ata

American Translators Association

The Voice of Interpreters and Translators

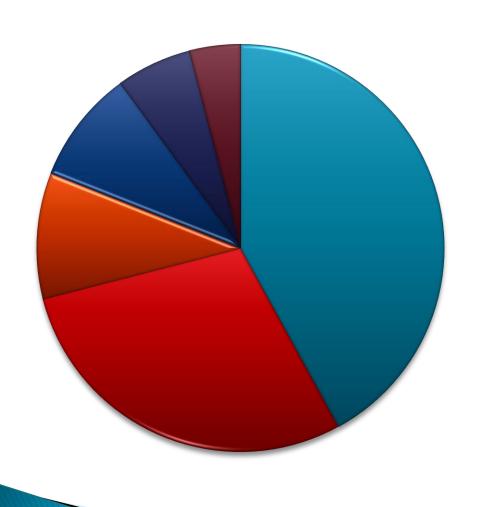
Overview of Services

General Facts

- Largest professional association of translators and interpreters in the United States; 11,000 members in over 90 countries
- National not-for-profit association with an international orientation, founded in 1959



Membership of the American Translators Association

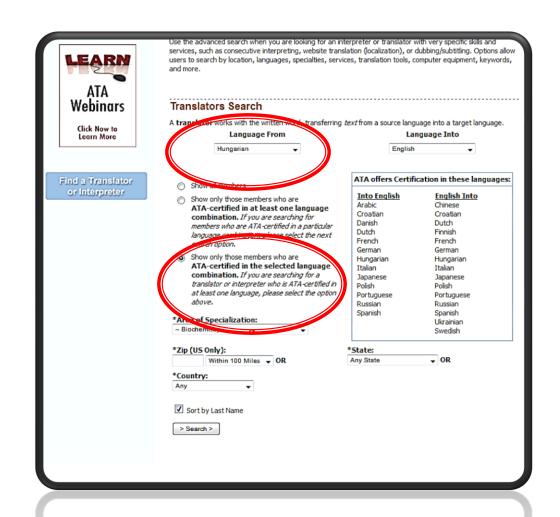


- Full-time Independent Contractor (42%)
- Part-time Independent Contractor (29%)
- Company Owner (10%)
- Full-time Private-sector Employee (9%)
- Academia (6%)
- Government Employee (4%)

www.atanet.org

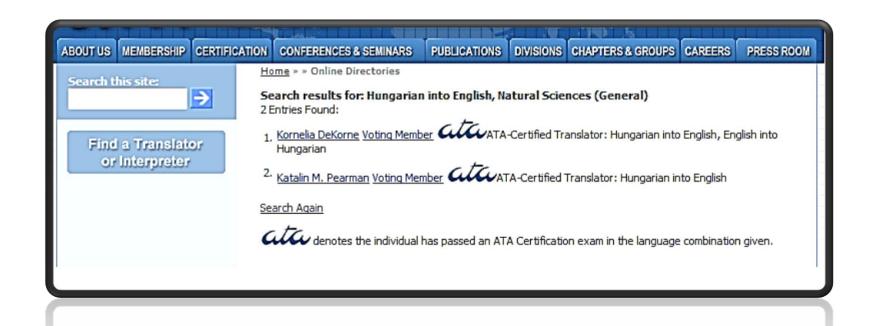


Online Directory Search





Sample Search Results





Website: www.atanet.org

- Over 7,000 linguist profiles
- 3.5 million pageviews in 2012
- Most requested language combinations:

English into Spanish Spanish into English

English into French

English into Chinese

English into Japanese



Certified Translator (CT) seal



A unique certification seal provides clients with objective evidence of a translator's professional competence



Professional Development



Annual Conference

ATA conference held in a major city every fall

Future Sites

- •2013 San Antonio
- •2014 Chicago
- •2015 Miami
- •2016 San Francisco
- •2017 Washington, DC



Webinars

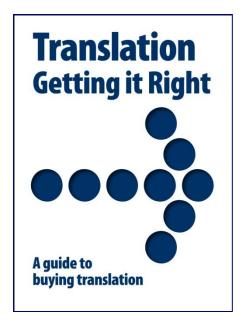
- 60-minute online educational session offered once or twice a month
- Watch live or recorded sessions

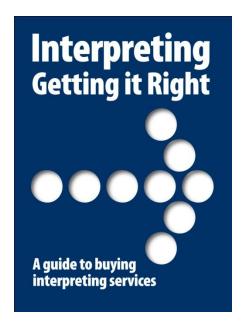
Webinars are available at

www.atanet.org/webinars/language/specialty-specific sessions



Client Education







Strategic Outlook

Priorities

- Outreach to new membership groups
- Communication strategy
- Further advances of certification



ata

American Translators Association

The Voice of Interpreters and Translators

ATA Certification Program

History

- First ATA exam administered in 1971
 - Developed by practitioners for practitioners
 - Three hour paper/pencil examination
- Major/minor errors
- Originally five texts
 - General
 - Semi-technical
 - Medical
 - Legal
 - Literary



Current

- System in place since 2001
 - Three-hour paper/pencil examination
 - Keyboarded option just started
 - Three source texts
 - Handout 1 Example from 2006
 - Volunteer graders (also select texts)
 - Twenty-five language pairs
 - Five error levels



Texts

- Three source texts 225-275 words (or equivalent)
 - Candidates translate two: Passage A (required) and either Passage B or Passage C
 - <u>A</u>: General text that expresses a view, sets forth an argument or presents a new idea
 - Newspaper editorial, essay, non-fiction book
 - B: Technical, scientific or medical in content
 - Patient education brochure, operating or installation instructions, encyclopedia article.
 - C: Financial, business or legal in the broadest sense
 - Contract or lease, financial report, government regulation
- B & C may be written by an expert, but not for other experts in that field.



Volunteer Grading and Training of Graders

- Graders are all ATA-certified practicing professionals
- Volunteer graders
- Semi-annual training
- Work together by language direction
- Passage-specific guidelines
- Into-English writing guidelines



Focus on Commercially Viable Languages

Languages in which there are enough ATA members and

energetic volunteers!

Into English	From English			
 Arabic Croatian Danish Dutch, French German Japanese Portuguese Russian Spanish 	 Chinese Croatian Dutch Finnish French German Hungarian Italian Japanese Polish Portuguese Russian Spanish Swedish Ukrainian 			

Challenge of Text Selection Process

- Source texts selected by language groups
 - Authentic texts with minor editing
 - Passage selection guidelines and review
- Translation challenges
 - Text level
 - Sentence level
 - Terminology level
- Translation Instructions (translation brief)



Framework and Flowchart for Rating

- Holistic test of language transfer
 - Five-level point system: 1, 2, 4, 8, or 16 point errors (since 2001)
 - Fail threshold is 18 error points
- Framework for Standardized Error Marking
 - Developed 1994, continuously revised
 - Specifies types/severities of transfer/mechanics errors
- Flowchart for Error Grading
 - Since 2002
 - Attempts to make a subjective process as objective as possible
- Example 2 Marked up sample target text



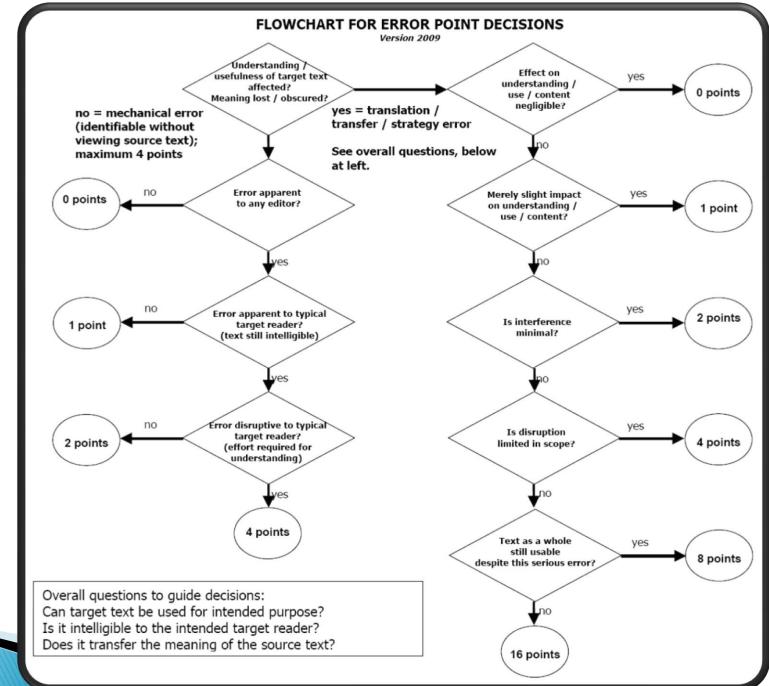
ATA Framework 2009

ATA CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARDIZED ERROR MARKING Version 2009

Exam Number:	
Exam Passage:	
Check here if for Review	

1	2	4	8	16	Code	Reason			
Errors tha	Errors that concern the form of the exam								
Trea	Treat missing material within the passage as an omission.				UNF	Unfinished (If a passage is substantially unfinished, do not grade the exam.)			
					ILL	Illegibility			
					IND	Indecision, gave more than one option			
Translation / strategic / transfer errors: Negative impact on understanding / use of target text.									
					MT	Mistranslation (use a subcategory if applicable)			
					MU	Misunderstanding of source text (if identifiable)			
					A	— Addition			
					0	— Omission			
					T	— Terminology, word choice			
					R	— Register			
					F	— Faithfulness			
					L	— Literalness			
					FA	— Faux ami (false friend)			
					COH	— Cohesion			
					AMB	— Ambiguity			
					ST	Style (inappropriate for specified type of text)			
					OTH	Other (describe)			
Mechanica	Mechanical errors: Negative impact on overall quality of target text. Points may vary by language. Maximum 4 points.								
					G	Grammar			
					SYN	Syntax (phrase / clause / sentence structure)			
					P	Punctuation			
					SP / CH	Spelling / Character (usually 1 point, maximum 2; if more than 2 points, another category must apply)			
					D	— Diacritical marks / Accents			
					С	— Capitalization			
					WF/ PS	Word form / Part of speech			
					U	Usage			
					OTH	Other (describe)			
0	0 x 2 = 0	0 x 4 = 0	0 x 8 0	0		Column totals			
	A grader may stop marking errors when the score reaches 46 error points. A grader may award a quality for each of up to three specific instances of exceptional trans			c	Quality points are subtracted from the error point total to yield a final score. A passage with a score of 18 or more points receives a grade of Fail.				
Total error points (add column totals):			Quality points (maximum 3):			Final passage score (subtract quality points from error points): 0			





Translator Certification Examination Pass Rates and Number of Examinations (n=7,585) 2001–2011



Grading Policy

- Two graders for each examination
- Grade independently
- Then compare scores
 - If discrepancies, then consult
 - Can modify (add overlooked errors, change points)
 - Can agree to disagree
 - Third grader
- Review and appeal available



Challenges:

- Specialized testing
 - ATA exam tests non-specialized translation skill
 - Need for specialized testing
 - Legal, medical, technical, etc.
 - Goes beyond what ATA can do with volunteers
- Expansion
 - New language combinations possible
 - Depend on volunteer availability
 - Challenging process to get started



ata

American Translators Association

The Voice of Interpreters and Translators

KSA Study/Fields Report

What are KSAs?

- K = Knowledge
- \circ S = Skills
- A = Abilities
- Competence is described in terms of KSAs



Authoritative Basis for KSA Study

- ISO 17024 General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons (2003 and 2012 editions)
- Certification scheme must:
 - Be based on a job and task analysis
 - Describe competence required to perform tasks
 - Be fair, valid, and reliable
- Competence = ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results
- KSA study establishes validity
- Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, from AERA, APA, & NCME (many editions; using 1999 edition)
- Certification: dependable identification of competence

ATA steps in KSA study

- Ask experts to identify KSAs via focus groups
 - Four focus groups; one included government
 - Focus group transcript study showed consistency
 - 36 KSAs were identified for job "translator"
 - We are aware that in the USG, job is "linguist"
- Develop survey questionnaire to rank KSAs
 - Used Qualtrics survey software
- Conduct survey (1453 completed surveys)



Top Knowledge Areas

- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Idiomatic usage (combinations of words)
- General knowledge
- Subject-matter-specific knowledge
- Ethical obligations



Top Skill Areas

- Textual analysis
- Terminology research
- General writing
- Editing and proofreading
- Computer (word processing and Internet)
- Organizational
- Personal time management



Top Ability Areas

- Read source language; write in target language
- Understand nuances and registers
- Perform language transfer
- Verify correspondence (= congruity judgment)
- Common sense
- Follow specifications
- Think analytically and intuitively



Fields Study

- Based on results of ATA KSA survey
- Conducted by Breakthrough Consulting Group
- Led by Dr. Paul Fields
- Developed test "blueprint"
- Each measurable KSA must find a home in
 - Eligibility requirements
 - Certification test or
 - Professional Development



Applicability to USG certification

- Describe government-specific translation tasks
 - Use structured translation specifications
 - ISO/TS 11669:2012 (Translation Projects General Guidance)
 - 21 translation parameters
 - Provide values for a specific type of translation task
- Hold government focus groups for each task
- Conduct government-specific surveys
- Develop test blueprints (as in Fields report)
- Consider ATA to manage USG certification



Recent Efforts to Strengthen the Exam

- Alignment with ILR Skill Levels
 - "A level of obvious competence with some room for growth."
 - A passing grade roughly equivalent to a minimum of ILR Level 3 translation proficiency
 - NEW: Reading/writing proficiency scores as eligibility option
- Possible "ATA rating"
- Research (NSF grant proposal)



ata

American Translators Association

The Voice of Interpreters and Translators

Keyboarded Exam

System Architecture

- Local computer 1 ←→ Exam computer 1
- Local computer 2 ←→ Exam computer 2
- Shared CertSoft server
- All exam computers talk with the same server
- Proctor monitors exams through server
- ATA HQ downloads results from server



Three-Layer Architecture

- Layer 1: local computers (temporarily limited)
 - Only keyboard, screen, and Internet
- Layer 2: remote exam computers
 - Pre-configured: selected apps and white list
- Layer 3: shared CertSoft server
 - Actual certification software (browser access)
- Very flexible and modular



Where are the exam computers? (Layer 2)

- Currently, "rented" from Amazon
 - virtual computers
 - ATA maintains a master and launches clones as needed
- Could be dedicated physical computers
- Can be anywhere (remote access)
 - Could even be dedicated local computer



Where is the CertSoft server? (Layer 3)

- Can be rented from a hosting service
- Can be a physical computer in your office
- Currently: Windows 2003 Server w/ ASPX



Security Requirements

- Avoid unauthorized distribution of source texts
- Avoid unauthorized distribution of target texts
- Keep candidate from contacting colleagues
- Make sure target texts get to graders
- Limit website access to a "white list"



What is it like to take the exam?

 What follows is actual screens from an experimental sitting by a candidate named "Tester Tester"



ATA Translation Certification



Instructions:

Save your translations at any time by clicking the "Save Translation" button.

Your work will be automatically saved every 60 seconds. You will be given 3 hours to complete your examination.

To work on a new passage, select a passage by using the dropdown menu below.

Passage A is mandatory for all candidates, and you must also choose either passage B or passage C to be graded. Please read both passage B and Passage C through before deciding which one to translate

When you are finished working on both passages, click the "Submit Exam" button.

Select a passage to translate: - General - MANDATORY -

Save Translation

Exam Site: Washington,

Candidate: tester tester

Remaining Time: 02:59:55

Save Count:

Exam: Spanish to English

10/19/2011, 7:00:00 AM

Spanish

Spanish Into English General (mandatory) - Passage A

Instructions: This text is part of the introduction to a report on education to be presented to a funding institution. Translate everything below the horizontal line.

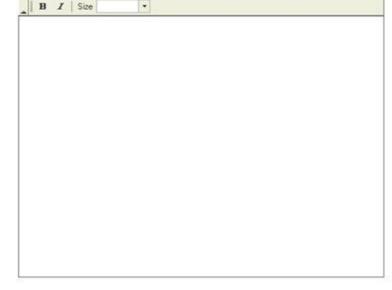
La educación peruana

El Perú se encuentra entre los países latinoamericanos con peores resultados en educación, según un estudio realizado entre 43 países de varios continentes. El estudio se efectuó en una muestra de 4.500 a 10.000 escolares de 15 años, e incluyó pruebas de comprensión de lectura, matemáticas y ciencias

Los resultados de esta evaluación son muy preocupantes si se tiene en cuenta que el objetivo del estudio fue conocer la preparación de los jóvenes frente a los desafios planteados por la sociedad contemporánea.

En el examen de comprensión de lectura, que tuvo un máximo de 546 puntos, el Perú ocupó el último lugar, con 327 puntos, debajo de México, Argentina, Chile y Brasil.





Save Translation

DO NOT CLICK UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR DRAFT TRANSLATION Submit Exam

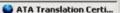
Last Local sync: 18:37:48 Last Remote sync: None











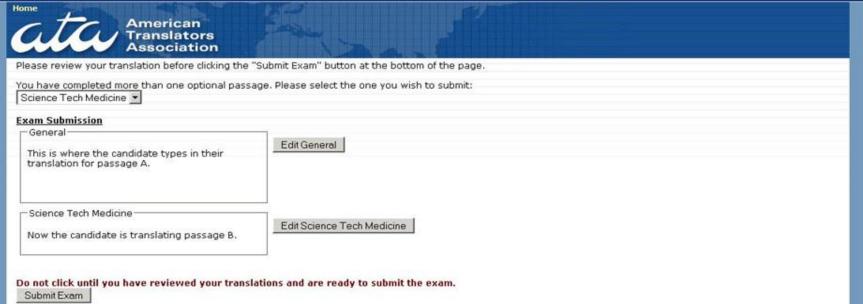






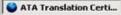
_ 8 X

ATA Translation Certification _ 8 ×

















Contacting the ATA

Phone

(703) 683-6100

Fax

(703) 683-6122

Website

www.atanet.org

Email

ata@atanet.org





Thank you for your interest!

Backup Slides