

THE JLD TIMES

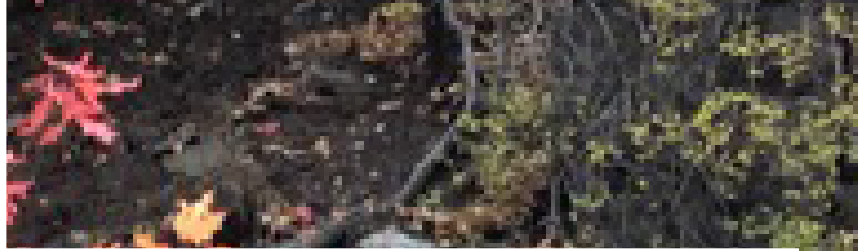
Fall 2020

Newsletter of the Japanese Language Division of The American Translators Association

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巡る季節



With the blink of an eye, even this year that has been riddled with COVID-19 shutdowns, spikes, and other life-altering events has come nearly to its close. However, despite the dampening of our collective spirits due to the pandemic, our favorite event of the year, the ATA Annual Conference, is still taking place. This year, the conference will be held entirely virtually to maintain the health, safety, and well-being of our colleagues. Nevertheless, there will still be more than 120 sessions and networking events for all to enjoy. We do see a smaller than normal number of JLD sessions, but considering the immense work and effort it takes to turn an in-person conference into an entirely virtual one, we hope that we have your understanding.

I am sure, for many, that this year was promising to start out strong. However, undoubtedly there were very few of us who have lived the last six months or more without feeling the direct or indirect effects of the pandemic on our personal and professional lives. With that in mind, the aim of this issue of the JLD Times is to highlight the situations of some of our colleagues who are translators, medical interpreters, and also professors at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. The issue is smaller than usual; however, JLD hopes that with your approval and consent, we can conduct a survey in two parts to better understand the status of our JLD community in the face of this pandemic. Please, reach out to us and tell us if you would prefer we did not conduct a survey. All answers would be anonymous and are not aimed at shaming or insulting one another, but rather taken with the hope of helping us understand and support each other better during these hard times.

The JLD also hopes to find more ways to interact with our division and would like your suggestions on how we might do this. Some ideas we have are some JLD specific webinars, periodic online gatherings for networking and friendly faces, and so on. However, we are only as good as the input and feedback we receive, so we would appreciate any suggestions that you might have to make your membership with the JLD more helpful and enjoyable to you.

It is my honor to keep serving as your Administrator for one more year. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your suggestions or comments. Meanwhile, I hope that many of you will join us for the ATA61 Virtual Conference. Please stay safe, and hopefully much of your work will resume to somewhat pre-pandemic levels soon.

Céline Sutherland Browning
JLD Administrator
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Life as a Medical Interpreter During the Pandemic: Interview with Ms. Shiou Udagawa

How long have you been in the medical interpreting field in the US?

I have been in the medical interpreting field for three years, officially. What I mean by that is I had been unofficially interpreting for patients while working as Registered Nurse for over twenty years prior to becoming certified as a medical interpreter.

*What was your normal work routine like before the COVID 19 pandemic?
Did your workload change after the pandemic declaration?*

Before the pandemic, I worked as an independent contractor through several interpreting agencies mostly taking on-site assignments at clinics and hospitals. After the pandemic declaration I completely stopped taking any in-person assignments and switched solely to remote interpreting due to safety concerns. After the WHO declaration my workload did see a change as the overall requests also diminished. Assignments were few and far between to begin with, but I made the selection even slimmer by declining in-person assignments.

How did you decide to approach your involvement regarding your job? Were there expectations placed on you regarding how you should behave?

I decided to decline in-person assignments based on my medical background and knowledge. Fortunately, I had the option to say no to any in-person assignments because of being an independent contractor. Since there was no pushback from agencies after saying no to assignments, I imagine they did not have many expectations given that I provided safety reasons as my decision to decline assignments. I also provide my availability for remote interpreting for specific assignments upon request.

For those interpreters with limited options, please protect yourselves with appropriate Personal Protection Equipment including N-95 masks, disposable gowns, gloves, and eye protection/face shield before going into an onsite assignment. The Limited English Proficiency population needs YOU to stay healthy so that you can help them. It is critical to be well-informed and keep up to date with information on this ever-evolving pandemic.

What do you think could be done differently?

Luckily this is not my personal experience, but I heard from other medical interpreter colleagues that they were sent to the "COVID unit" to perform in-person assignments without any PPE.



I understand that as language service agencies they do not have any liability to protect their independent contractors. However, they could have used their moral judgement or obligation to at least ask the hospitals to provide PPE for interpreters if they cannot financially do so. I would not have known how to properly protect myself if I did not have any medical background during interpreting assignments with COVID patients in enclosed rooms.

Do you think Telehealth can be an option for interpreters even in cases where the doctor and patient are in the same space?

Yes, I think it is possible as long as patients are not hearing impaired, and by this, of course I do not mean deaf patients. It is challenging to interpret remotely when a patient cannot hear well or is hard of hearing on "speaker" unless the hearing-impaired patient has a special earphone with increased volume. When both parties have stable internet connections, video can be utilized better than over-the-phone interpreting for being able to see subtle non-verbal cues to include into interpreting consideration.

Do you think the situation has gotten any better?

Not yet. There has been a significant decrease in overall assignment requests. However, I hope this does not mean patients are denied appropriate interpreting during medical visits, but rather that more and more providers are utilizing Telehealth. In California, there is a [new state law](#) being introduced and kinks are finally being ironed out. So, I am hopeful that the situation will continue improving. As a medical interpreter, I am anticipating that there will be increased demand for remote interpreting and look forward to new efficient changes ahead.

Do you think that this pandemic and collective experience will have long-term effects and impacts on medical interpretation?

Absolutely. It will never go back to how it was before the pandemic. As I stated in previous questions, the majority of future medical interpreting will switch to Telehealth. Medical field itself has already shifted into remote visits including consultation for both inpatient and outpatient settings. I take this as a welcome change in terms of saving time for both

parties to be more efficient.

From the perspective of a medical care provider, how do you think conference-going and other pre-pandemic norms will change?

I do not foresee any large organizations hosting conferences any time soon due to obvious reasons. From a medical professional's perspective, large indoor gatherings such as conferences are the perfect setup for cluster infections and almost impossible to keep everyone safe. For the time being, there will be online conferences just like the upcoming ATA annual conference. ■

Shiou Udagawa is certified by [CCHI's](#) "Core Certification Healthcare Interpreter" ([CoreCHI™](#)). She completed multiple [PALS for Health](#) Interpreter and Translation training programs. A native Japanese speaker, fluent in English, Shiou has lived in the United States for over 20 years, and has worked in a nationally top ranked level one trauma center since 2003. She is licensed as a Registered Nurse in both Japan and [California](#).

Surreal Choices in a Surreal Era

Written by Paul Koehler

It was a shock to hear this question from a colleague who I knew from when I lived in Japan, even in 2020:

"Based on your recent experience, would you say it's best for me to give up on translation and go into a different field altogether?"

The person asking me this question is not a newcomer and has several years of both freelance and in-house experience. However, after seeing many coworkers throughout their entire company getting laid off en masse, they wondered whether it was worth it to ride out the rest of their career in a field where such devastation could occur so easily. Surely it wasn't all that long ago that

Japanese translators and interpreters had such a lucrative skill set that no matter what the economic disaster, they could get through when things got tough. Right?

To be fair, our industry is pretty well-positioned to ride out a pandemic as long as demand is still present, and for those of us who were already working from home, we've already had a chance to get used to that "new normal."

Not everyone is so lucky though. My real sympathies go out to on-site interpreters, who have effectively seen most, if not all of their income evaporate due to lockdowns and social distancing. While the

effectiveness of these initiatives varies widely by country, it is nice to know that most governments realize the necessity of providing income during such times, which is why we've seen the proliferation of programs such as PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) and PUA (Pandemic Unemployment Assistance) in the United States, as well as similar relief efforts on both the national and prefectural level in Japan.

Still, there's nothing quite like having a record-breaking year in 2019, then seeing that income nearly dry up and pretty much disappear for a few months in 2020. The beginning of lockdowns in California pretty much killed my on-site interpreting work and demand for some of my smaller translation clients, but just two months later the customer of my main client stopped giving work to our language group and several others all at once. Almost all of my income was gone. C'est la vie.

I've had dry spells in my 10+ years working as a translator and interpreter, but nothing quite prepared me for that, aside from the savings I had and my successful application to PPP. Fortunately, I was able to find another client doing a similar type of work thanks to reaching out to colleagues and a strong recommendation from the previous client, who did not want to let me go in the first place. Work has begun to come back, albeit at a reduced pace compared to the beginning of the year.

When I replied to my colleague, I told them that I was planning to stick it out for the long run. It is true that the profession is not as prestigious as it was before and during the bubble era, and developments in technology such as MT have taken out some of the lower tiers of work. However, when we look back on this pandemic, the truth is that the devastation, in terms of both human lives and the global economy, has been tremendous and has affected nearly everyone. Fortunately, as was the case before, there will still be demand. The kind of work we do may be slightly different when this is all over, but there will still be work. If there's any optimism I'd like to keep from 2020, it's that. ■



Photo Credit: Céline Sutherland Browning

Effects of COVID-19 and Changes in Teaching Methods at MIIS

Effects on Translation

Written by Hideko Russell

3月中旬、MIISはコロナの影響で授業の完全オンライン化に踏み切った。教育を止めてはならないという必死の思いで、教員は10日間でオンライン授業の準備を整えた。そして今、秋学期もオンライン授業を実施中だ。学生たちは、モンレーをはじめ、日本や東海岸などから熱心に授業に参加している（通訳・翻訳の授業はオンデマンドではなくライブ）。新入生の数は例年より多く、勉強したいという強い思いが画面の向こうから伝わってくる。特に通訳については今後引き続きリモートの仕事が増えることが予想される中で、そのための訓練をしっかり受けていることが、学生にとって大きな強みとなるだろう。

翻訳の授業はZoomでじゅうぶん通常運転ができるので、対面授業と変わった点は特にない。一人一人の表情がはっきり見えるため、逆にコミュニケーションが密になったとも感じる。

リアルで会えない欠点はもちろんあるので、それを補うために、授業外でも交流する機会を私たちがつくっていかうと考えている。だが一方で、わざわざモンレーに引っ越さなくても勉強できる点をメリットだととらえ、入学を決めた人もいる。この2020年をきっかけに、高等教育の形はボーダーレスの方向に大きく変わっていくのではないだろうか。■

Hideko Russell is an assistant professor and Program Head of Japanese Translation and Interpretation at the Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS).

Effects on Interpretation

Written by Chiyo Mori

Back in March, I casually opened an e-mail to find out that all instruction at MIIS, where I teach, will move online in just 10 days due to COVID-19. The next day, my daughter's preschool tells us that they will close indefinitely for the same reason. In sheer panic and fear, I spent the next few days in cold sweats and tears not knowing what to do as a working single parent, living away from a home country.

After the first shock wave, I somehow survived a complete switch to online instruction in time with a lot of help from truly generous friends who took care of my daughter while I frantically run around to get things ready. Since then, I have been teaching Japanese into English consecutive and simultaneous interpretation classes online. 6 months into wearing masks everywhere, washing my hands like crazy, not eating out, 3yo daughter learning words like germs and 'hanitizer' (her own short form for hand-sanitizer), I am now liking online teaching from home a lot. Here are my observations so far:

Instructor Likes:

Similarity

What I do as an instructor is basically exactly the same in-person or online; I play source audio, the students interpret, and feedback and comments follow. As long as I'm connected, prepared, and organized, disasters are less likely to occur online than in real-life classroom settings.

Efficiency

Being able to sit down 3-minutes before class, log in, and start teaching right away with just a few clicks is really nice. There is no need for driving, no searching for a parking spot, and no reserving classrooms (which involves at least 7-10 email exchanges with different parties!). It's super efficient.

Device setup

There are no more in-class devices acting up or not working at all, no more incidents where tech support never shows up to fix things. Malfunctioning or overly complicated equipment in class was a major cause of frustration before the pandemic.

Classroom Availability

Inevitably, there are always classes running late and you have to wait outside the classroom until they are finished. That never happens in your cyber classroom! It's all yours to start teaching on time.

Streamlined

As long as you are prepared and organized, the entire process of teaching from start to finish is much more simplified and efficient. It's all there on your PC in front of you.



Photo Credit: Katrina Leonoudakis

Instructor Dislikes:

Connectivity issues

Making sure everyone has a robust and stable internet connection is a challenge because I can't control it from my end. Teaching interpretation requires stable and high-quality audio input and output on all ends. Unlike translation classes, it's critical that all parties can see and hear audiovisual materials and each other's renditions clearly without interruption. Connectivity is everything.

Devices

If your students don't want to invest in quality equipment necessary for remote interpretation (headsets, mic, laptop, etc.), the audio quality suffers. It's difficult for them to hear the source audio and for you to hear their interpretation, let alone evaluating it.

Class time use

There's always someone who disappears into the cyber-void during class, and you have to decide if you should wait for them to reappear or continue teaching anyway. Thankfully, you can record everything on the cloud and share it with your students later, so you don't have to waste too much time. However, this would rarely happen in a physical classroom.

Logistics

Of course, you'll need to be fully prepared and organized as an instructor, but so does every participant. Your students need to be familiar with the system and able to navigate online classes efficiently in order to have smooth transitions between activities during class.

Feedback

With the lack of physical presence, it's difficult to see and comment on students' physical performance such as voice production, posture, how they sit, how they take notes, where they look that are absolutely critical in training professional linguists.

I also wanted to know students' perspectives on online instruction. My current students Yukiko, Miki, and Rie kindly shared their thoughts on their learning in cyber space. Especially, Yukiko and Miki experienced both in-person and online instructions with me, and I was curious if they'd noticed any significant differences in their learning experiences and acquisition of interpretation skills over the past 6 months.

Student Likes:

Efficiency

No need to walk to classrooms or find a good place to practice consecutive interpretation is great! In real life, they'd go shopping, have lunch or tea with friends, stop to chat with people along the way.

Productivity

They can get right to studying, finishing their assignments, practicing, e-mailing before/after classes since they are already at their computers.

Practice

For future interpreters in training, working online and getting used to RSI platforms is essential.

Reviewing

Every class is recoded and shared with students, making it easy to review afterwards. This was not available with in-person classes.



Photo Credit: Céline Sutherland Browning

Student Dislikes:

Presence

Although performing in class can be nerve wrecking, my students think it's important to experience it in order to learn how to overcome such nerves and produce consistently high-quality interpretation. They also believe that receiving feedback on their voice production and posture etc. while taking notes and interpreting is critical.

Dependence on headsets

Listening through headset, especially with noise-cancellation function, all the time is good and bad because it's much easier than listening to source audio directly through your ears. They are worried if they get used to it too much, it'll be very difficult to go back to listening without high-quality headsets.

Campus life

More than anything, despite all the advantages of online instruction, my students want to go back to campus. They want to be in the classroom, practice in the noisy cafeteria on sticky tables, study with their friends; basically be a graduate student like they had imagined. It breaks my heart to see some students living alone, away from family, studying all by themselves.

Hearing how much my students want to go back to campus to study actually surprised me. Honestly, I'm ambivalent about going back to in-person instruction at this point, especially as a parent, considering the potential health risks. But my hope is that this year may renew our appreciation in each of us for taking an active part in collective learning experiences, while familiarizing ourselves with latest technologies available so that when things move to hybrid model in the near future, we will be fully prepared for anything! ■

Special thanks to my interpretation students, Yukiko Mitsuyama, Miki Watanabe, and Rie Okoso for sharing their valuable insight on online learning. I hope we get to meet in person and share our learning in real classroom one day!

Chiyo Mori is a visiting assistant professor of Japanese Translation and Interpretation at the Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIS).



All events will be held online. **Please note that both the Annual Meeting and Networking Meet-up will be held before the main conference dates.**

JLD Annual Meeting

Sunday, October 18th 4:00 - 5:00 PM EDT

Monday, October 19th 5:00 - 6:00 AM JST

Open to **all JLD members**. Come to discuss the state of our profession. Learn what has been happening in the JLD, brainstorm ideas for networking events and conference sessions, and affirm the new JLD Leadership.

JLD Annual Networking Social

Sunday, October 18th 7:00 - 8:00 PM EDT

Monday, October 19th 8:00 - 9:00 AM JST

Only open to conference attendees.

For those who are interested, we thought coming up with a JLD themed cocktail (or N/A version) would be fun and add a sense of unity and camaraderie whilst we are in a very different setting than usual. For those who will be attending in the morning, feel free to bring your biggest cup of coffee!



Thursday

Conveying the Words of U.S. Presidents into Japanese

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM EDT Presented by Professor Chikako Tsuruta

The speaker will discuss the challenges of conveying the culturally and politically nuanced speech of U.S. presidents from English into Japanese. The speaker has been interpreting the speeches of U.S. presidents since Bill Clinton, and has been at the forefront of communicating presidential statements in the headlines for over 20 years. Specific examples of statements by U.S. presidents who have garnered global attention will be provided.

Presented in Japanese.

Friday

Workshop for ATA's English to/from Japanese Certification Exam

3:30 - 4:30 PM EDT Presented by the Certification Exam Graders of JLD

This session will help attendees better understand how their certification exams will be graded, thereby increasing their overall preparedness for the exam. Attendees are encouraged to obtain and translate the sample passage (Japanese or English) beforehand to get the most out of this session. (We will keep you posted on how to obtain the samples.) Using the tools and standards used in the actual exam, the speakers (who are graders) will explain the nature of typical error points. If time permits, a brief overview of the certification process may be provided.

Handling English for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM EDT Presented by Professor Chikako Tsuruta

The speaker will discuss issues in Japanese>English translating/interpreting centered on culturally-specific content in signages. She will focus on how culturally specific terms can be expressed in English that is easy to understand even for first-time visitors to Japan. She will also give specific examples related to the postponed 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games such as unnatural English signs at the newly built National Stadium and in shops and restaurants around Tokyo. Discussion with the audience will focus on how form and content in Japanese can be translated into English and what it takes to convey the intended meaning.



Saturday

Deposition Interpreting Workshop II

12:30 - 1:30 EDT Presented by *Izumi Suzuki, CT* and *Manako Ihaya, CT*

This session will be a continuation of the one presented at ATA60. But don't worry if you didn't attend last year, since the session will start with a brief review of the deposition setting and an explanation of the roles of each player. The speaker will then discuss the 'meat' of this unique situation, including the use of LiveNote, a software program that displays English statements in almost real time. Attendees will gain knowledge about deposition interpreting and leave the session feeling as though they were at an actual deposition!

Speaker Bios

Chikako Tsuruta is a conference and broadcast interpreter with over 20 years of experience in interpreting and training interpreters. She is currently a professor at Tokyo Woman's Christian University and professor emeritus at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. She is a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters and a councillor at the Japan Association for Interpretation and Translation Studies. She has an MBA from Columbia University. She has 10 years of experience in the finance world and is a chartered financial analyst. She speaks Japanese, English, French, and Italian.

Izumi Suzuki, CT became a conference interpreter in Tokyo after graduating from the Japan Interpreter Training School and then completing the ISS Simultaneous Interpreters Course. She moved to Michigan over 30 years ago and established Suzuki, Myers & Associates, Ltd., a language and cultural training firm, in 1984. An ATA-certified Japanese to/from English translator, she has been a grader for ATA's Certification Program for over two decades and is now a member of the Certification Committee. She specializes in business, engineering, and manufacturing texts related to the automotive industry. She is also a certified court interpreter in California, Michigan, and Tennessee.

Manako Ihaya, CT is an interpreter/translator based in Orange County, California. She refers to herself as a "Jill of All Trades," interpreting in both the consecutive and simultaneous modes as well as translating in both directions between English and Japanese. A former journalist with The Japan Times in Tokyo, she is a member of both Japan Association of Translators and American Translators Association, serving on the JAT Board from 2007 to 2010, and as an ATA certification grader for Japanese-into-English exams since 2008, the language chair since 2019.

Get involved with !

GET CONNECTED

1. Join the division www.atanet.org/divisions
2. Website www.ata-divisions.org/JLD/wp/
3. Blog www.ata-divisions.org/JLD/wp/jld-blog/
4. Mailing list <https://groups.io/g/ATA-Japanese-Language-Division>
5. Facebook www.facebook.com/ATAJLD
6. LinkedIn www.linkedin.com/groups/4885677

GET INVOLVED

Conference Speakers

Do you have an idea for a session at the next ATA conference? Do you know an expert who would be willing to educate the membership about their field? Don't wait for a call. Start thinking of your proposal today! If you have any questions, please contact the Division officers.

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee helps find and solicit speakers and coordinate sessions for the following year's conference. The Administrator / Assistant Administrator usually host a series of Skype meetings once or twice a month until the deadline for submissions in March. The committee brainstorms session ideas and speakers, then contacts and helps guide potential speakers through the process. This is a great way to get involved in the JLD and to help us have another great conference next year!

Editorial Committee

The Editorial Committee gathers news on our profession, announces events and publications of interest, solicits ideas for features and encourages members to supply articles, such as ATA session summaries. They also archive resources that will be useful to our members. They maintain the JLD's various social media sites (JLD Times Blog, Facebook, and LinkedIn) and work with the Webmaster to provide content for the JLD's Website.

Networking Committee (aka, the "Entertainment Committee")

Divisions are tasked with providing networking opportunities for their members. This committee investigates sites and logistics for the Annual Dinner, and the Newcomer's Lunch. We would like to expand the committee's role to organizing at least one networking activity outside of the ATA conference.