Beyond Translation: Using Localization to Communicate Among Languages

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Our community partners:
- Family Support Center
- Ogden City
- Mount Ogden Junior High

Description of project and implementation in the community:
Based on our background knowledge of Spanish and of translation and localization techniques, we have assisted community partners with needed translations of important documents that are used in their offices. This has allowed them to reach the large population of Spanish speakers in the community of Ogden.

Relevance of the project and outcomes for the community:
“Family Support Center provides multiple family supports for our local community. We want as many people to be able to access our services as possible. The language barrier is often an issue. By having documents in Spanish helps us tremendously so that we can serve the clients that do not speak or read English. We don’t want them to feel like they can’t use the center because of language. Often this is an underserved population in our community so this will give them the opportunity to access a resource that they otherwise may not have been able to.” Janeen Jennings, Supervisor at Family Support Center.

“It is important that students provide true informed consent for the Tdap and flu vaccines we administer to them. Having these forms available in their native language helps ensure that Spanish-speaking students fully understand the process. The Student Health Center strives to encourage students to take an active role in their health care. Thank you so much for helping us to meet this goal in a culturally and linguistically sensitive way.” Dianna K. Abel, Executive Director of Counseling, Health, and Wellness

The skill set needed to translate goes far beyond vocabulary, grammar, and euphemisms. A good translator must have an intimate knowledge of the culture, heritage, and lifestyle of the intended audience. This class and the experiences I’ve had have helped me appreciate Hispanic cultures and realize the importance of immersion beyond the surface of a language. (Jarron Bolingbroke)

I’ve discovered that the translation process is more complex than it might appear to be at first. It involves more than just knowing the source and target languages. A translator must often research the material that is to be translated and seek to understand how it will be received by the target audience in order to prepare an effective translation. (Forrest Slade)

The project has helped me academically by preparing me to be able to do translations for my employer in the future. It has helped me personally because I feel rewarded knowing that I have done something to help my Hispanic community. (Diana Cedeño)

Working as a staff at Youth Impact, an after school program, I realized that their application and Parent Handbook was not translated into Spanish. The reason I decided to work as volunteer at my job was because more than 60 percent of our participants are Hispanics. I saw the need and the importance of these documents to be translated into Spanish, so parents can be aware of our policies and procedures. I feel proud of this awesome afterschool program and as a member of YI, I’m happy to say that we’re going to have these documents available to our participants parents in the language they understand. (Mirian Maya)

Translating for the Ogden Nature Center has not only impacted me academically but also has helped me to complete my growth in the community. What I have learned during my semester has given me the knowledge needed to assist the non-English speakers in the Ogden community. (Mónica Meredith)

On the right, original and translation of the parent survey that is usually required for participants in STEP courses.

Devan next to Elise Simpson, Mount Ogden Jr. High Orchestra and Choir Director

“Habitat for Humanity focuses on building and repairing homes for low income families. The translation below will help underprivileged people of the Weber/Davis county areas be able to apply for these services and overcome the homelessness problem we face today.”

After translating for Mount Ogden Junior High School, I’ve been able to appreciate the translating process as it is a complex and important task. Keeping in mind the culture around the organization is an important part of the process that has to do with localization. (Devan Alldredge)