Collaborative Approach to Translating Online Learning Content:
A Partnership Between the Research Data Management Librarian Academy (RDMLA) and National Taiwan University (NTU) Library

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- The RDMLA is a **global professional development program** for librarians and other professionals working in research-intensive environments
  - **Launched in October 2019**, the course currently hosts 11 units and 1 mini-module, and was **created through a collaborative effort** of 15 academic institutions, data-oriented organizations, government agencies, and educational technological company

- To reach a broader learner community, the RDMLA established a Chinese translation partnership with the National Taiwan University (NTU) Library in early 2020
  - *The partnership is based on a shared purpose of providing better access to quality, open access educational materials to broader learning communities*

- Through a collaborative approach involving an **iterative review**, both teams ensure the translation **retains authenticity and integrity of the original content**
  - Due to the nature of the project, **we developed our own workflow** based on availability and resources of both teams
    - The workflow allowed for the varied technology and translation process between the teams

- NTU team assumes the financial commitment of their translation work, while RDMLA maintains the rights to the original materials
  - Both teams have **equal access and use of the Chinese translation**
  - The translation will be **presented as its own course** on Canvas Network and available in mid-November
    - The course and **all materials is open access and free** to all users

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CHALLENGE 1:
Issues with translating technologically oriented content: What terms should/should not be translated?

SOLUTION 1:
a. Acronyms are to always be spelled out and remain untranslated
b. Associations, programming languages, software, and platform tools, remain untranslated

CHALLENGE 2:
Issues with translating conceptional content: How to handle typical American expressions and idioms?
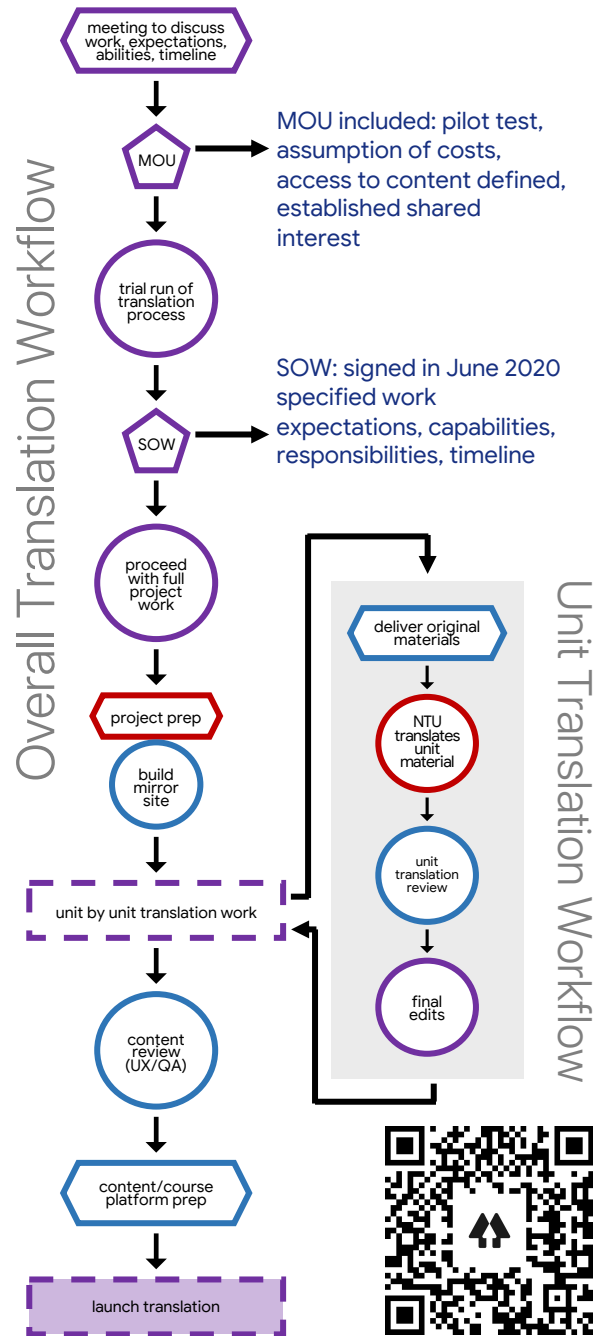
SOLUTION 2:
a. Field-related theories and principals (ex: FAIR) are spelled out in English and background context in Chinese
b. Idioms and American expressions - teams work to find an equivalent Chinese expression
    a. When a literal translation is not available, a semantically equivalent version is substituted

CHALLENGE 3:
Terminology differences in Taiwan and Mainland China: How to approach different terms used in two locations when goal is to reach all Chinese speakers?

SOLUTION 3:
a. A glossary table is included in each unit to list frequently used terms in both traditional and simplified Chinese

Overall Translation Workflow

meeting to discuss work, expectations, abilities, timeline

MOU → MOU included: pilot test, assumption of costs, access to content defined, established shared interest

trial run of translation process

SOW → SOW: signed in June 2020 specified work expectations, capabilities, responsibilities, timeline

proceed with full project work

project prep

build mirror site

unit by unit translation work

content review (UX/QA)

content/course platform prep

launch translation

Unit Translation Workflow

deliver original materials

NTU translates unit material

unit translation review

final edits

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. **"It takes a village"**: A team needs more than just translators - content experts and coordinators are also essential.

2. **Careful planning and flexibility**: Planning helped minimize cost and maximize productivity; understand timelines may need to change midstream; technical difficulties were overcome by anticipating future snags.

3. **Best practices for the translation and review process**: Translating learning content is not a literal word-for-word translation, there are strategies and mindfulness associated with handling both conceptually and technology content.

4. **Maintain rigorousness in translation accuracy**: It was important to keep a high level of rigor and quality, which was achieved by each team inspecting the translation at different levels of granularity to ensure consistency and accuracy.

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