



**The 17th Conference of
The Association for Machine Translation
in the Americas**

www.conference.amtaweb.org

Volume 1: Research Track

Editors:
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(Research Track Co-chairs); Shivali Goel (Publications
Chair); Jay Marciano (General Conference Chair)

Welcome to the 17th conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas – AMTA 2026!

Dear MT & AI Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the Proceedings of AMTA 2026, the 17th biennial conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas. These proceedings bring together research and practical experience from a community that continues to redefine the state of the art in multilingual communication. The contributions collected here represent advances in machine translation, the use of large language models, generative AI, and agentic AI for cross-language use cases, evaluation methodologies, and real-world deployment across an increasingly diverse range of applications.

For this year's conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas, we come together in person in beautiful Québec City, Canada, at the Centre des congrès de Québec from August 31st to September 2nd, and online for our Virtual Day of Tutorials on August 19th.

At our last in-person conference, AMTA 2024, we marked the 30th anniversary of the first AMTA conference, held in Columbia, Maryland, in October 1994, and 70 years since the first public demonstration of machine translation, the famous IBM-Georgetown experiment of 1954. And at this year's conference, we can mark the end of the first decade of Neural Machine Translation, the MT paradigm and architecture that rapidly took over the field and subsequently gave rise to Large Language Models and generative AI.

It is difficult to argue against the ubiquity of MT today. In an April 2026 blog post celebrating 20 years of Google Translate, Google estimated that their technology now translates approximately one trillion words monthly while servicing more than one billion customers. While Google is the recognized leader in the volume of words translated, there are many other heavily used and specialized systems in increasingly automated translation workflows and for new use cases. With such widespread use of MT distributed over so many systems, even approximating the volume of material processed by these systems is a daunting challenge. Add to that the use of LLMs for cross-language use cases, which blurs the lines between data curation, content creation, translation, and quality evaluation, and you must conclude that trying to come up with usage estimates is akin to guessing how many pennies are in a large glass jar on the counter of a country store: it can be nothing more than an educated guess.

While it is unquestionably an indication of acceptable usability, unthinkable high usage does not imply that automated translation is a solved technical problem. Work continues on expanding language support, on improving speech-to-speech systems, on developing systems for interpreting and translating sign language, applying agentic AI to the task of selecting how these technologies can best be applied to a given translation task, and reliable automated assessment of translation quality. With the widespread use of MT and related technologies, we find ourselves in an intense period of developing best practices for the application of these technologies, and, importantly, in exploring how to most effectively measure the quality of their output.

To this end, this year AMTA sponsored an industry working group to propose a methodological framework for conducting meaningful evaluations of translation quality evaluation systems.

Members of this working group, organized by Evelyn Yang Garland and including 23 industry experts, will be presenting a three-hour tutorial on TQE, including a practical introductory guide into both the current landscape of TQE systems and their primary use-cases across the translation industry, a review of primary findings of TQE evaluations from the WMT Shared Task on Automated TQE of recent years, and an overview of the findings and recommendations of an AMTA-sponsored working group, and will be presenting their results in a talk at the in-person conference as well.

What is of growing concern in the age of generative AI, across all industries and use cases, is the authenticity of voices, and it is exactly this concern with authenticity that makes AMTA conferences so valuable. A unique aspect of our conferences is that they bring together users and practitioners from across the MT spectrum of academia, industry, public sector entities, technology providers and, increasingly, individual language professionals, on whose daily work these technologies have had and will continue to have a profound impact. It is this authentic exchange of ideas from person to person, across professional categories, that will allow us to continue to address the challenges that remain.

We are pleased once again with the number and quality of submissions to our conference, which reflect great progress in MT, not only in the scope of supporting ever more languages and in improving and assessing output quality, but also in the use of large language models either as translation systems in and of themselves or, as you will see in many of the papers and presentations this year, in augmenting machine translation systems with additional processing via LLMs.

We are also pleased to award the second AMTA Best Thesis Award, a tradition that we borrowed from our sister organization EAMT. We congratulate this year's winner, Dr. Elizabeth Salesky, for her thesis "Overcoming Vocabulary Challenges in Natural Language Processing," an abstract of which is included in this volume.

As with all our conferences, AMTA 2026 would simply not have been possible without the selfless work of so many people on the AMTA board and organizing committee, all of whom are volunteers. I express my heartfelt thanks, respect, and admiration to each of them. They include:

Marianna Martindale, AMTA Secretary

Alex Yanishevsky, AMTA Vice President, Conference Online Platform

Ed Watts, AMTA Treasurer

Eleftheria Briakou, Peer-review Track and Best Thesis Award organizer

Jeremy Gwinnup, Peer-review Track and Best Thesis Award organizer

Shivali Goel, Peer-review Track, Best Thesis Award organizer, and Publications

Cecilia Yalangozian, Workshops and Tutorials, Presentations Track

Vera Senderowicz Guerra, Workshops and Tutorials, Presentations Track

Georg Kirchner, Presentations Track

Konstantine Boukhvalov, Public Sector Outreach

Derick Fajardo, Communications and Marketing

Lara Shackelford Daly, Sponsorships

Steve Richardson, AMTA Counselor
Alon Lavie, AMTA Consultant
Evelyn Yang Garland, Chair of TQE Workgroup
Kelly Ko, Webmaster

I also express my gratitude to our sponsor, Nations Translation Group, whose support has helped us defray the cost of this conference.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the authors for sharing their research, to the reviewers for their thoughtful evaluations, and, importantly, we thank the participants whose curiosity, collaboration, and commitment continue to advance the field of machine translation and multilingual language technologies.

We hope that these proceedings will serve not only as a record of the current state of the field, but also as a resource that informs future research and inspires continued collaboration across disciplines, institutions, and national boundaries. As machine translation enters its next decade of rapid innovation, the work presented here demonstrates that our community remains well positioned to shape the future of multilingual communication.

Sincerely,

Jay Marciano

AMTA President and AMTA 2026 General Conference Chair

The Second AMTA Best Thesis Award

For the second edition of the AMTA Best Thesis Award, we again received a strong and competitive slate of eligible candidates and theses, resulting in a difficult decision to choose a single Best Thesis Award winner. Each thesis was assessed by multiple reviewers for its relevance to the field of machine translation, the past, current, and potential future impact of the thesis work on the field, and how challenging the thesis's core problem was. To ensure fairness in this single-blind process, reviewers were assigned to avoid institutional or other conflicts of interest, and where necessary, members of the board recused themselves.

A committee appointed by the AMTA Board, consisting of Eleftheria Briakou, Jeremy Gwinnup, and Shivali Goel, oversaw the process, summarised the reviews, deliberated, and ultimately submitted a recommendation for the selected winner to the full AMTA Board for approval.

We are pleased to announce that the 2026 AMTA Best Thesis Award is awarded to:

Dr. Elizabeth Salesky

for her thesis entitled “Overcoming Vocabulary Challenges in Natural Language Processing.”

This thesis takes on the long-standing vocabulary bottleneck in machine translation and other natural language processing applications, exploring more robust and flexible representations of text and their impact on translation quality and cross-lingual generalization. The Proceedings include a short summary of the thesis's main contributions, and we encourage interested readers to explore the full thesis in greater depth. Dr. Salesky will present her work at the 2026 AMTA conference and will receive a prize of \$1000 USD along with a free AMTA membership and waived registration costs.

We thank the following reviewers for their work on this process:

Alon Lavie (Carnegie Mellon University)
Antonios Anastasopoulos (George Mason University)
David Adelani (Mila – Québec AI Institute / McGill University)
Huda Khayrallah (Johns Hopkins University)
Jeremy Gwinnup (Air Force Research Laboratory)
Kevin Duh (Johns Hopkins University)
Lei Li (UC Santa Barbara)
Marine Carpuat (University of Maryland)
Marzena Karpinska (Simon Fraser University)
Rebecca Knowles (National Research Council Canada)
Sweta Agrawal (Instituto de Telecomunicações)
Vered Shwartz (University of British Columbia)

We also thank the European Association for Machine Translation, especially for the long-running Anthony C. Clarke EAMT Best Thesis Award, which served as inspiration for the AMTA Best Thesis Award.

Introduction to the Research Papers Volume

The Association for Machine Translation in the Americas meets in Québec City for its 17th biennial conference. This year's peer-reviewed program reflects a field that is changing quickly, with long-standing questions in machine translation now shaped by large language models and generative AI.

The Research Papers volume of the AMTA 2026 Proceedings includes eleven research papers, along with the abstract for the 2026 AMTA Best Thesis Award. Large language models appear throughout, both as translation systems in their own right and as components added to existing systems. Several papers focus on evaluation and quality estimation. Others address fairness and accessibility, including gender bias, crosslingual disparities, and translation for atypical speech. The volume also includes work on terminology, post-editing in production and government settings, parallel data alignment, and the use of large language models in specialized domains. As is usual for AMTA, the papers come from academia, industry, and government.

Many of these topics also appear in the Presentations track, and we expect the two programs to complement each other and to give a broad view of where MT research stands and where it is going.

We thank the reviewers and emergency reviewers, the AMTA organizing committee, and the past research chairs for their help in putting this program together.

Sincerely,

Eleftheria Briakou, Jeremy Gwinnup, and Shivali Goel
Research Track Co-Chairs, 2026

Program Committee (Peer-Reviewed Track)

Alon Lavie (Carnegie Mellon University)

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