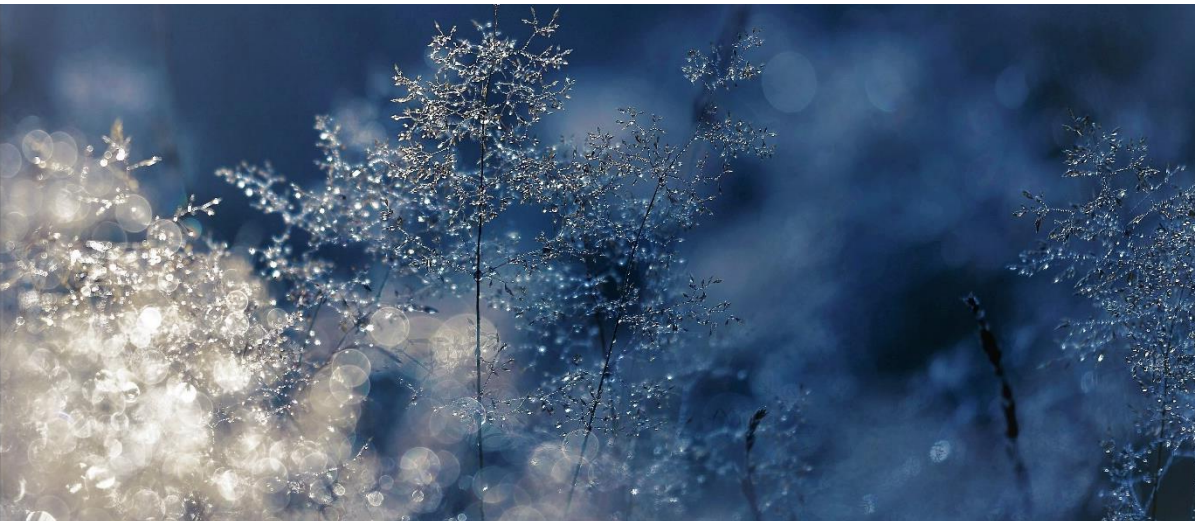


译风

The ATA Chinese Language Division Newsletter | Winter 2019 | 美国翻译协会中文翻译分会通讯



This issue of *Yifeng* witnesses yet more changes as we bid farewell to our layout editor, Tianlu Redmon (贾天璐) and welcome new layout editor Pearl Zheng (郑绍娴) on [page 4](#). Many thanks to both of them for their hard work ensuring that *Yifeng* is not just interesting to read but also pleasant to look at.

ATA annual conferences share much in common, but each offers a unique experience. Read about first-time attendee Jessie Liu's experience in New Orleans ([pg. 7](#)) and how Sean Song (宋俊杰) has improved his conference experience through repeat attendance ([pg. 9](#)). If you missed her at this year's conference, you can also meet CLD member Gigi Yau (尤建之) in our new feature 15 Minutes with June | 译者访谈录, by Junqiao Chen (陈俊巧), on [page 12](#).

Since our last issue on the new Chinese-to-English ATA certification exam, CLD member Rony Gao (高嵘) not only obtained the certification but figured out how to do so "in ten hours"! See how he achieved this feat on [page 16](#) and learn some tips for preparing for the certification exam.

Finally, in the Resources Roundup on [page 19](#), *Yifeng* editor Trevor Cook reviews the indispensable *Pleco* app, and, in Bird's Corner, CLD Administrator Pency Tsai (蔡晓萍) shares a fresh take on adopting translation and interpretation technology on [page 22](#).

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About the Editors

Trevor Cook has enjoyed editing *Yifeng* since the Summer 2018 issue. He is a professional Chinese-to-English translator and offers translation and other linguistic and cultural services through his company Cook Intercultural Services LLC (www.cookintercultural.com). He is interim vice president of Arizona Translators & Interpreters, Inc. (www.atinc.org), and likes to meet and work with fellow translators and interpreters locally, nationally, and abroad. Please send him your article submissions, ideas, suggestions, and complaints at trevor@cookintercultural.com.



Editor



Layout Editor

Read more about new layout editor Pearl Zheng on page 4. Contact her at pri.zheng@gmail.com.

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Farewell from Our Outgoing Layout Editor

Tianlu Redmon | 贾天璐

Happy New Year! As we say in Chinese, “新年新气象.” As the outgoing layout editor of *Yifeng*, I would like to introduce to you our new layout editor, Pearl Zheng (郑绍娴). You may remember her contribution to the 2018 summer issue, “New Orleans Dos and Don’ts for a Successful Trip.” Pearl and I have met several times in person, and I was struck by how kind and smart she is. I was even more delighted when I learned she has always had an interest in art and design! I don’t think I can present to you a better candidate to take over my position, so please join me in welcoming Pearl as the new layout editor!

As for me, I will continue serving the CLD as the new Assistant Administrator and will work side by side with Pency to revitalize our division. Many of you have inspired me since I joined CLD and began serving as the layout editor at the end of 2014. I hope to see more and more of you supporting our division by volunteering and welcoming new members to the family. I would also love to get to know more of you, whether by reading your articles in *Yifeng* or meeting you in person at ATA conferences.

See you around!

Tianlu Redmon
Houston, Texas

Tianlu Redmon is a conference, legal, and business interpreter and translator. She is President and Owner of Tianlu Chinese Language and Culture (www.tianluchinese.com). E-mail: tianlu@tianluchinese.com



Assistant Administrator

A Little Story About Our New Layout Editor

Pearl Zheng | 郑绍娴

It's 1988 in Taipei and I'm 3 years old. I'm lying on a cold tile floor on top of a large piece of paper. My mother is drawing a line around my body like a policeman would around the victim in a crime scene. When she finishes, I stand up and look over the freshly drawn silhouette of my body. My mom then asks my sister and me to draw the eyes, nose, and heart in the right places and write down the English name for each body part. The more names we write, the more gold stars we receive.

For as long as I can recall, my childhood was filled with fun and unique ways to learn the English language. Monday, it was acting out a Shakespeare play. Tuesday, it was moving around magnets to form the solar system. Born to two native Taiwanese parents who ran an English-speaking household in a Chinese-speaking country, this was where I set off on my lifelong journey to master two languages.

Fast forward two decades. Fresh out of college and eager to become a translator, I joined the ranks of those individuals who bridge language gaps around the world. Although I worked mostly in written translation, I was routinely asked to stand center stage and interpret for government and multinational leaders from both ends of the world.

After moving from Taiwan to the U.S., I decided to pursue a Master's in Conference Interpreting at the University of Maryland, where I further honed my translation skills and added simultaneous interpreting into my repertoire. The move also allowed me to be closer to my (extremely attractive) husband—a huge bonus!

When I joined the ATA and attended my first ATA conference in D.C., 2017, I felt like I found a community of my peers who are generous in sharing their knowledge about the industry. The sense of belonging to a wonderful community inspired me to be more actively involved. That is why when Tianlu Redmon (贾天璐), our former layout editor, asked me to take over her role, I immediately agreed. As I transition into this role, I would like to extend a warm thank you to Tianlu for her great contribution to the ATA and the CLD. If anyone has suggestions to help make *Yifeng*, our CLD newsletter, more visually appealing and engaging, please drop me a note at pri.zheng@gmail.com.



Letter from the CLD Administrator

Pency Tsai | 蔡晓萍

I remember when Di Wu ushered in a new chapter in CLD's story only a few years ago. I remember being eager, yet so green and unsure of things, as he passed the baton over to Alex Gao (高慧麟). Still uncertain about which direction to steer this ship, we started by continuing the idea of building the group into a community of professionals, one that would welcome new members with open arms.

Alex took on this approach with enthusiasm, bringing his unique charm and sense of humor to the table. His inviting smile and air of fun "goofiness" fostered a culture of togetherness that has led us to where we are today.

Fast forward to 2019 – today, it is such a pleasure to look around and see what we have become. Our annual meeting is boisterous with enthusiasm increasing every year. This year, we set specific goals to bring more people forward to take on different roles. Regular meetings are held with many participants; recently we touched on the assignment of duties such as the upkeep of the website. Thanks to both Elaine and Julie for taking on the task. Kudos to Pearl Zheng (郑绍娴) and Junqiao Chen (陈俊巧) for joining Trevor Cook on the *Yifeng* team. And, thanks to Liming Pals (王丽明) for being our Facebook guru.



Change is in the air, with it a welcome breath of freshness. CLD needs precisely this energy and proactiveness to move forward. Tianlu Redmond (贾天璐), our Assistant Administrator, is bringing forth a sense of organization and structure to our division, something this silly bird just doesn't have the chops for. Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, which is why we all need to band together to contribute in our own special way.

The Chinese Language Division has evolved over the years and is quite different from the groups in the past. New faces abound, and new ideas are being bounced around. Even so, all this grows from the same core that has persisted through the years. Administrators have come and gone, and their colleagues have moved on to other things, but this division's core values remain the same. Before Bin and Garry, there were others who gathered groups of like-minded individuals to build this family

of friends, interpreters, and translators seeking a community where they could seek counsel when they needed it. In their search of support from people who shared their passion for the Chinese and English languages, they came together into the fraternity that is the CLD.

You are a part of this too.

Your voice should be heard. Share your thoughts and ideas – bring on those proposals for the next ATA Annual Conference, and ask those questions that are nagging you in the back of your mind. It's all important – all it takes is the first step.

Happy 2019, everyone!

The Bird

Pency Tsai is a court-accredited interpreter currently serving as the CLD Administrator. Translating keeps her mind sharp when she is not interpreting in business, medical, and tribunal settings. She is the owner of VoiceOyster. Contact her at pency@voiceoyster.com



CLD Administrator

My First ATA Conference –

More than Just an Escape from the Kids

Jessie Liu

I first became aware of the existence of the American Translators Association in late August 2018 when I met Pency Tsai (蔡晓萍), the Chinese Language Division Administrator, in New York. Although I didn't know much about the ATA, when Pency told me about its 59th annual conference to be held in New Orleans that coming October, I made up my mind immediately to go because I had been looking for an excuse to get away from my children (I love them dearly but need some space from them occasionally to keep my sanity).

Conference registration fees and membership dues brought the cost of the trip to \$1,000—and I hadn't even left home! I remember saying to myself that this conference had better be darn good. A round-trip plane ticket between Los Angeles and New Orleans and a hotel for four nights multiplied the cost threefold, along with my expectations of the conference. I remember telling myself then that something really unbelievably amazing needs to happen during this trip because on this budget I could've done three escape-from-my-children trips.

I arrived at the conference Welcome Celebration with a ton of expectations, a

good amount of anxiety, and a hint of nervousness. Although I walked in with a “buddy” and another “newbie” like me, I knew I couldn't rely wholly on them and that I needed to find my own playground. Ah-ha, “Chinese Language Division!”—the big bold letters at the corner table smiled down at me. Off I went toward it, and that sign marked the beginning of a very fruitful and inspiring journey!

I developed friendships with many like-minded professionals and fellow linguists—a reward that no price can ever buy—and that is my biggest prize! The coming together of these brilliant minds of their language specialties resulted in endless discussion of rich and inspiring ideas and topics. I certainly appreciated the platform that the ATA annual conference created for such a great meeting of minds. I also must mention the Chinese Language Division's distinguished speaker: Mr. Zhongliang Chen, chief of the Chinese translation service documentation division at the United Nations department for general assembly and conference management, accepted an invitation to be a distinguished speaker at the conference! Given the caliber of Mr. Chen and past distinguished speakers, it would probably not be too far-fetched to imagine the celebrity Chinese

government interpreter Ms. Lu Zhang (张璐) speaking at some future ATA conference as a CLD distinguished speaker.

I also liked the workshops. They were packed with essential information that a language practitioner needs for different aspect of providing language services. I was so inspired by some of the ideas presented in the workshops that I have already started thinking about sharing some of my own experiences working in California Superior Court as a staff interpreter. Although several workshops are held concurrently during each time slot, I appreciate that many sessions are recorded so that I can watch or listen to some of those I couldn't attend.

I feel that the ATA annual conference did

an outstanding job in bringing so many language professionals together. The conference is a great place to make connections, network, or simply find new friends who can laugh at your jokes that a non-linguist would never be able to appreciate. I believe that interpreters or translators achieve the ultimate success when their presence, whether in voice or on paper, is not felt by their audience or readers. We truly are heroic in silence, and it's important that we be reminded of and praised for the nobility of the work we do—at least by each other—because it is hard for others to understand this lonely but intellectually challenging profession. I left the conference with my many expectations well-met, and I cannot wait to see everyone again in Palm Springs, California, in 2019!

Jessie is a California court certified Mandarin interpreter. She is currently staff interpreter at California Superior Court, San Bernardino County, and also interprets in federal and immigration court. She also loves the Spanish language and is excited to be learning it in preparation to add it to her repertoire of working languages.



Finding My Niche for a Better Conference Experience

Sean Song | 宋俊杰

In October 2017, while attending a linguist mixer event at the Los Angeles Netflix office, I met another translator who told me about the American Translators Association (ATA) and shared with me how she had benefited from being a member. I have been a translator and subtitler for over 15 years and am quite busy with my work and life, so, although I had heard of the ATA, I had never thought about joining. I did not get involved with organizations like the ATA or get certified not because I didn't need help, seek professional development, or desire to network with fellow translators, but because of my own ignorance of the associated benefits.

The fellow translator I met told me that she really learned a lot in the conferences and sessions held at each ATA annual conference. She said she would be going to the next one in DC where I live, and I told her that I may go to check it out as well.

I became an ATA member and signed up for the conference rather late, so it was quite expensive because I missed the deadline for early registration. I attended some sessions and met a few people. I met some other Chinese translators but ended up missing networking opportunities because I had to leave early.

I learned two important things from that first ATA conference. First, I met Sara Maria Hasbun (韩梅), Managing Director of Meridian Linguistics, who told me about the Locworld conference. She explained how she got her first big job for her company there. I was able to attend Locworld in Seattle this year. Although it mainly focuses on corporate businesses, it was still a good venue to learn about new technologies and network with other people in the industry. Many big companies tend to work with the largest translation companies. However, many corporations with in-house translation departments were there, and many of those still work with freelance translators directly. This is a great marketing opportunity with the potential to open new doors for anyone looking for more direct clients.

The second thing I learned was the importance of ATA translation certification to potential clients. I passed the ATA English-to-Chinese translation certification exam this summer. I did not get more direct clients right away, but the certification certainly helped me gain the trust of potential clients. I encourage ATA members who haven't yet taken an ATA translation certification exam to do so. It will surely help you.

I was hesitant to attend this year's conference because I had felt a little disoriented at my first ATA conference. I did not know many people, and many sessions turned out not to be what I had hoped for. It was difficult for me to gauge my actual interest in the various workshops just from their titles.

However, with the help of Pency Tsai (蔡晓萍), the administrator of the ATA Chinese language Division¹, I was able to get a room at the Sheraton Hotel just opposite the ATA conference venue. Since I had not originally planned on attending, I did not book early enough for a room in the conference hotel. My expectations were not very high for this conference, but I was pleasantly surprised.

First, it felt a lot warmer this time. I had made more friends and met more new people. The hotel was nice with breakfast and afternoon snacks included. I am grateful to Pency for helping me find such accommodations at the last minute.

Evelyn Yang Garland (杨荣), a director on the ATA Board, explained my feelings perfectly. She said that if you are new to the ATA, you probably don't know many people, and it can be hard for you to find the right sessions. But, after you know who is speaking in each session, you will find that some of them are amazing speakers. That is exactly how I felt. I was a little disoriented at my first ATA conference, but

I found my place at this one rather quickly, and many sessions I attended were quite interesting.

I was impressed with a session by one speaker who talked about the importance of good customer service. He said that if we are to treat our customers nicely, we should also treat our translators this way. Many translators testified that they had great experiences working with his company. It reminded me of what I heard from the founder of East Penn, a battery company located in Pennsylvania. East Penn Manufacturing Co. ranks as one of America's Best Large Employers for 2018 by Forbes and Statista.² The motto of the company's founder is that their success lies in three simple things: Treating their customers kindly, treating their employees kindly, and treating their vendors kindly. This simple rule has made them very successful.

The language business is not only about documents and computers; it's about people. Unfortunately, I have encountered some businesses and agencies who did not pay me for my work. I would imagine many freelance translators have faced this same issue. Despite those experiences, I remain grateful that there are also many wonderful people in this industry who are doing amazing work. They encourage me to continue learning from their great examples.

At the 2018 conference, I also had the opportunity to network with many different companies and was interviewed by my company's technology partner SmartCat. If you have a translation company, or if your company has a translation department, and you cannot afford a translation management system, SmartCat is worth a try. It offers free CAT tools integration, payment solutions, simultaneous translation, and editing as well as a Translator Marketplace.

I am not being paid to advertise for these companies, I only mention them because I think they may be helpful for some of you.

I discovered that although it takes time to feel comfortable and become a real member of a community, that investment pays off. Before joining the ATA, I was a lone ranger in the translation business, but I am glad I

finally found a community full of like-minded people. The benefits of participating in this community are not limited to finding new clients and learning from others; it is also an opportunity to enrich ourselves by helping others and contributing to the community. I am still learning to master this, but I feel certain it is worthwhile. My second conference allowed me to really get to know more people and broaden my horizons. I am planning to come back this October because it is a great way to recharge.

¹ <https://www.chineselanguagedivision.com>

² <http://www.eastpenmanufacturing.com/east-penn-ranked-in-2018-americas-best-large-employers-by-forbes/>

Sean Song graduated from the Communication University of China with a bachelor's degree in Journalism, from the London School of Economics with an MSc in Globalization and Communication, and the University of Southern California with an MA in Global Communication. He began his career as a journalist for an Asian newspaper and media company but later became a translator. He is the founder of Translation Boulevard (translationblvd.com). Email: seansong@translationblvd.com



Fifteen Minutes with June

译者访谈录

Junqiao Chen | 陈俊巧

Interview with Gigi Yau | 尤建之



Gigi Yau has been participating in the Chinese Language Division (CLD) since she attended her first ATA conference in San Francisco in 2016, but she has been translating and interpreting—trilingually—for many years before that.

Join us in our conversation this issue to learn about Gigi's unique entry into translation and interpreting, the challenges she has overcome as a trilingual translator/interpreter, and some of her most memorable experiences, as well her valuable advice for up-and-coming language service professionals.

Gigi, how do you introduce yourself as a professional translator and interpreter?

As an interpreter, I have native or near-native fluency in English, Mandarin, and Cantonese and can interpret fluently in any direction among all three languages.

I translate from English into Chinese as well as from Chinese into English and use both traditional and simplified characters. Long ago, when Billy Graham Evangelistic Association needed a Chinese-English translator, they called the Chinese church I attended, and the Christian education minister referred me to them. After the first testing assignments, the Hong Kong office commented that I did a better job than any of the translators in their Hong Kong office at that time.

Wow, so your translation career began with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association?

Yes. Just like that.

How did you start interpreting?

I had a roommate who was an interpreter of Cambodian and English. One time when she was out of town, an interpreter scheduler left a message on the home answering machine, so I replied informing the agency that this interpreter was not available. Somehow, the scheduler who answered recognized my spoken English carried a foreign accent and talked me into interpreting for that agency. About three years later, I quit, and then a year or two after that the owner of another agency pulled me back in because the industry was in need of good interpreters.

It sounds like your work has been in demand. How do you keep your career-related knowledge and skills up-to-date?

I attend workshops organized by the University of Minnesota and take training courses such as Bridging the Gap.¹ I attend the ATA Annual Conference and learn from its workshops and sessions and by visiting booths in the expo hall. At the Chinese Church I attend, I purposefully attend the Mandarin worship and mingle with native Mandarin speakers to keep my third language sharp.

What do you consider as important milestones in your career?

I have translated hymns and songs between Chinese and English into singable lyrics,

which I consider to be an accomplishment. I have accepted voiceover assignments in Cantonese as well as in Mandarin, and for a year and a half I was engaged almost weekly at a professional recording studio recording in my third language. I am a classical singer, and my use of voice helped me with excellent delivery.

How have you been involved in the CLD?

I first met members of the CLD at the first ATA annual conference I attended in 2016. I was happy to mingle with other translators and interpreters working in the Chinese-English pair.

How has it helped you?

I have benefitted much from the group messaging: when I have questions about pricing my projects or other things, I bring them up in the messaging group and also observe other's discussions. It has been useful as well as lots of fun.

Have you ever regretted embarking on the journey of translation and interpretation?

I stopped doing translations around the mid-1990s and started interpreting in 2001. In hindsight, I should have pursued translation when I changed my career from IT to sales and mortgage home loan origination. At the time, I thought that

interpreting might allow me to meet people of limited English proficiency and hopefully broaden my clientele in my mortgage business. In reality, when I interpreted, I would not bring up my sales or mortgage origination business unless asked.

Moreover, I was not as specialized as I should have been. Looking back, I should have pursued subtitle translation like when I started at Billy Graham. I should have pursued legal court interpreting qualifications sooner and started working directly with the court system earlier as well.

So, it sounds like the regrets might be more about timing than the work itself. What have been some of your most memorable clients or projects?

I worked on one project where the clients debated whether the Chinese texts in their next book publication should be top down instead of flowing left to right like English. One time, a client brought up a tongue twister using only the si, shi, and xi sounds.

It's always interesting to hear about some of the unique requests our clients come up with! Have you faced any particular challenges in your translation/interpretation career?

For voiceover, when I record using my third language, Mandarin, I usually transcribe the text into pinyin (Romanization) and study it that way before recording. One week, I had around eight hours of recording coming up, and on the first day at the recording studio, my professional recording partner suggested that we record the longest and hardest scripts first. I agreed because he had decades of experience in this industry and I usually accepted his suggestions, but I realize now that I should have expressed disagreement and recorded the easy scripts first (things like text of daily-use phrases, phone numbers, etc.) on the first day and taken more time to study the texts with harder vocabulary (things like medical writeups). Because I went along with that suggestion, I probably made more mistakes in the recordings, and after that our bookings thinned out.

What would you say to the newer generation of translators and interpreters?

Do whatever you do as if it were a full-time and long-term career, and continue to get as much education as possible. Observe people with more experience and ability and learn from them.



How do you perceive the importance of knowing more than one language?



Once, when vacationing in Europe, I arrived at the Munich airport late in the evening, and a flight attendant was waving at me. So, I let her speak with me. That flight attendant spoke German and French fluently and some English. She was with a passenger who spoke only Mandarin. I was able to help them figure out the passenger’s connecting flight, which was the next day. I was able to host her in my hotel room where she could sleep on the sofa and have a hot shower. The next day, as we took public transportation to the airport together, I realized that I had helped someone who was very worried and vulnerable at a time she most needed help.

¹ <https://xculture.org/medical-interpreter-training/bridging-the-gap-training-program/>

June, our interviewer, is a professionally trained Chinese < > English interpreter and translator with a master’s degree from the University of Maryland. While located in the greater D.C. area for the past five years, she has assisted with mutually beneficial exchanges between Chinese and U.S. government officials and between educational institutions and private companies, helping them to establish enduring relations and achieve concrete goals.



How I Became a Certified Translator in 10 Hours, from Scratch

Rony Gao | 高嵘

Since January 2018, I have been coordinating a practice group for Chinese/English translators in which we help each other prepare for the ATA certification exam. We practice with one passage per week and usually alternate between Chinese-to-English and English-to-Chinese. The weekly homework is typically around 350 words or characters, which takes about 1 hour to finish. By the time I took the Chinese-to-English ATA certification exam in May, I had finished about 10 passages in that particular direction. Since I'm not so much a translator (I am an interpreter), those 10 hours were basically all my preparation for the translation exam.

Apparently, it worked. I passed the exam, joining the ranks of a small handful of individuals who are currently ATA-certified in Chinese-to-English translation. (Few translators have passed this new ATA certification examination yet because it was launched only in January 2018.) In a way, I can say that I went from knowing nothing about translation to being certified by one of the most prestigious bodies in the profession after only 10 hours of preparation.

Now, before I share my experience, let me say that the title of this article is admittedly exaggerated—and perhaps a little provocative. After all, in addition to the 10 hours of homework, I also ended up spending more time

- carefully comparing my own work with others';
- digesting feedback I received from my practice partners;
- fulfilling administrative duties for the group, such as selecting passages, releasing weekly assignments (a WeChat group helped minimize the workload), and compiling everyone's submission into one Google doc.

So, even though “only 10 hours” might be a bit of an exaggeration, I'm glad to report that this practice group proved to be a very successful experiment for me, and I think I've found a very efficient way to prepare for the exam.

Here are a few tips based on my experience that might help you successfully prepare for an ATA certification exam.

Tip #1: Join or Create a Practice Group.

Finding peers who share the same goal and can critique each other's work is not always easy, and I think joining an association like the ATA is extremely helpful in this regard. The core members of my practice group were colleagues that I met at the ATA Annual Conference in Washington, DC, in October 2017. I highly recommend that any freelancers looking to boost their careers attend conferences like this, especially the ATA's annual conference.

If my case study isn't convincing enough, here is another post written by our colleague Sarah Symons Glegorio, who also vouches for the benefit of joining a study group. In fact, this single post saved me many hours that would have otherwise been spent unproductively. Thank you, Sarah!
www.sharktranslations.com/post/2017/1/13/preparation-for-the-ata-exam

Tip #2: Take the Practice Exam.

The ATA administers a practice exam that follows the same format and grading scheme as the actual certification exam. As a professional test-prep coach, myself, I honestly could not think of a better way to gauge my readiness than taking a practice exam. The ATA certification examination grading scheme requires that a single translated passage have no more than 17 error points deducted in order to pass.

When I received my practice test result, the number of error points deducted was, to my great surprise, zero. Needless to say, this boosted my confidence that I would likely pass the actual exam, and so I did.

Tip #3: Never Translate. Always Rewrite.

In my training as a conference interpreter, the best eureka moment came from my teacher Anchi Lue, who always emphasized the importance of "making sense" in English. All too often, after hearing something in Chinese, a Chinese interpreter begins to produce an English sentence that doesn't even make sense to the interpreter's own ears. On the first day of class, Anchi was quick to point out that I made very few of those "Chinglish" mistakes when speaking English to express my own opinion. In other words, I only fail to make sense when I interpret from Chinese. The reason, according to Anchi, is that I didn't have a "self-censoring mechanism" in place. This so-called "self-censorship" means that interpreters should act as if they are not interpreting but, rather, chatting with an English speaker about something that they understand, with the goal of helping the other person understand it, too. Before you begin to interpret, ask: in that chat with an English speaker, would you say what you are about to say? If the answer is no, then you'd better rephrase it.

This was a truly enlightening comment. It made me rethink what I'm doing when I interpret. For two languages as different as Chinese and English, it means we need to rephrase almost every single sentence to make it sound like English, rather than interpreting the words literally.

More importantly for our purpose, this principle applies perfectly to translation. Assume that you are not translating but writing an email to someone with the aim of delivering the source's meaning. Before you translate, think: in that email, would you still write what you are about to write? If the answer is no, then you'd better rewrite it.

Tip #4: Always Time Yourself.

The computerized ATA certification exam provides a relatively generous time limit: you have three hours to translate two of three passages provided. However, this doesn't mean that time is irrelevant in the test-taking equation. Whenever possible, you should always track the amount of time spent on any practice material and make

sure that you are able to leave enough time to check your work before submission.

Keep in mind that you are also expected to fulfill a number of technical requirements for the exam, such as saving the work in the right font and format, which will take some time as well.

After participating in a practice group, taking the practice exam, developing an attitude of "re-writing," and always timing myself as I practiced, I was able to successfully pass the Chinese-to-English ATA translation certification exam, even without extensive translation experience. I hope the lessons from my experience can also translate into exam success for readers in the Chinese Language Division and beyond.

Finally, I would like to thank a few individual colleagues whose contribution to the group was especially valuable: Tian Zhang, Liming Pals, Shaoli Needham, Xiangping (Renee) Wang, Tianlu, and Zilin Cui. I learned a great deal from their homework and feedback, and I wish them the best of luck if they decide to take the ATA exam down the road.

Rony is a self-proclaimed nerd and language lover based in Toronto. He takes pleasure in bridging the cultural gap between Chinese speakers and English speakers. Rony holds a Master of Conference Interpreting degree from Glendon College, Canada, and became an ATA-certified Chinese-to-English translator in 2018.



Resources Roundup

A Column for CLD members to review materials helpful to translators and interpreters

Trevor Cook

Pleco by Pleco Software. Available for iOS and Android. Version 3.2.35 for iOS reviewed, run on an iPhone 5S.

For my first seven years of learning Chinese, the *Pocket Oxford Chinese Dictionary* was my go-to reference source for looking up Chinese words. I wore thin the edges of the pages containing the radical index and filled the paper pages with marks showing which words I had previously looked up and how many times I had referred to particular pages. Although the “pocket” in the title is something of a misnomer (unless you have enormous pockets), that dictionary struck the best balance between comprehensiveness and portability for my needs.

In the late 2000s, everything changed. Mobile device technology was coming of age, and after a classmate introduced me to the Pleco app, even as a poor student I *had* to purchase a used iPod Touch so that I could use this remarkable tool. Although I mainly used the included free dictionaries and features at first, over time I have added to my dictionary collection through the app, and it has become an invaluable professional tool.

Pleco started its life in 2000 as an electronic version of the forerunner of my favored “pocket” dictionary, the then-called *Oxford Concise English & Chinese Dictionary*. Today, it boasts an impressive library of general and specialist dictionaries available for purchase within the app or as a free download. I myself use the purchased *21st Century English-Chinese Dictionary*, the *ABC Chinese-English Comprehensive Dictionary* (edited by John DeFrancis), the *Xiandai Hanyu Guifan Cidian* (《现代汉语规范词典》), the *Duogongneng Chengyu Cidian* (《多功能成语词典》), and the *Gu Hanyu Da Cidian* (《古汉语大词典》), as well as a few free dictionaries: a dictionary of Chinese Buddhist terms, the *Cross-Straits Chinese Dictionary* (published by the Taiwan Ministry of Education and focusing on differences in usage across the Taiwan Strait), and the crowd-sourced and frequently updated CC-CEDICT (from mdbg.net) that comes with Pleco. A variety of other dictionaries are available, including Chinese-English dictionaries of traditional Chinese medicine and PLA military terms and a free dictionary of 4,000 terms from tea culture.

Facilitating the orderly simultaneous use of so many dictionaries is one of many ways in which Pleco shines. When you select a term from search results, Pleco will list each of the dictionary entries for that term in your order of preference, and you can choose which dictionaries display their entries immediately and which only show that entries are available. Within entries, you can tap words to get pop-up definitions (for which function you can set default dictionaries and cycle through all dictionaries as you use them).

Dictionary search is intuitive and effective. Searches can be run in simplified characters, traditional characters, Pinyin (with or without tone indicators), or any combination of the three with no loss in functionality. A number of wildcards help you find words fast, even when you are not quite sure for what exactly you are searching. All searches are saved to a history, which is handy when working on a long translation project or when you want to come back later and review terms or create flashcards.

Although Pleco serves the function of a pocket dictionary library, it has many other useful features, most of which are available through in-app purchase. I have found the animated stroke order diagrams and flashcard system to be worth the cost. The stroke order diagrams, easily accessible through the dictionary entry view, help me develop good writing habits. The in-app

flashcard function has all the features of most standalone flashcard apps—including easy management of multiple flashcard decks, access to downloadable decks compiled by other app users, and a spaced repetition quizzing algorithm to help with memorization. However, integration of this function directly with the app and its other features makes it easy to create new flashcards with a single tap as you go, rather than mucking about in separate apps or programs.

Although I have yet to try it, Pleco's optical character recognition (OCR) is highly regarded and has been improved to take advantage of new camera technologies on recent generations of mobile phones. Pleco will identify characters without even needing to take a photo and provide you with a definition according to your dictionary preferences. Outside of this "live" OCR, you can also use the app's OCR feature on a variety of file types.

For those who prefer to keep their Chinese reading entirely electronic, a "reader" function let's you view pop-up definitions (again, according to your preferences) with a simple tap of a word or character. A clipboard reader function is included at no charge.

Other available add-ins include full-screen handwriting input, audio files to use with the dictionaries from various Mandarin (and Cantonese) speakers, a variety of paid



and free fonts, and a library of non-dictionary reference books, including the latest edition of Endymion Wilkinson's 1,300-page *Chinese History: A New Manual*, and various graded Chinese readers.

Not only is Pleco an indispensable tool for the modern student of Chinese, it has developed into a valuable and space-saving resource for language professionals working in the Chinese < > English language pair. I highly recommend it!

Do you use any apps, books, or other resources that you love? Share them with your colleagues! Email trevor@cookintercultural.com to find out how. Reviews of Chinese-language resources are especially welcome! All submissions for *Yifeng* are welcome in both English and Chinese.



Bird's Corner: Investing in Technology and the “Angel's Share”

Pency Tsai | 蔡晓萍

In life, you only get back what you put into something (or something along those lines). Maybe it's better if I say that your share in something is determined by the amount of capital that you put up and invest in to nurture this “something” into “something bigger.”

Technology. It's the invisible hand of change that has brought us forward from the beginning of time to make us the dominant species in the world today. From the advent of fire to the beginnings of electrical currents to the harnessing of the power of subatomic particles, technology has pushed the boundaries, taking us along for the ride. Our field has had its own fair share of technological advances, and those who have embraced the new tools have enjoyed increased productivity and improved quality. So, let's glimpse into the coming future and see how it will be shaped by the technological tidal wave...

My name is Bird and I've been in the business for 12 years, so the integration of machine and humans in the translation landscape has been a part of my work-in-progress career. I have spent many thousands of hours building the database that is now integral to my translation software suite of tools. The ability to maintain consistency

when handling similar phrases and terms is invaluable from my client's point of view. Had I not jumped on this in its early days, I would have had to turn down many projects on the basis of it being too much for one person to handle. Too often, I would be questioned as to why one phrase was translated multiple ways in one document. By embracing TM software, I've become a better translator.

On the other side of the spectrum, I was pretty hesitant with regards to real-time interpretation tools when they first arrived on the scene. The flash and pizzazz of advertisements were alluring, but the end product just didn't live up to the hype. The dream of speaking into a device and having it recite what I said in another language just had way too many variables that programmers couldn't work around.

But what if I used it to my advantage? In its infancy, the interpretation tools just didn't work well in real-life settings where speed and audible clarity was not ideal. So how did they work on this? They started with perfecting the mimicry aspect of the software. The ability to perfectly transcribe what was dictated was a breakthrough – the machine learning to determine what was said, in the context of things, and deciphering between the choices when faced with something ambiguous... that was a game-changer. Filtering through all of this and analyzing the possibilities

before coming up with what was said – brilliant! So how did this help me? It made my life in a simultaneous setting so much easier. I was able to visually see what was said with a high percentage of accuracy and could focus entirely on interpreting the words into the target language.

Awesome.

So, how about when they upgraded that transcriber to a translator/interpreter? It's not there yet, because there's just too many variables for the software to sift through. Computers haven't gotten to the level of the human mind so we're still not going the way of the Dodo bird anytime soon. Until they do, I'll be working away with my transcriber assistant and interpreting away with my visual aid. That's the beauty of looking at new tools with the eye of an adopter – if you look hard enough, you'll find a way to improve upon your own practices.

I was at a function recently where someone shared a beautiful story about the love of scotch and the slow process of making the drink. Scotch is left to sit in a barrel while it ages, and the older the scotch, the better the taste – kind of like a seasoned interpreter or translator. Every year, 2% of the scotch is lost while it's sitting in the barrel. They call this the “angel's share” in the industry.

So, the next time you're sipping on that 12-year-old scotch, just remember that 24% of that flavourful taste was approved by someone in the heavens. A toast to you, Jim, wherever you are. 😊

The Bird

Pency Tsai is a court-accredited interpreter currently serving as the CLD Administrator. Translating keeps her mind sharp when she is not interpreting in business, medical, and tribunal settings. She is the owner of VoiceOyster. Contact her at pency@voiceoyster.com.



Bulletin Board



Over 100 translators and interpreters gathered on International Translation Day (30 September 2018) for the annual conference of the Arizona Translators & Interpreters (ATI), including the CLD's *Yifeng* editor, Trevor Cook, who also serves as ATI's interim vice president (front row, far right). This photo was provided by ATA member Tram Bui (front), who is working toward establishing an ATA Southeast Asian Languages Division.

Congratulations to those who have received ATA certification since our last issue!

English into Chinese: Shaobo (Chris) Jiang, Xin Li, Hou-Pu Shen, Sean Song (see page 9 for his analysis of his ATA annual conference experiences), Tian Huang, and Shitong Kang. Chinese into English: Xiaochuan Cao, Adrian Dunbar, Timothy G. Durgin, Rony Gao (see page 16 to read about how he prepared for the examination), Evelyn Yang Garland, Huaqing Wu, and Howard Huang.

Were you recently certified by the ATA or another credentialing organization? Did you recently get a new job or graduate from an educational program? Do you have a new baby? Puppy? Please share your news with the division! Send a couple lines about what's up in your life to

trevor@cookintercultural.com.

Photographs welcome but not required.

Submission Guidelines

Suggested Lengths:

Bulletin Board announcements: Up to 40 English words | Up to 100 Chinese characters

Letters: 300 English words | 500 Chinese characters

Articles: 500 to 1,500 English words | 500 to 3,000 Chinese characters

Resources Roundup: 600 English words | 1200 Chinese characters

Bulletin Board: Up to 50 English words | 100 Chinese characters

Submission Format: Size 12

Font: Garamound

Paragraphing: no indent, single space

The Editor will work with you to prepare your submission for publication. Opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors. Send submissions and inquiries to trevor@cookintercultural.com

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