

SIGDOC Career Advancement Research Grant:
Designing a Multilingual User Experience Research Center to Support Language
Accessibility in a Binational Community

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION

I'm in the process of building *Sites of Translation User-Experience Research Center* at the University of Texas at El Paso (<https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/translationux/>). This is the first user-experience research center in the United States that specifically combines translation and technology design research to improve the accessibility of multilingual platforms and interfaces in local communities. Developed as a partnership among the University of Texas at El Paso, 30 affiliate academic researchers in translation students, technical communication, and user-experience across 11 Universities, and two dozen community organizations, health centers, and small businesses in the U.S. and Mexico, this research center is being designed as a non-profit, interdisciplinary, community and University-driven resource that supports the training of multilingual technical communication and user-experience researchers while simultaneously impacting local binational and multilingual communities in and beyond El Paso.

My work as director of this research center is to pair social-justice oriented organizations and individuals who need digital materials (e.g., websites, apps) translated into languages other than English with translators who can complete the translation work and with user-experience researchers who can then conduct testing with multilingual audiences. All projects that come into this research center go through the process of gaining IRB clearance to be published as research that can inform work in technical communication, user-experience, and technology design (in addition to other fields and disciplines). Because I am only in the second year of developing this research center, I'm still in the process of establishing a streamlined process for paying and supporting the students and professionals who complete this translation and user-experience work for their community. Therefore, I am requesting this SIGDOC career advancement grant to pay translators and student UX researchers to complete work for two of our ongoing projects.

METHOD

Two projects at *Sites of Translation UX Research Center* are in need of funding for translation and usability testing services. These projects include:

1. ***Content Strategy and Translation for Ciencia en La Frontera***, a science and technology journal published in Spanish at the medical school in the Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez (UACJ). Through a partnership with Managing Editors Dr. Jorge Alberto Pérez León and Dr. Jonatan Torres Perez, a team at *Sites of Translation* already developed a content strategy that will help expand readership for *Ciencia en La Frontera* beyond Ciudad Juarez. Executing this strategy requires the translation (from Spanish to English) of specific parts of the journal's website and content, as well as the cataloging of content on UTEP's library website. While the content strategy has already been developed, we are currently seeking funding to complete the translation of selected web content for this journal, and we are seeking funding to facilitate localization focus groups with Spanish-speaking readers who will help us ensure that this translation is adequate and usable for our target readers. This collaboration will allow science and technology research from Juarez to be more readily accessible to

students and faculty at UTEP and across the U.S., with the goal of expanding the visibility of this important research and of the work being done at UACJ.

2. Translation and Localization of A.W.O.L., a graphic novel about life on the border. In collaboration with the author Elvira Carrizal-Dukes and illustrator Ronnie Dukes (<https://dukescomics.com/>), *Sites of Translation* is translating this graphic novel (from English to Spanish) in order to distribute it to children living on the border in both El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. The graphic novel depicts the struggles and discrimination faced by children who cross the Mexico/US border, and serves as a representation of how borderland culture and language can inform contemporary art and scholarship. I am seeking funding to cover the translation and initial production costs of distributing this novel to one local after school program that will serve as the initial user-base for future revisions and iterations of the project. The graphic novel includes over 100 pages of texts and illustrations, so the translation of this project will inform ongoing research about the visual elements of technical translation practices (Gonzales & Turner, 2017).

BUDGET

Although portions of both projects have already been completed or are under way, funding from this research grant will cover critical costs that will facilitate the success and distribution of various project components. As a community-engagement project, institutional overhead costs will be waived by my department and institution (confirmation letter can be provided upon request).

Budget item	Cost
Translation of select Ciencia en La Frontera web content (6,400 words at \$.09/word translation costs)	\$576
10 localization focus group participants for Ciencia en La Frontera localization (\$10 compensation for each)	\$100
Translation of AWOL graphic novel text (8,000 words at \$.09/word translation costs)	\$720
Production costs to distribute AWOL to one after school program (20 books at \$5 each)	\$100
Total	\$1,496

TIMELINE AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

January-May 2018: Complete translation of Ciencia en La Frontera web content and AWOL graphic novel text with the help of contracted student translators. For research

purposes, translators will trace their translation processes using screen casting software and will participate in artifact-based interviews with *Sites of Translation* faculty, detailing their processes of translating content for Spanish-speaking audiences on the Mexico/US Border (see Gonzales, 2017).

June-July 2018: Localization focus groups will take place for the Ciencia en La Frontera web content translation. These focus groups will be recorded and analyzed for research purposes. Focus groups facilitators, faculty, and other researchers involved in these projects will submit experience reports to SIGDOC 2018 to discuss their processes of translating and localizing digital content for a borderland community.

August 2018: The new Ciencia en La Frontera website will be launched with the English portions added and with updated indexing in the UTEP library system. Translated AWOL books will be distributed to a local after school program through the El Paso Housing Authority. Translators and UX researchers involved in both projects will present their work at SIGDOC 2018, welcoming their community partners to co-author the conference proceedings and attend the conference or participate via Skype (depending on budget and time constraints). Future publications on this project will follow after feedback is requested from SIGDOC attendees and reviewers. Target journals will include *Communication Design Quarterly*, *IEEE*, and *Technical Communication*. Credit will be given to SIGDOC and ACM on all forthcoming publications.

SIGNIFICANCE

Through the dissemination of the Ciencia en La Frontera website and the AWOL graphic novel in both Spanish and English, this project will result in public deliverables that will directly impact several partnering organizations and community members. Disciplinarily, this project will also inform emerging research in communication design, specifically by extending disciplinary conversations about the importance of designing technologies that are useful to bilingual and bicultural audiences (Batova & Clark, 2015; Salazar & Romano Bergstrom, 2014; Walton, Zraly, & Mugengana, 2015; Sun, 2012), and studies about the value of translation and language in global health literacy (St. Amant, 2015; Meloncon & Frost, 2015). Further, the community-based methods employed in this project will inform ongoing conversations about the role of community engagement, language diversity, and social justice in technical communication and technology design (Agboka, 2013a; Agboka, 2013b; Dura, 2016; Yu & Savage, 2013; Jones 2016). In this way, the applications and deliverables stemming from this project are relevant to members of SIGDOC who demonstrate an increasing commitment to issues of accessibility and diversity in academic, professional, and community contexts. Funding this proposal will support the researchers and organizations involved in the two projects described in this narrative while also contributing to the growing stability of a user-experience research center focused on providing language accessibility to multilingual communities.

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