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国际译联发布2014年国际翻译日主题文章——语言权利：一切人权之基础

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语言权利：一切人权之基础

【编者按】9月30日是国际翻译日，全球口笔译工作者和术语学家一年一度的节日。国际译联每年发布国际翻译日主题及诠释主题的文章。以下是2014年国际翻译日主题文章。

大多数人都没有听说过语言权利。它究竟指什么？为何如此重要？

如果我们认同《世界人权宣言》中宣称的全人类与生俱来拥有平等享有人格尊严、自由、公平、健康与和平的权利，我们就必须思考如何让每个人获得、运用以及保护这些权利。不管我们身处怎样的法律法规和生存环境，都需要有效的沟通来捍卫这些权利。当我们所处的环境威胁到这些最基本的权利时，如果不能用自己的母语来理解或表达，我们将无法为自己辩护或保护自己。

如果不能行使语言权利，人权可能会受到各种威胁。想想移民、难民、寻求政治避难者、游客以及在国外工作的人们。当他们生病需要就医、不小心触犯法律、需要申请社会服务或者与雇主产生纠纷时怎么办？如果他们被迫使用一种既不会说也不会写的语言，连自己最基本的需求都无法表达，怎能行使自己的权利？这时候就需要口笔译人员和术语学家这些语言专业人士发挥至关重要的作用。

以公平和健康为例。如果受到违法指控，我们需要了解要求我们签署的文件的内容以及法官、律师和其他执法人员所说的话。如果我们在医院里不能向医生描述清楚自己的症状，医生怎能进行诊断和治疗？如果我们看不懂知情同意书，怎能指望我们在上面签字？这时需要语言专业人士介入。这些专业人士确保那些不会讲当地主流语言的人能够与他人交流，获得相关服务，从而实现有效的沟通，使他们的基本人权得到保障。受过专业训练的术语工作者致力于在一种语言内或不同语言之间统一术语，从而避免疏忽，确保病人安全。术语工作者在编制术语表或口笔译工作者在筛选那些危及我们安全与和平的口头或书面外语信息时也需要格外小心。其他体现语言服务重要性的领域包括社会服务、政府服务和守法公民为维护自身权利和保护自身安全需要了解的大量文件。

由于无法获得至关重要的语言服务而导致令人发指的不公正判决、监禁和无法挽回的身心损害有记录为证。我们需要携手提升语言服务意识，确保公众与服务提供方之间的所有沟通环节都有语言服务的支撑。

请加入我们的行列，在2014年9月30日国际翻译日宣传语言权利，启迪大众！

INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION DAY 2014 Language Rights: Essential to All Human Rights**Most people have never heard of language rights. What does this mean specifically and why is it important?**

If we are to assume that all humans have an inherent equal right to dignity, freedom, justice, health and peace, as reflected in the UN' s Universal Declaration of Human Rights, then we have to consider how one is to attain, exercise and/or protect those rights. Irrespective of the laws, regulations or conditions of the environment we all live in, effective communication will be required for us to be able to defend these rights. Without being able to understand and/or express ourselves in our primary language, we are simply not going to be able to explain or defend ourselves when facing a difficult situation that threatens those very rights to dignity, freedom, justice, health and peace.

There is a wide range of situations in which human rights may be threatened if people are not able to exercise their language rights. Think about immigrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, tourists and those working abroad. What happens if they fall ill and need to consult a medical specialist, unwittingly break a law, need to apply for social services or are involved in a dispute with an employer? How can they exercise their rights when they cannot even communicate their most basic needs and circumstances because they are forced to use a language they do not speak or write? This is where interpreters, translators and terminologists – all language professionals – play an essential role.

Let us take the examples of justice and health. If we are accused of a wrongdoing, we need to understand what documents we are being asked to sign and the words the judge, lawyers or other law enforcement professionals are speaking to us. In a hospital, how can we seek treatment if we cannot explain our symptoms for a doctor to diagnose our condition, or be expected to sign an informed consent form if we do not understand what it says?

This is where the language professionals come in. These professionals ensure that individuals who do not speak the dominant language are able to understand and be understood, and access these services, so that effective communication takes place and their basic human rights are protected. Terminologists trained in these specialized areas work to harmonize terminology within and among different languages so that due diligence can take place and patient security can be ensured. The same applies when terminologists compile glossaries or translators and interpreters intercept written and oral foreign-language messages that are a threat to our security and peace. Other areas where language services are essential include social services, governmental services, and the myriad of documents that lawful citizens need to understand in order to be guaranteed their rights and have their security protected.

The inability to obtain these essential language services has resulted in horrifying documented cases of injustice, incarceration and irreversible negative health outcomes. We all need to work together to raise awareness and ensure that language services are available at all the interfaces between the public and service-providers.

Join us in educating the public about language rights on International Translation Day, 30 September 2014.

Izabel S. Arocha (International Medical Interpreters Association)



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