

## Proposing a PSA-affiliated paid translation service with a focus on Africa

*Note: We need feedback from potential translators and researchers who need translation services. If this describes you, fill out one of the two surveys below!*

[Translator survey](#)

[Researcher survey](#)

Psychological science is dominated by researchers from North America and Europe. The situation in Africa exemplifies this problem. In 2014, just 6 of 450 samples (1.4% of the total) in the journal *Psychological Science* were African. In Africa, language issues exacerbate the more general problem of underrepresentation; only [130 million](#) out of [1.3 billion](#) Africans are proficient in English, despite [24 out of the 54 countries](#) having English as their official language.

We propose a paid translation service that can help overcome this problem. Our service will translate across many languages, but we will specialize in translations between English and [African languages](#). Such a service can both help local African researchers access English-speaking people as research participants and allow English-speaking researchers to access over one billion Africans (~12% of the world population) as participants.

Furthermore, a *paid* translation service can help provide resources to translators who may lack resources, such as those in Africa. We expect to draw many of our translators from among the ranks of African researchers whose universities cannot provide them with good salaries or research money. Because the Psychological Science Accelerator has both a need for translation and experience with the full translation process, we propose that this paid translation service becomes a formal part of the Psychological Science Accelerator. In the blogpost, we link to surveys for users (typically researchers) and service providers (typically translators) to investigate whether sufficient demand and supply exist for such a service. Because we plan to focus on African languages, the remainder of this post focuses on Africa. However, we invite researchers and translators who focus on other languages to complete the two surveys at the top of the post, as we will also offer general translation services.

### **Why is there a need for a paid translation service?**

A paid translation service can help build a network of translators proficient in African languages and coordinate the translation process. Particularly for the underrepresented and under-resourced African continent, having a paid translation service can help to improve the efficiency of translation, quickly identify and resolve roadblocks to the translation process, and timely delivery. A paid translation service can be likened to a business venture such as what we have as translation service companies and can hold financial, social, and educational benefits.

### **The Envisioned Partnership with the Psychological Science Accelerator**

To ensure the highest-quality content, we envision this paid translation service to be integrated into the Psychological Science Accelerator (PSA) as a Service provider. The PSA is the largest network of researchers in the field of psychological science. At present, the

PSA consists of [1021 member researchers in 73 countries](#). With this huge network of researchers, we envisage a steady demand for the paid translation service. Of course, researchers who are not a member of the PSA should be able to use the service as well. It is unlikely that this initiative can be started without a financial investment. Any business venture requires some risk-taking, and thus, investment, particularly if we want to ensure the involvement of African researchers.

From a business point of view, a paid translation service can be a source of revenue for the PSA. Additional benefits may include network expansion especially to underrepresented populations in Africa thereby promoting diversity and inclusion, creating a pool of experienced translators with which PSA can work, paid (fair) wages to support African researchers, while it can also help improve the generalizability in psychological science. Indeed, a paid translation service can help connect researchers from richer countries (like from Europe and North America) to African researchers and conduct research in currently understudied areas.

### **The process: users and service providers.**

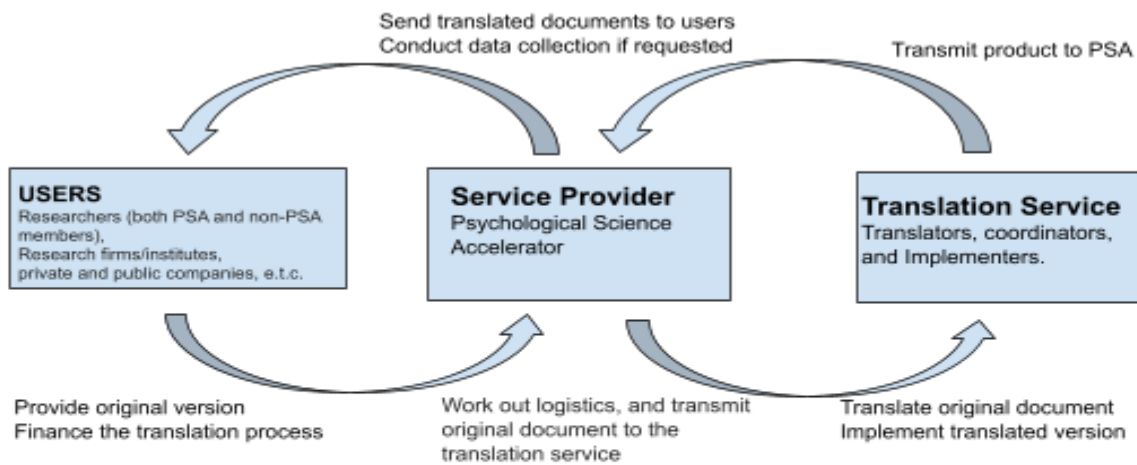
We can think of translation service operations in terms of the supply and demand for translation services. On the demand side are the **Users**. These are the buyers of the service provided by translators. They could include researchers, research institutes, companies, and any other entity that is interested in accessing translation service. They are the initiators and managers of these research projects and provide the funds for the translation service. At the other end is the supply system, **Service providers**. These are the organizations that provide the operations for the translation services. This is the main supply unit that manages the networks of translators, provides expertise and logistics, and financing.

### **What's in this for users?**

Users interested in solving generalizability problems in psychology can rely on the PSA's expertise to conduct crowdsourced studies. For instance, the PSA has already developed a translation procedure employed for PSACR studies. Conducting research of this magnitude required a translation of research materials, especially when considering reaching a multilingual population like Africa. Africa is really, really large and has many local languages. Only relying on English will probably only reach the more elite and higher educated populations. However, unless all translations are just provided for free, this requires money to ensure fairness between users and service providers. With a paid translation service, researchers will benefit from access to a high-quality service from a network of translators at affordable cost and with timely delivery. As a side benefit, such a translation service can help connect users with local researchers to help with data collection. **To understand the demand for this service, we have created a brief, five minute survey which can be found [here](#).**

### **What's in this for service providers?**

Despite the translation infrastructure at the disposal of PSA, only two of the [thousands of indigenous languages in Africa](#) were translated. With a paid translation service, there are benefits for service providers. First of all, fair wages can be provided to African service providers. Second, for those that are interested in participating beyond translation, one can become co-author of high-quality research projects and receive training in the newest open-science practices and psychology concepts.



### How will the translation service work?

The translation service is an integral part of the supply system. These are groups of experts who work directly with the service provider and produce the translated copy of the original materials. This process will require translators, translation coordinators, and implementers. The primary tasks are to translate research materials, recruit and train contacts, and implement translated notes. We also envision that translators can become in data collection if desired by both parties.

Translation will occur in the following steps:

- the user provides an English version (or, if available translators exist, other languages, such as French, German, or Dutch) of a study or measures in .qsf, .pdf, doc, or other file format to the PSA.
- PSA through its internal working mechanism will identify the area of need for translation and transmits the original document to the translation service.
- the translation service translates this file into the target languages, coordinates, and implements the translated survey into the target software.

The translation would be financed by the users/customer. Payment would be made through the PSA to the translation service. [Translation services](#) are usually charged per word and can vary between \$0.08 and \$0.28 USD per word. Aside time spent, number of words to translate, and number of languages to be translated into, translation service that deals with research materials can be costlier. However, to cost these services, we have to consider a number of factors such as validation (i.e., back translation), editing and proofreading, specialty, urgency of the job, scarcity of language translation, language source (e.g., translators from English to other African languages are less scarce than French to any African language), coordination and implementation, and payment to PSA as the service provider.

### **Call for translators**

We are trying to get information about the translation service for translators who are proficient in English and at least one non-English language. We are especially interested in recruiting translators from the African continent, though we welcome the input of translators from other countries as well. This search for information includes costing and availability of translators. We are looking for the opinion of academics, researchers, students, and other interested persons in the fields of Social sciences, Linguistics, and Languages with some experience in translation. **We invite people who are interested in translating for payment to fill in our survey [here](#).**

*This blog post was written by Adeyemi Adetula.*