in this issue
Public Awareness
15 Years of Transit – The Anniversary Edition! Enter a New Dimension.

The best just got better! The newest Translation Memory Tool Transit XV offers you a comprehensive range of innovative features including: concordance search, automatic terminology mining, drag-and-drop between dictionaries, expanded review features for text editing, as well as the Report Manager for precise evaluations at any stage of a project. All this makes your translation project more efficient and profitable! And ... speaking of profits, we are offering an introductory price to those interested in getting Transit XV right now. For more information, contact us at: STAR Language Technology, e-mail: transit@star-group.net
Features

14 International Certification Study: Austria
By Jiri Stejskal

17 The Right to an Interpreter—Who Decides? An Australian Perspective
By Penny Patterson
The capacity of judges (who are extensively trained in legal matters, but not usually in linguistic ones) to make informed decisions about language proficiency is highly questionable, and exposes a serious weakness in the Australian legal system.

20 A New ATA Affiliate: The Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association
By Laurence H. Bogoslaw and Deb Kramasz
ATA’s newest affiliate group has the combined mission of promoting the quality, professionalism, and prestige of the translating and interpreting industry in the upper Midwest region, and of providing networking, training, and development opportunities for local language professionals.

21 Incorporation versus Sole Proprietorship
By Howard Dias
Incorporation versus sole proprietor—do the tax savings outweigh the additional costs?

22 Time for Translation Providers to Come Out of the Shadows
By Chris Durban
The intrepid monolingual buyer of translations faces a challenge that is arguably even more difficult than the one faced by a consumer seeking high-quality healthcare. The reason? Translation buyers are often simply unable to judge what is delivered.

Columns and Departments

6 About Our Authors
7 From the President
10 From the Executive Director
13 Conferences and Events
44 Accreditation Forum
45 The Onionskin
47 Dictionary Reviews
57 The Translation Inquirer
59 Humor and Translation
60 ATA Chapters and Groups
62 Display Advertising Index
63 New Active and Corresponding Members

American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590 • Alexandria VA 22314
Tel: (703) 683-6100 • Fax (703) 683-6122
E-mail: Chronicle@atanet.org • Website: www.atanet.org
The ATA Chronicle Submission Guidelines

The ATA Chronicle enthusiastically encourages members to submit articles of interest to the fields of translation and interpretation.

1. Articles (see length specifications below) are due the first of the month, two months prior to the month of publication (i.e., June 1 for August issue).
2. Articles should not exceed 3,500 words. Articles containing words or phrases in non-European writing systems (e.g., Japanese, Arabic) should be submitted by mail and fax.
3. Include your fax, phone, e-mail, and mailing address on the first page.
4. Include a brief abstract (two sentences maximum) emphasizing the most salient points of your article. The abstract will be included in the table of contents.
5. Include a brief biography (three sentences maximum) along with a picture (color or B/W). Please be sure to specify if you would like your photo returned. Do not send irreplaceable photos.
6. In addition to a hard copy version of the article, please submit an electronic version either on disk or via e-mail (Jeff@atanet.org).
7. Texts should be formatted for Word or Wordperfect 8.0.
8. All articles are subject to editing for grammar, style, punctuation, and space limitations.
9. A proof will be sent to you for review prior to publication.

Standard Length
Letters to the editor: 350 words; Opinion/Editorial: 300-600 words; Feature Articles: 750-3,500 words; Column: 400-1,000 words

An Easy Reference To ATA Member Benefits

Your ATA membership has never been more valuable. Take advantage of the discounted programs and services available to you as an ATA member. Be sure to tell these companies you are an ATA member and refer to any codes provided below.

Business Owners Insurance
National Professional Group
(888) 219-8122
www.ata-ins.com

Collection Services/Receivables Management
Dun & Bradstreet
Mike Horoski
(800) 333-6497 ext. 7226
(484) 242-7226
Horoskim@dnb.com

Conference Travel
Stellar Access
Reference Code: 505
(800) 929-4242 • (619) 453-3686
e-mail: flycia@stellaraccess.com
www.stellaraccess.com

Credit Card Acceptance Program/Professional Services Account
NOVA Information Systems
Reference Code: HCDA
(888) 545-2207 • (770) 649-5700

MasterCard
MBNA America
Reference Code: IFKV
(800) 847-7378 • (302) 457-2165

Medical, Life, and Disability Insurance
Mutual of Omaha
(800) 223-6927 • (402) 342-7600
www.atanet.org/mutual.htm

Overnight Delivery/Express Package Service
UPS
Reference Code: C0000700415
(800) 325-7000
www.ups.com

Professional Liability Insurance
National Professional Group
(888) 219-8122
www.ata-ins.com

Retirement Programs
Washington Pension Center
(888) 817-7877 • (301) 941-9179

…And, of course, as an ATA member you receive discounts on the Annual Conference registration fees and ATA publications, and you are eligible to join ATA Divisions, participate in the online Translation Services Directory, and much more. For more information, contact ATA (703) 683-6100; fax (703) 683-6122; and e-mail: ata@atanet.org.
25 The Professional Image of Translators and Interpreters  
By Rut Simcovich  
Do translators and interpreters *have* a professional image? What image do we have of ourselves? There are some indicators that we don't have much of a professional image and that the little we have is not too good.

27 Back to Basics in Professional Preparation  
By Carol J. Patrie  
Working interpreters and student interpreters can benefit from awareness and development of intralingual skills within their working languages, but especially within their first language. This article describes and reviews relevant intralingual skills and cognitive processing skills.

32 An Introduction to German Patent Translation  
By Nicholas Hartmann  
Basic principles and procedures for translating German patents into English, including information about suggested working methods and the attitudes and qualifications that patent translators must bring to their work.

36 Overview of the Los Angeles Area Hospital Project and Training Strategies  
By Alexander Rainof  
The state of medical translation and interpretation in the U.S. has recently resulted in a great deal of concern. A discussion of some of the issues raised by physicians in medical journals (*JAMA, JAMWA*), by the Office of Civil Rights of the Health and Human Services Department, by the press (*LA Times*, etc.), and by translators and interpreters throughout the country.
About Our Authors...

Laurence H. Bogoslaw is the president of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association, a new ATA affiliate. He is also the coordinator of the Minnesota Translation Laboratory (MTL), which he co-founded with Professor Bruce Downing at the University of Minnesota. He received his M.A. in Italian from the University of Connecticut in 1988 and his Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literatures from the University of Michigan in 1995. He is an experienced technical translator in Russian, Italian, and Polish. He has also conducted research on poetry translation, and is a published literary translator. Contact: mtl@tc.umn.edu.

Howard Dias is a certified public accountant with 30 years of experience. He has been in business for himself since 1985 (and all those years as a corporation). He specializes in small- and medium-sized businesses, especially interpreters. Contact: hrdcpa@aol.com.

Chris Durban (FITI; member of the Société Française des Traducteurs) is a freelance translator specializing in finance and capital markets, and a founding member of Rencontres Traduction Financière. Based in Paris, she was a staff translator with EFSA, the research division of the Banque de l’Union Europeenne, from 1973-1987. She has organized conferences in conjunction with the Paris Bourse. Since February 1996, she has written a client education column for Bourse. Since February 1996, she has written a client education column for Bourse. Contact: chrisdurban@compuserve.com.

Nicholas Hartmann earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in 1973 and his Ph.D. in 1982. He began working full-time as an independent technical and scientific translator in 1984, and now specializes in translating patents and related documents for corporate clients and law firms in the U.S. and Europe. He has served ATA as director and secretary, administrator of the Science and Technology Division, chair of the Client Education Committee and the Science and Technology Information Committee, and as a member of the Terminology Committee and the ATA Chronicle editorial board. He holds ATA accreditation in French>English, German>English, and Italian>English. Contact: nh@nhartmann.com.

Deb Kramasz is a technical communicator and translator, former translation agency owner, and a Berlitz ESL/Spanish teacher. After living in Morocco for eight years, she developed a special interest in international communication in her working languages (Spanish, Arabic, and French). She graduates this year with a B.A. in technical communication from Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota, where she also works as the office manager of University Advancement. She serves as managing editor for Turning Point, the newsletter of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association, a new ATA affiliate. Contact: deb.kramasz@metrostate.edu.

Carol J. Patrie, Ph.D., is known nationally and internationally for her work on translation, interpretation, and teaching interpretation. She coordinated the Master of Arts in Interpretation at Gallaudet University, is a past president of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers, and is certified as an interpreter by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Comprehensive Skills Certificate, Specialist Certificate: Legal, Certificate of Transliteration, Certificate of Interpretation). She authored The Effective Interpreting Series: Cognitive Processing in English, English Skills Development, and Translating from English, all published by DawnSignPress. Consecutive Interpreting and Simultaneous Interpreting are forthcoming. Contact: cpatrie@hotmail.com.

Penny Patterson earned a B.A. in languages and applied linguistics at Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland, Australia. Contact: patterson_penny@hotmail.com.

Alexander Rainof grew up in France, Italy, Mexico, and the U.S., and received his M.A. and Ph.D. in comparative literature (specializing in Anglo-American, French, Italian, and Spanish languages and literature) from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He is a certified interpreter for the federal, state, and the Los Angeles County courts, as well as for all state agencies in California. He has published extensively in the areas of literature, linguistics, translation, and interpretation, and is currently a professor in the Romance, German, and Russian Languages and Literatures Department at California State University, Long Beach, and in the Translation and Interpretation Certificate Program at UCLA/UNEX. Contact: arainof@ucla.edu or arainof@csulb.edu.

Rut Simcovich is an Argentine freelance English-Spanish translator and interpreter. She has been running interpreter-training courses since 1986. She was the court-appointed interpreter in the trial of the Argentine Military Juntas, and currently works for clients such as the U.K. Embassy, the World Bank, and The Coca Cola Company. Contact: rsimcovich@infavia.com.ar.
As I write these words, I am on my way to a CLE seminar. CLE is lawyer-speak for “continuing legal education,” and attorneys in the state of Georgia, where I live, are required to take 12 hours of continuing education every year to keep their license. Although I no longer practice law, I am still licensed to do so and therefore attend the continuing education classes every year. Since I spend my days reading (and translating) legalese in foreign languages, these courses are an especially good opportunity for me to listen to standard English legal language as it is spoken by practicing attorneys. I also learn about new areas of the law that will probably show up in a translation one of these days.

As most of you know by now, last year the ATA Board of Directors approved implementing the recommendations made by credentialing expert Michael Hamm when he reviewed our accreditation program. One of these recommendations was that we implement continuing education requirements for retaining the credential. As past ATA President Ann Macfarlane told you in one of her many eloquent columns, we will be making these changes to the accreditation program “with all deliberate speed” (a famous phrase from the Supreme Court’s decision in Brown vs. the Board of Education, describing the court’s opinion of how quickly [or not quickly, depending on how you read it] school desegregation should be carried out).

In an effort to get the changes underway “with all deliberate speed,” the ATA Board met on Saturday, March 9, with the Accreditation Committee and discussed at length how to implement two of the Hamm recommendations. At a session led by Accreditation Chair Lili Van Vranken and Deputy Chair Celia Bohannon, we focused on eligibility requirements and continuing education. I have summarized the results of our brainstorming and have appointed two ad hoc committees, one to study each of these issues. The ad hoc committee on eligibility requirements will be chaired by ATA Treasurer Dr. Jiri Stejskal, and the ad hoc committee on continuing education requirements will be chaired by Professional Development Chair Marian Greenfield. They will report to the Board at our meeting in late June on their findings.

In the meantime, ATA Director Dr. Alan Melby will continue his investigation into whether it would be possible to meet all our requirements and still allow test takers to write the examination on a computer. For a discussion of the enormous difficulties surrounding this conundrum, I refer you to the excellent articles written by Terry Hanlen, who manages the accreditation program at ATA Headquarters. Terry’s articles appear in the July and August 2001 issues of the Chronicle. I look forward to bringing you news about changes in the accreditation programs over the next two years, and appreciate your support in making it the most widely recognized credential in our profession.

Announcing

ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar
Radisson Hotel and Suites Chicago • Chicago, Illinois • May 18, 2002

This seminar features an in-depth look at medical translation and interpreting. More information on the program will be e-mailed to all members and posted on the ATA website. All presentations will be in English. See page 11 for more information and the registration form.

Plus, an ATA accreditation exam sitting is scheduled for Sunday morning, May 19, in the hotel. (A separate registration is required for the exam. Please contact ATA Headquarters for more information.)

Fee: $145 ATA members; $230 nonmembers
After May 10: $225 members; $320 nonmembers

Space is limited. To register, contact ATA Headquarters at 703-683-6100 or visit the ATA website—www.atanet.org—On the home page, click on the Medical Seminar link under What’s New.

A few rooms have been reserved at $169 single/double a night, plus tax. To reserve a hotel room, contact the Radisson at 312-787-2900. Be sure to mention that you are attending the ATA seminar.

An ATA Professional Development Seminar
Parlez-Vous Success?

Introducing NYU’s Master of Science in Translation
There’s a whole new way to succeed in our rapidly shrinking world – with the new Master of Science in Translation degree from New York University’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies. It’s the only one of its kind in the world, and to really make the most of your skills, it has a special focus on finance and law.

We also offer a Graduate Certificate in Translation*, designed to provide a foundation for professional practice and further study in the field.

What’s more, for busy professionals, both have been designed to be offered completely online. Only the final term of the Master’s Degree program requires attending courses in New York City. Find out more today. Because success translates into every language!

INFORMATION SESSION:
Tues., 6-8 p.m., May 21
48 Cooper Square, 2nd Floor

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Phone: 212-998-7200, ext. 375
Website: www.scps.nyu.edu/375

* Pending State approval.
Plan now to attend ATA’s Annual Conference. Join your colleagues for a rewarding experience in Atlanta, Georgia.

ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference will feature:
- Over 150 educational sessions offering something for everyone;
- The Job Exchange where individuals promote their services and companies meet translators and interpreters;
- Over 50 exhibits featuring the latest publications, software, and services available;
- Opportunities to network with over 1,600 translators and interpreters from throughout the U.S. and around the world; and
- Much more!

The Registration Form and Preliminary Program will be mailed in July to all ATA members. The conference rates are listed below. As always, ATA members receive significant discounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Registration Fees</th>
<th>ATA member</th>
<th>Nonmember</th>
<th>Student Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early-Bird (by October 1)</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$335</td>
<td>$110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-day</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$170</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After October 1</td>
<td>$305</td>
<td>$420</td>
<td>$130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-day</td>
<td>$160</td>
<td>$220</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site (after October 26)</td>
<td>$380</td>
<td>$525</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-day</td>
<td>$195</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Students and one-day participants do not receive a copy of the Proceedings. All speakers must register for the conference.

**Hotel Accommodations**

The Hyatt Regency Hotel, the host hotel, is conveniently located in downtown Atlanta at 265 Peachtree Street, NE. The hotel is 20 minutes from Atlanta’s Hartsfield International Airport.

Conference attendees can register at the discounted rate of $160 single, $165 double, $175 triple, and $185 quadruple plus tax per night. (Regency Club accommodations are offered at an additional charge of $35 per room based on availability.) This rate is good until October 15, 2002. The availability of guest rooms or the group rate cannot be guaranteed after that date.

To make your hotel reservations, contact the Hyatt Regency at 1-866-333-8880 or 404-577-1234. Be sure to specify that you are attending the ATA Annual Conference.

**Travel Arrangements**

ATA once again offers the services of Stellar Access to help you with your travel arrangements. Through Stellar Access conference attendees are eligible for discounted air travel and rental cars.

Call Stellar Access at 1-800-929-4242, and ask for ATA Group #505. Outside the U.S. and Canada, call 858-805-6109; fax: 858-547-1711. A $15 transaction fee will be applied to all tickets purchased by phone. Reservation hours: Monday-Friday 6:30am-5:00pm Pacific Time.

BOOK ONLINE and pay NO TRANSACTION FEE! Go to www.stellaraccess.com and book your reservations from the convenience of your home or office anytime! First-time users must register and refer to Group #505.

Mark Your Calendar Today!
November 6–9, 2002
The Board of Directors met March 8 and 10 in Alexandria, Virginia. Here are some of the highlights from the meeting.

**Investment Policy.** The Board approved a new investment policy. The policy, drafted by ATA Treasurer Jiri Stejskal and the members of the Investment Committee (ATA Past Treasurer Eric McMillan and ATA Directors Beatriz Bonnet and Marian Greenfield), is a more conservative policy reflecting the need to preserve capital (versus seeking higher returns).

**Policy on Addressing Commercial Disputes.** The Board approved a policy statement reflecting ATA’s position on commercial disputes involving members. More information on the policy will be published in the *Chronicle* and posted on the website.

**Interpreting Issues.** The Board approved a motion to incorporate “interpreting” or “interpreter” anywhere in ATA material where “translation,” “translating,” or “translator” is mentioned. Related, the name of the online *Translation Services Directory* will be changed to *Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services* and the online *Corporate Translation Services Directory* will be changed to *Directory of Language Services Companies*.

**Services Surveys.** The Board discussed two surveys that will be getting underway late this spring. One will be an update of the *Translation and Interpreting Services Survey*, which features the compensation data for translators and interpreters broken out in several ways: experience, language, etc. The second survey will include detailed information on language services companies. Both are targeted to be published by the time of the annual conference in November.

**Research Forum.** The Board approved a motion to establish the Translation and Interpreting Research Forum specifically for individuals engaged, or having a professional interest, in research in the fields of translation and interpreting. Dr. Claudia Angelelli will chair this Forum.

In addition, the Board spent much time discussing the changes to the accreditation program (see “From the President” on page 7) and proposed public relations efforts. More information on both topics will be published as it develops.

The minutes of the meeting are posted in the Members Only section of the ATA website: www.atanet.org/membersonly. Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for June 29-30 in New Orleans, Louisiana. As always, the meeting is open to the membership.

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**Nominating Committee Approved**

The Board approved the 2002 Nominating Committee. The committee members are:

- Ann G. Macfarlane, chair
- Dr. Denzel L. Dyer
- Virginia K. Fox
- Robert E. Sette
- Benjamin B. Tompkins

For more information, please contact ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6100 or ata@atanet.org.

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**It’s Not Too Early To Plan**

**ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference**

Hyatt Regency Hotel

Atlanta, Georgia

November 6-9, 2002
Announcing
ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar
Radisson Hotel and Suites Chicago
Chicago, Illinois • Saturday, May 18, 2002

Join your colleagues in the “Windy City” on May 18th for a full day of in-depth sessions on medical translation and interpreting. Get current on terminology, hear presentations specifically targeting professionals working in medical translation and/or interpreting, and network with other translators and interpreters. All sessions will be in English and will be submitted for Continuing Education Credit for the States of California and Washington. A continental breakfast will be served.

Morning Plenary Session
The Language of Medicine
Davi-Ellen Chabner

Afternoon Breakout Sessions
Legal Issues in the Translation of Healthcare Documents
Maria Cornelio

A Crash Course in Experimental Design and Inferential Statistics for Biomedical Translators
Dr. Lydia Razran Stone

Ethical Codes and Ethical Dilemmas in Medical Interpreting
Dr. Cornelia Brown and Bruce T. Downing

Beyond Bilingualism: The Role of Telephonic Interpreting in Facilitating Cultural Competency
Janet Erickson-Johnson

Abstracts and speaker biographies can be found at www.atanet.org/medical/abstracts.htm.

Early-Bird Registration Fees:
ATA Members $145 Nonmembers $230

After May 10 and On-site:
ATA Members $225 Nonmembers $320

Space is limited. For more information, contact ATA Headquarters at 703-683-6100 or visit the ATA website at www.atanet.org and click on the Medical Seminar link on the home page. (Direct link is www.atanet.org/medical.)

A small block of rooms has been reserved at $169 single/double a night, plus tax. To reserve your hotel room, contact the Radisson at 312-787-2900. Be sure to mention that you are attending the ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar.

Complete the following Registration Form to register today!

An ATA Professional Development Seminar
ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar  
Radisson Hotel and Suites Chicago • Chicago, Illinois • May 18, 2002

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: ___________________________  ATA Member Number: ________
   First Name     Middle Initial     Last Name

Employer/School: ___________________________
   (Only list employer or school if you want it to appear on your badge.)

Address: 
   Street
   City     State/Province     Zip/Postal Code     Country

Telephone - Primary: ___________________
   Secondary: ___________________

Fax Number: ___________________
   E-mail Address: ___________________

SEMINAR REGISTRATION FEES:  ATA Member  Nonmember*
   Early-Bird (before May 10)  $145  $230  $_________
   On-Site (after May 10)  $225  $320  $_________

*Individuals who join ATA when registering for this seminar qualify for the ATA member registration fee. Please contact ATA or visit the ATA website for a membership application.

TOTAL PAYMENT:  $_________

Cancellations received in writing by May 10, 2002 are eligible for a refund. Refunds will not be honored after May 10. A $25 administrative fee will be applied to all refunds.

☐ Check/Money Order:  Please make payable, through a U.S. bank in U.S. funds, to American Translators Association.

☐ Credit Card:  Charge my  ☐ American Express  ☐ VISA  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ Discover

   Card No. / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / Expiration Date: ____________

   Name on Card: ___________________________  Signature: ______________________

Please send payment and completed form to: American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314. OR, if paying by credit card, please fax completed form to: (703) 683-6122.

_____ Please check here if you require special accessibility or assistance. (Attach a sheet with your requirements.)

For more information about the ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar or ATA membership, please visit the ATA website at www.atanet.org or contact ATA at (703) 683-6100 or ata@atanet.org.

An accreditation exam sitting will be held on Sunday, May 19. To register, please visit the ATA website to complete the Accreditation Examination Registration Form.
Conferences and Events

**Nashville, Tennessee**
Society for Technical Communication 49th Annual Conference
May 5-8, 2002
For everyone whose job involves communicating technical information! Conference attendees come together each year to share information about every aspect of their work. Besides its many networking opportunities, the conference provides a program of approximately 200 technical sessions. These are 60- to 90-minute presentations, each conducted by one or more experts in some area of technical communication. For more information: www.stc.org/49thConf/index.html.

**Washington, DC**
Translators Discussion Group
Borders Books and Music
18th & L Streets, NW
Meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00 pm at Borders. For more information, please contact Lily Liu at LilyLiu99@aol.com.

**Toronto, Canada**
Canadian Association for Translation Studies
15th Annual Conference
Translation and (Im)migration
May 25-27, 2002
Information: Dr. Anne Malena, Modern Language and Cultural Studies, 200 Arts Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E6 Canada. Tel: (780) 492-1187; Fax: (780) 492-9106; E-mail: amalena@ualberta.ca; website: www.uottawa.ca/associations/act-cats/index.htm.

**Vancouver, British Columbia**
XVI World Congress of the International Federation of Translators
Translation: New Ideas for a New Century
August 6-10, 2002
Canada is proud to welcome the XVI FIT Congress to Vancouver, British Columbia. It kicks off August 6, 2002, with the welcome reception and on-site registration, and the Congress itself runs three and a half days, August 7-10. This is the first time in over two decades that the Congress has taken place in North America, so we’re happy to continue the tradition of welcoming hundreds of delegates from all corners of the world. Recent Congresses have been held in Mons, Belgium (1999), Melbourne, Australia (1996), Brighton, England (1993), Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1990), and Maastricht, the Netherlands (1987). For more information, please visit www.fit-fit.org.htm.

**Slavonice, Czech Republic**
Call for Papers
Slavonice International Translators Conference 2002
September 19-22, 2002
Topics: Any topic of interest to translators
Length: 5-10 double-spaced pages (short is beautiful!!!)
Abstracts: Maximum of 100 words; enclose CV. Delivery: E-mail in .doc format to zuzana007@hotmail.com.
Authors of accepted papers will be advised by June 30, 2002. All presenters must be registered for the conference.
For more information, please contact: Zuzana Kulhankova Jana Zicky 2, 578 81 Slavonice Czech Republic
Tel: +420-332-493777 Fax: +420-332-493770 Mobil: +420-605-726432 E-mail: zuzana007@hotmail.com www.scholaludus.cz

**Birmingham, England**
The Birmingham Centre for Corpus Linguistics
Expert Training Package
"FastTrack to Translation: Extracting Translation Equivalents from Parallel Corpora"
University of Birmingham
June 11-14, 2002
Geared toward professionals in the language industry and other multilingual areas (i.e., dictionary publishing, multilingual technology, and translation services). Space is limited. For more information and a registration form, please visit http://clg2.bham.ac.uk/FastTrack.html.
Completed registration and payment forms should be sent by mail or fax to: Louise Matty, Centre for Corpus Linguistics, Department of English, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT, England; Fax: + 44 121 414 6053; E-mail: mattyrli@hhs.bham.ac.uk.

**Cambridge, England**
18th Intensive Course in Simultaneous Conference Interpretation
August 18-31, 2002
Participants will interpret for guest speakers on a wide range of general and technical subjects under authentic conference conditions. In addition to the core curriculum, there will be specialized discussions in a variety of fields (for example, consecutive, on-site translation, use and preparation of texts, booth and stress management, marketing and negotiation, interpreting approaches to Shakespeare and the Bible, etc.), and briefings on the International Association of Conference Interpreters, the international institutions, and the profession. The course languages are English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. The language of general instruction is English. Early enrollment is recommended. For information, including a detailed course brochure and application forms, please contact: Christopher Guichot de Fortis; Tel: (+32-2) 654-2080; Fax: (+32-2) 652-5826; E-mail: defortis@belgacom.net.
(Note: This course is specifically designed for conference interpreters only.)

**Paris, France**
VI International Forum on Legal Translation and Court Interpreting
June 12-14, 2002
Information: Elena de la Fuente, Organizing Committee Chairperson, FIT Committee on LTI; e-mail: delfrad@club-internet.fr.

**Yokohama, Japan**
13th International Japanese/English Translation Conference
May 11-12, 2002
For more information, please visit www.ijet.org/ijet-13.

**Auckland, New Zealand**
New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters
Ethics, Education, Experience, and Earnings: Elements in the Multilingual World of Translation and Interpreting
June 1-3, 2002
For more information, please contact the national secretary via e-mail at liu@ihug.co.nz.

**Madrid, Spain**
Madrid 2002 Conference for Financial Translators
Colegio de Medicos
Saturday, June 8th, 2002
A one-day event for financial translators (especially of Spanish) to be held at the Colegio de Medicos (C/Santa Isabel, 51, 28012, Madrid).
Speakers include experts from the financial sector and leading financial translators from around the world (including Chris Durban and Silvana Debonis). The conference seeks to provide translators with insight into the financial sector and a forum for networking with other translators.
Price: EUR 160. For more information, please go to www.rgft.com or contact: Jack Atkinson, RGFT España S.L. c/Bravo Murillo, 74, 1, 2, Madrid 28003. (Tel: +34 91 5540962, E-mail: ja@rgft.es).

**Call for Manuscripts**
Multilingual Matters Series
Professional Interpreting in the Real World
Suggested topics: Method (field-specific); Procedure (field-specific); Regulations (field-specific); Interpreting Equipment (conference and legal); Education (basics per field, advanced skills per field, advanced theory per field); Skills (memory retention exercises, note taking, troubleshooting per field, and specific language pair applications). The series editor will be pleased to discuss proposals with potential authors. Please send them to: c/o Multilingual Matters Ltd., Frankfurt Lodge, Clevedon Hall, Victoria Road, Clevedon, BS21 7HH, U.K.; or by e-mail to tommi@multilingual-matters.com. Guidelines for book proposals can be found on our website (www.multilingual-matters.com).
International Certification Study: Austria

By Jiri Stejskal

In the March issue we took a closer look at the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council and the Society of Translators & Interpreters of British Columbia, and I promised to explore the certification procedures for translators and interpreters in Austria. The following information was gleaned from the website of the Austrian Association of Court Interpreters (Österreichischer Verband der allgemein beeideten und gerichtlich zertifizierten Dolmetscher, ÖVGD). I am also indebted to Dipl. Dolm. Christine Springer and Dipl. Dolm. Liese Katschinka (president and vice-president of the ÖVGD, respectively), and to Dipl. Dolm. Erika Obermayer (president of the Austrian Association of Translators and Interpreters, UNIVERSITAS) for their guidance and additional support.

The ÖVGD is a nonpolitical, non-profit organization that has been in existence for more than 75 years with the declared objective of furthering the professional and business interests of sworn and certified court interpreters in Austria. At present, the association has approximately 600 members. As the association’s name and objective suggest, its members consist of only certified court interpreters. Being a certified court interpreter, however, is also the sole vehicle for providing certified translations.

In Austria, certification is the responsibility of accredited certifying bodies. A special federal law regulates the accreditation of certifying bodies that certify companies, institutes, etc. (for example, under ISO or CEN standards). As no standards comparable to the ISO 9000 series are available for expert witnesses and court interpreters, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Justice launched an initiative for the certification of expert witnesses and court interpreters several years ago.

The relevant law stipulates that the certification procedures be handled by a board consisting of, among others, a representative of the judiciary (since the certification primarily serves the courts) and a representative of the respective professional association. Therefore, the association does not carry out any certification proceedings itself. Rather, only certified court interpreters can become members. In other words, the certification precedes the application for ÖVGD membership.

...Owing to the strict selection criteria, the certified court interpreter is highly qualified, and specific legal provisions make him or her particularly trustworthy...

The certification procedure is uniform throughout Austria for all languages and follows the same procedure used for expert witnesses (court interpreters and expert witnesses fall under the same legislative category in Austria). The law requires candidates to apply to their domestic court if they want to become certified court interpreters. They must either have completed a university training course for interpreters and translators and have acquired two years of experience as interpreters and/or translators, or, if no university training was obtained (which applies primarily to “exotic” languages), they must give proof of five years of professional experience as translators and/or interpreters. All candidates must document their office facilities (dictionaries, computer equipment, etc.) and be familiar with the legal system of Austria and that of the applicant’s foreign language(s). Applicants need to fulfill these requirements before being admitted to sit for a written and oral examination before a board that comprises a member of the judiciary, a member of ÖVGD, a chairperson, and two language experts (one for the relative language and the other an expert in translatology, both to be named by the ÖVGD). The certification is granted for 10 years and can be renewed upon providing proof of work done in the courts during the certification period. Proof of further training obtained during that period is also required.

The certified court interpreter must be available at all times, and at short notice, for the courts and authorities. Repeatedly declining to answer a summons or prepare a translation could lead to the interpreter’s name being deleted from the List of Sworn and Certified Court Interpreters.

The certified court interpreter (“Allgemein beeideter und gerichtlich zertifizierter Dolmetscher,” or “sworn and certified court interpreter”) is an interpreter/translator who is available specifically for the courts and authorities (federal and rural police, customs officials, authorities granting asylum, etc.) who must command the required specific knowledge. The swearing in and certification are part of a judicial administrative procedure that applies strict selection criteria. “Sworn” means that the interpreter is permanently under oath for all proceedings he or she takes part in (as opposed to the mere “ad hoc” recruitment of an interpreter, who is put under oath only in exceptional cases for specific proceedings). The Amendment of January 1, 1999, to the Court Experts and Interpreters Act, introduced “judicial certification” in addition to the swearing process. This was done in
The ATA Chronicle | April 2002

order to implement the concept of quality assurance in interpreting and translating. The designation “certified” clearly shows that the interpreter/translator is continuously subjected to a quality assurance procedure, specifically with a view to his or her work in the Austrian courts. For the purpose of improved quality assurance, the personal requirements for registration in the List of Sworn and Certified Court Interpreters were expanded. The registration procedure was regulated in greater detail by laying down legal rules for the Selection Commission, and a periodic review of the prerequisites of registration was introduced. The title “Allgemein beeideter und gerichtlich zertifizierter Dolmetscher” is legally protected. An action for an injunction may be filed against any person unlawfully using this title.

The certified court interpreter may also be employed outside the public sector and by private persons (i.e., for notarial documents, marriages, arbitration proceedings, translations of contracts, official documents, etc.). The activities of certified court interpreters are regulated by the “Federal Act of February 19, 1975, Federal Gazette 137, as amended in Federal Gazette 168/98, concerning Sworn and Certified Court Experts and Interpreters” and, for the certification of translations, by the “Imperial Patent of August 9, 1854, Imperial Gazette 208, concerning Non-Contentious Civil Proceedings.”

Owing to the strict selection criteria, the certified court interpreter is highly qualified, and specific legal provisions make him or her particularly trustworthy (e.g., the law imposes the obligation of secrecy upon the interpreter). The certified translations prepared by them are official and public documents, and the interpreter is liable for their correctness. A certified translation includes the clause: “I hereby certify under my oath the full conformity of the above translation with the original/ transcript/photocopy—attached/ seen by me.” A round seal, which only the certified court interpreter may use, is then affixed to the document and is certified by the interpreter’s signature.

The Application for Registration in the List of Sworn and Certified Court Interpreters, including the applicant’s regular residence or place of professional activity (center of economic interests), must first be submitted to the president of the court in the district. In the course of the registration proceedings, the president responsible for the registration (certifying authority) will charge a commission when preparing an expert opinion on whether the registration requirements (qualifications) have been fulfilled.

The work of a certified court interpreter not only calls for an impeccable command of German and the foreign language(s), but also requires knowledge of the principles of Austrian legal and court procedures and of the legal and court procedures of the country/countries where the chosen language(s) is/are the official language(s). It also requires extensive knowledge of the terminology of law and commerce, both in German and the foreign language(s). In addition, a thorough knowledge of the terminologies of other fields such as medicine, technology, etc., is required. Every year, the association organizes several full-day introductory seminars for applicants, where an expert in law explains the necessary basic requirements for work as a certified court interpreter.

Translators must be experts in translation from both German into the foreign language(s) and from the foreign language(s) into German. Similar to the new system implemented in the Czech Republic (see the November/December issue), a restriction to work only in one direction is not possible. As far as written expression is concerned, a faultless mastery of German and the foreign language(s) regarding grammar, syntax, and spelling are basic requirements. Thoroughness, accuracy, and correctness of the translation are of extreme importance, since a certified court interpreter is a certifying officer who affixes an official seal onto translations. If certified translations are incorrect, an action for damages may be filed. Further information on ÖVGD is available from www.gerichtsdolmetscher.at (both in German and in English). You may also contact the association at oevgd@via.at.

Several years ago, the Austrian Association of Translators and Interpreters (Österreichischer Übersetzer- und Dolmetscherverband), also called UNIVERSITAS, approached the Austrian Standards Institute in connection with the German standard DIN 2345 to inquire about whether this could also become an Austrian standard. The Austrian Standards Institute suggested taking DIN 2345 one step further and invited all interested parties (representatives of professional associations, translation companies, freelance interpreters and translators, and customers of translators) to develop more detailed standards for translating and interpreting services and for the respective contractual relations between service providers and clients. The result are the Austrian Standards ÖNORM D1200 and D1201 (for translations), as well as ÖNORM D1202 and D1203 (for interpreting services). Work on
International Certification Study: Austria Continued

certification procedures based on these standards is about to begin. For further information, please visit the homepage of the Austrian Standards Institute (www.oenorm.at). The two standards on translation are also available in English. For further information about UNIVERSITAS, please contact the association’s president, Dipl. Dolm. Erika Obermayer (obermayer@netway.at), or visit the UNIVERSITAS website at www.universitas.org (German only, although an English version is reportedly coming soon).

Another Austrian organization active in the T&I field is the Translators Association (Übersetzergemeinschaft, www.translators.at), which focuses on literary translations. Translators and interpreters can train at three Austrian universities in Vienna, Graz, and Innsbruck. Information on training at the Institute for Translators and Interpreters of the University of Vienna is available at www.univie.ac.at/transvienna/.

In the next issue, we will take a look at the status of certification in the U.K. and Ireland. As the editor of this series, I encourage readers to submit any relevant information concerning non-U.S. certification or similar programs, as well as comments on the information published in this series, to my e-mail address at jiri@cetra.com.

ATA Honors and Awards

For information and deadlines for ATA’s upcoming Gode Medal, Lewis Galantière Award, and Student Translation Award, and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation Scholarship, visit www.atanet.org/awards.htm.

Log on to ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/membersonly for special features for members!
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ustralian judges are presently in a position to decide who is capable of speaking English sufficiently, thus enabling or disqualifying a person from access to an interpreter during court proceedings. A judge’s decision to allow an interpreter into the courtroom directly effects over 10% of the 17 million-plus people presently residing in Australia.

The capacity of judges (who are extensively trained in legal matters, but not usually in linguistic ones) to make informed decisions about language proficiency is highly questionable, and exposes a serious weakness in the Australian legal system. Lack of recognition of this problem undermines international convention and obstructs the course of natural justice. The right to an interpreter is a human rights issue that should be treated with the professionalism and seriousness it deserves. Qualified professionals should be responsible for determining the necessity for an interpreter in order to allow natural justice to occur in the fairest circumstances possible, and according to the constitution of any democratic state.

Language is the key to employment and equal access to health, education, and welfare services. Everything from applying for unemployment benefits or a home loan, to buying a car or applying for a visa, is almost impossible without the work of competent interpreters. Participation in the political and civic life of a community also depends on language.1 With nearly 100 different community languages spoken by over two million Australians2, there is little doubt that language is the code to survival within our culturally and linguistically diverse country. There is no question that the right to an interpreter is an essential part of Australian society. Furthermore, interpreters do not simply represent and exist to serve one section of the community, but assist in bringing everyone together in our much-celebrated multicultural society.

Under Commonwealth legislation, an interpreter will be provided, “unless the witness can understand and speak the English language sufficiently to enable the witness to understand, and to make an adequate reply to questions that may be put forward about that fact [emphasis added].”3 Although this appears impressive, the practical effectiveness of the convention is less so, as deciding upon whether a person’s language abilities are sufficient enough to warrant the use of an interpreter is ultimately subjective to the personal interpretation of the judge.4 Having culturally naive judges represent the majority can undoubtedly lead to great injustices within the courtroom. The majority of Australian judges are monolingual and monocultural. There are very few non-white, non-Anglo-Saxon, non-Protestant (non-WASP) judges currently presiding in Australia. Naturally, their experience influences the way they perform as professionals, consciously or subconsciously.

Judge Pat O’Shane believes that there is no choice but to draw on personal bias and beliefs in the law (“it is impossible not to”), and respected legal theorist Kelsen calls it “unregistered bias.”5 However referred to, personal bias clearly influences the ability of a judge to accurately determine whether a person’s language capabilities merit the use of an interpreter, since most judges have never experienced the situation they are required to preside over.

Emotions are high in most legal-action situations, and linguistic confusion only adds to the stress of appearing in court. Lawyers and other legal professionals often underestimate the sophistication of courtroom dialogue, where legal jargon is still too complex for the average educated, English-speaking Australian, let alone for those who are not of English-speaking backgrounds. Even the more capable and proficient individuals are at an incredible disadvantage within the legal context. The legal environment becomes hostile territory unless provisions are made for interpreters. The manner in which these judges come to an “informed decision” in such situations is therefore highly questionable. There is little legislative guidance about the criteria to be used in this situation.6

The courts and government alike have been seemingly reluctant to develop specific criteria by which to grade a person’s speaking and comprehension ability, preferring instead to employ a “general test.” Instead, a common assessment of language ability involves simple, short-answer, conversational questions, for example, about one’s occupation and length of stay in Australia.7 This makeshift attempt to determine fluency is...
an unreliable avenue for evaluation. According to Dr. J. Gibbons, there are two types of language proficiency. The first, assessed through simple questions, is basic interpersonal communication skills that develop during everyday conversation. Even the most limited English speakers can usually rattle off answers to basic questions without hesitation. The apparent fluency of an individual’s replies can mislead the decision makers, potentially proving disadvantageous to all parties involved in the proceedings. The second type of assessment is cognitive language proficiency, which is rarely attained by people who have migrated to Australia as adults, despite long periods of residence in Australia.

Rating Scales: Interpreters Relied on as a Last Resort?

More recently, the Australian Second Language Proficiency Rating Scale (S2LPS) has been developed to provide a more standard assessment of the need for an interpreter in the court. The danger with this, however, is that it generalizes a very personalized situation. The proficiency required, the nature of the case, the setting, and the role of a person with a non-English-speaking background (NESB) are all variables not considered within the framework of the assessment. Emotional stress is another factor that can greatly effect a person’s ability to communicate.

The government, in policy at least, has taken responsibility for the language rights of persons of NESB within the courtroom. As the highest and most righteous legal representative of government policy, it has traditionally been the job of the judge to enforce such legislation. Undoubtedly, judges would like to be seen as acting fairly, however, they are also reacting to the pressures of politics and the legal system. The Australian court system annually incurs exorbitant bills, which are funded by the taxpayers. It is not surprising that judges and other court officials feel pressured to limit expenses where possible. The ambiguity of legislative provisions (i.e., “judge’s discretion”) and the lack of suitable testing guidelines legally allow corners to be cut at the expense of justice. Further imbedding concerns of injustice, there has been a “disinclination of appellate courts to disturb the rulings of trial judges which concern the control of proceedings in their courts.”

So once the decision is made, it is rarely reversed, casting serious doubts on the role of the judge as the most effective decision maker. The “trial by battle” approach to courtroom proceedings has led legal professionals to despise the position of the interpreter within the courtroom. Interpreters are seen as a shelter for the guilty. “Some magistrates and judges refuse to allow a person of NESB to have an interpreter, even when it is obvious that they have difficulties with English. Reliance on an interpreter is seen as a last resort. Judges and magistrates push witnesses to express themselves in English as best they can, preferring to “see how we go.” Sympathy that understands more with the legal professionals than with the clients can lead to severe disadvantages. Furthermore, without appropriate interpreting skills, there are huge liabilities at stake. If an unfair trial can be proven, convictions are squashed and the process must begin again.

A benchmark of a free and fair society is the extent to which its members have confidence in its system of justice and can participate in its legal processes. It is the sworn duty of the court to do justice to the parties [emphasis added].

If this responsibility is to be taken with all the seriousness it deserves, then the court should insist upon using the most appropriate means possible to determine the abilities of those concerned. Considered important human rights legislation at an international level, the “right to an interpreter” deserves a more responsible and justifiable means of determination. Ultimately, this means that the courts should insist upon professional interpreters to assess, or at least give an opinion, of a person’s language capability.

Skills, Strict Regulations, and Moral Obligations

Professional interpreters have to abide by strict regulations and are under constant pressure to perform their duties without fault. Accordingly, professional interpreters are fully trained and highly skilled, particularly in such demanding areas as legal interpreting. Special interpreters should be hired solely for the position of evaluating people of NESB who must appear before the courts. Interpreters should be enlisted from the National Accreditation for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) and be financed by the government in order to rule out any suspicions of bias. NAATI’s status as a government organization helps to legitimize the integrity of interpreters and the methods of testing. With both the interpreting and legal institutions as government bodies, there will be little cause for doubt concerning an interpreter’s decision. The notorious criticism of the suspect hiding behind the interpreter could also be forgotten, as the qualified interpreter will be able to make a professional decision about a person’s language capabilities.

The decision to assign qualified interpreters the task of assessing a person’s language capability would
have widespread growth potential for the interpreting and translating professions. Obviously, if the legislation were to change, it would be due to government approval. This acceptance would most certainly be accompanied by increased financial support. This, in turn, would lead to increased awareness of the importance of qualified language professionals among the general public, as well as among those whose jobs put them into daily contact with people of NESB. This would ensure more government support, not only financially but also politically. Greater support and public use of language professionals would allow more refinements to the system, improving testing capabilities and increasing the professional quality of interpreters and translators.

Legal specialists assume heavy responsibilities when they enter the profession, having the power to condemn the guilty and free the innocent. Professional interpreters also have a special role to play in the preservation of justice. Affecting two million Australians directly and almost everyone indirectly, the interpreting profession is an indispensable aspect of our society today. An understanding of the daily occurrences in one’s life is essential for peace of mind, and a government cannot claim to be providing equality for all without providing the means for NESB to gain access to that understanding. This is particularly so within the legal system, as linguistic misunderstandings in the courtroom could mean the difference between life and death to the accused. With such an important responsibility, a professional should legally be required to submit an opinion regarding a person’s language capabilities. Interpreter-made decisions would be more beneficial for all those concerned, allowing justice to take its most natural course.

Problems plague the Australian legal system on the issue of the “right to an interpreter.” The lack of reliable testing methods and support within the legal system has meant slow progress for the interpreting and translation professions. Under no circumstances should a lone Australian judge, and one who is typically culturally and linguistically inexperienced, make the type of decision that is essentially a cultural and linguistic one. “Ethnic communities, lawyers, and interpreters maintain that the right to an interpreter is meaningless because provision of an interpreter is ultimately left to the discretion of the judge.”

The integrity of judges and their decisions are not so much in question, however, their actual ability to make informed decisions is. Interpreters are qualified for exactly this type of situation, and are much more capable of determining a client’s fluency. It is the moral obligation of interpreters and translators within the legal community to fight for effective language rights, and it is the government’s responsibility to ensure equality within the legal system. Interpreting and translating professionals understand, better than most, the confusion that can occur as a result of a system that lacks appropriate legislation regarding equality for persons of NESB.

Until Australian legislation is modified to include qualified interpreters in the decision-making process, persons of NESB will remain victims to a system that fails to understand or recognize their special needs. This inadequacy will only grow as the NESB population within Australia continues to increase. The government will inevitably have to consider these changes or risk alienating a relatively large proportion of the population.

Notes
1. Laster, 1994:74
2. Laster, 1994:2

Continued on p.20
A New ATA Affiliate: The Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association

Judging by the positive responses and initiative generated so far by the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA), it seems that we have tapped into an area of vital interest in Minnesota and neighboring states. UMTIA has the combined mission of promoting the quality, professionalism, and prestige of the translating and interpreting industry in the upper Midwest region, and of providing networking, training, and development opportunities for local language professionals.

Efforts to establish a local professional organization have gained momentum steadily over the past year and a half. November 2000 marked the formation of a volunteer-driven organizing committee, whose purpose was to establish a local chapter of the ATA in Minnesota. By May 2001, the committee had recruited 16 active ATA members (20 are required to start an official chapter). As an additional effort toward recruiting and building visibility, the budding organization held its first open workshop on June 9, 2001. This resoundingly successful event featured guest speaker Kirk Anderson, former chair of the ATA Chapters Committee, who gave a detailed presentation on how to prepare for the ATA accreditation examination. Kirk also advised the organizing committee on how to move further toward establishing a local translators’ and interpreters’ organization.

Based on this advice, the organizing committee decided to form an ATA affiliate organization until such time as the 20 active ATA members required to start a chapter can be recruited. On August 27, 2001, ATA Headquarters officially approved affiliate status for UMTIA, and on September 25 the new affiliate appointed a five-member executive committee.

As one way of furthering its goals, UMTIA recently worked with ATA to arrange the first national accreditation examination sitting to take place in Minnesota since 1998. This exam was held on the University of Minnesota campus on September 29—resulting in four newly accredited members of our organization! Future exam sittings are scheduled for March 9, 2002 and September 22, 2002.

In addition to the ATA exam sittings, UMTIA has organized several seminars and workshops hosted at the University of Minnesota’s Nolte Center. Many more events are already under discussion based on feedback from members and proposals from potential presenters. These events are announced each month in UMTIA’s newsletter, *Turning Point*.

Future plans include a website, job bank, and a professional services directory (inspired by the national online directories ATA has established). We also hope to synergize the resources of UMTIA’s diverse membership, which includes students, individual professionals, and local agencies, to set up mutually beneficial arrangements like internships and mentoring programs.

UMTIA members and the executive committee look forward to working with ATA toward our common goals to develop ourselves as cross-cultural communicators, and to promote the long-term vitality of our exciting profession.

The Right to an Interpreter—Who Decides? An Australian Perspective

Continued from p.19


It pays ...

to keep your listings updated in the ATA’s online
*Translation Services Directory* and *Corporate Translation Services Directory*

([www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org))
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ndoubtedly the most common question posed to me over the years by all my clients, especially the clients in the interpreting and translating field, has been whether or not to incorporate. While incorporation clearly has its advantages, it is not for everyone. Consider the following issues to see if incorporation is for you.

Limited Liability
This means that only assets owned by the corporation and in the corporate name are subject to lawsuits. Assets owned individually are not subject to lawsuits. Personal assets such as a home, car, investments, and other personal assets are not subject to corporate lawsuits, as is the case of a sole proprietorship.

Name Protection
The corporate name is protected and can only be used by that corporation, whereas any other fictitious name can be used by anyone. If the fictitious name is registered with the state, then only the person who owns the name can use the registered name. Rulings on conflicts between fictitious names and corporate names are automatically found in favor of the corporation. Corporations are also easier to sell than a business owned individually.

Tax Advantages
Employee benefits such as medical insurance, medical reimbursement plans, life insurance, and disability insurance are fully deductible for the owner. As a sole proprietor, only 30% of the medical payments can be deductible (60% of medical payments for federal income tax and 0% for social security), while none of the life or disability insurance premiums are tax deductible for the owner. For example, a corporate owner with a salary of $50,000, medical insurance payments of $10,000, life insurance premiums of $3,000, and disability insurance premiums of $2,000 will pay federal income tax on the $50,000 salary. The sole proprietor will pay federal income tax on $59,000 ($50,000 + $10,000 + $3,000 + $2,000 - $6,000 [60% x $10,000]). Social Security tax will be paid on $50,000 for the corporate owner, while the sole proprietor will pay Social Security tax on $65,000 ($50,000 + $10,000 + $3,000 + $2,000). The federal income tax savings will be $2,520 while the social security savings will be $2,295, for a total savings of $4,815. Also, tax audits are less likely for corporations (about four times less likely) than for sole proprietors. Generally, the IRS will overlook more items for a corporation than for an individual. Another tax advantage is the ability to elect S corporation status for the corporation. S corporate distributions (only allowed to the owner) are treated as dividends and are not subject to Social Security costs. This tax situation is not available to individuals.

Extra Paperwork
One disadvantage to incorporating is that federal and state governments require more paperwork. There are the setup costs and rules to be followed. There is a requirement for an annual meeting of all the shareholders, and corporate resolutions are needed to change banks, acquire other businesses, and purchase assets. For small corporations consisting of one or a few shareholders, these additional requirements are easily overcome with no additional costs. Acting as a sole proprietor has no setup requirements and no maintenance.

Initial Costs
The costs associated with starting and maintaining a corporation are relatively small compared to the benefits received. For example, there is a one-time incorporation fee that can range from $500–$1,000 in Pennsylvania (approximately $350 if you do it yourself). Quarterly payroll taxes must be prepared and filed for all employees. The owner is considered an employee if he or she works for the corporation. There is an annual corporation tax return required, but there may be an annual corporation fee to the state.

My rule of thumb recommendation is easy. If your annual gross receipts exceed $40,000, incorporation is for you. The benefits received will more than offset any additional costs. Look for my column in an upcoming issue for more specific advice.

ATA’s Fax on Demand
Want the latest list of exam sites? Call ATA’s Document on Request line, available 24-hours a day: 1-888-990-3282
By Chris Durban

A few months back, an article in the Financial Times discussed how to select a physician. The author was the editor of a British medical association journal. A doctor himself, he admitted that the challenge was daunting—even for an insider.

Yes, of course, all doctors have been to medical school. But a degree on its own is really no guarantee at all, he opined. Your health is important and there are plenty of mediocre doctors who slip through the net. Checking statistics on the performance of hospitals and surgeons is not reliable either, since some institutions improve their standing in the charts by avoiding tricky operations altogether (this from an expert).

Are doctors who publish widely in medical journals a better bet? Apparently the jury is still out. Learned articles do not necessarily guarantee a steadier hand for surgeons, or a better bedside manner for general practitioners.

And so on.

So who can you trust?

Ultimately, this eminent physician recommended (trepidly) that readers rely on “word of mouth”—intriguing advice, given the way many translators place doctors and lawyers on pedestals in the profession-that-gets-sweepstakes.

Yet the intrepid monolingual buyer of translations faces a challenge that is arguably even more difficult than the one faced by a consumer seeking high-quality healthcare. The reason is simple. By definition, and in contrast to buyers of ballpoint pens, I-beams, house-cleaning services, root canal jobs, and appendectomies, translation buyers are often simply unable to judge what is delivered. And as professional translators all know, there are plenty of suppliers out there who consciously or unconsciously exploit that situation.

Try tracking down the source of some of the appalling, silly, or simply tediously bland translations seen in published documents (see The Onionskin column on page 45) and you soon discover that the name of the game is buck-passing, with everyone in the supply chain running for cover.

Translation buyers are often simply unable to judge what is delivered.

Case Study

Last year I had the dubious pleasure of sitting in on a meeting of managers of a major French food company and a translation company. A mission-critical document needed translating and we were there to determine how this was to be done.

As known quantities to the buyer, my colleague Robert Blake and I were sitting pretty. Due to prior commitments we were unable to take on the job ourselves, so we had agreed that our role would be limited to “revising” the most sensitive sections of the translation, which would be produced by the translation company (TC for the purposes of this article).

Two of the TC’s sales reps made their pitch. They described and extolled its quality assurance procedures, which included an expert in-house team, multistage revision, painstaking editing, glossary building, etc. No problem, they said. We are experts at this, we’ll do a bang-up job.

At this point, a senior executive at the food company stood up.

“We’ve been here before”

With an infinitely sad smile, he reminded all present that he had been sitting in the same room the previous year and heard another translation supplier make exactly the same claims and list exactly the same resources, in exactly the same glowing terms. Yet when he had submitted this provider’s translation, printed and bound, to foreign partners and customers, they’d all had the same reaction: “well…we can see what you are trying to get at, but we would not say it like that. No way.”

“I want to avoid that situation this year,” he stated, adding, “As a French speaker, I cannot ‘feel’ the style in the English text you are going to deliver, so I have no choice but to trust you. That is terribly frustrating.” He then sat down and the TC reps, missing only a half-beat, reiterated that their teams and processes would rise to the challenge: smooth, flowing texts “as if written directly in English.” No problem.

An excerpt from their output appears in the accompanying grid on the next page, and there clearly is a problem. There are several in fact.

So what went wrong?

Ultimately the work had to be redone in large part. When writing this article I phoned the translation company to confirm their prices, because this, in my opinion, is part of the problem, and an area where better circulation of information would be healthy for everyone. The managing director insisted that his company had delivered a top-quality piece of work. Any criticism, he announced, was due to the inherently “subjective” nature of quality assessment.

This is nonsense, if you look at the text as delivered—which of course is
| Créer des programmes de formation spécifiques dans les zones géographiques |
| To create specific training programs in the geographical areas |
| Creating specific training programmes in the geographic areas |
| Targeted training for specific geographical areas |

**Depuis 2000, le Groupe ABC met progressivement en place dans ses zones géographiques, des formations transversales axées sur les « fondamentaux » du management, comme l’animation des équipes ou la gestion des personnes. Contrairement aux « filières » décrites précédemment, ces formations ne sont pas construites selon une architecture unique de manière à prendre en compte les spécificités culturelles. Le but est de donner à chacun, dans sa zone géographique, les moyens de s’améliorer dans le management des hommes, avec le concours de partenaires locaux.**

Dans ce cadre, l’Asie a lancé en 2000 un programme de formation composé de 4 modules, destiné aux managers de la zone ayant en charge une équipe. Le premier module a été particulièrement axé sur la culture du Groupe ABC et a fait l’objet de 10 sessions en 2000. Les trois autres modules sont en cours de préparation.

**Source text/153 words.**

**Online machine translation by Babelfish (Systran).**

**153 words. Instantaneous. Free.**

**Since 2000, Group ABC has gradually been setting up transversal training by geographic zone focusing on the basics of management, such as how to run teams or people management. Contrary to the procedures described above, this training is not homogenised so as to provide scope for cultural idiosyncrasies. The aim is to provide each geographic zone with the means to improve people management with the support of local partners.**

In 2000, Asia launched a training program of this type made up of 4 modules, aimed at zone managers in charge of a team. The first module was chiefly directed towards the ABC Group and run over 10 sessions in 2000. The other three modules are still being prepared.

**Supplier A. 126 words. €0.11-0.15 / mot.**

**Supplier B. 117 words. €0.46 / word**

The author is aware of ATA’s antitrust policy.
Time for Translation Providers to Come Out of the Shadows Continued

precisely what the client company’s readers will do. To be frank, I think the man was honest but clueless. As a native French speaker, he could not judge what his company was delivering any better than the French buyer. How interesting that in this case the client recognized the dilemma, but the supplier did not (or was not willing to say so).

Examples Bring the Message Home

One of the reasons I put together the grid for this article is that I find concrete examples, clearly presented, help focus the mind. Comparisons make it easier for clients to see what they are likely to get from a given supplier. This, in turn, brings home to them what we, as translators, know: that there is never a single translation, but rather various takes and options depending on purpose, target readership, budget, deadlines, and other factors.

With this information, buyers—the translation department, but also the nonlinguists who will be using translated texts (the CEO, the politician making the speech, the head of research, the marketing manager, etc.)—get a clearer idea of those options. They have something concrete to base their choice of supplier on, and may well decide to adjust their budget accordingly. Ideally, the comparison will concern texts into the client’s own language, but even in the other direction examples do clear away a lot of fog. In the case I’ve quoted here, the French buyer could, for example, have run the options past its subsidiaries in North America for an opinion.

Providing examples clients can relate to was the reasoning behind Translation: Getting It Right, a booklet produced by the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting (this document can be downloaded in .pdf format from the ITI website at www.iti.org.uk). This approach is, in my opinion, far more effective than yet another 10-bullet-point checklist or learned/earnest essay on linguistics.

Without examples, both buyers and sellers can neglect writing style, which is one of the most important and least tangible parts of the translation equation. In the case of translations commissioned for publication, it is style and readability that makes or breaks the product. That catch and hold the discretionary reader’s attention. That, if lacking, lead the reader to turn the page, click the mouse, and move on to another company’s offer.

How interesting to note that the skilled humans who produce such work are not really all that interchangeable—a serious obstacle for those ambitious suppliers promising both high volumes and high quality.

Adding Value—and Charging for It

Prices are marked on my grid. As you can see, the first (and I would argue unsatisfactory) text cost the end user €0.11-0.15 a word. In many cases, a pyramid of subcontractors means that the person actually doing the job is paid far less than that. Little wonder that many of these suppliers are simply blasting through, perhaps genuinely unaware of how short of the mark their work falls. And while high price is not necessarily a guarantee of quality, it is surely no coincidence that the text on the far right of the grid sold for three times more (€0.46 per word).

I fully expect the range of prices on the market to widen as clients and premium suppliers realize what their work is worth, and as more pressure is exerted at the low end of the market (machine applications are getting better; note the second column). That’s life.

But that is also why I urge all serious translation suppliers (companies, agencies, freelancers) to sign the texts they produce and sell, leaving anonymous work to the bottom end of the market and machines. Machine translation vendors might also consider claiming credit for their output.

By the same token, clients buying what claims to be for-publication translation can and should announce up front that translators/translation companies will be credited. Nothing could be easier: translator credits appear in the printed document alongside photo and printer credits. It costs nothing, can be applied immediately, and encourages everyone to make that extra effort. It also reveals to one and all who is providing what (illuminating, this), allowing customers to get in touch with suppliers whose work meets their needs.

Bringing Clients into the Picture

Smart, demanding clients are a good translation supplier’s best allies. They have demonstrated time and again that they are willing to work side by side with translators once they have understood the challenge. But they must have something to get their teeth into, and someone to interact with.

Getting samples and signed output out into the public arena is an essential first step in moving beyond lip service where translation quality is concerned. Without them, there is a real danger of an even wider gap appearing between theoretical statements (posturing? glossary brochures?) and actual output, in which case everyone loses out.
The Professional Image of Translators and Interpreters

By Rut Simcovich

“Soon researchers will bring us devices that can translate foreign languages as fast as you can talk—and—this is unbelievable to me—molecular computers the size of a tear drop...”

Former President William J. Clinton, State of the Union Address, January 2000

Many of you remember hearing former President Clinton when he said this. And some of you probably learnt, as I did, reading a Newsweek interview, that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan traveled to Iraq to negotiate with Saddam Hussein on the return of the UN arms inspectors, but neglected to bring along an interpreter. Once he was there, though, he did realize it had been a mistake.

These are sophisticated people. People who have interpreters at their behest, and who have benefited from their services. Former President Clinton said he found it difficult to believe that there could soon be molecular computers, but the idea of interpreters being replaced by “devices” merited no doubts.

Now, accounting software has been around for quite some time. If computers can do so many fantastic things, why don’t we hear about accountants fading into the sunset? Leaving aside Class B movies of the 1950s, nobody seems to be forecasting that doctors will be replaced by smart machines. Rather, people believe that accounting software is a tool for accountants to use, and that new instruments allow doctors to do a better job. It is pretty obvious to everybody that these are professions that add value to whatever a machine, no matter how wonderful, may provide. In fact, the value these individuals add is perceived to be so great that many of them manage to command hefty fees for their work, not to mention our high regard and appreciation.

More of the Same

A communications expert who was doing market research for a manufacturer complained that her company had gone to great trouble in getting their questionnaire translated. So much so, that they sought out an engineer to do the job. Of course, the end result was that the people filling out the questionnaire did not understand the questions! When I asked if they had considered using a translator instead, she gave me a puzzled look. “A translator?”

...Nobody can single-handedly build our professional image...It has to be done collectively on a daily basis...

Here is another example of such ignorance toward our profession, but now on a different front. I am sure many of you have wondered, as I have, about the fact that some translation companies have taken to calling us “linguists.” Why should we expect others to know better? Not long ago I was sent an application form by a translation agency where they asked me to define what I understood a good translation to be. The mere fact that they felt it necessary to ask is a commentary on the lack of a clear, collective consensus in the profession.

A common concern repeatedly voiced by our profession relates to the lack of prestige and recognition that it is afforded by society. We also hear frequently about translation and interpreting graduates not getting adequate training to be able to perform, which devaluates their academic credentials. Confused customers try to find ways to select the right person for a job. We all complain about the existence of “amateurs.”

Perhaps all this has to do with our professional image and identity. This is a way of referring to what interpreters and translators are supposed to be about or, to put it in other words, why there are people willing, or not willing, to pay us.

Our image determines, to a great extent, how society perceives us and is closely linked to the concept of value. As professionals, what we provide is a service. According to marketing specialists, a service involves a deed, a performance that cannot be physically possessed. Services have unique characteristics that distinguish them from products. One of the basic ones is their intangibility. Because services are intangible, evaluating their quality in advance is harder than evaluating the quality of a product. Services need to be experienced but in some cases, even then, evaluating their quality also requires some kind of special knowledge or experience that not everybody has.

The various stories I have included at the beginning of this article are examples of the degree to which our image is nonexistent or, even worse, needs to be “refurbished.” And because what we provide is an intangible professional service, we are extremely dependent, for success and recognition, on what our image may provide.

Can you imagine a layman calling an architect and discussing his or her fee on the basis of what they believe to be the skills, time, etc., required to design a house? “I just need you to draw a few squares! I would do it myself, because in high school I...”
took one year of drawing, but I’m kind of busy right now.” I think it’s unnecessary to elaborate, since you all know what I’m talking about.

At this point perhaps you are thinking, “This doesn’t really concern me. I make a living; actually, many times I have more work than I can cope with,” or instead, “Well, that’s life! What can I do about it?” There are things we can do about this, and, yes, it does concern all of us.

My purpose is not to offer any definite answers. I simply want to pose some questions intended to foster a debate. Nobody can single-handedly build our professional image. It has to be done collectively, by each and all of us, on a daily basis. And we need to start by asking questions. Questions about our professional training, our quality standards, about the way we charge for our work (would anybody think of paying a surgeon by the stitch?). We need to debate what is the unique contribution we attempt to make and the value we bring to the table.

As in mass production lines, where workers became subsidiary to machines, we can also fall into the trap of mimicking computers or becoming just another peripheral tied to them. Or, like other professions, we can bring to bear our unique human capabilities: our possibility of understanding even when the speaker or the author are slightly muddled, and our ability to use our craft to make a text readable, a speech enjoyable.

In its present form, translation and interpreting are very young professions. So far have they mutated from what they were in past ages. But we do not need to start from scratch. There is a lot we can learn from other professions. We can look at how they have organized themselves, how they have developed their academic training, how they have set up quality standards, how they have stratified levels of competence and experience, and how they have educated themselves and society about their identity. This is what, over the years, has built the image of prestige they now enjoy.

We need to get started down that road and the first step in that direction is not necessarily embarking on a press or advertising campaign. It is out of our own debate that we will gradually build a consensus on the identity of the profession and the many aspects it entails. Once we get it right, we shall probably do a much better job of telling others about it.

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**In Remembrance**

**Charter Member Mario Minafra (1921–2002)**

ATA charter member Mario Minafra (81) of Naples, Florida, died Friday, February 1, 2002.

A native of Foglia, Italy, Minafra was a graduate of the Italian Liceo Classico, where, in 1940, he received the Diploma of Classical Maturity in foreign languages (equivalent of a B.A.). He went on to attend the Italian Air Force Academy, where he received the equivalent of a B.S. in aeronautical engineering in 1944. He attended law school at the University of Naples from 1945-1946.

Minafra became a translator for the Allied Command in Caserta, Italy, eventually becoming the supervisor of the translation section of the Allied Supreme Command from 1946-1948. Following that, he taught English at the Italian School of Aviation Specialists in Caserta from 1949-1952. In 1952, he came to New York, where he worked as a translator, contributing editor, and interpreter. His specializations included technical, scientific, medical, and legal documents, contracts, and public relations. He was proficient in Italian (his native tongue), French, Spanish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Latin, and Greek (classical and modern). In addition to ATA, he was an associate member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Aside from his work as a translator and interpreter, Minafra was also a skilled athlete. In 1948, in Rome, he ranked third behind the world record holders for discus throwing. He was awarded several gold medals in the Masters’ Throwing Pentathlons between 1975-1985. He was involved in semi-pro soccer, basketball, track and field, and rowing. He also coached these sports at the high school and college levels.

He is survived by his wife, Anne (Bidwell) Minafra, of Naples, Florida, and a son, Stephen Minafra, of Burbank, California.
When I became a professional interpreter in 1968, interpreter education was either rare or nonexistent. Later, as an interpreter educator, I found approaches and materials for interpreter education were scarce or not appropriate. Happily, interpreter education for signed and spoken languages has enjoyed great strides in recent years. Although signed and spoken languages are distinct with regard to modality, they share similar fundamental processes. Some of these shared processes are discussed here using English as an example. Likewise, all interpreters share certain fundamental skills in their work, such as strong intralingual and cognitive processing skills to rapidly process incoming and outgoing linguistic signals while still preserving the source message. A brief and systematic review of some of these important intralingual skills is provided.

Gile (1995) suggests that interpretation requires a certain amount of “mental energy” and that the requirements of the interpretation task must not exceed the interpreter’s available supply of mental energy. When the demands of the job exceed the interpreter’s mental energy, the interpretation will suffer. Interpreters can help reduce the amount of mental strain by continually developing component skills, such as intralingual and cognitive processing, until these become nearly automatic. Such practice can be meaningful and productive for the experienced interpreter who wishes to work independently on skill improvement, but will also benefit developing interpreters.

**Strengthening First Language Skills**

The importance of developing and refining skills in your first language is often overlooked. Some may think that being able to read, speak, and understand a first language is enough, and that it is only necessary to study a second language. However, intralingual skills must be well developed in both languages for efficient interpretation. As has already been stated, when intralingual and cognitive skills are well developed, the amount of mental effort needed for processing information is less. It is best if interpreters start off by mastering the less difficult component skills before combining these skills with the more cognitively complex skills needed for such work as simultaneous interpretation.

According to Kohn and Kalina (1996): “Automation of strategic processes also plays an important role, for only if routine decision processes are performed more or less automatically will the interpreter have enough capacity and attention to solve the more intricate and complex linguistic problems.” Gonzalez et al. (1991) emphasize the importance of routinization, or making conscious acts become more automatic. A skill that once demanded much effort and attention can become unconscious over time with practice. Some of the essential skills that interpreters need control over are summarized in the following sections. English is discussed as an example of a first language, but the principles described apply regardless of which language is your first language. Most of the skills and related examples refer to interpretation, but some of the intralingual skills apply to translation as well. The intralingual skills discussed include comprehension, finding the main idea, paraphrasing, lexical substitution, and summarizing.

**Comprehension**

Interpreters must understand the source material before they can begin to interpret. Comprehension of the source material is a skill that underlies all other skills in the interpretation process as a whole.

According to Gile (1995), comprehension is based on two types of knowledge: 1) knowledge of words in a language, and 2) knowledge of the grammar of a language. He also says that these two basic features are not enough to ensure comprehension. Understanding and being able to use the context in which the words and grammar occur is an essential ingredient in the comprehension process.

Direct practice in the comprehension of spoken material is an important aspect of intralingual skill proficiency. Strong comprehension skills improve the ability to find the most important parts of spoken discourse. Interpreters need to make quick decisions about which points are main ideas and which are supporting.

**Finding the Main Idea**

Finding the main idea can lend focus to comprehension. In order to be able to identify the main idea, you must sort the ideas by level of importance and then by topic. This is accomplished by using a specific type of analytical thinking called hierarchical thinking. In a well-organized speech or talk, the main idea is ideally expressed as early...
as possible. Once the main idea is stated, it becomes implicit in the points that follow. Often these points will clarify or support the main idea.

**Paraphrasing**

Developing paraphrasing skills can enhance linguistic flexibility. Larson (1984, 415) says: “Paraphrase is a restating of the same information in another way, sometimes with the addition of bits of information.” As a training technique, the source message can be paraphrased and then translated or interpreted into the target language. Paraphrasing can also be useful when working into the target language. For example, you may not be able to find the exact word that you desire in the target language, but by using paraphrasing skills you may be able to summon a reasonable equivalent.

**Lexical Substitution**

Another way to develop linguistic flexibility is to practice lexical substitution. Lexical substitution is the process of replacing a word with another word without changing the meaning of the message. In some cases a single word can be replaced by a phrase, or vice versa, as long as the meaning is not changed. Substitution drills can also be practiced at the phrase level.

**Summarizing**

The ability to summarize or capture the gist of what is heard is central to the interpretation process. According to Tommola (1995), the process of summarizing is so important that it is often used as an aptitude test for candidates entering interpretation programs.

Tommola says: “Among the various characteristics that interpreter aptitude tests attempt to measure, a central one is the ability to analyze the source message into its semantic elements, to create a representation of the content, and to retain this representation in memory so that it can be rendered in the target language” (471). He goes on to suggest that macro processing, or having the ability to quickly find the main ideas and establish the relationships between them, is a highly desirable skill for interpreters. “This process includes the restructing of incoming information into more abstract units of meaning which subsume the lower-level details. Retrieval of the hierarchically stored abstract units is an essential aspect of consecutive and, to some extent, simultaneous interpreting.”

**Cognitive Processing Skills**

In addition to strong intralingual skills, interpreters must have reliable and efficient cognitive processing skills. Cognitive processing skills support many of the more complicated aspects of the interpretation process. Shreve and Koby (1997) point out that these mental operations are largely “hidden,” yet form a complex and essential part of the interpretation process. Gile’s Effort Model provides a powerful explanation for the importance of cognitive processing capacity in the interpretation process. He also points out that this processing capacity is available in limited supply and is not automatic. Therefore, the more highly developed cognitive processing skills are, the more mental capacity can be devoted to other aspects of the interpreting process that cannot become routinized.

If cognitive processing skills are not developed and readily available, then there is a much higher chance that the skills which must be developed later, such as translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation, will not be strongly grounded and may be more difficult to master. Specific cognitive processing skill deficits can lead to particular types of errors in interpretation. For example, we may find that there is a relationship between poor auditory memory, short lag time, and an increase in overall errors (Cokely, 1992). The cognitive processing skills that are briefly discussed here include memory, acuity and discrimination, visualization, repetition, pattern inference, and multitasking.

**Memory**

Interpreters must be able to accurately remember the content of the source message long enough to process it into the target language. Schweda Nicholson (1996) has written a critical review of recent literature dealing with the role of memory in interpretation. Nicholson goes on to provide a summary of short-term memory, also known as working memory. The duration of working memory is thought to be only 250 milliseconds. According to Baddeley (1990), there are three parts to working memory. The first is the central executive, which controls working memory. The second is the visuo-spatial sketchpad, which is the place where mental images are probably created and stored. The third part is the articulatory loop, which can retain limited amounts of information. All three aspects of working memory combine during the interpretation process and allow interpreters to use visualization and other strategies to assist them in their work.

**Acuity and Discrimination**

Acuity means acuteness of perception. Discrimination, in this context, means the ability to perceive
distinguishing features in spoken English. It is important for interpreters to be able to remember differences in source texts that may be similar but not identical to each other. A real-life example of the need for acuity and discrimination would be when an interpreter interprets the same tour or type of meeting frequently. The topic and context may be similar, but there may be differences in the content. Interpreters also need to be able to distinguish homonyms (words that sound the same) by listening carefully to the context in which the words occur. Good acuity skills assist the listener in detecting important differences in spoken English. Discrimination skills allow the interpreter to hear differences between similar messages.

Visualization
Visualization allows you to hear a message in English and imagine where the items or persons are located in relation to each other. This skill involves the creation of a “scene” or picture in your mind’s eye, and has two important subcomponents. One is visualizing the relationships between things or people already known, but not visible at that moment. The other is imagining relationships between items or people when you have no prior visual knowledge of their spatial relationships. An example of this difference can be seen by imagining yourself interpreting directions from Point A to Point B when you already know the way, and interpreting the same directions when you have never seen Point A or Point B or any of the points in between.

Repetition
The ability to listen and repeat is one aspect of simultaneity. Immediate repetition means that the interpreter has the ability to allow a minimal amount of time to elapse (referred to as lag time, processing time, decalage, or ear-voice span) between when the speaker says something and when he or she interprets the same utterance. The ability to maintain this interval separating the speaker’s utterance and the repetition of that utterance by the interpreter is a subject of much interest in interpretation. By practicing the skill of immediate repetition and, later, delayed repetition, interpreters can get the feel for what it is like to maintain enough cognitive control over their repetitions to stay immediately, or just a phrase, behind the speaker. Practicing repetition of texts that include numbers is another useful developmental tactic. Later, during actual simultaneous interpretation, the ability to control the amount of processing time becomes a valuable asset for the interpreter.

DeGroot’s (1997, 52) analysis of recent research suggests that the skill of immediate repetition shares many components with simultaneous interpretation. DeGroot points out that the process of immediate repetition and the process of simultaneous interpretation both require comprehending and producing someone else’s speech simultaneously. When a cognitive process such as this becomes more effortless, more of the interpreter’s cognitive processing can be devoted to other aspects of the interpretation process.

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Pattern Inference

Pattern inference skills exist at several levels: the word level, the phrase level, and discourse level. The first two are briefly discussed here. Pattern inference at the word level occurs when the speaker omits a word, thereby requiring the listener to fill in the missing word with one that makes sense in the context. This skill is very valuable to interpreters, since it allows them to make sense of what they hear even if they miss part of what has been said due to the acoustic disturbances (a door slamming, background chatter, or a plane flying overhead) that are so common in their working environment.

Phrase level pattern inference in spoken English is the ability to complete a sentence, idea, or text with a logical ending. These pattern completion skills are based on having strong linguistic skills and being able to use context to find possible and logical solutions. Pattern inference skills at the phrase level form another subset of skills that are necessary for both interpreters in training and working interpreters. Oller (1988) describes the ability to complete linguistic patterns as “active hypothesis testing.” Thus, completion involves more than just guessing what would come next in the speech. The interpreter needs to check a hypothesis against what has already been heard in order to make sure that it creates a possible and logical direction for the speech to follow. The completion process also has a retroactive component. Once the active hypothesis has been made, the listener checks the actual speech to see if the hypothesis is supported.

In order to develop pattern inferences at the phrase level, you need two things. One is a good command of how English is spoken and what constructions are grammatically acceptable. The other is the ability to logically complete an idea based on the context and the information you have heard up to the point where the phrase ended. Well-developed pattern inference skills will allow the interpreter to quickly hypothesize how a sentence, paragraph, or longer text might logically be completed. This is important because interpreters are usually planning ahead and exploring possible directions that the speech may follow while interpreting. Pattern inference skills are positively related to world knowledge. The more practice and awareness you have of the importance of pattern inference, the less effort you will need to devote to this aspect of the interpretation process.

Multitasking

MacWhinney (1997) says that simultaneous interpreters must focus on two things at once: 1) comprehension of the incoming message, and 2) the structure of their output. The interpreter’s focus on production always occurs after the focus on concentration. Gile (1995) also describes the simultaneous interpreting process as a divided attention task. The ability to manage several cognitive tasks at the same time is an essential aspect of the simultaneous interpretation process.

The entire simultaneous interpretation process is heavily dependent on cognitive processing skills. But more than that, these skills must operate on several different levels at the same time. For example, while you are listening and comprehending, you must also transfer the message and at the same time find the correct expression for the message in the target language. The expression given to the message in the target language must also be monitored for meaning and corrected if necessary. This is a very brief and simple description of the many processes that occur simultaneously during the interpretation process.

Examples of multitasking exercises include repeating while writing something from memory, such as a well-known poem, multiplication tables, or writing numbers forward or backward. Such exercises reveal the interpreter’s ability to divide or shift attention among competing tasks while selecting one for greater focus. Managing so many different cognitive and linguistic tasks all at once is not an automatic or innate process for anyone. Moreover, multitasking is the most cognitively demanding.

Ability to Tolerate Ambiguity

Ambiguity means that a word or phrase could have more than one meaning. Ideally, the context will allow the interpreter and other listeners to know which meaning is intended. However, if this is not the case, then the interpreter’s heightened sensitivity to possible meanings will allow him or her to realize that there could be more than one. Some ambiguity must be tolerated as the speaker reveals his or her point. Sometimes the speaker may not show or tell the interpreter how the ideas being presented are related, which can add to the interpreter’s cognitive load.

More experienced interpreters will generally be able to tolerate more ambiguity than those who are just learning. Moser (1997) suggests that one of the most notable differences between novice and expert interpreters is that novices tend to be distracted by superficial problems along the way and use more of a “microview” approach wherein they can get “lost” in the details. Expert interpreters, on the other hand, tend to use a more global, or “macroview,” which allows them to avoid getting lost in the details and to follow the overall message better. Pattern inference skills promote the ability to work from a macroview.
Conclusion

This brief description of some of the intralingual processes that underlie the interpretation process provides a brief glimpse into the enormously complex world of interpretation. The skills mentioned here focus on developing processes, which in turn will lead to more highly refined and defensible “products.”

The product is the observable part of your work. It is the interpretation that the “listener” receives from the “sender” via your interpretation. The product can be recorded for future analysis, but the process cannot. Seal (1999) summarized the results of a recent study of sign language interpreters who wished to improve their skills.

(Author’s Note: This article is based on information published in The Effective Interpreting Series: Cognitive Processing in English, English Skills Development, and Translating from English, published by DawnSignPress. Each title includes a teacher’s guide, student workbook, and videotext. For practice materials and further information about the topics, please go to www.dawnsign.com.)

References


An Introduction to German Patent Translation

By Nicholas Hartmann

What is a patent?

The U.S. Code, Title 35, Section 154 states that a patent is:

“…a grant to the patentee…of the right to exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention throughout the United States…for a term beginning on the date on which the patent issues and ending 20 years from the date on which the application was filed.”

A patent is therefore a negative right. The authority granting the patent undertakes to enforce the patentee’s right to exclude others from practicing the invention, but the inventor’s right to practice his or her own invention is independent of the patent.

A patent is both a technical and a legal document. It is an agreement between an inventor and an authority that defines the parties’ reciprocal rights and obligations with regard to a particular new item of knowledge called an “invention.”

What is an invention?

In U.S. patent law, the subject matter of an invention (which may consist of a “process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any…improvements thereof”) must be:

- **novel**

A patentable invention must not have been known or used by anyone in the United States, or published or patented anywhere in the world before being invented by the applicant; it also must not have been published or patented anywhere in the world, or in use or on sale in the United States, more than one year prior to the application date. These criteria define the “prior art” (Stand der Technik); non-obvious

The differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art must be such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious, at the time the invention was made, to a person having ordinary skill in the art (durchschnittlicher Fachmann) to which the subject matter pertains;

- **advantageous**

Among the many rewards of patent translation is the knowledge that with each patent, the translator is helping to advance the frontiers of innovation…

1. Specification (Beschreibung)

The specification is a narrative description of the invention, beginning with the Background of the Invention (Stand der Technik or Technisches Gebiet). The first sentence of a German-language patent often begins “Die Erfindung betrifft….” This section defines the prior art—that which is known (bekannt)—within which the invention must represent some novelty or improvement. The PCT requires that relevant prior-art documents, such as journal publications or other patent documents, be cited and briefly described in this section. It is also usual to cite shortcomings or disadvantages (Nachteile) of the prior art, setting the stage for the Summary of the Invention (Darstellung der Erfindung), typically beginning with “Es ist Aufgabe der Erfindung…” or “Der Erfindung liegt die Aufgabe zugrunde…” indicating the disadvantages that the invention is intended to overcome (vermeiden) and the advantages it is intended to offer.

The next paragraph typically begins with a phrase such as “Diese Aufgabe wird erfordungsgemäß dadurch gelöst, daß…” (“This object is achieved, according to the present invention, in that…”) introducing the Advantages of the Invention. This section states the specific ways in which the invention achieves the stated object (die gestellte Aufgabe) in paragraphs which often refer to Vorteile (advantages) or vorteilhafte bzw. bevorzugte Ausbildungen (advantageous or preferred embodiments). In many patents, the wording of this section is very similar to that of the claims.

A paragraph mentioning “ein Ausführungsbeispiel der Erfindung anhand von Zeichnungen” (“an exemplary embodiment of the invention with reference to drawings”), or
some similar phrase, introduces the **Summary of the Drawings** (usually just headed *Zeichnung*: drawings are singular in German but plural in English). The individual figures are described in terms of direction of view, relationship to other figures, etc.

The remainder of the specification consists of the **Description of Preferred Embodiments** (*Beschreibung der Ausführungsbeispiele*), in which the nature of the invention is described in detail. This is where the inventor supplies the “disclosure” that is his or her part of the patent transaction. To paraphrase Burton Amernick (see References):

In return for receiving the rights conferred by a patent, the inventor (*Erfinder*) gives to the public by way of the printed patent a full written disclosure (*Offenbarung*) of the invention, which must be complete enough to teach (*lehren*) those skilled in the relevant art how to make and use the invention. The disclosure must also include that which the inventor believes to be the best way to carry out (*durchführen*) the invention.

In a mechanical or electrical patent, this section refers in detail to the patent drawings, in which each element or component has a reference character (*Bezugszeichen*). Chemical patents seldom have drawings, but they often include formulas as well as examples (*Beispiele*) disclosing the relevant method or composition of matter.

2. **Claims** (*Patentansprüche*)

The claims represent the issuing authority’s part of the bargain. Each claim defines a “range of protection” (*Schutzbereich*), i.e., the particular area of technology within which the authority will enforce the inventor’s right to prevent others from exploiting the invention. Claim writing is a subtle art, and the phrasing of each claim is critical. If a claim is written too broadly, it will infringe upon some prior art and the invention will not be patentable. If it is written too narrowly, the protection can easily be circumvented. The translation of claims therefore demands particular attention and care.

In U.S. patents, the numbered list of claims is sometimes prefaced by a phrase such as “I claim:” or “What is claimed is:” (this seldom appears in German patents). Even without the explicit preface, however, every claim is notionally a single sentence which must contain only one period at the end. This is mandatory: no matter how convoluted, a claim must never be subdivided into multiple sentences.

Claims usually have a two-part structure. The first part is the preamble (*Oberbegriff*), which defines the prior art or the field of the invention. German claims begin with a noun (“*Vorrichtung*...”), but a common U.S. practice is to begin the main claim (*Hauptanspruch*) and any other independent claims (*unabhängige Ansprüche*) with the indefinite article (“*An apparatus...*”) and a dependent claim (*Unteranspruch*) with the definite article (“*The apparatus as defined in...*”). The second part is the characterizing clause (*Kennzeichenteil*)—very often beginning with *dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß*, which is usually rendered as “characterized in that” or “wherein”—containing that which is actually claimed as novel and inventive (*erfinderisch*) and therefore to be protected.

3. **Abstract** (*Zusammenfassung*)

A brief summary of the invention appears on the cover page of a published patent, or is part of an unpublished application.

4. **Drawings** (*Zeichnung*)

The drawings are an integral component of a patent. No patent should ever be translated unless the drawings are supplied. They often resolve ambiguities and provide other vital information.

5. **List of Reference Characters** (*Bezugszeichenliste*)

This does not appear in every published patent or application. Certain attorneys insist on having this translated as “*Parts List.*”

**Translating Patents**

1. **Thematic Unity**

Rule 13 of the Patent Cooperation Treaty states that “the application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept (‘requirement of unity of invention’).” For the translator, this means that each individual patent, like a sonnet or a short story, deals with only one topic. This, in turn, limits the amount of subject-related research that needs to be done for each patent.

2. **Terminology**

Within that single topic, the translator’s principal task is to understand and manage terminology. Most importantly, the target-language terminology must reflect the source-language terminology consistently and unequivocally. For example: if *Einrichtung, Vorrichtung, Gerät,* and *Einheit* all appear in the German text, and if you decide to translate those words into English as “mechanism,” “apparatus,” “device,” and “unit,” respectively, then within that patent you must always use “apparatus” for *Vorrichtung,* and you must never...
use “apparatus” to translate any other German term. The same applies to every other word or term.

Much of the patent translator’s time is therefore spent setting up and maneuvering around these terminological barricades. This demands close attention and good record keeping. Problems can also arise when the translator has to work on several patents from a single source on a single subject. For example, having decided in Patent A1 to render verbinden as “connect,” befestigen as “mount,” and verriegeln as “lock,” what do you do when Patent A2 introduces the German verbs lagern, fixieren, arretieren, and anschließen? A good thesaurus is the patent translator’s best friend.

The terminology must also be appropriate. Bear in mind that the original author of a patent worked very hard to define the subject matter in a way that was not too broad and not too narrow. The translator must respect those intentions: a “topfartige Auswölbung” must be called a “cup-like bulge” even if in the drawings it looks just like a bump.

3. A Translation Procedure

In most patents, the same material will appear more than once within the specification, and there are often parallels between certain portions of the specification and the claims. The translator can take advantage of these echoes, to save time and to take another step toward terminological consistency, by proceeding as follows:

• First translate the entire specification, referring to the drawings to help solve terminological mysteries. My method is to check each paragraph as I translate it, then wait an hour or so and read through the entire specification again.

• The very first paragraph of the specification, often beginning "Die Erfindung betrifft...,“ is almost always identical to the preambles of the first claim. Cut and paste and make minor adjustments as necessary.

• The section which begins with the statement of the patent’s object (e.g., “Der Erfindung liegt die Aufgabe zugrunde...”) contains a number of paragraphs each describing a feature that is “advantageous” (vorteilhaft). The first such paragraph is often very similar to the characterizing portion (following dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß) of the first claim, and each subsequent paragraph often echoes another individual claim. Cut and paste this entire section, then make adjustments as necessary. The reference characters will need to be added.

• The abstract is often very similar to the first claim (with punctuation added to make it more readable, since the “single-sentence” rule applies only to claims), and can usually be brought over with only minor modifications.

It is very dangerous, however, to assume that a particular patent will obey all these rules, and on that basis to cut and paste blindly. Always read, check, and double-check every word.

Why translate patents?

Patent translation is not for the faint-hearted or the disorganized. It demands a meticulous and rigorous approach to subject matter that may be complex and abstruse. Among its many rewards, however, is the knowledge that with each patent, the translator is helping to advance the frontiers of innovation.

There are other, more tangible benefits. Few translators deliberately choose to specialize in patents, so those who do may find themselves with less competition than their colleagues in more popular specialties. Because an issued U.S. patent is viewed in the business world as an extremely valuable piece of property that is worth paying for, patent attorneys and corporate patent departments are unlikely to quibble about a translator’s fee—provided the translator has demonstrated that he or she can consistently and reliably produce American English patent texts that are both accurate and idiomatic.

One final reward is a measure of job security. The subtleties and peculiarities of patent language in both German and English are such that patent translation is likely to remain immune to automation for at least a few more years.

References

About Patents


Dictionaries


(Possibly) Useful Websites

U.S. Patent database (by number) http://164.195.100.11/netahtml/srchnum.htm


European Patent Office www.epo.co.at/epo


German Patent and Trademark Office www.patent-und-markenamt.de


Acknowledgments
Dave Wentz, Mary Lou Blatteau, and Paul Goodridge in Philadelphia; Jan Clayberg and Olaf Bexhoeft in Washington, DC; Bill Grimes and Isabel Leonard in Boston; Milton Oliver in Connecticut; Suzanne Gagliardi, Barbara Gallo, and Helga Piel in New York; and Waltraud Schlochtermeyer, Hans Raible, and Margerit Rolli in Stuttgart, among many others, have offered advice, guidance, wisdom, and the opportunity for many years of on-the-job training in German patent translation. Thank you all.

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The Graduate Program in Translation at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus, offers an MA in Translation and a Post MA Certificate of Specialization. The Program invites applications for a full-time position teaching graduate courses in Spanish->English Translation, to begin, if possible, in August. Initial recruitment: One year, with possibility of renewal for up to three years or, subject to performance, appointment to a tenure track position. Candidates must possess an M.A. in Translation with substantial experience in one or more specialized areas, such as legal, technical or financial translation. Or, preferably, a Ph.D. in Translation or a related field. College level teaching experience and native proficiency in English, near-native in Spanish required. A commitment to research and publishing necessary. Command of a third language, as well as CAT (computer-assisted translation) experience, very desirable. Teaching load of 12 credits per semester. Candidates must be willing to serve as thesis advisors. Send letter of application, curriculum vitae, 3 letters of recommendation, transcripts from all colleges and universities attended to Director, Graduate Program in Translation, P.O. Box 22613, San Juan PR 00931-2613. Screening will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. The University of Puerto Rico is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Overview of the Los Angeles Area Hospital Project and Training Strategies

By Alexander Rainof

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) stated in a recent article entitled “Notice of Policy Guidance for Health Providers who Receive Federal Funds,” appearing in the Federal Register (August 30, 2000), that: “In the course of its enforcement activities [of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964], [it] has found that persons who lack proficiency in English frequently are unable to obtain basic knowledge of how to access various benefits and services for which they are eligible, such as the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), Medicare, Medicaid, or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) benefits, clinical research programs, or basic health care and social services.” This is, of course, unacceptable as, under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, language rights are considered to be civil rights.

Translation and interpretation rights, be it in the courts, the medical sector, the schools, at the polls, or any other of a variety of venues, are tied to the much larger question of language policy in the United States. In his recent book, Language Policy and Identity Politics in the United States (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), Professor Ronald Schmidt, Sr. discusses what he identifies as the two major trends regarding language policy in the United States. He presents a cogent critique of both the assimilationist approach (English only) and the pluralist approach (bilingual education, where other languages in addition to English would be used by state agencies, government entities, etc.). He shows, through statutes, bills, proposals, case law, etc., how assimilationism is tied more to a Republican agenda, while Democrats tend to favor a pluralist approach. This swinging of the language policies pendulum in the U.S. is evidenced in the most recent ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court against giving a Department of Motor Vehicle test in Spanish to an applicant in Alabama who was a native Spanish speaker with limited English proficiency (LEP). At the same time, SB 987 (Escutia) in California seeks to affirm in all California government entities the language rights abrogated in part by the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision.

...Persons who lack proficiency in English frequently are unable to obtain basic knowledge of how to access various benefits and services for which they are eligible...

Language policy and medical interpretation are also both closely tied to the courts. They have resulted in extensive litigation and case law, and shall continue to do so for years to come. In this sense, medical translation and interpretation, and its forensic counterpart, are inextricably linked together. This close linguistic correlation regarding language rights between the medical sector and the courts is illustrated in a vast body of case law. Let’s look at a few examples.

One of the leading cases, mentioned both in the article by the OCR in the Federal Register and in Ronald Schmidt’s book, is the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Lau vs. Nichols (414 U.S. 563 [1974]). The Court recognized that recipients of federal financial assistance have an affirmative responsibility, pursuant to Title VI, to provide persons with LEP with meaningful opportunities to participate in public programs. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that a San Francisco area public school system’s failure to provide English instruction to students of Chinese ancestry who did not speak English denied the students a meaningful opportunity to participate in a public educational program, and was in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Lau decision affirmed the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare’s policy regarding discrimination and the denial of services on the basis of national origin.

Another case that noted the link between language and discrimination based on national origin, and cited by the OCR in the Federal Register, is Garcia vs. Gloor (618 F.2d 264 [5th Cir. 1980]; cert. denied, 449 U.S. 1113 [1981]). Here, “The court found that, on the facts before it, a workplace English-only rule did not discriminate on the basis of national origin since the complaining employees were bilingual.” However, the court stated that, “to a person who speaks only one tongue or to a person who has difficulty using another language other than the one spoken in his home, language might well be an immutable characteristic like skin color, sex, or place of birth” (Id. At 269).

The Fifth Circuit in U.S. vs. Uvalde Consolidated Independent School District (625 F.2d 547 [5th Cir. 1980]) also upheld an amendment to the Voting Rights Act regarding concerns about language minorities, the protections they were to receive, and eliminating discrimination against them by prohibiting English-only elections.

However, while forensic translation and interpretation as a profession has made giant strides in the last 25
years in terms of validation, recognition, and income, its medical counterpart is still where the courts were more than two decades ago. This dismal state of affairs has many physicians worried and clamoring, in view of their bleak diagnosis, for a set of prescriptions and urgent treatment in order to produce a cure for this situation.

“Language Barriers in Medicine in the United States,” an article of paramount importance to translators and interpreters in general and, in particular, to those of us who work in the medical field, was published in the March 1, 1995 issue of JAMA (the Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 273., No. 9., pp. 724-728). Written by five physicians (Steven Woloshin, M.D.; Nina A. Bickell, M.D.; Lisa M. Schwartz, M.P.H., M.D.; Francesca Gany, M.D.; and H. Gilbert Welch, M.P.H., M.D.), it offers an exhaustive survey of the disastrous situation in medical translation and interpretation that prevailed six years ago. Unfortunately, the situation in the U.S. has not changed much since the article’s publication. In fact, the new census will probably show that the gloomy statistics given in this article have grown considerably worse.

The authors are well aware that the physician-patient relationship is built through communication. According to them it consists of: 1) clinical reasoning; 2) observations; 3) nonverbal cues; and 4) interviews where language is the most powerful tool. Interviews, in turn, create the opportunity to address and reconcile different belief systems about health and illness (an empathic connection that may be therapeutic in itself).

However, language barriers do exist between the physician and patient. According to the U.S. 1990 Census, there are 14 million people with LEP. Those with LEP number more than 10% in California, New York, Texas, New Mexico, and Hawaii. Thus, the use of interpreters is of paramount importance. Professional interpreters are formally trained and highly proficient in mediating communication between languages. However, they are rarely available in health care. New York City, for instance, does not employ professional medical interpreters in its public hospitals. When professional interpreters are not available, which is all too often the case, three suboptimal mechanisms are used: 1) clinicians rely on their own language skills; 2) clinicians rely on the skills of a patient’s family and friends; and 3) clinicians rely on the skills of ad hoc interpreters.

Each one of these mechanisms has weaknesses. U.S. physicians are probably not sufficiently bilingual. The inability to communicate properly with a patient distracts the physician’s focus away from clinical thinking, and results in frustrating encounters for both the physician and patient. A patient’s family and friends, as well as ad hoc interpreters, lack sufficiently good language skills and often commit stereotypical errors, including omissions, additions, substitutions, editing, etc. In one observational study reported in the JAMA article, 23% to 52% of words and phrases were incorrectly translated. The use of family and friends may undermine patient confidentiality. Also, ad hoc interpreters may view interpretation as an unwelcome and unpaid burden. Using children to interpret may expose youngsters to sensitive information and invert family dynamics. The deplorable consequences arising from the use of children, family members, and ad hoc interpreters were outlined in painful detail by one of the medical interpreters attending a training session I gave to some 15 interpreters at the Children’s Hospital in Los Angeles. She told us about a situation where a physician, who had waited for close to 30 minutes for an interpreter, had decided to use an older sibling to relay the younger sibling’s AIDS treatment to the parents. The child, upon learning that his younger brother had AIDS, burst out crying. The parents were furious with the physician, as the children had not been told the nature of their sibling’s illness. My interpreting colleague said that when she entered the room, she found everyone crying and shouting.

Aside from the emotional side, the clinical consequences of inadequate interpretation are many. These include: misdiagnoses; a greater dependency by the physician on diagnostic tests; the interpreter missing cues which might result in the physician not ordering needed tests, or ordering unnecessary tests (this is expensive, inconvenient, and might result in false-positive tests); and the loss of important cross-cultural information, impairing a patient’s education and understanding of medical instructions. In addition, patients who find visits to the physician difficult and frustrating might avoid them as well as routine care. The end result is often poor compliance, inappropriate follow-up, and patient dissatisfaction.

Inadequate interpretation also raises a host of ethical problems. For instance, informed consent is not really informed. A lack of sufficient physician-patient shared decisions takes place, which violates the patient’s autonomy. Access to care, both acute and preventive, is curtailed, which leads to a form of discrimination (as identified in the 1964 Civil Rights Act). A lack of accuracy and completeness when recording
medical histories can result in a variety of potential negligence cases.

It is important to remember, and hospitals seem to forget this all too often, that protection against discrimination, under the 1964 Civil Rights Act, is extended to language. Acutely aware of this failing, the authors of the JAMA article suggested some strategies on “how to do better.” According to them, one should establish clear standards for medical interpreter training and certification. At minimum, all interpreters should have a demonstrated proficiency in English and a target language and be knowledgeable of medical terms (to be determined through standardized testing). Additional requirements include the training of heritage language speakers at the community level (the training at the University of Minnesota, which consists of 150 hours, is cited) and the training of ad hoc interpreters (a 70-hour training course in New York City is cited). One wonders if 70, or even 150, hours of training is really sufficient.

Other suggestions made by the authors include increasing multilingual signs and videos to inform patients about the availability of interpreters and the medical services at their disposal, developing bilingual phrase sheets for staff and patients, and telephone interpreter access (for questions and appointments only). The AT&T Language Line option is mentioned as a possibility. However, the authors of this article seem unaware of the problems that exist with telephone interpretation: problems that have been, and still are, at the center of a heated debate in our profession. The possibilities of recruiting bilinguals at the medical school level through financial incentives, English as a Second Language classes for patients, as well as the need to foster cultural awareness were also deemed worthy of consideration.

Some of the solutions the article considered included hiring professional interpreters (trained from one to four years), training ad hoc interpreters, and making telephone interpreting more readily available. For people in the know, the first of the three solutions adduced is the only one that seems adequate. In the medical sector, just as in the courts, the situations that require interpreters often deal with matters of life and death, or with important decisions that entail far reaching consequences. To trample the language rights patients have under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 only results in tragic mistakes and will give rise, in the future, to numerous lawsuits.

Two more recent articles point out the extent to which patients’ language rights, meaning civil rights, are derailed in medical environments. In “Worlds and Words Apart” (Los Angeles Times, November 6, 2000, Health Section), Jane E. Allen writes of patients given injections without explanations, of cases cited during an interview by Thomas Perez, director of the OCR of the DHHS, “of a South Carolina hospital’s practice of denying epidural anesthesia during childbirth to patients who could not speak English” (doctors there said that if there were complications, the women wouldn’t be able to communicate), and of other horrors. Two physicians in the latest issue of JAMWA (Journal of the American Medical Women’s Association, Vol. 55, No. 5, pp. 294-295, Fall 2000) reported in an article entitled “Language Barriers to Informed Consent and Confidentiality: The Impact on Women’s Health” that, “Evidence that language barriers have a direct effect on health care delivery is growing.” Errors in interpretation in psychiatric interviews, for instance, “led to misdiagnoses.” This language barrier is especially problematic in women’s health: “At the beginning of the year I had this woman who spoke Arabic, and I wanted to do a few things, including a mammogram, pelvic exam, and Pap smear. This was hard to do given that her young son was the interpreter…so we didn’t do it.” This case, as with many others involving medical interpretation, shows women to be victimized more often than men.

While physicians are acutely aware of the need to enforce OCR standards, many are concerned about the costs involved. The Sacramento Bee (October 9, 2000) ran a front page article entitled “Translator Rule a Burden Doctors Say.” The article quotes Dr. Patricia Samuelson, the medical director of the Sacramento Urban Indian Health Project, as saying: “It [compliance with the Federal Register guidelines] put us out of business.” Doctor Jack Lewin, the CEO of the California Medical Association, is quoted as saying: “We think this is a wonderful, much-needed requirement, but unless the federal and state governments decide to provide the funds for translation services, it will become a nightmare.”

As has been stated before, language rights under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 are considered civil rights. However, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 regulation has three problems. First, it is vague, with no guidance at the national level on how to determine the adequacy of interpretation. Second, the funds to implement the regulation are inadequate. In hospitals, bilingual services are reimbursable under
Medicare, but no explicit billing for interpreter services is allowed. The monies are generally included in hospital overhead rates. Third, there are both staff and resources shortages. A staff of 300 oversees 100,000 organizations receiving DHHS funds. Compliance monitoring is complaint driven. Those people who are classified as having LEP are often unaware of their rights and fear government reprisals.

Aware of the problems the people trying to enforce these civil language rights have had to face in the medical sector since 1964, the OCR published the important “Notice” that was mentioned previously. The stated purpose of this notice was to clarify the responsibilities of providers of health and social services who receive federal financial assistance from the DHHS, and to assist them in fulfilling these responsibilities to people with LEP in order to avoid discriminating against them. The guidance provided in the notice, “does not impose any new requirements, but reiterates long-standing Title VI principles [of the Civil Rights Act of 1964] that OCR has been enforcing for over 30 years.” This enforcement, as was seen in the “Language Barriers in Medicine...” article, has not been very effective.

The policy statement in the Federal Register puts health care providers on notice that enforcement will be pursued with more diligence in the future. It starts by identifying who should not provide medical translation and interpretation (MTI): namely, minor children and untrained “interpreters” and people with neither the formal training nor the obligation to observe confidentiality. It states:

> These practices have severe drawbacks and may violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In each case, the impediments to effective communication and adequate service are formidable. The client’s untrained ‘interpreter’ is often unable to understand the concepts or official terminology he or she is being asked to interpret or translate. Even if the interpreter possesses the necessary language and comprehension skills, his or her mere presence may obstruct the flow of confidential information to the provider. This is because the client would naturally be reluctant to disclose or discuss intimate details of personal and family life in front of the client’s child or a complete stranger who has no formal training or an obligation to observe confidentiality. When these types of circumstances are encountered, the level and quality of health and social services available to persons of limited English proficiency stand in stark conflict to Title VI’s promise of equal access to federally assisted programs and activities. Services denied, delayed, or provided under adverse circumstances have serious and sometimes life threatening consequences for an LEP person and generally will constitute discrimination on the basis of national origin, in violation of Title VI.

Discriminatory policies, by the way, “need not be intentional to be discriminatory, but may constitute a violation of Title VI if they have an adverse effect on the ability of national origin minorities to meaningfully access programs and services.” The OCR document adds that if any one part of a health provider’s program receives Title VI federal funds, then all parts of the recipient’s operations are covered by Title VI and must abide by it.

The key to providing meaningful access to persons with LEP is outlined clearly by the OCR. The recipient of federal funds must ensure that they and the person with LEP can communicate effectively, that the person with LEP “is given adequate information, is able to understand the services and benefits available, and is able to receive those for which he or she is eligible. The covered entity must also ensure that the LEP person can effectively communicate the relevant circumstances of his or her situation to the service provider.”

In view of the pressing concern amongst physicians regarding the alarming lack of adequate MTI services in the medical sector, the OCR intends to vigorously seek compliance. It considers a program to be in compliance when it incorporates the following four elements: 1) assessment (the recipient conducts a thorough assessment of the language needs of the population to be served); 2) development of comprehensive written policy on language access (the recipient develops and implements a comprehensive written policy that will ensure meaningful communication); 3) the training of staff (the recipient takes steps to ensure that the staff understands the policy and is capable of carrying it out); and 4) vigilant monitoring (the recipient conducts regular oversight of the language assistance program to ensure that persons with LEP gain meaningful access to the program). However, “the failure to implement one or more of these measures does not necessarily mean noncompliance with Title VI, and OCR will review the totality of the circumstances in each case. If implementation of
one or more of these options would be so financially burdensome as to defeat the legitimate objectives of a recipient program, or if there are equally effective alternatives for ensuring that LEP persons have meaningful access to programs and services, OCR will not find the recipient in noncompliance.”

Thus, the recipient must identify the points of contact in the program where assistance is likely to be needed and the resources required to provide this assistance, in terms of location and availability, as well as the arrangements essential to accessing these resources in a timely fashion.

A very important segment of the “Notice” in the Federal Register covers oral language interpretation. In order to design an effective language assistance program, the recipient of federal funds must develop, “procedures for obtaining and providing trained and competent interpreters...in a timely manner.” Some of the recommended steps to achieve this goal are: “hiring bilingual staff who are trained and competent in the skill of interpreting; hiring staff interpreters who are trained and competent in the skill of interpreting; contracting with an outside interpreter service for trained and competent interpreters; arranging formally for the services of voluntary community interpreters who are trained and competent in the skill of interpreting; and arranging/contracting for the use of a telephone language interpreter service.” The notice adds that:

The use of contract interpreters may be an option for recipients that have an infrequent need for interpreting services, have less common LEP language groups in their service areas, or need to supplement their in-house capabilities on an as-needed basis. Such contract interpreters must be readily available and competent. The use of community volunteers may provide recipients with a cost-effective method for providing interpreter services. However, experience has shown that to use community volunteers effectively, recipients must ensure that formal arrangements for interpreting services are made with community organizations so that these organizations are not subjected to ad hoc requests for assistance. In addition, recipients must ensure that these volunteers are competent as interpreters and understand their obligation to maintain client confidentiality. A telephone interpreter service line may be a useful option as a supplemental system, or may be useful when a recipient encounters a language that it cannot otherwise accommodate. Such a service often offers interpreting assistance in many different languages and usually can provide the service in quick response to a request. However, a recipient should be aware that such services may not always have readily available interpreters who are familiar with the terminology peculiar to the particular program or service. It is important that a recipient not offer this as the only language assistance option except where other language assistance options are unavailable.

Regarding the competence of interpreters, the OCR states that:

In order to provide effective services to LEP persons, a recipient must ensure that it uses persons who are competent to provide interpreter services. Competency does not necessarily mean formal certification as an interpreter, though certification is helpful. On the other hand, competency requires more than self-identification as a bilingual. The competency requirement contemplates demonstrated proficiency in both English and the other language, orientation and training that includes the skills and ethics of interpreting (e.g., issues of confidentiality), fundamental knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms, or concepts peculiar to the recipient program or activity, and sensitivity to the LEP person’s culture and a demonstrated ability to convey information in both languages accurately. A recipient must ensure that those persons it provides as interpreters are trained and demonstrate competency as interpreters.

While it is regrettable that the OCR does not feel that formal certification is “necessarily needed;” at least it provides a mechanism for setting some MTI standards. However, this mechanism fails to discuss who would evaluate those noncertified interpreters, and how this would be done. By failing to do so, it leaves the door open to a variety of pitfalls and abuses of the type that have plagued the courts for years. A national certification of medical interpreters, somewhat similar to the federal examination for court interpreters or the translation and interpretation examination provided by the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters...
and Translators, is, in my opinion, the only solution that takes into account the vital importance of the interpreter’s role in a medical setting.

Regarding written translation, the OCR deems that an effective language assistance program is one that ensures “that written materials that are routinely provided in English to applicants, clients, and the public are available in regularly encountered languages other than English.” The OCR notice proceeds to list some of these documents, such as applications and consent forms, and expresses its willingness to, “collaborate with respective DHHS agencies in determining which documents and information are deemed vital.” Documents must be translated for each eligible LEP language group, “that constitutes 10% or 3,000, whichever is less, of the population of persons eligible to be served.” For smaller groups, vital documents still need to be translated, except for groups under 100, for whom written translations need not be available (provided they are given notice of their right to have relevant documents translated for them free of charge, if not in written form, at least in oral form).

The OCR stresses that, while compliance is required from all recipients of federal funds, “OCR will focus its compliance review efforts primarily on larger recipient entities such as hospitals, managed care organizations, state agencies, and social services organizations that have a significant number or percentage of LEP persons eligible to be served.” This approach, no doubt, will help a large number of patients. Still, one of the weaknesses that surfaces throughout OCR’s description of its compliance efforts is that compliance review is complaint-driven. Considering former U.S. President Bill Clinton’s Executive Order 13166, “Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency” (August 11, 2000), and the mounting chorus of concern from physicians in medical literature regarding the trampling of patients’ rights in the medical sector, compliance review should not be based solely, or mostly, on complaints. It should be carried out by a well-staffed team on a comprehensive and constant basis. Considering the vast surplus we have, and all the debate on how to spend it, this is certainly an area where some of it could, and should, be used.

Perhaps a solution to the whole problem of MTI lies in a system of assessments of medical interpreters and translators. The Guide to Initial Assessment of Interpreter Qualifications, an extensive study the National Council on Interpretation in Health Care recently posted on its website (www.ncihc.org), provides some badly needed suggestions and strategies. The NCIHC’s thorough coverage of the subject is based, “…upon widely accepted views of what constitutes the basic skills of the health care interpreter. The sources used by the authors in thinking about the makeup of the assessment include ‘a screening process used successfully over the past few years by a consortium of health care agencies that employ interpreters in Madison, Wisconsin…[and] the formal certification process being developed by the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association....’”

The NCIHC study covers three types of assessment: 1) initial assessment (defined as an “assessment of individuals’ qualifications at the point where they are either being hired or being admitted to a list of interpreters available for assignment); 2) performance assessment (an evaluation of an interpreter’s performance on the job; and 3) formal assessment (consisting of a formal examination for the purpose of issuing a licensure or certification). The initial assessment should be given in conjunction with training, and can precede or follow such training, depending on whether it wants to provide a standard for accepting applicants, or a way of evaluating the training received.

The only somewhat disappointing aspect of the NCIHC analysis is the statement that:

With reference to initial assessment, however, we do not believe that reading and writing skills represent a testing priority. Interpreting is fundamentally an oral skill. Even candidates who do not read and write well can be excellent interpreters, and should not be initially screened out based solely upon their lack of literacy. Indeed, in some refugee populations there may be very few interpreter candidates who have had the opportunity to study English formally and, therefore, few may read or write English well...For these reasons we do not include formal assessment of written language skills as a part of the minimum screening necessary in an initial assessment, even though it may be a valid component of a certification program.

There are many written documents that are part of MTI. Furthermore, in life and death communication situations, a thorough knowledge of both languages used is needed. A person who has limited reading and writing skill in a given language simply does not know the language in depth and at a level required in MTI.

MTI assessment strategies is a project I have undertaken this
summer with various hospitals in the Los Angeles area. We hope to develop a set of assessments and a three-week MTI Summer Institute at California State University, Long Beach, in connection with these assessments. In this respect, the laudable NCIHC study is both timely and very useful.

What is amply clear from all of the aforementioned is that change is in the air, as well should be the case, in the field of medical translation and interpretation. It is incumbent upon leading associations of forensic translators and interpreters, such as NAJIT, CCIA, ATA, etc., to work hand-in-hand with such organizations as NCIHC (www.ncihc.org) and The Massachusetts Medical Interpreter Association (MMIA, www.mmia.org) to bring the profession of medical translation and interpretation to the level of recognition and income which many court translators and interpreters now enjoy.

An awareness of the law and of the legal rights of patients is essential. Just as important is an awareness of training resources and methodology for medical translators and interpreters. The NCIHC website, in this respect, is a must for the medical translator and interpreter. It provides a wealth of information, including the entire text of the OCR “Notice” of August 30, 2000 (in both English and Spanish). A much needed Guide to Initial Assessment of Interpreter Qualifications and Dr. Maria-Paz Beltran Avery’s article, “The Role of the Health Care Interpreter: An Evolving Dialogue,” can also be downloaded from this site.

The MMIA site is also very useful, one of its highlights being its “Medical Terminology Survey.” This project asked physicians from different specialties to provide a list of: 1) the five most common medical conditions seen in their specialty; 2) the 15 to 20 most common medical terms used in their specialty when speaking with patients; and 3) the most common medical tests and procedures specific to their specialty. The list, by specialty, can be downloaded from the MMIA website.

Yahoo! also has a sine qua non site for medical terminology and information. It lists practically every disease known to man, and each ailment, from the most recondite syndrome to the most prevalent malady, has numerous links that provide encyclopedic amounts of information. A rare malady such as cri du chat (cat’s scream) has six links, while cancers in general have 579 links, with separate entries for each type of cancer (http://dir.yahoo.com/Health/Diseases_and_Conditions).

Numerous other URLs, such as the American Medical Association, JAMA, etc., provide a plethora of medical information relevant to the medical translator and interpreter. Due to space constraints, I leave them out of this article. However, the ones previously discussed should suffice for the next step in our exposition.

Using the information sources already mentioned, as well as others, be they dictionaries, glossaries, other websites and publications, the T/I professor, the T/I student, and the working medical translator and interpreter, we can follow a training methodology I have developed which has proven highly effective.

In this exercise, the MTI students choose an illness or medical specialty which they will research on the Internet and elsewhere. Students will then write a 5-10 page paper on this affliction, followed by a source language/target language glossary of the medical terminology used in the paper. The papers are then recorded on an audiotape or CD. Word groups, incremental sentences, and possibly a medical-scripted interview should also be developed based on the terminology found in the papers. The training is done in groups comprised of two students for the word groups, six to eight students for the incremental sentences, three students for the dialogue. Training should be conducted in a simultaneous interpretation language laboratory in order to facilitate the recording of tapes or CDs of the papers. This approach is excellent for classroom purposes, T/I agencies, and for hospital and medical offices employing several interpreters.

Word Groups

Words pertaining to a specific glossary are set in groups of seven (nine groups in the source language and nine groups in the target language per glossary). The number of groups and terms, as well as the number of specialized glossaries, can be increased at will. In the glossaries, the positions of the equivalent source and target terms match, making them easier to memorize. For example, in the English/Spanish word groups, if one looks at the fifth word in Group 2, going horizontally, in the Medical English section, one finds the word “color blindness.” In the Medical Spanish section, the word “Daltonismo” occupies exactly the same position.

For purposes of training, have someone slowly read the words from a given group to you, and try to come up with equivalents in the target language as fast as possible. Even though the terms should be read slowly at first, there should be no more than a three-second pause between words. The reading speed should increase until you know the terminology so well that you are able
The advantage of this arrangement in groups is that one can start with any word, in any group, and then go up, down, right or left, changing the order of the words every time. This preserves the elements of surprise and variety (such an integral part of interpretation).

**Incremental Sentence**

This exercise consists in starting with a short sentence and adding a new segment every time one repeats it. While it is easier to remember the sentence due to the repetitions, the exercise still requires absolute concentration due to the amount of information presented and due to the length of the sentence. The sentences should vary between 100 and 112 words. Translate the sentence in its entirety each time it appears. This exercise should be done orally.

The training consists of studying the glossaries relating to each paper, reinforcing this knowledge with word group exercises and incremental sentences associated with this specialized terminology, and, finally, doing a consecutive interpretation with the scripted dialogue based on each paper, and a simultaneous interpretation of each recorded paper.

**References**


Betancourt, Joseph R., and Jacobs, Elizabeth A. “Language Barriers

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**Table 1 Medical Terminology: General**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Term</th>
<th>Spanish Term</th>
<th>English Term</th>
<th>Spanish Term</th>
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<td>Desnutrido</td>
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<td>Recuento hemático</td>
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<td>Hives</td>
<td>Ronchas</td>
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<td>Sarna</td>
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<td>Pacemaker</td>
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<td>Bone splinter</td>
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<td>Pink eye</td>
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Continued on p.64
Accreditation Forum:

Specialized Training to Prepare for the Examination

By Terry Hanlen, ATA Accreditation Program Manager

One of the most frequently asked questions is “What courses or training does ATA recommend to prepare me to pass the examination?” This is actually a difficult question to answer.

In theory, any program that improves your skills as a translator should improve your chances of passing the examination. However, I am not aware of any courses out there that teach you to pass our exam with any inside knowledge of the accreditation program. The best advice we can give candidates is to follow our published guidelines and tips carefully as they prepare for the exam. We post these guidelines and tips on our website and mail them out with candidate confirmation letters.

A translation instructor who gives workshops throughout the country recently told me that she encourages her students to polish and improve upon the source text when the translation is intended for publication. However, she advises her students not to do this when taking the ATA examination. Graders are looking for accuracy, not editing skills. They will mark each deviation from the source text as an error. This does not mean that candidates should translate literally, since they have to demonstrate that their writing skills are on a professional level in the target language, but they should not add or interpret more information than the source text contains.

Some of our local chapters offer workshops or informational presentations to help prepare for the examination. The informational presentation involves a set of overhead slides providing details about the accreditation exam and our program policies. This same information is available on the ATA website (click on “Accreditation,” then “Frequently Asked Questions,” and then on “The Accreditation Examination: An Informational Presentation”). Although there is no standardized format for the chapter workshops, they usually consist of the overhead presentation followed by a sample translation (using an old practice test) under test conditions. After taking the practice test, participants break into language-specific groups and discuss their translations with fellow candidates and/or workgroup leaders. These workshops are usually fun and can be educational, but the feedback provided should not be considered authorized feedback from ATA. The workshop leaders are not ATA graders and have not been trained as graders. The only way to get official grading and comments is to order a practice test from ATA Headquarters, complete it, and submit it for grading. You should allow a minimum of six to eight weeks for graded feedback on a practice test.

This past year, several candidates asked me about courses they have seen advertised that claim to prepare candidates to pass the ATA examination. The ATA does not endorse any of these outside programs. At best, these courses base their training on the information we provide at no cost on the ATA website and for a small fee at chapter workshops. The people developing and teaching these non-ATA courses are not affiliated with the ATA accreditation program. They have not participated in grader training sessions, and they are not privy to the internal discussions of our language-specific workgroups.

I encourage you to consider any reputable programs and courses offering formal training in translation. The language-specific training provided in these courses should improve your chances of passing the ATA examination. However, I would caution “buyer beware” for any program claiming inside knowledge or a privileged connection with ATA.

For Long-Term Planners

Future Annual Conference Sites and Dates

- **Atlanta, Georgia**
  - November 6-9, 2002

- **Phoenix, Arizona**
  - November 5-8, 2003

- **Toronto, Canada**
  - October 13-16, 2004
The Onionskin  By Chris Durban

The Onionskin is a client education column launched by the ITI Bulletin (a publication of the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting) in 1996. Comments and leads for future columns are very welcome; please include full contact details. Contact: chrisdurban@compuserve.com or fax +33 1 43 87 70 45.

Translation Software Erupts at French Volcano Park

Silly translations culled from hotel lobby signs and tourist brochures are a regular feature of Internet newsgists. Often the culprit is a home-grown linguist “just lending a hand,” but examples of misapplied machine translation are on the rise.

A recent victim is Vulcania, France’s new volcano science park in Auvergne. With hefty backing from regional authorities, the private sector, and luminaries (including former French President Valéry Giscard d’Estaing), the park was poised to open as this Onionskin went to press. Its Internet presence was already in place, and a jury of industry professionals had named sleek www.vulcania.com France’s “best tourist attraction website” in December.

Unfortunately the English version of the website, which went live on February 10 doesn’t make the grade. Pages of relatively smooth text are displayed side by side with what would appear to be raw output from a translation software package. In some cases, awkwardness slides into the downright comical: “For the moment, Vulcania is exposing itself at the House of Auvergne from February 11th to March 16th.”

When we phoned, park officials claimed they were unaware of the problem and asked for examples, which we duly supplied. The same contacts were adamant that all texts had been supplied by the same source, which they declined to identify. The Onionskin’s first guess: a weak link in the supply chain gambling that the machine output would not be identified as such in a mad rush to the finish. However, further investigation revealed a more pernicious miscalculation.

Site developer MA.COM in nearby Clermont Ferrand confirmed that it had commissioned the translations from Métáform-Langues, a language services company in the same city. But when we phoned, the project manager coordinating the English, German, and Spanish translations for Métáform expressed dismay at the errors. The flawed texts were not delivered by Métáform, she insisted. Indeed, her own team had spent hours researching and revising their contribution, calling in scientists specialized in the field to review particularly technical pages. A meddler had been at work, since the official English version now featured entire chunks of embarrassingly poor text that had obviously been produced by someone who “was not even a native speaker.”

Back at MA.COM, we learned that certain sections of the site (e.g., “Actualité” [sic]) were designed to allow S.E.M. Volcans, the park’s management structure, to insert updates directly. Spot checks using free online machine translation to back-translate the website’s distinctly odd English texts (The Trophy, made of bronze and the shape of globe, creation of the sculptor Edith Simonet, evokes the topic of tourism and still reinforces the notoriety of Vulcania web site) generated reasonably smooth French, and confirmed the source of the problem.

A Vulcania insider finally admitted that the poor texts had been produced by Altavista’s free online service Babelfish (Systran). Reliance on machine translation for updates was a policy instituted at the highest level, with an eye on both deadline and budget, and, no, there are no plans at present for any change.

Not that the park is altogether un receptive to comments and criticism. A week after our initial call, Vulcania was no longer “exposing itself” in online text (one of the errors we had cited). It was “exposed”—a bit like dodgy translation practices.

Once more from the top: machine translation is a fast, cheap way to find out (sort of) what the other guys are saying, but it is simply inappropriate for promotional texts. And the results are unlikely to improve much if a nonnative speaker who is also a nonlinguist revises machine output.

For the regional authorities in Auvergne, the European Park of Volcanism at Vulcania is expected to generate revenues of between €12 and 18 million a year ($10.5-15.5 million). Skimping on the foreign-language version of a vector as prominent as a website is woefully shortsighted—or simply misinformation.

Translator Termed Temptress in Turkey

On February 27, 2002, Turkish translator Nermin Acar appealed a fine equal to approximately €1,700 imposed on her and a Turkish publisher by Istanbul courts for her translation of Serge Bramly’s La terreur dans le boudoir. The novel, which concerns the Marquis de Sade, was confiscated by the Turkish authorities on the grounds that it “arouses sexual desire in readers.” It was originally published in French by Editions Grasset, and translations have also appeared in Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, and Greek. None but the Turkish version has been challenged in court. Acar, who has apparently opted to live close to the edge, also translated Alina Reye’s Lilith, against which a similar suit has been filed.

Author Serge Bramly is actively supporting his translator, as are
the two Turkish publishers. Acar is being defended by Halil Gokhan, a lawyer and editor-in-chief of the new Turkish edition of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, which has devoted a full page to the case. An article co-authored by Gokhan and Bramly has already appeared in a Turkish biweekly, while in France both *Le Monde* and *Le Canard Enchainé* have run stories based on a press release issued by Bramly. Such coverage is critical, Acar told The Onionskin: “Articles like these ensure that the story gets out to translators and the public throughout Europe, and their support is very important.”

The French literary translators’ association (l’Association des Traducteurs Littéraires) has issued a statement of solidarity, as have the European Council of Literary Translators Associations and The European Writers’ Congress. Initial reports suggested that Editions Grasset refused to become involved. Yet when we called, Foreign Rights Manager Marie-Hélène d’Ovidio expressed concern and confirmed that she, too, planned to send a message of moral support (nermin_acar@hotmail.com).

Financial assistance might also be welcome, mused The Onionskin: Acar was paid just over €400 ($350) for her translation of the contested book: a reminder that, in most cases, literary translation remains a labor of love regardless of the subject matter.

**Stop the press:** An unexpected development caught both Nermin Acar and her defense off guard at the Feb. 27 hearing. “We were prepared [for *La Terreur dans le Boudoir*],” Acar told The Onionskin. “But as I had received no formal notice of the charges regarding *Lilith*, I assumed that the case had been dropped.”

Under Turkish law, official charges must be filed within 12 months of the publication of offending works in such cases, she said, and the deadline had passed. Alas, the courts presented the charges on Feb. 27 and adjourned the hearing until May 16. Editions Robert Laffont, the French publisher of *Lilith*, has not announced any plans to support the translator and had no official comment as we went to press. Titillating times, indeed, in Turkey. Watch this space.

**Haste Makes Waste for WTO Protocol in China**

When China became the World Trade Organization’s 143rd member on December 11, 2001, books on the WTO and its implications became instant bestsellers as citizens boned up on the benefits and challenges involved, according to reports in the *People’s Daily*.

Beijing’s largest bookshop, the Xidan Book Emporium, gave pride of place to some 300 different books on the subject, reporting monthly sales of 7,000 to 8,000. However, the official protocol of China’s accession to WTO, published by the Shanghai People’s Press, was not among them. That volume was banned by the People’s Publishing House only hours after its launch due to translation errors. These made the text misleading to readers, said officials from the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation (MOFTEC), who cited examples including “invite tenders” rendered as “submit tenders” and “grain” translated as “cereal.”

For western quality assurance enthusiasts, at least one fascinating statistic emerged. According to the head of a publishing house quoted in the *People’s Daily*, China’s Press and Publication Administration demands that “the mistake rate of a book should be kept under 1/10,000.” Precisely how mistakes are measured is not specified, although the newspaper left no doubts as to the cause in this particular instance: “The Shanghai People’s Press couldn’t wait to grasp market, left no enough time for translation, and now readers can only wait for the authoritative version of WTO documents by MOFTEC.”

**Linguists versus Redheads: Back to the Stacks?**

The bookish and perhaps somewhat dusty public image of professional translators and interpreters came in for a jolt in both the U.S. and the U.K. early this year.

In the season premiere of the highly rated TV series “Sex and the City,” attorney Miranda, described as “a cute, smart and sexy redhead,” fell for a State Department interpreter who speaks five languages.

Shortly thereafter, the BBC’s long-running radio soap “The Archers” launched a racy subplot in which a translator character (flame-haired Celtic temptress Siobhan, married to the series’ boring Dr. Tim) began an affair with lothario squire farmer Brian Archer.

No doubt both plot developments say more about redheads and their image than about linguists and theirs. But The Onionskin was intrigued at the client education opportunities thus opened. Above and beyond the plot lines, were these on-air portrayals accurate? Since representatives from the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting had already weighed in on professional practice for the...
Le Petit Robert CD-ROM New Edition
Software Designer: Bureau Van DIJK
Publisher: Vivendi Universal Interactive
Publishing France
(www.vivendi-universal-interactive.fr)
Release date: 2001
Price: 68.37 euros (approximately $60)
Reviewed by: Françoise Herrmann

Le Petit Robert is simply and unanimously recognized as one of the best monolingual dictionaries of the French language. Famed for its well-chosen, user-friendly examples and literary citations to illustrate language use, as well as for the semantic (analytic) organization of its corpus that includes lists of synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, and etymological information for each applicable term, this dictionary has become one of the best and most reliable references for lovers of the French language. Now, enhanced with electronic functionality for the new millennium and enriched with an outstanding and sophisticated design by the Belgian design firm Bureau Van DIJK, you will be thrilled to discover the new edition of Le Petit Robert on CD-ROM.

Prior to reviewing each of the new and pristine electronic features that have transformed the printed Le Petit Robert into an exceptional computer-mediated tool, you will immediately be surprised and pleased to note that this new edition is both PC- and MAC-compatible. This is a blessing for MAC users, since so few electronic dictionaries have been designed to run on Macintosh systems. For PC users, you will need at least a Pentium 100, 16 MB of RAM, Windows 95/98/2000 or NT, a 4x CD-ROM drive, a sound card compatible with Sound Blaster, and a color monitor with 640x480 screen resolution. MAC users will need a Power Mac or beyond, 16 MB of RAM, System 8.1 or beyond, a 4x CD-ROM drive, and a color monitor with 640x480 screen resolution. An interactive Wizard program manages the installation of the application onto your system. Standard, partial, or complete installation options exist for both systems, enabling you to use your electronic Le Petit Robert in conjunction with other electronic dictionaries even when you are short on space.

The CD-ROM also contains a small and wonderfully detailed 20-page user manual tucked into the case cover. This manual, written in French, succinctly provides you with all the information you need for the installation and use of the CD-ROM, in addition to informing you that further assistance is available via the dictionary’s help function. For all who miss the genre of printed, almost phonebook-sized, user manuals that used to come with all major applications, dislike online help, or bemoan the complete absence of such support either in print or online, this slim pocket-size user manual is a real guiding treat!

Beyond these preliminary goodies of substance, you will find an extraordinary array of cleverly harnessed electronic features.

First, you will notice a series of familiar features whose enhanced toolbar design and extra functionality is a delight. Among these familiar and revisited features, you will discover:

- A **pop-up function**. This allows you to use the dictionary directly from applications such as MS Word, MS Works, or your browser without having to launch the CD-ROM from the “Start” menu. In addition, you can access the complete application from the pop-up mode without ever having to launch it from the “Start” menu.

- **Print, copy, and paste text-processing functions**. These allow you to export and import information across applications and media. In addition, there is an annotation function so you can flag and annotate a particular article related to a term in a dated and author-identified note card, which you can then retrieve using the annotation search function.

- **Hypertext navigation**. This allows for nonlinear perusal of the dictionary corpus. In addition to hypertext linking among all articles, there are a series of added links within each article. These include links: to files that clarify all of the dictionary abbreviations displayed (including phonetic transcription); to cultural note files concerning the authors quoted; and to the languages cited in the etymological files. As a result, all of the items listed in an article are clickable, including such items as proper nouns, dictionary abbreviations, phonetic transcriptions, and dates.

- A **bookmarking function**. This allows you to retrace your search path, both forwards and backwards. Additionally, this function is accessible both as a toolbar button that transports you...
back and forth on your path, and as a drop-down menu that lists the history of terms you have searched.

- **Multiple indexing of the linguistic content of the dictionary.** This allows you to direct your searches within a particular sublisting. The CD-ROM contains three indices: for all the terms included in the dictionary, for expressions, and for inflected terms. These indices allow you, for example, to find proverbs in situations where you can only remember one word, or to find an expression directly without worrying under which headword it has been listed under.

- **Pronunciation of terms.** There are 12,000 audio pronunciation files, including both pronunciation variations for a single term and the complete pronunciation of certain citations. Additionally, these are displayed in separate pronunciation dialogue boxes that show phonetic transcriptions and allow for an infinite number of playbacks.

- **A built-in spell checker.** Incorporated into the design of the dictionary’s search function, a spell checker allows you to target search terms even when you are not quite sure of the correct spelling, and in particular when your search word is inflected. Additionally, a “spell checker” button is located next to the data entry field. This supplies you with a drop-down menu of alternate spellings for any term whose spelling has not been recognized, or whose spelling you would like to verify.

Beyond these familiar electronic features, you will also find a series of functions specifically designed for easy navigation of *Le Petit Robert*’s articles and for immediate access to targeted information. Called “visualization functions,” they each correlate with a particular aspect of the semantic organization of the dictionary. Mapped onto the MS Word toolbar design, these functions are accessible both in the “View” drop-down menu and as iconized buttons (positioned as a horizontal toolbar across the display and activated as an option when they apply to a particular search item). Six of these function buttons are displayed below, and you can see their horizontal toolbar location in Figure 1 of the main display screen.

Figure 1: *Le Petit Robert* CD-ROM main display screen opened for a search of the term “formidable” (terrific)
bother using the Map function button for a summarized semantic mapping of the article. All you have to do is click on the Synonyms/Antonyms button (or select the option in the “View” drop-down menu). An organized list of the synonyms and antonyms for the term “formidable” (terrific) will then appear in the “Results” portion of the screen (including hyperlinks for each item returned). Similarly, for the same term you can also request: a list of citations using either the Citations button or the citations option in the “View” drop-down menu; a list of examples using either the Examples/Expressions button or the “View” drop-down menu; or even the etymology of the term using either the Etymology button or the drop-down menu. However, you will immediately notice that there are no homonyms to worry about, since neither the Homonyms button nor the drop-down menu option have been activated.

As you can see from the examples I have provided, these fabulously harnessed visualization functions capture the unique organization of Le Petit Robert and transform perusal, search, and navigation into an easy, effortless, swift, and immediate experience.

And still more electronic functionality is added to Le Petit Robert through the “Conjugate and Feminine/Plural” functions (accessible as a toolbar button or as options via the “Edit” drop-down menu). The “Conjugate” function will call up a dialogue box for any verb and display all the conjugated forms with highlighted endings and spelling difficulties (for all aspects and tenses), including alerts or verbal group characteristics. As for the “Feminine/Plural” function, it will instantly return the...
morphological variations for any term, according to gender and number, along with a brief grammatical description of the morphological rules that apply. You will be delighted to use these functions, not only because they provide an immediate shortcut to locating correct forms, but also because the dialogue box information is presented with outstanding clarity. (See Figure 2 and 3 for examples of the Conjugate and Feminine/Plural dialogue boxes.)

Add still more electronic functionality to *Le Petit Robert* with the adjustable text size function (accessible as a toolbar button or as a selection in the Options drop-down menu), which allows you to choose the size of the print appearing on screen. You will delight in using this function because your options for print size are not limited to “small” or “big.” You can “zoom” in and out of an array of about 10 sizes, ranging from 8 to 24 points. And ultimately, this will save you from any undue eyestrain that all too frequently results from tiny print size, whether electronically mediated or not.

The dictionary’s advanced search mode (accessible either via a toolbar button or as a selection in the “Search” drop-down menu) is launched from a dialogue box that includes five tabs indicating search options: List of Terms, Phonetics, Etymology, Citations, and Complete Corpus. From within each of the tabs, drop-down menus, tables, and check boxes guide you through the selection of criteria so that you do not have to remember wildcard shortcuts or write your own Boolean expressions, or even toggle into a phonetics keyboard for phonetic transcriptions. Thus, for example, you can easily search the dictionary for all the citations of a particular author, all the articles that contain a reference to a particular term, all terms with a particular suffix or prefix, or for a list of terms containing a particular phonetic sequence or sound. Results are then returned in the main screen, where both bookmarking functions and a Research tab allow you to keep track of your searches.

On a linguistic level, at a glance, you will find the *Le Petit Robert* inclusive of the following:

- 60,000 words
- 1,000 authors cited
- 12,000 audio pronunciation files
- 300,000 meanings
- 150,000 semantic links (synonyms, antonyms, homonyms)
- 180,000 examples
- 40,000 citations
- 8,000 expressions
- 200 etymological notes

Missing from this quantitative picture, however, is the exceptional qualitative dimension that has given *Le Petit Robert* its stature as an institutional giant. Quality measured in the clarity and succinctness of definitions and their semantic organization; in the choice of examples that leave little room for doubt and truly illuminate both the meanings of terms and their usage; in the selection of citations that capture twists and turns of meanings, both literary and poetic; in the semantic horizons that are opened with the choice of synonyms and antonyms; in the clear indexing of terms according to various registers, including updated official recommendations for usage when there are competing imports; and in the abundance of historical information supplied in the etymological references.

*Le Petit Robert* is a linguistic gem, both as reference to the French language and as a tool that supplies a wealth of vocabulary options and richly composed expressions.

Now electronically mediated with a brilliant design that vastly enhances the ease of consultation and the immediacy of access to information, *Le Petit Robert* is twofold tops. This is one of the best dictionaries of French enhanced to the power of *e* (and to the point of no return) by features that correlate perfectly both with the unique semantic organization of the corpus and the activity of translators-at-work. When your language is French, whether a Mac or PC user, get it! And enjoy!

**TERMIUM® 2001 (CD-ROM)**

Software Designer: Public Works and Government Services, Canada (www.termium.com or 1-800-TERMIUM)

ISBN: 0-660-61606-8

Price: $395 (initial purchase)$325 (update)

Reviewed by: Françoise Herrmann

If there is one electronic tool for translators which is already well on its way along the research and development track of super growth and quantum leaps of innovation, it has to be TERMIUM®! If you’ve been keeping track of Microsoft Word from Version 1 to 2001, you’ll be pleased to know that TERMIUM® has logged on to a similar stellar trajectory. The new TERMIUM® 2001 CD-ROM is packed with innovations: a completely...
revamped and dazzling trilingual (French, English, and Spanish) interface; three million terms—a twofold (!) increase compared to the 1999 version; 95,000 updated records; and the inclusion of 118,000 Spanish terms. With all these features, you are bound to be impressed.

TERMIUM® is a linguistic database, perhaps the largest in the world for French and English terms. The new 2001 CD-ROM version also includes 118,000 Spanish terms. Beyond sheer size, it is the process underlying the design of TERMIUM® that fuels its unique and spectacular development. Prior to becoming a commercial venture available for public benefit, TERMIUM® was (and still is) the linguistic database of the Canadian Bureau of Translation. This means that it is a tool constantly updated and used by the Bureau’s 40 (!) terminologists and 800 (!) translators. TERMIUM® is thus far more than a comprehensive and extensive compilation of terms and their translations. It is a tool fueled by the needs of translators and the demands of translations (for which sometimes no precedence of terminology exists). It is a tool constantly in the making, and accordingly perhaps uniquely positioned to keep up with the terminological frontier.

In terms of the organization of its content, the TERMIUM® 2001 CD-ROM also presents a unique format. It is a hybrid in the world of dictionary tools: part monolingual dictionary, part trilingual dictionary, part glossary, and part encyclopedia. TERMIUM® 2001 spans multiple domains of general, specialized, and ultra-specialized terminology, selectively providing definitions, examples, translations, and bibliographic references for the terms listed. For the translator, this clearly means an unprecedented wealth of fingertip information in a single database, where normally multiple reference sources, not to mention countless hours of research, would be required.

For example, TERMIUM® 2001 proves to be an excellent and invaluable reference tool for ultra-specialized terms in the domain of chemical formulas, regardless of whether you are translating the chemical ingredients of a cosmetic product or those of a carbonated beverage. With the click of a mouse you will find a translation for an ingredient such as “BHT” (butylated hydroxytoluene, or hydroxytoluène butylé in French), including a definition to tune you a little more precisely into the kind of substance concerned: “A white, crystalline, water-insoluble, and liposoluble solid. An antioxidant and stabilizer for fats.” Similarly, TERMIUM® 2001 proves a treasure of information for terminology in the ultra-specialized domains of defense, medical, and dental technology, to name just a few terminological frontiers. And even for more mundane translations, you may find terms listed that do not appear in the institutional giants. For example, the ubiquitous and illustrious term “chad” (confetti), lexical star of the 2000 U.S. presidential elections.

And because of the hybrid dimensions of its organization (it frequently lists much more than just a translation), TERMIUM® 2001 is an invaluable tool for translators who all to often work in domains unrelated or unknown to their own backgrounds or fields of specialization. You will find illuminating definitions and succinct explanations of obscure terms in the monolingual dictionary mode. You will find expressions and phrases inclusive of a particular term and indexing according to domains of usage in the glossary mode. You will sometimes encounter several translations for a term in the bilingual dictionary mode. Finally, in the encyclopedic mode you will find sources and other references for a term, including additional indexing according to such criteria as established or standardized usage. It is this combination of breadth and depth of terminological processing, constantly updated and manipulated by the Translation Bureau staff, that makes TERMIUM® 2001 a unique tool for translators. And for all TERMIUM® fans who already know all of this, the 2001 version has increased its terminological processing capability with two million additional terms!

And there is still much more good news. Under the impact of commercialization and market forces, TERMIUM® 2001 has been vastly “sanitized.” Where critics of the 1999 CD-ROM version deplored the presence of spelling mistakes, repetitions, and incomplete records, you will find an overhauled version sporting sparkling articles, each dated, consistently presented, carefully proofed, and composed. And with the sanitization of the content comes a completely revamped interface, similar in appearance to TERMIUM Plus®, the online version available on a monthly or yearly subscription basis (see the CD-ROM screen snapshot in Figure 1 on page 52).

With the new and user-friendly interface, available in French, English, or Spanish, you simply choose the search key (the language of the records searched), type in your term, and the search results are...
Dictionary Reviews Continued

Figure 1: Screen Snapshot of the new TERMIUM® 2001 CD-ROM interface

returned immediately in the split screen. On the left of the screen appears the highlighted hit, and on the right the display of the record(s) corresponding to the targeted term. A summary of the results by domain appears in the subject field drop-down menu, which allows you to select the translation domain when several records are returned. You can also browse all of the records returned using the “next” or “previous” buttons at the bottom of the window. In addition, you do not need perfect spelling, nor do you need to worry about accents and inflections in French, to target your search term since there is a built-in spell checker that automatically reformulates or approximates your search item. Querying options include the use of Boolean operators and “*” or “?” wildcard shortcuts. A bookmarking function allows you to view all of the terms you have searched previously and to call up any one of those records anew. You will also be able to print, copy, or save the records you have called. And a “Preferences” window allows you to set the screen size and other parameters such as the language of the interface, the default search key, and the order of languages of the records displayed.

The three million terms contained in TERMIUM® 2001 require a Pentium PC, running Windows 95 or a later version, a double-speed CD-ROM drive, 16 MB of RAM, and a minimum of 13 MB of free space on your hard drive. Standard, complete, or partial installation options of the software are available so that you can use TERMIUM® 2001 either with or without the CD-ROM. Included within the CD-ROM are three of the Translation Bureau’s publications: the Canadian Style Manual, Le guide du rédacteur (a style manual for French), and the Lexique analogique (a cross-referenced bilingual thesaurus designed specially for tough-to-translate terms).

TERMIUM® 2001 provides you with almost all of the advantages of online TERMIUM Plus®. Even if the terms are not constantly updated on a monthly basis and increased, as is the case with the online TERMIUM Plus®, and even if you cannot readily contribute to the development and collection of terms by submitting entries of your own directly online to the Translation Bureau, the CD-ROM still gives you fingertip access to three million terms in general, specialized, and ultra-specialized domains, with definitions, examples, multiple translations, and reference sources. You will also have style manuals for both French and English, and the specially designed translator’s thesaurus (although, unlike online TERMIUM Plus®, you will not have access to the selection of excellent articles in modern comparative stylistics culled from the Translation Bureau’s quarterly publication Terminology Update). However, and most importantly, the information contained in the CD-ROM version does represent the most up-to-date version (or cut-off point) of the TERMIUM® databases.

For anyone working in French and English (and increasingly Spanish) translation on a professional basis, TERMIUM® is an absolute necessity. You need not scorn or throw out any of your favorite and existing resources, but you would be short-changing yourself immensely by not taking advantage of this privileged access granted by the Canadian Translation Bureau. Try it! You will not be disappointed.
The Larousse Chambers CD-ROM Advanced Dictionary of English-French/French-English is another bilingual multimedia dictionary tool developed by Havas Interactive in France, the mastermind software publisher behind Harrap’s Shorter and Le Petit Larousse on CD-ROM. With 300,000 words and expressions and 530,000 translations, this bilingual electronic dictionary is the largest in the Larousse Chambers collection of five French<>English dictionaries, extending, in increasing order of size, from the Mini (a traveler’s dictionary) to the Pocket, the Petit, and the Compact (designed for high school students). The Larousse Chambers Advanced Dictionary of English-French/French-English was designed for practitioners and advanced students of English.

Consistent with all of the Havas Interactive electronic dictionary releases, this dictionary presents a series of well-harnessed media-specific features, in addition to excellent lexicographic content. Among these features you will find: audio pronunciation of 30,000 English words and 25,000 French words; complete hypertext modularity, allowing you to navigate from one word to another within and across records with one double-click; multiple search modes in the dictionary’s various indices; pop-up functions for searching directly from the application in which you are working without having to retype the search term; an interactive conjugate function for searching all verb forms; and cut-and-paste functions for the integration of information across applications. Included in the dictionary, without media specificity, you will also find a grammatical compendium for each of the languages, a cultural guide, and a guide for correspondence.

This CD-ROM requires the following minimum configuration: a Pentium 100 PC with 30 MB of space on the hard drive, 16 MB of RAM, Windows 95/98 or NT, a 4x CD-ROM drive, a sound card compatible with Sound Blaster, speakers, and a mouse. Installation of the application includes standard options for complete or partial setup, so that you can use the dictionary either from your hard drive or with your CD-ROM drive. When the application is launched, it opens as a small window with the Splash screen shown in Figure 1.

In addition to the standard media-specific features already listed, the Larousse Chambers Advanced Dictionary CD-ROM is replete with media-specific perks that greatly enhance the application. For example, you will notice that you do not have to worry about correct orthography when typing your search word, nor do you have to bother typing accents in French, since there is a built-in spell checker, inclusive of inflections, that greatly simplifies searches (whether typed or in pop-up mode). Similarly, you will notice in the “Preferences” menu that among the various parameters (i.e., for the language of the interface, the default search index, volume, and start-up configuration), you can also adjust the font size of the records. This option comes as a blessing for all who complain about eyestrain due to the microscopic font size of both print and electronic dictionaries. In the “Preferences” you can also adjust the layout of the dictionary interface so that the screen splits either vertically or horizontally, allowing records to be displayed left to right or top-down, depending on your preferred consultation mode. And finally, as an added media-specific perk, you will also discover a “Find” function allowing you to search for a word or phrase within a longer record. This function is particularly useful...
for polysemic terms, since it allows you to target your translation without perusing the whole article related to that term.

You will no doubt also observe that the interface of the Larousse Chambers Advanced Dictionary CD-ROM contains function icons, making it pleasantly uncluttered. Opting for icons with mouseover explanations, in lieu of drop-down menus, offers extra navigational nimbleness. Toggling in and out of the dictionary search mode, for example, occurs by double-clicking on the small “AD” icon on the left border of the Splash screen and, once in the dictionary mode, on another small contents icon at the center of the border. Similarly, “Previous,” “Next,” and “Find” functions, as well as a “Bookmarking” function called “History,” all have icons on the border of the window. This allows for immediate access to the requested information while bypassing the usual steps of a drop-down selection. (See the dictionary screen in Figure 2.)

In the dictionary’s search mode, you will discover three indices: bilingual, French-English, and English-French, allowing for perusal of headwords and their derivatives. In addition to this standard organization of listings, a series of cross-listings for each index according to register (such as slang, informal, literary, and formal) and regional variation (Scottish, American, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand English; Canadian, Swiss, and Belgian French) allow you to direct your searches and to explore circumscribed lexical horizons. Add to these multiple search options hypertext links for all of the items returned in a record (allowing you to double-click on any unfamiliar word for immediate access to its translation record), and you have an electronic dictionary that has optimized the use of it supporting medium.

In an encyclopedic mode typical of modern lexicography, some of the words and expressions in this dictionary also appear indexed with a small “+” icon to indicate inclusion of a cultural comment. For example, you will find additional cultural comments for such terms as “Westminster,” “The Monroe Doctrine,” and “Pearl Harbor” in English, and “verlan,” “dragée,” and “Pâques” in French. These cultural notes seek to supply additional context for the terms in the indices, and thus more information for appropriate translation.

Regarding linguistic content of the dictionary, although this is a French and British product, you will find both American and British English spelling, and American and English translations (when such variation exists). For example, say you type “harbor” or “color.” In both cases a single record is returned with both “harbor” and “harbour,” or “color” and “colour” listed, each properly indexed according to “Br.” (British) or “U.S.” (American) English. Similarly, if you were to search for a translation of the term “camion” in French, you will get a listing indicating “lorry (Br.), truck (U.S.)” for both British and American translations. The list will also include British and American variations for derivatives, such as “camion de déménagement” (removal van [Br.], moving van [U.S.]); “camion à semi-remorque” (articulated lorry [Br.], trailer truck [U.S.]), and “Interdit aux camions” (No HGVs [Br. “No Heavy Goods Vehicles], No trucks [U.S.]).

With a corpus of 300,000 words and 530,000 translations, you will undoubtedly find some missing terms and expressions, an absence of specialized and ultra-specialized vocabulary, and perhaps even miss having an encyclopedic dimension that is directly linked to the World Wide Web. However, beyond the unrealistic search for exhaustiveness, the normally restricted scope of general bilingual dictionaries, and perhaps the omission of gateways to the wealth of new information available on the Internet, the Larousse Chambers Advanced Dictionary of English-French/French-English is still a bilingual dictionary that boasts excellent lexicography and equally excellent design, including some additional media-specific perks to enhance the pleasure of navigation and searching. Enjoy!
Elsevier’s Dictionary of Marine Pollution
Diccionario de contaminación del mar

English-Spanish

Author: Louis-Jacques Zilberberg
Publisher: Elsevier Science B.V.: Amsterdam
Publication date: 2000
Price: $136.00 or €136.00 (a little cheaper in euro than in dollars)
Available from: Elsevier or by special order only through i.b.d. Ltd.

Reviewed by: M. Eta Trabing

Specialty or field: Marine pollution.

Type: Bilingual glossary or, as per the title, a dictionary (however, there are no parts of speech and few meanings or definitions offered).

Languages: Only British English and Continental Spanish, as the UN does not work in American English or Latin American Spanish.

Number of pages and entries: 715 pages. Publisher says approximately 12,800 terms (I’m not so sure).

Type and quality of binding: Hardcover, perfect binding (very nice).

Quality of paper and print: very good.

Typeface and legibility: Excellent serif typestyle, easy to read, lots of white space, main entries in bold, subentries in a medium-sized font and indented.

Convenience of look-up and arrangement or format: Divided into Part I (The Shore: clean-up, fishing, chemicals, and radioactive wastes; 174 pages); Part II (The Ship: navigation, radio communications, search and rescue, sea/weather, and the crew; 154 pages); and Part III (Legal Aspects; 76 pages). As indicated in the dictionary’s foreword: “obviously this makes for some repetitions” (indeed, a number of words are duplicated in various sections). Contains indices: 122 pages of English alphabetical entries that refer the reader back to Parts I, II, or III, which have alphabetical entries and subentries in English. There are 134 pages of Spanish alphabetical entries that refer the reader back to Parts I, II, or III. (Although it is a little harder to find the latter words just by page number, since one has to look down the entire page before finding them opposite the English alphabetized entries and subentries.)

The Annexes:

Annex I (four pages) is entitled “Additional Useful Vocabulary.” This is also subdivided into four sections that really should have been in similar sections in Parts I or II (they were apparently missed and then tacked on as an annex).

Annex II contains five pages of some useful vocabulary about oil, although these general entries can be found in any hydrocarbons dictionary and even in some general dictionaries.

Annex III contains seven pages: fish and shellfish, marine mammals, whales, marine turtles, marine fowl, seabirds, and terrestrial mammals. (I am not sure why deer, fox, or mink were listed in this section or what they have to do with marine pollution, although the river otter, polar bear, and brown bear make sense.)

Annex IV contains one and a half pages of data from the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals.

Annex V is a seemingly very comprehensive list, although somehow whaling ship is listed as both a species of whale and as a type of ship. I particularly like the listing of species with Latin binomials.

Annex VI contains seven pages on garbage and air pollution, which I would have thought would be included in Part I.

Annex VII contains two pages on liability and compensation regimes.

In addition, there are 11 pages of acronyms and organizations, all listed in English in alphabetical order. There is also a useful four-page bibliography list of many useful books and dictionaries for additional reading (both English and Spanish, and French for triangulation).

Grammatical information and pronunciation: None, as in all Elsevier dictionaries/glossaries.

Contextual and encyclopedic information as well as examples and labels for distinguishing usage, technical field, dialect, social level, semantic area, and synonyms: Basically none, as in all

The ATA Chronicle | April 2002
Elsevier dictionaries/glossaries. Brief explanations occasionally appear in Parts I, II, and III.

**Appendices, tables, and illustrations:** No illustrations, but 10 useful appendices/annexes (see above).

**Percent of “filler” words (found in a general dictionary and therefore not specific to the subject matter):** Yes, some filler words, but see comments below.

**Accuracy and errata:** Appears to be very accurate, although as noted, in Latin America we use different words than in Spain.

**Overall evaluation:** Very good, with the proviso noted below in comments.

This is undoubtedly a dictionary full of really useful information (I particularly like the section on sea, waves, and weather, but wish it were more comprehensive). However, this information is distributed throughout 20 (!) subdivisions that look very much like a compendium of conference interpreters’ notes and glossaries. I say this because interpreters’ glossaries are usually grouped narrowly by a specific subject or aspect of a subject, as we work with individual speakers who speak on only a portion of a subject at a time.

It will take a while to learn to use this dictionary. For instance, although the five subdivisions of Part I make sense for the conference interpreter, I believe it will be hard for the translator to find words. For example, *aluminium* (no American *aluminum*) is listed in the English index. From here you are sent to page 140. However, on page 140, *aluminium* is actually found under *packaging materials*, which means one has to look down the entire page before finding the appropriate entry. A translator may find this unnecessarily time-consuming.

It’s a pity that the many words in the annexes are not in the indices. If one doesn’t find the needed word in one or the other index, one may be tempted to think it doesn’t exist when it very well may be in one of the annexes. For example, *banana carrier* can be found in Annex V under *carrier*, but not in the English index. This is obviously a ship, so it could be found quite easily in “A List of Various Types of Ships.” However, for more obscure words, one would have to look in all seven annexes.

I turned to the section on chemicals (as per the table of contents) expecting to find the names of some chemicals. In the text, that division is called “Containers and Dangerous Goods” (certainly dangerous goods will include chemicals), but there are only very general entries such as agrochemicals, bioaccumulative chemicals, LPG, LNG, PCBs, etc., which can be found in many other dictionaries, general or specialized.

I’m not sure I understand why *canyon floor* and *trough* are in the “Radwastes and Dumping” section when all other geologic formations are in “The Shore” section.

There appears to be little cross-referencing. For example, “bluff, steep-to, abrupt slope” (*abrupt slope* is omitted from the English index and is listed only under *bluff* in Part 1). *Steep-to* is in the index, but listed in Part I under *bluff*.

Here are some interesting differences in just one word I researched: *abyssal* (the author says deeper than 5000 m, *Webster*’s says between 4,000 and 6,500 m, and F. Beigbeder Atienza says “…profundidades océanicas de menos de 6.000 pies,” or 1,828 meters). In addition, *McGraw-Hill’s Dictionary of Scientific and Technical Terms* says *abyssal zone* “…generally below 1,000 meters” and the *Encyclopedia Britannica* says *abyssal zone* “…deeper than about 2,000 meters and shallower than about 6,000 meters…the upper boundary is conveniently defined between the abyssal zone and the overlying bathyal zone as the depth at which the water temperature is 4°C; this [latter] depth varies between 1,000 and 3,000 meters.” There is no entry for bathyal zone.

Part III, “Legal Aspect of Marine Pollution,” is a good glossary, particularly if one does not have any other legal dictionaries specializing in maritime law.

In summary, this is a useful interpreter’s glossary of words, while a translator may have trouble working with it in the current layout.
Years back, the Translation Inquirer would never have thought that someday he could write, “I’m starting my tenth year editing this column.” There are many ATA members who have not even been in this association long enough to remember when it was under the direction of his very able predecessor Peter Wheeler, let alone any of the column’s founding fathers. Thanks to the editorial staff of the ATA Chronicle for keeping this very traditional column going, and to the rank-and-file of the ATA for contributing to it. Long may it rock and roll!

[Abbreviations used with this column: D-Dutch; Da-Danish; E-English; F-French; G-German; I-Italian; R-Russian; Sp-Spanish; Sw-Swedish.]

New Queries

(Da-E 4-02/1) A moderate amount of comment, for Lantra-l, that is, was provoked by the final, and rather colloquial, word “Ramt!” in this piece of Danish text: “Ideen om, at vi bare gør vores arbejde, mens andre må tage de moralske overvejelser for os. Ramt!”

Some suggestions, such as moralske overvejelser for os. Ramt!” in this piece of Danish text: “Ideen om, at vi bare gør vores arbejde, mens andre må tage de moralske overvejelser for os. Ramt!”

When sketching, the first and Rancid! provoked questions about whether it is possible for the word to be negative in tone.

(E-D 4-02/2) A Lantra-l correspondent needs a good Dutch rendering for the phrase execute a short order, which is obviously from the world of short selling. The Oxford Paperback Reference Dictionary of Finance gives an unusually frank definition of what is involved here: “selling commodities, securities, currencies, etc., that one does not have.” The expectation, of course, is that prices will fall.

(E-F 4-02/3) A colleague from Lantra-l wondered about a good French phrase for sensory integration dysfunction, a developmental delay some children and adults suffer. Any French rendering might or might not include “hyperesthésie,” but in order to be sure, one would have to know whether the original three-word English term embraces autism, attention deficit disorder, etc.

(E-F 4-02/4) I call upon techies to arise for the next two! An obscure piece of hardware (patrice socket) mentioned in an engineering document caused problems for one of ProZ’s correspondents. A part of a phrase can ease the pain: the flex was connected via an on-off switch to a multi-way patrice socket. What on earth is it (perhaps a proper name?) and what can one do with it in French?

(E-G 4-02/5) Here is a technical query, with the emphasis on finding German for spool pieces: Locations of spool pieces are represented on the following view. For more details about connection, see next pages and flow schematic.

(E-R 4-02/6) From the world of art education, the term gestural sketch requires the proper Russian wording, probably involving the use of памятник. The ProZ member who asked this wondered if there happened to be a specialized term for it. The context: When sketching, the first important step is to draw the basic overall shape of your selected animal subject with the fewest strokes needed to identify what you are drawing. These are called gestural sketches, i.e., the essence of movement.

(E-Sp 4-02/7) Renato Calderón seeks something better than “capítulo” (which is often used, but with erroneous literalness) for chapter, as in a subdivision of an organization. Perhaps “división” or “sucursal” might be a start toward getting a proper solution to this in Spanish.

(E-Sp 4-02/8) There is nothing easy about finding a good Spanish equivalent for outreach, says Renato Calderón, as in community outreach, where the social programs are trying to extend services not normally provided to a community. As a verb, we might get close with “proveer, extender servicios extras a una comunidad.” As a multi-word explanation-type translation, “más servicios” could work. To be literal about it, “tener mayor alcance, extender, exceder, superar, ir más allá,” are all appropriate, but they do not do as well, for example, as “alcance más allá de” = reach out.

(E-F 4-02/9) The problem in this financial query, says a Lantra-l correspondent, is “transfert en biens.” Some more context: “Mme A m’a demandé de vous contacter pour finaliser le transfert en biens vers le REER du Fonds de solidarité FTQ des actions que M. B détient à son compte no. 876564.” Is it some sort of transfer of assets?

(E-F 4-02/10) This query about activities of a company that produces industrial rubber products comes from another Lantra-l correspondent, and the unknown term is “mélages en l’état.” The extra context provided comes from the firm’s annual report: “Mélages en l’état conçus, réalisés et commercialisés auprès de transformateurs industriels.” She was tempted just to use state mixtures, but thought it worth a query.

(I-E 4-02/11) A ProZ correspondent, working in a context of law and patents, wondered about the meaning of “l’assetto societario.” A bit of context: “…l’assetto societario dell’azienda erogatrice…”


The Translation Inquirer
By John Decker

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821, or fax them to (570) 275-1477. E-mail address: jdecker@uplink.net. Please make your submissions by the 25th of each month to be included in the next issue. Generous assistance from proofreader Per Dohler is acknowledged.
BBC’s scriptwriters (as reported by Janet Fraser in the ITI Bulletin), we opted to start there.

Many, if not most, professional linguists found Siobhan’s overnight transformation from translator (written work) to interpreter (spoken) unrealistic. For many, too, her language combinations (English, Spanish, German, and French) and apparent willingness to translate anything that moves were distinctly out of keeping with the focus and specialization that experts recommend.

Fewer, if not most, professional linguists found Siobhan’s overnight transformation from translator (written work) to interpreter (spoken) unrealistic. For many, too, her language combinations (English, Spanish, German, and French) and apparent willingness to translate anything that moves were distinctly out of keeping with the focus and specialization that experts recommend.

The Onionskin Continued from p.46

Nor—after one episode had her complaining about the difficulty of rendering “rotary atomizers” into German—was it entirely clear whether she respected the Golden Rule: professional translators make a point of working only into their native language.

Speaking for “The Archers,” BBC Senior Producer Keri Davies acknowledged the ITI’s early input and agreed that the translator/interpreter switch was highly unusual (“but not impossible”). Unfortunately, translators were seen as too sedentary for the storyline; the scriptwriters wanted some foreign travel for dramatic tension.

Yet several ITI recommendations had been taken on board, Davies told us. Thus, when approached for a Hungarian translation, Siobhan immediately passed the work on to “Klaus,” a native Hungarian translator, rather than attempt it herself. (It is not known whether she took a cut of the action.)

Continued on p.59
Linda Jerome sent in a couple of pages of Ernest Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, together with the corresponding pages of a translation of the novel into Spanish by an unnamed translator. In the book, written in English, the Spanish characters speak English, though Hemingway throws in a few Spanish words for flavor. In the translation, all of the English dialogue of the fictional Spanish characters is of course translated (or is that back-translated?) into the characters’ native language. What’s more, at least to someone as bilingual as Jerome, Hemingway’s “English-language reproduction of Spanish-language dialogue” does not ring true, and she believes it would be “a good idea for a new edition” of the novel to retain Hemingway’s English narration, but also to have all the dialogue of the Spanish characters translated into Spanish.

The philosophical questions this raises are interesting. Does it make a difference if Hemingway was actually trying to tell his readers something specific about Spaniards? Or only what he thought about Spaniards? Or if he didn’t care if his characters bore any resemblance to real Spaniards at all, but were only “Spaniards” in order to provide his readers with some exotic color? Could a translation of *Romeo and Juliet* into Italian be more authentic than Shakespeare’s English original?

And what about the presumed howler pointed out by Jerome? In the English original (or is that the English “translation?”) Pilar tells Primitivo, “You should take a physic.” In the Spanish translation (or is that the Spanish “original?”) Pilar tells Primitivo, “Debieras ir al médico [you should go to the doctor].” Is the translation a howler or is it a more authentic rendering of the original? Since Jerome says there is “no apparent motivation” for “Debieras ir al médico,” it is probably a howler. But is that a howler on the part of the Spanish translator or on the part of Hemingway for not motivating something that a Spanish translator perhaps thought a Spaniard would be more likely to say than what Hemingway said the Spaniard said?

What about texts that exist only in actual translation, where the original is unrecoverable? The most obvious example is the New Testament. While it is possible that Jesus knew a word or two of Greek, he certainly did not speak Greek to his followers. Therefore, in addition to the problem of translating the New Testament into other languages, there is the totally unsolvable problem of deciding whether the “original” Greek represents an adequate translation. Would someone fluent in Aramaic be able to translate it into a more authentic version?
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Overview of the Los Angeles Area Hospital Project and Training Strategies

Continued from p.43


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