



Ridiculous Generosity

I'm so happy to announce that we'll once again have a Dictionary Exchange at ATA's 63rd Annual Conference in Los Angeles (October 12–15, 2022). Many of you know that this has been my favorite ATA event during the past few years because it allows us to be ridiculously generous with our own dictionary treasures while making our spouses or partners happy with reclaimed bookshelf space. It's also amazing to see a table full of dictionaries in rather unexpected language combinations (Czech<>Albanian, anyone?), and the flushed cheeks of translators who have just grabbed one or two or even more of those gems. All the recipients have to do in return is...oh, that's right: nothing!


We started the exchange at ATA59 in New Orleans four years ago and—perhaps unsurprisingly—this has become a very popular event. (You can read my report of the first Dictionary Exchange in the January/February issue of *The ATA Chronicle*.) Reading that account, you'll find that one thing we make sure of each year is that the handful of dictionaries that don't find a new owner aren't simply tossed in the trash. Instead, they go to a reputable bookstore or college library. We try not to just honor the old and new

owners of the books, but also the books themselves.

If you don't want to schlep your print dictionaries but have glossaries to share, you can bring a description of that glossary along with a QR code on a printed sheet of paper that will bring your colleagues to its online location. Of course, you can also email that code to me (jost@internationalwriters.com) and I'll display it on the Dictionary Exchange table. All of these will then also be shared under the #dictionaryexchange tag on Twitter.

An additional new feature this year that ATA President-Elect and Conference Organizer Veronika Demichelis has come up with is a (non-dictionary) book exchange. Unlike the Dictionary Exchange, this is a “true” exchange where you can bring your favorite book of the past year or so and exchange it for someone else's favorite book. This should not only make for interesting reading on the plane, train, or automobile back home, but also for interesting conversations at the conference, and possibly new friends as well.

It may be that very last thing (“new friends”) that ends up being at the core of why the Dictionary Exchange is so great, and why I would strongly encourage other associations to offer something similar at their meetings. The world of translation is a strange and beautiful place where we cooperate rather than compete, where we help each other rather than stand in each other's way. This event is that principle exemplified beautifully and practically.

Again, be sure to bring your dictionaries. If you've already gifted your dictionaries at a previous Dictionary Exchange, help spread the word on social media or any other place where you interact with colleagues. 

NOTES

1. Zetzsche, Jost. “Wondrous Things at the ATA59 Dictionary Exchange,” *The ATA Chronicle* (January/February 2019), 31.



Jost Zetzsche is a translation industry and translation

technology consultant. He is the author of *Characters with Character: 50 Ways to Rekindle Your Love Affair with Language*. jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com

This column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals.