

Design Report

Language Access Innovations in Court

February 2019

Stanford University Legal Design Lab

A Technology-Policy Report for the California Judicial
Council





How can Courts use
TECHNOLOGY + DESIGN
to support people in court
when they're not proficient
in English?

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Introduction

How can courts use technology and design to support people through court when they have limited English proficiency? Limited English Proficiency (LEP) court users lose precious time being sent back time and time again for improperly filling out forms they don't understand. Oftentimes they are relying only on themselves, or on family and friends to translate. Courts use precious staff resources to answer the same questions again and again.

California has approximately 7 million residents who are not proficient in English, and who speak over 200 languages. **What are some innovative, scalable, user-friendly solutions to address their language access needs outside the courtroom?**

The Stanford Legal Design Lab team, that worked with the Santa Clara Superior Court in the Autumn 2018 class Design for Justice: Language Access, has a set of preliminary proposals, requirements, and testing plans for new courthouse language access interventions. These include technology solutions, as well as information and service designs. They aim to help litigants who are visiting the court to deal with typical courthouse transactions that occur outside the courtroom setting, so that these litigants are empowered, confident, and capable of navigating the spaces, process, and interactions of the court system.

Our team explored tablets as a primary solution, but also uncovered other opportunity areas for new technology, service and information design to make meaningful change in language access in public services. This report recommends what courts, self-help centers, and other legal public organizations can do to improve their clients' language access to services. We hope it can be of use for technical and policy choices, about how to effectively invest in greater language access in California courts.

1.

Our Work + Process

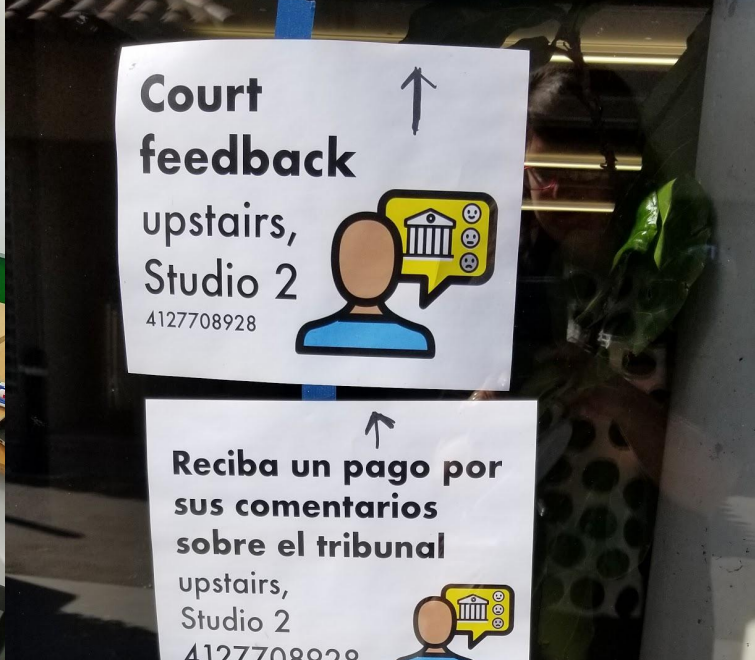
A short overview of our design research and the overarching principles and use cases that emerged

Our Process

The Stanford Design for Justice class organized themselves into four groups of interdisciplinary students evaluating tablets as a tool for language access in the Santa Clara Superior Court self-help center context. They also worked on identifying people's user needs, guiding principles to direct future innovation work, and other ideas (aside from tablet-based translation) that would serve the stakeholders.

The class used several techniques to understand and test the opportunities for language access innovation:

- **Background Research and Innovation Landscape.** Before class began, our team collected literature and conducted outreach to legal aid technologist mailing lists. We asked what types of initiatives have been used to improve language access and wayfinding through technology. This formed a basis for our understanding of what is possible.
- **Site observations.** Our teams worked in partnership with the Santa Clara Superior Court Self-Help Center, and their team of lawyers and Justice Corps volunteers. We made 6 site visits to the court. At these visits, teams observed court users, workflows, service and information offerings, and space designs.
- **Interviews, surveys, and simulations.** The teams interviewed over 50 LEP litigants in Santa Clara. Most interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. They included structured surveys and evaluations, as well as simulations and qualitative feedback. Participants ranged in age from 18 to late 70s. They included native speakers of Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Turkish, Uighur, Farsi, and Russian.
- **Staff interviews and tablet observation.** The teams interviewed over 10 staff members and interpreters at the court as well. The teams observed staff using tablets with LEP users to see how the current tablet pilot is working.
- **Design Brainstorms and Synthesis.** We used human-centered design process to make sense of the observations, interviews, and surveys. This involved creating personas, process maps, and user requirements list. We brainstormed new possible innovations for language access.
- **Prototype simulations and testing.** The teams tested various tablet implementations and other concepts for language access innovations with court users, to understand what type of intervention might be most valuable -- and to refine initial ideas for improvement.



FUNCTIONALITY:
How easy is it to navigate?
0 Low 7 High

AUTHORITY:
How trustworthy + RELIABLE is the INFO communicated?
0 7

OBTAINABILITY:
How EASY is it to access info + services?
0 7

PROBLEM-SOLVING:
How much USE did it prove to be, to solve the problem the user came with?
0 7

DIGNITY:
WERE you treated with RESPECT BY THE COURT?
0 7

We began our research with a mix of quantitative instruments and qualitative discussions. Our main quantitative instrument was a 7-question survey that asked users to rank an item on a scale of 0 to 7 on factors like effectiveness, access, technical usability, experience design, procedural justice, and dignity. We asked participants to review tablets and other ideas for language access innovation using this survey.

For non-English speakers, we had students proficient in Spanish, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Farsi, and other languages translate the survey aloud. They also assisted LEP court users in filling in the surveys.

Reviewing our results, we found that with our small sample, our qualitative discussions produced more meaningful insights and guidance than the survey. The survey questions were useful to prompt more detailed conversations about how and why a tablet could be useful. This survey might be of use with a larger sample, to evaluate a tablet roll-out on a wider scale.



MARIA
- 24 yrs old
- needs restraining order

drives to court unsure of what she needs



INFO DESK

where should I go?
x in Spanish

30 min Later

RESTRAINING ORDER HELP CENTER



I found it!

WAITING LINE

NO QUESTIONS
WAIT AT YOUR OWN RISK

2 hours Later



Here's the form you need bring it back next week

At Home

English

This doesn't make sense



What should I do?

COMFORT / WAITING TIME

- Waiting area playgrounds
- Change color of chairs/walls
- comfort chairs
- PLANTS!
- Plants garden
- To stroll through while waiting
- White, bright, fancy views
- Magazine variety
- Pinup gallery
- Two separate rooms privacy when receiving help
- Reading Material (middles) enter keyword via information
- BASE BALL CAPS
- Napping Chambers
- Free coffee
- cultural dogs
- bring your dog to work
- Therapy dogs
- BASE PIT
- daycare
- Private Talking Room
- more comfortable furniture/decor
- actual person @ desk helpful
- Museum gift shop
- fun waiting room (separate)
- Shows from home
- more relaxing less waiting
- w/ Free Body Bags

FINDING WAY

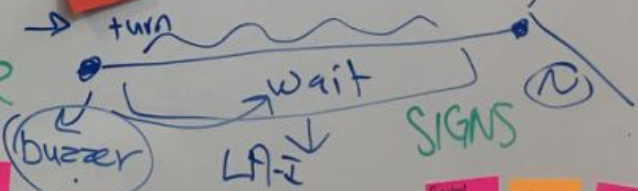
- guiding lines to rooms
- color directions

- Kiosk
- realist - screen for visuals
- Information desk
- TECH
- Electronic signs that switch messages
- Chrome car
- BAR CODE FORMS
- Barcode scanner check-in
- update in person language
- RENEW IT 5 STEPS
- better welcome?
- google etc.

ALERTS

- numbered ticket
- number system
- buzzer in line

People



REMOTE

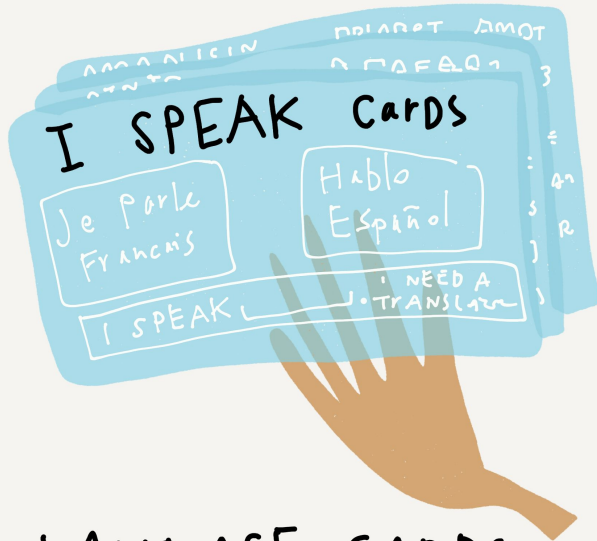
- Court comes to you schedule time
- what about remote appointment
- in person order of your choice
- CALL IN

- Serial Signs
- brochure QR
- change program
- targeted forms
- larger readability posters

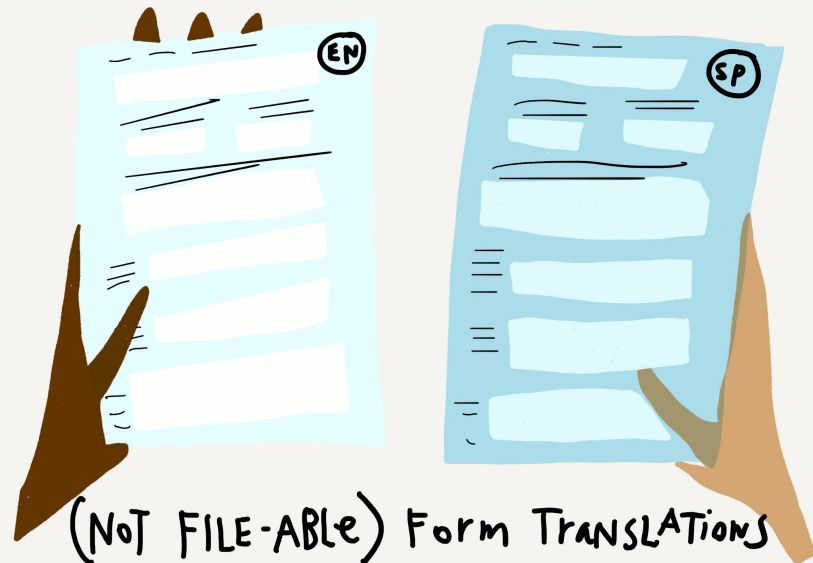
feelings

- Home + Security
- Cafe
- Relieving anxiety
- building trust
- CHOOSE YOUR HERO
- rating advisors
- Choose who serves you based on Bonus
- REVISION
- check for right room

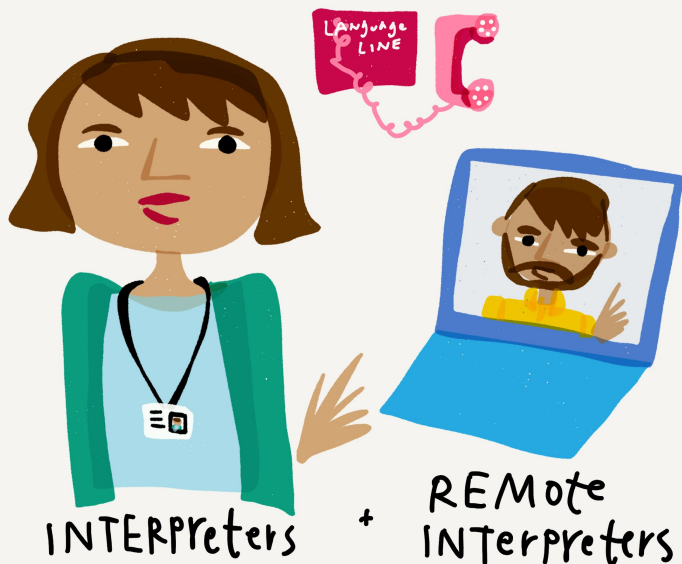
Language Access Designs + Technology



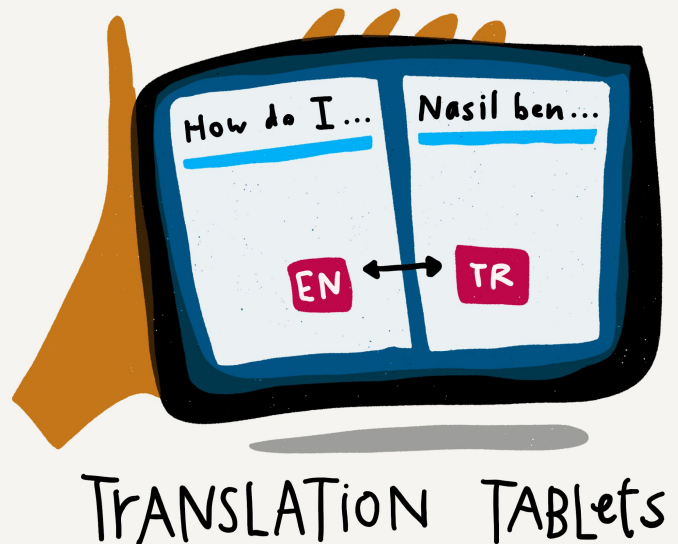
LANGUAGE CARDS



(NOT FILE-ABLE) Form TRANSLATIONS



INTERPRETERS + REMOTE INTERPRETERS



TRANSLATION TABLETS

From our background research, we identified a number of existing initiatives to promote language access in the court. These were Interpreters and Remote Interpreters, forms and materials that had been pre-translated, I-Speak and other language cards to help staff identify what language is in use, and some tablets with Google Translate that have just begun to be used in courts.

We also brainstormed other possible ways to increase language access in the lobby, security area, and self-help center areas.



WELCOME TO THE COURT. WHAT CAN I HELP YOU WITH?

ROBOT GREETER

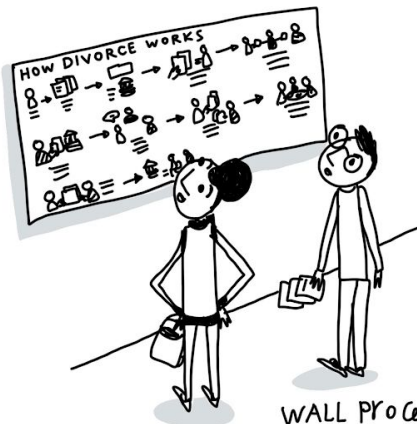
Printer

DOCUMENT SCANNER



TRANSLATION STATION

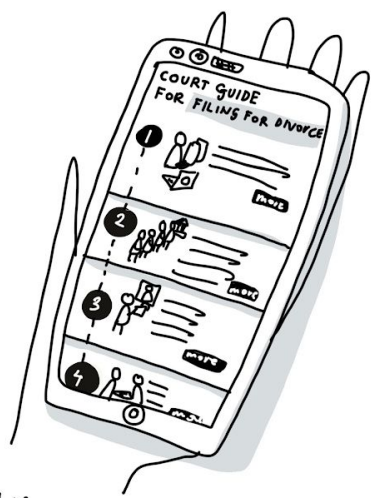
TRANSLATION STATION



WALL PROCESS MAPS



MOBILE-FRIENDLY WEB GUIDES



INFORMATION / CHECK IN KIOSK



INFO DESK VOLUNTEER



PERSONALIZED SIGNAGE & DIRECTIONS

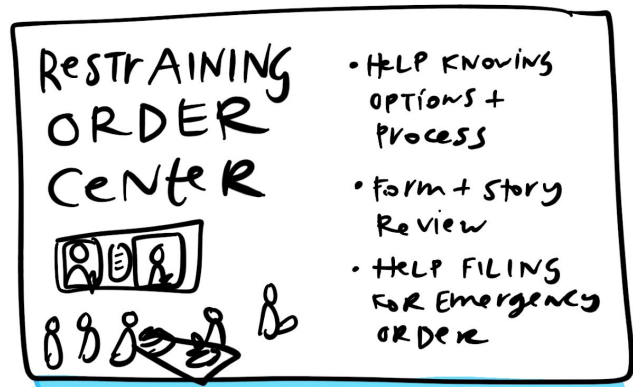


WELCOME MAP + SERVICES HANDOUT

Core Use Cases

In our work, we aimed to be concrete about exactly where, when, and with whom, language access technology could serve LEP users in the courthouse contexts. We identified the tasks and court locations where the technology could be used. In the Santa Clara court, this included :

- **The Self Help Center and Family Law Facilitator's Office**, in which a person checks in, has a triage conversation, fills in forms with the assistance of staff, and has their forms and paperwork reviewed.
- **The Restraining Order Center** where similar assistance is provided with a focus on violence prevention orders applications and responsive documents.
- **Family Court Clinic**, wherein Staff Attorneys provide day of court services such as alternative dispute resolution, preparing parties for hearing should settlement efforts fail and order preparation.
- **Workshops**, in which litigants with same issues (starting cases such as divorce, parentage, and Limited Conservatorships; mandatory financial disclosures; finishing divorces) are helped with process information and forms in groups in a classroom type setting lead by one Staff Attorney assisted by JusticeCorp interns.





IT'S MY FIRST TIME COMING TO COURT. WHERE DO I GO? WHAT SHOULD I BRING? WHEN DO I NEED TO BE THERE? WILL THEY BE ABLE TO HELP ME IF I DON'T SPEAK ENGLISH WELL?



HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF THE COURT STAFF CAN HELP ME WITH MY PROBLEM? OR WHERE I CAN GO TO GET HELP?



I DON'T FULLY UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED JUST NOW AT MY HEARING — OR HOW TO GO THROUGH A 'MEDIATION' WITH THE OTHER PARTY.



HOW CAN I FILL IN MY INFO + MY STORY INTO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE FORMS?



The Language Access Experience of Court Self Help Centers

From our research sessions, we found several themes around LEP users of court self-help services:

- 1) **People using the Self-Help Center are stressed.** They are eager to access basic information about their legal issues and to advance their proceedings. They are anxious about what is happening, and feel that it takes a lot of time to get access to the limited services on offer.
- 2) **They are scared of getting it wrong.** Many also expressed fear as a dominant emotion. This included fear of making a mistake in how they communicated to the court in their conversations, documents, and hearing appearances -- in such a way that would undermine their chances of a fair outcome.
- 3) **They want a big picture understanding.** Many echoed a similar desire: that they currently cannot understand where they are in the system, or what to do next. They asked for more support to understand the entire procedure and what services and tools were available for steps along the way.
- 4) **They already use Google Translate for language access.** For our users who are comfortable with mobile phones (which was a large majority), they depend on Google Translate to facilitate interactions in businesses and government services. It is the go-to workaround for language access issues in their everyday life. That said, many recognized that it can be inaccurate and not always to be trusted.



Guiding Principles

1. Dignity and Control

Ideally, any new technology or service to provide language access will increase a person's sense of dignity and control in the legal system. Attention must be paid to people's experiences with the technology, because it will affect whether this new offering will indeed be used and will serve their goals. It will also affect their sense of procedural justice in the courts. A good intervention will increase their sense that they know what to do, and that the justice system is fair, accessible, and reliable.

2. Support for Three Dimensions of Translation

For any new innovation in language access, there must be a commitment to different kinds of 'translation' to allow for equal access to the court's communications with the public. This involves three dimensions of language access, which we repeatedly saw and heard from stakeholders as meaningfully impacting their access to the legal system.

1. Literal Translation
2. Legal Translation, of legal terms and concepts
3. Cultural Translation

Communications between litigants and the court cannot be solved through simple translations. Concepts such as "summary dissolution" will not have an easy translation. The danger is that technology reduces translation to only literal translations, which will often not lead to quality communication. New innovation must work to ensure that legal terms are translated out from 'legalese' and with cultural context.

3. Building from existing Trusted Relationships with Tech

Many LEP users already have experience using certain language access tools. In particular, many of our interviewees have established trusted relationships with Google Translate. Based on their past experience in the legal system and many other contexts, many prefer technology translation to human translation. They are also accepting of Translate's mistakes, and have developed individual workarounds to make it serve their purpose. New interventions should build from this established trusted relationships. That said, if the technology for language access is implemented in confusing ways, this trust may not be enough to lead to good Language Access outcomes through Translate. Also, users may mistakenly rely on Translate if it produces correct-seeming translations of legal concepts.

2.

Tablets for Language Access

Exploring when and how tablets can help people with language access to court communications

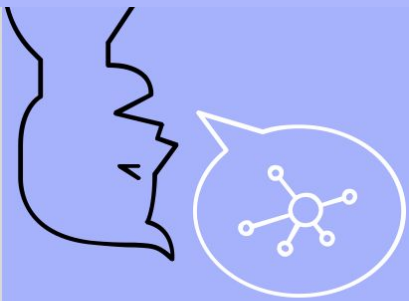
Tablets

Our team explored tablets as a possible solution to enhance language access in court services. The Santa Clara Self-Help staff had just begun to try using tablets with Google Translate to interact with LEP users when we began our design research. This allowed us to observe their field experiences, gather their feedback, and conduct our own tests. We recommend using tablets for Self-Help and general court wayfinding and procedural conversations. The tablets generally had high trust among users, they were usable, and they were able to produce relatively good communications (other than issues with some languages' translation via Google Translate).

That said, the success of tablets as a language access device will depend on several protocols being established.

- 1) **The Tablet Practicalities:** There must be a protocol for situating the tablet in the space of the court, including the practical matters of electrical power, visible positioning, uninterrupted data service, and volume off.
- 2) **Staff Education:** It is essential that Self-Help and other staff members are trained on when and how to best use tablets for language access, and also when to use a tablet with a translation application versus using an interpreter.
- 3) **The Right Content on the Tablet:** Courts may need guidance on what applications and information are provided on the tablet. This includes having the necessary languages downloaded, removing extraneous applications and distractions, and having a set 'workflow' between a general translation application (like Google Translate) and a more court-specific, legally oriented application that has pre-set information.
- 4) More ambitiously -- **Auditing and Encouraging Google Translate** to improve their translations for legal conversations that are not English-to-Spanish. This app will be central to any language access technology effort, because of its ubiquity and people's familiarity with it. But it does not perform adequately for most non-Spanish language legal conversations that we tested. Our testing and Self-Help staff reported that Spanish-language translations were more reliable. It is worthwhile for legal stakeholders to invest in auditing and training Translate to perform better for key legal and court information tasks.

It's worthwhile to note that often, instead of using tablets, we used our own (or LEP users') mobile devices to communicate. The same best practices that we lay out for the tablet can be replicated with existing devices. Thus, we recommend that **courts use these protocols to incorporate users' mobile phones into service.**



“

*I like that on the tablet I
can see what's being
translated so that I know
it's translating the correct
words.*



Tablet Practicalities

The details of a tablet's implementation will be essential to ensure that staff and LEP court users do in fact make use of the tablet -- and that it leads to efficient communication between them. There are some key criteria that courts must review when implementing the tablet.

- **Table-to-Tablet Cable Tether.** Ideally, the tablet will be used at set locations in the Self-Help Center, Workshop room, or Hearing Self-Help locations. Often it is necessary to hand it between the staff member and the LEP user, so that both can easily speak, type, and read with it. To keep the tablet secure, it's ideal if it can be tethered to a table via a locked cable. In this way, they are present and accessible, can be used in flexible ways -- but are not as apt to be lost or stolen.
- If it is not possible to set up a cable tether the focus should be positioning tablets so that they are **accessible** (able to be picked up, handed between people, and readily available) **and secure** (so they are consistently in the same place, and there is not concern about theft or loss).
- Another alternative, if the tablet must be in a more permanent place, without a cable tether, would be to have the tablet in a single, locked down place (like a desktop kiosk -- imagine a picture frame) -- but then to have a **microphone** that is plugged into the tablet and can be passed back and forth between staff and LEP user. This can allow more effective voice-to-text transcriptions in noisy environments.
- In case there is an LEP user with trouble reading a tablet's text, there should also be a **headphone set available**, and then the tablet translation can be used in text-to-voice mode. There can be disposable earphone covers in addition, to address sanitation concerns when multiple users use the same set.
- **Reliable (if not Permanent) Charging.** The tablets should also be located close to power outlets so that they do not run out of battery when needed. Ideally, the tablet can be always plugged in (or always plugged in when not in use).
- **Instructions at the ready.** To introduce new LEP users to the tablet, and to remind staff of best practices, the tablet should have instructions about turning it on, what applications to open for different tasks, volume control, and other essentials. It doesn't need to be always part of the translation interaction, but it can be a reference point if necessary.

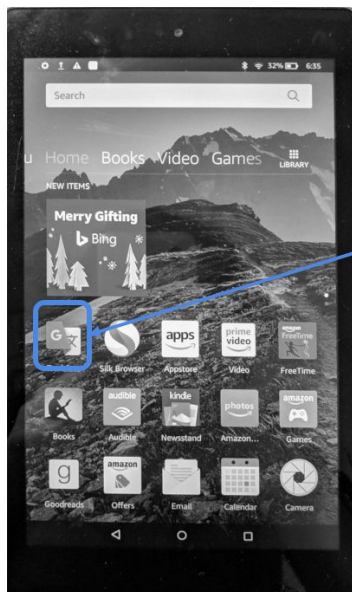
Which tablet?

We tested two types of tablets -- the Huawei Mediapad and the Amazon Fire. If the court were to invest in tablets for language access, we would cautiously recommend the Huawei model that we tested over the Amazon Fire. We would discourage use of the Amazon Fire in any case. Huawei had one drawback -- its buttons' locations -- but otherwise proved to be usable, capable, and reliable. If another provider's tablet could fit the following criteria in the positive, we'd recommend it as well.



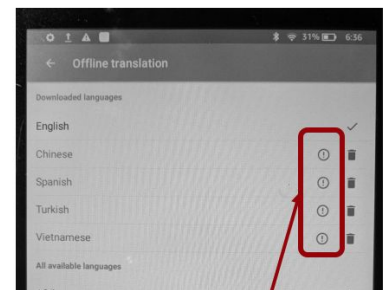
HUAWEI w/ Android

- Confusing that the home button is not the power button.
- Easy to make Google Translate accessible from every screen (true of all Android tablets)
- Enough memory to download all common languages
- Does not require WiFi



AMAZON

- Amazon tablets include multiple redundant applications that make it hard to get the tablet started and go straight to Google Translate.
- They do not have enough memory often to download all common languages.
- Amazon tablets require WiFi, at least to set up.



Testing notes on the Huawei with Android Operating System

Negative: **Button location is not intuitive.** Staff and litigants regularly found it confusing that the home button is not the power button. They were placed in locations on the tablet that did not make sense to most of our testers.

Positive: **Translate's accessibility.** It's easy to make Google Translate accessible from every screen. This is true of all tablets running on Android OS.

Positive: **Memory Capacity.** The Huawei tablet had enough memory to download all common languages. Each language is between 30 and 60 MB. Currently, Google makes 59 languages available for offline download. If the court plans for 200 possible languages to translate, it should have at minimum 12 GB memory free for languages. (Once downloaded these offline languages must be updated monthly as well).

Positive: **Network-free usage.** Using the tablet itself, and often running translations, does not require WiFi. This allows for more consistent usage, even if there are wifi issues in the court (which we experienced frequently).

Testing notes on the Amazon Fire with Android Operating System

Negative: **Too much unnecessary content.** Amazon tablets include multiple redundant applications that make it hard to get the tablet started and go straight to Google Translate. It is hard to remove them.

Negative: **Not enough Memory.** The tablets do not have enough memory open to download all common languages for translation. Additional memory could be added with an external MicroSD card installed in the tablet.

Negative: **Wifi dependency.** Amazon tablets require WiFi, at least to set up.

Negative: **App store limitations.** Amazon tablets do not easily support the Google Play store to add applications. Its own app store is limited, with versions of Google Translate that do not have all features.

Conversation with the Tablet: Best Practices

Based on our testing and experiments deploying the tablet in conversations between Self-Help Center staff and litigants, we developed an initial set of guidance for using tablets responsibly for language access.

These points should be integrated into staff training and tablet roll-out.

1. Be ready for the **button choreography**: if you are initiating the conversation, press the Language Button before you speak. When it is time for the litigant to speak, they will press the button again.
2. **Do not use Google Translate in the mode of ‘Text to Audio’**, that automatically outputs audio of its translation. This mode does not work for many of the languages we tested. Also, users can be embarrassed if the tablet’s volume is too loud and overheard by others. If the volume is too quiet, it is difficult for the user to hear in a busy environment (like with 5 other conversations happening nearby).
3. Use **formal, not conversational English**. The staff should be aware of their language choice -- potentially referring to a structured handout to say phrases that are controlled, clear, and direct. They should avoid metaphors or legal jargon.
4. **Speak in short phrases**, to reduce the chance of mistranslation and to more smoothly facilitate conversation.
5. **Pause after speaking each phrase** for the translation to finish correcting. Often the application’s first translation attempt is poor quality, but it will correct the translation itself after a short pause
6. **Check audio to text dictation for correctness before showing the translation** to the court user. For example, sometimes Google Translate can mishear and translate something into offensive terms, like “You are a donkey”. In other situations, a staff member asked, “What is your name?” but Google Translate registered “What is guy’s mom?” and thus translated something incorrectly to the user.

We have created sample “Good” and “Bad” examples of conversation with a tablet or phone in the Self-Help context, that illustrate these points for training staff:.

Good Translation with Tablet : <https://youtu.be/n5Ti2O7zDIQ>

Bad Translation with Tablet: <https://youtu.be/Si1qxEejfXA>



Staff Training & Procedure

It is very important that the court staff are appropriately trained to work with tablets and translation technology, so they can confidently guide the LEP users through court conversations and transactions.

Before staff members start using the tablets, it is important to provide them with an adequate procedural as well as tech-based training so that they are aware as to when to use the tablet, when to request for additional help, how to navigate the tablet and use its different and pertinent features to facilitate communication with LEP users.

This could be achieved by having a combination of a Set Procedure for tablet usage, plus Trainings of staff. Development of more thorough guidelines may be an appropriate future project for the Judicial Council to undertake.

- (1) **Set Procedure must be made and documented by the court.** This should determine when the staff should use an interpreter, when they should use a tablet (or litigant's mobile device), and when it is acceptable to have a family or friend to translate. The court must decide on this guidance, so that staff are confident that that they can choose the right pathway for a certain type of conversation or user need.
- (2) After these pathways for tablet usage are defined, then there should be **Trainings** in which this procedure and the tablet technology is taught. The staff can run through model scenarios and conversations to practice with the tablet functions and procedure. A sample Training workshop would include the following topics for staff to learn:
 - a) **The Court's Set Procedure:** When do you use a Tablet to facilitate Language Access? And when do you not?
 - b) **Navigating the Tablet:** Get familiar with the basics of the tablet: turning it on, controlling the volume, and opening the main applications.
 - c) **Best Practices for Conversations:** Learn the main pointers that this report has already established to use Translate efficiently.
 - d) **Test-Run: Practice Scenarios:** Give staff members each a chance to do a simulation with someone playing an LEP user, so they can get used to the tablets.

Setting the Procedure: When to use the Tablet?

We recommend the court invest in creating their own policy about when to use a tablet versus an interpreter. We observed that the transition to tablets in Santa Clara's Self Help Center disrupted their earlier protocol about when to call on interpreters. To avoid this confusion about when to use tablets versus interpreters, the staff should define a policy. We offer some insights to help them shape their choices.

- 1. Google Translate on a tablet is good for wayfinding and procedural communications.** If the task involves short questions and statements, for a conversation around where to go, what form is necessary, or what specific question the person has, then likely a tablet or mobile device with Google Translate will suffice. We found it be efficient, and mostly accurate (if people spoke in straightforward sentences), for these kinds of short, direct conversations. When people spoke in longer sentences, with multiple clauses, then it took repeated attempts to boil their communication into a form that was amenable to Translate.
- 2. Google Translate on a tablet is not good for long narratives.** If the task involves the staff member or LEP user having to speak in an extended narrative -- with many phrases in a sentence, and with a priority on uninterrupted flow of what they are saying -- Google Translate does not serve them well. Oftentimes the application will interrupt people when it hears a slight pause, thus derailing a person's narrative flow. The translation also suffers when there are sentences with multiple clauses and no discernible breaks.
- 3. For important legal terms, Google Translate must be supplemented.** Staff found the translations of legal terms were not consistent enough to be reliable. Similarly, LEP users that speak less commonly spoken languages said that the hardest part of their court experience was knowing what the English legal terms were in their native language. Rather than relying on the application, the court staff should instead turn to other options, like having a printed or tablet-based document with pre-translated phrases of important legal terms.
- 4. Google Translate conversations can be inefficient.** It often takes multiple attempts to get the choreography and translation of the communication to be correct. In many testings, it took users repeating the same content three different ways to get the translation they intended. The flow of the interaction will likely be more efficient with an interpreter rather than the translation app.

Content on the Tablet

The amount of content and the flow of the content on the tablet is a crucial factor in how usable it will be. Out of the box, the typical tablet has too many applications preloaded onto it, and thus the home-screen is confusing. We found that many people accidentally or intentionally exit out of applications, and then they are not able to find their way back to the correct application when the homescreen is crowded.

There should be a discrete, intentional sequence of content on the home screen. The content (applications and files) should be sequenced into a workflow that will match what most people's needs will be.

The home-screen content sequence should be:

- 1) **Google Translate** as the primary application, particularly to begin a short exchange between a user and a staff member
- 2) **Pre-translated Legal/Court Information** as the second application, or folder of files, on the homescreen. This can be pulled up to direct people to the correct, vetted information about court process, space, and law in the most common languages.
- 3) **Forms, packets, and translated forms** as the third application, or folder of files. The self-help conversations often end up with discussions and referrals to forms. Ideally, the tablet can allow for the staff and user to look directly at the form and translations while they discuss them.
- 4) **Legal Jargon Glossary** as another reference application/document on the homescreen. This would be a searchable set of translations of common legal terms and phrases, so that the staff member and user are confident that they have the correct term.

Most conversations will only involve Google Translate, but in case other questions come up in a conversation, the staff member can then move to the other resources -- forms, maps, glossary, or pre-translated content. These are supplements to support the LEP users' understanding of next steps.

If the conversation moves from Google Translate to these other materials, ideally the staff user can send this supplemental content to the user's device -- through email, a text message link, otherwise -- or in hard copy. We did not work on these details, but we recommend that courts think about the ability to send content to users' devices.

3.

Google Translate Audit + Improvement



A practical research project to ensure the leading translation application is legally accurate

Improving Google Translate

Our evaluation work continually pointed to the importance of Google Translate for tech-based communication in the court. Though the court can invest in some curated, specific translations of its own materials -- like its forms, maps, handouts, instructions, and website content -- many LEP users will turn to Google Translate to translate their documents and conversations.

Because of its place as a trusted translation tool, and its likely continued central role as a free and dominant service, we recommend that the court proactively work to evaluate and improve the quality of Google Translate's service for legal tasks. Through our small sample and anecdotes we gathered from LEP users and staff, we found that Translate does not perform adequately for legal-related conversations, unless they are English-Spanish (where Self Help staff and users generally found the quality of Spanish-English to be reliable). In non-Spanish situations, there were more frequent, serious errors in translation, as well as in dialect recognition.

That said, these errors did not mean that LEP users will abandon Google Translate. They will continue to try to use it to navigate court and accomplish tasks. Therefore, we recommend that the court and its academic and community partners work on improving the quality of Google Translate's legal (and other civic-related) translations.

(FLF)		الأسرة (FLF)				
Can't afford to pay? If you don't have enough money to pay the fees and court costs, ask court staff for a Fee Waiver form.		ليس بإمكانك تحمل التكاليف؟ إذا لم يكن لديك ما يكفي من المال لدفع الرسوم وتكاليف المحكمة، اطلب من موظفي المحكمة الحصول على نموذج الإعفاء من الرسوم.	无法付款？ 如果您没有足够的钱支付酬金和诉讼费，请向法院职员索要免费申请表。	無法付款？ 如果您沒有足夠的錢支付酬金和訴訟費，請向法院工作人員索取免費申請表。	توانایی پرداخت ندارید؟ اگر پول کافی برای پرداخت کارمزد و هزینه‌های دادگاه را ندارید، فرم «معافیت از کارمزد» را از کارکنان دادگاه درخواست کنید.	지불할 경제적 여유가 없습니까? 귀하가 수수료와 법원 비용을 지불할 충분한 경제적 여유가 없는 경우, 법원 직원에게 수수료 면제 양식을 신청하십시오.
File Papers Here		قم بإيداع الأوراق هنا	此处提交文件	此處提交文件	اسناد را از اینجا ارائه کنید	이곳에서 문서를 제출하십시오
Filing Window		نافذة الإيداع	申報窗口	申報窗口	پنجره ارائه	제출 창구
Help Desk		مكتب المساعدة	帮助台	服務台	میز راهنما	지원 데스크
Jurors: Serving Justice, Serving the Community		المحلفون: يخدمون العدالة، يخدمون المجتمع	陪审员：服务正义，服务社区	陪審員：服務正義，服務社區	عضو هیات منصفه: خدمت به عدالت، خدمت به جامعه	배심원: 법원에 봉사, 지역사회에 봉사
Jury Room		غرفة المحلفين	陪审室	陪審室	اتاق هیات منصفه	배심원실
Jury Office		مكتب المحلفين	陪审办公室	陪審辦公室	دفتر هیات منصفه	배심원 사무소

The improvement of Google Translate can be done through a practical research project. Our provisional suggestion for the possible plan is as follows:

- 1) A list of the most common 200 Self-Help conversation phrases and requests is compiled. Our team has gathered such a list from Self Help Centers in Massachusetts -- as well as a spreadsheet of terms available in California's Language Access Toolbox. These can be starters for a list of the phrases that are spoken in the Self-Help and court navigation use cases. They should be said in a way that most staff and LEP users speak -- not in overly formal terms. We encourage the court to possibly also collect Livechat, emails, and other conversation texts they have from self-represented litigants, and to have them as an additional corpus.
- 2) An academic partner of the court runs an audit of Google Translate, to determine the accuracy of its translation of these 200 terms in the most common languages of LEP users.
- 3) Google Translate's translations of the 200 terms can be evaluated by expert legal interpreters -- with them supplying the correct translation and marking the quality of the translation. The experts' translations can also be tested by LEP users, to ensure that they are understandable (and not legalese, or culturally incorrect).
- 4) The results of this audit can then be brought directly to Google Translate's product team, as well as those in charge of civic partnerships at the company. The court, or academic and community partners, can encourage the team to incorporate the legally correct translations into its product. An authoritative set of translations for common public service terms (and, potentially, translations of chat or email conversations) could be offered as a training set of data, for the Translate product team to use to improve the models that power their translations.
- 5) Then the academic partner can run a subsequent audit to determine if there has been improvement of the quality of translation.

Our team at Legal Design Lab has done a similar research project about the quality of search results for legal help terms, in which we have audited platforms' search results, found evidence of misinformation and low quality information, and used it to establish better practices on the platform. Our team would be interested in working on such a project, to more rigorously evaluate Google Translate as a civic and legal tool -- and to use this evaluation as a means to encourage improvements.

MASSACHUSETTS TRIAL COURT LOCAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE PILOT PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions by Unrepresented Court Users
Collected by Access to Justice Volunteers in 5 Massachusetts Trial Courts
(Springfield, Dudley, Barnstable, Roxbury and Salem)
March 2018

Where:

Where do I go for....?
Where do I check in?
Where do I file my [paperwork]?
Where is Courtroom # ___?
Where do I file a 209A?
Where do I pay my fees?
Where do I go for a Clerk Magistrate Hearing?
Where do the victims go when they are summonsed in on a case?
Where can I go to eat?
Where can I park?
Where do I go if I'm a victim on a case?
Where are the Eviction forms (14 Day or Rental Period)?
Where can I find a pay phone?

When:

When am I supposed to be in court?
When is my next court date?
When will I be able to speak with an interpreter?
When is my case scheduled?
When are my child support payments supposed to end?

How:

How do I get an interpreter?
How do I find my case/docket number?
How do I change my court date?
How do I modify my probation?
How do I file a 30A?
How do I file [motions, complaints and so forth]?
How do I subpoena a document? Or Person?
How do I get a new judge?
How long does the process take?
How do I make a payment?
How can I make a phone call?
How can I find out my court date?
How can I get help to complete my forms?
How can I get legal assistance?

Other Questions:

Can I get a second call? Or a later time for my hearing?
Can I reschedule my [event]?
Can I speak to the family law facilitator by phone? (or court service center)
Can I have a waiver form?
If I am in contempt or file a contempt will there be jail time?
I was in court today; can I have a copy of my judgment?
Do you have an interpreter?
I live out of state can I have my case moved here?
Can I use probation's phone? Is there a pay phone available?
Is there a bus or taxi service I can use?
Will I be able to speak with an interpreter? If so when will this occur?
Is there a lawyer I can speak with about my case?
Do I need a lawyer?
Can I use your phone?
Have you seen my lawyer?
Do I have court today?
Can you make a phone call for me?
Questions about account numbers on financial statements.
Do I have to do community service?

How can I get results of my drug test?
How am I going to get home?
How long will I be here?
How do I get an appointed attorney?
How do I apply for a restraining order?
How can I look for my attorney?

What:

What time is the interpreter coming?
What is going to happen when I go to the court room?
What is the [event] going to be like?
What is the small claims breakdown?
What is the 9A packet?
I have a case in probate, criminal, civil what do I do?
What if I don't know where the other party lives?
What if the other party won't take the Parent education class?
What is the filing fee for _____? (both pro se and attorneys)
What's the difference between a restraining order and harassment order?
What kinds of payment are accepted?
What is mediation?
What can I do with my phone?
What do I do next?

Why:

Why do I need to report to Probation? Am I being placed on Probation?
Why can't the court service center take phone calls?
Why do the forms on the mass.gov website either not match or do not have all the forms required for each filing?
Why don't you have more interpreters?
Why does it take so long to get divorced?
Why do I have to pay the fee for contempt if the other party is the one not paying support?
Why do I have to file individual restraining orders for my kids and I?
Why can't I bring my phone inside?
Why do I need to continue reporting to court on 209A/ Abuse Harassment Order? Explaining the process of getting service.
Why do I have mediation?
Why can't I use my phone in lockup?

Who:

Who is my lawyer and what is their contact information?
Who is my probation officer?
Who do I speak with about my case?
Who can help me with these forms?
Who can help me understand these documents?

4.

Other Service and Information Designs

Other important investments courts can make to improve Language Access outside the courtroom

Forms for Language Access

Aside from Self-Help conversations, the court should also prioritize Language Access to the court forms. As one of the central tasks to be done to use the court system, and as a crucial determinant of a person's outcomes in court, form's language access is crucial.

One group focused entirely on how to improve forms. This entailed going beyond translation of the words on the form, to making them more usable and comprehensible. Their user research found that:

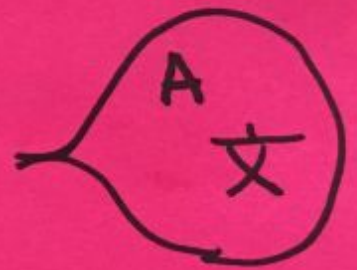
- Filling in the forms takes too long, and after investing significant time in their completion -- many people discovered they had not understood them, had filled them in wrong, and needed to restart the process. This wasted their own resources as well as those of the Self-Help staff.
- LEP users often got lost in the language of the forms. They could not follow the complicated sequences of information being asked of them.
- The requirement to fill the forms in English (even if translated versions are available in their language), meant that they often relied on their children or friends to complete the forms. Many people sought out guidance from people's write-ups of their experiences in blogs -- or from others in line or waiting area of the Self-Help Center. This peer-to-peer workaround isn't necessarily reliable guidance.

Improving the interface of the forms can improve their language accessibility. The recommendations for improved form access include:

- **Creating digital interfaces** to fill in the form. This will allow people to complete them in stages, and ideally to also change and update the fields if it turns out they did not understand them (rather than, in hard copies, having to start all over again). This could be through technology that other legal aid groups have used for document assembly, including Gravity Forms, Docassemble, A2J Author, or many others
- **Staging the information being asked.** Rather than showing all questions and fields to the user, asking single questions at a time.
- **Hiding the irrelevant questions.** Based on a person's replies, the form should hide conditional fields that do not apply to the persons' situations.
- **Providing 'more info' tooltips.** The digital interface means that the court can layer more legal and cultural explanation for difficult terms.

Welcome

Select your language:



English
Español
عربي
isi Xhosa

Step 3: Preguntas básicas de Divorcio

Tienes hijos? sí no

Eres residente de California? sí no

Compartes propiedad con tu cónyuge? sí no

Apoyo conyugal? sí no

Continuar

Form Workshop Redesign

In addition to changing the forms to be more comprehensible, the self-help workshop can also be redesigned and repackaged to better serve LEP users.

Rather than a workshop with a general introduction to the process, and then having each person work through their form, the redesign would have a “Flipped Classroom” model of a workshop.

- **Mixing explanation with form-completion.** Digital forms would be presented piece by piece. They would be interwoven with video lessons from a legal expert. If the workshop was presented like a Khan Academy experience (or other online learning platform), it would be on a platform that mixes video-based instruction (e.g., a 2 minute video explaining what a form’s question is and why it is important to answer it) with task-completion (having the person answer the question). The person would go through these short videos and tasks. Some of the document assembly could also be required homework before the workshop begins.
- **Choose your own language.** Ideally, the workshop instruction and the form completion would be available in multiple languages, so a person could get a video that fits their language and cultural need.
- **Virtual or In-Person workshop.** A person could choose which setting to do the workshop. If the workshop is done on a virtual platform, then people can do it on their own time, in their preferred language. This can decrease stress and avoid the burdens of coming into court, waiting in line, getting a place in a workshop, and getting child care, parking, and job coverage taken care of.
- **Personal Service as Needed.** If there is an in-person component, there can be an Office Hours service, in which people can bring their questions to get specific things resolved -- to supplement their form work and to get the customized conversations that so many people want.
- **Replicable in Many Community Settings.** Another proposal is to have workshops on such a platform held in different settings outside court. This could include at community centers, schools, religious organizations, or other places where people have social relationships. Here, there could be a regular schedule of workshop offerings, to bring this valuable service to settings where people have greater comfort. If the workshop is structured into a virtual platform, then it could be led by trained community volunteers, who guide people through using the platform.

Guides, website, and maps

The court might also invest in making more **step-by-step guides** to common legal procedures -- getting divorced, dealing with a custody dispute, responding to a debt collection lawsuit, responding to an eviction notice -- in multiple languages. This would be through its Self-Help website or a new mobile application.

Having an authoritative explanation of what steps will be involved in a given legal procedure, with images, cultural explanations, links to forms, and links to services, can help to relieve LEP users' anxiety about what is happening and what to expect.

An LEP user can have downloaded and prepared with the step-by-step guide before they come to court. This will help them understand what to expect, what kinds of questions to have answered, and what paperwork, translation help, or other things to bring with them to make their court visit a success.

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Along with step-by-step guides, the **court website's content** about services, logistics, directions, and self-help content should also be made available in multiple languages. The website content is essential to help LEP users plan when and how to use court. The central California Self-Help website, as well as each county's particular information, should be translated into major languages for the county.

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The spatial map of the court building -- including explanations of the functions and tasks to be done in a Clerk's office, a given Department, a Self-Help Center, an other key locations -- should also be translated into multiple languages. These translated maps ideally could be located around the security station and the information desk in the lobby. This is a key place of confusion. Currently many people ask the security station's staff for this wayfinding information. Ideally, they can use the translated maps in conversation with the person, to visually show them where to go. Or, they can direct LEP users to look at them directly.

iSelf Help

Everything you need at a glance

One of our teams prototypes of what an interactive self-help step-by-step guide would be, that could then be adapted into multiple languages. It could be used by litigants to prepare for court, and navigate the procedure.



What information are you looking for today?

- Divorce
- Child Custody
- Child Spousal Support

Just to narrow it down...

- Are you starting a divorce or filing a response?
- Are there any children involved? If yes, how old are they?
- Is it a contested or uncontested divorce?

Interactive Flowchart

- Step 1: Complete the forms
- Step 2: Make 2 copies
- Step 3: File at courthouse
- Step 4: Serve to your spouse
- Step 5: PDDs
- Step 6: Divorce Case Review

Step 3

File the original and copies at the Clerk's Office of the Courthouse

Location:
201 N, First Street, San Jose, CA 95113 (link to google map)

Transportation:
How to get there? Where to park?

Opening hours:
Monday - Friday 8:30am - 3:00pm (regular updates on holiday hours)

Any questions?

- Check out our FAQs
- Links to additional information
- Visit the Self-Help Center

Printing

- Flowchart with descriptions
- Forms



Translated guides and maps ideally could be located in a court's Info Desk in the lobby. In Santa Clara, the Family Justice Center's Info Desk is currently empty. It could have building maps, multi-lingual step-by-step guides to common legal processes, and tablets with glossaries and guides. Ideally, there would be an aide present there to welcome and guide court users, who are hungry for direction.

Electronic signage and maps could also make Language Access a priority, rotating through multiple common languages or allowing a user to choose the display language.

5.

Next Steps

How can the court and its partners advance Language Access through more innovation work and community engagement?

Pilots and Evaluation

We hope that courts, with the support and direction of the Judicial Council, will invest in more technology and service design for language access. This can be through greater roll-outs of tablets for Self-Help tasks, expanding upon the implementation in Santa Clara Superior Court. We encourage more quantitative evaluation in pilot programs through surveys of users and staff. We have drafted a usability and procedural justice survey instrument that can be used to gauge whether the technology and its implementation is effective.

For Evaluation of Tablets, these survey questions can be used with Likert scale responses of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

Q1 I felt that I was understood using the tablet's translations.

Q2 I was able to understand the court employee.

Q3 I wish I could take the tablet to use in other situations in court.

Q4 I felt the translated information provided most of the information I was looking for.

Q5 I felt that the system could be improved.

For broader evaluation purposes -- including of other non-tablet interventions, these survey questions can help court leaders understand the intervention's usability.

Q5 I think that I would like to use this system often to help me communicate.

Q6 I thought the system was easy to use.

Q7 I felt very confident using the system.

Q8 This will help me to get through court more efficiently.

Q9 This gave me clear, helpful information.

These questions are adapted from technical usability surveys, evaluation instruments of government websites, and procedural justice surveys. They are effective measures to understand users' experiences of technical systems.

Ideally, the survey would also ask basic demographics -- about the respondent's age, gender, native language, and income level -- so that the evaluators can determine if certain populations are not being served by tablets or other interventions.

Feedback for Continued Iteration

We also encourage the creation of a feedback channel, in which staff and users can submit stories, proposals, and other detailed submissions about what needs attention. This feedback channel would be necessary to spot breakdowns and to encourage iteration of the tech and protocols. The question, though, is who in the court system would be responsible for collecting and responding to the feedback channel.

We strongly encourage the establishment of a feedback system for language access improvements and other court services. Some options are to have **regular in-person user testings**, like those that our Lab team held, in Self-Help Centers. We found that staff and users were quite open to speak with us and had many recommendations for improvements. It would require a team of around 3 people, a basic research protocol, and ideally small amounts of user compensation (like gift cards for Starbucks or Amazon) to secure participation. In other areas of civic innovation, cities have established similar user testing sessions -- like the group Smart Chicago, which created a Civic User Testing Group to regularly test new city websites and technology with people in the community.

Another idea would be to have a **dedicated email address or phone number to receive feedback** about court services, including complaints and ideas. Ideally, this email or voicemail system would accept submissions in multiple languages, and have a system for translation into English. Several court users, who have invested a great deal of time in learning how to use the court system, had ideas about what could be improved and are eager to propose innovations. This channel would be one way to crowdsource an agenda for change, and ideas for improvement.

The court should also maintain **contacts with national leaders on access to justice technology**, through networks facilitated by the Legal Services National Technology Assistance Project, the Self-Represented Litigants Network, the National Center for State Courts, and other groups. These leaders in the field of justice technology can supply new ideas, critical feedback, evaluation mechanisms, and best practices to local courts as they consider how to promote language access innovation for their users.

Our Team

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