

**Report D.001
Translation Task Force to
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation
October 24-25, 2019**

The Translation Task Force of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation met on May 13, June 18, July 18, August 15, and September 18, 2019, either in-person or by Zoom conference and forwards the following progress report to the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), A Corporation:

I. For Action: None.

II. For Information:

At the 223rd General Assembly (2018), Item 04-03 included three directives to “create a systematic approach to language accessibility for the entire church”:

1. Requiring “that translation services be staffed appropriate in order to provide translation services to all six agencies and be centralized in Shared Services.
2. Requiring that “prioritization and exceptions of translation services ... be discerned and directed by an inclusive group, such as the Diverse Voices Table, in consultation with associated in Racial Ethnic and Women’s Intercultural Ministries, as well as the racial ethnic caucuses and the Advocacy Committee for Racial Ethnic Concerns”, and
3. Requiring that translation services ... include websites and the translation into English of materials originally written in other languages”

The General Assembly ordered that, in implementing these directives, “translation services ... reside within [ASG] in ‘A Corp.’” and that “the total cost of these services ... be allocated and paid for by each agency as a percentage of work completed. Specific funding sources and budgets used by each agency shall be determined by their respective board(s)/committee(s) and/or executive leadership.

In fulfillment of the mandates of the Assembly, the Task Force met with a number of guests in the last six months and have the following updates.

OGA Meeting Planning and Translation/Interpretation Issues

The Task Force met with Rev. Tom Hay and Deb Davies who discussed how they have engaged translation and interpretation services for large events such as Big Tent and the General Assembly.

Before General Assembly materials such as overtures, rationales, comments and reports need to be translated. Other materials such as registration materials, guidebooks, and worship materials also need translation. At present the main translation is from English to Spanish and Korean.

OGA staff ask those who register if they need interpretative services and if so they get a call with assistance. At the General Assembly guests who need assistance may be assigned a local interpreter if their language is not Spanish or Korean. The most often requested other languages are French and Portuguese. This interpretation service happens mostly in plenary, it is a two-way interpretation process because they want the ecumenical partner to be able to access the body, not just hear from the body.

During plenary meetings prior to the 2018 General Assembly there were simultaneous live interpretations going on to guests using headphones. At the 2018 General Assembly OGA staff

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tried the software program Spf.io. They were impressed with the company's mission and spirituality. They provided interpretation to guests on their devices and it was a very mixed experience. One downside was the necessary delay between receiving the English words, then translating them online, then pushing them out to consumers. In some cases, as this delay was experienced, persons for whom English is not their first language missed votes. OGA will be interested in Spf.io in the future if it the interpretation is quicker, can be accessed while in or out of the room by live streaming, and is also designed for church services and meeting.

The Stated Clerk is responsible for translation and interpretation services at meetings planned by OGA and the Stated Clerk and OGA want to partner with the Task Force to guide how that happens in the future. OGA will also need help with translation services for Zoom meetings and conference calls for GA committees, task forces, etc.

Report from Prof. Baixauli-Olmos

In order to receive expert guidance on the translation and interpretation industry, we engaged the services of Prof. Lluís Baixauli-Olmos, an Associate Professor at the University of Louisville with experience in translating and interpretation. You can find his biography at this link:

<https://louisville.edu/modernlanguages/faculty/lluis-baixauli-olmos>

The professor attended Task Force meetings and contributed to its work in various ways, including attending interviews of candidates for the position of the Manager of Global Resource Services.

Prof. Baixauli-Olmos provided the Task Force with a report, including recommendations. A copy of the report is attached (Attachment 1).

Global Resources Manager

Prof. Baixauli-Olmos recommended that a manager of Global Resources was necessary for the success of the translation/interpretation goals set by the General Assembly. The position is one of project management which can oversee employee translators, contractors who provide translation and interpretation, and engage software and other tools to fulfill the work of the Global Resources department.

Jason Raff, who leads the Office of Translation Services for the Kentucky Court of Justice, accepted the Manager position. Jason has experience recruiting, vetting, and managing contract interpreters. He led a translation project for over 60 courtrooms and drafted new Judicial Administrative Procedures governing translations in the Kentucky courts, which was approved by the Supreme Court of Kentucky. Jason's first language is English, and he also translates Spanish and Portuguese into English. Jason has served as a freelance interpreter and translator and is certified.

Jason will start work on October 28, 2019.

Signage at the Presbyterian Center

One project completed before the Board meeting was to supplement some signage at the Presbyterian Center so it appears in three languages: English, Spanish, and Korean. This project was implemented by ASG through Building Services in order to make the Center more welcoming for our guests. In the future we hope to increase signage to other languages.



Event at Big Tent

Bridget-Anne Hampden and JoAnne Sharp hosted a gathering at Big Tent that was well attended. Folks from a number of caucuses and councils came to hear an update on the work of the Task Force. Bridget-Anne informed the group that the Task Force was considering creating an advisory council of folks from the caucuses and councils and invited everyone to consider who they might recommend be included on that advisory council. We collected contact information from all attendees and may create the advisory council in the fall of 2019.

The Translators

The Task Force heard from translators Stephanie Vasquez and Paul Huh. Most of their work is event driven. Some work is for internal clients, such as translation of Matthew 25 materials, but they also do some translation for mid councils. They recognize there are limited resources at the moment for translation and interpretation and the organization needs to incorporate other languages. They want ASG Global Services Department to be the central location for all areas of PCUSA to go to for translation services.

Report of Prof. Baixauli-Olmos to Translation Task Force

Lluís Baixauli-Olmos

Author Note

This report was funded by the Presbyterian Church-USA. The author wishes to thank Mike Kirk for his help throughout the process of drafting this report.

Summary

This report intends to offer information and guidance to the Translation Task Force to make informed decisions regarding the development of a systematic approach to language access. The report has two main sections focusing on giving (i) information (terms and general practices) and (ii) advice (needs assessment and recommendations).

Report of Prof. Baixauli-Olmos to Translation Task Force

This report intends to offer guidance to the Presbyterian Church-USA Translation Task Force in their mission to put in place a systematic language access structure that enables the organization to better communicate across linguistic and cultural barriers.

This document was prepared with the help of the Translation Task Force between May and August 2019. It is meant to be a preliminary working paper to be used internally for more informed decision making, and therefore it is open for discussion.

Introduction

Globalization trends have brought about increased diversity to most industrialized nations. Demographic changes and the linguistic and cultural diversity they carry pose a fundamental opportunity for these societies. The PC-USA finds itself in a situation many other organizations, religious and otherwise, are frequently faced with in the US nowadays: the organization has the will to be responsive to a linguistically and culturally diverse population, but it does not know very well how to do that. One way is to try to overcome language barriers to use providing language access services.

The Presbyterian Church-USA 2016 General Assembly approved a recommendation (Recommendation 1.b.. 'Churchwide Conversation on Race, Ethnicity, Racism and Ethnocentricity Report', GA 222 Item 11-24) expressing a “desire to create a systematic approach to language accessibility for the entire church”; this would require “that translation services be staffed appropriately”. As a result, a Translation Task Force was set up to come up with ways to realize this desire. This report has been drafted at the request of Mike Kirk and Julie Cox, on behalf of the Translation Task Force, to offer some guidance on how to assist the Presbyterian Church to be more language accessible in a systematic way.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives of this report are:

- 1) To inform the Translation Task Force about translation and interpreting as a means to fulfill their mission by...
 - a) Providing definitions of common terms
 - b) Explaining general industry practices

- 2) To propose strategies to the Translation Task Force to realize the GA 222, Recommendation 1.b (To create a systematic approach to language accessibility) by...
 - a) Conducting a needs assessment: existing resources, needs, prioritizing, staffing
 - b) Offering recommendations for the development of a Language Access Plan

Basic definitions

Some terms related to language access and cross-language message transfer are used in this report; they are defined below:

- Language access: Services used by organizations to bridge language barriers; example: translation services.
- Language access plan: A conscious and systematic effort to allot and organize resources in order to fulfill an organization's need to increase language accessibility.
- LEP (Limited English Proficiency) individual: User in need of language access services.
- Translation: Conversion of a written text from one language (source language) into another language (target) (please note that the acronym T&I is used to refer to Translation and Interpreting).
- Source language (SL): The language a message is translated from.- Target language (TL): The language a message is translated into.- Interpretation: Conversion of a spoken or signed text into another language (please note that the acronym T&I is used to refer to Translation and Interpreting).
- Remote interpreting: Interpreting services provided telephonically or electronically.
- On-site interpreting: Interpreting services provided in the location where the event takes place (e.g., in a booth in the same room).
- Bilingual: An individual with a high level of competence in two languages; although all T&I are bilinguals, not all bilinguals are T&I, as they need to rely on experience or training in order to provide professional services.

General T&I Industry Practices

The industry follows a set of practices that are not obvious for outsiders and that are worth knowing in order to make informed decisions. This section will cover these standard procedures, platforms and software, and guidance on fees.

The T&I is an overwhelmingly freelance based profession. Although there are big agencies and many smaller companies, in general there are few in-house professionals.

The way a translation or interpreting project is managed depends on the nature of the source message(s) and the way it is rendered into the target language(s). The main consideration to take into account is whether it's a translation (written) or an interpretation (spoken) project.

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The person in charge of managing these projects is the translation project manager, who is in charge of receiving the request, sending an estimate, communicating with the client, coordinating the team (client, translator, reviewer), managing the existing language resources (glossary, translation memory), finding a reviewer, assuring quality and sending the finalized translation back to the client and receiving and processing payment, among other duties. Project managers tend to be in-house employees, with salaries ranging from 25,000 to 80,000 per year

The most common platform to manage translation projects is SDL Trados Groupshare; it's expensive but well-known, versatile and with strong technical support. However, not all translators use it, the learning curve is pretty steep, and the interface is not very intuitive. SmartCat is less established, but professionals seem to love it; it's much better designed, and it connects with existing service providers, which would save time when you can't find a translator for your project; it also streamlines payment.

When the source message is in written form, we are working on a translation project. In the industry, translation projects are most often invoiced on a per-word basis for the translation, and then a revision or proofreading rate (also per word, although sometimes also per page or per hour), and if necessary, desktop publishing services. Additional rates may be included when it's a rush assignment, the text is very specific, or there is a technical component (like web design). The rates also vary by language combination; the going rates from English into Spanish and Korean are currently from around 0.10 to 0.30 per word. It is important to bear in mind that usually it takes a translator one hour to translate 200-300 words, and experienced translators do around 2,000 words a day. Translators are not usually in-house, although, if the volume is sufficient and the types of text are not too varied, it is recommended that a staff translator is hired.

For translation, the main work platform is also SDL Trados Studio, although many professionals do not like it. Many different programs, online and local, exist. The Google Translator Toolkit, which is different from Google Translate, offers some basic functionalities and it is free and not difficult to use. In any case, most professional translation (except for literary or bible translation) is done using Computer Assisted Tools (CAT), because they increase productivity. Because PC-USA has translated a lot of materials, it would be ideal to transform those existing translations into translation memories (TM) and glossaries or termbases (TB), so they can be leveraged.

Audiovisual translation (subtitling, for example) is usually billed by the minute, one minute of screen time rated at around 10 dollars for bilingual projects; subtitling or close-captioning costs around 5 dollars per minute for monolingual videos. As a platform that would probably be a good fit for PC-USA in terms of subtitling, the "Project Pentecost is a movement helping churches reflect their multilingual diversity" (<https://spf.io/>), but it seems it's a good fit for monolingual subtitling, that is, mostly useful for deaf or hard of hearing individuals, and not so much for non-English "readers".

When the source message is in spoken form, we are dealing with an interpreting assignment. In interpreting, projects are billed by the hour, in general, although these varies widely. There are different types of interpreting services, depending on the type of language (spoken vs. signed), the setting (court, medical, conference, 2 side meeting, multilateral meetings), the modality (remote, onsite, video) or the mode (simultaneous -the interpreters speaks or signs while you speak-, or consecutive -the interpreter speaks or signs after you pause-). Rates vary widely, onsite conference interpreting probably being the most costly type of assignment; court interpreters charge by half (between \$100 and \$230) or full day (\$200-\$400), or between \$30 and \$60 hourly. Medical interpreters and community interpreters charge less, although less than \$25 is probably too cheap to be good. High level conference interpreters may charge a thousand dollars per day.

Interpreting services may also be provided electronically or telephonically. For telephone or video interpreting, the running fees are \$1.5-\$7 per minute. There are different business providing these services. Professionals seem to be talking a lot lately about KUDO (<https://kudoway.com/>), which “streams real-time language interpretation to your web meetings and live conferences, so everyone can speak in their mother tongue.” Although a quote was requested, it was not processed successfully, but this would probably be a good fit for the GA.

Results and Recommendations

Existing Resources

It seems that PC-USA already counts on significant moral human, technical documental and linguistic resources to realize their objectives:

- Moral: The organization has set itself the goal of improving accessibility and there is willingness to accomplish it.
- Human: Several agencies and individuals with experience in the fields of T&I and with a broad range of language combinations are identified (Presbyterian Women in the PC-USA, Racial Equity and Women’s Intercultural Ministries-RE&WIM) (Appendix A: Email from Rhashell Hunter). Many services, including but not limited to T&I, are offered by bilinguals already employed by the PC-USA.
- Technical: PC-USA uses the Zoom platform for meetings, which could be used to provide remote interpreting services; the Interpreters’ Orientation Packet (2016) is a fantastic technical resource that could be adapted to meet the needs of other types of meetings, not just the GA. The Pentecostal project (spf.io) offers captioning services, which could be used for mostly monolingual events to allow deaf or hard of hearing to read what’s being said; this resource is not recommended for multilingual events.
- Linguistic: The existence of decades of translation work, including the website’s translation into Spanish and Korean, is a resource that may be leveraged to reduce future work volume and increase output quality (the effort to leverage existing translations will be covered in Translation project management).
- Practical: Different agencies within PC have been using translation services for quite some time using different methods (How the Agencies Address Translation Issues).

Needs

The PC-USA operates mostly in English and often translates materials into or conducts activities in Spanish and Korean.

In the PC-USA Languages and Translations report (Susan Barnett 2018), 29 other languages are identified, the 10 most frequent being, in this order: Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese), Vietnamese, Arabic, French, Japanese, German, Russian, Hindi, Tagalog, Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian, Croatian, Montenegrin, and Serbian). This report found that more than one third (39%) of respondents stated it would not be useful to have materials translated into other languages.

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In the same report, a list of 8 types of documents most useful to be translated was presented in order of importance: Devotionals, Bible Studies, Worship Aids, On-line Materials, Newsletters, Church News, Official Church Documents, Mission Magazines. Although more than 650 items were selected by respondents, a shortlist of other documents was presented: Book of Order, Book of Confession, Videos with closed captioning for those church members who are deaf (“Church training - how does the PCUSA work”). Big events, like Big Tent or the General Assembly are also huge consumers of translation services; the following materials were identified as needing to be translated for these events (from minutes of the May 13, 2019 Zoom meeting): overtures, rationales, comments, reports, but also guidebooks, registration materials, and worship materials.

Now, different PC-USA agencies seem to have different translation needs (as documented in How the Agencies Address Translation Issues): The Presbyterian Foundation uses external contractors and is interested in receiving the services of the Administrative Services Group translation office (ASGTO), only for Korean and Spanish. The Office of the General Assembly creates videos and designs and manages the web design in English, Spanish and Korean; they use the Administrative Services Group translators for video subtitling and web content. The Presbyterian Publishing Corporation follows two main methods: for books to be consumed in the US, they hire external contractors, although they often license books into other languages and then, for example, PC-Korea does the translation; for curriculum, the staff develops the contents originally in the language in question. Even though PILP does not currently use translation services, they would like their circular translated by the Administrative Services Group. The Board of Pensions uses native speakers in their Plan Operations group, who provide services beyond translation (phone, email, guidance, meetings), although they also outsource some English document for translation (Inline Translation Services, Inc., \$2,000-\$5,000 annual) and do not think it is viable for them to use the ASGTO; nevertheless, this year they need help with a Korean translation of the Healthy Pastors/ Healthy Congregations curriculum.

It is useful to see how other religious organizations operate in the language service provision arena. The document Q&A Translation Service/Other Denominations shows that they do not follow the same method; none of the surveyed organizations have a systematic way of identifying translation needs, although they also do not seem to find this has been an important issue for them. When asked about how the translation work is conducted, there are different types of solutions

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- all services are outsourced (Christian Reformed Church in North America); previous in-house work relied on volunteers and quality and turnaround weren't satisfactory.
- one in-house manager and the actual translation work, outsourced (Episcopal Church in the U.S.)
- Services are done by members of the congregation (Disciples of Christ, at a fee of \$0.15 per word; previous outsourcing experience was mostly negative, for lack of theological terminology accuracy).

In terms of management of the translation process and contractual relationships, the Episcopal Church in the U.S. uses a set of free-lancers and a company, and then they have an annual contract with a core group of contractors (Universe Language Solutions, Ltd); the Christian Reformed Church in North America does not have enough volume for an annual contract, and they out source at a rate of around 0.1 per word. In order to prioritize services, the Christian Reformed Church in North America relies on a Translations Team that decides, and the Episcopal Church in the U.S. is starting a Language Services Working Group. Their scope is usually main documents and then parish needs, as they come.

The available information in terms of interpreting needs indicates that PC-USA requires interpreters throughout meetings, especially at the GA (as discussed at the May 13, 2019 Meeting), most importantly at the plenary, and then in smaller committee meetings. These needs are identified during registration. If the languages are Korean and Spanish then volunteers are used; when it is other languages, then an external interpreter is hired to offer those services. No data is available in terms of interpreting needs outside the big events. This report finds that, although there is a significant amount of good-quality data on translation needs and existing resources, not enough information is available regarding interpretation needs (i.e., translation of spoken or signed messages).

Recommendations

After discussing the needs of the organization in consideration of its current resources and its expected outcomes, and after exploring general practices in the T&I sector, a few recommendations are presented below for the Task Force to consider:

- Develop a language access plan: A language access plan is the way to go in order to organize and systematize language needs; although many templates are circulating on the web, the bibliography contains a couple of good ones. An initial and thorough needs assessment is advisable, including identification of LEP populations in the PC congregations; this should probably be step 1 for the new hire. Assessing needs by jurisdiction and with a certain periodicity is also recommended.
- Maximize what you have (human, linguistic and technical resources): Identify PC people with a lot of experience (and ideally training) and interest in translating; process existing translations so you can leverage your existing linguistic resources and pilot Zoom for interpreting services. Ask other congregations again for guidance. Train your people.
- Prioritize: Start small with only the most critical communication without expanding to other languages or documents/meetings. Consider sustainability too; make sure the translation of dynamic types of texts like websites or social media posts can be sustained over time. Otherwise, select only the most relevant and static types of text (like the About Us section in a website).
- Make project management a priority: Spend resources on thinking well how projects will be managed, linguists lists maintained, translation records kept. A well designed and tried workflow will makes things run more smoothly, cheaply and with higher quality. Translation project managers can also help to leverage existing linguistic resources (identifying most frequent terms and phrases and their accepted translations and processing them for future use). Quality assurance systems should be put in place to avoid low quality work, as it may negatively impact the overall goal of ensuring accessibility. Project managers make sure a native linguist (not just a bilingual) reviews translations; this is critical in cases of impactful documents or meetings. If theological terminological accuracy is important, the project manager may hire someone with expert knowledge in their language.

Although this report has focused on T&I, there are many other strategies that may be put in place to improve language accessibility, like creating multilingual signage, organizing basic intercultural competency trainings or ensuring that institutional practices and regulations respect diversity. However, adjusting to diversity is a never-ending learning experience and the organization would probably benefit from understanding this as a cyclical rather than a linear process.

Useful Resources

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence. (n.d.). *Developing a Language Access Plan for Your Agency*. Retrieved from www.lep.gov/guidance/guidance_index.html

Barnett, S. (2018). *Languages and Translations*. PC-USA.

Federal Interagency Working Group on LEP (US Dept. of Justice). (2011). *Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs*. Retrieved from <http://www.lep.gov/13166/eolep.pdf>.

Language Network. (n.d.). *Language: How to Develop a Language Access Program*. Retrieved from [https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2296582/PDFs/Language-Network_Language-Network-Access-Program_ebook\(1\).pdf](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/2296582/PDFs/Language-Network_Language-Network-Access-Program_ebook(1).pdf).

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Ungo, J. (n.d.). 5 Elements of an Effective Language Access Plan. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from <http://blog.languageline.com/5-elements-of-an-effective-language-access-plan>.