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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

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...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.
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Steve Vlasta Vitek received his master’s degree in Japanese and English studies from Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1980. He worked as an in-house translator for the Czech News Agency in Prague from 1980-81 and for Japan Import Center in Tokyo, Japan, from 1985-86. He has been a freelance translator specializing mostly in the translation of Japanese and German patents and articles from technical journals for patent law firms in the U.S. since 1987. He recently moved from Northern California, where he spent almost two decades, to Chesapeake, Virginia. Contact: stevitek@PatentTranslators.com.
From the President

Your ATA Membership

Thomas L. West III
president@atanet.org

It’s that time of year again: time to renew your ATA membership. If you have already renewed, I want to thank you on behalf of the association.

If you haven’t, I’d like to suggest some reasons why your ATA membership is one of the most significant investments you can make as a translator or interpreter.

First of all, ATA is thriving. We had over 8,500 members last year and expect to surpass that number this year. We are also hard at work on plans for the 43rd Annual ATA Conference, to be held in my hometown of Atlanta from November 6-9, 2002, where we expect to draw a crowd of around 1,600 translators and interpreters from across the U.S. and around the world. In the meantime, some additional professional development seminars are in the planning stages—you’ll get more details on them soon. In addition, some exciting changes are underway. Our award-winning monthly magazine The ATA Chronicle has a new look. Also, Lilian Van Vranken and her dedicated team are hard at work on strengthening our accreditation program.

Still not convinced? Here are some more reasons to renew your membership.

One job covers your dues payment. I continue to hear from many ATA members who have gotten jobs through the online Translation Services Directory and the Corporate Translation Services Directory. Many translation companies use the TSD on a regular basis to hire translators and interpreters. The potential of gaining a new client is more than worth our modest dues payment.

Keep up with the latest tools in our profession. By reading The ATA Chronicle, you could learn about a new software tool that could save you hours. How many hours would you have to save to cover the cost of your membership dues? The answer is: not many! Perhaps a dictionary review in The ATA Chronicle will make you aware of a specialized reference work that is now available. For example, Boris Silversteyn’s review in the January issue discusses two books that no into-English translator will want to be without. On the other hand, you might learn about an administrative practice discussed at a conference session that will help you run your business more efficiently and effectively. It won’t take long for these time savers to cover the cost of your ATA membership.

ATA membership offers a multitude of professional development opportunities. You need to stay current in your working languages and areas of specialization to be successful. To address this need, ATA holds an annual conference featuring over 150 educational sessions; conducts regional seminars, such as the Financial Translation Conference in New York last year (with additional seminars in the works for this year); and publishes a variety of special interest articles in The ATA Chronicle. Finally, our divisions offer specialized training and practical, informative newsletters.

Develop, strengthen, and expand your network. We learn from each other. ATA membership offers you many opportunities to network with your colleagues. What is so important about networking? Where can you turn if you have a question about terminology that you can’t find online or in a dictionary? You don’t need to reinvent the wheel each time. More than likely someone has faced the same terminology query or business problem that you are addressing. ATA provides many networking opportunities for both newcomers and experienced translators and interpreters.

ATA membership saves you money. As for true dollars-and-cents savings, ATA members receive discounts on the ATA Annual Conference, professional liability insurance, collections services, medical and disability insurance, overnight and express package shipping services, and much more.

Doing something for the profession. As the many other volunteers and I involved in our thriving association have found, the more you give, the more you receive.

When you consider all that ATA has to offer you, it is clear that the nominal membership fee is money well spent. I urge you to renew your membership in ATA.

ATA’s Fax on Demand

Need a membership form for a colleague?
Want the latest list of exam sites? Call ATA’s Document on Request line, available 24-hours a day: 1-888-990-3282
From the Executive Director
Walter Bacak, CAE
Walter@atanet.org

Thanks and Reminders

ATA Pro Bono Project Thanks.
For the past three years, ATA, as part of its community outreach program, has sponsored a pro bono translation project in conjunction with the ATA Annual Conference. Most recently, in Los Angeles, ATA members translated a 3,800-word brochure for the Starlight Foundation, an organization that is dedicated to granting wishes to gravely ill children and to helping their families cope with the duress of their children’s illness. (In St. Louis, ATA members translated a brochure in several languages for the Scott Joplin Museum. In Orlando, ATA members translated some webpages for the Everglades National Park.) The projects have helped create goodwill for the association, and spread the word on the work of professional translators and interpreters. Our thanks go out to past Public Relations Committee Chair Manouche Ragsdale for all her efforts to initiate and coordinate this important ATA program, as well as to the translators and reviewers on this year’s project: Alba Jones, Hernando Carranza, Izumi Suzuki, Manouche Ragsdale, and Beatrice Wulfsohn.

Renew your membership online.
2002 final dues renewal notices have been mailed. Please renew your membership today. You may renew online in the Members Only section of the ATA website: www.atanet.org/membersonly. If you have not received your notice, please contact Maggie Rowe at ata@atanet.org or (703) 683-6100, ext. 3001. Don’t miss a day of your membership benefits, including your listings in the online Translation Services Directories. Thank you for your continued support of the American Translators Association.

Translation Services Directories.
Listings in the online Translation Services Directory and Corporate Translation Services Directory are proving to be valuable benefits of ATA membership. Buyers of translation and interpreting services are using the TSDs. Last year, these sites averaged just over 100,000 hits per month. Be sure to keep your listings up to date. As a reminder, the Directories have been further refined to allow members the option of putting their areas of specialization and language combinations in any order.

Call for Proposals for Conference Presentations.
Share your knowledge and experience with fellow ATA members by making a presentation at ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference, November 6-9, 2002, in Atlanta, Georgia. Please complete the Proposal for Conference Presentation form and return it to ATA Headquarters by March 15. The form may be downloaded from the ATA website, www.atanet.org/conf2002/abstract.htm. You can also get a copy from ATA’s Document On Request fax service, 1-888-990-3282, document #80, or by calling ATA Headquarters, 703-683-6100. The presentations are a great way to network with others who share your interests, and to indirectly promote you and your company’s services.

Awards Reminder.
In addition to the call for conference proposals, the deadline is approaching for ATA’s various awards: Gode Medal, Lewis Galantière Award, and the Student Translation Award. In addition, the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation is offering a scholarship again this year. For more information, please see the January Chronicle or the ATA website, www.atanet.org/awards.htm.

(From left to right) Past ATA President Ann Macfarlane, Manouche Ragsdale (past Public Relations Committee chair and coordinator of ATA’s pro bono translation project), Jenny Isaacson (director of community affairs for the Starlight Foundation), and pro bono project reviewer Izumi Suzuki in Los Angeles.

Thanks to Albert Bork. Al Bork has stepped down as chair of the Dictionary Review Committee. For over eight years, he helped compile the popular dictionary reviews that appear in the Chronicle. I am happy to report that Al will continue to serve on the Committee, and that Boris Silversteyn has agreed to serve as the new chair. Besides appearing in the Chronicle, the dictionary reviews are also available online at www.atanet.org/dictionary_reviews.htm.
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Sessions Approved

Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts
Continue Education Activity for Court Interpreter
Minimum Continuing Education Credit (CIMCE)

The following sessions, presented at the ATA Annual Conference in Los Angeles, California, have been approved for Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education Credit (CIMCE) by the Judicial Council of California Administrative Office of the Courts. For a complete list of approved sessions, please visit ATA's website at www.atanet.org/conf2002/credit_ca.htm. For more information, please contact Teresa Kelly at ATA Headquarters (teresak@ata.org).

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<tr>
<th>CIMCE#</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
<th>Session Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>1152</td>
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<td>I-1 “Home Alone 3”: Building a Cooperative Network of Support Among Interpreters</td>
<td>(Friday, 10:00-11:30am)</td>
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<td>1148</td>
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<td>I-3 The ASTM Standard Guide for Language Interpretation Services: What Is It? What Does It Say? What Is It Good For?</td>
<td>(Friday, 1:30-3:00pm)</td>
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<td>1153</td>
<td>1(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td>I-4 Processing Time for Interpreters/Interpretation of Innuendo</td>
<td>(Friday, 1:30-3:00pm)</td>
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<td>1154</td>
<td>1(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td>I-5 Quality Assessment of Telephone Interpreters: Preview to the Process of Identifying, Training, and Certifying Telephone Interpreters</td>
<td>(Friday, 3:30-5:00pm)</td>
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<td>1155</td>
<td>2(\frac{1}{2})</td>
<td>I-7 Life Before and Inside the Booth—A Reminder</td>
<td>(Friday, 3:30-5:00pm)</td>
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<td>1147</td>
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<td>I-8 Conference Interpretation: Is It for You?</td>
<td>(Saturday, 8:00-9:30am)</td>
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<td>1156</td>
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<td>1144</td>
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<td>I-11 Plea Bargain? You Bet Your Life!</td>
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<tr>
<td>1145</td>
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<td>(Saturday, 3:30-4:15pm)</td>
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<td>(Thursday, 3:30-5:00pm)</td>
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<td>1149</td>
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<td>LAW-1 The Role of the Interpreter in Addressing Hate/Bias Incidents</td>
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<td>1150</td>
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<td>1151</td>
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<td>Part One: MED-4 Initial Assessment of Interpreter Skills: A Case Study in Screening Medical Interpreters</td>
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<td>Part Two: MED-4 Medical Interpretation at the Crossroads: Overview of the Los Angeles Area Hospital Project and CSULB Training Strategies</td>
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<td>1183</td>
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<td>SEMINAR E Force Majeure Clauses in Spanish-language Contract Documents</td>
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<td>1187</td>
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<td>SEMINAR Q Confidence in the Courtroom! Advance Preparation Tips and Tools for Trial Interpreting (Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm)</td>
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<td>1186</td>
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<td>SEMINAR P The Challenge: Translating an Economic Analysis into English (Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm)</td>
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<td>1185</td>
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<td>SEMINAR G Professional Enhancement for Practicing English-Spanish Interpreters in the Field of Hemispheric Trade (Wednesday, 9:00am-12:00noon)</td>
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<td>SEMINAR O Language in TV News: Effective Communication in a Fast-paced Environment (Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm)</td>
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Part Two: SL-3 Recent Issues in Russian and English Translation: Avoiding the Pitfalls and Overcoming Business and Technical Challenges (Friday, 10:45-11:30am) |
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| 1189   | 1½   | J-2 Legal Documents (Contracts) Made Easy: Understanding Legal Expressions (Thursday, 3:30-5:00pm) |
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| 1182   | 1½   | SP-4 Problems with the Translation of Terminology in Legal Documents in Mexico (Friday, 1:30-3:00pm) |

**Translating and Interpreting in the Federal Government**

**New ATA Publication Now Available from ATA Headquarters**

*Translating and Interpreting in the Federal Government*, compiled by Ted Crump, is a comprehensive survey that provides the language needs, career ladders, and contact information for over 80 federal agencies and offices. 174 pages; $30 (ATA members), $50 (non-members).
American Translators Association Announces 2001 Awards Recipients

Each year, the ATA awards three prizes: a medal for meritorious service to the translation and interpreting professions, a prize for a book-length translation, and a student prize. The following awards were presented at the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference in Los Angeles, California, in November 2001.

The Alexander Gode Medal, ATA’s most prestigious award, was awarded to Christine Durban, a freelance translator specializing in finance and capital markets. Durban is also a contributing columnist to the ITI Bulletin (U.K.) and the Translation Journal, and is the author of a client education pamphlet entitled Getting It Right.

The Ungar German Translation Award, bestowed biennially in odd-numbered years for a distinguished literary translation from German into English, was awarded to John Felstiner for his translation of Selected Poems and Prose of Paul Celan. Felstiner is a professor at Stanford University in California. This award consists of $1,000, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA conference.

The Student Translation Award, bestowed annually to a student or group of students for a literary translation or translation-related project, was given to Aaron Crippen for his translations of the modern Chinese poet Gu Cheng. Crippen is currently working toward his Ph.D. in English literature at the University of Houston. This award consists of $500, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA conference.

For more information and deadlines for ATA’s 2002 awards, please contact: Jo Anne Engelbert, Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee, American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; Phone: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: ata@atanet.org.

Beacons 8: Call for Manuscripts

Beacons is a magazine of literary translation published annually by the ATA’s Literary Division. We are currently seeking submissions of literary translations of poetry, fiction, short drama, journalistic writing, or essays for the 2002 publication. Translations from any language into English are acceptable. Submissions should be limited to a maximum length of 15 pages and must be accompanied by a copy of the original text and a letter of permission for serial publication from the holder of the foreign rights. All submissions must be sent as hard copy by mail, with a SASE enclosed. The deadline is April 15, 2002. Send all correspondence to:

Alexis Levitin
Editor
Beacons
Department of English
SUNY-Plattsburgh
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
Santa Fe, New Mexico
ATA’s Portuguese Language Division
Spring Meeting
April 25-28, 2002

For more information, please visit
Hope to see you there!

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 p.m. at Borders.
For more information, please contact Lily Liu at LilyLiu99@aol.com.

Canada
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 6th, 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.fit2002.org/enghome.htm.

Slavonice, Czech Republic
Call for Papers
Slavonice International Translators Conference
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:
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E-mail: zuzana007@hotmail.com
www.scholaludus.cz

Cambridge, England
18th Intensive Course in Simultaneous Conference Interpretation
August 18-31, 2002

Participants will interpret 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.)

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 Multidimensional 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.

Call for Papers
Canadian Association for Translation Studies 15th Annual Conference
May 25-27, 2002 (Exact dates to be confirmed) • Toronto, Canada

Conference Theme: Translation and (Im)migration
Information: Dr. Anne Malena, Modern Language and Cultural Studies, 200 Arts Building, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E9 Canada. Tel: (780) 492-1187; Fax: (780) 492-9106; E-mail: amalena@ualberta.ca; website: www.uottawa.ca/associations/act-cats/index.htm.
International Certification Study: Finland and Sweden

By Jiri Stejskal

In the January issue we looked at the complex certification process of the Canadian Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec. We will now move on to Scandinavia, with a review of the Finnish and Swedish certification processes. The following description is based on the information provided by Meeri Yule, membership chair of the Mid-America Chapter of the ATA; Ari Penttilä, vice-chairman of the Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters (Suomen kääntäjien ja tulkien liitto, SKTL); Sven H.E. Borei, chairman of the Swedish Association of Professional Translators (Sveriges Facköversättarförening, SFÖ); David Jones, chairman of the Federation of Authorized Translators (Föreningen Auktoriserade Translatorer, FAT); and Kerstin Björkholm, representative of the Swedish Legal, Financial, and Administrative Service Agency (Kammarkollegiet).

Finnish professional linguists are organized under the umbrella of the SKTL. Until 1987, the certification process was administered by both the Finnish Chamber of Commerce and the Translator Examination Board. Currently, certification exams are administered solely by the Translator Examination Board, appointed by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Research Institute for the Languages of Finland. The Translator Examination Board has been administering exams for translators since 1967, which is when the first Act on “sworn translators” came into effect. The current type of examination was introduced in 1988, when the Act was amended. In order to become certified, the candidate must pass a translation exam consisting of two parts: general and specialized. Examinations are conducted between any two domestic languages, or a domestic and foreign language, in either direction. The domestic languages are Finnish, Swedish, and Lapp (Sami). No educational entry qualification has been prescribed for the test, but the candidate must be a legally competent person residing in one of the member states of the European Union or in some other country included in the European Economic Area (EEA). Further...

...While currently there is no cooperation between the ATA and the Finnish and Swedish organizations in terms of mutual recognition of linguistic credentials, Sven Borei of the SFÖ has expressed interest in such an arrangement...

Information on the certification procedure and on the SKTL is available at www.megabaud.fi/~sktl, or you may contact Ari Penttilä directly at asengl@kolumbus.fi.

In Sweden, the certification process also used to be administered by the Chamber of Commerce, but the responsibility was taken over by the state at the beginning of the 1960s—originally by the Swedish Board of Trade and now by the Kammarkollegiet (www.kammarkollegiet.se). The following rules and procedures are required by the Kammarkollegiet (based on the information received directly from the Kammarkollegiet):

Conditions of Authorization
To qualify for authorization as a translator, you must:

- Reside in Sweden or any other state within the EEA;
- Be 18 years of age and not under the legal guardianship of an administrator (under the provisions of Chap. 11, Sec. 7 of the Code on Parents and Children) or be subject to any similar restrictions in another state;
- Be of known personal integrity and otherwise be suitable to work as a translator; and
- Have passed the proficiency examination as set down by the Kammarkollegiet.

If special grounds exist, a person residing outside the EEA may also qualify for authorization.

Administration of the Test
The examination is held in September in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö, and Umeå. On each examination, you may translate from one language to one other language only. One of these languages must be Swedish.

Once authorized, translators have their own individual stamp and are entitled to vouch for the accuracy of their translations. In some cases, Swedish government agencies are enjoined to entrust translation to authorized translators, and an authorized translation is required in a number of official contexts. Authorization is a requirement for some translation posts within the Swedish civil service and for inclusion in some of the framework procurements of translation services by state agencies. Some authorized translators are authorized to work from more than one language into Swedish, and some are authorized to work both to and from Swedish into another language, but the vast majority are authorized in one direction only.
There are two organizations for translators in Sweden—the already-mentioned FAT and SFÖ. FAT only admits authorized translators while SFÖ membership is open to anyone who meets their criteria for entry. FAT currently has about 325 members, working either into or from about 30 languages. FAT represents the interests of these translators and organizes annual seminars for candidates for the authorization test. It also publishes a quarterly newsletter called Fataburen, and is involved in the production of word lists. Further information is available at the Federation’s website (www.eurofat.se) in Swedish only, or directly from the Federation’s chairman, David Jones, at david@rhetorica.se.

According to the chairman of the SFÖ, the organization feels that the government authorization does not successfully answer the question as to whether a translator maintains a high level of ability and quality over time. The test, being academic in nature, does not address the question of end-user satisfaction or any of the ISO- and/or DIN-related translation administration issues. In an attempt to accomplish this, the admission procedures of the SFÖ are very strict, and a great emphasis is placed on continuing education. To be admitted to full SFÖ membership, a translator must provide three recommendations from customers for each language pair, and submit proof of having worked five years as a professional translator (applicants who do not meet the five-year requirement can become associate members). There are currently approximately 650 members in the association. Applications are screened by members of the SFÖ board. All recommendations are checked, with the focus being on ascertaining the applicant’s level of established ability and capacity. There is no requirement that an applicant be a citizen or resident of Sweden, nor that Swedish be one of the languages of the pair. Translators are required to translate only into their mother tongue, though exceptions may be granted by the membership committee. Further information on the SFÖ can be obtained directly from Sven Borei at heskon@algonet.se, or at the organization’s website at www.sfoe.se.

The above-mentioned Swedish Kammarkollegiet has, according to law, an advisory council for questions relating to interpretation and translation (Rådgivandenämnden för tolk- och översättningsfrågor) where the SFÖ and FAT each have a seat. All major interpretation organizations are represented, as are the larger users of authorized interpreters and translators. The council deals with standards, integration of standards, problems with the test procedures, the definition of languages, and other related questions at their semi-annual meetings. In between sessions, there are task forces on specific questions. This council has potential to develop into a major player in raising and maintaining interpretation and translation standards in Sweden.

Another form of certification in Sweden, though as yet without any formal linkage to any of the above-named organizations, are various university courses leading to a diploma. The main representative is the Interpreter and Translator Institute at the University of Stockholm (Tolk- och översättingarinstitutet, TÖI), with which the SFÖ has first-level contacts in an effort to ensure that those who graduate have attained a quality level that is in itself sufficient for membership in the SFÖ.

While currently there is no cooperation between the ATA and the Finnish and Swedish organizations in terms of mutual recognition of linguistic credentials, Sven Borei of the SFÖ has expressed interest in such an arrangement either within FIT in general or else limited to the ATA and SFÖ. Next time we will revisit the certification process in Canada, namely the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council certification, as well as the current initiative of the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia, geared toward mutual recognition of credentials between the ATA and STIBC.

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.
“Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm”
Winston Churchill

Most people dislike the idea of failure, but think about it; the only way not to fail is by not trying. Wouldn’t you rather your people pursue possible failure in order to attempt new ideas, seek to bring in new clients, and try to create new products, than not? If your people are not allowed to fail, they will not grow. If you cannot encourage your team to reach new heights by giving them a safety net (not firing them if they fail), then how will you take your company to the next level?

From 0 to 50…Million

This philosophy has helped a number of companies reach the top of their markets. For example, take Mid-America Direct, the largest Corvette after-market parts company in the world. CEO Mike Yager continues to encourage his team to try new ideas, and doesn’t punish them if their ideas don’t work right away. He believes that with support, his team members will reach deep within themselves and create new income streams for the company. He continues to remind them that they are part of a team and that they are supported by him and by each other. Even if their ideas don’t work, he is pleased that they are attempting to push the envelope. To further inspire his people, they also get personal rewards for their continued efforts toward improving the company.

Yager started Mid-America Direct with a vision, a few ideas, and not much else. After reaching the top of his industry, he decided to take on two new catalogues (Volkswagen and Porsche) two years ago, and is watching them grow with the same velocity. He believes that the only thing that can turn a challenge into a failure is not learning from it. He also believes in continuing education for his team, and brings in the best speakers and trainers in the country to help his people reach the next level.

Act As If

Henry Ford said, “Failure is only the opportunity to begin again more intelligently.” Being able to look at your failures and learn from them is a definition of wisdom. To be able to see them clearly, as steps to your goals, gives you energy and inspiration. If you beat yourself up and become listless with self-loathing, your goals become harder to reach. The energy you put into anger just holds you, and your people, back. If you have difficulty grasping this idea, here’s a way to see how it actually works.

The next time you or one of your team members fail, don’t chastise them (or yourself). Hold back your anger or disappointment and “act as if” (pretend) that it was part of the process. See it as a step in the right direction. Talk with your team and explain that you believe that this supposed “failure” is taking you closer to your goal. Explain to them (and yourself) that without the lessons learned from this failure, you would not have the information and experience necessary to achieve success. Then see if you don’t reach the next level quicker and easier than if you had spent time and energy wallowing in blame, anger, and disappointment. This isn’t some kind of mind game, but rather a necessary step in growing your business that has been used by some of the most successful leaders and companies in the world.

Beyond Failure

Perhaps the most important job of a mentor is to help the mentees learn from their mistakes. This is the learning that comes from experience, and it’s the most valuable learning we get. By supporting your team and yourself in this kind of thinking, you are creating a company culture that will inspire your team to make your business grow. Most successful people will honestly tell you that they reached their goals by making lots of mistakes. The mentor’s job is to encourage the mentees to reach beyond their failures, mistakes, and fears, and use the lessons learned to achieve success. Work to encourage your team to pursue possible failure, and they will respond by pushing the envelope all the way to the top.

(Note: More information can be found at www.BartonGoldsmith.com, or by contacting Barton Goldsmith, Goldsmith Consulting, P.O. Box 4502, Westlake Village, CA 91361; Toll-free: 866-522-7866.)

It pays...

to keep your listings updated
in the ATA’s online
Translation Services Directory
and
Corporate Translation Services Directory
(www.atanet.org)
Thoughts on Evolutionary Aspects of Language and Translation

By Ruth Bittorf

For many years, very intelligent computer scientists and linguists have attempted to develop computer-supported software to replace the human translator. To date, the results have been disappointing, because machine translation is unable to capture the structural meaning of multilayered human expression.

An example for an optimally functioning machine translation device would be the “universal translator,” as seen in the Star Trek TV series and movies. Alas, it is fictional! The universal translator device on Star Trek allows Federation crews to communicate with the aliens they encounter while traveling through various galaxies (all of whom seemingly speak and understand Standard American English). Only once did Captain Picard and his crew from “Star Trek: The Next Generation” come into contact with a civilization that caused their universal translator to crash. In that episode, the aliens communicated through metaphors, physical expressions, and images taken from their culture’s history. The vocabulary was complex and allegorical. The language was expressive in different ways than ours, in that it did not represent concepts by way of abstract symbols carrying assigned meanings.

For example, when we see the word “please” spelled out or hear it spoken, we understand the letters or sound of the word to be a code through which we associate meaning. Every English speaker knows this word means to request something. However, in the language Captain Picard encountered, concepts such as “please” or “you are welcome” were not represented by abstract symbols, but were circumscribed within analogies, allegories, and legends. The speaker expressed a concept through the retelling of a parable (like the deed of some historic figure) that symbolized the idea the speaker was trying to relay. For example, if we wanted to express the concept of “honesty” in our own cultural context using the linguistic system just described, we would probably tell the story of Abraham Lincoln, because to this day “Honest Abe” is symbolic of this trait.

Aside from this episode, I am not aware that the linguistic or cultural differences as reflected in language ever played much of a role in the Star Trek series or other science fiction programs. In the newest TV version, “Enterprise,” Captain Archer has a loyal female pilot/engineer/linguist (it is still unclear what she is) who miraculously understands the language of the new species the Enterprise encounters—a universal translator with a pretty face!

The dream and/or convenience of a universal language may have been a reality millennia ago (in biblical times, perhaps in Babel), but we will probably never know, for recorded history does not reach that far back. Also, our ability to reconstruct this universal language from the vocabulary of present-day languages, already many generations removed, is highly questionable. However, it is entirely possible to reconstruct many of the parent languages of today’s languages. For example, we can trace French, Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Catalan, and a few others to Latin. Moreover, we can reconstruct a common linguistic ancestor for many of the Eurasian languages of today: proto-Indo-European (the prefix “proto” indicates that it is a reconstructed language). But attempts to reconstruct the grandparent languages (for example, of proto-Indo-European, proto-Altaic, proto-Nilotic-Saharan, etc.) from these reconstructed languages, what the Russian School calls the “Nostratic language,” is entirely theoretical. Evidence of this reconstruction is speculative, which makes the veracity of the end result highly suspect.

However, language is more than just a way to communicate. Language is the stuff that makes us human. We were reminded not too long ago, with the results of the widely publicized genome project, that our genetic makeup is over 98% identical to that of monkeys. Could it be that our humanity is encoded in less than 2% of our total DNA? It certainly looks that way—and language is part of that 2%! Language gives us awareness and a soul. Through language, we can pass along information, learn from and connect with others, form and cultivate relationships, analyze, abstract, and even evaluate facts and concepts, as well as question the physical world and cultivate our intellect.

Physiological research of the brain’s functions and of injuries and diseases of the brain has shown that the center for language capacity is located in the brain’s left hemisphere. Linguists and cognitive scientists have demonstrated through studies in language acquisition that there must be an innate genetic predisposition for learning language. This is substantiated by the way in which children master the most complicated grammatical systems in a relatively short period of time. Children even create new languages, as research on the genesis of the creole languages...
Thoughts on Evolutionary Aspects of Language and Translation Continued

demonstrates. Remarkably, the ability to acquire languages seems to be independent of the amount and quality of the input we receive from our environment. Children have a natural urge to speak. Irrespective of their native language, culture, social status, or the quality of the language input from their parents, children generally start speaking their native tongue by the age of two. Language is ultimately an evolutionary adaptation to a hostile environment, and one that probably improved our chances of survival millennia ago. Subsequently, language has also allowed us to develop religion, culture, art: everything we are today.

Language should not be confused with thinking. We think in concepts and images that we subsequently encode into language. Even babies who have not yet acquired language have shown the ability to distinguish between different concepts they find in their immediate surroundings, such as recognizing the image of the mother and differentiating between her image and that of the father. Using the building blocks of language (the “linguistic toolbox,” i.e., morphology, syntax, lexicon, etc.), we encode the mental images and concepts we want to communicate or define and pass these on to others. In turn, we use language to decode the images we receive. Some of us are more skilled than others at working with linguistic encoding and decoding tools. Proper decoding and analysis of the information is more reliable if the interlocutors share a similar cultural background and/or life experience.

Language is multifaceted and multilayered, just like human beings. The number of possible grammatical sentences that can be built with any linguistic inventory is infinite. Language helps us to analyze thoughts, inform, dream, express emotion, convince, analyze, confuse, deceive, lie, and manipulate. The list of linguistic applications is as long as the list of human endeavors. Rhetorical figures, shifts in meaning, borrowed lexicon and structures, connotations, denotations, alliterations, metaphors, satire, parody, irony, registers, syntax, and semantics, among others, characterize the richness of language as it evolves over time and becomes part of the culture it helps define. Centuries of literature, folklore, and science have proven the value of language as a companion and integral part of human development.

Technically speaking, it is the translator’s job to take a finite linguistic selection from an infinite source-language system, and to transfer this to a corresponding finite linguistic selection from an infinite target-language system utilizing the “linguistic toolbox.” The translator analyzes and decodes the multilayered concept and expression in the source language and re-encodes the concept into a corresponding output in the target language. These finite selections of language are very specific in terms of content and application for use in a particular technical, economic, social, or cultural context. The translator’s tools are his or her innate language skill in the native language and a well-rounded knowledge of one or several languages (in addition to expertise in the subject matter to be translated).

Despite what some people, including many clients, believe, translation is a very complex intellectual endeavor. It goes far beyond the linear exchange, replacement, and substitution of surface expressions. Being able to speak does not necessarily mean a person can write. Likewise, being able to speak more than one language does not necessarily enable a person to translate on a professional level. Professional translation is not limited to finding target-language equivalents for computer commands, restaurant menus, replacement part lists, and operational manuals. Since requests for translation are usually related to a specific subject field, the translator also needs a thorough education, experience, and research skills in that particular area in order to grasp the concept that is represented in the original text. Sensible decoding and re-encoding is not possible without a secure understanding of the source language. Being a professional translator requires linguistic sensitivity and awareness, intelligence, imaginative, attention to detail, conscientiousness, logic, common sense, and the ability to communicate. A well-written original text and a well-written translation should be effortless to read, and even give pleasure to the interested reader.

Language is organic. It is as alive as the people who speak it. Every time somebody opens his or her mouth or writes down a sentence, new speech is created. The translator is a facilitator bringing different languages and people together, thus helping humanity interact.

Renew Your Membership

Renew online in the Members Only section at www.atanet.org/membersonly or by contacting Maggie Rowe at ata@atanet.org or 703.683.6100
With the proliferation of global communication, interpreters are playing a vital role to ensure accurate and successful communication between cultures. Since the inception of the ATA's Interpreters Division (ID) three years ago, it has grown into the second largest division in the ATA with 854 members.* We attribute the success of the ID to our former administrator, Diane Teichman, for her leadership and diligent work in bringing us to light.

We all know the inherent, subtle, and obvious difference between interpreting and translation. I believe that interpreting and translation complement each other, which means that we fine-tune our skills through both practices. There are, however, extreme cases. Maybe one can be blind and interpret well, but not translate. One can be deaf and translate well, but not interpret. One can translate meticulously, but cannot interpret in front of an audience. One can interpret flawlessly, yet lack the hardware, software, or tools to translate. Knowing our strengths and weaknesses is the key to developing and improving the quality of our profession.

This year, we have the greatest fortune to have former ATA President Ann Macfarlane as a liaison between the ID and ATA. She is also instrumental to the establishment of the division. Personally, I find her an inspiration.

Please note that there is an Interpretation Policy and Advisory Committee (IPAC) established by the ATA and headed by Christian Degueldre. IPAC is responsible for making recommendations to the ATA Board concerning any issue involving interpreting. The IPAC and the ID share a common goal: to better serve and defend the interests of the interpreting community within and outside of the ATA.

Our division’s assistant administrator is Elizabeth Tu, who comes to us with diverse professional experience. Through her exporting activities, she has been a translator and interpreter since 1983. Elizabeth has actively chaired the Chinese Sister City Committee in Cincinnati since 1989.

Our website has a wealth of information for all interpreters. You can find tips, training opportunities, the division’s newsletter, bylaws, and links to other sites for references, just to name a few. Do check out our site at www.atanet.org (click on “Divisions”).

Our quarterly newsletter, The Interpreter’s Voice, is edited by Diane Teichman. Dan MacDougal and Pat Thickstun serve as proofreaders and Linyh Chan Brown is the layout editor. You may submit your articles to Diane (speakeasy@pdq.net) in order to be published and have your voice heard by all who walk the same journey.

The division’s annual meeting was held on November 1, 2001, during the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, California. The meeting agenda was as follows:

**Call to Order**
- Introduction of the new ID administration
- Election of candidates and candidate statements
- Candidate for administrator: Helen Cole
- Candidate for assistant administrator: Elizabeth Tu
- Voting: Election was conducted

**Division Reports**
- Financial report: surplus
- Membership total: 854

**2000-2001 Division Activity**
- Newsletter: published quarterly
- ID website: constantly updated
- ID reception: held at Camacho’s, was a great success

**Election Results Announced**

**Report from New Administrator and Assistant Administrator**

Three motions were made, discussed, and voted upon (see details below).

**Meeting adjourned**

After discussing old business, the floor was turned over to the new administration. The results of our discussion were as follows:

1. The first motion for discussion was whether interpreters are properly represented within the organizational title of the American Translators Association. Shall we propose to have the name changed to the American Translators and Interpreters Association? After a thorough discussion of this topic, we concluded that there are complicated issues involved with this idea. Unless a solid proposal is drafted, we shall not make a motion to the ATA in haste. A conciliatory solution was made as an

* Based on the November figures provided by ATA Headquarters

Continued on p.22
The Portuguese Language Division (PLD) is one of the oldest and most successful divisions of the ATA, I’m very happy to say. In addition to explaining who we are and what we do, this article also serves as a way for me to introduce myself. If you are a new ATA member with an interest in the Portuguese language who has maybe never heard of us, please visit our website at www.ata-divisions.org/PLD/index_Phtm and join us!

I took office as administrator last November during the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference in Los Angeles. The conference is our chance to meet and network with almost 2,000 colleagues working with every language on the planet—from Arabic to Zulu. If you are a new ATA member and have never attended, believe me, it is a great party! But this event is not your only opportunity to meet and network with colleagues. The PLD also holds its own mini-conference (the PLD Spring Meeting) every year in a different city just for Portuguese linguists. You can read more about it on our website. We are planning a very special meeting for 2002, in beautiful Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 25-28. Please see the information on page 21.

I am fortunate to have three great professionals and friends working with me on the PLD board. We are excited to have this opportunity to learn together in a voluntary way to make our division stronger and to honor the accomplishments of our previous administrators, especially Vera Abreu, whose vision and dedication took the PLD to new heights and inspired us greatly. My assistant administrator is Kátia Iole, from São Paulo, Brazil, a specialist in video subtitling and a technical translator based in Florida. Our treasurer is Ines Bojlesen, also from São Paulo, a translator and interpreter based in Oregon, with a degree from the Alumni Association in Brazil. And our secretary is Arlene Kelly, a court interpreter, college teacher, and Fulbright Scholar based in Massachusetts who spent many years in Brazil.

If you are considering membership in the PLD, we welcome you and would love to meet you at the earliest opportunity. If you are already a member, thank you for welcoming us to the board and for working with us for the continued growth and recognition of our profession in the U.S. and around the world.

We also publish a newsletter four times a year, the PLData, which I’m co-editing with Heather Murchison, another hard-working colleague and friend based in Seattle whose enthusiasm never fails to inspire me. You can read recent issues of the PLData on our website and receive it electronically when you become a member. We have been featuring interviews with many professional colleagues. In the works is an informal conversation with the team of Portuguese terminologists at Microsoft’s world headquarters.

All facets of the profession are represented in our division—freelancers, in-house, part-timers, company owners, project managers, and sales executives. We are translators, court interpreters, subtitlers, editors, journalists, localization experts, conference interpreters, or any mix of the above. We even have professionals who have a strong connection to the Portuguese language but make a living working in other languages— you name it! We come from all over the world and have all kinds of academic and professional backgrounds. In many ways, and in many subjects, we do not even think alike. Our link, though, which has proven very strong, is our love of the Portuguese language and our desire to explore new ways to strengthen our profession. The ATA gives us a great opportunity to do just that. And we still get the perks of making new friends every year, expanding our family of linguists, nursing and comforting that saudade in our hearts, and learning how to work smarter and be truly successful.

I have been a member of the ATA since the early 1990s, and joining has proven to be the single very best decision I made in my professional life. Originally from Rio de Janeiro, I freelance as a translator in Dallas, Texas, specializing in Brazilian Portuguese in the areas of marketing, advertising, legal, and financial materials, in addition to my contract work as a seminar interpreter with the U.S. Department of State and as a translator with the Organization of American States.

Our website contains a list of activities for present and future members, as well as many useful links and a history (past, present, and future) of our division. Our sincere thanks to all the ATA family. See you in 2002 and an outstanding year to all. Saúde e bom trabalho!
The French Language Division
Annual Meeting Summary

By Michèle Hansen

The French Language Division held its annual meeting on November 1, 2001, during the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference in Los Angeles. The division has grown significantly since its inception five years ago, and currently has nearly 800* members, making it the third largest in the ATA. The following issues were discussed:

**Newsletter.** A heartfelt “merci” went out to Mylène Vialard as editor of À Propos. She has performed nearly all of the tasks associated with publishing the newsletter alone. Four members graciously offered to help her find or write one article per issue in the coming year. Additional contributions are certainly welcome!

**FLD website.** G. David Heath has done a remarkable job creating and maintaining the FLD website (www.americantranslators.org/divisions/FLD/fldhome.htm). He appreciates any and all input (articles, comments, links, etc.). Several members indicated that they never visit the site, so a suggestion was made to add an automated reminder service, such as NetMind, to notify members whenever the site is updated.

**Listserve.** Odile Legeay described the system used with ATA and its disadvantages: many initial technical problems and slow message exchange (twice per day). She proposed another option, such as a Yahoo! Group. This idea was well received (she has since set up this eGroup).

**Directory.** Thierry Chambon reported that the ATA has a policy of not supporting online directories for divisions, as maintaining and updating separate directories would become too difficult. An alternative is being investigated, namely, posting a list of FLD members and their names and contact information on the FLD website, which visitors could then use to consult the online TSD. Gina DeMarco agreed to assist in this effort should it go forward.

**T-shirts.** FLD t-shirts are available for the first time for $15, and continue to be available from ATA Headquarters (see ordering information on the website or in À Propos). Michèle Hansen took the initiative to create a very nice design featuring a small arc de triomphe logo on the front and a quote from Victor Hugo on the back.

**Sessions.** As in past years, volunteers were recruited to write brief summaries of French-specific sessions. As a general rule, conference speakers are not paid, so the depth and breadth of FLD sessions are solely the result of our own members’ generous efforts and hard work. Many thanks to the presenters, and to Michèle Hansen and Marie-France Schreiber for helping to identify these individuals.

**Translator’s Handbook.** This project was proposed at last year’s conference, before members were aware that the Japanese Language Division had already written a thorough handbook of interest to translators and interpreters of all languages. To better serve our francophone interests, the FLD has decided instead to offer a mentoring program, with Michèle Landis, Michel Meunier, Manouche Ragsdale, and Anne Vincent volunteering to respond to any telephone or e-mail queries sent to the administrator and/or website. Danièle Heinen also offered to write an article for newcomers to be posted on the website.

**Social Activities.** Marguerite Layton and Anne Wiles were roundly applauded for their generous underwriting of the FLD reception on Friday evening. We tried a new format this year: a cocktail reception rather than a sit-down dinner, to facilitate networking among members. Our reception was well attended and everyone commented favorably on this new format, which we intend to keep next year with a few improvements.

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Mark your calendars! ATA’s Portuguese Language Division 2002 Spring Meeting

April 25-28, 2002—in beautiful Santa Fe, New Mexico
Details and information can be found in the PLDATA, the newsletter of the PLD, and on our website at: www.ata-divisions.org/PLD/index_P.htm. Hope to see you there!
Kevin Hendzel Sets PBS Viewers Straight: 
“Babelfish is 400 Years Away”

By Alexandra Russell-Bitting

(Note: This article first appeared in the Capital Translator, the newsletter of the ATA National Capital Area Chapter, www.ncata.org.)

In a PBS special called “Planet Work: Finding Solutions in the World Wide Work World,” which aired in September, host Will Durst explored how globalization of the world economy is transforming the way we work, including how we translate. Taking a lighthearted approach only befitting a standup comedian, Durst interviewed people in a variety of jobs around the U.S. and on several other continents.

Between segments on a mother who commutes from California to Asia several times a month and a gondolier philosopher in Venice deploring the decline in the quality of life, Durst chatted with the ATA’s own Kevin Hendzel, who runs ASET International, a Washington-area translation company. He was clearly wowed by Kevin’s background as an interpreter who manned the hotline between the White House and the Kremlin for five years.

Noting that “national security has always depended on real people for simultaneous translation,” Durst asked Kevin where he could get a “headset” that would do the job automatically. Such translation software, Kevin informed an incredulous Durst, “is 400 years away.” “Not months or years?” asked Durst. “It’s Star Trek technology,” Kevin insisted. To prove his point, he did a trial run of the Babelfish machine translation program available on the Internet for Durst, who concluded that for something simple, it’s “clunky but adequate.”

But when Kevin put Babelfish to the acid test of Durst’s own writing, Durst saw the light. Translated from English into Italian and back to English, the phrase “Although our American culture may be the red, white, and blue bowling ball on the ping pong table of commerce…” became “Even if our cultivation American can be the sphere white woman and red blue bowling on the table of pong of metallic noise of the commerce….”

Durst concluded the segment by accosting some passersby on the streets of Rio with his $150 “Lingo 10 Talking Translator.” Reactions ranged from an indulging handshake to an irate slap. Clearly, Durst got the message that current machine translation programs are okay for simple sentences but not okay for complex phrasing. Score one for the ATA’s ongoing outreach activities for client education, spearheaded by Kevin and other ATA members.

The ATA’s Interpreters Division Update Continued from p.19

amendment to the first motion. This is to simply request that the ATA Board include the word “interpreters” and “interpreting” on the listing of services and publications that the ATA offers.

2. The second motion for discussion was to produce a paper copy of the ID directory, since there are times when we need to reference the directory. The majority voted in favor of a paper copy.

3. The third motion for discussion was to have a button made which states “(I’m an) Interpreter, ATA” or simply “Interpreter, ATA.” This discussion did not take long and gained favorable votes from the majority of participants.

4. The fourth motion for discussion was to have the ID Spring Meeting at a Texas ranch. Due to the time constraint, this motion did not make it to the table. Please refer to the ID website for details and offer your input. The contact person is Diane Teichman.

5. During the ID annual meeting, our website was up on a demo mode simultaneously, which added great flavor to our meeting. Our webmaster, Margareta Ugander, is a true backbone and treasure to the ID. Her knowledge and expertise enhanced not only the meeting but also the division.

6. Also during the annual meeting, a volunteer sign-up sheet was circulated around. Thanks to all those members who have signed up to share their talents.

The success of an organization requires everyone’s participation. We can only be strong and better if we put all our hands together. I look forward to seeing all of you next next fall in Atlanta, Georgia, for the ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference.

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It was great to see so many SPD members at the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference in Los Angeles. Close to 1,400 people were there, the way I heard it. And around 260 of them were from the SPD! A good representation and a great cross section of our membership, although from looking at the list of attendees’ addresses, California definitely ruled. The presentations for our language pair were enlightening, and what a meal we had at El Floridita!

At the division’s annual meeting, Virginia Perez-Santalla, my invaluable assistant administrator, and I solicited suggestions regarding what the membership wants from its division (see the list). Note that the SPD has now broken the 2,000 member barrier, and the Board would very much like to hear from the rest of the membership about where you want us to head. Specifically, our treasury is in an enviable position, i.e., we have plenty of funds to put to good use. What we need are more suggestions as to what you want to do with those monies.

The following list of suggestions for how to use our funds was created during the brainstorming session at the division’s annual meeting in Los Angeles. (Remember that brainstorming involves listing any and all ideas without judging them. Reviewing the merits of each proposed idea is a subsequent step.) This list is by no means complete, so please let us know what you think.

...The SPD’s mission is to assist us in our professional lives...

- Regional training sessions for ATA accreditation exam
- Upgrade Intercambios
- Scholarship for a promising student translator
- Upgrade website
- Get higher profile speakers for the ATA conference
- More coverage of the division’s activities
- Special development of workshop materials
- SPD publications to share with the world
- Client education/public awareness campaign
- Regional seminars for SPD members
- Regional seminars for clients and potential clients
- Publish an informative booklet to distribute to clients
- Return to printing and mailing Intercambios
- Hold two SPD conferences each year, one at either end of the country (our first division conference took place aboard the “Fascination” of Carnival Cruise Lines, January 25-28, 2002. More on this successful event will appear in a future issue.)

Remember, there were 260 people present and our division has 2,000+ members. We are very interested in hearing from everyone, so please do not hesitate to write rudy@SpanishEnglishServices.com with any comments on the suggestions that have already been made. Keep in mind that the SPD’s mission is to assist us in our professional lives, and then send me some ideas.

ATA Chapter Seed Money Fund

Is your ATA chapter planning an event? Does that event have need for a distinguished, dynamic, industry-relevant speaker? If so, the ATA’s Professional Development Committee wants to help! The ATA’s Professional Development Committee offers a seed money fund for speakers. Be sure to call the ATA today for application guidelines and a list of fabulous speakers who could be a guest at your next meeting, workshop, or seminar. The ATA’s chapters play a key role in the continuing education of their members. Since the chapters vary greatly in number and composition of members, it can be hard for some chapters to offer educational opportunities to everyone. As a service to all ATA members and as a benefit of chapterhood, the ATA would like to support these educational efforts by subsidizing presentations that might otherwise prove to be a financial burden for individual chapters. The fund was designed for ATA chapters, so don’t let the opportunity pass you by. Contact Mary@atanet.org at ATA Headquarters soon for all the details!
Update from the Japanese Language Division

By Izumi Suzuki

It was fun meeting new people and seeing familiar faces at the ATA’s 42nd ATA Annual Conference in Los Angeles.

As for JLD activities, there were about 25 people who came to our informal gathering. We introduced ourselves one by one, and Ben Tompkins announced he would be the new editor of our newsletter, JLD Times, thanking Manako Ihaya who has done a wonderful job during her 2000-2001 tenure. Each speaker who was present that evening was introduced, and enough people volunteered to introduce the speakers at the beginning of their sessions and to summarize the sessions. Thank you very much to all our volunteers. Your reports will be valuable to those who could not come to the conference, and attendees whose busy schedule caused them to have to miss some sessions. Let me also extend our sincere appreciation to the 2000–2001 Program Committee: Hiro Tsuchiya, Akiko Sasaki-Summers, and Tim Hallet. They worked hard all the way through the conference to assure successful JLD sessions, and they did a superb job. Gokurosama deshita! (= Thank you for your hard work!)

There were about 35 members in attendance at the JLD Annual Meeting. You can read the details of the meeting in the minutes recorded by our secretary/treasurer, Ben Tompkins. On Thursday night, we had a JLD dinner at Sai Sai, the Japanese restaurant in the hotel. There were 42 people engaging in conversation, catching up with one another, and enjoying kaiseki-ryori.

On Friday, I counted 54 people at one popular session! (Later, I saw even more faces, so there must have been about 60 people altogether.) After the forum on Saturday, we took some time to chat about next year’s conference program. Hiro Tsuchiya was the moderator for the forum, and he continued on in that role as we discussed what sessions we would like to have next year. The new Program Committee consists of Carl and Masae Sullivan and Manako Ihaya. We are all thankful to them for taking up this very important task. In fact, this is where our division shines, thanks to a wonderful program and to the fine speakers that are consistently provided each and every year. I am certain that some of you will hear from the committee. If contacted to present a session, please say “Yes!”

Every member of the JLD has something special that is valuable to share with other members. By sharing such knowledge, all of us become a little better…

Call for Proposals for ATA Conference Presentations
Atlanta 2002

Share your knowledge with colleagues by making a presentation at the ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, November 6-9, 2002. Please complete the Proposal for Conference Presentation form and return it by March 15. Forms are available at www.atanet.org/conf2002/abstract.htm, ATA’s Documents On Request line (1.888.990.3282, document #80), or through ATA Headquarters at 703.683.6100.

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Minutes from the Annual Meeting of the ATA’s Nordic Division

By Marianne Dellinger

Approximately 15 members attended the Nordic Division’s annual meeting at the ATA conference in Los Angeles. Marianne Dellinger, the division’s assistant administrator, presided over the event. The following topics were discussed:

1) In the future, our newsletter, *Aurora Borealis*, will be posted on the Nordic Division’s website (www.atanet.org, click on “Divisions”), where members can access and read it at leisure. Members will receive an automatic electronic message when a new newsletter has been posted. In order to save costs for the division, we decided to discontinue distribution of hard copies of the newsletter. We agreed that in this time and age any professional translator would have access to the Internet and would be able to access the site and read relevant information there. For those last few people (if any) who still have no Internet access, it is possible to access the Internet at all public libraries.

2) We discussed whether it would be possible to write a little about what has been going on within each language group in every newsletter. Anja Miller graciously offered to write something for the Finnish group, so if you have any contributions for her, please send them to anja_miller@compuserve.com. Vigdis Eriksen, of Eriksen Translations Inc., mentioned the possibility of one of her employees, Else Mogensen, contributing an article for the Danish group. Please contact Diane Manown at diman@rof.net if you have any suggestions. At this time, we are still looking for a volunteer contributor for Norwegian. If you are interested, please contact Diane at diman@rof.net.

3) We reported a very small (approximately $400) surplus this past fiscal year.

4) Edith Matteson is contemplating arranging a conference for the Nordic Division in Norway in 2002 similar to the one that was arranged in Denmark. Approximately five people indicated an interest in attending such a conference.

5) The need for more ATA accreditation exams was also discussed. We currently have accreditation exams in place for English>Finnish, Finnish>English, and Danish>English. We still need English>Danish, Norwegian>English, and English>Norwegian. The accreditation exams are here to stay, and will remain an option for members who wish to become accredited in order to indicate their skills and other professional qualifications. Marianne Dellinger volunteered to work on the English>Danish accreditation process, but indicated that she will not be able to do so until early 2002. We are looking for qualified volunteers who might be able to help out with the Norwegian and Swedish exams. If you are interested in doing so, please contact ATA directly (terry@atanet.org) or Edith Matteson at emmatteson@earthlink.net.

Please note that the ATA has decided that the “accreditation exams” will be known as “certification exams” at some time in the future. This is for reasons of linguistic correctness (organizations become “accredited,” private individuals become “certified”). In addition, stricter requirements for becoming certified will be implemented. For more information about this, please refer to information on the ATA website (www.atanet.org).

6) The meeting was adjourned after these discussions. Some of the members subsequently met on Friday evening for a delightful informal dinner at a Mexican restaurant on old historic Olvera Street.

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**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.
Where Do We Go from Here?

By Tim Alanero

Translation quality has been discussed in academic circles for some time. It was only in 1978, however, that it was recognized that in order to measure quality, a theory of translation must be in place. Hans J. Vermeer was the leading scholar who started what became known as Skopos theory, or functionalism. Much of the way in which we define the word localization today, and the ways in which the industry has evolved, are directly rooted in his work and that of his students.

Functionalism, in its most basic form, seeks to underscore the importance, as the name implies, of the function a given translation is supposed to have in the source and target languages. By this, it is meant that the delivery of the translation must not only meet the requirements of translation accuracy, but also the expectations of the end user. There, at its heart, is the raison d’être of the localization industry.

We would not speak of localization if what is considered to be an adequate translation consistently met the needs of the end user in the target language. Consider, for example, the subtle field of advertising. A well-known example is that of the German company Gardena, which manufactures high-quality garden tools, whose advertising extols the craftsmanship and technical superiority of its products. An accurate translation of an advertisement meant for the German audience is unlikely to resonate with a U.S. audience because the cultural expectation of the American consumer is usually assumed to be based on the ease of use or convenience of a tool versus the quality of the craftsmanship. As such, even an accurate translation is insufficient, suggesting that translation is part accuracy and part function, with neither holding a position of superiority.

It stands to reason, then, that a poor translation, or even a nontranslation, should be viable in a given culture if the poor quality or nontranslation is within the boundaries of what is expected in the target language. There are examples of this, such as Volkswagen’s Fahrvergnügen advertising in the U.S. and, even more unusual, the General Electric television advertisement that is broadcast across the U.S. only in Japanese.

The success of these endeavors is to be found, I believe, in the fact that, regardless of the language, the function remains the same and, as such, is capable of being generalized across two cultures. The Volkswagen ad, for example, played on the U.S. perception that German words are hard to pronounce and that Fahrvergnügen sounded like a disease. Viewers were subtly encouraged to “catch” Fahrvergnügen as an “ailment” of extreme pleasure that manifests itself in driving sporty cars. The General Electric ad spoke to U.S. values and traditions, such as nighttime baseball, even though the actors were Japanese. The logical conclusion is that accuracy and function are interrelated in ways that must be considered in...
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The Chinese Language Division in Los Angeles

By Yuanxi Ma

The Chinese Language Division (CLD) held its first meeting at the ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference in Los Angeles on November 2, 2001. Approximately 35 people participated. Yuanxi Ma (assistant administrator) reported on the work being performed by the Administrative Committee since the establishment of the CLD at the beginning of 2001. The following issues were discussed:

1. Preparation to establish the CLD by the Administrative Committee; drafted the CLD by-laws; and discussed the procedures and requirements for the establishment of the CLD with ATA Headquarters.

2. Recruitment of members (currently at 170).

3. Three issues of the CLD Newsletter published and sent to members.

4. Setting up a website (in progress).

5. Preparation for the 2002 budget (including passing out the budget to attendees for comments).

The attendees were then asked to briefly introduce themselves and tell a little bit about their past work and projects they are currently involved in. We also asked each person to write down their name and e-mail address, which will, together with the e-mail addresses of the members who were unable to attend the meeting, be compiled into a list and posted in the next issue of our newsletter.

The third item on our agenda was to solicit comments and suggestions from the attendees. The following ideas were suggested:

1. Setting up a CLD e-mail message board to help members and to enhance and protect their interests.

2. Creating a network for the exchange of terminology.

3. To save on postage, members felt that copies of the newsletter should be mailed out only to those members who cannot receive it electronically. Also, a number of people suggested that some articles be written in Chinese so that there will be a wider readership.

4. Contact with Chinese translators/interpreters organizations should be pursued.

Members of the CLD Administrative Committee are in the process of exploring ways to implement some of these suggestions.

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order to understand, and act upon, quality assurance in translation.

There is far more depth and scope to functionalism than can be covered here, but as a starting point we can see how this theory, taken in its most basic form, has determined the technology with which we work today. Furthermore, it seems more than coincidence that Germany has been at the forefront of various aspects of groundbreaking innovations in translation technology. This industry dominance appears to have had its genesis in a pragmatic approach to translation as a definable quantity, based on given functions for which different individuals are responsible.

A quick glance at the localization industry and translation memory technology is striking. In the realm of translation memory and associated technology, we find that a number of the major players are either headquartered or have their origins in or near Germany—Trados, founded in 1984 by Jochen Hummel and Iko Knyphausen in Stuttgart; Star, founded in 1984 in Stein am Rhein, Switzerland; and IBM’s translation manager division, headquartered in Stuttgart.

As the technology moved beyond translation memory to include workflow, terminology management, and cross-platform standards, and as the industry began to show profit, or potential thereof, there began a profound change in the field of translation which resulted in many mergers, acquisitions, and IPOs, as technology created efficiencies previously unobtainable. From this, the localization industry was born, which seems to represent an emerging relationship between translators and engineers that is still being defined.

The LISA conference featured a number of interesting exchanges fostered by a panel session hosted by the automotive industry that may indicate...

Continued on p.30
German Language Division Report from the Administrator

By Dorothee Racette

The 2000/2001 calendar has marked a busy time for the ATA's German Language Division. This report provides an overview of our activities during the past year, as well as an outlook on what is to come.

Membership

Division membership continues to grow rapidly and was last reported at 753 (up from 716 in October 2000), which makes the GLD the fourth largest division within the ATA after the Spanish, Interpreters, and French divisions.* This increase in membership was especially noticeable in the conference attendance and the session contributions in Los Angeles. Approximately 135 GLD members attended the conference and more than 80 were present at the annual business meeting.

GLD website

The division’s own website, which is now part of the ATA website, can be seen at www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/index.html. The site contains information on division activities, lists administrators, and also contains links to the online version of our newsletter, Interaktiv. As the site continues to grow, we welcome membership comments and input.

The GLD also maintains its own discussion forum under the auspices of Onelist.com. Any GLD member is welcome to join the group, and messages are available either as e-mail or in digest format. Further instructions on how to join can be found on the website under the address www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/list.html. Many thanks to Michael Metzger for his dedicated work with the website and the administration of the newsgroup!

...This report provides an overview of the German Language Division’s activities during the past year, as well as an outlook on what is to come...

A new division project is to establish a knowledge database for members at the site. Featured articles will address frequently asked questions. So far, three articles are available, and we hope to increase the number of represented topics over the coming year. The collection of bilingual contributions can be found at www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/conindexd.html.

GLD/conindexd.html.

Newsletter Interaktiv

The distribution of the newsletter was switched to electronic format for most members this year. Effective in April, 90% of members began to receive their newsletter by downloading a PDF file from the GLD website. The option to receive a printed version is still available upon request, and approximately 70 members have taken advantage of that option.

Our continued thanks go to the team producing Interaktiv. This past year was the last for our editor Marga Hannon, who decided to pass the office on after four years of excellent service. The new editor will be Christiane Bohnert. Manfred Winter has kindly agreed to continue his work with the newsletter, which has published four issues since the conference in Orlando. The lively new layout is the work of Karen Lawliss, and Janice Becker continues as our dedicated proofreader.

Budget

The decision to deliver the newsletter online to the majority of our members has led to significant budget savings. The elimination of the overhead payment of divisions to the ATA has also helped. Therefore, we decided to maintain the current membership fees of $15 per year. This year, the GLD was in a position to invite a speaker from Germany. We hope to invest the money saved in other places for future professional development and training events, including a potential GLD conference to be held in 2003.

Contacts with German-speaking Translators Associations

We were pleased to welcome leading BDÜ members Peter Schmitt, of Leipzig University, and Elke Limberger-Katsumi, of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, as speakers at our conference this year. During formal and informal talks, division members discussed plans of future cooperation with BDÜ in the form of communication platforms, exchanges, and partnership projects. An article about the Los Angeles conference is scheduled to be published in the official BDÜ newsletter, MDÜ, and will be reprinted in Interaktiv when it becomes available.

Los Angeles Conference Events

The ATA’s 42nd Annual Conference at the Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, October 31–November 3, 2001, was certainly one of the busiest ever. In accordance with figures received from ATA Headquarters, a total of 135 GLD members made the trip. Overall, slightly more than 1,300 people attended the conference.

The list of preconference seminars, which is growing longer from year to year, makes it obvious that many members are interested in taking seminars with small numbers of participants...
within an intense learning atmosphere. This year, the preconference program included two offerings for German translators: Robin Bonthrone again offered a highly successful seminar entitled “Der IAS- und US-GAAP-Anhang,” and Peter Schmitt, our guest speaker from the University of Leipzig, conducted a seminar in two parts entitled “Advanced Topics in English-German Translation.” Both seminars were well attended, and we hope to keep the tradition of offering such seminars alive in the future.

The official conference program, which formally began on Thursday, November 1, contained a number of very interesting and well-presented sessions for German<>English translators. This year, the conference organizers opted to keep events for specific language pairs in the same room whenever possible. This was a welcome change from hurried room changes between presentations, and allowed for a more continuous program.

Lois Feuerle and Joe McClinton spoke about translating written arguments in civil litigation, taking turns to explain the two sides of court proceedings. Their emphasis on translator pitfalls was especially interesting, and participants took many notes. A PowerPoint file with the text of the presentation is available upon request, either by e-mailing Joe McClinton at joe@jmctrans.com or by sending $2 and a SASE envelope (9x12 inch, $1.49 postage) to Lois M. Feuerle.

On Friday morning, Nicholas Hartmann gave an expert introduction to German patent translation. The text of his presentation can be found in the conference Proceedings. In fact, the information is so valuable that it should be reprinted in the ATA Chronicle for a larger audience. Karl Pfeiffer followed with his excellent presentation on “Industry and Terminology Standards in English-German Technical Translation: An Overview of Developments and Resources.” The translation of DIN standards can be a difficult challenge, and we are grateful that Karl Pfeiffer decided to post his presentation as an online resource at www.mypresentations.homestead.com.

In the afternoon, a presentation about translating German advertisement and marketing texts (presented by a representative of Siemens Language Services, as the original speaker, Mary Tannert, could not attend) highlighted the challenges of translating text that must have cultural and promotional appeal. Peter Schmitt, our guest speaker from Leipzig, then gave a comprehensive overview of translation studies at different institutions in Germany. In contrast to study options in the U.S., German universities offer a broad spectrum of language options and study specializations.

The German program was rounded off by a seminar for newcomers to the profession, presented by Dorothee Racette and Elke Limberger-Katsumi. The PowerPoint presentation for that session can be found at the GLD website at www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/beitrags.html.

Many GLD members also opted to give more general presentations for audiences across languages pairs at the conference, and made a valuable contribution to the program in that way.

The tragic events of September 2001 made it impossible for two of our speakers to travel to Los Angeles from Europe. Thus, Ingrid Haussteiner from Vienna was forced to cancel her presentation on terminological issues surrounding the introduction of Euro banknotes and coins and the transition to a common European currency. Even though the presentation had to be cancelled, an abstract of the article was printed in the conference Proceedings. A second presentation about financial translation by Elke Faundez of CLS Corporate Language Services in Basel, Switzerland, also had to be cancelled. We sincerely hope that the two speakers will be able to present their topics to us at a future conference. Many thanks for their willingness to contribute to the German program.

**GLD Annual Business Meeting**

More than 80 people attended the GLD’s annual business meeting on Thursday, November 1. Reports were submitted by Dorothee Racette (administrator), Michael Magee (assistant administrator), Michael Metzger (webmaster), and Marga Hannon (outgoing editor of Interaktiv). Dorothee Racette gave an overview of the current state of the division. The membership keeps growing and reached an all time high of 753 in September 2001. Due to a decision by the ATA Board of Directors, divisions no longer need to pay an overhead to ATA Headquarters, which is why the GLD budget of approximately $10,500 is balanced and contains funds for educational activities and future initiatives. Converting the distribution of the newsletter to an electronic format has been a financial success, even though the number of downloads seems to indicate that more needs to be done to advertise the download site and content of the newsletter to members. Approximately 70 people have chosen to receive a printed version by mail.

Assistant Administrator Michael Magee announced plans for a GLD conference to be held at a future date. A show of hands among the attendees of the business meeting indicated that roughly two-thirds would at least be interested in such an event. A committee has been formed to further explore the possibilities of such an event.
Where Do We Go from Here?
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the direction of the industry. Speakers included Lisa Stobierski, customer advocacy strategy manager for Ford Motor Company, Dennis McCury, integration manager for DaimlerChrysler Corporation, and Don Sirena, language translation manager for General Motors. Traditionally associated with high-tech industry, this seminar represented an unusual opportunity for the established automotive industry to present its view of the localization industry.

conference, which most likely would be held in 2003. Discussion focused on issues such as cost, location, and organizational challenges. The committee has established its own listserver discussion group, and will start by surveying the membership for interest and opinions about such an event. Please contact the administrator if you would like to be involved in the work of this committee.

Michael Metzger, webmaster, announced that the GLD listserver currently has about 150 members. In a new initiative for the website, the division has started a knowledge database, in which a collection of interesting articles on the profession will be kept to answer frequently asked questions. The articles are accessible to all at the GLD website. Michael Metzger agreed to serve the division for another year, but invited other members to become involved with maintaining the website.

Marga Hannon, the outgoing editor of Interaktiv, gave an overview of the past year’s activities. Four issues of Interaktiv were published, including the largest copy ever (28 pages) last December. Marga welcomed the new editor of Interaktiv, Christiane Bohnert, who, unfortunately, could not be present at the conference. She also thanked Manfred Winter, assistant editor, as well as past and current division administrators for their support. GLD Administrator Dorothee Racette thanked Marga for her dedicated services in the name of the division.

The discussion of new business included ways to improve the electronic distribution of the newsletter, as reader numbers apparently are quite low. It was agreed that instead of one announcement, there would be several e-mails reminding members to access the newsletter. The newsletter often contains important announcements and helps members stay connected, so it is important to bring readership numbers up.

The ATA Board has approved a simplification of the division election process. Elections for the GLD are scheduled for 2002, and Dorothee Racette asked for the formation of a nominating committee. Frieda Ruppaner-Lind and Ruth Zimmer-Boggs have graciously agreed to be part of the nominating committee. As soon as division election guidelines are published by the ATA, we will announce election candidates for 2002.

Social Events
On the social side, we were pleased to welcome over 90 GLD members to our own reception held at the conference hotel. Due to the growing numbers of conference attendees, the concept of meeting in a restaurant is becoming increasingly difficult. The well-attended reception was certainly an indication of interest, and we hope to develop the concept further for future conferences.

Fédération internationale des traducteurs (FIT) Archives

FIT is seeking academic institutions, libraries, or foundations interested in serving as a repository for FIT archival materials. Letters of interest should address the nature of ownership of archival materials, physical and staff resources allocated to collections, access to collections for research purposes, copyright, financial arrangements, and the level of organizational support.

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H3A 2S9
Wake Forest University, located in the beautiful foothills of the Southern Appalachians of North Carolina, offers one of the strongest liberal arts education programs in the United States. Many WFU students continue their education at Ivy League or other professionally recognized graduate programs. The university believes that a language requirement, along with those requirements in philosophy, theology, literature, and art, is essential to a thorough human science formation. Two years ago, WFU started a new and very much needed certificate program in Spanish translation and interpreting. It is only the third program of its kind in the U.S. to be offered at the undergraduate level.

There is a growing need for language services in our region. Over the past two years, North Carolina, particularly the western part of the state, has seen one of the fastest growing Hispanic populations in the country. With neighboring states experiencing similar immigration trends, the South is not so homogenous anymore. As a result, there is a need to offer not only interpreter and translator training, but also to educate future professionals about the value of language services. The certificate program at WFU was designed to address this situation.

The Romance Languages Department is fortunate to have as its chair a great modern literary scholar, Candelas Gala, who has an excellent grasp of what is happening in the language world outside academia. The university administration, headed by Dean Paul Escott, has also been very supportive, providing state-of-the-art equipment and other resources for the interpreting lab. Our certificate program was designed with a two-fold intention. First, we wanted to select, pre-train, and guide potential students who were thinking of pursuing a graduate degree in translating or interpreting. However, we also feel that it is of the utmost importance to educate even those who will never become interpreters or translators themselves about the value of language services to their chosen field.

The students who take my translation or interpreting classes very rarely want to pursue a career in the language profession. In most cases, they are just looking for an alternative to a literature major take advantage of these courses. However, I cannot introduce complicated texts in my courses because there are still many gaps in the students’ vocabulary. Even though a prerequisite for the interpreting program is a semester spent in a Spanish-speaking country along with many advanced language and literature classes, we still have to backtrack and start the course at a beginning translation level (although the class is not called Introduction to Translation).

Furthermore, since most of my students are not there to become translators or interpreters, offering an introductory course that is purely translation practice-oriented at the undergraduate level is a mistake. Students who have only a basic preparation in languages will rarely translate outside of the classroom. In most cases, constantly revising and working with dictionaries becomes tedious for students. Instead, they need to learn why they should care about translating and interpreting and how these practices relate to their chosen fields. Such a course might be the only information about TI to which students with no further language plans will ever be exposed. Therefore, we need to take advantage of this opportunity to teach students about the importance of quality language services, especially at institutions that can afford no more than one translation-related class per year in their curriculum.

In answer to this situation, my class structure presents a translating and interpreting process in a practical, field-oriented context. For example, in the translation class we review the differences between Spanish and English style and grammar (there is also a separate contrastive Spanish-English grammar and style course that students can take within the scope of the certificate program). We discuss translation strategies, translation dimensions (linguistical, cognitive, and pragmatic), and analyze stages of translating activity. We then focus on the translation and localization industry, and also talk about a translator’s psychological profile and qualifications.

What I would like to emphasize here is who usually attends these classes. The following statistical breakdown, representing three semesters of interpreting and translation classes, illustrates how many students from each major take advantage of these courses.

Pre-Med: 20%
Pre-Law: 20%
Political Science: 20%
Psychology: 10%
Business/Economics: 5%
Others (Religion, Spanish, etc.): 5%
I assume that the low enrollment of students studying business and economics is due to the existence of our “Spanish for Business” courses, which are offered simultaneously. These figures confirm my theory that we should start client education at the college level, otherwise we will miss the opportunity to inform future professionals early on about the importance of translating and interpreting.

In my courses, we discuss such topics as the definitions of various types of interpreting, how to write an informational guide for medical personnel who use interpreting services, the reliability of online terminological bases, and the pros and cons of subtitling and dubbing. I also like to invite professional translators in to share their experiences, including how they prepare for a job. Since the teaching mode is bilingual (optional during exams), students are able to express themselves freely. This is because, as I mentioned earlier, not all of them are highly proficient in Spanish. (Although, it should be said that students generally have a very good comprehension level.)

I believe that teaching the value of translating and interpreting to students entering other fields is the most effective way to diffuse the general public’s ignorance about the profession and to garner support and recognition of what we do. I fully acknowledge the value of training seminars, awareness videos (offered widely by our European and Australian colleagues), informational mass mailing, and special publications. However, I still see T/I classes at the undergraduate level as the best tool to educate those who will be decision-making leaders in various industries and institutions. Why? Because we have more time in the classroom to elaborate, through examples from the actual working world, on the importance of quality language services. Texts can be drawn from different professional fields so as to cover a much wider spectrum of the practical application of T/I services than would be possible during a one-day workshop. We can also fit in speakers, who usually have very tight schedules, because we are more flexible in adjusting to their availability (classes meet once or twice a week for 15 weeks).

Through classroom exercises, students also gain a better understanding of how difficult translating is by doing it themselves. They are encouraged to discuss situations from their own volunteering or certificate internship experiences. Of course, the fact that students are learning more eagerly because they care about their grade (at least those who need a high GPA) is not to be neglected either.

I have seen amazing results from the non-language-major students’ exposure to different facets of the language business. For example, I overheard one of my students correcting a colleague from another department who asked if the student was taking a translation course with Professor X. The student explained the difference between oral and written translation (because he was enrolled in the interpreting course) to the professor. Another student told me how she shared what she was learning in our class during a discussion in another course. Though these are positive signs, it is sad to see that the lack of proper terminology, understanding, and support for T/I professionals still prevails strongly in academia (sometimes even within the language departments). However, I am really glad to see great encouragement and enthusiasm for the T/I courses among the faculty of the Romance Languages Department at WFU. After all, when a client calls the department seeking help for their company, shouldn’t the departmental secretary be the first one to correct their terminology, even before referring them to an agency or a translation/interpreting student (depending on the client’s needs)?

A community-oriented internship in a field related to the student’s major is also a vital requirement for the Certificate in Interpreting. Whether at a North Carolina police station, law office, or women’s health clinic, my students might struggle to understand the different Guatemalan and Nicaraguan dialects, but they definitely will know enough to use the first person while interpreting and to demand professional treatment from their supervisors. The perception of lawyers, doctors, nurses, school principals, and hotel managers concerning the importance of language services is transformed just by being around our interns. When I go to observe the students at the end of their internships, their coworkers talk knowledgeably of glossaries (not vocabularies) and interpreters (not translators). The list of my students’ successful interventions in the real world is endless.

A revolving concern at the “Critical Link 3: Community Interpreting” conference in Montreal this past May was how to increase public recognition of our activities. I hope these ideas will contribute to the current debate on the necessity for increasing the public’s awareness of the T/I professions, and will give us a better idea of how to achieve this goal. We have a saying in Polish, Czym skorupka za młodu nasiąknie, tym na starsość traci. This could be translated into English with a less picturesque proverb, What youth is used to, age remembers, or into Latin as Quod nova testa capit, inveterata sapit. Let this be a motto not only to all the educators, but also to everybody who happens to have some influence.
over the young adepts of any modern trade. They all need to know how translators and interpreters work. If we are still discouraged by the disrespect, lack of recognition, ridiculous pay, or a TV screen message saying “voice of translator,” let us attempt to inform those whose brains are more receptive and really eager to learn.

Another reason I wrote this article was to respond to the one Harry Obst published in the February 2001 ATA Chronicle, entitled Interpreter Training in the United States, that attempted to describe the current situation of interpreting programs in the United States. I generally agree with Mr. Obst’s analysis, but the high cost of hiring instructors is only one of the many reasons behind the academic vacuum in T/I training. There is also, just to mention a few, the territorial nature of academia, the fear of losing literature students, and the lack of Ph.D.s in the field. The recent rapid growth in T/I should help by establishing translation studies as a recognized academic discipline. I am pleased to direct Mr. Obst to our new website, Careers in Languages, at http://lrc.wfu.edu/careersinlanguages/, where, next to other useful information for prospective language professionals, there is an updated list of training opportunities in the United States. In a way, this site came about as a reaction to the needs of my students. Many students do not realize that there are careers in language aside from becoming teachers and translators, and that knowledge of interpreting, terminology, and localization will also help them in their chosen professions.

My student assistant Laura Wray and I have dedicated an entire semester to the project of discovering what educational courses are available today (at least as of May 2001). We have followed the data from Translator and Interpreter Training in the USA: A Survey. Second Edition compiled by William M. Park (ATA: 1993) and did independent research on the Internet. As expected, many programs are unable to specify their focus, some of them are not sure of their future due to the lack of funding, and some places have stopped teaching T/I courses altogether but are still known as the best schools for translators and interpreters. Our site catalogues the programs by the nature of the education they offer. We tried to avoid any misunderstandings regarding the kind of degree you can obtain from each school. These are the categories: master’s degree, master’s degree with a focus in..., graduate certificates, distinct certificates, and undergraduate certificates/minors. We contacted every program we heard of either by e-mail or phone at least twice. If there was no response within a couple of months, we assumed (rightly so, I believe) that the program did not exist anymore. Any comments, suggestions, or contributions will be warmly welcomed and appreciated. Please also visit our certificate website at http://lrc.wfu.edu/certificates/.

Selected English-language references for a translation and/or interpreting awareness course:


Translating Official Documents for African Immigrants

By Adrián Fuentes Luque

Translating official documents from one language into another often poses singular and diverse peculiarities that frequently involve cultural, linguistic, sociological, and deontological considerations. This last aspect is common to any sworn translation, but is particularly prevalent in the translation of official foreign documents. When dealing with official documents presented by citizens of developing or third world countries for translation, to be used in their quest to obtain legal status in a given country, a new element is added to the above-mentioned factors. This type of documentation calls for translators to include a social component to their professional linguistic and cultural mediation—to empathize with the client’s situation.

Empathy, of course, does not mean that a professional sworn translator should in any way falsify or distort the information of the original document out of compassion for an individual. Instead, the sworn translator can express his goodwill in other ways, such as reducing or waiving his fee altogether. (Obviously, such a practice cannot be systematically carried out for pure reasons of economic survival.) Also, such goodwill frequently tests the translator’s expected professionalism. Translators may often feel compelled to make an additional effort to “rebuild” a flawed document, such as correcting defective writing, style errors, references, etc., in the commissioned translation.

The term “client” might not be the most appropriate one to use when referring to these situations. Although fine from a purely commercial perspective, the word seems out of place where the translation calls for the translator’s solidarity towards the financial possibilities and objectives of the individual who commissions the translation. Most of the time, especially in the case of developed countries geographically located near (or even bordering) other less developed ones, the “client” is an illegal immigrant from one of those underdeveloped countries who needs to obtain legal residency or a work permit in a host country. This is a particularly serious situation in certain European countries, such as France, Italy, Germany, and, perhaps most of Spain over the last few years, posing a wealth of labor, economic, ethnic, social, health, political, and cultural issues. There are a number of criminal organizations which profit greatly by smuggling immigrants into Spain (but also into France, Italy, or the U.K.), jeopardizing lives with false promises of a new and prosperous life in a land of milk and honey. Many of these immigrants come from the Northern African countries, mainly Morocco, but an increasingly large proportion of them are of sub-Saharan origin (mainly from Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Cameroon, Tanzania, but also from as far away as Namibia, Lesotho, Kenya, Ghana, The Gambia, or Botswana).

These people receive very little, if any, real information in their home countries about the necessary documents required in the host country. As a matter of fact, most of them do not have documentation of any kind. This makes regularizing their legal situation extremely difficult. Even properly identifying them is a challenge, and it sometimes becomes an almost impossible task to establish the real origin or nationality of these people. Some sworn interpreters have been in delicate court situations involving immigrants who claimed to be, for example, Rwandan or Tanzanian in order to be considered refugees and not immigrants. The maze of languages, dialects, and ethnic groups in these countries, together with the diverse and confusing character of territorial borders and armed conflicts, render identification extremely difficult to establish.

Types of Documents

Immigrants frequently arrive in the host country carrying all sorts of mixed documents. These can range...
from the appropriate and true original documents to papers blatantly falsified by one of the smuggling mafias. Among the documents worth mentioning are age certificates, divorce decrees, birth certificates, and university degrees and diplomas. In general, there are no unifying features that can clearly identify these documents. Each one follows its own requirements in terms of presenting the information and data, and they all follow a different style. They often appear unsigned, do not bear the signature of the holder or the affirmand, do not bear an official stamp, or are not printed on crested paper. In these cases, a possible appropriate translation strategy might be to avoid translations in the line of, for example: “This is the translation of a Nigerian birth certificate from English into...” A more neutral option, “This is the translation of a document written in the English language and presented to me for its translation into...” is perhaps both more desirable and adequate. **Translation Problems**

The following are some of the most frequent translation problems a sworn translator will come across when dealing with this type of commission. They were drawn from the conclusions of consultations with other Spanish sworn translators for the English language in different parts of Spain, and are presented here together with the results of my own personal experience.

**Gender:** Unfortunately, most people are not sufficiently familiar with the reality of sub-Saharan African immigrants, especially their different social and cultural contexts. We do not know their rituals, their norms, and social rules. We are equally unaware of the nature of their proper names. There is an established tendency in Spanish to determine, perhaps due to phonetic similarities, that proper names ending in, for example, “-a” or “-y” (such as Anna, Victoria, Jenny, or Nancy) are feminine and that those ending in “-o” are masculine. Translators often have to dig within the text in search of a clue that will enable them to determine whether a name like Iyabo, who presented a petition for divorce against Kammy, is the husband or the wife. (In this case, Iyabo turned out to be the wife and Kammy the husband.)

**Coherence and Correction:** Many African countries, like Nigeria, Uganda, Sierra Leone, or Liberia, have English as an official or co-official language (for instance, Kiswahili, Swahili, and English are all official languages in Tanzania). However, English is the primary language of commerce, administration, and higher education in most countries.

Another problem is that official documents written in English by the civil servants and nationals responsible for issuing them (supposing that all presented documents are really “official”) often leave much to be desired in terms of linguistic, grammatical, and syntactical coherence. Such flaws in the original document will have to be fixed by the translator in the target text. For example, let us look at an excerpt from a Nigerian divorce decree: “There is too child [sic] in between them xxx and yyy.” Further down in the same document it is not clear whether the petitioner is requesting the custody of one or both children: “Prayed to cout to award she custody of the child [sic].” Other errors of this kind are related to verb and grammar agreements (for instance, confusing shifts between the third and first person without following a clearly established criterion).

**Style:** In the same vein, the translator, as a mediator, recreates, and sometimes even specifically builds, the style and register that will be appropriate to the original document. Thus, in the divorce decree just mentioned, when the petitioner presents her arguments for the divorce claim, the original document contains a laconic and direct argumentative statement (“no more love”) and a concluding argumentative statement (“the unerable [sic]”), which obviously need to be changed accordingly.

**Cultural Elements:** These elements have to do largely with a country’s legal system. Official documents are often of a legal or administrative nature. Most of the African English-speaking countries have legal systems based on some form of common law (mostly inherited from the former colonial power), Islamic law, or even tribal or indigenous law (most of these being largely unfamiliar to Western societies).

We can distinguish several systems of reference on which English-speaking African countries base their legal systems.

- Those based on English common law and customary law (Uganda, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone). Sierra Leone also uses customary laws indigenous to local tribes. Nigeria and Kenya are part of this group as well, but they also base their legal systems on Islamic law and tribal law.
- Those based on other law systems (for instance, Rwanda’s legal system is based on German and Belgian civil law systems and customary law). Liberia has a dual system of statutory law based on

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Two Hands Clapping: Nuances of Sound and Style in Prose Translation

By Cindy Schuster

(Note: This article is based on a presentation given at the American Literary Translators Association Conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, in October 2001. The author wishes to express her appreciation for the generous feedback of many of her colleagues.)

For the would-be reader, an untranslated text may be as silent as the proverbial one hand clapping. Yet, when the translator’s hand joins the author’s, new sounds begin to emerge. Indeed, an often overlooked element in prose translation is the question of how best to render sound itself. Translators of poetry struggle with such elements as rhyme, meter, assonance, consonance, and alliteration as they attempt to preserve the musicality of verse, often finding themselves in the quandary of choosing between sound and “meaning.” While the importance of sound in poetry is apparent, translators of literary prose must also examine the workings of sound in their texts, identifying its functions and striving to approximate a parallel construct that will retain the multiple levels of meaning and effect that sound can produce.

In his essay, “No Two Snowflakes Are Alike: Translation as Metaphor,” Gregory Rabassa illustrates this dilemma with examples of sounds derived from animals and musical instruments:

More deadly even than personal and cultural nuances in hindering an ‘exact’ translation is the very sound of languages and the words that constitute them…. The rooster has shown us that onomatopoeia varies from tongue to tongue [Rabassa has previously noted that the English ‘cock-a-doodle-doo,’ is rendered ‘qui-qui-ri-qui’ in Spanish], and authors will marshal the very sounds of their language in order to squeeze out its ultimate effects…. Verlaine organizes the sounds peculiar to the French language to imitate the wail of a violin…. ‘Les sanglots longs des violons de l’automne.’ English simply has no matching nasal sounds in words that would convey the meaning, unless we turn to trombones, and then we have changed instruments, although that may be more in keeping with what translation is all about.¹

From barnyard to orchestra pit, the challenge of translating those two cries (the crow and the sob) in all their nuances abound.

Moreover, the use of sound in this text helps to define and distinguish the psychological values that the character associates with different physical spaces.

In the story, “Difícil situación,” which I’ve translated as “Tight Spot,” Puga tells a wickedly funny tale of alienation, paranoia, and rage against complacency. A woman goes into a photo shop in Oxford, England, ostensibly to get some film developed. She somehow finds herself in a battle of wills with the shopkeeper, whom she perceives as condescending and dismissive. She begins to unravel, to dissociate, acting progressively more bizarre as the power struggle escalates and the shopkeeper attempts to get rid of her. Finally, exasperated with the standoff, she threatens him with an imaginary bomb, and realizes that she has painted herself into a corner.

Here are the opening lines of the story in the original Spanish, followed by a literal gloss and two successive revisions in English:

Original text:

La campanilla restalla como látigo. La puerta ha exhalado un sonido rebotado. Como de balín en los goznes. Todas las puertas de todos los comercios pequeños de Oxford son así. Siento el mugir de los autobuses afuera, pero ya estoy dentro de la tienda; la puerta se cierra suavemente.²

Literal translation:

The small bell/restalla como látigo. La puerta ha exhalado un sonido rebotado. Como de balín en los goznes. Todas las puertas de todos los comercios pequeños de Oxford son así. Siento el mugir de los autobuses afuera, pero ya estoy dentro de la tienda; la puerta se cierra suavemente.²

Literal translation:

The small bell/restalla como látigo. La puerta ha exhalado un sonido rebotado. Como de balín en los goznes. Todas las puertas de todos los comercios pequeños de Oxford son así. Siento el mugir de los autobuses afuera, pero ya estoy dentro de la tienda; la puerta se cierra suavemente.²

...For the would-be reader, an untranslated text may be as silent as the proverbial one hand clapping. Yet, when the translator’s hand joins the author’s, new sounds begin to emerge...
but I am already inside the store; the door closes gently.

Revision 1:
The jangle of the little bell above the door cracks like a whip. The wheezing of the door reverberates. The squeaky ricochet of hinges. All the doors of all the little shops in Oxford make the same noise. I can hear the low murmur of the doors out in the street, but by now I am inside the store; the door closes with a gentle click.

Final Draft:
The little bell above the door snaps back like a whip. A reverberating wheeze; the squeaky ricochet of hinges. All the doors of all the little shops in Oxford make the same noise. I can hear the mooing of the doors out in the street, but by now I am inside the store; the door closes behind me with a gentle click.

The first problem that presents itself concerns the translation of the sounds of the door as it opens. These are very specific to a particular kind of door, and the translation must respect that. At the same time, the words used to describe those sounds begin to give the reader a hint of insight into the character’s psychological state. Moreover, these sounds present an apparent contradiction. How can a bell, with its multiple, high-pitched, metallic sound, also sound like the crack of a whip? Clearly the whip is being used metaphorically to suggest tension and edginess; perhaps even power and the threat of punishment. Somehow both the bell and the cracking sounds come through in Spanish: “La campanilla restalla como látigo.” (I suspect the onomatopoetic echoes of “illa” and “alla” embedded in the words may have something to do with allowing the reader of the Spanish text to hear the bell.)

One strategy would be to look at which verbs might be used to translate “restalla.” In (American) English, to say that a bell “cracks” brings up visual images of the Liberty Bell, rather than the sound we’re after. “Snaps” would also give us the sound of the whip, yet while both “cracks” and “snaps” hint at the character’s mental state (she snaps, or cracks up), we still haven’t resolved the initial problem. “Snaps like a whip” also calls to mind the unfortunate “whippersnapper.” On the other hand, one might try translating the verb into a sound more consistent with a bell (clinks, tinkles, rings, etc.), but none of these sound like a whip. Replacing “whip” with “strap” or “switch” doesn’t help either, although “switch” does give us the idea of a sudden change, which is consistent with the text.

“Doorbell” presents its own set of problems: 1) perhaps adding one too many “doors” to the passage, and 2) causing the American reader to think of a “ding-dong” or buzzing sound (not the actual bell referred to in this context). One might opt to amplify “campanilla” to include its sound as well as its location to clarify what kind of bell it is, as in Revision 1: “The jangle of the little bell above the door cracks like a whip.” The juxtaposition of these two sounds sets up a dissonance consistent with the tone of the story, yet it seems like something of a mouthful. Too many words, too much information, and a rushed rhythm that suddenly slows as we arrive at the word “cracks,” placing too much emphasis on that word (in Spanish, the emphasis is on “látigo” [whip]). Upon further investigation, I discovered that this kind of bell is often mounted on a spring device which causes it to “snap back” against a metal plate after the door is opened. This information led to the final draft: “The little bell above the door snaps back like a whip,” which is faithful to the sound as well as its metaphorical value.

But we’re not out of the woods yet. “La puerta ha exhalado un sonido rebotado. Como de balín en los goznes.” There is considerable awkwardness in a door that “has breathed a bouncing [etc.] sound,” and to remedy this my approach was to try to find a way to express that sound without actually saying the word “sound.” Let’s begin with the verb. “Breathe” seems too neutral and quiet. “Exhale” might suggest a sighing sound, but “wheeze” is hoarser and more akin to the doubling of the sound that is described, though it is a bit of a liberty. I opted for “reverberates,” both to capture the “bouncing” nature of the sound as well as to avoid the present perfect construction “has wheezed.” “Reverberates” works nicely, since it does just that while allowing us to keep the verb in the present tense. I then transposed “ricochet” into the following sentence where it implies the sound of a shot, suggesting tension and an undercurrent of violence with unpredictable consequences, which is appropriate in the context of the story. The word “balín” further complicates matters. The many native Spanish speakers with whom I consulted could not agree on its meaning. The possibility that the more obscure, but in this context logical (and consistent with Mexican Spanish), usage of “balín” to mean “ball bearing,” caused me to shy away from using the word “shot.” The inference is that the bearing is in need of lubrication, giving us a squeaky hinge.
Upon further revision, I explored ways in which I might omit the word “door,” since I had added it to the previous sentence. I considered saying simply: “A wheeze reverberates,” but that seemed too choppy even for a text in which choppiness is often deliberate. “A reverberating wheeze” seemed to flow more easily, but presented a certain ambiguity. Written this way, it sounds as if the wheeze describes the bell, not the door. Joining the two fragments with a semicolon (“A reverberating wheeze; the squeaky ricochet of hinges”) connects the wheeze with the door and respects the rhythm and the sound, even while altering the syntax.

The next line was relatively simple. “Todas las puertas de todos los comercios pequeños de Oxford son así.” “Make the same noise” communicates the idea (the shops are similar because their doors sound the same) more concisely than the rather flat-sounding “are like that.”

In the final sentence of this passage, sound serves as a vehicle to establish a metaphorical contrast between the two spaces in which the narrative occurs—inside and outside the shop. The confines of the shop function as a kind of prison or trap for the protagonist, and it is the space in which emotions are heightened and the conflict plays itself out. In Spanish, “siento” means “I feel/perceive” as well as “I hear,” which is more commonly expressed as “oigo.” By translating it as “I can hear,” we underline the subtlety of the character’s perception, as well as the contrast between the muted, neutral “outside” sounds that still enter into her consciousness, and the sharp, grating “inside” sounds she associates with the shop. The outside world is ordinary, nonthreatening, and innocent. When the protagonist finally manages to “escape” from the shop, she is able to breathe a sigh of relief.

This brings us to the “mooing” of the buses.” While “mooing” is a bit odd in this context, it can be argued that: 1) it preserves the onomatopoeia of “mugir,” which specifically refers to the sound made by a cow, 2) it suggests the peculiarity of the character’s perceptions, and 3) it’s an odd, somewhat comic, choice in Spanish as well. The word “bellowing” is synonymous to a certain extent, and “the bellowing of the buses” does have a nice alliterative ring to it. Unfortunately, it suggests, too strongly to my ear, collocative associations with anger (bellowing with rage), whereas “moo” evokes a more pastoral sensation of tranquility, a reassuring bovine sluggishness. “Roaring” has a similar effect to that of “bellowing,” and beyond that calls to mind more feral animals. Revision 1 uses “low murmur” in an inventive, but ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to suggest “moo” by converting its verbal synonym “low” into an adjective. Despite its unconventional use, “mooing” appears to be the sound we’re after, and the final draft returns to the original, literal translation.

Finally, once inside the store, the protagonist has definitively crossed the threshold into the realm of contention. Accordingly, I chose to amplify “closes gently” to “closes with a gentle click” so as to add a slight onomatopoeic punctuation to the metaphorical value of the inside/outside dichotomy. That “click” makes the distinction between the two spaces clearer and functions to lock the character into a claustrophobic space. The further amplification to “closes behind me” turns the key in that lock just another notch.

Sound, then, can operate on multiple levels in a literary text, subtly communicating an undercurrent of information not explicitly stated. We have seen how the squeaks and snaps made by a simple door, beyond convincingly depicting the setting, also manage to convey, through the displacement of metaphor and the sensory immediacy of onomatopoeia, a character’s psychological state. It falls to the translator’s hand to meet and match these sounds in concert.

Notes

Some Thoughts on the Modern Scientific Principle of Systematic Oversimplification

By Steve Vlasta Vitek

No matter how many times you may try to wash a black dog, it will not turn him into a white dog.

(An Indian proverb discovered on a website of a translator in Japan)

It was a dark and stormy night in eastern Virginia on the Chesapeake Bay. I was watching a rerun of “Buffy, The Vampire Slayer” with my preteen children, fancying myself as Giles (definitely not Spike or Angel). After all, I am often as lugubriously absentminded as Giles, I presume to be an expert in a dark and secret lore (technical translation), I also have a funny accent, and, unlike Giles, I speak fluent Slovakian!

Sometimes I get bored while watching TV and turn on my laptop during one of the commercials. If there is nothing of interest in my e-mail, I fire up a search engine like Google or AskJeeves to check up on my competition by typing “Japanese patent translators” or something like that into the search field, often never to come back to Buffy’s latest count of slain bloodsucking monsters (my kids will gladly fill me in later). Hundreds or thousands of hits usually come back after such a search. Some of the resulting webpages are from translation companies and agencies in the U.S. and around the world, and some are from individual translators. It seems that translators are finally waking up to the opportunities of a worldwide market on the Internet that is now as open to an individual player as it is to a multinational corporation. For example, if you search for “Korean translator,” some interesting website is bound to come up in California, England, or somewhere else. This is also a good way to find out how much other people are charging for what you do.

Teams of language- and subject-qualified experts carefully check and recheck our translations!

Every agency and individual usually claims that their translations are carefully proofread and checked for accuracy, style, cultural compatibility, etc., so as to guarantee a superior product (although all other agencies and individuals claim the same thing). Translation agencies usually claim that their product is superior because they have teams of experts who carefully check and recheck the translation until they are able to shape the final product into a perfect form. Individual translators sometimes pay for a proofreader, or else have their wives or husbands proofread the translation. (Of course, some wives don’t mind this chore since they get to criticize what their husbands are doing wrong. This in turn requires the husbands to thank their wives profusely, sometimes with money, flowers, or by at least taking them to a sushi bar every now and then—which can cost about as much as having a full-time employee! In fact, even if the original translation is good or excellent, it is a very good idea to have a fresh pair of eyes look at it again to find errors, omissions, typos, etc., because we can’t usually see our own mistakes until somebody else points them out to us. However, I am very skeptical when it comes to claims of “teams of language- and subject-qualified experts” who labor tirelessly on a translation until a perfect match is achieved between the meaning of the original and the translated product, which will “read as if it has been written in English in the first place.” I think that this whole concept is mostly an advertising gimmick aimed at gullible, monolingual translation consumers.

So why have I never had a single call from a language- and subject-qualified expert since 1987?

Although most of my income is derived from my direct clients, mostly patent law firms, I still work for translation agencies. Based on my interactions with U.S. agencies since 1987, I am sorry to say that I don’t know a single one that has on its staff “teams of subject-qualified experts” who would be able to add much, if any, value to my translations of Japanese patents by pointing out, for example, mistranslated terms or incorrectly interpreted Japanese parts of speech. For some reason, not even one such expert has called me in the last 14 years or so.

Most of the time, I only get a call from an agency if I skip a line of Japanese text or if a recognizable (Arabic, not Chinese) number is missing in the otherwise Japanese, and thus completely incomprehensible, document. This is because their proofreaders can almost never read any Japanese. Frequently, these are kids (I think I can say that now because I will hit the big five-0 pretty soon) who may know some French or Russian and work part-time as a translation coordinator/proofreader.

Though these kids seem pretty bright (although not all of them are as deferential to me as I think they should be), most are completely monolingual. Needless to say, none of them are equally fluent in...
Japanese and English, and at the same time also experienced in the translation of highly technical Japanese patents into English. This is probably because if they were language- and subject-qualified experts, they could make much more money translating the same patents than by working for an agency. Even a monolingual checker can catch omissions and typos and thus add some value to a translation, because even the best translators make mistakes sometime, especially when under the constant pressure of one deadline after another.

If the original translation is good, there is not much that can or should be done with it, other than catching the occasional typo or omission. If the original translation is mediocre but still makes sense, you can perhaps fix a few technical terms or clumsy expressions, but that is about the only thing that can be done. And you can only do it if you happen to be a more experienced translator than the first translator.

**Typical monolinguals are likely to do more harm than good with their editing of translations**

That is why typical monolinguals, even very smart monolinguals, are likely to do more harm than good to a highly technical translation if they try to change the meaning of something that may “sound strange” to them without understanding the meaning of the original and/or the technical context. The smarter ones try to stick to fixing up typos and carefully checking for omissions by matching the lines and paragraphs. They know that patents in strange languages are likely to be “strange” by definition. If a translation of a Japanese patent sounds like a beautiful excerpt from another great American novel, it is most likely not a very good translation. A Japanese patent is not supposed to read like a novel, so if it does, chances are that the translation is not being faithful to the original text.

When one strives to achieve a balance between the principles of fidelity to the original and elegance of expression in the target language (a mighty struggle we all go through every day), it probably makes sense to emphasize elegance of expression in some types of commercial translations. Patents are translated to provide technical evidence that is often used in courts of law. Every minor mistranslation or a slight change of meaning, which is usually not terribly clear in the original, can basically destroy the purpose of the whole translation. The best protection against a mistranslation is matching the right kind of translation with the right kind of translator. The problem is that unless an agency specializes in a certain field or language(s), the coordinator often has no idea what is in the text that is being sent to a freelance translator. Once a mistake is made and the wrong person accepts the wrong kind of work, the only remedy is usually a retranslation when an angry client refuses to pay for an unusable product.

**If you are not sure about the translations you are selling, shouldn’t you be selling used cars or refrigerators instead?**

How many times have you received a call from a person asking whether you can translate “a document” in your language, and when you asked what kind of document, they told you that they were not sure? In my case, it is most of the time. A used car salesman who “is not sure” about the kind of car he is selling is probably going to lose his customer. A translation coordinator who is not sure about his product is also likely to eventually lose his customer, although it may take some time before the customer discovers problems with a translation. And the company who commissioned the translation will probably not be sure why they lost that customer.

Many clients are realizing that they may be better off working with a specialized translation agency or an individual translator rather than with an agency that translates “all fields and all languages.” When patent lawyers and paralegals run an Internet search, they will be more likely to send us an e-mail instead of calling the biggest advertisement in their local Yellow Pages (a common practice a few years ago) if we seem to have exactly what they are looking for on our website. The same principle is probably applicable to other specialized fields of translation.

But our potential clients who look for the right kind of specialists (who happen to be us) can only find us if we make it easy or at least possible for them to do so. We can do this by, among other things, having our own website, being listed on the ATA website, or with a listing on the site of our local translators organization. It is a lot of work to create a website that will serve this purpose, and it takes some time and costs money. But in the end, it is time and money well spent. As some of our clients are becoming more sophisticated about the nature of translation, they are beginning to realize that, short of hiring the perfect translator full-time for their company, which usually does not make sense for budgetary reasons, the only way to make sure that they get what they need is to enter into a long-term relationship with a professional translator or an agency that specializes in a fairly narrow field.
Excellent in the field of translation does not just suddenly fall from the sky. It is the result of a close relationship between translators and clients who supply the same materials to translators who work in the same field year after year. Instead of trying to wash a black dog that should have been white, or to paint a white dog black because we really wanted a black one, it makes much more sense to start with the dog who already has the desired color (i.e., the right translator) from the very beginning. For best results, you should still wash the dog (i.e., have the translation proofread carefully), just as long as you know that doing so won’t change its color!

The performance of some professions is suitable for teamwork, but teamwork may be less suitable for other professions. For example, a team of professional burger flippers working at Burger King will achieve the best results if the guy who chops onions and cole slaw can also make fries and defrost frozen ground meat, as well as run the cash register. Members of this professional team can be paid the equivalent of minimum wage because the skills required here can be learned easily, thus making each person easily replaceable.

However, some professions, like vampire slaying, picture painting, or translation in highly specialized fields, is less suitable for teamwork. When you have Buffy, Giles, and Willow going after the same monster with three different wooden sticks, the monster slayers could easily kill each other in the confusion of the fight, because vampire slaying is a highly individualistic art and not very suitable for teamwork. Imagine Vincent Van Gogh, Egon Schiele, and Thomas Kinkaide cooperating on the same picture. They would probably start fighting with each other, and one of them might end up missing an ear or some other body part as a result of their cooperation. I believe that three different translators collaborating on the same text would probably end up killing each other as well, because each of them is likely to be a supreme individualist using a different approach.

As I said in the beginning, it may not be such a good idea to try to wash a black dog and expect to get a white dog after the washing, or to paint a white dog black. I would get the color of the dog right the first time. And it makes no sense to try to repaint Van Gogh or Schiele into Kinkaideian glitz just because you want “to see the whole picture.” Each of the artists will paint a completely different picture of the same scene.

“It is vain to do with more what can be done with fewer.”

From what we know about translation, it seems to be more art than science and far from an easily learned skill such as flipping burgers. But even if we were to consider translation more science than art in order to try to apply scientific principles to it, I would vote for the well known, time-tested scientific principle called Occam’s Razor. This principle is named after William of Occam (1285–1349), an English Franciscan friar who taught philosophy in Oxford and Munich and, among other things, wrote antipapal pamphlets that influenced Luther and later paved the way for the Reformation. According to his maxim: “it is vain to do with more what can be done with fewer.” (Translation into modern English, almost seven centuries later: Keep it simple, stupid!) This means that the fewest possible assumptions should be made when explaining a thing, and that the simplest hypothesis is usually the best. What could be simpler than having one experienced and qualified translator translate a text and having a fresh pair of eyes (preferably ones that are qualified) proofread the translation afterwards? This is definitely easier than trying to do the same thing with the “teams of subject- and language-qualified experts” that some companies claim to have (which would most likely be prohibitively expensive). After all, more than seven centuries after Occam, science was called a systematic oversimplification by Karl Popper (1902–94), perhaps the most influential philosopher of science of the last century.

But the simplest and best solution…may not always be the easiest one!

When scientists take complicated processes and strip them down to their essentials, they can sometimes discover fundamental truths that apply to other processes. Amazingly, what scientists are trying to achieve in their laboratories is very similar to what poets, painters, and philosophers are trying to express with words, colors, shapes, and ideas. The problem is that the simplest and best solution may not always be as easy as it sounds. The simplest solution for the translation of a certain type of text in a specific language would be to have the person who knows the language and field in question answer the phone when a customer calls with a prospective translation. The same person could then either translate the text or send it to a translator they know who is qualified in that language and subject. In reality, however, this does not always happen. In fact, based on my interactions with agencies (“we have a document for you to translate, but we have no...”
 idea what’s in it because it is in Japanese, Slovak, etc.”), I know this does not happen too often.

Translation agencies who translate “everything” are hardly the only commercial or noncommercial providers of services in this country who do not seem to be paying much attention to actual and real knowledge of foreign languages. It would have been nice had there been personnel fluent in Arabic and other languages within the CIA, FBI, Immigration, and other taxpayer-funded organizations prior to September 11. Had we been able to actually understand communication between terrorists in foreign languages that we were no doubt monitoring with our superior technology, it might have saved a few thousand lives. I am hoping that we are doing more of it now, but I am not exactly holding my breath. It takes a long time before a country can change its monolingual view of the (known) universe. According to newspaper reports, there was a total of nine (!) college graduates who majored in the Arabic language in the U.S. in the year 2000. In a country as big as ours, chances are that ingrained attitudes will never change anyway. It is easier to spend more money on eavesdropping technology that nobody will actually listen to.

Even a well-known publishing house such as Alfred A. Knopf is “Two Steps Removed.”


“On behalf of more than 10 translators, editors or scholars of Hungarian literature, I wish to express our pleasure that Alfred A. Knopf has undertaken the American publication of one of Hungary’s most famous 20th-century authors, Sandor Marai. We are dismayed, however, that an author known for his distinctive Central European vision and his elegant Hungarian prose was translated not from the original work, but from a translation. The work in question is Marai’s short novel ‘Embers’ (review, Oct. 14). Since only the copyright page indicates that the German is the source edition, many readers will have the impression that the translation is from the language Marai wrote it in. It is not. That a major publisher should condone such a long-outmoded practice is regrettable. Will readers of this twice-filtered English text hear Marai’s voice nearly as much as they would in a fine translation by someone in tune with the non-Indo-European nuances of the Hungarian? Established translators of Hungarian to English do exist in a sufficient number for a publisher to secure a first-rate translation from the original…. What, after all, would American readers say about the works of an eminent German author reaching them not directly from German, but Hungarian?”

I have to wonder, unless you tell them, would they notice?

Anglo-American common law for the modern sector, and customary law based on unwritten tribal practices for the indigenous sector. Cameroon poses a unique situation both from a cultural and linguistic point of view, since it has French and English as official languages. Its legal system is based on the French civil law system, with a common law influence.

Examples of some of the situations to be encountered within these complex legal and cultural contexts include references to “dowry” and to certain forms of unmarried unions which are settled simply through family or tribal agreements, but still require a court decree to be officially dissolved.

Another curious but very interesting example is the translation of age certificates. This type of document is common to many English-speaking African countries. The certificate states the age or date of birth of the holder, and frequently does not bear the signature of the affirman (which, in principle, should render the document invalid for official purposes). This certificate also contains references to customary or tribal systems of registering births and deaths, where individuals are not registered in the official register of births, marriages, and deaths. Instead, a record is made in the “book” of the family, tribe, or ethnic group. This is shown in the official document using formulae like: “...I declare that at the age of... I am... years old.”
Discussions at the Fifth International Conference on Translation, held October 29-31, 2001, at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, ranged from Arabic technical terminology and Finnish websites to a Polish version of *Alice in Wonderland*. The year 2001 was declared the European Year of Languages in order to promote awareness of the great cultural and linguistic diversity in the European Union, and to encourage the learning of languages for personal and professional development. This has drawn some attention to languages of lesser dispersion in the EU. As a reflection of this, the conference was aptly entitled “Interculturality and Translation: Less-Translated Languages.”

The conference was organized by members of the Department of Translation and Interpretation at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, headed by Albert Branchadell. There was an emphasis on the wide array of languages taught within the department, which include Arabic, Chinese, Czech, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, and Russian. Papers were presented in four or five concurrent sessions throughout the three days of the conference. It was encouraging to see students from the university flock to get seats at the various sessions.

The well-known Catalan author, translator, and professor of anthropology and sociology, Joan Francesc Mira, who recently was awarded a “Premio Nacional” in Spain for his translation into Catalan of Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, was the keynote speaker. Professor Mira spoke in Catalan with simultaneous interpretation into Spanish and English. Although Catalan is not an official language of the EU, it is not correct to say that it is a less-dispersed language since it is more widely spoken than some of the 11 official languages of the EU. It can boast of being the tenth most translated source language in the world, and is an important part of Europe’s linguistic and cultural heritage.

The “role of translation in intercultural relations” was the general topic of this conference. Some of the areas covered included the role of translation in the promotion of linguistic diversity in Europe, the state of translation and translation theory in countries with less-translated languages, translation and cultural mediation, and cultural imperialism. The conference organizers wanted to make the world aware of the fact that English works are translated into other languages in much greater amounts than, for example, works in languages such as Arabic, Chinese, and Portuguese. In short, access to the translation market is not equal for all languages and cultures, although contact between cultures is increasing along with the demand for translation.

Papers at the conference included issues related to the Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Russian, Japanese, Catalan, Galician, Polish, Albanian, Italian, Finnish, Persian, Malay, Danish, Creole, Kartuli, and Portuguese languages. Albert Branchadell focused on the basic question of which criteria to use when determining whether a language can be categorized as one that is less-translated, explaining that the concept of a less-translated language is based on the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization’s statistics of literary translations. He argued that there are many other languages whose literature is not widely translated, but which are widely translated in many other fields (for example, Catalan). As a result, we may gain another perspective of whether a language is one that is less-translated by changing the criteria to include other subject areas.

Gemma Capellas commented on the fact that international institutions such as the United Nations and International Labour Organization use English and French as working languages, and that 90% of the working papers are written first in English and then translated into the other five official languages. She added that many of the translation rosters of these institutions are quite small in some languages and that translation work is often subcontracted to external agencies due to lack of volume, lack of professional translators in particular languages, and the need to reduce costs.

Anthony Pym explained that two general principles apply to translation to and from English. He observed that a language that has a lot of published material also tends to have a high volume of these works translated into other languages. At the same time, the more books there are published in a language, the lower the rate of translation tends to be into that language.

Another practice that works against less-translated languages, as discussed in a paper by Hildegard Resinger, is...
is the habit of writing in English in specialized and scientific publications, and even keeping citations and acronyms in English. Juan José Martínez claimed that the root of many of the problems of less-translated languages are social. For example, the mere writing of languages such as the Creole of the Reunion Islands is considered a political claim for the status of the language. Anna Meskhi argued for the importance of translating the Kartuli language, spoken by approximately five million people in Georgia, in order to make this culture, with its links to both ancient and modern civilization, accessible to the world. Vilelmini Sosoni examined multilingualism in Europe and the status of languages of lesser diffusion, such as Greek and Finnish, and the so-called minority languages, such as Catalan and Gaelic. She questioned whether multilingualism and multiculturalism have an effect on all languages or if this is limited to the languages of lesser diffusion. Dora Sales Salvador considered the concept of transcreation in relation to Indian fiction written in English, looking at this type of literature in terms of politics and as a fictional echo of multilingualism and interculturalism.

Translation techniques and strategies used in less-translated languages were presented by Dorota Pacek, who discussed the importance of form in imaginative literature as a means of creating special and unusual meaning. She analyzed different translations into Polish of puns, often said to be impossible to translate, from Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass. Inkeri Vehmas-Lehto’s paper dealt with explicitation as a translatorial strategy in literary translations from Russian into Finnish, focusing on optional explicitations that may come about by stylistic preferences and pragmatic explicitations caused by differences between cultures. Eva Jover analyzed different approaches to the translation into Spanish of Danish fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen. Karen Smith discussed the translation of advertising campaigns from English into Russian, focusing on the strategies employed in modes of address to direct a message at certain groups in order to create the desired relationship. She also discussed the possible transfer from English to Russian advertising. Anastasia Stratu discussed techniques useful for interpreting negotiations, based on concepts of semiotics. Lourdes Montoro presented a selection of Caribbean proverbs and sayings, commenting on problems such as syntax, vocabulary, and cultural differences between the source and the target language when rendering them into other languages. Seán Golden analyzed the methodologies of the Jesuits Matteo Ricci and Nicolas Longobardi in dealing with Chinese culture as a case study of the role of cultural imperatives in the process of cross-cultural transfer and intercultural understanding.

Other topics presented at the conference related to less-translated languages included a paper by Rachid Aarab which discussed the lack of necessary tools, the lack of financial support to carry out translation work, and the lack of translation education in some countries. Problems of terminology were the subject of a paper by Khaled Abdel Aziz, who spoke about the lack of standardized terminology for special fields, such as law, in the Arabic language. David Wilmsen focused on problems of translating modern technical terminology into Arabic with its wide regional variations. To illustrate, he discussed a document comprising a bid by a Spanish fisheries company for the sale of fish to a buyer in Cairo, for which the translation of common names of fish was extremely difficult because the terminology is not uniform across the Arab world. María Isabel Barroso commented on the difficulties of translating haiku verse, Héctor González discussed the translation of sports-related terms into Catalan, and Else Mogensen examined some issues concerning the translation of controlled English into Danish.

Also included were papers on the general field of translation. Chunshen Zhu surveyed the academic status of translation studies in China, reviewing research methodology and theory. Liu Yang presented a study of translation and censorship in China, analyzing the relationship between censorship and the selection of texts, translators, and translation strategies, as well as the response of readers. Other topics presented at the conference included: the role of some translators of less-translated languages in promoting these languages; translation in the theater and the cinema; the visibility of works in the Malay language in Britain; the translation of Egyptian classics into Catalan; dealing with numbers in consecutive interpretation from English to Chinese; Persian poetry and folk tales; the translation into Italian of the limericks of Edward Lear; the translation into Russian of Spanish poetry; and the translation of webpages. Papers on the translation of literary works included a wide array of classic authors, such as Fyodor Dostoyevski, Mikhail Bulgakov, Nagib Mahfuz, Fernando Pessoa, Mircea Eliade, Eugéne Ionesco, Witold Gombrowicz, Jorge Amado, and Rabelais.

Continued on p.53
Accreditation Forum: Accreditation Activities in Los Angeles

By Lilian Novas Van Vranken, ATA Accreditation Committee chair

The ATA Annual Conference is usually a very hectic time for graders and language chairs. It is a unique opportunity for graders to interact, exchange ideas, streamline standards, fine-tune grading skills, and forge a strong sense of camaraderie. It is also the venue where the Accreditation Committee meets to discuss policy, submit a report to the Board, and present a short summary of the committee’s activities to the membership during the association’s business meeting.

As we prepared for Los Angeles, many of us struggled to overcome our fears after the inconceivable 9/11 attacks. Suddenly, our lives and dreams shifted focus and nothing seemed relevant enough other than being close to our loved ones.

The initial jitters soon faded when we started seeing all the familiar faces of friends and colleagues in Los Angeles. The excitement started to build up and, before long, we were involved fully in the accreditation business.

During the conference, graders and language chairs attend two grading sessions that help them reinforce a particular skill. These workshops are repeated several times to give everyone a chance to attend without conflicting with other sessions.

Deputy Chair Celia Bohannon has the daunting and time-consuming task of deciding the subject of the workshop, preparing the exercises, and teaching every single one of the workshops (this year we had six!). This is a very difficult job because the exercises must be neutral, meaningful, and relevant enough to bridge the gap between language combinations. As most of us can attest, she does a superb job. Celia has an extraordinary ability to think in an abstract way and to come up with examples that we all find hard to sort through, that challenge our skills as graders, and that become a significant learning experience.

Regardless of how long graders and language chairs have been grading, they will always learn something new at the workshops. This year is particularly challenging as the accreditation program prepares to introduce dramatic changes.

The focus of the first grader workshop was to practice the new procedure that becomes effective with the 2001–2002 exam year: the two-grader consultation. This means that if the two original graders disagree about the pass/fail outcome of an exam, they must consult each other to seek agreement. Only if they cannot reach agreement will the exam be sent to a third grader, who in turn may consult with the initial graders or other graders in the workgroup.

Graders were encouraged to attend this workshop with others in their grading workgroup. If this was not possible, then graders worked with their counterparts grading in the other direction, with graders of into-English exams, or individually. It was an invaluable opportunity to further compare grading styles, and to continue the discussion about grading standards. We feel it will help streamline grading practices and ensure consistency in each language combination and throughout the language groups as well. We also consider this to be more beneficial to the candidate, since this process is almost like having each exam reviewed by a panel of experts.

The second grader workshop centered on the new form for practice test feedback. The intent is to make our evaluation of practice tests more consistent, less personal, and more efficient. We find that, no matter how carefully we word our comments to candidates (which has also been the subject of a previous grader workshop), it is too easy to hurt feelings and seem unprofessional in our feedback.

Also, the purpose of the practice test is to provide an introduction to the nature of the exam. It is not its function to attempt to teach the candidate how to understand the source language, how to translate, or how to write in the target language.

The new form contains an upgraded Framework for Standardized Error Marking (page 1) with more detailed categories of errors. Instead of simply marking an error as SP (spelling), we can now provide more feedback by marking D (accents and other diacritical marks) or C (case, upper/lower). Thus, it is not necessary to advise the candidate how to translate, or how to write in the target language.

The framework also includes a box for E+ (major plus), E- (major minus), e+ (minor plus), and e- (minor minus). The Accreditation Committee intends to develop a point system for grading exams, to be implemented in November 2002. The revised Framework, with plus and minus signs in the headings for major and minor errors (which still carry the same weight as before), provide

…The ATA Annual Conference is a unique opportunity for graders to interact, exchange ideas, streamline standards, fine-tune grading skills, and forge a strong sense of camaraderie…
a useful transition to grading with a point system. These marks will be used on practice tests and optionally used on exams during the 2001–2002 exam year.

Page 2 has a schematic description of the language skills of a professional translator tested by the accreditation exam and whether the candidate meets the criteria, as follows:

Comprehension of the source-language text.
Criterion: Translated text reflects a sound conceptual understanding of the material presented.

Translation techniques.
Criteria: Translated text conveys the full meaning of the original. Common translation pitfalls are avoided. Dictionaries are used effectively.

Writing in the target language.
Criteria: Translated text is coherent. Sentences are recast appropriately for target-language style and flow. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, syntax, and usage are appropriate.

For example, numerous errors in group G (grammar), P (punctuation), SP (spelling), C (case), WF (word form), U (usage), SY (syntax), and ST (style) suggest that the candidate does not meet the standard for writing in the target language.

In addition to the grader workshops, some language groups got together during their “extra” time to discuss passage guidelines for the 2001–2002 exam year. This is a careful and time-consuming process, whereby graders discuss what constitutes a major or a minor error and develop grading criteria for their specific language. It represents a large amount of work, but it is also a great chance to have a good time with fellow graders and to strengthen the bonds of camaraderie and friendship.

The conference is not the only grader training opportunity we offer. Language chairs meet at ATA Headquarters in March or April of each year for the Spring Meeting, where further training and policy discussions are held.

Last April, Celia conducted the first regional grader workshop in Boston. A cluster of graders in that area traveled a short distance for a one-day training session on the two-grader consultation process. The participating graders hailed it as a big success, lots of fun, and a wonderful opportunity to share insights with fellow graders.

The ATA Annual Conference in Los Angeles proved to be an exciting venue for graders and language chairs, and everyone involved in the accreditation program shares the enthusiasm for the new changes that will definitely streamline our program and improve the level of our credential.

Accreditation Forum: Accreditation Activities in Los Angeles Continued

Translating Official Documents for African Immigrants Continued from p.42

time of this birth was not officially registered but was recorded in the family record book [sic].”

Apparently, this is a common practice in a number of English-speaking African countries. On the other hand, many societies do not follow the Western calendar when making entries to their official birth registries. Instead, they resort to the curious system of establishing January 1 as the official date of birth for everyone born during the current year. Obviously, this leads to situations in which it is impossible to determine the exact age of the individual. I have encountered this situation at least a dozen times.

Conclusion

Translating official documentation for immigrants and foreign nationals presents special challenges to translators, since in many cases (such as when applying for a work permit or residency) these papers will often play a decisive role in the legal status of the individual commissioning the translation. Unfortunately, I have found that many translators do not have a thorough understanding of the structural, linguistic, social, and cultural nuances involved in the proper translation of these documents.

It would be both very useful and desirable for translators and interpreters to familiarize themselves with the different stages of the immigration regularization process, including the procedures, requirements, types of documents, and legal systems, in those countries from which they receive translation assignments. This would certainly greatly simplify their task, and would also help avoid misinterpretations. In this sense, the work of social workers proves to be of key importance, since they act as a link between the immigrants and the institutions involved (including the translator) and are, like the translator, intercultural mediators.
Diccionario Collazo inglés-español de informática, computación y otras materias (DIC)

Author: Javier L. Collazo
Publisher: McGraw-Hill Interamericana Editores, S.A. de C.V., Mexico
Publication Date: 2001
ISBN: 970-10-3428-7 for both volumes

Reviewed by: Rudy Heller

General Information:
Hardcover, heavy weight paper, with two-column pages. Standard presentation of English entries in bold, followed by the entry field in italics, then the Spanish translation, followed by numbered encyclopedic descriptions in separate paragraphs. Uses very readable font, comfortable leading. Contains 1,699 pages in two volumes.

While overall this review is very positive, let me get some basic complaints out of the way first:

• A paper-only dictionary in the year 2001—Why? I’d much rather have a CD-ROM that I can load onto my hard drive than have to deal with a bulky paper dictionary in which searching takes time. Allow me to load the data onto my hard drive and I’m a happy camper. So, Javier Collazo and McGraw-Hill Interamericana, consider this review to be a plea to come out with an electronic version of the book soon!

• A two (or more) volume dictionary. If having the dictionary in an electronic format is out of the question, I’d rather deal with one huge, thousands-of-pages monster that I place on an easel (our town librarian has given me the name of her supplier) and consult without ever closing it. Now every time I want to use it, I have to think about whether the break between volumes is before the “m” or after the “j” or whatever. There is probably a valid book-binding reason for going the two-volume route, but that does not negate the inconvenience to the user.

• More than one look-up location. I do not understand the Appendix “Suplemento léxico A” that is found in the back of Volume II of Collazo’s DIC. Why are these terms not in the basic corpus? Now I am forced to look up every term in two locations. Collazo even exhorts me to do this with the warning “conviene consultar este suplemento, ante la posibilidad de encontrar en él alguna información adicional de interés.” If the author and publishers are going to take the “supplementary/appendix” route, then I’d much rather pay something extra up front to get updated versions every so often, similar to what one does with software. I’d subscribe to the Collazo Dictionary Update Plan in a heartbeat. And that is another reason to go with an electronic format from the start.

Having issued these three basic complaints, let me move on to the good stuff. I’ve been hearing about this dictionary for at least five years, and it was well worth the wait. Collazo’s thoroughness is legendary (to wit, the popularity of his Diccionario enciclopédico de términos técnicos), and he did not let up at all in creating this masterpiece. Please be aware that this is a unidirectional dictionary (only English into Spanish, with the encyclopedic explanations written in Spanish).

The dictionary’s alphabetization is totally logical and intuitive. This may seem trivial, but use a dictionary such as Beigbeder’s Politécnico, where this logic is missing, and you’ll realize that alphabetizing is key. Plus, in Collazo’s DIC, every term is fully written out—no abbreviations or symbolic representations of repeated words. There are no lines or squiggles in this dictionary. Alphabetizing is endemic, even within entries, lists of synonyms, fields, and specializations. All of these are also carefully alphabetized.

The dictionary is encyclopedic. That is, for most terms there is not just a translation, but an explanation. This makes the DIC the translator’s ultimate tool. By way of example, let’s take a look at a standard entry:

six-phase rectifier (Elec) rectificador hexafásico.

Rectificador en el que se utilizan transformadores para obtener seis fuerzas electromotrices alternas que difieren en fase en 60° (un sexto de un ciclo) y que alimentan seis diodos o elementos de conducción unidireccional o asimétrica.

So the translation is there along with a description in Collazo’s impeccable syntax, chock full of terms you may need in other parts of your translation. Returning our attention to the above example, I often see the masculine adjectives “automotor” or “electromotor” used with a feminine noun. The careful translator will catch this error by reading the above description, where the correct “electromotriz” is used.
If you are questioning a term you’ve heard or seen, you will find secondary terms in the DIC, preceded with the words A VECES, MENOS FRECUENTE, TAMBIÉN, VARIANTES, ANGLICISMO, LOCALISMO, etc. Secondary terms may not be the most appropriate, but Collazo recognizes that they are commonly used. Shades of Manuel Seco’s dictum in his latest dictionary: “Si se usa, lo incluyo.” A good dictionary is not necessarily the one with the most terms and definitions, but the one with the most clarity and precision.

Collazo’s care and approach puts his book way above the rest. For example, let’s look at the term “jpeg.” This term comes across my screen all the time, yet I’ve never taken the trouble to find out that it stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group and that this group is an ISO committee. The brand new Microsoft Computer and Internet Dictionary doesn’t tell me that, but says, erroneously, that the extension I see on my screen is not .jpg but .jpeg.

For another example of the qualitative difference between these two dictionaries (both published in 2001 and both by McGraw Hill), let’s look at the term “buffer.” Collazo says: memoria intermedia, almacenador (almacenamiento) intermedio, compensador (de velocidad), memoria de tránsito. This is followed by a half-column, four-part explanation. Microsoft says: buffer; búfer, followed by a wimpy paragraph. Búfer? Give me a break!

Let’s compare a couple of more common terms given in Table 1. As is obvious from these examples, the difference is a matter of thoroughness and offering the translator choices.

I was not pleased with seeing several terms (for example, “browser”) both in the main lexicon and in the appendix. By the way, did you know that this term is actually an acronym: BRowsing Online With SElective Retrieval? Collazo’s preferred choices for this term are examinador, hojeador. I missed seeing explorador and the even more common navegador. As a matter of fact, I ran Collazo’s choices on several search engines, and the hits are significantly lower for examinador and hojeador than for the two terms that are missing. I did read an interview in which Collazo states that back in the days when Citizen Band Radio (CB) was catching on, “se publicaron muchas cosas tontas de las que ahora nadie se acuerda.” But personally, I think that explorador and navegador are here to stay, not so examinador and hojeador.

“Internet.” There is no Internet in the main corpus (except for the all-lowercase “internet,” entre redes, and a lengthy [one entire column] explanation of the Internet, which I found under the entry World Wide Web). And in the appendix, I noticed that Collazo has chosen to give Internet the feminine article (la—as opposed to el—Internet). Running this choice through several search engines confirms Collazo’s selection. The dictionary’s supplementary appendix does have a column and a half of terms that use the word Internet, starting out with one eight paragraphs long. These detailed descriptions are found throughout the dictionary. It is unfortunate, though, that they are not all together in one place. I only found the listing Internet in the main corpus by chance. I don’t want to harp on it, but, oh, do I miss the CD-ROM version with look-up functions that find all instances of a word instantly!

It is my hope that widespread use of this dictionary will go a long way towards standardizing the terminology of computer science and related fields, which are plagued by calques and extranjerismos. For example, with the term “word processing,” Collazo does list the often-heard

| Table 1 |
|---|---|
| **Collazo:** | **Microsoft:** |
| “ratón,” telecursor, teleíndice, puntero tipo ratón, telemando (rodante) de cursor. | Ratón |
| entrar, ingresar, dar entrada, dar ingreso, hacer ingresar (informática, datos)./introducir, meter; insertar; penetrar./inscribir, registrar, anotar, asentar; dar(le) asiento, dar(le) entrada (a una información en un libro de registro)./afiliarse, ingresar (en); hacerse socio (de), hacerse miembro (de)/(Adm/Com) cargar en cuenta; asentar, contabilizar | Entrar |
procesamiento de palabras, however, he clearly expresses his preference for the more correct procesamiento de textos. And under “word processing functions,” he translates and explains (with just the right brevity) 27 different WP functions that one so often runs into when translating from English into Spanish (regardless of one’s specialization). A word that has always made me cringe, “deletear” (a Spanglish bastardization of “to delete”), is not found here. In its place we find (take your pick) anular, cancelar, suprimir, borrar, tachar, suprimir, and eliminar (datos o programas de la memoria).

The dictionary definitely has a slant towards Latin American Spanish (computadora instead of ordenador, archivos instead of ficheros), although I have seen a sprinkled use of ficheros in some definitions. As in Collazo’s previous Diccionario Enciclopédico de Términos Técnicos, there is no mention of countries where this or that term is used. Everything seems written to promote a standardized, universal Spanish.

The DIC also has a huge collection of acronyms and abbreviations, all listed individually along with their complete spellings. For example, between “d’Alembert’s wave equation” and “damage,” I find DAMA (demand assignment multiple access), specified under the fields computación, Lingüística, Técnica especial, Telecom. I found it interesting that the DIC includes “translation software” but not “translation memory.”

I know that the Diccionario Collazo de informática, computación y otras materias is not yet available on U.S. bookshelves (the first printing did not include U.S. distribution rights). My favorite bookseller, Freek Lankhof, at ibdlt.com, tells me that a second edition is out and that he is going through all kinds of hoops to get some copies to sell to U.S. translators. A quick perusal of my shelves confirms the void that Collazo’s dictionary fills (bilingual computer dictionaries are still few and far between). Most are ancient: IBM (1975), Olivetti (1982), CAC’s Informática (1986), Aguilar’s Ordenadores (1969), Handel’s Electrónica (1962), Chandor’s Computadores (1970), and Maynard’s Procesamiento de datos (1978). However, in a field that has moved as fast as this one, these works are definitely pre-dinosaur.

Perusing ibd’s website, I also find newer informatics dictionaries like Rincón’s Diccionario conceptual de informática y comunicaciones (98, Paraninfo), the already slammed Microsoft dictionary (2000), Cebrián’s Diccionario de Internet (2000, Airtel), Alarcón’s monolingual Diccionario de informática e Internet (2000), and Wollhals’ Diccionario de tecnología de la información (97, Brandstetter). I’ve gone through all of these quickly and, as Freek pointed out, none of these have come close to Collazo’s opus.

Última palabra: The Diccionario Collazo de informática, computación y otras materias should be on every translator’s shelf. The list of central subjects covered is 22 items long and ranges (alphabetically from álgebra booleana through infotecnica, matemáticas, procesamiento de datos, and from televisión to videotecnia). Related fields that Collazo does not consider central to the DIC, but that are covered extensively, include: acústica, artes gráficas, cine, contabilidad mecanizada, física, geofísica, luminotecnia,
método del camino crítico, registro magnético, and tecnología especial. If you own the Diccionario Enciclopédico de Términos Técnicos (DETT, ISBN 0-07-079162-7), this is both a complementary work and an update of that classic. If you don’t have the DETT yet, go for broke and buy them both!

**Elsevier's Dictionary of Invertebrates (Excluding Insects)**

**Authors:**
Dr. Ilja Okáli, Dr. Miroslava Dulová, and Ing. Pavel Mokrá

**Publisher:**
Elsevier Science B.V.
(Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

**Publication Date:**
2000 (first edition)

**ISBN:**
0-444-50535-0

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$170/NLG 325/Euro 147.48

**Where Available:**
This book can be ordered directly from Elsevier's Amsterdam or New York offices, or by visiting their website (www.elsevier.com).

**Amsterdam Office:**
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Sara Burgerhartstraat 25
P.O. Box 211
1000 AE Amsterdam
The Netherlands

**U.S./Canada Office:**
Elsevier Science Inc.
P.O. Box 945
Madison Square Station
New York, N.Y. 10160-0757

**General Information:**
Multilingual dictionary in Latin, English, French, German, and Spanish. Hardbound with heavy stock quality paper and semi glossy, with very legible typeface. Contains 496 pages and 4,613 terms.

**Reviewed by:**
Marie-France Schreiber

The dictionary contains the national names of species and subspecies of invertebrates (excluding insects) found worldwide, including an abbreviated form of the phylum, class, order, and family of the zoological system for each name. It not only focuses on geographical areas, but also local names. Phyla covered include: Plasmodroma (plasmodromic animals), Ciliophora (ciliophores), Moruloidea (moruloid animals), Porifera (sponges), Cnidaria (enidarids), Platyheiminthes (flatworms), Nematheiminthes (roundworms), Acanthocephala (spiny-headed worms), Gephyrea (gephyrids), Nemertoidea (ribbon worms), Ascheiminthes (ascheiminths), Mollusca (mollusks), Annelida (ringworms), Tentaculata (tentaculates), Archipodi (archipidiates), and Arthropoda (joint-legged animals, excluding insects).

The preface and index sections of this book are in four languages. There is also a zoological system (a list classified by individual taxons in Latin) that forms the basis for the main section of the dictionary. English, French, German, and Spanish terms can be conveniently looked up in their respective indices, located at the back of the dictionary.

Let me point out that I would have never called this a dictionary. It is more a glossary; namely, a long list of terms in a numerical sequence, classified alphabetically according to families based in Latin. Each entry is usually translated into one or more languages, but not every term is necessarily available in all languages. No phonetic pronunciation is provided for any of the languages, nor is there any contextual or encyclopedic references outlined. There are also no illustrations of the invertebrates. This would have been a very nice touch for the avid learner or research aficionado.

I will attempt to illustrate what I mean by giving you a few examples. When I wanted to look up **hermit crab** in English to find out what its **scientific name** in Latin was and then

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>French</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hermit crab</td>
<td>745 Cancer pagurus XIV-CRU-dec-28</td>
<td>Crabe pagure; tourteau; crabe rouge; crabe de lune; crabe velours; crave tourteau; crabe dormeur; dormeur; crabe poupart; houvet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1731 Eupagurus bernhardus XVI-CRU-dec-16</td>
<td>Bernhard-l’hermite; pagure; soldat; Bernard; consilieux</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
find an equivalent translation into French, the information in Table 1 was the result (note there are two Latin references).

What term would you pick in French? Well, I settled for Bernhard-l’hermite. What is the most appropriate scientific name, then? I leave that response to a scientist. Next, see Table 2 for what I found when looking up the mollusk **coquilles St. Jacques** in French for an equivalent in English and Spanish.

In every one of these cases, it seems rather difficult, in my opinion, to choose an appropriate translation without prior scientific knowledge or an understanding of Latin etymology.

In terms of the accuracy of content, I am not a connoisseur of such creatures, but I believe any scientist fascinated by this field of study would find this dictionary quite useful if he needed to translate scientific terms into lay or common terms in any of the given target languages provided. However, the average translator looking for an English–French translation of a term or even a scientific name equivalent would find this process quite awkward and time-consuming. I truly think you need to be scientifically inclined to use this dictionary creatively.

**Elsevier’s Dictionary of Entomology**

**Author:** Murray Wrobel  
**Publisher:** Elsevier Science B.V. (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)  
**Publication Date:** 2001 (First Edition)  
**ISBN:** 0-444-50392-7  
**Price:** $148/NLG 300/Euro 136.13  
**Where Available:** This book can be ordered directly from Elsevier’s Amsterdam or New York offices, or by visiting their website (www.elsevier.com).  
**Amsterdam Office:** Elsevier Science Inc. Sara Burgerhartstraat 25 P.O. Box 211 1000 AE Amsterdam The Netherlands  
**U.S./Canada Office:** Elsevier Science Inc. P.O. Box 945 Madison Square Station New York, N.Y. 10160-0757  
**General Information:** Multilingual dictionary in Latin, English, French, German, and Italian. Hardbound with heavy stock quality paper and semi-glossy, with very legible typeface. Contains 386 pages and 4,947 terms.

**Reviewed by:** Marie-France Schreiber

This dictionary was compiled as a companion volume to *Elsevier’s Dictionary of Butterflies and Moths*. Its purpose is to give an overview of the common names of insects other than butterflies and moths. It contains, in alphabetical order, the scientific names of orders, families, genera, and species of insects, spiders, snails, and other invertebrates found in Europe, North America, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. French-speaking Canadian terms are also included.

There is a brief preface section in English as well as an English, German, French, and Italian index located at the back of the book, where terms can be looked up. The contents is a numerical listing of Latin scientific names with their respective English, German, French, and Italian translation, whenever applicable.

Overall, this dictionary/glossary is set up the same way as *Elsevier’s Dictionary of Invertebrates (Excluding Insects)*, except there appears to be...
Some ATA members may in fact have worked as language coaches for the motion picture industry, but the Translation Inquirer has heard of a, probably, unique instance in the New Zealand Lord of the Rings project. Apparently, individuals were hired to coach actors and actresses in the correct pronunciation of a nonexistent language, one based loosely on a combination of Welsh and Finnish, invented by J.R.R. Tolkien. Sure enough, the first installment, the Fellowship of the Rings, has English subtitles for Tolkien’s Elvish. How fanatical can you get?

New Queries

(E-D 2-02/1) Possibly related to the English-Italian query below, the military slang verb phrase to pull rank came up in a context where Dutch was needed. Presumably, the best possible translation would be one that would come from the Dutch military, but maybe in a perfect military service such behavior never occurs….

(E-F 2-02/2) This financial query leaves open an apparent range of choices for the French rendering, because tax default, the term causing the problem, may be viewed as either intentional or unintentional. Perhaps the context from the original document may help: …these agreements include one agreement for encouraging and protecting investments, and another for avoiding dual taxation and preventing tax default. Clearly it’s a no-no, but as we all know, you can run into tax problems without meaning to!

(E-F 2-02/3) This query should provoke a good deal of creative fun, as it was doing when last seen in a not-yet-solved condition on Lantra-L. The colloquialism in English is If it looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck… [implied:] chances are, it’s a duck! The last five words may or may not be included if something appropriate and parallel can be found in French.

(E-I 2-02/4) Among a dreary list of all the negative things that can happen to a person as a result of being in a family, a ProZ member found the neologism parentification. At first glance, an amateur is tempted to think maybe this is the role-playing done by a sibling to lord it over another sibling. However, this is a well-defined buzzword in psychology. Exactly what does it refer to, and how would one render it into good Italian?

(E-R 2-02/5) Can this be? Surely the term fast-forward can scarcely be applicable to compact disk players, and yet a description of how one works says exactly that: After 3 seconds, the CD begins to fast-forward until the rocker button is released. The elapsed time is displayed while the CD fast-forwards. The context sentences repeat the idea twice, giving one the notion that somehow compact disk terminology has preserved at least some of the traditional audio tape recorder jargon. If so, unwise to pronouncing or wise to pronouncing could be the Russian renderings of choice. Or is something else more appropriate?

(E-R 2-02/6) A Lantra-L member wished to know how to render Mandarin Chinese (the name for the language, that is) into Russian.

(E-Sw 2-02/7) In the context of materials written about the quality of a controlling valve in a loading machine, a ProZ member had trouble with float detent. The context: 3-spool, open center type with float detent on lift and electrically controlled auxiliary spool. Swedish equivalent needed, please.

(G-E 2-02/8) A ProZ correspondent working on a patent ran into the contrast between “entgegen” and “abgewandt” in the following statement regarding a screw fastening system: “Vorzugsweise schließt sich an das Setzrichtungseitig abgewandte Ende des Gewindes ein Nachgewinde an, das eine entgegen der Setzrichtung abnehmende Flankenbreite aufweist.” The question is whether the former is best rendered as facing away, and the latter as facing (“zur Setzrichtung hin”).

Old Queries, No Replies Yet

As far as I can see, there was never a peep from anyone regarding the two queries below, which appeared on page 58 of the May 2000 Chronicle. No one is ever likely to accuse this column of having too much Finnish, so back in they go:

(FI-E 5-2000/12) Yngve Roennike wonders whether “suuntautuneisuus” is best rendered as direct approach in English.

(FI-E 5-2000/13) In connection with pulp-related machinery, Yngve needs to know the meaning of “käppyri.”

Replies to Old Queries

(E-I 9-01/4) (stipulated default): Berto Berti would translate this as “inadempienza concordata” or “debito concordato.”
(G-Sw 8-01/11) (….Scheinselfständigkeit mit einhergehenden Unterlaufen der Beschränkungen der Arbeitszeit….): Sigrid Junkermann is kind enough to provide some concrete examples of this sort of legal dodge that creates pseudo-independent contractors: waiters who “rent” parts of a restaurant, and slaughterhouse workers who come to work every day under a special contract to use a position on the “dis-assembly line” (which, I suppose, is the only way one could describe the workplace at a slaughterhouse). The people described really are employees, but they use these dodges in order to work longer, not shorter, hours.

(R-E 11-01/7) (илл.103): For this, Jim Shipp refers us to a fine, comprehensive work by Druker and Avrutin, the Comprehensive Russian Computer Dictionary, published in 1999 by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Computer Society. It goes in both directions. When he read the query, gateway popped into his head, and the above dictionary confirmed it: илл.103 = gateway, Internet gateway. Additionally listed was илл.103обои север, gateway server.

(Sp-E 11-01/8) (“asociación en participación”): Gabriela Meilij-Romero believes this ought to be translated as joint venture, even though in Argentina the Spanish version would be “sociedad en participación.” “Asociación,” she says, is used for nonprofit institutions.

Just four responses in a month, from an organization that numbers over eight thousand? Some of the chat rooms of translation-related cybersites have that many responses, and more, in an hour!

Dictionary Reviews Continued from p.51

fewer terms available in all languages. English seems to be the predominant language represented.

I would also like to make an observation regarding the layout of the multilingual indices. Listing the names in alphabetical order does not assist the researcher in trying to locate an insect. For instance, if you were looking for a particular beetle, the only term you find in the English Index is Beetles. You would need to know the full name of the beetle to look it up, such as Chinese rose beetle. I think it would be useful to cross-reference names under the main heading Beetles as follows:

Beetles
- Chinese rose beetle
- Christmas beetles
- Goliathus beetle

Otherwise, it becomes a thumb-paging process to find all the beetles in this particular dictionary.

Overall, both Elsevier dictionaries reviewed here are well compiled based on the list of bibliographic references. However, they fall short of my expectations as a reference tool for translators. I do not consider myself a scientist, but a researcher. Challenged with translating material on invertebrates and entomology, I believe these two dictionaries would be helpful, but by no means the only tools for my research. There are usually too many entries to pick from for each species! My conclusion is that these reference tools should be targeted to scientists, experts in their fields, who recognize species by their Latin, scientific names. They provide less assistance to the average translator looking up terms in his native language to render into another.

Fifth International Conference on Translation
Continued from p.44

The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, with its international profile and status as an innovator, was the perfect venue for such a conference. It is located 12-13 miles from Barcelona in Bellaterra, in the heart of Catalonia’s technological district, in the so-called green corridor between Barcelona and the industrial belt. This provided an attractive environment for the conference participants. Even the train ride from Barcelona to the university campus was a pleasant experience, as it passed through semirural as well as industrial and residential areas.

Log on to ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/membersonly for special features for members!
Most people would agree that a translation, no matter how changed it is from the original, must still retain the essence of the original. Therefore, if something essential to the original is not available in the target culture, then that original is untranslatable into the target language. Even if the translator translates the words into some “literal” equivalent, the result is unsuccessful because the target audience reaction is so different from the original audience reaction. Paradoxically, repeated “translations” of untranslatable material may eventually instill in the target culture what was not previously present, and so make such material translatable, or even turn what was once not a translation into one.

But how much of what is called untranslatable due to cultural incompatibility is actually only badly translated? A piece in the current issue of *Translation & Literature* (Volume 10, Part 2, 2001) by Adam Piette (pp. 282-89), which reviews translations of contemporary French poetry, shows that critics often do not make the distinction. Here is a poem by the Breton poet Guillevic, which Piette claims the poet can “just about get away with”:

Mer au bord du néant,
Qui se mêle au néant,
Pour mieux savoir le ciel,
Les plages, le rochers,
Pour mieux les recevoir.

Here is John Montague’s English translation:

Sea on the edge of nothingness,
Mingling with the nothingness,
Better to perceive the sky,
The beaches, the rocks,
Better to receive them.

According to Piette, Montague’s English “teeters on the edge of a different abyss” than the French néant; it is “self-mocking”...“sentiment on the rocks!” because over the past two centuries there has been “a comic dismantling” in English “of the Romantic elementary sublime.” “It is so very difficult to register the seemingly unadulterated joy the French can still articulate in just saying elementary “mer,” elementary “ciel,” “plages,” “rochers.” In English, the list:

‘the sky, / The beaches, the rocks’
invites the conjuring of concrete contexts: girls and boys at play on those beaches, gulls scattering guano over those rocks, the sky suffering the projections of a tourist’s drunken fantasies. English may have changed so much over centuries of suspicious Protestant use that its speakers will always be tempted towards over-reading and bathetic connotation when articulating the bare elements, the over-reading designed to explode pretensions towards flighty sentiment about nature and the primitive sublime.

But is Piette correct as to the untranslatability of the poem? He implies that the English reader is stuck with Montague’s translation because “the poetry of the elementary is relatively easy to translate. There are not a trillion options.” But there is one obvious option not chosen by Montague—and not mentioned by Piette: to make the English truly “elementary,” not only in ideas but in language. In English, a tri-syllabic word like “nothingness” is not elementary. Here is Ronnie Apter’s translation, which, by coming closer to the incantatory quality of the French, belies the poem’s untranslatability:

Sea verging on void,
merging with void,
better to scan sky,
sand, rocks,
better to take in them.
We want you to know.

By its very nature, what we do as a key member of the Intelligence Community requires a high degree of confidentiality. We gather intelligence from foreign electronic signals for U.S. Government decisionmakers at the highest levels; at the same time, we try to prevent our adversaries from gaining access to our own vital U.S. communications. As a part of accomplishing these two objectives—and to meet our increasingly complex role in today's changing world—we regularly invite select individuals to peer into our world...to capture a glimpse of the dedication, the environments, the challenges, and the special people that define the NSA as a unique career destination.

What you'll see will raise your eyebrows.

Imagine working with over-the-horizon technologies, including those that don’t come into commercial mainstream use for many years. Couple this with the importance of the work we do at the NSA (work that enhances the nation’s security and the safety of every citizen) and you have a career that is both challenging and compelling...and ultimately, so much more rewarding.

Language Paths

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Atlanta, GA 30355
Tel: (770) 587-4884
aaitinfo@aait.org • www.aait.org

Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI)
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Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526
Tel: (919) 577-0840 • Fax: (775) 244-2746
C.A.T.I. @pobox.com • www.catiweb.org

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Coral Gables, FL 33114-1057
Tel/Voice: (305) 274-3434
Fax: (305) 387-6712
info@atafl.com • www.atafl.com

Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA)
6600 NW Sweetbriar Lane
Kansas City, MO 64151
Attn.: Meeri Yule
Tel: (816) 741-9441 • Fax: (816) 741-9482
translate@kc.rr.com • www.ata-micata.org

National Capital Area Chapter of ATA (NCATA)
P. O. Box 65200
Washington, DC 20035-5200
Tel: (202) 255-9290 • Fax (202) 234-5656
johnvazquez@msn.com • www.ncata.org

• The Professional Services Directory of the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Translators Association (NCATA) has gone online. It lists NCATA members and the services they offer, together with additional information that enables translation and interpretation users to find just the right language specialist for their projects. Bookmark www.ncata.org and check out the NCATA directory. If you maintain language-related webpages, you may want to include a link to the directory. NCATA is always interested in comments and suggestions.

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mmond1@ameritech.net
www.ohiotranslators.org

North Carolina Translators Association (NCTA)
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• Telephone/online referral service. See searchable translator database on website.
• NCTA Directory of Translators and Interpreters available on CD-ROM or diskette for $15. Accept MasterCard/Visa.

Northern California Translators Association (NCTA)
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Tel: (206) 382-5642
info@notisnet.org • www.notisnet.org

Southern California Area Translators and Interpreters Association (SCATIA)
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Los Angeles, CA 90034
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izumi.suzuki@suukimyres.com
www.mitinweb.org

Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA)
Coordinator,
Minnesota Translation Laboratory
218 Nolte Center
315 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Tel: (612) 625-3096 • Fax: (612) 624-4579
Laurence.h.bogoslaw-1@tc.umn.edu

Utah Translators and Interpreters Association (UTIA)
3617 S 1400 West
Salt Lake City, UT 84119
Tel: (801) 973-0912 • Fax: (208) 441-5390
ellingge@qwest.net • www.utia.org

Other Groups
This list gives contact information for translation and interpretation groups as a service to ATA members. Inclusion does not imply affiliation with or endorsement by ATA.

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elert@utdallas.edu
www.literarytranslators.org

Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA)
P. O. Box 13331
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The California Court Interpreters Association (CCIA)
345 S Hwy 101, Suite D
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Colorado Translators Association (CTA)
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• For more information about the online directory, newsletter, accreditation exams, and professional seminars, please visit www.cta-web.org.

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Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association (MITA)
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National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)
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headquarters@najit.org • www.najit.org

New England Translators Association (NETA)
27 Wachusett Avenue
Arlington, MA 02476
Tel: (781) 648-1731 • Fax: (617) 232-6865
neta@coetrans.com • www.netaweb.org

New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association (NMTIA)
P.O. Box 36263
Albuquerque, NM 87176
Tel: (505) 352-9258 • Fax: (505) 352-9372
uweschroeter@prodigy.net
www.cybermesa.com/~nmtia
• Membership Directory available for $5. Please make check payable to NMTIA and mail your request to the address listed here, or contact us by e-mail.

The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG)
2007 N 15th Street, Suite 4
Arlington, VA 22201-2621
Tel: (703) 522-0881 • (800) 992-0367
Fax: (703) 522-0882
ttig@mindspring.com • www.ttig.org

Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society (WITS)
P.O. Box 1012
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www.witsnet.org

International Groups
FIT
Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs/International Federation of Translators (FIT)
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secretariat@fit-ift.org

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Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators, Inc. (AUSIT)
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