Tips for Evaluating Translators

Language Match
In general, the best result is obtained if the chosen translator's mother tongue is the target language (the language that the material will be translated into). If the court wishes to translate a document from English into Spanish, it is recommended to choose a translator whose first language is Spanish. If the court wishes to translate a document from Spanish into English, it is recommended to choose a translator whose first language is English.

Level of Qualifications
The translator's level of qualifications, specialization, standard of general education, and relevant experience should be appropriate to the complexity of the document and the specialist nature of the document for translation. To produce a culturally appropriate translation that is easy for the intended readers to understand and use, select translators who have the necessary writing skills and cultural knowledge.

Membership in a Professional Body
The translator should ideally be certified by the American Translators Association (ATA), which has a translation certification exam, a code of ethics, and disciplinary power over its members. If your translation project is in a language for which there are no certified translators, it is advisable to locate a translator who is an ATA member.

Access to Translation Technology Tools
The translator should have access to technology tools or computer programs such as translation memory software that uses stored memory to reuse already translated content in subsequent translations, making translations more efficient and cost-effective.

Adherence to Accessibility Standards
The translator should have the ability to apply accessibility features to translated documents—for example, tab order, tags, translated image alternative text, translated customized screen reader text, and screen reading order—to allow access to translated content via screen reader software. The translator should also adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 at the AA conformance level.

Review of Translations
Courts are encouraged to create a two-step process for all translation work: an initial translation followed by a review of the translated document by a second, similarly certified and qualified translator before finalizing the document. The review should entail a comparison of the original document and the translated document and should ensure consistency in translated terminology and should accurately convey the tone and register of the source document.