

**Heather Knight Wiersema**  
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**Qualifications and Education:**

- US citizen: moved with family as a child to the Arabian Gulf in 1973.
- Attended primary and secondary school in an Arabic public-school system; all studies were conducted in Arabic, a total of 16 years of immersion in the Arabic language, culture, and history.
- Graduated with honors from the science division of *The First High School for Girls* in 1987. All courses were conducted in Arabic.
- Attended *King Abdul Aziz University* for 3.5 years, studying for a BS degree in Nursing; honors list. Transferred to the University of Arizona.
- Attended the *University of Arizona*, Tucson, AZ, graduated *cum laude* (GPA 3.6) from Medical Technology. Dean's list 1995-97.
- 2002-2005 while an Assistant Professor of Arabic at the *Defense Language Institute* began MA in Teaching Foreign Language, at the *Monterey Institute of International Studies*, before deploying to Iraq.
- Graduated from *Norwich University* in July 2012 with Masters of Art in Diplomacy, focus on Terrorism.
- Current voting member of the American Translator's Association. Held the position of the assistant director of the ATA's Arabic Language Division from 2011 till 2016.

**Languages Skills:**

- Speak, read, write and type both English and Arabic as a first language (native in both languages). Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) official scores from DLI: English 5/ Arabic 4. Full understanding of Arabic culture and Islam; grew up in a bilingual home. Certified Arabic OPI tester; specialize in Islamic and Classical Arabic translation and interpretation, handwritten Arabic.
- ACTFL reading and listening scores: superior

**Highlights of Translation Projects:**

**Arabian Knights, LLC**, currently own and operate this Arabic-English translation and interpretation company. Among completed projects are the following:

- a. **The National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland** – (multiple projects) collected, evaluated and translated samples of Gulf, Iraqi, Yemeni and Saudi Arabic dialects, meeting specific ILR level and content suitability standards for language assessment purposes.
- b. **The National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland** - collected, evaluated and translated samples of Yemeni and Saudi Arabic dialects, meeting specific ILR level and content suitability standards for the DLPT language assessment tests. Recorded speech in Hijazi for lower levels required for the DLPT.
- c. **CENTRL**: Collected, evaluated and rendered language samples for Saudi dialects, meeting specific ILR levels and having content suitability for DLPT testing. Recorded speech in Hijazi for lower levels required for the DLPT.

- d. **JTG, Inc.** Completed 73,000-word technical OSHA related document, from English to Arabic, using SLD Trados. Translation capacity is 3000 words a day.
- e. **Children's Hospital Los Angeles**, wrote the Arabic language style guide for the translation department at CHLA.
- f. **Syntes Language Group**: Translated, via MemoQ, complex scientific presentations, to include manipulating graphics and tables for the Cairo Workshop discussing Growth Promotants in Cattle.
- g. **RIC Translation & Localization Services**: Translated a number of projects to be presented at meetings in association with the UN National General Assembly, held in New York, in 2009, word count: 30,000 words (Arabic to English)
- h. **Lazar and Associates**: classified project - translated documents to be used in a war crimes trial of a head of state, estimated word count: 30,000 words (Arabic to English).
- i. **USAMRIID Biological Weapons Manual**, translated technical medical language manual from English to Arabic as a project for the DLI; word count 50,000 from English to Arabic
- j. **Global Language Solutions**, completed translation project of about 35,000 words; syntax was old handwritten documents in Lebanese dialect (documents were hand written between 1881 and 1924) from Arabic to English.

#### **Work Experience:**

**2011- 2014 NCIS/SOCOM- MANTECH:** Provided linguistic services for a highly classified project under full non-disclosure agreement. Drew on knowledge of Arabic to advise United States policy makers of Arabic cultural views and their implications. Among achievements are the following:

- Assisted in tailoring United States Department of Defense messages to foreign counterparts.
- Developed contacts for information exchange and promotion of United States interests.
- Coordinated among regional media, ministries of information, think tanks and non-governmental groups.

**2010-1212 Information Operations- J3 CENTCOM, Tampa, FL Sr. Linguist and Cultural Adviser** worked on various classified projects, using background in the Arabic language, culture and Islam.

**2009-2010 OSINT Directorate at CENTCOM, Tampa, FL-** through first ASE/Booz Allen, monitored pan-Arab and western media for the intelligence services and the media cyber team, provides website exploitation from open sources and other relevant products to support the intelligence community. Provided translation and in depth cultural analysis of Jihadists propaganda, focus on AQAP threats, in addition to assisting the IO team in countering such messaging using background in Gulf Arab culture and Islam.

- 2009 National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC):** Temporary project translating Iraqi documents from Arabic to English and from English to Arabic (from April to July) for US government agency.
- 2009 Islamic and Arabic Culture Instructor:** developed and taught an in-depth seminar on relevant Arab and tribal culture, history and the varieties of Islam actually practiced in the Middle East- with focus on Iraqi and Gulf tribes) for the for the Expeditionary Warfare Training Group, Pacific, in addition to a focus on 'Lessons Learned' from experience in Iraq
- 2007- 2008 Senior Linguist and Cultural Adviser for Commanding General of Multi National Forces- Iraq:** (19 months) - International Zone, Baghdad, Iraq- performed all simultaneous interpretation at top Iraqi government meetings and document translation for the Commanding General of MNFI. Advised on Gulf Arab culture, Arab culture in general, tribal Arabs, Islam (including extremism), and Arabic print, broadcast and Internet media. Provided critical detailed information for the "Tribal Arab Engagement & Reconciliation" paper used in 2007/09 as the reconciliation strategy in Iraq. Monitored the Iraqi and Pan Arab media for propaganda and other topics of interest to assist in early containment if possible of enemy propaganda or addressing incidents of significance, in addition to analyzing nuances when communicating with Iraqi officials or in the Iraqi/pan Arab media. Received the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award.
- 2007-2008 Senior Linguist and Cultural Adviser to Commander, United States Central Command:** Acted as the cultural advisor for the CENTCOM Commander; provided cultural advice on Arab culture in general and Gulf Arab culture in particular, also provided information tribal Arabs, Islam, extremism, and other topics of expertise. Traveled with Admiral Fallon on most of his trips to countries in the CENTCOM region; worked for him until his resignation, in addition to working for Commander of CENTCOM. Provided advice on a variety of cultural issues and Islam, interpreted nuances given to him by heads of state during his visits to the region. Provided simultaneous interpretation for Admiral Fallon and his staff in sensitive meetings or bilateral negotiations with high-ranking Arab officials or heads of state. Attended conferences to ensure quality control of all simultaneous translations to prevent mistranslations at the four-star level; e.g. the Manama Dialogue and the Chiefs of Defense Conference in Tampa, Florida.
- 2006-2008 Conferences:** Provided simultaneous interpretation for the Iraq Coalition Conference four consecutive times; officials supported included the President of the United States, and ministers of defense of numerous coalition nations, and Arab countries.
- 2006-2007 MNFI - Strategy, Plans and Assessments Directorate, IZ, Baghdad, Iraq- Contract Linguist:** Highlights of duties: translating complex official documents that containing charts, graphics, and official government memoranda and executive orders, in addition to interpreting high level meetings concerning the material of these documents.

**2005-2006** **Central Criminal Court of Iraq, IZ, Baghdad, Iraq:** Contract Linguist, US Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, interpreted during hearings and translating court documents for US attorneys presenting Coalition Forces cases to Iraqi investigative judges. Translated for various conferences aimed at educating US JAG personnel in Iraqi laws

**2002-2005** **Defense Language Institute:** Assistant Professor of Arabic, Monterey CA, certified OPI tester of Arabic- taught (as a native speaker) and developed advanced Arabic courses in addition to teaching the basic 64-week course. In addition to providing translation for various government projects supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

**1998-1999** **Scripps Clinic/Green Hospital:** La Jolla CA  
Licensed Medical Technologist- Responsible for isolating and identifying pathogenic organisms and testing sensitivities in the department of microbiology. Prior to this held generalist position: covering all departments: Chemistry, Hematology, Coagulation and Stat Microbiology- Also, covered the Blood Bank for routine and emergency procedures, including liver transplants

**Additional Certifications:**

**1997** **ASCP:** American Society of Clinical Pathologists- medical technologist certification.

**2001** **Certified Graphic Artist,** Foundation College: Multimedia technology, Desktop Production Web Design, Programs include, Adobe Photoshop, Web Site Design and Creation of an interactive web-based portfolio using Dreamweaver.

**2013** **Translation English/ Arabic Certification:** NYU.

**2018** **ACTFL:** Listening proficiency: Superior  
Reading proficiency: Superior