Publishing Committee Update – TMS Implementation (August 2025)

Submitted by: Mônica S. – TMS Coordinator

Introduction

We are still in the initial onboarding phase of the Translation Management System. Progress this month has been slower due to the summer holiday period, but the foundation is being laid. If all goes as planned, the first translation teams will begin onboarding by **mid-September**.

What is a TMS and why does it matter?

A Translation Management System, or TMS, is a platform designed to centralize, support, and accelerate translation work. Instead of working with scattered Word or Google documents, all tasks, resources, and progress are managed in one place.

It looks very much like a translation tool: translators see the source text on one side and the target language on the other. But beyond that, the TMS has built-in features:

- **Glossary** – terms appear automatically when detected, ensuring consistent use.
- **Style Guide** – supports decisions on language, grammar, and style, helping teams write with clarity.
- **Translation Memory (TM)** – remembers what has been translated before and suggests it again, which saves time and increases consistency.

This not only helps volunteer translators — who are not professionals — adopt best practices more easily, but it also allows coordinators to track progress in real time.
Over time, this will also give us the ability to create a clearer **publishing budget and timeline**.

1. Glossary

- In discussions with team coordinators, we learned that it is not possible to have a single ACA glossary for all languages. Each language has its own context and needs.
- Teams also struggled with the former Foundation Glossary of almost 400 terms. Completing it often took months or years, delaying the start of translations.
- Experience showed that glossaries work better when built progressively during translation. Teams naturally identify which terms need to be fixed, while others can be handled through MT suggestions and the translator's judgment.
- Still, not all teams have that experience. To provide a practical starting point and to make this manageable, we created a reduced glossary of about 90 essential terms (from Foundational Literature and ACA core concepts). This lighter version serves as a foundation for new teams, while still leaving freedom for each language team to adapt, add, or remove terms as they grow.

2. Supporting Documents & Workflow Guidance

- We have been developing documents to support teams in understanding the translation workflow and the transition into the TMS, which will be posted as resources on the ACA WSO Translation website once reviewed and approved.

- ACA Localization Guidelines
- ACA Translation Workflow & Resource Links
- TMS Glossary – Template
- Language-Specific Style Guide Form
- Translator's Note Guideline
- Translation Review Process (for Coordinators)

3. Foundational Literature as First Task

- Every team entering the TMS will begin with re-translating the **Foundational Literature**.
- This builds the **Translation Memory** from the start, gives teams hands-on practice in a smaller project, ensures consistency in the most frequently used texts and fulfills our mission to carry the message.

4. Translation Status & Criteria for First Teams

Based on the recent Translation Status Form, we now have a clearer picture of which teams are closer to readiness. The ideal groups for the pilot phase are those who:

1. Preferably under 50% complete (as previous drafts cannot easily be imported and will need to be re-entered in the system).
2. Already have at least a basic glossary, with essential terms defined.
3. Have started work on the Foundational Literature.

- Teams that already translated their Foundational Literature will need to input it again into the system, but this will be faster since the work is already done.
- These early adopters must be aware that this is a *learning phase* for all of us. We will discover problems and solutions together, with training and support provided along the way.