Introducing AIIC's new online interpreter directory

Are you looking for bilingual German-English interpreters? Do you need to compose a team for a conference with French, English, German, Spanish and passive Italian? AIIC's interpreter directory is your friend.

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Published: July 9, 2012 Last updated: December 2, 2015

Where to find it

On aiic.net, go to 'Directories & listings' at the top of every page and choose 'Interpreters'.

What's different

We now provide listings and let you search across the database of AIIC interpreters by language pairs. A language pair is any combination of a source — passive — language into another target — active — language.

If you're an interpreter yourself or are used to working with interpreters, you may wonder what has become of AIIC's long-standing 'ABC' language classification scheme. It's still very much there, only in the background. In the foreground are the languages from and into which AIIC interpreters offer services.

How does that work? Let's start from the official AIIC system that classifies interpreters' languages into 3 categories dubbed 'A', 'B' and 'C':

- **A**: the interpreter's mother tongue (or another language strictly equivalent to a mother tongue), into which s/he interprets from all her or his other languages in both modes of interpretation
- **B**: a language into which the interpreter works from one or more of her/his other languages and which, although not a mother tongue, is a language of which s/he has perfect command
- **C**: a passive language of which the interpreter has complete understanding and from which s/he interprets.

As you can see, the AIIC 'ABC' scheme is essentially shorthand for language pairs. The ABC nomenclature allows for 6 types of language pairs

- A → A
- B → A
But that's not quite all there is to it. The ABC scheme divides active languages into 'A' and 'B' for a reason. The general understanding among professional interpreters is that, given the choice, one should preferably work only into one's native language.

On aiic.net, we've decided to use **boldface** to mark out native languages. With that addition language combinations can be represented as languages pairs without any loss of information over the official 'ABC' system. Let's illustrate the point with an actual language combination:

- A: French
- B: English
- C: German

Here's the same combination transcoded into language pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though it may look different at first sight, it is important to note that the representation of an interpreter's language combination in the form of language pairs is a perfect equivalent of the traditional ABC shorthand. Retroconversion into the ABC nomenclature is a straightforward process: Any language in boldface is an A. Any language in the active column not in boldface is a B. Any other language is a C.

Now, presented with a pair-based representation of their language combination, some interpreters with a B may object that they would never, for instance, work from C into B.

Unfortunately, the AIIC classification system is vague in that regard. In other words, AIIC does not know whether an interpreter with one B and one or more C's does or does not work from C into B. The situation is equally unclear with a B into B language pair. In practice, you will need to check with the interpreter to find out whether he or she provides C/B into B.

This directional imprecision surrounding the B language in the AIIC nomenclature cannot but be carried over into the pair-based representation. In order not to disadvantage interpreters who do work into their B from more than just their A language, the pair-based representation must necessarily err on the side of comprehensiveness.

Taking this into consideration, we have chosen to identify C/B into B pairs with an asterisk as a reminder that you will have to check with the interpreters concerned to find out whether they offer those pairs.
At some point AIIC may allow interpreters to remove from the pair-based representation of their language combination any C/B into B pair with which they never work. Until then, please mind the asterisk.

**Geolocation**

We've implemented a new geographic information system to manage interpreter, school and consultant interpreter data, amongst other things. This allows to us add interesting features such as lumping interpreters by world region or country, making geographical selections easier.

**Maps**

We have added geographic coordinates for every city or professional address in the AIIC system, which we use to map out result sets in real-time using Google Maps.

**Charts**

We've thrown in simple pie charts to provide basic statistical information when you browse our listings.

**Finder**

Last but not least, our new interpreter finder lets you look for interpreters who match multiple criteria.

You can search by:

- passive language (max 5)
- active language (max 2)
- location (max 5)
- any combination of the above

When you search by language, every interpreter whose combination includes at least one of the query's passive and/or active languages is returned.

When you search by location, every interpreter who is currently based in the world region, country or country group in your query is returned.

Result sets are always weighted by AIIC membership status first (Active come before Associate members of AIIC), then by how well the interpreters' language combinations match your language search criteria.

Also, depending on whether you are searching for one or more languages into one, or two or more languages into two (bilingual booths), result sets are further weighted by the typology of each of the interpreters' matching language pairs.

The order in which interpreters with the same weighted ranking appear is randomised 'on the fly' to make sure that everybody gets a chance, even if their name starts with Z.

On the private version of the finder, available to AIIC members only:
• you have the option of including AIIC candidates and pre-candidates into the search base
• you can override best-matching and ask the system to return only those interpreters whose combination perfectly matches your language selections
• you can narrow the typology of language pairs to be considered in the search to something that works better for you, for instance ABC into A only
• You can include or exclude interpreters by professional status and/or AIIC membership status.
• Membership status weighting can be overridden, for instance if you wish to put candidates and fully-fledged members on an equal footing.

Follow this blog for additional information about how the finder works, and how best to use it.

Recommended citation format: