This glossary provides definitions for many of the terms frequently used in relation to translation and interpreting.

**Accredited translator:** Translator who has received accreditation from a professional institute such as the American Translators Association (ATA). Accreditation – a requirement for membership – is usually issued on the basis of examination and experience.

**Ad hoc interpreting:** Spoken translation between two languages, in informal conversations, between two or more people. Used, for example, in business meetings, for phone calls, during site visits and social events. The term is sometimes used loosely to include consecutive interpreting.

**Apache:** An open source Web server for the Windows and Linux platforms. It is able to support Perl, TCL and other server-based scripting languages. It is one of the most common Web servers on the Internet.

**Apostille:** An official government-issued stamp or attachment to any public or private document that makes the document legal for use in any country that has signed the Hague Convention on Documents.

**ASCII:** American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) is a character set and a character encoding based on the Roman alphabet as used in modern English. This character set is based on 7-bit words and has been replaced with the more flexible ISO8859 group of character sets.

**ASP:** Active Server Pages (ASP) is a platform for creating interactive Web applications on (primarily) the Windows platform. ASP pages tend to consist of HTML interspersed with programming code in special tags. The programming code is interpreted by an ISAPI DLL at runtime, much like PHP or Perl. ASP code can be written in JScript or VBScript. ASP is a COM (Component Object Model) platform and is part of the Microsoft DNA (Distributed Network Architecture) where ASP is used to create the user interface, COM objects are used for business logic, and a Microsoft SQL server provides data storage.

**ASP.Net:** A platform for creating complex Web applications on (primarily) the Windows platform. ASP.Net targets the Microsoft .Net Framework rather than the COM system, but can also interoperate with older COM components for backwards compatibility. ASP.Net pages are compiled to MSIL (similar to Java byte code) and then executed as machine code by the JIT compiler. This results in performance gains over ASP 3.0 and also provides stronger memory management.

**Background information:** Information relating to the source text that helps the translator perform the translation in context using the correct style and tone. Examples include previously translated documents, terminology, and definitions.

**Background text:** Text in the source and/or target language providing additional information about the subject matter of the text to be translated as well as the preferred terminology and written style.
**Back translation**: Translation back from the target language into the source language by a second translator. For example, if a document has been translated from English into French, the back translation would go from the translated French back into English to allow an English speaker to check that no meaning has been lost in the translation process.

**Bilingual**: A bilingual person is, in its broadest definition, anyone with communicative skills in two languages, be they active or passive. In a narrow definition, the term bilingual is often reserved for those speakers with native or native-like proficiency in two languages.

**Calibrated page**: See “Standard page”.

**Certified translation**: A translation that has been reviewed and deemed to be correct and a true reflection of the source text. There are two levels of certification depending on the client's needs. A translation can be certified by the translation company as being a true and accurate translation, or it can be certified by the translator before a notary public to legally deem it a correct translation.

**CGI**: A Common Gateway Interface (CGI) allows an HTTP request to execute a program on the server. This allows users to be able to request dynamically generated documents from the Web server.

**CMYK**: Cyan Magenta Yellow Black, the color space used for commercial printing and most color computer printers.

**Codepage**: A table of character mappings - the mapping of numbers to characters. This is usually different for each region of the world. Examples of common code pages include 1252 (Western European Latin), 1250 (East European Latin) and 1255 (Hebrew).

**ColdFusion**: A platform from Macromedia used to create Web applications.

**Computer-aided translation (CAT)**: Describes computer technology applications that assist in the act of translating text from one spoken language to another. Examples for such programs are Trados, Wordfast, and Transit, to name just a few. They record every translation done by the translator and, if the same sentence/phrase reappears, suggest the previously saved translation, thus saving the translator time and providing consistent translations.

**Computer-assisted translation (CAT)**: Translation with the aid of computer programs, such as translation memory tools, designed to reduce the translator's workload and increase consistency of style and terminology. Basically, a database in which all previously translated sentences are stored together with the corresponding source text. If, during translation, a sentence appears that is similar or identical to a previously translated sentence, the program suggests the found target sentence as a possible translation. The translator then decides whether to accept, edit or reject the proposed sentence. Not to be confused with machine translation!

**Conference interpreter**: An interpreter with highly specialized skills, qualified for conferences, who provides simultaneous interpretation of a speaker's words in one direction only from one language into another.

**Conference translator**: A translator with highly specialized skills who provides immediate translation of a speaker’s words in one direction only from one language into another.
Consecutive interpreting: Oral translation of a speaker’s words into another language when the speaker has finished speaking or pauses for interpreting. More formal than ad hoc interpreting and used, for example, in formal business meetings, for negotiations, training sessions or lectures.

Content management system (CMS): A system used to manage the content of an organization. This could be the content on its website, its internal documentation or its product catalog. Typically, a CMS consists of two elements: the content management application (CMA) and the content delivery application (CDA).

Controlled language: Language with a restricted vocabulary and restricted rules of formulation. Used, for example, in technical documentation to make the text easier to understand for users or for non-native speakers and to facilitate translation.

Copywriting: The writing of material in accordance with a specific brief or instruction, most usually associated with the production of advertising or publicity copy. It cannot be stressed too strongly that advertising copy does not translate 100% due to the different cultural contexts and advertising cultures of the target culture and language. Advertising copy for non-English speaking target markets should always be produced by persons familiar with the language, culture and colloquialisms of the target country or region.

Court interpreter: An interpreter with special subject knowledge who provides interpretation during legal proceedings. Requirements regarding accreditation and certification for court interpreting vary from country to country.

Desktop publishing (DTP): The use of a personal computer or workstation to produce high-quality printed documents. A particularly important feature of desktop publishing systems is that it enables one to see on the display screen exactly how the document will appear when printed.

DMZ: A DeMilitarized Zone (DMZ) is a part of a network which sits between a trusted network such as a company’s LAN and an untrusted network such as the Internet. Computers on the DMZ can usually access the Internet to provide a Web proxy, Web server or to send and receive email.

Dominant language: See “Language of habitual use”.

Editing: See “Revising”.

eProcurement: Electronic-PROCUREMENT, catalog-based online procurement. The automation of a purchase ordering system that enables general business users to browse catalogs of preferred suppliers and create requisitions. These then must be signed off in the eprocurement workflow by managers as required.

EPS: Encapsulated PostScript (EPS) is a PostScript file format used to transfer a graphic image between applications and platforms. EPS files contain PostScript code as well as an optional preview image in TIFF, WMF, PICT or EPSI, the latter being an ASCII-only format.

Extranet: An intranet which is available on the public Internet. This is commonly provided over https, where the user must log in.
**Firewall:** A piece of software or hardware that prevents communication between networked devices. Firewalls usually block communication on specified TCP ports to reduce the potential for hacking attacks by blocking access to software that listens on a TCP port. They usually filter traffic to protect against common attacks such as ICMP floods. Software firewalls usually provide a facility to deny specific applications network access.

**Flash:** A multimedia authoring technology from Macromedia. Macromedia Flash uses vector graphics to provide low bandwidth and high impact multimedia, but has started to include XML support and advanced scripting.

**Framemaker:** A popular desktop publishing package from Adobe.

**Freelance translator:** A self-employed translator who may undertake work for translation agencies, localization companies and/or directly for end clients. Often specializes in one or more particular fields, such as legal, financial, commercial or technical.

**Free translation:** Machine translation that provides the “gist” of a document.

**FTP:** File Transfer Protocol (FTP) is a method used to transfer files over a TCP/IP network. This is usually not encrypted. Most Web browsers support basic FTP functions.

**Full match (100% match):** A segment or sentence in a source document for which the translation memory tool has in the target language a perfect match, including font style and various attributes like context. See “Fuzzy match”.

**Fuzzy match (partial match):** A segment or sentence in a source document for which the translation memory tool can match in the target language some of the words, including font style and various attributes like context. See “Full match”.

**GIF:** Graphics Interchange Format (GIF) is a graphics format devised by CompuServe. This format is very popular on the Web due to its small file size and transparent background capability. It is only capable of reproducing 256 colors simultaneously.

**Gisting:** A rough or outline translation of a text, typically produced by a machine translation, to provide an insight into the subject and overall content of the source text.

**GMS:** Globalization Management System (GMS) is enterprise software that provides workflows to manage translation, review, filtering, translation memory and translation vendor management. These systems are typically bought by large corporations to manage their entire translation spend. They are difficult to maintain and manage.

**Globalization:** See “Internationalization”.

**Glossary:** A database of agreed terminology for use by the translator. For example, a company may specify that the preferred term for motorcycle is “motorcycle”, not “motorbike”, “bike” or any other term. The preferred term is entered into the glossary.

**HTML:** HyperText Markup Language (HTML) is the standard document format of the Web. This is defined by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and uses a system of codes that represent structural (and display) information.
HTTP: HyperText Transport Protocol (HTTP) is the communications protocol used to connect to servers on the Web. It is a stateless protocol and allows a user to send data to and request data from an HTTP server.

HTTPS: HyperText Transport Protocol Secure (HTTPS) is the protocol used for accessing a secure Web server. By using HTTPS rather than HTTP, the user is redirected to a secure port on the Web server where communications are encrypted, usually by 128-bit SSL.

IIS: Internet Information Services (IIS) is Microsoft's Web server. IIS is provided with several versions of Microsoft Windows and provides built-in support for ASP 3.0.

Inbound text: Internal text that is intended for use only within the company, not for people outside. Examples include internal correspondence, memos, and work instructions.

Internationalization: The process of preparing a product or software to be ready for localization. This may involve extracting text strings, making stickers for a certain sign instead of engraving the words into the chassis, and any other such activity that prepares the product for a global market.

Internet: A large global network of independent networks connected by use of the TCP/IP protocol.

Interpreter: Provides oral (spoken) translation of a speaker's words from one language into another.

Interpreting: The act of rendering spoken words from one language into another.

Intranet: A private website accessible only within a company's internal network.

ISO 8859 character sets: A family of character sets that provides character encoding based on the alphabet of a given locale. There are at present 15 different character sets based on regional language groups (e.g., Western European, Cyrillic, Arabic, Baltic languages). The character sets are based on 8-bit words and have been superseded by the more modern 16-bit Unicode character set.

JavaScript: A scripting language that is commonly used within Web pages to provide a dynamic user interface.

JPEG: The Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG) is an ISO standard for compressing photographic-type images. It is very popular and well supported on the Web.

Keystroke: Often used as a measure of line or page length in defining the size of a translation job. Includes all visible characters as well as spaces and line breaks / paragraph marks.

Language of habitual use: The language with which a person is most familiar, usually the language spoken in the country in which the person lives. Considered by some to be more appropriate than “mother-tongue” as a measure of a translator’s or interpreter's ability to translate into a given language.

Liaison interpreter: An interpreter who provides (usually consecutive) interpretation between two languages in both directions. May be affiliated with a host company and act as facilitator in negotiations or undertake some PR activities.
Linux: An open source operating system with similarities to Unix. Linux is a cross platform operating system that runs on many different architectures. It is very popular for use as a server but is now gaining ground on the desktop market.

Literal translation: Translation that closely adheres to the wording and construction of the source text. A literal translation usually appears "stilted" and unnatural and is, therefore, to be avoided unless there is a specific reason for translating literally.

Literary translator: A translator specializing in the translation of literature, such as fiction, biographies and poetry.

Locale: A set of attributes specific to a language and geographical region, e.g., date format, or currency format. An example of a locale is: English (U.S.).

Localization: The process of adapting a product (in the context of translation, usually software) to a specific locale, i.e., to the language, cultural norms, standards, laws and requirements of the target market. Includes, but is not limited to, translation of the screen texts and help files.

Machine-assisted translation: See “Computer-assisted translation (CAT)”

Machine translation (MT): 1. Translation produced by a computer program; 2. Use of a translation program to translate text without human input in the actual translation process. The quality of machine-translated text, in terms of terminology, meaning and grammar, varies, depending on the nature and complexity of the source text, but it is never good enough for publication without extensive editing. Machine translation (usually using highly customized MT programs) is occasionally used by some translators and translation companies to assist them in their work but rarely to translate entire documents. MT must not to be confused with computer-assisted translation! (Contextual Communications offer this service on its website.)

Microsoft SQL Server: Microsoft’s flagship database server product. It runs on Microsoft Windows servers, and supports a wide range of SQL and extensions to SQL called T-SQL (Transact-SQL). Microsoft also offers a cut-down desktop version called MSDE, which is functionally identical to SQLServer except in the number of concurrent connections it can handle.

Mother-tongue: Used as an indicator of a translator’s or an interpreter’s ability to translate into a particular language. Because a person who has lived in another country for many years (perhaps from childhood) may be more fluent in their second language than they are in their first (i.e.,their mother-tongue), the term "language of habitual use” or "dominant language" is often preferred.

MultiTerm: Terminology program published by Trados. A component of the Translator’s Workbench translation memory program, but also available as a separate product.

MySQL: MySQL is a popular open source relational database system. It is able to run under various operating systems on many different platforms.

Native speaker competence: The oral and written command of a language equivalent to that of a person who not only learned the language as a child and has continued to use it as his/her language of habitual use, but who also has had some language training.
On-site interpreting (OSI): Interpreting done by an interpreter who is directly in the presence of the speakers. Also called face-to-face interpreting. See "Remote Interpreting”, “Telephone Interpreting.”

Oracle: A popular commercial database system that is used extensively in large businesses.

Outbound text: Text intended for publication outside the originating organization. Normally designed to sell products and services. Examples include PR articles, brochures, catalogs, and advertising copy.

Parallel text: Text in the source or target language that is comparable to the text to be translated in terms of subject matter or text type. Includes previous translations of the same type of text.

PDF: Portable Document Format (PDF) is a file format that captures all the elements of a printed document as an electronic image that you can view, navigate, print, or forward to someone else. PDF files are created using Adobe Acrobat, Acrobat Capture, or similar products.

Perl: Practical Extraction and Reporting Language (Perl) is a lightweight, yet powerful, scripting language similar in syntax to C.

Photoshop: A popular graphics manipulation package for MacOS and Windows from Adobe. This is the de-facto standard for graphics manipulation.

PHP: The Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) is a scripting language similar to ASP that is used to create dynamic Web pages. Recent changes to the language have started to include object-oriented elements to the language.

PNG: Portable Network Graphics (PNG) is a graphics format that combines the features of the two most popular image formats on the Web – GIF and JPEG. It is recommended for use by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) because of the lingering legal problems associated with the GIF format.

Proofreading: Strictly speaking, checking a proof before printing to ensure that no mistakes have been made in typesetting. The term is often used by translators in the sense of revising. When typesetting a translated text, it is advisable to let the translator who performed the translation proofread the typeset document, especially when the text is written in a language foreign to the typesetter.

PSD: Photoshop's internal file format. The format allows images to be constructed using layers of different elements that allow the designer to be able to adjust the positioning of elements within a graphic. When the PSD is exported to another file type, the image is flattened to achieve compatibility. Many other applications – such as Corel's Paint Shop Pro product and the GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Package).

Raster Graphics: Raster Graphics are graphics that are represented by a grid of pixels (a point of color) where each pixel represents an RGB color space. Raster Graphics (as opposed to Vector Graphics, which represent images through the use of shapes) cannot be enlarged without appearing "blocky".
Remote interpreting: Interpreting provided by an interpreter who is not in the presence of the speakers, e.g., interpreting via telephone or videoconferencing (ASTM). See “Telephone Interpreting”, “Video Interpreting”, “On-Site Interpreting”.

Resource file: Files that contain resources related to programming code. The format is usually a collection of XML files that contain all of the localizable text in a program, along with graphics and other visual elements.

Revising: Editing. Reading a text to identify errors, inconsistencies, incorrect grammar and punctuation, poor or inappropriate style, and, in the case of a translation, conformance with the source text.

RGB: Red Green Blue, the colors used to build color pictures on a screen. The RGB levels are used to describe each pixel value.

SDLX: The translation memory software from SDL. It also includes a suite of tools for alignment, editing, analysis, etc. Hence, there is no need to use separate applications during the translation process.

SDL Webflow: Positioned as a multilingual content management product. Used for building and maintaining multilingual websites, it can be used in conjunction with the SDLX product suite.

SDL Workflow: WorkFlow comprises SDL's content transfer API, which permits the customer to create rules and, therefore, maintain control over the extraction and management of amended content and its subsequent publication in the target languages.

Simultaneous interpreting: Oral translation of a speaker's words into another language while the speaker is speaking. The interpreter usually sits in a booth and uses audio equipment.

SOAP: Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP) is the industry standard for XML Web Service data exchange.

Source language: The language in which the text to be translated is written.

Source text: The text to be translated.

Specialized language competence: Familiarity with the relevant subject matter and command of its special language conventions.

SSL: Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) is a protocol developed by Netscape which encrypts data. Websites that are secure will start with https:// rather than http://. 128-bit SSL encryption is the most commonly used variant and is used by banks, shopping sites and extranets to ensure that data cannot be snooped during transmission.

Standard line: A standard measure of the size of a text. The standard line length varies from country to country. In Germany, for example, it is usually 55 keystrokes, in Belgium 60. Translation projects are often priced on a per-line basis.
Standard page: A standard measure of the size of a text, used especially in the publishing industry and in literary translation. The standard page length may vary from country to country and depending on the sector, but it is generally in the region of 1500 to 1800 keystrokes or 300 words per page. Translation projects are sometimes priced on a per-page basis, although – except in the case of literary translation – this practice is becoming less common and is being replaced by the word count.

Sworn translator: A translator who takes an oath and can produce a certified translation. Normally, however, in the United States the translator vouches for the correctness and completeness of the translation and a notary administers the oath.

Target audience: The group of people that an interpreter addresses. Used mostly in connection with simultaneous interpreting. Sometimes used (incorrectly) in the sense of target readership.

Target language: Language into which a text is to be translated.

Target readership: The group of people for whom a text is translated – for example, subject matter experts, novices, and prospective customers. It is important to specify the target readership when commissioning a translation so that the translator can choose an appropriate style and vocabulary.

Target text: The result of the translation process.

TCP/IP Port: Each IP address within a network has a number of TCP "ports" that a program (or domain) can listen on for attempted connections. For instance, a Web server usually opens up port 80 for incoming connections, whereas an FTP server will open up port 21. Other commonly used ports are 17 (Quote of the Day), 23 (Telnet), 25 (SMTP) and 37 (Time).

TeamWorks: TeamWorks is a translation management system, similar to a GMS, built by Trados. It helps a large corporation (or a language vendor) manage the translation process from filtering to memory management, vendor management, review, etc.

Telephone interpreting: Interpreting carried out remotely, with the interpreter connected by telephone to the principal parties, typically provided through a speaker-phone or headsets. See remote interpreting.

Text encoding: A method of representing text as a sequence of bytes. Commonly used text encodings include ASCII, Unicode and Shift_JIS.

Text function: The purpose of a piece of text. For example, the text function may be to sell a product, to provide instruction on the use of a product, or to convey information about an event. It is important to specify the text function when commissioning a translation so that the translator can choose an appropriate style and vocabulary.

Text style: See “Text type”

Text type: A class of text (e.g., abstract, news report, light fiction, commentary) with specific characteristics of style, sentence formation, terminology, etc.

TIFF: Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) is a type of graphics file. This is widely used and is a bitmapped graphics file format for black and white as well as color images.
**TMX:** The Translation Memory Exchange Format (TMX) is designed to allow easier exchange of translation memory data between tools and/or translation vendors with little or no loss of critical data during the process. It is supported by the latest versions of most leading translation memory programs.

**Trados:** Publishers of the eponymous translation memory program.

**Trados GXT:** A server application that connects an organization’s content to the managers and translators responsible for its localization. TRADOS GXT can be described in terms of three basic modules: the Global Content Manager and the Localization Manager run within the TRADOS GXT server.

**Transit:** A translation memory program published by Star.

**Translating:** Translation. The act of rendering written text from one language into another.

**Translating competence:** The ability to render text into the target language correctly in terms of language, subject matter and idiomatic style, having regard to the text function of both the source text and the target text.

**Translation agency:** Provides translation and interpreting services, acting as middleman between customers and freelance translators. May offer value-added services such as file protection, typesetting, publishing, project management, review management.

**Translation company:** Provides translation services using mainly in-house translators. May specialize in a particular field – such as legal, patents or technical – and may offer value-added services such as typesetting, publishing, and project management.

**Translation manager:** 1. Translation memory program published by IBM; 2. (Syn.: project manager) person in charge of managing a translation project. In large translation projects, the translation manager is responsible for liaising between the client and the translators, coordinating the translation work (which may be carried out by several translators for each language), maintaining the terminology database, ensuring consistency of style and terminology, etc.

**Translation memory (TM):** See also "Computer-aided translation". An application that stores translated sentences (translation units or segments) with their respective source segments in a database (the "memory"). For each new segment to be translated, the program scans the database for a previous source segment that matches the new segment, either exactly or approximately (fuzzy match) and, if found, suggests the corresponding target segment as a possible translation. The translators can then accept, modify or reject the suggested translation. All translation input and accepted by the translator is added to the database.

**Translator:** One who renders written text from one or more languages into another language, usually into his/her mother-tongue.

**Translator’s Workbench:** Translation memory program published by Trados.

**Transliteration:** Mapping from one system of writing into another. Transliteration attempts to be lossless, so that an informed reader should be able to reconstruct the original spelling of unknown transliterated words.
**Unicode:** A character encoding standard that uses 16-bit character encoding, making possible the representation of virtually all existing character sets (e.g., Latin-based, Cyrillic, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese). The use of Unicode simplifies working in a multi-lingual document and program environment.

**Unix:** A multi-user, multi-tasking operating system mainly used for server applications.

**UTF-8:** 8-bit Unicode Transformation Format (UTF-8) is a lossless, variable-length character encoding for Unicode. It uses groups of bytes to represent the Unicode standard for the alphabets of many of the world's languages.

**UTF-16:** 16-bit Unicode Transformation Format (UTF-16) is a character encoding form that provides a way to represent a series of abstract characters from Unicode and ISO/IEC 10646 as a series of 16-bit words suitable for storage or transmission via data networks.

**UTF-32:** UTF-32 is a method of encoding Unicode characters using a fixed amount of 32 bits for each character.

**Vector Graphics:** A type of graphic where the image is constructed from geometric objects such as circles, curves and rectangles. This allows graphics to scale upwards in size without losing quality.

**Video interpreting:** Interpreting carried out remotely, using a video camera that enables an interpreter in a remote location to both see and hear the parties for whom he/she is interpreting via a TV monitor. The interpretation is relayed to the principal parties by speakerphone or through headsets. Two-way interactive television can also be used, so that the other parties can interact with the interpreter as if face-to-face. See “Remote Interpreting.”

**Voice-over:** Spoken commentary in a film or multimedia presentation. Foreign-language voice-over consists of two parts: 1) translating the narrative, whereby timing (coordinating the voice with the film sequence) is an important consideration, and 2) recording the voice-over, which may be performed by a linguist with special training and/or expertise or by an actor. Voice-over services are provided by some translators and translation agencies / companies including Contextual Communications.

**Whispering:** Similar to simultaneous interpreting, whereby the interpreter sits close to the listener and whispers the translation without technical aids.

**Word count:** A measure of the size of a text based on the source language. Translation projects, for example, are often priced on a per-word (U.S.) or per-1000-word (G.B.) basis.

**XML:** eXtensible Markup Language (XML) is used to create structured documents that are readable using standard libraries. As such, it is an ideal standard format to use when exchanging data. XML can be rigidly defined and validated using a document-type definition that describes the structure of the document, as well as by other methods.