do of a particular content type or in cases where you have previously had quality problems. During this process, document decisions about language or process and make them available to all parties.

Build documents for success

Japanese translations that closely follow your source document format and style can cause problems. As you prepare your content, take the following actions to help deliver top-quality materials:

- Improve your source content. Many localization problems — regardless of language — reflect issues found in the source. Because Japan requires more adjustment than most other locales, these problems are frequently more apparent there than they would otherwise be. Managing your terminology, using consistent style, and following other content source optimization techniques can deliver huge dividends.
- Define document requirements and build Japanese-specific templates. Decide in advance with your LSPs how to handle the specificities of Japanese localization. Collaborate to define templates for that market rather than sending them your source documents and hoping they will make them work. Start this work early on so you have it ready for your content, rather than spending the money to retrofit after projects begin.
- Use more graphics. Japanese readers tend to prefer graphic-rich technical content rather than long walls of text. Graphics may be more expensive than text to develop initially, but you will recoup that cost and more in time and budget savings across the rest of your target languages.

• Give localizers freedom to adapt. While transcreation is above the call of duty for most material, Japanese localizations from European languages will require more adaptation. Make it clear to providers what they can and cannot change and ask them for their recommendations. This requirement will vary from minimal changes for technical content to substantial ones for other text types. This process takes time and costs extra, but can make the difference between market success and failure.

• Don't insist on an exact match between source and target. The structure and linguistic approach of Japanese is so different from European languages that a sentence-by-sentence review that insists on finding perfect equivalency is misleading. Good Japanese translations add, remove, and restructure information within and between sentences in order to deliver maximal clarity. In addition, Japanese is very imprecise in some grammatical aspects where European languages demand exactness, but very detailed in others where its counterparts are loose. Looking for exact correspondence will lead to poor reviews and low quality.

• Consider skipping translation memory (TM) for non-technical texts. TM works best in a sentence-by-sentence approach. While that applies for technical texts, it introduces problems for many other content types that require a less literal and linear approach. By the time the translator is done reorganizing the text, TM's advantage may be nullified and it may negatively affect quality. If you do apply it, paragraph-level segmentation may be more appropriate, although this choice may be less effective in finding matches.

High-quality Japanese localization is attainable, but usually requires extra effort and budget. Be flexible and willing to adapt your expectations to the market. If you work closely with LSPs and local affiliates, you can resolve most difficulties early on in the process for a smooth experience. If you receive consistent complaints about your Japanese content, determine the root causes. Problems often arise from lack of communication or from expectations that differ in that audience. If your content is confusing or looks wrong, troubleshoot the approach with your LSP and consider working directly with in-country linguists and local staff. [M]

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From Specialist to Generalist

The emerging translation market in Singapore

Susan XU Yun

Susan XU Yun is an associate professor and the head of Translation and Interpretation at Singapore University of Social Sciences. She pioneered the certification examinations for professional interpreters and translators in Singapore. These examinations are compulsory for translators and interpreters working in public services in Singapore. She is the author of *Translation of Autobiography: Narrating Self, Translating the Other*.

Multilingualism in Singapore necessitates translation activities in everyday life. Public discourse needs to be translated from English into three other official languages — namely, Chinese, Malay, and Tamil — to connect with citizens of these respective ethnic groups. Though translation services are not mandatory in the private sector, businesses seem to proactively engage customers through multilingual communication.

"The translation market and developing economies: A preliminary study of ASEAN countries," published in 2013, points to a market in Singapore that is "driven by foreign, not local, demand" and "derived from external trade-related activities." More often than not, translation or language gaffes detected in official documents have caused public outcry, alerting the public to substandard translation practices that result from lack of standardization and regulation.

Contrary to the common belief that bilingualism is conducive to translation and interpretation, there has been a deeply rooted prejudice against it in this small, advanced economy. Translation was never thought of as a respectable pursuit in Singapore, and neither was the profession promising or lucrative. Misconceptions prevailed. Many believed that anyone proficient in two languages could translate or interpret. As a result, translation professionals in Singapore have been trapped in an underdeveloped market that sets low entry barriers and prioritizes price over quality. Substandard translations ensue.

There is light at the end of the tunnel, though. In the recent decade, government-led initiatives have been launched to improve the local translation landscape. The National Translation Committee, chaired by Senior Minister of State Sim Ann, Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI), has been formed to enhance whole-of-government translation capabilities as well as raise standards across the industry. The Translation Talent Development Scheme and Community-in-Translation program are available to spot and groom local translation talent.

So some due recognition is now given to translation and interpreting professionals. The minister herself well understands the challenges: she translated a book, *Chasing Rainbow,* from Chinese to English, and completed a graduate program in translation. Her passion for lifelong learning goes well with Singapore's national SkillsFuture movement.

Paradigm shifts

A government-funded initiative called SkillsFuture Singapore promotes a culture of lifelong learning to enable Singaporeans to acquire skills that meet the demands of the future economy. The initiative supports industry transformation to expand sectors with potential. Professional service has been identified as a key high-value growth sector for Singapore. Translation could be one of these.

Generic skills and competencies, referring to employability skills, are an integral part of the skills framework. There is a long list: communication, computational thinking, creative thinking, digital literacy, global mindset, interpersonal skills, managing diversity, problem solving, and transdisciplinary thinking, just to name a few. The list overlaps with the top five soft skills and ten hard skills companies need most in 2020, according to recent research conducted by LinkedIn.

For as long as the activity has existed, translation in Singapore has been considered a skill rather than an academic discipline — labeled as an art or a craft, rather than a science.

Contrary to the common perception of "jack of all trades, master of none," generalization has become a key to success, at least according to a 2018 survey by LinkedIn on "what it takes to become a CEO." The survey concluded that the commonality among CEOs is not what they studied at university, but their ability to handle complex problems, inspire others, and prove themselves at every stage of their careers. The shift from specialization to generalization is also observed by David Epstein, the author of New York Times bestseller *Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World.* Epstein posits that a person skilled in a particular field but having broad knowledge and abilities can make connections across far-flung domains and ideas. This could sharpen their problem-solving tactics in an increasingly complex world. Our society's transition toward this recognition of skills bodes well for translation and interpreting.

When we translate, we frequently step into the unknown as the materials we translate often have nothing to do with our domain knowledge. We have to make sense of the unknown, drawing upon our knowledge accumulated over time, reflecting on our past experience. In the process, we use technology — perhaps more extensively and long before many other professions.

Climbing up the value chain

The threat of technology "disintermediation" powered by the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has created much anxiety among translators and interpreters. Their roles in facilitating cross-cultural communication are likely to diminish further as more and more bilingual and tech-savvy millennials join the workforce. In multilingual, globalized Singapore, professionals working in the field of translation and interpretation are like drops in the ocean facing the tidal wave of technology disintermediation. Our options are limited: go with the flow or sink the ship.

Recent breakthroughs in AI-powered machine translation (MT) claiming human parity can both pose challenges and create opportunities in Singapore. For example, an MT engine known as SG Translate was jointly developed by the MCI and the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) under the Smart Nation and Digital Government drive. It is said to have produced good translations that suit the local context. SG Translate now supports the translation division of the MCI, which undertakes the most important translation work for the government, enabling the team to handle a higher volume of translation within a shorter duration. To fight against COVID-19, the engine was deployed to translate public communication materials such as a WhatsApp daily update.

The use of MT augments human translators, though, and human touch is still essential. We need to deal with subtle expressions and complex structures, and most importantly, to resolve conflicts arising from sociocultural, geopolitical differences. The increasing use of MT underlines an urgent need for a mindset change. Now we have machines to do the basic, tedious linguistic transfer, we humans must regenerate ourselves to create higher values than ever before.

The interdisciplinary nature of translation and interpreting gives us the opportunity to learn, unlearn, and relearn. This does not mean that the bilingual skills that we have spent years honing are going down the drain. They are still very useful and relevant. What we should now focus on is making our skills transferable to those anticipated to be in greater demand. For example, a bilingual advantage allows us to embrace a global mindset. Translating culture-specific phenomena makes us adaptable and creative, especially in the case of untranslatability. To thread our way through conflicts between cultures, religions, and ideologies, we strengthen our ability to manage diversity. Our digital literacy developed over the years in the use of computer-aided-translation (CAT) tools may allow us to take technological advancements as fish to water. These skills will help us climb up the value chain.

Undeniably, some parts of our thinking need to be adjusted. We might have become too accustomed to our dominance with CAT tools. Now we have to adjust ourselves to auxiliary roles — human-aided MT. While we can still take pride in our grasp of the art of translation thanks to abstract thinking, we need to gear ourselves towards computational thinking by understanding big data and machine learning. We can then play a part in training neural MT systems. In so doing, we turn our passiveness into activeness.

Translation industry professionals in Singapore are lucky. Even though they are just drops in the ocean, they can tap on the vast resources made available through the national SkillsFuture movement to reskill and upskill. While AI-powered changes continue to make waves, those who think broadly and embrace diverse perspectives can steady the ship in a stormy global economy. [M]

Introducing Memsource Translate

Unlocking the full potential of Machine Translation

Machine translation (MT) has transformed localization. Recent advances in MT technology have dramatically improved the quality of translations. Together with the high speed and low cost, MT has become an increasingly attractive proposition for enterprises and LSPs. For many it is already a reality.

Adopting and using MT optimally is not without difficulties. One obstacle is navigating through the large number of options available today. The MT landscape is dynamic, with new engines being continuously released, and existing engines improved all the time. Competitive and constant innovation has helped MT make tremendous strides in quality but it has also made it more difficult for users to find their optimal engine.

At Memsource, we have been exploring new ways for users to go further with MT. Our platform currently supports more than 30 different engines with our internal data showing a steady rate of adoption and general quality improvements for most engines year on year. However, in order to avoid the hassle of engine testing and implementation, most users tend to rely on one engine exclusively, losing out on the gains achieved by other engines for specific language pairs and content types.

We have found that **in more than 70% of all translation projects, a better performing engine could have been used.**

This is why we have developed Memsource Translate, an AI-powered machine translation management solution that automatically selects the optimal MT engine for the user's content and language pair based on past performance data.

Testing MT engines is normally a costly and time-consuming process. For many users, keeping up to date with the latest engine developments is prohibitively expensive, and taking advantage of them impossible. Memsource Translate offers a unique solution to this problem.

Automatic and data-driven engine selection saves time and money by choosing the best performing engine for every task. The algorithm will consider not just the language pair, but also the type of content you are translating, all in real-time and using continuously updated performance data. Memsource Translate is fully integrated with existing workflows in Memsource, with features such as automatic domain detection further reducing the need for human input.

Memsource Translate makes managing multiple engines, convenient as customers can use, track, and pay for multiple engines all in one place. Users can immediately start translating with three fully managed engines, or add their own generic or customizable engines.

By using the best performing engine for every translation, users can expect higher output quality, which can significantly reduce the need for costly post-editing. Memsource Translate includes the innovative machine translation quality estimation (MTQE) feature, which uses AI algorithms to automatically identify MT output quality at segment level, allowing users to efficiently allocate post-editing resources.

Memsource Translate helps you unlock the full potential of MT, ensuring the best possible quality for your translation, all while simplifying the process of testing and engine management. Transform your localization today with Memsource Translate.

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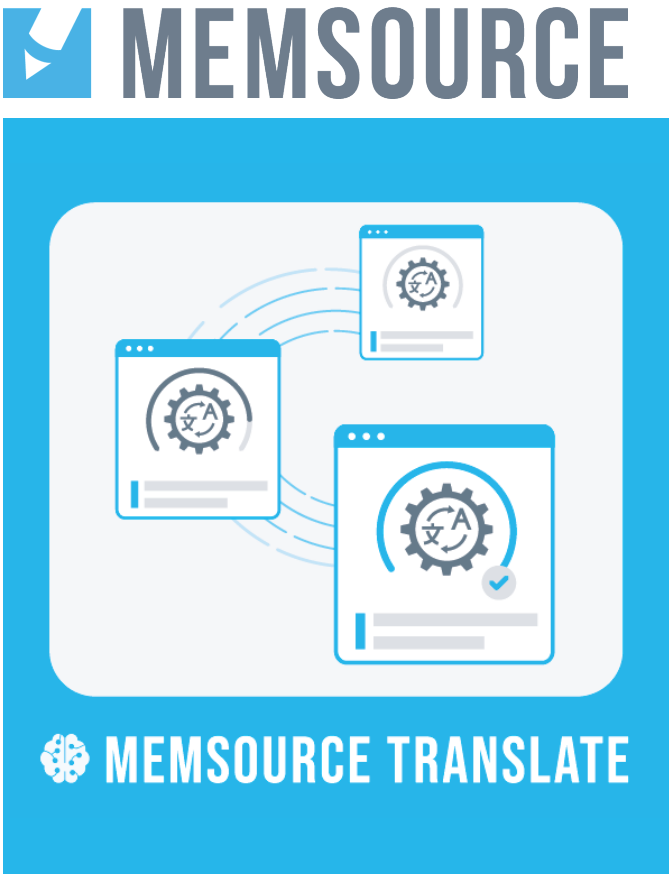


Cracking SEO in Asia Pacific

Don Shin

Don Shin is the CEO and founder of 1-StopAsia, a translation agency dedicated to Asian languages. He has a BA in Korean language and literature and extensive experience as a translator and interpreter.

Gergana Toleva

Gergana Toleva is the global marketing manager at 1-StopAsia. She has 12 years of experience in sales prio r to working as a marketing professional. Gergana holds an engineering bachelor's degree in Automation, Information, and Control Techniques from the University of Food Technologies in Bulgaria.

When we started compiling information for this article, the situation around the world was much different than it is now. While most of it is still valid, it's quite interesting to reflect on how rapidly things have changed, and what shifts the past five months have brought. Yet two facts are quite clear at the moment:

Fact 1: The East is not as far away from the West as we once thought.

Fact 2: Globalization is never going to be the same in terms of travel and the worldwide movement of people.

Generally speaking, a company's digital presence has never been more important than it is now, and companies with a great online presence will come out on top. Along with that comes the ever-present need to rank on the first pages, be visible, and have an excellent online reputation.

For Asia, and in particular the Asia Pacific Region (APAC), where technologies continue to develop every single minute, digital presence is essential for every business that wants to thrive — even more so with travel down, borders closed, and people constantly online.

Asian languages and the translation industry

While the longterm effects of COVID-19 are still being assessed, the translation industry in Asia seems to be carrying along largely at the same level as before the pandemic. According to our keyword research on Google Trends, about the same number of translation service queries are currently happening in Asian countries as before. There are a number of reasons behind this apparent stability, not all of which are evident at first glance.

Reason #1: A rise in the demand for translation between Asian language pairs — due to their complicated nature, it can be necessary to use English as an intermediary language when translating between Asian languages.

Reason #2: Many companies have offices in Asia and manage their requests from there. This means that most searches, even those originating from Asia, are actually from Asian branches of Western companies.

Reason #3: Interest in doing business between the East and West is at an interesting crossroads, and building a bridge between them will require a complex mix of translation, localization, marketing, and technology.

The hitchhiker's guide to Asia

For someone who's approaching the Asian market for the first time, it may seem straight out of the universe Douglas Adams describes in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. And with good reason — Asia is so culturally, linguistically, and geographically diverse that the well-ordered world of the West, along with the option to defer to English, is shaken from its foundations when East and West meet for business. It may sound cliché, but it cannot be overlooked.

The over 76 million Vietnamese speakers alone Indonesian, with around 43 million first-language speakers and 156 million second-language speakers, represents a significant market as well. Imagine a mid-sized Western company approaching these markets, and the possibilities for success if all goes well.

Let's take a look at a more common major market. Say, for example, we've decided we want to target China. Time to set up a nice website, go through the hassle of obtaining a license to operate in China, and then translate our content into Mandarin Chinese. Nothing wrong with that, right?

Well, of course there is! You need localization as well, for a start. So, ok, we've discovered that translation and localization go hand in hand, and we've done that, too. What are we missing in the grand scheme?

The fact is, even if you've done all of the above, you can still fail due to the lack of a customized digital presence that's right for the market. In digital, fast-paced economies like China, Japan, and India, this can prove challenging.

Where does SEO fit in?

Google Keywords and Google Trends don't work well enough to plan a proper SEO strategy and to launch effective search engine marketing (SEM) campaigns in Asia, at least not everywhere. But even in countries like Vietnam, where Google is the major search engine, there are details that have to be considered prior to SEO optimization and launching SEM campaigns. So what can an LSP do about SEO?

It's possible to treat SEO for any market as a translation, editing, proofreading (TEP) task. But that is not, and will never be, enough — even the most optimized website with perfectly localized language is not sufficient if you're a leader only in Google, but your audience is using WeChat.

SEO is not the simple translation of researched and

properly listed words. Not in the slightest. It may seem like that, but in reality, SEO is a living, breathing entity that you have to maintain on many different levels in order to reach your business goals. It's the whole picture drawn before the eyes of your audience by your digital presence.

Different things work in different markets, and SEO strategy is no exception. First, you need to know where your customers are. After all, if we want a fish, we go to a fish market, not the mall.

If we look at Chinese search engine popularity dynamics, one reason the number two search engine, Sogou, rose from a 2% market share in February 2019, to a 24% market share in October 2019, is the fact that it integrates content from WeChat and QQ. And for China, this is where users are.

A successful SEO strategy requires you to be a local, sound local, and know where locals are — all while being an outsider. This requires careful planning, analysis, and cultural knowledge. There is no magic pill here, just hard work, solid planning, and precision!

The APAC region is so diverse in countries, cultures, nations, and languages that an "Ultimate Guide" will fail big time. But we can look at top picks by country, nonetheless.

For example, you've heard of Baidu, Bing, and Yahoo!, but what about Sogou, Shenma, and Naver? Are you clear on what makes them popular among users and why they are performing well in some countries while a major player like Google takes a step back? And, for that matter, is Google really stepping back?

Simple research on dominant players in the area shows that most countries use Google as a search engine. However, that doesn't make it any easier to plan an SEO optimization and marketing strategy for any of the Asian countries that use it.

Getting over the Great Firewall of China

The Chinese market is huge. Data for the Chinese search engine market varies based on what statistics are used, but trends tend to stay the same. About 70% of the search engine market share in China belongs to Baidu, and Sogou is picking up speed. The search engine Shenma, which does mobile search only and holds a remarkable (for a mobile-only search engine) 4.5% market share, rounds off the top three. We've listed our picks, and how to navigate them below:

1. Baidu (the largest on the market). Baidu thinks differently, and so do users in the Chinese market. Fast-loading websites are prioritized by Baidu. It focuses on mainland China, so consider using a .cn domain. Anything "Google" will cause a delay of 40 - 90 seconds.

Keep in mind that Money Plant (绿萝) polices hyperlink cheaters. It searches for hyperlink cheaters and websites that rely heavily on building backlinks, so these can lose their positions. This of course has its exceptions. Pomegranate (石榴) is another algorithm that aims to penalize multiple and overwhelming advertisements done on Chinese websites.

2. Sogou is a strategic investment by Tencent. Tencent is one of the largest internet companies in the world, and Sogou is quickly becoming the second largest search engine in China. Its main advantage is integrating content from WeChat and QQ — two highly popular media networks whose content is not available on Baidu. Sogou has a unique search engine method that claims that "it anticipates users' search intentions in real-time and allows them to search directly with Sogou Search through its embedded search function." It's highly flexible when it comes to personalization, which appeals greatly to Millennials.

3. Shenma is mobile only, but ranks third in market share for search engines in China. Shenma states they are an exclusive mix between a search engine and app store. If you're a brand that wants maximum reach, imagine how many users 4.5% represents in a country like China.

Rising like the sun in Japan

Yahoo! Japan is no longer the number one search engine in the country. The Japanese version of Google now holds between 73% and 77% of the market per data from May 2020 taken from various resources (StatCounter and Zodigital.jp). Bing ranks third with between 4% and 6% of market share per May 2020 statistics.

1. Google in Japan. Keywords in Japanese are a crucial milestone in your website's SEO strategy because there are so many ways to say or write a single word. As high-quality content is extremely important for the Japanese, use locals to create it. The language is so complicated for translation and everything needs to be flawless; otherwise, it will drive Japanese customers away from your brand.

Remember, clean and Zen have nothing to do with the way Japanese audiences perceive information online. "Busy" is the design slang that comes to mind when you check a popular online Japanese brand.

2. Yahoo! Japan. Yahoo! presents content to search queries differently — sometimes they add unique content like

a hot topic even though it doesn't have a top position yet. It's still popular, but not as a search engine anymore. It's now used more like a web portal for information. Yahoo! Japan has a completely different layout and presentation of information.

To produce quality content for a Japanese audience, opt for local content writers and native speakers. The Japanese are extremely sensitive about their language, and it evolves quickly, so it's important for your content to be written in an up-to-date Japanese.

3. Bing. Social media is a key factor in Bing, which you should consider when preparing your strategy. Page load time is one of the technical factors Bing uses to rank you ahead of others.

Meta keywords and descriptions are something that actually work, so use them wisely.

South Korea: Web portal or search engine?

Statistics for Korean user preferences on the search engine market vary, but one thing is for sure: you can't plan a proper SEO strategy without considering the two major players on the market there, Google and Naver.

Korea offers a true and unique challenge when it comes to SEO and winning marketing strategies. It's more open to the outside world for business, and at the same time it's still a traditional Asian country.

Gathering statistics and data on search engine shares proved to be quite a difficult task, especially for an outsider. We dug deeper and found three different sets of statistics on the topic, which vary drastically. As a matter of fairness, we will include the numbers from all three source that different statistics measure different variables. However, there is no denying that Google is growing the numbers from all three source and then tease out our real-deal SEO advice for the Korean market.

Following a survey among Korean users, local media Joins.com stated that Naver has 74%.4 share, Google follows with 13.2%, and Daum is third with 9.6%. Internettrend.co.kr says that Naver holds 59% share, Google has 32.73%, and Daum 7.01%. StatCounter shows us the following: Google 76.59%, Naver 17.31%, and Bing 2.43%.

It would probably sound weird if we say they're not necessarily wrong about South Korea, but the fact is

that different statistics measure different variables. However, there is no denying that Google is growing fast. Still, if you want to search like a local and reach the locals, most of the information will be on Naver, not Google. Different market segments can also be found on different search engines.

For example, Google is more popular for the IT crowd and younger generations, while B2C companies, products, and information still mostly use Naver. That's of course based on user preferences, so when considering your strategy for the South Korean market, you should definitely take these factors into account.

That's why the one search engine we'll talk about despite the statistics is Naver. Its logic and layout are completely different from Google's. It classifies mostly user-generated content, paid ads, and blogs or community pages. It doesn't generate organic results after crawling through the entire internet, which is what Google does. This is why Naver is more of a web portal than a search engine.

Koreans search in a totally different way from English speakers. Keywords are short-tailed due to the fact that the Korean language is more concise. Accordingly, SEO is short, simple, and straight to the point, which requires local knowledge in order to generate the most effective strategies for the market. The search term influences the order of the vertical search result, so using the proper search term, and later on the proper keywords, is of great importance to reach your target audience.

SEA and SEO

Southeast Asia (SEA) is the region in Asia where the language barrier is not as significant as in the previous countries and the use of English as a second language gives better options for market penetration for companies coming from Western countries. However, that doesn't make the task any easier, due to the fact that the audiences are much different in perception, mentality, and user habits.

We've selected a few of the smaller and less familiar markets in the area that have quite a few things to offer an investor. Despite the fact that Google is dominant in all three of these countries, there are still a few things to consider before you dive into doing business there.

Vietnam: Go digital or go home.

A country that opened itself to the internet just over two decades ago, Vietnam is in the Top 20 by the number of internet users. So going digital is a must. Consider it the major rule for successful business there. Over 90% of the search engine market as of May 2020 is held by Google and number two is search engine Cốc Cốc. Consider the local language, go mobile first, and understand that quality content reigns supreme for better ranking.

Malaysia: M is for mobile.

Google is the dominant search engine in the country, and it's interesting that Malaysian internet users are very well-versed in both English and Malay, the local language. Over 70% of internet users use mobile devices, so the first step is to plan for a mobile-friendly service presentation with an excellent digital presence.

Besides that, the winning strategy in this country is localized content as well as online presence, which is also very important.

Be aware of local specifics, like the fact that rich snippets are something worth optimizing for in Malaysia, because not many websites do that. Having your website in Malay as well as English will cover both language groups in the country and will give you higher exposure to potential users.

Cambodia: The "Wild West" for digital adventurers.

In March 2019, the first tech and digital convention was held in Cambodia under the name "Digital Cambodia," which shows the government's focus on turning the country into a digital powerhouse with a spot of its own on the world's digital map. And to be honest, why not?

The country skipped over the years of technical improvements of the more developed economies and jumped straight into the era of optical internet connection. Furthermore, mobile penetration in Cambodia is at a stage where there are more mobile phones (SIM cards) per capita than people.

To sweeten the pot, there's a quickly developing digital environment in the country along with a lack of experienced digital professionals. Along with it comes the local language spoken by Cambodians, Khmer — ភាសាខ្មែរ in the local script.

Over 95% of Cambodians use Google, which has a Khmer version. Facebook use is growing, and a lot of the searches start on Facebook, not Google. So how do we go about conquering this market with an SEO strategy?

1. Optimize for mobile — with so many users of mobile phones, this is essential.

2. Work on your brand and brand message because it's very important in Cambodia.

3. Localize as much as possible, as Cambodians are highly attached to their culture.

4. Keep in mind that Phnom Penh is not the same as the rest of Cambodia, so do your research on your target audience first.

Chain reactions

We've been carefully observing the behavior of users around the world from the front row over the past five months. We clearly saw the chain reaction the pandemic caused, but what we're seeing now is how countries were closing their borders while at the same time opening their online markets. There is a clear reason behind that: we don't need to travel in order to do business.

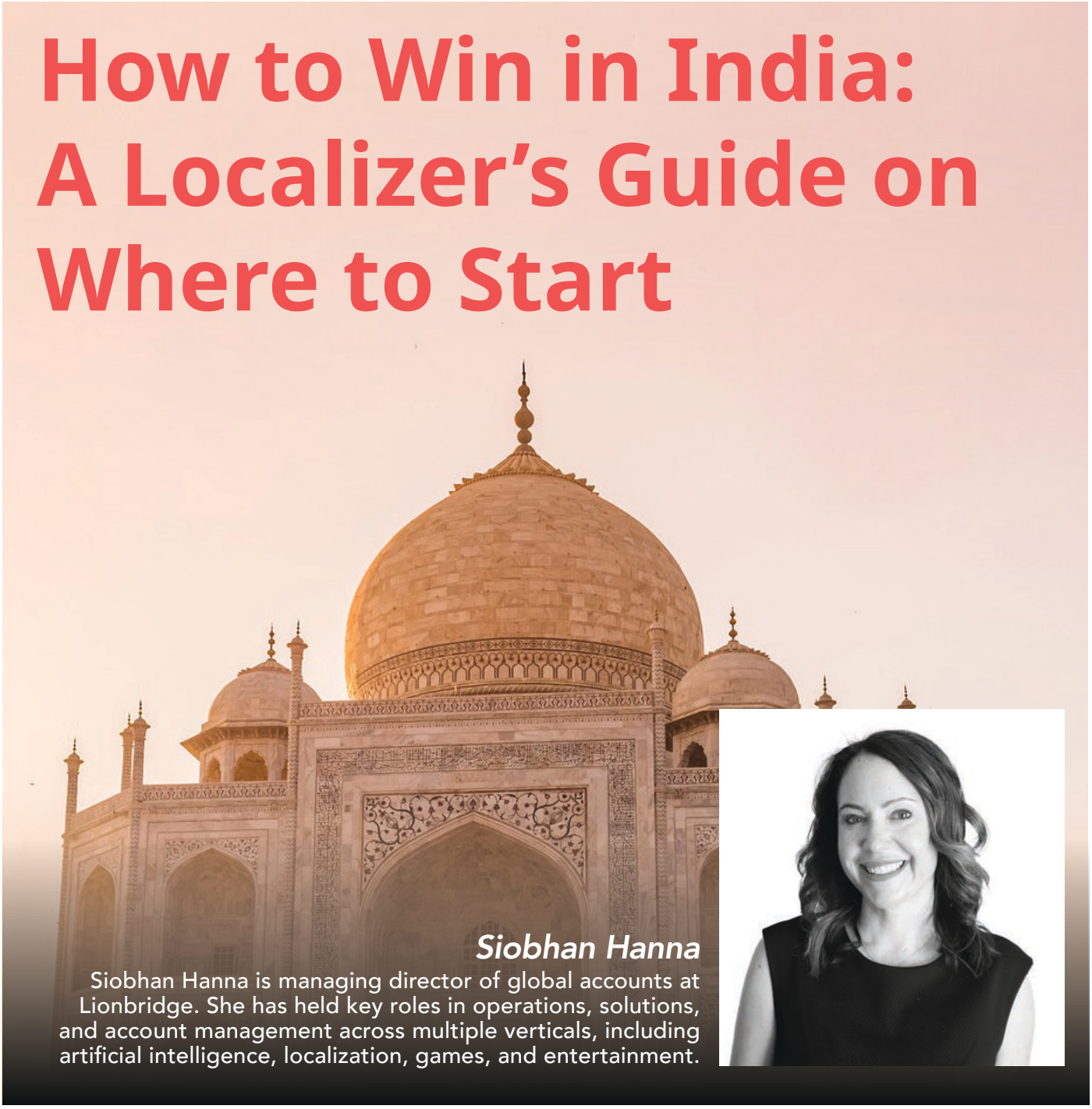
The only thing we need to do is find the right audience and get their attention. Online businesses have never seen a stronger push than they're currently experiencing, and one of the most critical actions they have to take is to improve and increase their online presence. This being said, SEO is one of the most important and accessible places to start.

One recent trend we've noticed: in the two Asian countries most affected by COVID-19 (China and South Korea), there is something curious about search engine market shares. Right from the very moment the pandemic started, we started to see an increase in traffic toward traditional in-country search engines. This might mean two things:

1. Companies entering the Chinese market, such as mentioned in our example above, need a strategy update right away, due to the changes noticed in these markets.

2. Countries are closing themselves off due to the pandemic, and users are turning to the most well-known and reliable resources they recognize. It stands out in these countries mainly because Google does not have the main market share and it only confirms the thesis we put forth in the beginning: SEO is not a mere translation of words researched and properly listed in a tool within a given budget. [M]

How to Win in India: A Localizer's Guide on Where to Start



Siobhan Hanna

Siobhan Hanna is managing director of global accounts at Lionbridge. She has held key roles in operations, solutions, and account management across multiple verticals, including artificial intelligence, localization, games, and entertainment.

Picture this: your company's new website is ready to launch. You've worked on it for months, everything is good to go, and then the boss tells you the company's expanding into India. And not just expanding — not dipping its toe into the market for exploratory sales — but full-fledged launching across the whole country. This means you're now in charge of making sure your product and marketing material are fully localized and coordinated for simultaneous shipment. You've never been to India, and don't really know much about the country, so the first thing you do is hop online. The Indian national census tells you 122 languages are spoken there — 22 of them officially recognized by the constitution — so where do you start?

One good place is with geography. Linguistically, India operates like many other multilingual countries: people tend to live in the same areas as others who also speak their language, meaning those 22 official languages largely divide along regional lines: Gujarati in Gujarat, Assamese in Assam, and so on. Most companies don't localize for all of them, though, especially not businesses new to the market. Exporters usually start at the top: Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali are the three most widely spoken languages in India, so that's customarily where they begin. But then your boss says product testing is taking place in the South — and this means Telugu, Kannada, and Tamil. Next thing you know, testing recruiters are asking you to add Marathi, and suddenly there you are, localizing seven languages that might as well feel like 22 because there's simply so much to manage.

The good news is you've already got buy-in. Many localization managers struggle with getting the c-suite to recognize the importance of their work and to increase budgets alongside demand. These managers often must prove translation's role as a profit driver, as opposed to the cost center less globally minded companies see it as. People don't buy what they don't understand. CSA Research reports that 55% of global shoppers won't purchase from e-commerce websites in languages other than their own. In India, this statistic is staggeringly higher: 90% of shoppers expect full product and marketing localization.

These are the stats localization experts often need to prove their job should exist; to justify the need for translation itself. But, lucky you, your boss is a believer. He's the one who came to you asking you take on this massive project managing translation for a brand new market of over one billion people. To make this happen, you need a better understanding of the Indian market landscape.

Researching India, you find out that the country is currently the world's second-largest smartphone market — bigger than the United States in fact. By 2022, Indians will collectively own nearly 700 million smartphones. This quick adoption is due in part to how affordable mobile devices are there. Retailer Flipkart sells 4G phones for 4,499 rupees (roughly $63.54) and up. Data plans are equally low: approximately 26 cents per GB per month, versus $12.37 in the United States, according to newspaper The Times of India. In fact, data's so cheap in India that the country currently has the highest usage per phone in the world.

These connected consumers are making mobile ecommerce and etransactions at an increasingly accelerated pace over platforms like Flipkart, Snapdeal, Amazon, and Paytm. In a society that's currently evolving from cash-based to cashless transactions, they also increasingly rely on eWallet apps for completing purchases.

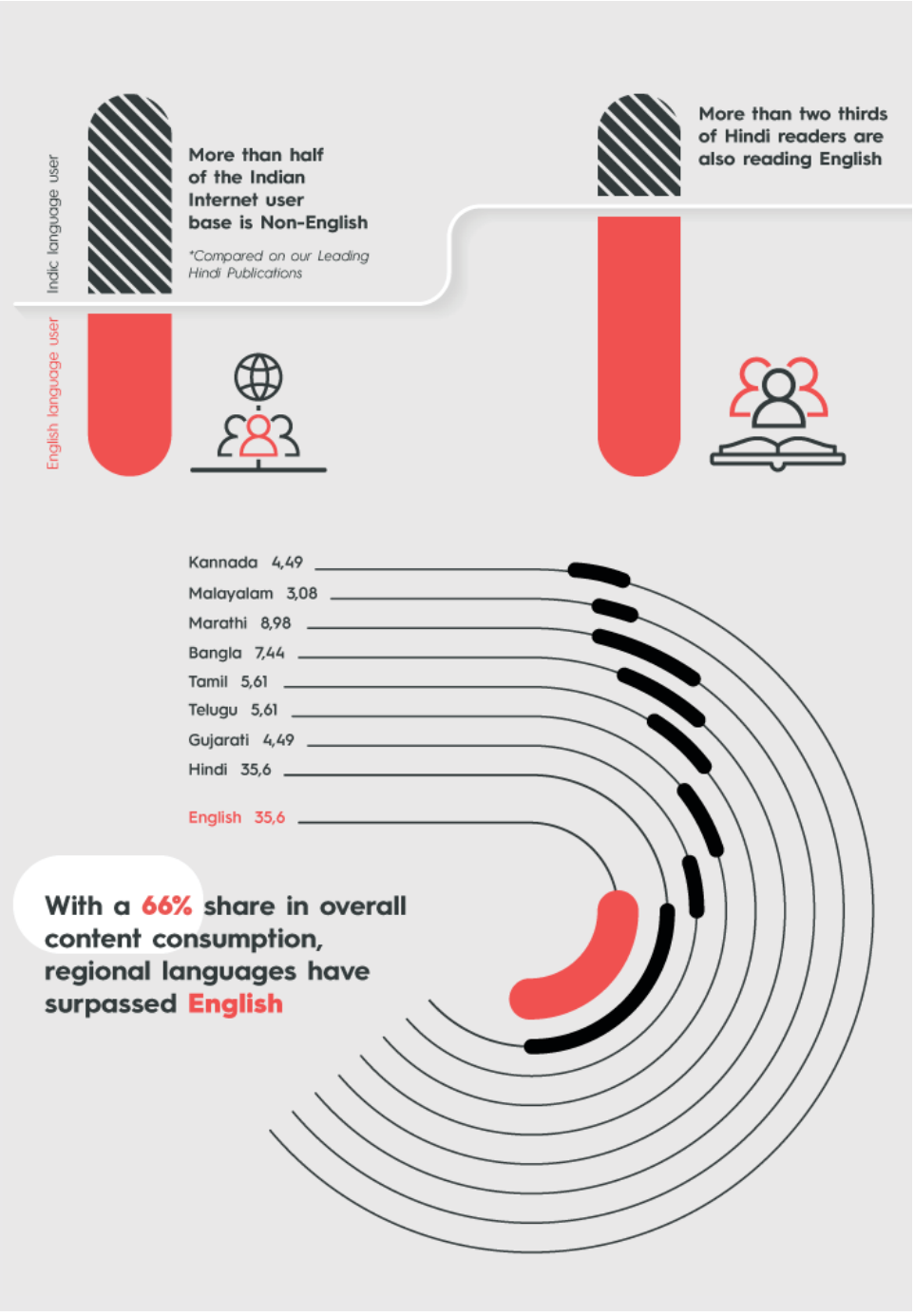
In terms of translation, it's essential to keep this mobile-first market in mind. Adaptive design is already best practice for American and European websites, but when localizing for India, user experience (UX) redesign may be required, depending on how your site's new, target-language user interface looks on a phone. If the original source site is optimized for a different device, you'll have to plan for additional UX testing.

This is especially important when marketing to younger generations. Sarath Divella, country head for Lionbridge India, says, "When you look at many Indians in the 25-35 age range" — which he calls "the new generation" — "they consume virtually all of their content and conduct transactions via their mobile phone." But unlike US mobile users, who continue to rely on computers and occasionally tablets for various tasks, Divella explains that young Indian shoppers "don't fit the stereotype of people who own lots of devices. They often have one device and one only: their mobile phone, having completely skipped over the whole idea of owning a physical desktop or laptop computer."

This generation has become a buying class of its own. Around 440 million Millennials (born between the 1981 and 1996) live in India currently, and by 2030, 77% of all Indians will be either Millennials or Generation Z (born after 1996). As a societal group, they are voracious consumers not just of the web,

but also social media. For Millennials in particular, internet and social are where they get purchase-driving information. This tech savviness doesn't just dictate how optimized your company website will need to be for mobile, but it also affects the marketing message itself. With a world of information in the palm of their hands, Indian Millennials are shrewd, knowledgeable buyers who are quick to figure out what they want and whether that's what your company actually has to offer.

Accordingly, Divella says they buy "based on functionality. They're not status-conscious customers who are trying to show off or display their watch, phone, or any other items. They're people who need the function of the product and then use it." While he adds that this is "a very practical way to buy," it's also problematic if your current marketing strategy is built around looking cool or keeping up with the Joneses. In order to resonate with this astute and discriminating demographic, content of this nature will require localization rather than simple translation, or, in some instances, complete transcreation. Taking a look at population by age group for each state — as well as that region's mobile adaption rates — will help you determine which services are needed. The more connected the consumer base, the more likely they are to make educated purchases, which won't come from "don't you wanna be cool" style marketing. Statistically, connected consumers are also more likely to upgrade to premium products and to demonstrate brand loyalty, not just in India, but everywhere: post-sales language access influences 74% of global consumers' buying decisions. This brand loyalty will dictate what content needs to be translated post-launch so the company can foster repeat clients.



Because Indian consumers are so particular, you're forced to ask yourself a fundamental question: if they can't count on your company to give them information in their own languages, will they turn to competitors who can? Despite what misconceptions tell you, India is not an English-first country; this is leftover, colonial thinking that simply isn't true. In fact, only 10% of residents speak the language fluently — and, even then, it's typically a second or third language. So as stressful as launching in so many languages sounds, the increase your company will see in sales makes it worth it. India may have a multiplicity of official languages, but for you, the right localization strategy — and deployment — is singularly possible [M]

Dispatch on India's newest translation association

Multilingual speaks to Sandeep Nulkar, CEO of BITS, and one of the driving figures in the recent formation of India's Confederation of Interpreting, Translation and Localisation Businesses (CITLoB). So far, the association has a newsletter, and is planning to start webinars soon.

Tell me more about CITLoB. How and when did it come about?

Nulkar: Actually, this has been something that we have been toying with for a long time. Honestly, there wasn't much happening because — as you might be aware — the internal industry in India is very fragmented. There is a lot of insecurity and people don't want to be part of anything that they have to pay for, which was challenging. As a company, we just took it upon ourselves to start doing things on our own because the association wasn't happening.

I think Mayflower, BITS, Braahmam, and Crystal Hues first got together and started discussing it, but after that, honestly, nothing happened for a while because we were all busy with our own businesses. Things changed when I got a chance to speak at the Association of Translation Companies (ATC) conference. At that time we were still toying with the idea, and I was invited to speak on India as the next frontier. There was a lot of positive feedback. Geoffrey [Bowden] said "If you really need to take this up, go back and take this up. And the ATC is willing to back you in any way you deem fit." The only kind of help that we needed was administrative and procedural, so that was put in place and we really got started just under two years ago.

We didn't immediately start actively working on it because, at that time, the Indian government was putting a lot of money and effort into building up the entire language ecosystem in India — and translation is a very miniscule subset of what they were trying to do.

Anyway, we didn't want to clash with any initiatives that the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) was undertaking — although the areas of operation are completely different; the Indian Language Internet Alliance (ILIA) is more technology-centric and very minimally translation- or LSP-centric — which is why we kind of lay low for about a year, until FICCI and the ILIA have been completely set up.

We have noticed a resurgence in demand for Indian languages. What do you think is driving that?

Nulkar: I think that the primary reason is the launch of Reliance Jio [an Indian telecommunications company that operates a national LTE network]. I think that no one really imagined that anything as disconnected as that would have any kind of impact on the language industry, but it did in a way that no one ever expected. Almost overnight there was a phone in every Indian's hand, and access data was very cheap, so in a country of nearly 1.4 billion people you had over 1 billion phones. Now, only 10% of our population speaks English as their first, second or even third language, which means you are very quickly catering to the real 1.4 billion market when you were initially catering to a market of probably 150 or 200 million.

The initiative at FICCI was not something that the government primarily thought of; rather the impetus came from the industry. The industry really demanded that the government and the official body FICCI do something about this, which is why they constituted ILIA – because a lot of technology needs to really catch up with this change.

How many members did you start with, and how many do you have now?

Nulkar: We started with five founding members – BITS, Summa Linguae (which acquired Mayflower), Braahmam, Crystal Hues and Fidel Softech. We opened memberships up a little over a month ago, and so far we have already reached 50 members. Now our aim is to get to about 150 members, and then start using my position in FICCI-ILIA to leverage opportunities and see what we can do for the industry

.

What is the cost of your membership fee currently?

Nulkar: Our membership is still free, because I believe that we need to earn the membership fee first and can't just expect people to pay.

What is still missing in India?

Nulkar: One thing that is still missing in India is a market survey or market research. The one that came out in 2017, the KPMG Report, is already three years old and has been overused to an extent that is not even funny anymore, and this work has been a study that has really scoped out the Indian market. We don't know the size of the Indian market, which really means that there is a lot that needs to be done and can be done, and it is in everyone's interest to do so, as people seem to be interested in India and Indian companies.

DiDi's Localization Journey out of China

Jasmine Bao

Jasmine Bao is globalization program manager at DiDi. She is responsible for DiDi's localization tools, operation and platform. She helped the transition from in-house translators to localization project managers, created the localization pipeline, and led the team to standardize the localization process.

Not many Chinese technology companies have successfully expanded abroad, and DiDi, an app-based ride-sharing service first developed in China, is among the few who have. DiDi's localization team faced many challenges when moving beyond the Chinese market, but managed to overcome these hurdles and pave the way to becoming a truly global enterprise.

At the beginning of the journey, the localization team often received negative feedback from internal stakeholders regarding process, speed, efficiency, and quality.

First of all, there were scalability concerns, since there was no official process for translation or translation updates. Many requests — up to 50% — were urgent. Development engineers were asked on a daily basis to change user interface translations in the codebase. On top of that, there were no quality standards or language style guidelines to follow.

Second, time to market was an issue. With no established processes in place, translation requests took up to three weeks to turn around. Launching a new language took more than six months.

Additionally, the DiDi localization team was bogged down with manual processes. Engineers and localization project managers spent hours uploading, downloading, copying, and pasting.

Quality issues were a constant headache. Occasionally, typos and grammatical errors made their way into the online apps. There were also internationalization problems, and quality was never a guarantee.

Continuing down this path meant that the team would likely encounter issues when trying to scale up for future globalization.

Strategy

To overcome these issues and build an effective localization strategy, it was essential to understand the background, analyze the challenges, solve the problems, and review the final performance of the localized apps.

These four main areas needed to be improved as quickly as possible to ensure that new features and languages could be launched quickly, and with sufficient quality. And, with very limited resources for the localization team, prioritization was essential.

The first step was to create a standardized process. The consensus at the time was that localization means just doing translations, and that these translations should be delivered the next day. There was no agreement on quality standards and no way to determine whether the translations were good or bad.

DiDi created a process for translation, review, localization quality assurance, and content editing. They also created a language style guide and quality standards. This helped the internal stakeholders better understand localization and have confidence in a process that didn't involve engineering resources.

The second step was to improve launch speed. At the time, DiDi was in a period of accelerated expansion, and supporting this growth was of the utmost importance. Since supporting the launch of a new language took up to several months, DiDi needed to build an internal proxy to connect Git with Memsource, a third-party translation management system, to automate translation submissions and the delivery process. Eliminating the need for engineers to manually copy and paste would save a great deal of time.

The third step was to improve the efficiency of the localization workflow for the engineers, language specialists, and localization project managers. DiDi needed to create a website that would free engineers from hassling with manual translation edits, prevent quality errors due to manual editing, and reduce the communication costs of product managers throughout the entire process.

One of the main challenges was that engineers needed to do code refactoring to support translation search, edits, and auto release function. Code refactoring involves editing and cleaning up previously written software code without changing the function of the code in any way. Of course, this takes time. Balancing the short-term and long-term costs and benefits and convincing engineers to do code refactoring now to support long term global expansion was not easy. The pros of not doing it meant that engineers had more time in the short term to spend on feature development. However, the cons meant that every time DiDi needed to update a translation, the engineers needed to be involved.

In the end, DiDi decided to do code refactoring, sacrificing short-term efficiency but supporting long-term scalability. The team performed a pilot test to prove the code factoring worked.

The internal localization platform provides semi-automation capability — a translation editing function — and has more modules (from previous code refactoring) that connect with the platform. The second stage of the localization platform provides full automation capability (translation editing plus release automation) and integrates with the rest of the modules. A full 90% of the modules finished with the code refactor were integrated to the platform, which helped free the engineers from translation work.

The final step was to ensure not only that the language quality was accurate, but that it also sounded natural to the target audience and was user-friendly. A regular review and localization quality assurance process was established to ensure UI translation quality. The DiDi internal localization content management system provides UI descriptions, screenshots, character limits, and generates reference files that enable linguists to have more context.

Performance review

After implementing these processes, DiDi built a solid localization system to ensure that new languages and features are launched quickly and efficiently.

Internal stakeholders understand more about the localization process and turnaround time, and urgent requests have decreased dramatically. The style guide was approved and is used by local legal, PR, and marketing teams.

Overall, localization launch time was reduced by up to 40%. The localization content management system saved engineers 185.5 days of manual work time, and saves localization project managers over 60 hours per month. The translation fix time has been reduced from several weeks to one business day. The localization quality assurance projects fixed 2700+ linguistic issues across three main locales within six months.

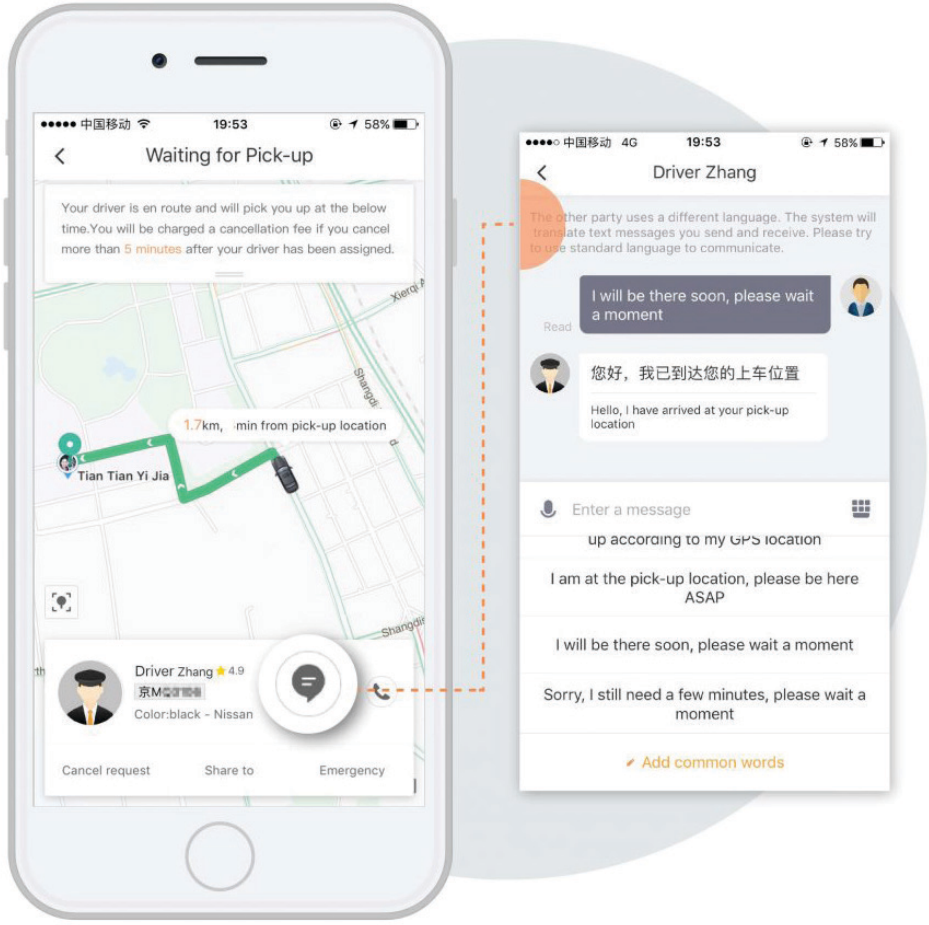
Lessons learned

Lessons from DiDi's localization journey can help other Chinese companies that plan to enter the global marketplace.

The first hurdle for Chinese companies is adopting an international mindset. Localization teams need to continuously educate internal stakeholders to think about internationalization and localization rules, cultural differences, differing design standards, and so on when deciding to launch a new product.

As business grows, a number of legacy localization problems will need to be fixed. Since many Chinese companies only decide to go international after establishing themselves in the Chinese market, the codes, product features, and designs are not very user-friendly for different locales. Tolerating reduced efficiency in the beginning to fix legacy issues was important and necessary. It allowed the company to set up their infrastructure, processes, and quality standards, providing DiDi localization the ability to scale and automate without any snags.

DiDi has now achieved a higher level of localization maturity, and is well-equipped to deliver high-quality global products, content, and user experience. [M]



DiDi's app service in English.

The Descent

Turkey went from democracy to dictatorship in a matter of months, and has stayed that way. One refugee explains how it happened.

Katie Botkin

Katie Botkin is the Editor-in-Chief of *MultiLingual* magazine. She grew up in a deeply religious US microculture, and has taught English on three continents.

It is 2018. Emre Alpsoy sits at a bar on the Greek island of Zakynthos, watching a soccer match. He has traveled by ferry from Athens, and tomorrow, he's boarding a plane bound for Amsterdam. He has a fake visa in his passport; maybe it will work, maybe it won't. He needs to get to Germany, he says, so he can begin life again. He's been accepted as a refugee in Greece, but unfortunately, there's not much opportunity for him here.

In Turkey, he taught Ottoman language and literature at a university. Spoken by peoples of the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman Turkish was heavily influenced by travel and multiculturalism. After all, the Ottoman Empire sat at the crossroads of the Eastern and Western worlds for six centuries. During the peak of Ottoman rule, words of foreign origin outnumbered native Turkish words: Arabic and Persian loanwords comprise up to 88% of the vocabulary in Ottoman literature.

Alpsoy has a deep affinity for the language. He recites Ottoman poetry with palpable feeling, the ancient cadences contrasting with the blare of Greek TV. He taught this poem in classrooms before Turkey's dictator imprisoned upwards of 40,000 people as political enemies, including Alpsoy. "Being just an ordinary person was enough to go through what I've lived. The fact that your only crime against the State is having speeding tickets doesn't change this situation," says Alpsoy.

Alpsoy's story coincides with Turkey's descent from a free and democratic country to an authoritarian regime. The story begins on July 15, 2016, the day a would-be coup was enacted against Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the president of Turkey. According to official Turkish pronouncements, while Erdoğan and his family were vacationing in the southern seaside resort town of Marmaris, political opponents tried to capture and kill him. However, the attempt was quelled. "I was happy about it because I would prefer even the worst democratic governance to a coup," says Alpsoy.

Afterwards, the coup was used as an excuse to vilify whole classes of people. Those who did not favor Erdoğan as a politician were accused of being terrorists. People with even a passing association with the Gülen movement, which the Turkish government claimed was responsible for the coup, were rounded up as criminals. A moderate Islamic practice that follows principals of volunteerism, social service, and secular political rule, the Gülen movement was begun by Muhammed Fethullah Gülen, who currently lives in Pennsylvania in the United States. The Turkish government has not produced any evidence that Gülen was responsible for the coup, and the US government has refused to extradite him back to Turkey.

Regardless of the lack of evidence, emergency decrees called Kanun hükmünde kararname (KHK) were issued in Turkey, and laws that normally required parliamentary approval came into force by prime ministerial decree. People were fired from their jobs — and arrested, tortured, and even murdered. Some were journalists and editors from an ensuing media purge. In March 2016, for example, the government seized control of Zaman, a newspaper that had been critical of Erdoğan and his party. The fact that Zaman — and other media outlets like it — had gained extensive readership and international popularity did not help save it.

Many more of those who lost their jobs were academics. 6,070 academics were dismissed from state institutions due to KHK decrees, and 2,808 more lost their jobs with the closure of 15 private universities. Following the coup, a total of 8,878 academics were dismissed — nearly 15% of the academics then working in Turkey.

At the time, Alpsoy was working as a lecturer at a university in the small northern port city of Zonguldak while writing his doctoral dissertation. 13 days after the coup, his phone rang — a summons from the Dean's Office. "Of course, I was very scared," says Alpsoy. The Dean, says Alpsoy, "was a really kind man. He was at a loss for words and couldn't tell me the truth." With no other excuses to fall back on, the Dean brought up the fact that Alpsoy was doing a doctorate at Fatih University — ostensibly, his acceptance to this other university was the reason he was going to be fired on the spot. Alpsoy's office was locked, and all his belongings and books were confiscated.

At first, it wasn't too terrible. Alpsoy received his salary for three months and took a mini-vacation. On October 29, however, he saw his name on the expulsion list in the newspaper. Here, says Alpsoy, his "first banishment began" — he was excluded from society, barred from traveling abroad. "From that day on, no one could employ me. I became a criminal person, to whom people turn their backs."

At the time, Alpsoy thought that surely, sooner or later, the government would understand that he was innocent and correct their mistake. After all, the night of the coup, he'd been playing guitar and drinking beer, utterly oblivious to the events unfolding elsewhere. So, eventually, he would resume his work and continue his PhD studies. "Until then, I just needed to wait and do something useful." This illusion was shattered in April 2017 when he was arrested on terrorism charges. Detention and interrogation, he

says, were awful. "It was the worst experience to have and it is still hard for me to even talk about."

Finally, he appeared in court, which is where he first learned what he was accused of. The charges stated he had associated with Gülen-influenced institutions: he'd worked at a certain state-recognized institute as a teacher back in 2006; he'd worked for Zaman newspaper for six months a few years prior, where he'd penned unfavorable articles about Erdoğan; he'd undergone vaguely "suspicious" travel; he'd used a chat program called ByLock, then available on Apple Store and Google Play.

"I didn't know how to reply to these assertions," says Alpsoy. "Besides, there wasn't anyone listening to me. I faltered a bit and was able to say, 'Sir, I can't see anything criminal about this; they were all legal institutions when I was working for them.'"

The judge stood up and said, "All right, arrest this guy." That was his last statement before Alpsoy was placed in the prison system. "I knew prisons solely from American movies," said Alpsoy. He thought there would be a big yard to play sports in and a cafeteria, but the reality was quite different. For five months and 12 days, he was detained in a small ward designed for seven or eight prisoners along with 27 other men. The wards were all overflowing with political prisoners, and it was up to them to manage their lives in confinement. "I stayed in a very orderly ward, much like a small state. We solved all our problems democratically," says Alpsoy. They prepared their own food and arranged how they slept. The wards were still outfitted for seven or so prisoners, with one dull butter knife for cutting food to be shared among everyone. They also had a single brush without a handle they all shared. When a former judge was transferred to their ward as a prisoner, he started writing petitions to get a brush handle and a second butter knife — 25 petitions in total. He was eventually successful. A prison guard came in and threw a brush handle at him.

Alpsoy read approximately 60 books during his confinement and spent a lot of time thinking. "My body was imprisoned but my imagination and soul were free." He started to lose his sense of reality, though, he says. Once, when he was overwhelmed, he called over the guardian and asked, "I wonder, Officer, do you have the keys of this place? We could be anywhere in the world." After every

bad incident, he told himself, "This is the worst thing that has happened to you. I mean, it can't get worse." At first, he says, "it was really hard, but later, I got used to it. Most of all, you miss soil and nature when you're in prison."

Alpsoy briefly went back to court. "My case file was complicated. I did not even receive my indictment," he says. Before the hearing, he stayed in a cell on the basement floor. You could hear the cries and screams of women, he says; children wailing because of hunger. "While I was walking through the corridor with lots of soldiers and police officers, I saw many children and women in cells," he says. The women and their children were members of Gülen. "There are still thousands of them in prison. Children who were punished along with their mothers by the government," says Alpsoy. "People from different backgrounds: teachers, housewives, doctors, journalists, and many other professionals."

When he got out of prison, he was still a convict, and he worked for his cousin's construction company. "At all costs, he looked out for me," says Alpsoy. "To work in construction was heavy and backbreaking. Additionally, I was scared of people."

He was afraid due to the political climate. "There is a group of people in Turkey who could be easily manipulated. The politicians know how to do it, especially by using religious arguments. It doesn't matter which religion it is. A politician making policy while holding the Quran in his hand has a target group, for sure. No matter how educated they are, some people got manipulated because of religious issues." Because of this, he was afraid to identify himself or to meet new people at work. "When you search my name, you would see the news about my arrest. My situation could not be called living anymore. Nevertheless, I survived and continued to live," he says.

Alpsoy continued to appear in court hearings, and, every time, he was afraid he'd be re-arrested. He made a decision: he was going to flee Turkey, and no longer be part of his country's hunt for political opponents. "Either I was going to be a victim of this witch-hunt, or turn over a new page in my life," he says. "I don't feel any regret, but I saw many regretful people on the way here. That's why it is a difficult decision to make. Going back is almost impossible."

For the last time, Alpsoy did all the things that he loved to do in Istanbul. "I enjoyed the view of the Bosporus. Then I strolled around the streets. And then it was time to go." He paid smugglers to lead him to Greece, along with a band of strangers who would escape with him. They walked for many hours in the dead of night; Alpsoy describes carrying the children of strangers when they grew weary. Finally, they arrived on the banks of the Evros River, which separates Turkey from Greece as it winds its way to the Thracian Sea. They got into a boat and crossed in the darkness. "It is the common story of many refugees," says Alpsoy, "If the Greek border security detected us, they would turn us over to Turkey. That means each of us would be imprisoned for a long time. The instinct to survive makes you do such things!" Still, that would not be the worst that could happen, as he would find out speaking to other refugees later. "I saw many people on this journey who lost their children and spouses in the Evros river, people who lost their children in the cold waters and never found them again."

Once they landed in Greece, the band of refugees found a phone and called the cops on themselves. They slept on a floor, and were taken to a refugee camp the next day. At the time, some refugee camps in Greece were supported by Translators without Borders, given the number of languages spoken there, and the camps were not always well-equipped. Camp volunteer Emily deTar Gilmartin described the conditions as less than ideal, sometimes full of disease due to the close quarters.

Alpsoy was apprehensive of what he saw. "They brought us to police custody at the end of the day. A small room.

After years of accepting refugees from Turkey and elsewhere, Greece has taken a hardline stance and has temporarily suspended acception of asylum applicants. Source: Aris Messinis/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images.

There was a toilet inside but the door was broken. No light, no water, and this place was malodorous. I thought to myself, this must be the end of the line."

However, a woman came in and interviewed Alpsoy in Turkish. He told her his story; how he'd been arrested for having been a teacher and a journalist. She interrupted him with a joke: "Ah, so you're a terrorist." He was relieved to see that she understood.

He was granted a permit to stay and travel in Greece. "It was a kind of asylum," he says. While he waited for his papers, he met other refugees who were also in limbo. "All the immigrants I saw there were people who escaped from war, death, oppression."

He got permission to order pizza. "A huge amount of pizza," he says "We shared our pizza with other people in the waiting room. That was why we ordered quite a lot." He received his papers the next day and decided to go Athens.

"In the beginning, I stayed mostly in hotels at Omonoia Square where many prostitutes stayed. A few days later, [muggers] threatened me with a knife and stole my money." They didn't get everything: he still had his reserve cash, his cell phone, and his passport. Still, "I felt as if I were on the edge of a cliff. Though I had experienced many things, the idea of losing everything I had in the country where I was a refugee was troublesome."

So he found an Airbnb run by a Greek woman in a quieter part of the city. "This energetic, white, short-haired lady welcomed me with a warm smile on her face. It was such a good feeling. There were some sorrowful historical problems between the Greeks and us, but it wasn't an obstacle to our friendship. I saw how sad she felt after I told my story to her. She had a three-story house with a big garden. It was a beautiful house in which many people from different countries take a vacation for a few days. Yes, this place was perfect for me to feel safe."

The Greek woman, Mata, affectionately began calling him her son. He passed the time with Caroline, a French woman living in the house with her dog, and other housemates, most of them there for only a few days. They took Mata's car to the seaside and swam in the Aegean, ate oranges, burned coffee grounds in her garden to try to keep mosquitos away. "I was sleeping at nights and spending my time in the kitchen or garden in the daytime," he says. "I stayed there for about three months. I started to feel safe and good again. It was like a holiday. In no time I had friends from all over the world. I am still in touch with most of them, and we talk occasionally. I got used to them so much that it was even hard for me to leave."

From Athens, he wants to go to Germany, so he's come to Zakynthos with a fake visa in his Turkish passport to try to make it to Amsterdam. He's going to pretend to be coming back from holiday, just so he can make it within the borders of Germany and seek asylum. He's chosen Germany due to its asylum policies, and the fact that he thinks he'll be able to pursue a PhD in Ottoman literature there eventually. He's drinking at the bar, trying to get into the mindset of a tourist. I think it will work, he says hopefully.

It is 2018, back in Athens. The attempt did not work, nor did subsequent attempts. "At first, I was really nervous," he says. "But one gets used to everything quickly. After some time, I felt nothing strange about it. Being distinguished among other passengers at the airport, walking under police supervision, passing by curious or insulting gazes of

Drachenburg Castle in North Rhine-Whestphalia, the region where Alpsoy is now straying.

the passengers, and finally going into custody." Meanwhile, back in Turkey, Erdoğan is re-elected president in the same state of emergency conditions imposed after the 2016 coup.

It is 2018. July. Alpsoy is running out of money — he's spent 10,000 euros already. On his seventh try, he boards a plane to Amsterdam. "I trembled until the plane took off," he says. "A young Brazilian woman sat by my side. She thought that I have aviophobia and tried to calm me by telling how often she flies, and there isn't anything to be afraid of. However, I was thinking that police could deplane me soon. I started to calm down after the plane took off. I was in the sky… On a plane… Henceforth, I could take a deep breath. I was somewhere without boundaries. I thought to myself that all countries seem pretty much the same from the sky."

On July 10, 2018, he steps out into a free world. He has a Czech ID with a name on it that he can't even read. "For a couple of days, I became a citizen of a country I had never been to. It was difficult to describe this feeling that also deepened the emptiness in me and the distance between myself and reality. I had to ask myself heaps of times: who am I?

It is July 2020. "It's been two years since I came to Germany," he says, but even still, "I just stop on the street and think who I am, what I am doing here? I wake up still at night, ask myself 'Am I really here, or am I only dreaming in prison?' Because freedom is not easy to regain, once you lose it. And I wouldn't expect that other people give it back to me. I had to struggle to regain my rights, the meaning of which I didn't know before I lost them."

Alpsoy is happy — although given the state of his application, and the fact that he still does not have an ID, he is not allowed to travel, even within Germany. "Somehow I achieved to be imprisoned again but within larger boundaries," he says. "Indeed, the idea of not having an identity or state pleases the marginality of my soul." [M]

Back to Basics: Developing a Common Language to Automate Regulatory Data

Duncan van Rijsbergen

Duncan van Rijsbergen is associate director of regulatory affairs at Iperion, a globally operating life sciences consultancy firm.

Digital transformation in complex regulated sectors can be a challenge. Many life sciences companies are stuck struggling with how to ensure high-quality, consistent data can be shared across systems. One of the main issues is the lack of a common vocabulary to describe the data. Here are some practical action points to get companies started on their data quality journey.

Life sciences companies are increasingly focused on the need for digital transformation. They face basic issues such as getting up-to-date, consistent data to communicate across functions and systems.

Regulatory systems contain data on products and licences; procedural data records interactions with authorities about a license, from the initial application through to later changes to the licence. Elsewhere in life sciences companies, expert functions from manufacturing to clinical teams collect their own data on devices or drugs. Typically, there is no communication between regulatory systems and expert functions systems. Manufacturing and clinical teams collate their data into a summary document and send it to the regulatory team. The regulatory team then takes that data and puts it together in a submittal dossier, ready to send to external authorities for approval.

In clinical development, data records clinical studies. In manufacturing and the supply chain, the enterprise resource planning system typically holds data about products and materials. Meanwhile, in the regulatory function, there is a regulatory information management system, which also contains data about the same products, but from the perspective of regulatory approval. Those systems are most often in completely separate worlds, with little or no interoperability. And yet, a change made in the manufacturing world must be reflected in the license. Currently, sharing that information is done using a large number of forms and perhaps even through an intermediate system that stores those forms.

It is particularly important to get back to basics when it comes to structured, regulatory, chemical, manufacturing, and control (CMC) data. The process of inputting specification testing data into the laboratory information management system can easily take a year or more: extracting it, entering it into regulatory documents, sending it to regulatory bodies, and then reversing the process for implementation. If this process were automated, the timeline could be reduced to mere weeks, enabling products to be brought to market and made available for patient treatment much more rapidly.

Data quality issues

A data-first starting point is key. If companies store clean and consistent data, rather than documents, they will be in a much better position to automate processes and share this data efficiently with regulatory bodies. Yet companies continue to struggle with basic data quality issues.

First, there is the compliance issue, where licenses must accurately reflect activity relating to clinical trials or manufacturing. In a regulated environment, compliance failure could lead to product recall, license suspension, or fines. Datasets in operational settings may not align with datasets shared with the authorities. While the data is essentially the same, the way the data is presented may not be aligned exactly across the two systems. The granularity of the data — how it is worded or linked — might be slightly different.

Secondly, there are issues tracking changes in data over time. Drugs that are produced over many years will experience changes in composition or manufacture. These must be reflected both in regulatory systems and in the company's operational systems. There is a need to change the data but also to keep it in sync. That synchronization becomes much more difficult if there is a longwinded process, with multiple steps in it, where the data changes form multiple times, going from structure to document, and back to structure again, with manual copying along the way.

Ideally, the synching process should be integrated with the regulatory process. That way, when the company introduces improvements to the product, testing data can be shared with the regulator much more quickly, accelerating the time it takes to get product enhancements to market. Reducing manual processes also eliminates the potential for human error and reduces costs.

Effortless compliance

Commonly, compliance itself is the goal. Ideally, though, compliance should be effortless, a by-product of a company's activities, not the focus of them. When data is aligned and kept in sync automatically through a properly aligned process, compliance becomes secondary. It will just happen by itself.

Here are five practical action points to help get companies started on their data quality journey:

1. Communicate with all the stakeholders involved in the process. Together, identify use cases for data flow continuity, and agree on how best to measure the benefits of automating data integration. Getting everyone's buy-in and developing solutions collaboratively drives

transparency and improves trust among functions. This approach enables people within a fairly long process chain to be confident that predecessors have done things correctly and given them data they can work with.

2. Develop a shared vocabulary to talk about data held commonly across functions. Presenting product data across the organization in a way that everybody understands, with commonality of language, also builds trust as well as driving operational excellence and innovation.

3. Standardize data descriptions. Once use cases have been identified and a common vocabulary agreed upon, consider how best to standardize data relating to complex products. The IDMP model is a valiant effort to find a common way to describe data. The quality and consistency of individual data is also key to data standardization initiatives, such as the US FDA's drive to standardize Pharmaceutical Quality CMC (PQ-CMC) data elements for electronic submission. The more widely accepted a product model is, the easier it is to share with external parties. This includes regulators, and also partners such as labs, manufacturers, and research organizations.

4. Ensure processes are properly aligned. There needs to be a robust process for capturing and sharing changes over time — and making sure that systems keep in sync and that there is as little time lag as possible. Focus on bottlenecks. There may be one process in an operational setting and another in the regulatory section. Where do they meet? Where does the data get exchanged, and how could that be improved?

5. Identify suitable technological solutions. The initial focus should not be on finding the right software, but on the system architecture and how and where to connect systems. One approach could be to build a bridge between two systems — a point-to-point connection. The issue is maintaining the link and upgrading functionality in two discrete systems that talk to each other. A better option would be to develop a looser coupling, and this is where the common language model comes in. It is important not to take a static approach — how do I solve the problem now? — but rather consider maintaining the solution and innovating over time. This is not about individual systems, but about a system of systems.

The core business of a pharmaceutical company is to get the best medicines to patients. Data processing should be a hygiene factor. Ensuring data quality and integration won't in itself generate innovation, but it will provide a platform on which to innovate. A consistent vocabulary is key to supporting effective data communications.

The idea that technology, systems, and software can resolve data quality issues is appealing. In fact, knowing your data is key to getting this right. The technology is secondary to a good understanding of the data and data flows within the business. Life sciences companies are experts in their own data. Once they have mapped it and standardized it, they will be ready to specify the technology needed to create automated interoperable data flows, saving time and money, ticking compliance boxes, and providing a platform for innovation. [M]

Indigenous Radio Stations Provide Comfort During Pandemic

Angelica Cabral

Journalist based in the Bay Area. She has her bachelor's from Arizona State University. Her work has appeared in *Slate Magazine*, *The Bold Italic*, *The Mary Sue*, *The Arizona Republic*, and more.

COVID-19 shifted priorities for everyone, bringing to light which businesses might not have a future — or which may have their operations reduced after the pandemic is over. Starbucks and Victoria's Secret, for example, have both closed stores around the country.

On the other hand, the pandemic has also shown what is essential — what people really and truly want in their daily lives. For many indigenous communities, this means fighting to keep their radio stations alive, proving just how much they need and want their own source of media.

Indigenous languages are still around, sometimes with speakers who don't know English. But the majority of these first-language speakers are part of an older generation. It can be a struggle to keep these languages alive, and many radio stations in the United States do the work that's necessary to ensure people continue to learn their indigenous languages, and celebrate their culture in a way that's not always possible with mainstream media.

KYUK in Southwest Alaska has been translating their daily news program to the local indigenous language, Yup'ik, to help those who don't speak English. That translating work is done by Julia Jimmie, their radio programming director.

"Since the pandemic, the news department has been inviting guests with a focus on the pandemic," she said. "The guests have been doctors or community leaders, trying to keep everybody safe and healthy."

Even before COVID-19, they had a couple talk shows in Yup'ik, but their translation efforts have ramped up to include public service announcements from the local hospital about wearing masks, washing hands, social distancing, and instructions on how to get tests done. Jimmie wants to ensure that people have what they need to stay in the know. "KYUK has been playing a critical role during this pandemic," she stated.

For the Hualapai radio station in Peach Springs, Arizona, KWLP, their work has brought a form of healing to their community during the pandemic by broadcasting wake ceremonies at the request of families who have had someone pass away.

"There's a process of moving from sadness and grieving to being joyful and helping send their loved one's home," Terri Hutchens, station manager at KWLP, explained. "They were still able to do that and there was still a connectedness even though they're separate and apart in lockdown in their homes."

They've had restrictions placed on large gatherings, and they haven't been able to have their traditional ceremonies, but they were still able to dress in their regalia and sing and dance along with the wake ceremony from the safety of their own homes and together as a community.

The station has also been working hard to update people in the area on anything they need to know regarding the pandemic. Though they are a commercial station, they operate as a community station in regard to content, using community volunteers as DJs and radio show hosts. Since they've been limited to just essential employees, Hutchens has had to make do, adapting to complete the work with their volunteers remotely and digitally.

Another thing that community members tune into at their station is the tribal council meetings. Now that the meetings are closed to the public due to social distancing, they've started broadcasting them live so people at home can follow along. They can have as many as three meetings a week. Additionally, council members provide on-air content.

"We've had council members coming on the air regularly if there's a particular resolution related to COVID, stay at home orders, shutdown orders," Hutchens said.

Their community calendar, which has always been a regular feature that plays on the quarter hour, has been dedicated to COVID-19 updates since March, and they've been coordinating with the Indian Health Service (IHS) and the tribe's incident command team. They've been running hundreds of public service announcements and alerting the public to changes they should be aware of.

"How the meals were being distributed was a major issue when the elderly department that kind of did a Meals on Wheels for elderly community members [changed] how those [meals] were going to be distributed differently and when," Hutchens said.

In addition to providing information, the station has also been giving radios to community members who need them. Some people in the tribe do not have access to the internet in their homes to be able to listen online either.

"We've had so many requests for radios, and we have provided radios to a lot of the community members, especially those that are in isolation or quarantine because of COVID," Hutchens said. "It's like their only connection to the actual community is listening to the radio."

While they do incorporate the Hualapai language into some of their programs, that process has come with its own set of challenges. There are different dialects of the language, and some tribal members disagree on how the language should be spoken.

"Because of the signal range, people who aren't Hualapai will hear it, and so they may misuse it or misunderstand it or misspeak it," Hutchens explained. "[Some believe] that the stories and language should only be shared and taught personally within the family or particular limited community circles."

Like many other areas of the world, the station has been hit personally by COVID-19 and has lost a few of their Hualapai language speakers during the pandemic.

Over at WGWE, the Seneca Nation's commercial radio station in Little Valley, New York, Brett Maybee, a production assistant, is working on starting a program on the show that uses the Seneca language, but he faces challenges just like Hutchens. So, he wants to make sure he does it right. There are issues to take into consideration, including who will have access to the information once

they put it out into the world and ensuring that they receive the valued opinion of those in their community before proceeding.

"We want to do it right, as opposed to just jumping into something that [would] be insensitive to some of the concerns," he said. "You know there are people of the opinion that it shouldn't be shared in that format."

Despite these concerns, Maybee still has a vision of what the show might look like: it would have multiple segments including one that is geared more towards basic conversational things that the kids can understand.

"The idea being to be able to engage the entire family almost, and it might be a little nostalgic of me to think, the good old days when people sat around and listened to programs like that," Maybee explained.

They even have enough recorded, archival material so they can include stories from elders that have since passed on. Maybee is also hoping to work with immersion students, who he calls the "rock stars" of the language.

Maybee said that when COVID-19 hit, their number one priority "was to get that correct information out there for people to know which resources [were available] and where to turn."

As with many smaller media companies, funding will always be a concern for the upkeep of a commercial radio station, especially, as Maybee mentions, when the station has to rely on revenue from nonnative businesses around the area as well. Their level of advertising has been affected by recent events surrounding COVID-19.

"As most people found, when the pandemic hit, we saw a nationwide or international shutdown," he said. "When people stop wanting to advertise at that point, we have a lot of time [to fill]."

It will take some time to see how the funding comes through and how their radio station continues on.

"Most communities are kind of afraid right now that perhaps some of that funding just won't be available in the near future," he said. "We're all to some degree or another invested in some of our own setups as well, and I think once that fire is lit and we're able to kindle that more and more, it'll take on a movement of its own."

Maybee is hopeful about what the future of the station brings, even if it means some things take a little bit longer.

"Even though the COVID-19 pandemic might alter the course of what we'd originally planned, I think by definition, by nature, by that traditional kind of reckoning and thinking it will find ways to work around this and do the best with what we have," he said.

From the East Coast to Alaska to Arizona, Maybee, Hutchens, and Jimmie are hardly alone in their work. These radio stations all over the country are broadcasting and keeping their communities informed by helping people receive the critical information they need. From wearing masks to whether or not businesses are opening to the latest from the World Health Organization, they're sharing it all.

"These indigenous radio stations are vital to the community and vital for indigenous nations to be able to frame the conversation," Maybee emphasized. "I think these are great bridges, especially as some of the more mainstream media sources have always tackled indigenous topics in an unfair or negative light; this really presents opportunities for us to, again, humanize who we are." [M]

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A Creole Call for Localization

Sophia Eakins

Sophia Eakins is a PhD candidate in linguistics at the University of Michigan and a former marketing content specialist for Lionbridge. She holds dual bachelor's degrees in linguistics and French from Wellesley College.

When the 2018 Category 5 Hurricane Michael threatened to devastate the Florida Panhandle, the US government needed to quickly communicate evacuation plans and safety guidelines to millions of inhabitants at risk. However, many were non-native English speakers. A lack of local translation resources made connecting with the Vietnamese, Filipino, and Haitian populations especially challenging. Localization to the rescue! Within 24 hours, Lionbridge teams translated the safety information into four different languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Haitian Creole (Kreyòl).

Everyone needs to be communicated with in a manner they understand, regardless of what language they speak. Of course, fulfilling that need for some communities can be more challenging than for others. Consider, for example, the difficulty of localizing for India's diverse linguistic landscape of 22 official languages, 121 major languages and thousands of minor languages and dialects. Like in India, where the majority of languages are rarely localized into, creole languages are regularly overlooked in the world of translation.

Where different languages separate one community from another, localization brings them together. With culturally mindful linguistic adaptation, localization allows us to reach across regional frontiers to connect with communities different from our own. It encourages international collaboration and promotes understanding between different cultures.

Beyond building these cross-cultural bridges, localization serves as a critical resource to linguistic communities in need, providing equal access to healthcare, educational resources, and public services. In a crisis, localizing messaging helps ensure the safety of everyone in the community.

Creole language localization

Creoles face numerous challenges preventing effective translation. The foremost is a lack of translation resources. Underlying sociopolitical prejudices play a role in this, which means that in some cases, creoles may be characterized as mere dialects of their European counterparts. This linguistic stigma discourages the formal education necessary to train translators, and generally muffles the urgency for creole translation.

Additionally, the term itself is shrouded in confusion. Most people are likely to associate the term "creole" with a group of people or a particular spice mix rather than a linguistic classification.

Professor Michel DeGraff, a linguist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a specialist in creole languages and the founder of the MIT-Haiti initiative, explains that creole languages are grouped together due to a shared socio-historical context. They emerged during a period of colonization when the language of the colonizers came into contact with the languages of other inhabitants — most commonly slaves brought over from Africa. Linguistically speaking, however, there are no distinctly creole structural identifiers common to all creole languages.

Localization into creole languages is rare. Lionbridge, for example, receives comparatively few requests for creole language services. Most requests are for Haitian Creole (Kreyòl) speakers in the United States who need English interpretation for government matters.

With close to 100 creole languages spoken worldwide, the need for translation is clear. Bringing to light the existence and validity of creole languages is the first step toward gaining more translation attention.

A look into Kreyòl

Speakers of creole languages around the world face linguistic injustice. Many creole languages are devalued in their communities in favor of their European colonial counterparts. One compelling example of the bias against creole languages and its effects is Kreyòl in Haiti. While French is considered educated and formal, Kreyòl implies a casual and informal tone to many people.

"Haiti has perhaps the largest population of speakers who communicate only in the local vernacular," as compared to other creole-speaking communities, explained DeGraff. Data collected by Ethnologue, an online database cataloging the world's living languages, estimates that of the 11 million Haitians living in Haiti, 7 million are monolingual in Kreyòl.

As the major language of Haiti, Kreyòl dominates in everyday exchanges and informal media platforms. However, it wasn't until 1987 that Kreyòl was recognized as an official language alongside French, and as the country's only common national language.

Only about 3% of the population speak French proficiently. Paradoxically, "French is de facto the sole official language in most academic and governmental spheres of Haitian society, especially in formal written texts," said DeGraff. Consequently, only a small percentage of the population can access positions of authority in the country.

Documents including birth certificates, land deeds, and pharmaceutical labels are generally written in French. DeGraff recounted a story of one woman whose health was put at risk because she misread the French instructions on how to take her medicine. The label prescribed two cuillères à café, which she took to mean "two spoons of coffee" instead of two teaspoonfuls of the medicine.

Court proceedings are also conducted entirely in French, barring a few exceptions. Many Haitians on trial have no idea if they have been judged guilty or innocent until the handcuffs come on or off.

Sadly, Haiti's story of linguistic apartheid can be applied to almost any creole language community. Residual colonial influence preserves the European language as that of power and prestige.

Kreyòl in the classroom

For DeGraff, improving the linguistic hierarchy in Haiti requires addressing the root problem: the education system. Similar to hospitals and courtrooms, Haitian school materials, especially for higher grades, are mostly in French — with no translation. This is a problem when the students, and often even the educators, are not proficient in French.

Because the teachers themselves are rarely fluent in French, they often resort to Kreyòl in their classrooms. A common Haitian expression jokes candidly that teachers use Kreyòl when they want students to understand the lesson and French when they want them to behave.

Numerous studies show that people learn better when taught in their native language. When they can't understand their coursework, students become discouraged and learning becomes near impossible. That's evident from Ethnologue data reporting that Haiti has a literacy rate of just 60%.

"In Haiti's classrooms, most children do not like to ask or answer questions. They are constantly struggling to translate from Kreyòl into French or from French into Kreyòl," said Guerda Jean-Guillaume, a professor at the Training Center for Fundamental Schools in Haiti, in a quote on MIT-Haiti Initiative's website.

The inequity in Haitian education is why DeGraff founded the MIT-Haiti Initiative.

"The basic premise of our initiative," DeGraff explained, "is that using Kreyòl for Haitian education is an essential ingredient to improving quality and access for education for all."

The project answers a long-overdue call for change

in Haiti. Using modern techniques and tools for interactive pedagogy, in-house teams of Haitian educators have developed digital resources and curricula in Kreyòl, focusing on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) areas. In the classrooms where they have tested Kreyòl-based learning, the results speak volumes.

"All 25 sixth-graders at LKM [Lekòl Kominotè Matènwa, a school where Kreyòl is the main language of instruction] passed the official exam administered by the state (compared with an overall success rate of 71%)," DeGraff told MIT News in 2015. "What's less measurable, but also profoundly important, is the dignity of these Haitian children at LKM, whose joyful creativity is set free when they can learn in their native Kreyòl."

DeGraff hopes that by bringing Kreyòl into all classrooms at all levels of the education system, it will improve equality and cede control of civic spaces to the Kreyòl-speaking majority in Haiti.

How can localization help?

Improving access to opportunity can start with localization. For Kreyòl-speaking Haitians, this means more content available in Kreyòl.

Because French is the preferred written language, almost all documentation is created and published exclusively in French. Again, this deficit of written material in Kreyòl is partially due to the historically ingrained stigma, but a lack of translation resources is another major impediment.

Currently, there are not enough professional Kreyòl translators to support the scale of linguistic reform Haiti needs. The solution to cultivating more Kreyòl translation lies, yet again, in education. Unfortunately, the relative rarity of Kreyòl materials in the classroom means lower literacy levels and fewer translators, propagating the cycle. Reforms to include Kreyòl as the primary language of instruction will improve fluency in both languages, as French can then be appropriately and adequately taught as a second language.

"Once children have strong foundations in their native language," DeGraff said in the MIT News interview, "they are better equipped to learn all academic subjects, including second languages such as French."

In addition to reforming the education system and training more native Kreyòl translators, two other areas poised for localization development in Haiti are the government and healthcare industries. In a country where 95% of the people are fluent in exclusively one language, producing legal and healthcare documentation in that language seems crucial to creating an equitable society. Translation of legal documents would grant the people of Haiti access to what many would consider their basic rights as citizens.

Regarding the quality and efficacy of healthcare, language is equally important — if not more so. With the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, DeGraff sees an increasing need for localization in Haiti. Perhaps recognizing the danger of communicating exclusively in French, the government chose to create and translate information in Kreyòl.

"It's been good to see the government making a real effort for their medical advice to the population be published in Kreyòl," DeGraff said.

How does this relate to other Creole languages?

According to the Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Language Structures (APiCS), creole languages are found on six of the seven continents and represent between 70 and 100 of the world's languages. Creole-speaking communities around the world face similar challenges to Kreyòl speakers in Haiti. For all of them, localization — and language access in general — is crucial.

Professor Marlyse Baptista is a linguist and creole expert at the University of Michigan. She specializes in the Portuguese-based creole Kriolu, spoken in Cabo Verde, a country comprised of a group of islands off the west coast of Africa. Like DeGraff with Kreyòl, she believes that the representation of Kriolu in the education system is core to bringing equity for the Cabo Verdean people. With most of the speakers living outside their native country, localization is especially important for the Cabo Verdean diaspora. An estimated 65,000 Cabo Verdeans live in the Greater Boston Area alone.

"It feels that Kriolu is invisible to the broader society. It has little representation in education, particularly in the Boston Public School system," said Baptista. "A more widespread creation of and translation into Kriolu would go a long way toward empowering Cabo Verdeans — not only for the betterment of their education, but for access to their basic linguistic and human rights."

The bottom line

Creole speakers are not the only linguistic communities in need who can benefit from localization, but they do tell a unified story of the importance of communicating to an audience in a language they understand.

Language is often what distinguishes one community of people from another. But our ability to communicate using language is also a uniquely human quality that relays a powerful unifying message. Localization celebrates these differences by building bridges between languages, cultures, and people around the world.

The Alphabet that Keeps the People from Vanishing

An Interview with the Creators of ADLaM

Perpetual Aneke

Content writer at Translation Commons, Perpetual Aneke is currently enrolled in translation studies (MA) at University of Birmingham, UK. She is passionate about people's growth, educational reforms, and traditional Igbo cuisine, in that order.

The power of language — and the written word in particular — to sustain cultures and create economic opportunities is undeniable. For example, take ADLaM, a script developed in 1989 for the Fulani language by two young boys. Today, it has spread across several countries in Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America, thanks to the efforts of its creators and the not-for-profit organization Winden Jangen ADLaM. The name ADLaM is an acronym derived from the first four letters of the alphabet (A, D, L, M), standing for *Alkule Dandayde Leñol Mulugol:* "the alphabet that protects the peoples from vanishing." In this interview, the creators of ADLaM provide insights on the relationship between language and global development.

Would you introduce yourselves?

A: I'm Abdoulaye Barry, and I live in Portland, Oregon. But I am originally from the Republic of Guinea, West Africa. I've been in the US since 2003, nearly 17 years now. I work and live here with my family. After getting a bachelor's degree in finance, in Guinea, I moved to the US and obtained a masters' degree in finance. Besides my main job, my brother and I work on ADLaM, the script we created about 30 years ago.

I: My name is Ibrahima. I was born and brought up in Guinea. Before moving to the US in 2007, I was studying civil engineering. Then, I moved here and obtained another degree in civil engineering.

You started working on ADLaM at ages 10 and 14, respectively. What inspired you to take up such a huge project?

A: Decades ago, people did not have telephones in Africa. If you wanted to share news or any kind of information with relatives, you had to write letters on paper and send them through someone. Your relative would then find someone to read and interpret the message for them, since most people could neither read nor write. In Guinea, the Fulanis used the Arabic script to write letters, even though they were written in Fulani language (also known as Fulfulde or Pular). However, the Arabic script was not well suited for the Fulani language because there are Fulani sounds that are not represented in the Arabic alphabet. So, even if you knew Arabic, it was difficult to understand the Fulani language written using the Arabic script.

Our dad was one of the people in our town who could decode Fulani written this way, and we learned how to do so too from a very young age. We started learning the Quran in Arabic from ages 5 or 6. At age 9, we were already reading some of those letters that our dad used to help people read. That was when we discovered a problem: every letter was written differently. Because there was no standard, everyone used different Arabic letters to represent Fulani words and sounds, according to their own individual interpretation. So, most times, readers had to guess the writer's message.

When we asked our dad why we had no Fulani script, he told us that the Arabic script was the only alphabet we knew for writing our language. So we decided to create our own alphabet.

I'd expect you encountered some challenges along the way, considering the sheer size of the project alone. Could you talk about some of them?

A: We did not know from the onset that ADLaM was going to be such a huge project, nor were we aware of the enormity of its impact. We were just very young children who were excited at the prospect of making it easy for people to read and write letters in our own language. When we started, we did not realize that the Fulani language was not only spoken in Guinea, but in over 20 of the 54 countries in Africa. So, ultimately, we did not know the amount of work that it would take to bring ADLaM to where it is today.

First of all, creating the alphabet itself was challenging. It took us some time to figure out the needed letters, put them together to make sure we had everything, and ensure that every Fulani sound was represented.

The second challenge was getting people to embrace it. After creating the alphabet, we started to teach our sister, before proceeding to teach it at the local market — this was how it began to spread. You know, If you create a script for a language and you're the only one who knows it, it's really not going to be useful to the people. So, the people have to be able to learn how to use it.

I: When we started teaching people, we had to do so using textbooks. This presented a dual challenge: how to provide multiple copies of books at a time when we had no access to photocopiers or any form of computers and, on the other hand, what content to put into the books. Initially, we translated existing books from Arabic and French and made copies of them by hand. It was not until several years later, when I went to Conakry, that we started to make use of photocopiers. We wrote textbooks that engaged with the daily realities of the people: newspapers, basic health manuals, and so on. The demand for the books continued to rise and we simply could not continue writing books by hand. We realized typing would be much easier, but ADLaM was not yet encoded in any computer at the time.

A: From 2007 onward, ADLaM became supported across major digital platforms such as Microsoft Windows, Google Chrome, Android, and the like.

We certainly did not know all the obstacles in our way about 30 years ago, and we still face some technology-related challenges, but we have also made a lot of progress over the years.

How did you manage to get your people interested in learning and using the ADLaM script?

A: For centuries, the Fulani people have been in the habit of writing, but they always used the Arabic script to do so, and in a non-standardized manner. So, it was not so much of a challenge to get people to embrace ADLaM for writing, since it facilitates clarity and understanding. Also, because ADLaM originated from one of their own, the indigenous people loved it. It was easy for people to embrace it because they took pride in the fact that the script is from us; from our people and for our people. This singular fact drives the growth and spread of ADLaM around Africa, and even around the world.

Despite the predominance of colonial languages such as French and English in the region, our people

appreciate ADLaM as a vehicle for the preservation of our languages. They know that if nothing is done to preserve our languages, they will eventually die off. For instance, several children in Guinea currently do not know how to count in their own languages, yet are able to do so in languages such as French. This is why it is important for us to teach them to read and write in their own language.

If a language is not being written, it will eventually disappear. There is no way around that. The only languages that will survive are those that are being written and used by people. In the case of ADLaM, we were lucky because the Fulani people were already used to writing, even if it was being done using the Arabic script.

Yes. In my country [Nigeria], for instance, you find that some young people can barely compose full sentences in their native languages without using English words or phrases.

A: You know, I often say that one of the biggest problems of Africa's education system is that most governments have made the choice to teach their people in languages other than theirs. People say that most African countries have so many languages that it would be difficult to choose one as an official language, but I do not think so because we do not have to choose. In fact, by even using English or French as official languages, we are making a choice of promoting other languages rather than ours.

Experts have said that the best way to educate a person is in their own language. It makes no sense that a child speaks a language at home, in the market, in the neighborhood, among friends, but goes to school only to be taught in a foreign language. That child would usually end up spending so much time learning a new language instead of acquiring knowledge. This is the situation in Africa. If, on the other hand, the child were taught in the same language they are already conversant with, all he or she needs to learn is how to write that language and acquire knowledge in it. And by mastering science and technology in your language, you can make it readily accessible to everyone in the community. But, because these foreign languages are used, only a small percentage of the population can access information in these languages. We even have this notion that anyone who does not read or write in the foreign, official language of the country is illiterate.

In Guinea, we have people who have mastery of neither French nor their own indigenous language — you know, that state of linguistic in-betweenness. And this is of no use to anyone. Countries such as Switzerland have more than one official language, so the presence of multiple languages is no excuse for not teaching African languages across the continent.

I: Yes, we do not have to choose. Everyone can study in their own language. The purpose of a lingua franca is to facilitate communication among people from different language backgrounds. Africans may choose to have a lingua franca, but it should not stop people from learning in, and having a good command of, their indigenous languages. Nothing stops us from learning in our languages.

In many cases, you find that children in Africa spend so much time memorizing words and concepts in English, thinking that is knowledge. But this time could be redirected toward actual learning. And we can actually translate existing knowledge into our own languages. I mean, people have successfully revived some dead languages. For those that are not yet dead, hope is not lost. All that is needed is the willpower to do so. Billions of dollars are

spent annually to promote speaking foreign languages within the region, and if only 10% of that money is used to promote indigenous languages, they would definitely survive.

A: Something else we often do not pay attention to is the fact a people's language contains their history and culture. No word we speak is random. When you study the history of the development of the French language or any other language for that matter, you would discover that strong cultural or historical links, and if you let any word of it die, you would have lost a part of your history or culture as a people. For me, a language is like a memory card with encoded messages that you pass from generation to generation. And without your culture and history, what is your identity? What do you stand for?

At Translation Commons, projects like the Language Digitization Initiative are aimed at supporting the language communities and helping prevent them from going into extinction. In order to revive and strengthen a language like Pular/Fulfulde, what, in your opinion, are the most important things to be done by the speakers of the language itself; professionals in the language industry; and the government or any other group of persons you think are key players in similar projects?

A: All these groups you mentioned have their respective

roles to play. One of the most beneficial things the government would do for any indigenous language is to invest toward its promotion. Thus, the people would be motivated to learn them.

We are in the era of technology and everyone uses the internet, smartphones and computers. If a language would survive, it has to be present in and supported by these tools. Unfortunately, this decision lies in the hands of a few companies that own and operate these tools. This is also where the government could come in. They could petition or ask these companies to intervene or support these languages.

Most often, companies decide what language to support based on its lucrativeness for business. And that makes sense anyway. Take Nigeria, for instance, where English, as the official language, is widely spoken by the population. Why would a company want to support Igbo, Hausa, or Yoruba if the people do not even make use of it themselves? But I often tell these companies that if the languages are first made available, the people would consequently make use of them.

They often say the market in Africa is limited. Two-thirds of the Guinean population do not know how to read or write in French. If you are selling phones or computers configured in French, how do you expect them to buy or use those tools? Moreover, the "literate" one-third is not necessarily the richest or the population with the highest purchasing power; because in Guinea, or even in Africa, we know that people who have the most money are those engaged in informal business activities; the so-called uneducated ones. So, if you do not make content relevant to them, they won't use your products. In Guinea, people mostly use their phones for two things: making or receiving calls and, sometimes, surfing Facebook. This is true even though there are so many other things they could use them for. But they cannot maximize these devices because they do not fully understand the language. This is why we need to make the developers and companies configure in our languages, since it would also improve their business profits in Africa.

Translators can help us make translations available in these languages. Native speakers would be drawn to content in their own languages. Everyone has a role to play to protect these languages from dying off. Many languages in Africa are threatened today, even though nobody talks about it.

The only surviving African languages are the major ones spoken by huge populations. But even the major ones would gradually die off because the country's official language would eventually be the language of communication in the average African household, and by the time the kids grow up, that's the language they would be proficient in; and after two or three generations, there might be little to no knowledge of their own indigenous languages.

Ironically, the only thing that is saving African languages right now is probably the high rate of illiteracy. When we finally succeed in getting everyone educated, and everyone is forced to speak English or French, our own languages would probably disappear.

I: It has already started. Because in Ivory Coast, for instance, I met people of Mandinka descent [one of the largest languages in West Africa] who hardly speak any word of their own language. They only speak French. Even some people from Liberia, too.

You earlier mentioned that it's the norm in many African countries to brand people who do not know how to read or write in the foreign, official language "illiterate." How does this affect the attitude of the people toward learning or promoting indigenous languages?

I: I think this attitude is a product of colonization. You know, if you wanted to be among the elite, you had to speak the language of the colonial masters, so it all began then. Back in the day, if you spoke your indigenous language at school, you were ridiculed or even punished for speaking an inferior language. In fact, indigenous languages were relegated to the status of patois, as though they were second-class languages. These languages would most certainly have retained full prestige if colonization did not take place. This is why I say that it is a matter of mentality.

A: To add to that, I suggest that all those who care about preserving languages can play various roles towards helping and supporting languages technologically, making them available on various platforms. The reason is this: when, for instance, I, as a Fulani-speaking Guinean, see my language on a platform on which I don't expect to see it, it makes me respect my language even more. It is not just up to the indigenous language users to preserve their languages: the government and the big companies do have significant roles to play.

There have been quite a lot of stories told concerning the positive impact ADLaM has made so far. Which of the success stories stands out the most for you?

I: Earlier, I didn't know that ADLaM had spread so wide. I was only aware that it had spread across Guinea, and down to Sierra Leone. In 2006, I visited Senegal and one of my friends suggested we go to a particular market. There, I found a lady teaching the Fulani language using the ADLaM script. I was surprised to discover that she

was actually using one of the books I wrote. I went closer, and asked her when she learned to read and write the language, to the point that she could actually teach others. She said she had learned it several years ago. A lady in Guinea from whom she used to buy palm oil had brought the book there and taught her to read and write. She told me how useful learning to read and write in ADLaM had been to her, especially as she was not literate in French; she could thus take stock of her business affairs. I asked her if she could teach me the script. She said yes. I asked her how much I'd have to pay, and she said she would charge me nothing. I only had to purchase the book. I consequently became so motivated — I realized that the work I was doing in my room in Guinea was changing the lives of people as far as Senegal. That was the first time I encountered someone who was able to teach others the script outside Guinea. When I came to the US, I also discovered there were Gambians who had also learned how to read and write ADLaM through her — a lady I had never met in person.

ADLaM owes much of its success to the fact that it was developed by indigenous users. Do you think that would be the case for other languages?

A: That's a tough question. I think there are big languages in Africa. There are other smaller ones that are already in the process of disappearing. For those that require urgent action, we can, at least, make their governments aware of the importance of protecting their heritage so that they can do something about it.

Ibrahima and Abdoulaye Barry in Portland

We have been working on ADLaM for 30 years, but some languages don't have that time to spare. For some languages that are only spoken by two or three elders, for instance, developing a script might not work. It might be better, in such instances, to make tape recordings of those people speaking or telling stories. It is really up to the community, with the support of the government, university professors, scholars, and linguists.

By the way, the ADLaM script can be used to write a large number of African languages, and we encourage people to use the script if they so desire. It is easy to use and is readily adaptable to any African language. Other than ADLaM, there are also other scripts.

Ultimately, we need to lobby our governments to take our languages seriously, because if they don't, there may be nothing much we can do.

The advantage we have is the fact that we own the ADLaM script, and because people are proud of it, they take initiative themselves and decide to teach the language. I do not know a single existing ADLaM center in Africa that is being sponsored by an NGO or a government entity; they're just grassroot initiatives. People choose to learn, and send for people from other towns or countries to teach them. For example, we know someone who has travelled to Senegal, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Nigeria, and two other countries to teach ADLaM. When people hear about him, they hire him to teach people or train those who would teach others. This could be done for other languages to preserve them.

I: As my brother said, one of the problems we have in Africa is that many governments don't care about indigenous languages. Recently, we were at the UNESCO conference in Paris, and from what we heard from large countries like Russia, it was

obvious that they care about minority languages in their country. They spend billions trying to revive languages that are on the verge of disappearing. Most African governments, on the other hand, do almost nothing to preserve indigenous languages, whereas they invest heavily in promoting English, French, Arabic, and the like.

A: You know, one of my Ivorian friends who works on the ADLaM projects once told me how she started school being taught in French. Upon getting to middle school, she also had to choose to learn either German or Italian. Looking back, she wondered why she was never presented with the option of learning an African language.

I personally have no issues with learning French or German or any foreign language for that matter. My only concern is why we have to spend so much time and effort learning foreign languages without learning even one African language, not even your own indigenous language.

I: Yes, it's also the same in Guinea. We used to be taught in French, and had to learn Arabic as a second language, and then, when we got to high school, English got added to the mix. I don't even know why — and most of these people who go on to learn foreign languages do not even move abroad so that we can then justify the purpose for which they spend so much time learning other languages.

A: To stress the importance of learning one's indigenous language, one of the problems we have in Africa is disunity, especially among ethnic groups. But when you speak a person's language, you get closer to that person and even become a kindred spirit. A very practical example is the FIFA World Cup. For instance, if France were to play against Argentina, you'd realize that most Francophones in Africa would support France. You would think we wouldn't support the French since we were colonized by them, but no. Because we speak French, watch French movies, and practice a great deal of the French culture, you find that we'd readily support France. In the same vein, we could make efforts to learn other African languages in order to get along with one another.

The importance of ADLaM is to help promote literacy in the Fulfulde language. There's also another script that has been designed to help the Mandinka language. The government is not really supporting it, but the people are helping to promote instruction in their own language because they have their own script too.

Despite existing inequalities among languages of the world, when would you objectively say that a language community is strong?

A: For me, the strength of a language is measured by its presence online, in literature — that is, books and articles published in it — in oral communication, and in media like radio and TV. And also the extent to which it is taught in schools. If a language doesn't have all of these, it has zero to no chance of survival. Actually, the key to helping a language survive is to make it a language of instruction in schools. If a language is being used that way, it will never die. All the other factors mentioned are merely indicators that the language is vibrant. But until we make it mandatory to learn indigenous languages in schools, we would not really be doing what we ought to do for our languages.

I: Like he said, in order for a language to survive, it has to be the language of instruction, and I think that's where the government should come in. If a language is online — on radio or on TV, but books are not published in the language — it will end up being infiltrated with foreign words. The language might still be spoken, but not in its pure, standard form. If there are no dictionaries, if people do not read or write in the language or study it, it would eventually be used by increasingly fewer people.

The government really has a lot of work to do. Promoting a language without the support of the government is no mean feat; especially if you're not being paid for it. You have to earn a livelihood and also work on the language alongside. Developing a language requires strong drive and a lot of courage because it is not easy.

What message would you like to send to the world?

A: Making products, content, platforms, or systems available in indigenous languages makes them more accessible to the African people, since most of them are not educated in languages like English or French. By supporting our languages and making products that are configured in our languages, you'll be able to reach more people, thus boosting your business. Also, if we care about the world and its heritage, we need to care whether or not the disappearing languages belong to our individual tribe or race. It's our joint heritage as humans.

I: Africans, do not be ashamed to speak your language or promote it because that's what defines you wherever you go. It's your heritage and identity. People in power should also do more to sustain indigenous languages. [M]

buyer's guide

Associations

European Language Industry Association (Elia)

Elia is the European not-for-profit association of language service companies with a mission to accelerate our members' business success. We do this by creating events and initiatives that anticipate and serve our members' needs in building strong, sustainable companies, thereby strengthening the wider industry. Elia was founded in 2005 and has since established itself as the leading trade association for the language services industry in Europe.

Elia *Brussels, Belgium*
Email: info@elia-association.org
Web: http://elia-association.org

Globalization and Localization Association

The Globalization and Localization Association (GALA) is a global, nonprofit trade association for the language industry. As a membership organization, we support our member companies and the language sector by creating communities, championing standards, sharing knowledge and advancing technology.

Globalization and Localization Association
Seattle, WA USA
+1-206-494-4686
Email: info@gala-global.org, Web: www.gala-global.org

Conferences

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The Unicode Consortium
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612-986-3108
Email: aki.ito@crestecusa.com
Europe: Amsterdam
+31 205854640
Email: sales@crestec.nl, Web: https://crestecusa.com

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Languages: 60+
E4NET Co., Ltd. *Seoul, South Korea*
82-2-3465-8532
Email: l10n@e4net.net, Web: www.e4net.net

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Established in 1986, EuroGreek Translations Limited is Europe's leading Greek localizer, specializing in medical, technical, financial and legal translations from EN/DE/FR/ES to EL and EL to EN. Our aim is to provide high-quality, turnkey solutions, encompassing a whole range of client needs, from translation to localization, desktop publishing and testing. Our DTP department covers all Latin and Cyrillic alphabet-based languages, in addition to Greek, at very competitive rates. All of EuroGreek's work is produced in-house by a team of 30 highly qualified specialists and is fully guaranteed for quality and on-time delivery.
Languages: Greek to/from English; French, German, Spanish to Greek
EuroGreek Translations Limited *Athens, Greece*
30-210-9628-559
Email: production@eurogreek.com
Web: www.eurogreek.com

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Languages: More than 70 languages
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+82-2-2193-1725
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Languages: Greek and European languages
ORCO S.A. *Athens, Greece*
+30-210-723-6001
Email: info@orco.gr
Web: www.orco.gr

RWS Moravia

RWS Moravia is a leading globalization solutions provider, enabling companies in the IT, consumer electronics, retail, media and entertainment, and travel and hospitality industries to enter global markets with high-quality multilingual products and services. RWS Moravia's solutions include localization, testing, content creation, machine translation implementations, technology consulting and global digital marketing services. Our customers include eight of Fortune's Top 20 Most Admired Companies, and all of the "Fab 5 Tech Stock" companies from 2017. Our global headquarters is in Brno, Czech Republic, and we have local offices in Europe, the United States, Japan, China and Latin America. To learn more, please visit us at www.rws.com/moravia.
Languages: over 250
RWS Moravia
USA HQ: Thousand Oaks, CA USA, +1-805-262-0055
Europe HQ: Brno, Czech Republic, +420-545-552-222
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Languages: 120+

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Languages: All

Vistatec
Europe: Dublin, Ireland, 353-1-416 -8000
North America: Mountain View, CA USA
408-898-2364
Email: info@vistatec.com, Web: www.vistatec.com

Nonprofit Organizations

Joint National Committee for Languages

The Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) represent the interests of over 140 member organizations, associations and companies in virtually all aspects of the language enterprise — education PreK-20, research, training, assessment, translation, interpreting and localization — to the US government. The mission of JNCL-NCLIS is to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to learn English and at least one other language.

Joint National Committee for Languages – National Council for Languages and International Studies
Garrett Park, MD USA, 202-580-8684
Email: info@languagepolicy.org
Web: http://languagepolicy.org

Protecting Translators and Interpreters Worldwide

Red T is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization advocating for the protection of translators and interpreters in high-risk settings.

Red T *New York, NY USA*
+1-212-675-0451
Email: contact@red-t.org, Web: http://red-t.org

Translation Commons

Translation Commons is a nonprofit US public charity powered by translators. We are a volunteer-based online community aiming to help our language community thrive and bridge all the sectors within our industry. We facilitate cross-functional collaboration among the diverse sectors and stakeholders within the language industry and instigate transparency, trust and free knowledge. Our mission is to offer free access to tools and all other available resources, to facilitate community-driven projects, to empower linguists and to share educational and language assets.

Translation Commons *Las Vegas, NV USA*
(310) 405-4991
Email: krista@translationcommons.org
Web: www.translationcommons.org

Translators without Borders

Originally founded in 1993 in France as Traducteurs sans Frontières by Lori Thicke and Ros Smith-Thomas to link the world's translators to vetted NGOs that focus on health and education, Translators without Borders (TWB) is a US nonprofit organization that aims to close the language gaps that hinder critical humanitarian efforts worldwide. TWB recognizes that the effectiveness of any aid program depends on delivering information in the language of the affected population.

Languages: 190 language pairs

Translators without Borders *CT USA*
Email: info@translatorswithoutborders.org
Web: www.translatorswithoutborders.org

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Multiple Platforms

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Languages: All

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Languages: All

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Plunet

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Multiple Platforms

Plunet develops and markets the business and workflow management software Plunet BusinessManager — one of the world's leading management solutions for the translation and localization industry. Plunet BusinessManager provides a high degree of automation and flexibility for professional language service providers and translation departments. Using a web-based platform, Plunet integrates translation software, financial accounting and quality management systems. Various functions and extensions of Plunet BusinessManager can be adapted to individual needs within a configurable system. Basic functions include quote, order and invoice management, comprehensive financial reports, flexible job and workflow management as well as deadline, document and customer relationship management.

Plunet GmbH *Berlin, Germany*
+49 (0)30-322-971-340
Email: info@plunet.com
Web: www.plunet.com

SMARTLING

Smartling

Smartling Translation Cloud is the leading translation management platform and language services provider to localize content across devices and platforms. Smartling's data-driven approach and visual context capabilities uniquely position brands for efficiency. Seamlessly connect your CMS, code repository, and marketing automation tools to Smartling's TMS via prebuilt integrations, web proxy, or REST APIs. No matter the content type, Smartling automation tools help you do more with less. Smartling is the platform of choice for B2B and B2C brands, including InterContinental Hotels Group, GoPro, Shopify, Slack, and SurveyMonkey. The company is headquartered in New York, with offices in Dublin and London. For more information, please visit Smartling.com.

Smartling *New York, NY USA*
1-866-707-6278
Email: hi@smartling.com, Web: www.smartling.com

Translation Services

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SPECIALISED TRANSLATION

Translation Services into Italian

ASTW is an Italian language service provider that offers translation services into Italian. ASTW has historically gained extensive experience in patent translations and is now the provider of numerous international intellectual property consultancy firms. The other specializations include translations in the life science, legal and technical fields. ASTW also offers (light and full) post-editing services for pre-translated texts through machine translation in many areas. Other services include technical writing and medical writing services in English and Italian.

ASTW *Genova, Italy*
+390100980766
Email: info@a-stw.com
Web: www.a-stw.com/en/contact-us

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Your Partner for East European languages

birotranslations

Founded in 1992, birotranslations specializes in life science, legal, technical, IT and automotive translations into all East European languages (Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Ukrainian). We have a long-term partnership with the world's top 100 MLVs and many end-clients all around the globe. With our experienced project managers, extensive network of expert linguists and usage of the latest CAT tool technology, your projects will be delivered on time, within budget and with the highest standards of quality. For more information, please contact Mr. Matic Berginc (details below).

Languages: Eastern European languages

birotranslations *Ljubljana, Slovenia*
+386 590 43 557
Email: projects@birotranslations.com
Web: www.birotranslations.com

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Languages: 50+ more languages including Korean, English, Chinese, Japanese, German, Russian, Vietnamese, Thai, Indonesian.
GlobalWay Co., Ltd. *Seoul, South Korea*
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Languages: More than 54 languages including Korean, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai, Indonesian.
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Languages: Spanish (all variants), Portuguese (all variants), Catalan, Basque, Galician, Valencian, K'iche', Quechua, Aymara, Guarani
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34-93-778-73-00
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Languages: 45, including all EU languages
MediLingua Medical Translations BV
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+31-71-5680862
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memoQ

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Languages: All
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+3618088313
Email: sales@memoq.com
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SDL plc

SDL is the global innovator in language translation technology, translation services and content management. Over the past 25 years we've helped companies deliver transformative business results by enabling powerful, nuanced digital experiences with customers around the world. SDL is the leading provider of translation software to the translation industry and SDL Trados Studio is recognized globally as the preferred computer-assisted translation tool of government, commercial enterprises, language service providers and freelance translators.

Languages: All

SDL plc *Maidenhead, United Kingdom*
+44-1628-417227
Email: info@sdltrados.com
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Advertiser Index

Takeaway

Donna Parrish's Influence on My Own Localization

Marjolein Groot Nibbelink

is the director of sales and advertising for MultiLingual. *Born and raised in the Netherlands, she lived an international nomad's life for eight years before settling in the US. She holds a degree in communication from the Rotterdam Academy, and has been with the* MultiLingual *team since April 2015.*

Donna Parrish hired me shortly after I arrived in the USA, penniless and awaiting a green card after years of bumming around South America. As one of the language industry's leading influencers since 1997, Donna had been crucial in developing *MultiLingual* and LocWorld as the brands we have come to know and love. Her limitless care and selflessness have contributed to the industry's culture of assisting rather than competing with one another, something that is evident through her work with Translators without Borders (TWB). Donna is on Nimdzi's recent Localization Influencers Watchlist, a reflection of how proactive she is in maintaining the full scope of the industry and its leading professionals.

Joining the *MultiLingual* team in April 2015 meant taking the conscious and somewhat reluctant step from writing in British English to American English — I was born and raised in the Netherlands where British English was the rule. Business communication had to be in line with the same style guide we ask our writers to adhere to, and sentence structures for marketing had been carefully developed over years of deliberate finetuning. Even after years of sharing offices, she'd throw idioms my way (discussing a reluctant client, she once said, "Well, you can lead a horse to water…") that made my eyes glaze over and a large question mark appear overhead. She'd see that and fill in "…but you can't make it drink!" with a warm smile. Through these efforts, Donna quite literally inspired the localization of my entire person and gave me the opportunity to claim a space in the industry by working hard and demonstrating a capacity to empathize and take care of others. This is a success story I've heard repeated countless times by colleagues, especially by those who entered the industry before 2010. Through my work and open conversations with industry veterans who put less value on job titles and more on honesty and kindness, the meaning of localization has crystalized into a colorful gem I hope to carry with me for life.

In so many ways we can see Donna's personality reflected in the language industry — a great capacity to listen and understand other people's hurdles is the essence of the work we do. I personally manage sales and advertising, which is impossible to do well without deeper comprehension of the localization process and my client's business objectives.

Donna has always known how to ask the right questions and let you find your own challenges to then establish a more defined set of goals. This helped me become independent and confident, as well as develop a unique set of social abilities based around care and thoughtfulness. In the same way, she's worked tirelessly and with a permanent smile to provide localization buyers with a place to develop skills and find the resources they need. Meanwhile, providers use the many channels Donna has cultivated for more than 20 years to share case studies and connect to other professionals around the world.

We are the industry that supports global communication, and in this time of the coronavirus pandemic, many businesses are taking a serious look at their online presence hoping to develop international opportunities.

Despite the overall global economic stress, the language services market continues to grow. Users, providers, and project managers alike continue to work hard behind the scenes to help businesses enhance their worldwide messaging and be noticed in efficient and exciting ways. This is what connects us and holds us together, even when we are in every country — even when we can't meet up at go-to events such as LocWorld, GALA, Elia, ATA, and others. How normal it is to send clients and collaborators pictures of your vacation or share videos of yourself singing covers of The Police? But normality has no place in our line of work — we are here to differentiate.

A friend and industry veteran shared the Hebrew proverb "to swallow the frog" (to accept an unpleasant or difficult fact or situation and move on) and pointed out Donna knows how to do it. Handing over the reins of *MultiLingual* had to be done, and she found people willing to take them with the same degree of respect for people: a warm, personal approach to doing business while staying mostly in the background. In the meantime, I have been answering concerns over the direction our industry's leading source of information will take after this change. Our team stands with Donna's heritage and know it to be unwise, even impossible, to separate the *MultiLingual* brand from her charm and identity. This, in my opinion, is a good thing.

As of July 1, 2020, Donna stepped down as publisher of *MultiLingual* magazine, but remains principal of LocWorld and board member of TWB. This is my homage to the powerhouse who gave me the opportunity to live and thrive in my new community while staying in touch with my international roots. I will miss Donna the same way I miss my British accent — as the unique foundation my today is built upon. [M]

RWS Moravia

Maribel Rodríguez | Language Technology Deployment Manager

Enhancing global communications with AI

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