Coming Soon...

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Saturday, February 8, 2003 • Los Angeles, California

Join your colleagues in Los Angeles on February 8 for a full day of in-depth sessions on translating and interpreting for the Entertainment Industry.

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and much more!

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All sessions will be conducted in English and will be submitted for Continuing Education Credit for the States of California and Washington (Sessions are pre-approved in the State of Oregon). A continental breakfast will be served and a Networking Session will follow the final presentation.

Space is limited. For more information, contact ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6100 or visit the ATA website at www.atanet.org and click on the Translating and Interpreting for the Entertainment Industry Seminar link on the home page.

Visit www.atanet.org/entertainment to register!

~ An ATA Professional Development Seminar ~

SCATIA’s Subtitling Seminar
Sunday, February 9, 2003 • Los Angeles, California

Southern California Area Translators and Interpreters Association is holding a half-day seminar in conjunction with ATA’s Entertainment Industry Seminar.

Visit www.scatia.org/events for more information.

Keep watching the ATA website for these upcoming events:

Medical Translation & Interpreting Seminar
Miami, Florida • March 22, 2003

Legal Translation Conference
New York City area • May 2-4, 2003
Features

15 Another Successful ATA Professional Development Seminar
By Jacki Noh
A happy attendee shares her thoughts on ATA’s latest professional development seminar, September 14 in San Francisco, featuring top-notch speakers on court interpreting and legal translation.

19 Effective Freelancer Resumes
By Marian S. Greenfield and Teresa S. Waldes
A thoughtful, well-written, and well-laid out resume is key to attracting new clients and advancing your career.

22 Translating Resumes for Our Small Planet
By Sylvie R. Moulin
Based on the author’s personal experience in France, Chile, and the U.S., this article addresses pertinent issues related to the translation of resumes and the problems resulting from cultural differences.

25 Strategizing Your Performance at the Witness Stand
By Janis Palma
When consecutive judiciary interpreters are aware of the highly structured forms required in order to communicate ideas in legal discourse, they can improve both retention and efficacy in their performance.

29 The Argentine Crisis in the English-Language Press
By Alexandra Russell-Bitting
The new Spanish terminology spawned by the current crisis in Argentina demonstrates how important it is in translation to focus on meaning rather than words in order to convey the source-language message.
An Easy Reference To ATA Member Benefits

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

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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.
31 The B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing: Looking at the Flowing Water, Not the Canoe
By Christiane Melançon and Marco A. Fiola
With two unique programs in translation and professional writing and localization, the Université du Québec en Outaouais (Gatineau, Canada) is embracing change while helping language professionals prepare for the future.

35 Reducing the Impact of Preconceptions on Interpreter Training Through Corpus-Based Studies
By Peter P. Lindquist
A discussion of how corpus-based analysis may be adapted to the study of simultaneous interpreting to improve training methods by exposing areas of difficulty, patterns of linguistic and extralinguistic behavior, and coping strategies that can affect the performance quality of interpreting students.

41 A Brief Introduction On the Use of the Internet for Japanese Medical Translation
By Yuka Tamura
A short introduction for beginners on how to use the Internet as a resource for those English↔Japanese medical translation projects.

44 Translators'/Interpreters' Historic Blunders Along the Frontiers of Languages and Cultures
By Richard Finks Whitaker
History is replete with curious reminders that, without the assistance of skilled translators/interpreters, crossing cultures can lead to all manner of misconceptions. Yet even where translation and interpretation are handled by professionals, faux pas can occur—with consequences that range from the amusing to the sobering.

51 An Interview with Tameme editor C.M. Mayo
By Lily Liu
A talk with the founding editor of Tameme, the annual bilingual journal of new writing from North America.

56 ¡Che inglés!
By Tony Beckwith
How embarrassing to be a stranger in my own land! ¡Qué vergüenza!

57 Do You Run Your Business Or Does It Run You?
By Barton Goldsmith, Ph.D.
If you’re going to grow a functional organization, one that grows exponentially, you have to learn to hand off some of the responsibility.

Display Advertising Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>74</th>
<th>Almi International</th>
<th>68</th>
<th>Language Matters, Inc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Cybertec USA, Inc.</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Portland State Extended Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68</td>
<td>Cross Cultural</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Star-GMBH Translation Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>GMT</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>TRADOS Corporation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Jacki Noh has been a full-time Korean, Spanish, and English interpreter/translator and voice talent since 1986. Interpreting at the Olympics (1996, Atlanta; 2000, Sydney; and 2002, Salt Lake City) as a post-medal press conference interpreter for journalists and medalists has been among her favorite assignments. She particularly enjoyed interpreting for comedian Bill Cosby and the young actor Elijah Wood (Frodo in “The Lord of the Rings”), and has always loved translating love letters. Contact: jackinoh@compuserve.com.

Janis Palma has been a federally certified judiciary interpreter since 1981. She was a freelance interpreter throughout the U.S. and Puerto Rico for 22 years before joining the U.S. District Court in Puerto Rico as a staff interpreter earlier this year. She also has over 15 years of experience training judiciary interpreters through institutions of higher education and professional associations, and has authored various articles and publications on judiciary interpreting theory and practice. She is currently working on a new textbook and the production of training and educational materials for judiciary interpreters at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Contact: janispalma@att.net.

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Richard Finks Whitaker is a professor and researcher at the University of Quintana Roo in Chetumal, Mexico. Formerly one of the creators—and, for several years, the director—of the master’s program in translation and interpretation in English and Spanish in Guadalajara, he now lives in the Mexican Caribbean, where he teaches translation and other subjects in the field of language. His publications include books on the history of world culture, social correspondence in English, and the annotation and documentation of scholarly writing in English and Spanish. Contact: wfinks@correo.uqroo.mx and richard_finks_whitaker@hotmail.com.
Overview. What a pleasure it was to welcome so many of you to my hometown at the 43rd Annual Conference in Atlanta! It has been so encouraging to hear from so many of you that you had a great time at the conference, and even got a chance to see a little of our city. As you can imagine, there are thousands of details that go into putting together an ATA conference, and I would especially like to thank ATA President-Elect and Conference Organizer Scott Brennan for pulling it all together. I also want to thank our outstanding Headquarters staff, our sponsors, our hosts in the Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators, and those of you who shared your knowledge and expertise at our educational sessions. Be sure to come back next year for what promises to be a great event in Phoenix next November.

Public Relations. ATA’s conference received worldwide coverage thanks to the efforts of ATA Public Relations Committee Co-Chairs Chris Durban and Kevin Hendzel. Their extraordinary work in organizing the Translation and Terrorism Session drew a standing-room-only crowd of over 700 attendees.

Election. I would like to welcome Laura Wolfson to the ATA Board of Directors and congratulate Kirk Anderson and Tim Yuan on being re-elected as directors for three-year terms. I would also like to thank Alexandra Russell-Bitting, Kathy Foster Hall, Madeleine Velguth, and Carl Youngblood for running in the election and being willing to serve the association.

Harvie Jordan. On a sad note, while we were in Atlanta, long-time member and conference attendee Harvie Jordan passed away in Austin, Texas. His upbeat attitude, warm smile, and trademark hat will be missed. A more complete tribute appears on page 9 of this issue.

Ed Berger. One of the highlights of the conference was a surprise announcement at the Closing Banquet. Long-time member and Gode-medalist Ed Berger was surprised by his children on the occasion of his 80th birthday with the establishment of a prize in technical translation, to be awarded every year by the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation. Congratulations to Ed, and warm thanks to his family.

Happy Holidays!

ATA Election Results

Bylaws Amendments

Amendment 1, Student Membership: Expanding student membership qualifications
For: 505 Against: 36
The Amendment passes.

Amendment 2, Finance Committee: Changing the name of the Budget Committee to the Finance Committee
For: 514 Against: 3
The Amendment passes.

Election of Directors

Kirk Anderson 406
Laura Wolfson 286
Timothy Yuan 232
Madeleine Velguth 214
Alexandra Russell-Bitting 200
Carl Youngblood 104
Kathy Foster Hall 87

Anderson, Wolfson, and Yuan were elected for three-year terms as director.
Build Your Own Website with RADTown!!

American Translators Association (ATA) and Two Radical Technologies, Inc. (2RAD) have teamed up to provide ATA members with an incredible membership benefit. ATA is offering members an opportunity to build their very own customized website by using one of the most advanced online website creation tools - RADTown. RADTown is a powerful, dynamic website creation tool that lets you be in complete control of your website and offers an extraordinary lineup of dynamic features that you can easily add to your site. RADTown will help ATA members harness the power of the Internet and establish an online presence for themselves in just minutes!

![Image of RADTown website]

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As a benefit to being an ATA member, you can sign up for a full-featured web page building program that is fast and easy to use for the low cost of $99/year. With RADTown, not only do you get to create your own unique website, but you can also use your own unique domain name (i.e. www.yourname.com), receive free hosting, PLUS your website will be fully integrated with the ATA online directories!

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log on to [www.atanet.org/radtown](http://www.atanet.org/radtown)

Email questions to: radtown@atanet.org

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Alexandria, VA 22314
ata@atanet.org
Here are the highlights from the ATA Board of Directors Meeting, November 9-10 in Atlanta.

**Budget.** The Board approved the January-June 2003 budget. This short-term budget is necessitated by the change in the ATA fiscal year from the calendar year to July 1-June 30. ATA Treasurer Jiri Stejskal will cover the budget in more detail in the next issue of the *ATA Chronicle*.

**Chapters.** The Board approved the establishment of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association Chapter of ATA. UMTIA covers Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

**Divisions.** The Board approved the establishment of the Medical Division [being established]. Martine Dougé has agreed to serve as the administrator and Jorge Ungo has agreed to serve as the assistant administrator. ATA members will be able to join this new division on the ATA renewal form. More information on this new division will be published in the *ATA Chronicle*.

**Accreditation.** The Board continued its discussions and refined the proposed eligibility and continuing education requirements for the accreditation program. The Board and Accreditation Committee will have a joint meeting in March 2003 to finalize the requirements. These requirements are scheduled to go into effect in November 2003.

**Professional Development Seminars.** The Board was updated on the professional development seminars scheduled for 2003. Three one-day seminars are planned: Entertainment Industry Translation and Interpreting, in Los Angeles, February 8; Medical Translation and Interpreting in Miami, March 22; and one on localization (date and site to be determined). In addition, the ATA Legal Translation Conference will be held in the New York City area, May 2-4.

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**In Remembrance • Harvie Jordan**

Harvie Jordan, a long-time ATA member, passed away in Austin, Texas, on November 8th, 2002, after a brief battle with cancer. An independent Spanish↔English translator and Spanish and English voice talent, Harvie was chair of ATA's Active Membership Review Committee and served as the first assistant administrator of ATA's Spanish Language Division. He was ATA-accredited (Spanish ↔ English). He was the current president, as well as a co-founder, of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA). He launched *The AATIA Letter* and edited the publication for six years. He also founded AATIA's Spanish Special Interest Group (SpanSIG). Of the 13,500 members of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), Harvie was one of 700 worldwide to hold the international public relations credential of Accredited Business Communicator (ABC). He was the first member of IABC's Accreditation Board, appointed to evaluate Spanish-language portfolios and grade accreditation examinations written in Spanish. For three years he was named to IABC's Blue Ribbon Panel to judge international Gold Quill competition entries in Spanish and English. He received a B.A. degree in Latin American studies from the University of Texas at Austin.

Continued on p.67
ATA Awards: Call for Nominations

ATA Alexander Gode Medal
The Alexander Gode Medal, the American Translators Association’s most prestigious award, is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translation and interpretation professions. This award may be given annually.

Individuals or institutions nominated do not have to be members of ATA. However, a history of constructive relations with ATA and the language professions in general is desirable. Nominees do not have to be U.S. citizens. Petitions and letter campaigns are not encouraged.

Nominations should include a sufficiently detailed description of the individual’s or institution’s record of service to the translation and/or interpretation professions to enable the Honors & Awards Committee to draw up a meaningful short list for approval by the ATA Board of Directors.

Nomination Deadline: May 1, 2003.

Please send your nominations of the individual or institution you consider worthy of receiving the next Gode Medal to the Chair of the ATA Honors & Awards Committee at the address listed at the bottom of the page.

ATA Ungar German Translation Award
ATA invites nominations for the 2003 Ungar German Translation Award. This award is bestowed biennially in odd-numbered years for a distinguished literary translation from German into English published in the U.S. (The Lewis Galantière Translation Prize for translations from any language, except German, is awarded in even-numbered years.)

To be eligible for the award, to be presented at the ATA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, November 5-8, 2003, the published translation must have been translated from German into English and published in the U.S. in 2001 or 2002.

The published translation must list the translator’s name on the title page and preferably also on the dust jacket.

Preference will be given to published works that provide information on the translator. The translator need not be an ATA member, however, the translator should have a strong connection with the U.S. (citizenship or permanent residence). The nomination must be submitted by the publisher of the translated work.

The nomination must include a cover letter, with complete publication information for the work being nominated, together with a brief vita of the translator, at least two copies of the nominated work, plus one extra copy of the dust jacket, and two copies of at least 10 consecutive pages from the original work, keyed to the page numbers of the translations. (ESSENTIAL!)


Publishers are encouraged to submit nominations early!

Award: $1,000, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, November 5-8, 2003.

Please contact the ATA Honors & Awards Committee at the address listed at the bottom of the page.

ATA 2003 Student Translation Award
In 2003, the ATA will award a grant-in-aid to a student for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project. The award, which will be presented at the ATA Annual Conference in November 2003, is open to any graduate or undergraduate student or group of students attending an accredited college or university in the U.S. Preference will be given to students who have been or are currently enrolled in translator-training programs. Students who are already published translators are, however, ineligible. No individual student may submit more than one entry.

The project, which may be derived from any facet of translation studies, should result in a project with post-grant applicability, such as a publication, conference presentation, or teaching materials.

Computerized materials are ineligible, as are dissertations and theses. Translations must be INTO ENGLISH from a foreign language; previously untranslated works are preferred.

Applicants must complete a form (available from ATA Headquarters) and submit a project description not to exceed 500 words. If the project is a translation, the description must present the work in its context. It must also be a substantive statement of the difficulties or innovations involved in the project and of the post-completion form the work will take. The application must be accompanied by a statement of support from the faculty member who is supervising the project. This letter of support should demonstrate the faculty supervisor’s intimate familiarity with the student’s work and include a detailed assessment of the project’s significance and of the student’s growth and development in translation.

If the project involves an actual translation, a translation sample of not less than 400 and not more than 500 words, together with the corresponding source-language text, must accompany the application. The translation sample may consist of two or more separate passages from the same work. For poetry, the number of words must total at least 300.

Application Deadline: April 15, 2003

Award: $500, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference. One or more certificates may also be awarded to runners-up.

All nominations and materials should be addressed to:
Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee
American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Ste 590
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: ata@atanet.org

ATA’s Spanish Language Division 2nd Annual Conference
St. Anthony Hotel • San Antonio, Texas
April 25-27, 2003

This is an exciting opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience with appreciative colleagues. For more information, contact: Virginia Perez-Santalla (virginiasps@comcast.net).
Conferences and Events

Washington, DC
Translators Discussion Group
Borders Books and Music
18th & L Streets, NW

Meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00pm at Borders. For more information, please contact Borders at (202) 466-2152.

San Antonio, Texas
2nd Annual ATA Spanish Language Division Conference
April 25-27, 2003

This is an exciting opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience with appreciative colleagues. For more information, contact: Virginia Perez-Santalla (virginiasps@comcast.net) or visit www.ata-spd.org.

Dublin, Ireland
14th International Japanese/English Translation Conference
IJET-14
May 17-18, 2003

The 14th annual IJET conference in Dublin will mark the first time that IJET has met in Ireland, and promises to provide an exciting and charming experience for all attendees. This venue was proposed in the hopes of not only providing a thoroughly enjoyable conference, but also to expand the horizons of IJET attendees. Just as translations serve to bring Japanese- and English-speaking cultures closer together, IJET conferences provide an opportunity for first-hand exposure to the languages and cultures. It is hoped that IJET-14 will be a learning experience, as well as a good time, for all participants. More information will be available at http://ijet.org/ijet-14/ shortly.

Halifax, Nova Scotia
Canadian Association for Translation Studies
16th Annual Conference
Theme: “Translation and Globalization”
May 29-31, 2003
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Information: Dr. Louise Brunette (organizer): louiseb@alcor.concordia.ca
Marc Charron: marc.charron@uqo.ca
Anne Malena: amalena@ualberta.ca
Marco Fiola: marco.fiola@uqo.ca
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E-mail: amalena@ualberta.ca;
Tel: (780) 492-1187;
Fax: (780) 492-2106.
www.uottawa.ca/associations/act-cats/

American Translators Association Announces 2002 Awards Recipients

This year, the ATA awarded two prizes: a medal for meritorious service to the translation and interpreting professions, and a prize for a book-length translation. The following awards were presented at ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, November 6-9, 2002.

The Alexander Gode Medal, ATA’s most prestigious award, is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translation and interpretation professions. This year’s recipient was Susana Greiss, founding member of ATA’s Portuguese Language Division and founder and past administrator of ATA’s Slavic Languages Division. In honor of her past work for the SLD, the division established the Annual Susana Greiss Lecture Series at the ATA conference, featuring a distinguished guest speaker, well-known in the field of Slavic languages. Previous speakers have included the authors of two Russian-English dictionaries, a UN interpreter, and the editorial director of Yale University Press. Greiss is a freelance translator and is ATA-accredited in five language combinations: English→Spanish, Spanish→English, Portuguese→English, French→English, and Italian→English. Greiss holds a master’s degree in translation from the Graduate School of the City University of New York (CUNY), specializing in corporation law.

The Lewis Galantière Award is bestowed biennially in even-numbered years for a distinguished book-length literary translation from any language, except German, into English, published in the United States. This year’s recipient was Professor Willard Wood for his translation of Andre Raymond’s Cairo. The award consists of $1,000, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference.

For more information and deadlines for ATA’s 2003 awards, please contact: 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.
In the October issue we visited Spain, and briefly also Portugal and the Principedom of Andorra. We saw that the Spanish and Andorran certification procedures were similar to the Scandinavian model sanctioned by the government (which we called the “continental model” earlier). We also saw that Portugal was among those countries which did not offer any form of certification for translators and interpreters beyond academic credentials. The lack of certification is by no means unique to Portugal; a similar situation exists, for example, in nations such as Israel and China. Frequently, in countries without certification, stringent eligibility requirements are enforced for membership in the country’s organization for translators and interpreters. Interestingly, it appears that there are multiple organizations for translators and interpreters in countries offering certification, whereas in countries with no certification, only a single organization exists. Membership in such an organization then serves as a form of certification.

In the Ukraine, the newly formed Ukrainian Translators Association (UTA)—combines the certification examination with stringent membership requirements. The information in this article was obtained largely from the UTA website (www.uta.org.ua). Interestingly, the UTA site is currently not available in Ukrainian, but rather in Russian and (to a limited degree) in English. Igor Malykin, deputy chairman of UTA, supplied additional information. Mr. Malykin participated in the preparation of two standards for rendering translation services and with the qualification of translators and interpreters. He can be reached at info@uta.org.ua.

Founded in May 1999, UTA is a public organization. It is an independent certification body duly registered by the Ukrainian Institute of Certification, Standardization, and Metrology (UkrSEPRO). There are 50 associate members from different regions of Ukraine, 22 full (certified) individual members, 2 full (certified) corporate members, and 1 independent member (Kyiv International University, the former International Institute of Linguistics and Law). In 2001, UTA launched annual seminars for Ukrainian translators and translation companies.

Membership Structure
Freelance translators are admitted to UTA as full members only after having passed the certification examination, and translation companies may be admitted provided that they meet the requirements of the association’s standards…

...Freelance translators are admitted to UTA as full members only after having passed the certification examination, and translation companies may be admitted provided that they meet the requirements of the association's standards…

“…Freelance translators are admitted to UTA as full members only after having passed the certification examination, and translation companies may be admitted provided that they meet the requirements of the association’s standards…”

Associated Member: An individual (minimum age: 21) or collective member who is a professional translator/interpreter, takes an interest in UTA activities, shares its aims and tasks, and takes part in UTA work. The associated member:

- Has a right to obtain general information on translation services rendered by different translators and companies in Ukraine and abroad;
- Receives periodicals issued by UTA and obtains information from UTA databases;
- Has no right to hold positions in UTA, use UTA's logo, or to refer to UTA membership for advertising purposes;
- Does not take the certification examination; and
- May participate in conferences held by UTA with no vote.

Independent Member: An individual (minimum age: 18) or collective member who does not deal with translation on a professional basis, but takes an interest in UTA activities, shares its aims and tasks, and takes part in UTA work. The independent member:

- Has a right to obtain general information on translation services rendered by different translators and companies in Ukraine and abroad;
- Receives periodicals issued by UTA and obtains information from UTA databases;
- Has no right to hold positions in UTA, use UTA's logo, or to refer to UTA membership for advertising purposes;
- Does not take the certification examination; and
- May participate in conferences held by UTA with no vote.

By Jiri Stejskal
UTA and obtains information from UTA databases;
• Has a right to participate in joint projects and conferences, and to enjoy legal and technical support in the field of translation;
• May apply for full membership status not earlier than six months after continuous membership in UTA as an associated member;
• Has no right to use UTA’s logo or to refer to UTA membership for advertising purposes; and
• Has no right to hold an office in UTA.

Full Member: An individual (minimum age: 21) or collective member who is a professional translator/interpreter residing in the city of Kyiv (Ukraine), meets UTA certification requirements, and follows the UTA Code of Professional Conduct. A full member can also be a company located in the city of Kyiv that deals with translation on a professional basis, meets the requirements of the association’s standards (STTU APU 001-2000 and STTU APU 002-2000) or has an ISO 9002-certified quality system, and follows the Code of Professional Conduct. The full member enjoys all the rights and privileges stipulated by the UTA Charter. The full member:

• Has a right to profit from UTA’s database and other information provided by other translators and companies concerning translation activities;
• Has a right to hold a position in UTA and be elected to the governing bodies of UTA;
• Has a right to receive employment assistance, to receive letters of recommendation from UTA, and to use UTA’s logo for advertising purposes;
• Has a right to legal and technical support in the field of translation activity;
• Has a right to participate in joint projects and education programs, and to make proposals as to the implementation of UTA’s tasks;
• Has a right to participate in the management of UTA and to vote; and
• Is granted a certificate of a full member.

Correspondent Member: An individual (minimum age: 21) or collective member who is a professional translator/interpreter residing outside the city of Kyiv, meets UTA certification requirements, and follows UTA’s Code of Professional Conduct. A correspondent member can also be a company located outside the city of Kyiv that deals with translation on a professional basis, meets the requirements of the association’s standards (STTU APU 001-2000 and STTU APU 002-2000) or has an ISO 9002-certified quality system, and follows the Code of Professional Conduct. The correspondent member enjoys all the rights and privileges stipulated by the UTA Charter. The correspondent member:

• Has a right to profit from UTA’s database and information provided by other translators and companies concerning translation activities;
• Has no right to hold a position in UTA or be elected to the governing bodies of UTA;
• Has a right to receive employment assistance, to receive letters of recommendation from UTA, and to use UTA’s logo for advertising purposes;
• Has a right to legal and technical support in the field of translation activity;
• Has a right to participate in joint projects and education programs, and to make proposals as to the implementation of UTA’s tasks;
• Has no right to participate in the management of UTA or to vote; and
• Is granted a certificate of a full member.

It is of interest that the distinction between a full and correspondent member is the residential requirement. ATA membership criteria are similar in this respect. However, while an active member in ATA (corresponding to full membership in UTA) must reside in the U.S., to be eligible for full membership in UTA, the member must reside in a single city, namely the Ukraine capital.

Certification

The certification procedure, which is mandatory for full and correspondent memberships, serves as a testament to a translator’s professional competence to translate from one specific language into another. Unlike real conditions for translation, the examination is written without access to all the resources normally available, such as the Internet. The three-hour examination is in a specific language pair (i.e., one specific source language and one specific target language). The candidate is not expected to produce a highly refined and polished translation. The written test consists of five passages of approximately 250-300 words, one in each of the following categories: general, medical/scientific, semitechnical, legal/business, and literary. The candidate selects at least three passages, and must satisfactorily translate at least three. To pass the examination, the candidate should adequately convey the meaning of the original, demonstrate knowledge of translation techniques, and observe the rules of the target language.
The candidate may use dictionaries and other reference materials. It is recommended that the candidate bring general bilingual glossaries, a technical dictionary, and a dictionary of the language into which he or she is going to translate. The sharing of resources is not allowed. If the test is handwritten, it must be legible (the examination will be photocopied and provided to the graders). During the examination, the candidate will not be given additional time to complete the translation.

The Examination Process
The candidate will receive the test packets, each with a code number assigned to him or her by UTA to maintain the confidentiality of the examination. The candidate will use that number, not his or her name, on all pages of the examination. In the packet, the candidate will find five passages in the given language combination, marked A-E (A = General, B = Science/Medical, C = Semitechnical, D = Business/Legal, E = Literary). The examination takes three hours. The candidate's papers become the property of UTA's Certification Committee. The candidate should select at least three passages to translate. When taking the examination, the following guidelines are offered to the candidates:

- If a word in the passage does not appear in your reference materials, you may state that the word is not in your dictionary. You will not be penalized, provided the word is considered obscure and not a form of a word found in most dictionaries.
- Avoid regionalisms wherever possible, using instead more standard words.
- Do not omit minor words that you consider unimportant. Stay as close to the original as possible while still producing a grammatically correct translation.
- Keep in mind that a “clean” final copy of your translations is not required. Do not waste your time by copying your work to a second draft. Deletions, inserted words, and other revisions are acceptable as long as the translation is legible. It is your responsibility to ensure that the graders can clearly understand what you write.

Assessment Criteria
A passage is marked as “failed” when the candidate makes 2 or more major errors, or 1 major error and 7 or more minor errors. The following are considered major errors:

- Incomplete passage: An incomplete passage lacks one sentence or most of the text.
- Misunderstanding of the original text: Ranges from mistaken words to misattributed modifiers.
- Mistranslation into target language: The meaning of the original is lost. This may involve a word, a sentence, or even a whole paragraph. Most common are misunderstandings of the original text, misplaced modifiers, and incorrect verb tense.
- Additions or omissions: While certain additions or omissions are necessary for a good translation, the candidate must sense what can be added or omitted without changing the meaning of the original text.
- Terminology, word choice: A common mistake is to take the first word listed in a bilingual dictionary without checking the meaning in a monolingual dictionary.
- Stylistics: It is unallowable to translate, for example, a legal text in a journalistic style.
- Too freely translated: Creativity is not being tested.
- Too literal, word-for-word translation: Translations that follow the original text exactly yield awkward renditions and, often, mistranslations.
- Grammar, punctuation, and spelling: Must follow the rules of the target language.
- Syntax (sentence structure): Following the sentence structure of the source language leads to pitfalls that include misunderstandings of the original text, misplaced modifiers, incorrect use of verbs, and punctuation errors.
- Usage: Certain grammatical forms in the source language are not used in the target language and vice-versa. The candidate must be able to tell the difference.
- Indecision—candidate gave more than one option: Graders will not choose the right word for the candidate.
- Abuse of “not in the dictionary”: This may be invoked for obscure words that only a subject-matter expert would be expected to know. Passages are carefully edited to avoid such terms. Candidates are expected to recognize alternative verb tenses, word root derivatives, compound words, and proper names.

Eligibility and Recertification Requirements
In addition to minimum age requirements (18 years for independent members, 21 for all other individual members), the association’s standard (STTU APU 001-2000)—the

Continued on p.18
Another Successful ATA Professional Development Seminar

By Jacki Noh

This time I did not have to take a plane or drive hours to participate in an ATA event. For the second time during my 14 years as an ATA member, the association visited me in San Francisco, with top-notch speakers Holly Mikkelson, Nancy Schweda Nicholson, Sara García-Rangel, Joe McClinton, and Janis Palma (Janis came all the way from Puerto Rico, and commented that San Francisco was surrounded by “grandpa fog”). ATA was last here back in 1997 for its annual conference, which featured opening remarks from Mayor Willie Brown and the equally colorful Tony Roder, who was president of the Northern California Translators Association (NCTA) at the time.

ATA’s Court Interpreting and Translation Seminar, the latest in a series of professional development workshops, was combined with other career enrichment and networking activities. There was a reception hosted by NCTA and BACI (Bay Area Court Interpreters Association) on Saturday evening. On Sunday the 15th, Courtney Searls-Ridge, chair of ATA’s Mentoring Task Force, held a mentoring workshop, and there was a sitting of the ATA accreditation exam. Also on Sunday, the NCTA general meeting was held, featuring C.J. Phillips speaking on “How to Write Your Own Work Contracts and Finally Get Paid.”

I was glad to drive just 13.42 miles (according to Mapquest.com) to the beautiful Westin St. Francis Hotel. Marian Greenfield, seminar organizer and chair of ATA’s Professional Development Committee, also came up with an idea to help attendees deal with the parking situation. A list of parking locations near the venue with their fees (ranging from $18 to $39 per day—yes, welcome to San Francisco!) was faxed to attendees along with the registration confirmation.

On this dazzling San Francisco fall day, approximately 75 judiciary interpreters and legal translators gathered to learn and exchange experiences and anecdotes. The fact that this seminar was approved for six units of continuing education credits attracted court interpreters working in California, Oregon, and Washington—states where there is a requirement for continuing education credits in order to maintain certified interpreter status.

“…By continuously and consistently educating speakers, clients, and ourselves, I believe interpreters play a vital role in minimizing communication breakdowns…”

The seminar followed the path of the highly successful Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar in Chicago (May 18, 2002) and the Business of Translating and Interpreting Seminar in Boston (August 10, 2002), each with more than 125 attendees. The first event organized by ATA’s Professional Development Committee, the three-day Financial Translation Conference, was held May 18-20, 2001, in New York City. The next three-day seminar on legal translation will be held in New Jersey, May 2-4, 2003. Please mark your calendar. The excellent idea of having seminars in various cities was conceived by the staff at ATA Headquarters and the forever-vibrant Marian Greenfield. And this energetic lady is telling me that plans are underway for more one-day seminars in 2003. Stay tuned.

In order for you to assess whether a future seminar would be right for you, let me share with you what I walked away with after attending.

Holly Mikkelson gave the first presentation of the day, entitled “Translation of Civil Legal Documents from Mexico: Resources, Comparative Law, Evidentiary Requirements.” It provided valuable tips on translating a power of attorney with notarization, followed by a discussion of how to certify a translation in the U.S., where there are no “official” or “government certified” translators. For instance, one issue is that when a translator submits a certification page that states the translation is true, complete, etc., to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, signs it, and has it notarized, the client may or may not be aware that only the translator’s signature has been notarized, not the translation itself.

Holly started her presentation with the tools needed to translate a power of attorney from Mexico. Topics included monolingual and bilingual dictionaries (both general and legal), a sample parallel form in the target language, and how the power of attorney is extracted from, and is governed by, civil code in Mexico. Many of the difficult legal terms concerning special powers of attorney that she discussed were translated in a glossary and included in the excellent handouts, along with a bibliography that included a list of legal dictionaries, legal codes, translation textbooks, model translations, and URLs.

Different ways to handle terms with no English equivalent were also discussed. For example, the Mexican legal concept of amparo, which has no equivalent in the U.S. legal...
system, is usually left in Spanish, with a translator’s note in brackets in the text or as a footnote at the bottom of the page. (Sharlee Merner Bradley contributed to this paragraph, since the presentation was designed for Spanish interpreters/translators. Thanks, Sharlee!)

As always, Holly’s presentation was full of practical and useful information. Her handouts will be immediately applicable to the attendee’s next legal translation project, in addition to providing a stimulus for thinking of ways to improve the quality of translation using the tools she shared. On a personal note, it was Holly who gave me my initial taste, love, and passion for court interpreting in early March of 1986. (Thanks, Holly!)

Nancy Schweda Nicholson’s eye-catching title, “‘Did I Say That?’ ‘Isn’t That What She Said?’ Self- and Other-Monitoring Activity in the Courtroom: Process and Problems,” was, in fact, the session I had anticipated the most. These are the same questions I have been asking myself as both a consecutive and simultaneous interpreter for all these years. After all, interpreters want to make sense of what they hear. Simultaneous interpreting, as Nancy said, was considered possible only because there was a belief that simultaneous interpreters were not paying attention to the output. According to Nancy, self-monitoring has three states: what we intend to say, what we actually say, and what we said. We are connecting current material with past material we stored in both our short-term and long-term memories. Content (what we say) is as important as form (how we say it).

Nancy then talked about what we monitor: pronunciation; lexical item (word) choice (Is the proper register being used? Is it money, fund, financial support, bucks, moola, dough…?); grammatical correctness; overall context (who, what, where, why, and how everything is happening); rate of speech; output level (Am I speaking loud enough?); and extralinguistic features (gestures, facial expressions, tone, cultural expressions, thinking why is she or he here, and so forth). Nancy stressed that it is not IF you make mistakes, but WHEN you make mistakes.

Many laughs were shared during Nancy’s presentation, with jokes involving former U.S. presidents and George W. Bush, and numerous examples of mishearing (e.g., Lusaka [in Zambia] → Osaka [in Japan]; in different positions • indifferent physicians; Mary Kay → Medi Care; bandwidth → banquet). Active audience participation was encouraged. Lastly, Nancy explained both external and internal breakdowns in the monitoring system. External breakdowns consist of such problems as: very fast source-language input; the strong nonnative accent of a speaker; delivery style (false starts, swallow- ends, sentence structure); difficult subject matter (unfamiliar words and expressions); extraneous noise/distractions (i.e., fire engines); and technical difficulties involving equipment. Internal breakdowns involve: the interpreter’s state of mind; how the interpreter feels physically (I couldn’t sleep last night due to jet-lag; I am hungry); and the individual’s interpretation skills. By continuously and consistently educating speakers, clients, and ourselves, I believe interpreters play a vital role in minimizing these breakdowns.

Since I am writing this article in Utah during a conference interpretation assignment, the first simultaneous interpretation assignment since hearing her talk a week ago, I find that I am much more self-conscious. (Thanks, Nancy!)

Her talk reminded me of the article in Newsweek (September 16, 2002, page 54) about Edie Falco (Tony’s wife on HBO’s “The Sopranos”). Co-star Stanley Tucci, in a Broadway revival of “Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune,” answered as follows when asked if Falco seems like a confident person: “I never met a confident actor. Show me one. If there is one, it usually means they’re not very good.” I couldn’t help but see a parallel with interpreters. The fact remains that there is no way we can control all of the internal and external breakdowns in the self-monitoring system.

In Sara García-Rangel’s presentation, “Sight Translation,” she reviewed when this method is required in court, what to render, its process, ways to improve public speaking skills, and different exercises to improve these skills. Sara asked, “Is sight translation a translation or an interpretation?” She explained that due to time constraints, stress, and anticipation, sight translation is closer to interpretation than translation. Court interpreters often have to render sight translation of foreign-language documents or various types of court documents, such as criminal complaints, indictments, charges, plea agreements, and waiver of rights, during different court proceedings such as the arraignment, pretrial hearing, preliminary hearing, disposition, and so forth.

Here are some of the points Sara made. In order to render sight translation one needs to have the following skills: language skills (including different registers of language and an awareness of cultural differences); good reading skills; subject matter
knowledge; technical skills (linguistic flexibility and the ability to break down large pieces of information into specific segments, or “chunks”); problem solving; and decision making—on top of translation and public speaking skills. The process of sight translation is the ability to read, analyze, and comprehend the source language (SL) in written form (C = KL + EK + A; Comprehension = Knowledge of Language + Extra-linguistic Knowledge + Analysis). In sight translation, visual input becomes oral output. Some of the ways to improve public speaking skills are: to breath slowly, to become aware of your voice by carrying a tape recorder, to realize how you project your voice, and to practice inhaling and exhaling while keeping in mind your posture and gestures.

Those who are starting out in court interpreting would certainly benefit from attending this type of seminar. Sara’s comprehensive handouts are valuable resources for interpreters who want to practice on their own or else use them as a guide to create their own practice/exercise material. (Thanks, Sara!)

The last two sessions were concurrent: Joe McClinton’s “Untangling Legalese: Maximizing Clarity in Translation of Pleadings into English” and Janis Palma’s “Enhancing Retention for Consecutive Interpreting.” Since I desperately wanted to attend both sessions and could not divide myself in two, I asked my NCTA colleague Martin Hoffman to report back on Janis’s presentation (more on this below).

Joe is a wonderful presenter with a subtle and unique sense of humor. He provided useful advice on translating pleadings into English, thanks to his years of experience and research. He first gave a definition of “pleading,” then explained the sequence of pleadings under the U.S. legal system (Complaint [Plaintiff] → Answer [Defendant] → Reply/Repetition [P] → Rejoinder [D] → Surrejoinder [P] → Rebuttal [D] → Surrebuttal [P], etc.), and the differences between U.S., German, Spanish, French, and Italian pleadings. Joe also talked about the anatomy of a pleading and shared points to remember in captions (e.g., v. not vs.; correctly naming the court).

Joe insisted that we have to be consistent in the treatment of citations and must try to keep it clean. We should not force the translation into a mold when referring to a parallel text in the target language. It’s always a good idea to have clear and concise footnotes. Here, Joe concurred with Holly in favor of using footnotes—not as interferences, but as aids to clarify the meaning. Joe shared 20 invaluable pieces of advice to be used with caution when translating legal documents. Though he was referring to translating legal documents, I believe his advice can, and should, be applied to all translation projects.

Here is a sampling of Joe’s advice that I wholeheartedly agreed with: clear communication with the client (no literal translation, please); be sure to translate everything; do not try to improve on the original as long as the levels of complexity are acceptable and one uses the correct register; be sure to read your translation aloud (watch for the “huh?” moment); choose vocabulary carefully (the Internet is an excellent resource for checking phraseology); use the right term, not its second cousin (“the defendant” v. “the criminal”); fight the temptation to use grand words for their own sake (always be consistent with the style of the original); eradicate ambiguities; and try to use effective connectives.

All of the advice he shared would be useful to any legal and nonlegal translators to improve the quality of their translations. (Thanks, Joe!) There was a lively discussion and active audience participation while we worked together to untangle extremely unclear working examples. We all had fun with it. Too bad we ran out of time to work on the last equally challenging working example. On a personal note, I had the secret pleasure of learning how German linguistic structure is close to that of Korean, and felt that I had finally found a comrade to share my pain on segmenting chunks of texts. (Recently, I had to translate a single sentence of Korean legal text that was five-and-a-half pages long, with one verb and no subject.)

Meanwhile, next door in Janis Palma’s “Enhancing Retention for Consecutive Interpreting,” an enthusiastic audience enjoyed an informative, entertaining, and useful presentation. Since the majority of the attendees were working court interpreters rather than legal translators, not to mention Janis’ fame as a presenter, her session attracted more attendees. The room was full to capacity. (According to Martin, “People had to bring in extra chairs, and eventually we just left the door open because people were spilling out into the hall.” Thanks for the report, Martin!) Janis stuck pretty closely to the texts in the handouts, and as a result I almost felt as if I had been at the session after reading them. According to Janis, visualization techniques involve both a mental image (of a story, etc.) and the underlying meaning. Concentration or a “lack of distraction” is essential (Remember Nancy’s external breakdowns?).

Attendees were called upon to do a memory exercise using the visualization technique. Janis read a
linear story. The first person in the row had to repeat the first sentence. The second person had to repeat (or accurately restate) the first and second sentences. The third person had to recount the first, second, and third sentences, and so forth. The people who relied more on visualization (including some mnemonic devices) did better than those who relied on notes. Those who relied on visualization were concentrating on the logical flow of the story as a whole, rather than on the individual details. Visualization also lends itself to a more relaxed state of mind—and therefore to better concentration—than a meticulous note-taking technique. Attendees looked at examples of how to use certain symbols during note-taking: “notes are just a bridge, a secondary aid after memory.” Some tips from Janis: steno pads are best for note-taking and to space words/symbols out on each page; don’t try to use unfamiliar abbreviations and symbols, only use those that are easy to remember.

Three days after Janis’s presentation I had an opportunity as a check (not Czech) interpreter to witness an interpreter who relied on a shorthand technique during a deposition. Everyone in the room had to wait for some time before she rendered her interpretation from English into Korean. I did not know at first why it took this interpreter so long, even when relatively short and simple questions were addressed to the Korean-speaking witness. I later found out that she had studied English shorthand for two years in Korea. During the deposition, she nervously and intently took down everything while English was spoken, then transformed that into regular English before rendering the sight translation in lieu of consecutive interpretation. No wonder it seemed like it was taking at least three times longer!

Overall, this ATA professional development seminar was excellent, and valuable information was given during all the presentations. For me personally, this seminar’s most important contribution was to solidify my desire to become a better court interpreter and legal translator. It gave me an opportunity to think about my skills both as interpreter and translator and ways to improve them. All the sessions were intertwined and closely related, which made learning a lot more interesting and relevant. I wish to thank all the individuals who worked so hard to make this seminar successful, and especially the energetic Marian and friendly and helpful Teresa Kelly from ATA Headquarters for the wonderful time we had together. Please come back to San Francisco any time.

International Certification Study: Ukraine

Qualification and Certification of Translators/Interpreters: General Requirements (available in Russian on the UTA website; passages cited here were translated by the author of this article)—stipulates the following minimum eligibility requirements for candidates:

- Membership in a national or international association of translators; qualification as a professional translator; or
- Two signatures of members from an association of translators confirming the candidate’s competence; or
- Two recommendations from the candidate’s employer confirming the candidate’s competence.

The certificate is valid for a period of three years. It can be withdrawn if an independent certification body finds the certificant wanting in the area of ethical conduct, and in case of a significant interruption in the certificant’s professional performance. In order to extend the certificate for another three-year period, the certificant must show evidence of his or her continuing performance in the area of translation or interpretation. Should the certificant fail to produce such evidence, he or she must take the certification examination again.

In the next issue, we will review certification procedures for translators and interpreters in Germany. 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.
Effective Freelancer Resumes

By Marian S. Greenfield and Teresa S. Waldes

So you’ve decided to hang out your shingle as a freelance translator and start looking for clients. Everyone tells you that the first thing you need is a resume. The problem is that you’re not sure what you should say or how to say it, and most of the advice available in books or on the Internet applies to resumes for in-house employment rather than freelancing. We thought we would fill this gap by offering some specific tips on drafting resumes suitable for soliciting freelance translation work. Our advice is based on our many years of experience evaluating resumes from freelancers, and includes general suggestions as well as recommendations specifically applicable to the translation industry.

Getting Started
Before you begin writing your resume, you need to give some thought to the following considerations:

What are your strengths?
As the ancient philosopher said, “know thyself.” Think about what you have to offer, what makes you unique. Make a list of all your qualifications and outside interests. This list will help you identify your strengths and will form the basis for your resume. You will eventually need to whittle it down, but it is important to start out with as much information as possible so as not to overlook anything relevant.

Who is your target audience?
In this discussion we assume that your goal is to work in commercial translation as an independent contractor. (If what you want is, for instance, to be a literary translator or a medical interpreter in a hospital setting, you will need to research employers in those fields.) Your most likely targets are translation companies acting as intermediaries between end-clients and freelancers. After identifying your strong points, think about what the employers you are targeting are looking for. It is important that your resume be accurate, yet it should highlight your strong points and organize your information in a way that shows you in your best light to your target audience.

“How to Package Your Message
The people who will look at your resume (i.e., project managers at translation companies or potential direct clients) are extremely busy. There are enormous numbers of aspiring translators out there all jostling for attention. Many companies receive an average of 20-30 resumes a day. This means the reader will look at your resume for just a few seconds. You must make an impression in that short time span or you are not likely to get a second chance. It is crucial to organize your resume so that the most important information can be gleaned at a glance. That’s why we recommend that you place all your freelance-related information in a prominent position near the top. As your reader scans piles of resumes and gets to yours, that first crucial glance should land on the information most relevant for his or her purposes. Your clear, well-organized resume says read me while others are tossed out.

“...It is crucial to organize your resume so that the most important information can be gleaned at a glance…”

Heading
The heading of your resume should include all your personal data: full name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address, if you have one (if you don’t, you must get one before going any further). Bear in mind that Yahoo!, Hotmail, and other Internet service providers (ISPs) offering free e-mail have file size limits that could prevent you from receiving files (that is, jobs) from your clients. What’s more, sending e-mail from such accounts really gives the impression of a dilettante. Also, remember that cutesy or racy e-mail names are best left for personal e-mail, as they are simply unprofessional. Consider spending the roughly $35/year it costs for your own domain name so that you don’t have to change e-mail addresses (and therefore business cards, stationery, etc.) every time you change ISPs. Be sure your contact information also includes a cell phone or pager number. Translation is a service business, and you must be easily reachable if you want to get work.

Most Important Information
Anybody glancing at your resume should be able to tell in the first 10 seconds that you are offering your services as a freelance translator in some specific language pairs. Either write French-into-English Freelance Translator (for instance) as a subtitle under your name or in the objective section. Many people who previously pursued other careers use their old resume and neglect to mention that they now want to work as freelance translators. Never make your reader guess—state clearly the kind of work you are looking for.

Freelance Translation Experience
If you are currently (or have
Effective Freelance Resumes Continued

previously been) freelancing, even part-time, the top of this section should read:

Freelance Translator
[year] – Present

Under this item you should list your:

Language Pairs

Be reasonable. Do not list all the languages with which you are somewhat familiar. List only the language pairs you have mastered and are prepared to work with. Resumes with 20 language pairs generally wind up in the circular file. Only one language should ever be claimed as native, and if you claim to translate into more than one language, your resume should provide evidence that you really are qualified to do so. Resume readers are quickly turned off by grandiose claims of unlikely language abilities.

Make sure you are fully competent in any language pairs you claim, or you are likely to become a “one-job wonder.” Being competent means having at minimum university-level reading ability in the source language and native-equivalent university-level writing skills in the target language; owning or having immediate access to an extensive, subject-appropriate set of reference materials; installing the required fonts and spellcheckers in your computer; etc.

By all means, list ATA accreditation if you have earned it. Some translation companies claim that they use only accredited translators, and most will look at accreditation as an indicator of seriousness. If you have other credentials, such as a State Department examination or foreign certification, list them also. For any accreditation or certification you list, be sure to include the conferring organization and the language pair[s]/direction[s] in which you are accredited and/or certified.

Either here or elsewhere in the resume, you should clearly indicate how you came by your language skills (through education, years spent in foreign countries, etc.). Some people like to have a separate section entitled “Languages.”

Areas of Expertise

Look up the list of areas of expertise on the ATA Membership Directory website (www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl/18756.html) and those used by many translation companies to cross-reference translators. If your expertise truly does not fit into the typical categories, create your own, but make sure they are immediately comprehensible to the average (non-technical) reader.

Hardware and Software

Do you have a PC or Macintosh? What word processing programs do you use (e.g., Microsoft Word 2000 Professional, Word Perfect 7.0, etc.)? Are you proficient in any other programs, such as Excel, Adobe Acrobat, and Quark? Desktop publishing skills are a real bonus.

Daily Output

Since deadlines are always tight, translation companies want to know whether you can do 4,000 words a day or only 1,000. You should also indicate whether you are freelancing full- or part-time. If you are only available to translate at certain times, be sure to specify them.

Other Services Provided

This section should list editing, proofreading, escort/court/conference interpreting, tape transcription, etc.

Please note that all of the above information should be included, whether you have been translating for 20 years or are seeking your first assignment. If you do have freelance experience, you might want to mention some significant recent projects (include clients’ names only with their permission) or list the types of documents you work with. If you don’t have translation experience, you should really get some before applying to translation companies. Put yourself in their shoes—why should they take a chance on an untested individual? Try to find an internship in a company or volunteer to translate for worthy nonprofit organizations. Do anything it takes to get experience.

Other Experience

For the rest of the experience section, you can follow either the standard historical format or a more functional one. If you follow a historical format, provide the dates (year-to-year), title, function, company, city and state, and a brief description of your duties for each position.

A functional format puts less emphasis on dates and more on skills. This approach allows you to highlight how you developed translation-related skills and subject-matter knowledge. The section could then be titled “Relevant Experience” and grouped by skill, such as translation, writing, language teaching, or a particular technical field in which you specialize. Another option is to have several subtitles, such as “Translation Experience,” “Financial Experience,” etc. Bear in mind that almost anything you have done in your personal and professional life can be put to good use in your translation career. Your past experience in other fields gives
you credibility as a specialist translator (i.e., as a legal translator if you have expertise in the legal field, preferably as an attorney or paralegal, or as a specialist in travel and tourism brochures if you used to be a travel agent).

If you have gained some specialized translation expertise through a leisure-time pursuit or volunteer experience, include that information under “Relevant Experience” on a functional resume. On a chronological resume, it should be listed under “Other Activities.” If your hobbies and volunteer efforts are not relevant to the type of translation you wish to pursue, leave them out.

**Education**

List all your degrees in reverse chronological order. Give degree or certificate obtained, year obtained or expected date of graduation, institution, city, state, and country. Indicate your major, honors, and other relevant facts. If you did significant academic work but did not get a degree, you can also include that information. You could say “Institution XYZ. Coursework towards ABC degree or certificate/degree expected in May 200x”

**Publications and Speaking Engagements**

List any translations you have had published or published translations you edited. Use standard bibliographic style. Also, list any relevant articles or books you have written and conference or seminar presentations you have given.

**Professional Affiliations**

Mention membership in ATA and any other domestic or international translation and interpreting associations, or other relevant professional associations, such as the Society of Technical Communication, American Medical Association, etc.

**Formatting**

After gathering all your information, give some thought to formatting. A well-formatted resume is easier to read and helps convey your story more clearly. There are all kinds of books and software programs on resumes. Look around for inspiration and experiment with various alternatives. Check out links to other translators’ resumes and websites in the ATA web-based directory. If you have a recent version of Word, you can use Microsoft’s templates to create your resume (to find them, click “New” on the File Menu, click on the “Other Documents” tab, and then double-click on “Resume Wizard” and follow the instructions).

As the format sometimes gets garbled when resumes are sent as an e-mail attachment, it may be appropriate to send your resume as a PDF file. However, some translation companies prefer to receive resumes as a Word file so that they can be pasted right into a database. Other companies do not accept resumes, and want applicants to fill out a form on their websites instead. Find out the employer’s preferences before sending your resume. It is a good idea to have a version of your resume saved in RTF (Rich Text Format) so that you can quickly cut and paste its contents into an e-mail message or into a form on a website.

**Final Step**

When your resume is finished, a final, often-neglected, step is to get a second and third opinion. This is important even if your resume and cover letter are written in your native language, but it’s really essential if they’re not. In either case, be sure that your materials are carefully proofread by a native English speaker. When we were in the business of hiring freelance translators we were amazed at the number of typographical and grammatical errors contained in the resumes and letters we received. You can well imagine that these were the first to hit the circular file.

You might think that going through all the steps we have described is a lot of work. However, we urge you to put time and effort into drafting your resume. A thoughtful, well-written, and well-laid out resume is key to attracting new clients and advancing your career.

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**Proposed ATA Middle Eastern Languages Division**

During ATA’s 43rd Annual Conference in Atlanta, a group of attendees met to discuss the establishment of a new ATA division, the Middle Eastern Languages Division (MELD). As its acronym suggests, MELD will be designed to serve as a nonpolitical forum that welcomes participation from all translators and interpreters working in the languages of this region. For more information or to volunteer with this effort, please contact Haleh Vakhshori, MELD coordinator, at eztranslations2@yahoo.com.
Translating Resumes for Our Small Planet

By Sylvie R. Moulin

In this day and age, a resume is often translated into at least one or two languages that are distinct from the one in which it was originally created. The reason for this is simply the fact that a successful career rarely keeps an individual in one spot for the duration of his or her entire professional life. For instance, in the humanities, and even more so in the field of modern languages, faculty members frequently teach outside their native country. In many cases, those in academia initiate this migratory process while they are still working on their doctoral dissertation or completing postdoctoral research. Which means, at some point, they will unavoidably have to translate their resume in order to make it appealing and saleable in a foreign job market.

This became a familiar situation very early in my professional life. To make a long story short, I received my doctorate in France, but my entire professional experience, so far, has taken place either in Chile or the United States. In the early 1980s, shortly after I waved goodbye to that respectable institution, the Sorbonne, I started looking for positions on the Modern Language Association (MLA) Job List at www.mla.org, and sending applications to any job that appeared remotely suitable in helping me fulfill my desire to cross the Atlantic. Of course, I had to cope with my virtually nonexistent professional experience. At that time, my resume was fairly short: no previous jobs, no publications, no papers delivered at conferences, no committee assignments, no professional affiliations of any kind, and, of course, no “transcripts” (up to this day, an entity totally meaningless, and therefore unavailable, at any French university). As a matter of fact, the absence of transcripts in my dossier didn’t make the job search any easier, and probably closed a few doors in my face. The truth is that my resume was a full, but single, concise page, typed with the best characters I could find on the humble typewriter that had also produced my doctoral dissertation. It basically included my educational background and a couple of names for recommendations. Succinct indeed, but powerful enough to allow me to receive my first job offer, a one-year position at Kearney State College (which would, a few years later, change its name to the University of Nebraska at Kearney).

Time went by, bringing more challenging positions, along with participation at conferences, hard to get, but crucial, publications in respectable journals, involvement in university committees, and professional memberships. All these activities were enough to counteract the lack of powerful contents in my original resume, and build my professional history up to a solid four-page format. At that point, it seemed that I wouldn’t have to translate resumes anymore—either mine or other people’s. However, my life was meant to be a multicultural and trilingual experience, and almost 10 years after signing my first contract with the American academic world, I found myself facing a new challenge when we decided to move to Chile. Considering the low salaries of teaching positions there, I decided to supplement my income by dedicating a good chunk of my free time to the translation/interpretation business. First, I had to translate my own resume in order to present it to potential employers. I then decided to leave the customer/job hunter side of the market and become a “supplier,” translating other people’s resumes and getting paid for that duty.

The business for which I was working, Servicio Chileno-Francés de Traducción (even though it also received material to translate to and from English), was located on a peaceful street adjacent to the effervescent center of Santiago. It attracted a steady stream of customers in need of translated documents, from birth certificates, drivers’ licenses, legal files, medical records, business letters, and exportation paperwork, all the way to master and doctorate dissertations. A significant share of our daily supply was provided by students who wanted to pursue their studies in Europe or the U.S., and from professionals planning to travel abroad to acquire additional specialization in their fields (mostly doctors, veterinarians, publicists, journalists, and architects). Their application files usually included a full curriculum vita, copies of college degrees, a complete list of courses, a letter of application, and letters of reference. Sometimes, a detailed description of the research project to be developed at the foreign institution had to be attached to the dossier, and therefore also required adequate translation.

The range of topics, concepts, fields of study, and specialties I was running into every single day while translating those files was as diverse as the expectations of the applicants themselves. I was faced with the...
challenge of switching back and forth between standards and requirements that went beyond the transposition of contents. While the topics and areas of concentration of studies, although they frequently bear slightly different names from one country to the other, were fairly easy to figure out, I was constantly coming up against punctual problems that made the job substantially more difficult. For instance, how do you render concepts such as “major,” “minor,” or “Honors College?” How do you explain what being a member of a fraternity at an American university represents? What about the transcripts a French student could never provide simply because they do not exist in that country? And if grades are required, how do you find an acceptable equivalence between point scales ranging from 7 (Chile) to 20 (France) and 100 (U.S.)?

That steady practice soon confirmed what I had suspected for some time: translating a resume requires quite a sophisticated knowledge of the two idioms and cultures involved in order to handle the complexity and specificity of the contents. It surely cannot be limited to a mere “transfer” from one language to another. Although this type of document appears to be simple and safe to work with, it requires an expertise which defeats, for good or bad, the usefulness of automatic translators to complete the job accurately.

The answers to these questions do not concern the word selection process as much as they involve cultural and educational considerations. Different cultural standards will impact the format of the document and the phrasing of specific components. You must decide what is appropriate to include, what to leave out, how to formulate statements, and even how assertive one should be in defining expectations. For instance, while it is appropriate in France to present oneself as the best “deal” to a potential employer (a usage which is fairly recent and believed to have originated in the U.S.), the American or Chilean job seekers will remain more reserved and afraid to sound offensive or forceful. Aside from uncertainties related to the meaning of specific terms, the translator faces some difficult challenges when attempting to create the same impact upon the reader (in this case, a potential employer or research director) that the original writer intended.

Based on personal experiences, both as a job hunter and as a translator, the chart on page 24 shows the main categories included in a standard professional resume, as well as the most significant dissimilarities between an American, a Chilean, and a French format. A job applicant who takes the following into account might not be hired for the position, but at least his or her resume will not be trashed because of its presentation.

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, ATA’s Professional Development Committee wants to help! ATA’s Professional Development Committee offers a seed money fund for speakers. Be sure to call ATA today for application guidelines and a list of fabulous speakers who could be a guest at your next meeting, workshop, or seminar.

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, 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!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>Chile</th>
<th>France</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Data</strong></td>
<td>Name, address, phone number, e-mail address.</td>
<td>Name, address, phone number, e-mail address, age/birth date, marital status, children (if any), nationality, and RUT (Rol Unico Tributario, an ID # comparable to a Social Security # in the U.S.). (Photo often required.)</td>
<td>Name, address, phone number, e-mail address, birth date, and nationality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
<td>One or two lines before the actual resume. Describes career expectations while keeping a low profile.</td>
<td>N/A Section states high expectations and presents himself/herself as the top candidate.</td>
<td>Applicant states high expectations and presents himself/herself as the top candidate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>Degrees, starting with the highest, further education, professional or occupational qualifications, additional training courses, military service.</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Official transcripts may be required.</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Experience/ Career History</strong></td>
<td>Includes all jobs, full- or part-time, paid or unpaid. Usually starts with the present or last job, in a yearly format. For each entry, list dates, job title, name of employer, skills used, key tasks, and responsibilities.</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interests</strong></td>
<td>Hobbies, travel experience, additional talents. (This is an optional category.)</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td>Social or civil activities, sports activities, etc. (This is an optional category.)</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grants and Awards</strong></td>
<td>Scholarships, class standing, special recognition, academic achievements that relate to the kind of job sought. Grants (include amount).</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publications</strong></td>
<td>Starts with the last. List place and date of publication, page numbers when part of a review or magazine. (Follows MLA standards.)</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td>Software applications, professional memberships, foreign languages, etc.</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
<td>Idem Idem Idem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>“Available upon request.” Separate list of professional references (3-5), including name, title, address, and business phone number.</td>
<td>List of references requested.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signature</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Original and copies must be signed.</td>
<td>Original and copies must be signed and accompanied by the mention “sincère et véritable.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategizing Your Performance at the Witness Stand

By Janis Palma

Do you ever wonder how jazz musicians can just get up on stage and start improvising a melody with other musicians they may never even have met before? Or how about actors who spontaneously create dialogue without any preparation? There is theory and technique behind such performances.

Other professionals must also have finely tuned performance techniques. For instance, consider the judicial interpreter. Like the actor and musician, the judicial interpreter is called upon to “perform” when he or she renders a stranger’s words during legal proceedings. The key to a successful interpretation is to be familiar with the rules guiding the structure of the medium being used, legal discourse in this case, in order for communication to seem free flowing and natural.

For example, during a Q&A session, attorneys know what they are going to ask, in what order, and why. Before a witness sits on the stand, the examining attorney has already reviewed the Q&A session with that witness to: 1) avert surprises, and 2) make sure the witness provides all the information the attorney wants to elicit. Interpreters need to understand that a Q&A session is not as “spontaneous” as it seems. One of the ways to learn the structure of this aspect of legal discourse, as well as its impact on the entire judicial proceeding, is to take a closer look at what types of questions are being asked, for what purpose, and how each question is phrased to achieve its goal. To illustrate, let’s look at the differences between direct examination and cross-examination.

Direct examination and cross-examination questions must abide by certain formulas prescribed by the Rules of Evidence. The questions, in turn, shape the answers a witness may offer. “[I]f a witness strays in answering a question, the lawyer has considerable leeway to interrupt and bring the witness back to the point of the question. And if the witness proves unresponsive, despite such efforts, the lawyer may ask the judge to instruct the witness to answer the question.” It is also important to understand that other factors involved with how a question is presented, such as speech tempo and tone of voice, will influence the answer given. For instance, direct examination tends to be slow and methodical, whereas cross-examination is usually aggressive and very fast-paced.

“…When we learn to analyze discourse as we hear it, we learn to anticipate the structure of a question or answer…”

Understanding the purpose behind the phrasing of a question will enable you to anticipate what form the answer might take. When you know what to listen for in the discourse, you’ll learn to recognize the key lexical units (the “how,” the “why,” the “when”) in a statement. This will allow you to break down long strings of facts into their respective units (i.e., “Last Thursday [= when] I took the bus [= how] to see my brother about a loan [= why]). Mentally categorizing these facts is one of the mnemonic devices you can use to remember information and enhance your consecutive interpreting performance. Segmenting information allows us to improve our retention and overall rendering of the discourse in the consecutive mode. Learning to recognize and break down the units of legal discourse will put less strain on our short-term memory, allowing us to rely more on long-term memory. We will examine other techniques you can use to improve your interpreting performance in the following article.

Direct Examination Question-&-Answer

Direct examination questions must be open, allowing the witness to express some of the personal knowledge he or she has acquired directly. With few exceptions, a witness will not be allowed to testify about what others may know, or have seen, heard, or said. Direct examination questions will generally include the phrase “if anything” (e.g., “What, if anything, did you do after you got to the restaurant?”). Answers will generally be of a narrative nature. However, certain types of witnesses, such as expert witnesses, tend to offer descriptive answers.

In a narrative structure, the interpreter can break the information down into the basic “who, what, when, where, and how” pattern to remember a relatively long sequence of events. A descriptive discourse, however, will consist of small, self-contained units of meaning that are more difficult to retain. For example, “Hydrophones are underwater acoustic sensors used in marine research, undersea mapping and navigation, and various commercial and military applications.”

Retention of information from narrative discourse can be easily enhanced using visualization and note-taking as mnemonic aids. Descriptive discourse, on the other hand, may require the interpreter to stop the speaker whenever a complete thought has been uttered. For example, “Hydrophones are underwater acoustic sensors…” [speech
break]...used in marine research, undersea mapping and navigation...[speech break] ...and various commercial and military applications.”

Although not all questions during direct examination will be phrased as “WH” inquiries, the format provides us with a rudimentary taxonomy to explore some of the underlying structures in legal Q&A.

What?

The answers to “What” questions tend to be narrative. Look for the key verb in the question:

“What (if anything) happened after...?”
“What (if anything) did you do with the package?”
“What (if anything) did you find inside the bag?”

(Note: “What” questions will elicit answers that build on the story being told by the witness. Such answers will form the basis for future questions in order to establish a complete picture of the events in the mind of the judge or jurors.)

Some “what” questions will elicit descriptive, rather than narrative, answers. For example: “What (if anything) did Officer Jones do at that point?” is looking for an answer that will describe the normal activities of a police officer, such as lifting fingerprints or searching a vehicle. In the case of a medical examiner, the answer may be a description of an autopsy. In the case of a money-laundering expert, the answer may be a description of the means used to move funds from one account or country to another.

Anticipating answers within the specific context of the question, and within the broader context of the subject under discussion or the issues in the case, is a skill the court interpreter needs to develop. Become familiar with the most common types of procedures described in the civil and criminal cases frequently heard in your district. For example, if you live near a border, customs and immigrations procedures will most likely come up very often. Likewise, if you live near a coastal area, fishing or boating procedures may be quite common.

Note that not all “what” questions are going to necessarily elicit facts or events. For example, “What did [those words] mean to you?” is the type of question that will most likely bring forth an answer addressing the witness’ perception or understanding of a fact or event.

Be aware, however, that some other types of questions may also be framed as “what” questions, even when they could best be phrased as “when” or “how” questions and vice-versa. Let’s look at the following sample “When” questions.

When?

In “When” questions, the key verb will guide you in anticipating an answer, whether it’s a date or a general time frame:

“When did you meet the defendant?”
“When did you first hear about...?”
“When was it that you actually arrived...?”

(Note: These could also be asked in place of “what” questions. For example, “Who was El Chino?” instead of “What was El Chino’s role within the organization?”)

These types of questions seek the identification of someone, and are usually bridge questions to tie a “what” question to another, or to set the foundation for another type of question (“when,” “how,” “where”).

Example:

Q: What, if anything, were you doing at the Seven Seas that night?
A: I was just having a beer after work before heading home.
Q: Who else was there with you?
A: Two of my coworkers were also there.
Q: What are your coworkers’ names?
A: Billy Smith and Cynthia Green.
Q: Did any of them see you leave the Seven Seas?
Example:
Q: What, if anything, did you see when you looked out the window?
A: I saw Henry Willowbrook’s car parked across the street from my house.

Q: Was there anyone inside the car?
A: Yes, I saw two men I recognized.

Q: Who were the men you recognized?
A: Henry was one of them, the other one was Tony Adello.

Q: Did you see any of them get out of the car at some point?
A: About five minutes after I spotted the car, Tony got out from the passenger’s side.

Where?
“Where” questions will elicit the proper names of places, addresses, or general placement descriptions, such as “under the bridge,” “in front of the building,” “on top of the table,” “just past the exit ramp,” “inside the closet,” and so on.

“How were you able to identify your suitcases?”
“How can you tell this is the same gun that was used in the shootout?”

“How” questions will tend to be abstract (e.g., “How did you know to go there to get the cocaine?” “How do you know the person you spoke to on the phone is the same person you later met at the hotel?” “How were you able to get the money from Miami to Colombia?”). They may require complex answers that you may have to break down into smaller components in order to retain the complete context, depending on the type of information being provided by the witness. Expert witness testimony, such as a doctor’s, will typically fall under this category.

Why?
“Why” questions are looking for the witness’ opinion or perception of a fact or event. A lay witness may be asked: “Why didn’t you leave your husband after he beat you up that first time?” “Why did you decide to make all your banking transactions at that particular branch of the National Federal Bank?” “Why did Susan keep the door to the store locked even during business hours if she had an alarm system?” Of course, under the rules of evidence there are a number of hearsay objections that may be raised. On the other hand, expert witnesses, in general, are called to the witness stand precisely to give their opinion about some fact in the case over which there is a substantive controversy. Opinions will seldom be concrete lineal accounts.

Cross-Examination Q&A
Cross-examination questions are intended to impeach a witness’ prior testimony, his or her recollection, credentials, training, or techniques (in the case of expert witnesses, especially). The examiner will be looking for gaps in the direct testimony, contradictions, or inconsistencies that can bring into question the witness’ reliability, credibility, or truthfulness.

Questions will tend to require “yes” or “no” answers. Even though they may appear to be complex, cross-examination questions will generally be structured using information already provided during direct examination. Sometimes they resemble “declarative statements with interrogative intonation,” or what Conley and O’Barr have also called “commentary disguised as questions.” These “disguised commentaries” tend to be followed or preceded by tag questions (“Would you agree with me?” “Isn’t it true?”) and similar requests for confirmation.

Answers will be shaped and limited by the type of question being asked. Direct examination will “permit more discursive answers and even invite the display of rhetorical skills,” whereas cross-examination will “inherently [be] more controlling and coercive.”

During direct examination, witnesses will tend to be cooperative, but during cross-examination they may become evasive or defensive as they maneuver to avoid impeachment. Answers will often begin with “it depends...,” “let me explain...,” “yes, but...,” “no, but...,” etc. Keep in mind that these types of answers during cross-examination will most likely trigger an objection. Rather than letting the witness go on, only to be interrupted during your rendition into the target language by an objection, listen to how the witness phrases his or her response in order to make an informed and responsible decision about how
long to let a witness speak before you interrupt to render your interpretation. If there is no objection, you can signal the witness, through nonverbal means, to continue with his or her answer. However, if there is an objection, you can then wait for the judge to rule before allowing the witness to continue with his or her explanation.

Another strategy used by attorneys during cross-examination is to repeat the last portion of a witness’ answer as a preface to their next question. Their voice inflection, however, may connote disbelief or sarcasm. Be attentive to these nonverbal cues, as these implicit messages should be conveyed together with the verbal message.

Example:
Q: Who entered the intersection first?
A: I don’t remember.
Q: You don’t remember. But you do remember the traffic light was still green?

During cross-examination, some attorneys may attempt to diminish a witness’ importance or status by addressing him or her as “Mr.” or “Ms.,” rather than “Dr.” or “Agent.” If you hear this, you will know there is a reason for the change in title. Remember, just because it was not what you were expecting to hear does not mean that this is a mistake on the speaker’s part or something you misheard.

Conclusions
Learning to categorize questions as requests for a narrative of events, a time frame, an identity, a place, a reason, or a process will help you anticipate the basic structure of an answer. Doing so will also allow you to have better control over the duration of the utterance, so you can retain and render it accurately.

Keeping track of what has already been established for the record will also help you to break down the structure of a seemingly long discourse in order to find the predicate statements and the core questions. For example: “And if the confidential informant told you he had used the Emerald Hotel in Canyon City between May and August of 1998, would that be the type of information you would have corroborated as part of your investigative technique?” The predicate statement in the question is something already in evidence: “the confidential informant told you he had used the Emerald Hotel in Canyon City between May and August of 1998.” The core question: “Would you have corroborated that information?” When analyzing the questions, identify what is new and what is old, what has already been recorded in your notes or stored in your long-term memory, and what is to be stored in short-term memory.

Keeping a list of names, dates, addresses, and some other facts essential to the testimony that has already been offered (taking care to keep them separate from the notes you use as mnemonic aids for the consecutive rendition) is very helpful to keep the question structure clear, regardless of how extensive the question may be. The best way to prepare this list is to write down the names of people and places as they are mentioned during direct examination. The list can then be used as a visual reference, which minimizes note-taking efforts when these details come up again during subsequent questions.

Once you learn to identify repetitive phrases, you can create shorthand symbols, such as “i.a.” for “if anything,” to unclutter both your note-taking and your short-term retention. Drawing arrows is probably the most versatile and easy way to incorporate symbols for interpreters who are starting to develop a note-taking system of their own. When the questions and answers cover spatial and temporal relations, arrows pointing to the right denote a forward movement, arrows pointing to the left denote a movement back in time or space, and so on. Mathematical symbols are very easy to incorporate as well, because the semiotics of math symbols are almost universal. We automatically associate “+” with a sum or an increase, “=” with money, “=” with one thing being equal to another, and so on.

Also keep in mind that a witness’ level of formal education, ability to express him or herself in public, and knowledge about the subject matter under discussion are all elements that shape the coherence and grammatical correctness of an answer. This, in turn, will affect the interpreter’s ability to retain longer or shorter portions of the witness’ answer. As you listen to the witness express his or her thoughts, look for those elements of discourse that can help guide your strategies while interpreting at the witness stand.

Notes
1. See, for example, Federal Rules of Evidence, Article VII. Witnesses. Rule 611(b) Scope of Cross Examination. Cross-examination should be limited to the subject matter of the direct examination and matters affecting the credibility of the witness. The court may, in the exercise of discretion, permit inquiry into additional matters as if on direct examination. Rule 611(c) Leading Questions. Leading questions

Continued on p.43
The Argentine Crisis in the English-Language Press

By Alexandra Russell-Bitting

The following is based on a preconference seminar by the author entitled “Understanding Argentina: What Led the Third-Largest Economy in Latin America to Default?”

But Simovich reported in the June 2002 issue of the AFA Chronicle on the new Spanish terminology spawned by the current crisis in Argentina, for which translators and interpreters have found it challenging to find English equivalents. But what about the English-language press? Journalists, especially those covering business and finance, have had to write about such issues as the corralito and pesificación. How have they been rendering these terms in English?

A review of coverage since the onset of the crisis in several major English-language periodicals (The Washington Post, New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times of London, The Economist, and BBC News Online) showed that the writers generally avoided the Spanish terms altogether. This is a commonsense approach, considering that most of their readership knows little, if any, Spanish.

Instead, they turned to adaptations, calques, and neologisms, but always with an explanation. Below are examples of three specifically Argentine terms associated with the current economic crisis: corralito, pesificación, and convertibilidad.

**Corralito**

In her article, Rut defined el corralito as, “the name…given to the new rules that prevent people from having access to their bank deposits or withdrawing cash from banks.” The very unpopular measures were decreed in early December 2001 by then-President Fernando De la Rúa in a desperate attempt to halt the run on bank deposits as confidence in the banking system collapsed. Depositors are only allowed to withdraw $1,000 per month.

The English-language press avoids the Spanish term corralito altogether, opting for paraphrases. In the U.S., for example, the Washington Post uses such descriptions as “a partial limit on withdrawals,” “restrictions imposed…limiting monthly withdrawals,” and “the limit on cash withdrawals.” Similarly, the New York Times generally refers to the “freeze on bank accounts,” “bank restrictions,” or “banking restrictions,” as does the Wall Street Journal, with “banking freeze,” “limits on bank-account withdrawals,” or “limits on cash withdrawals.”

The British press also seems to prefer “freeze,” in particular the Financial Times, which uses “bank freeze” and “freeze on bank deposits.” The Economist refers to “controls on bank deposits,” and BBC News describes the rules as “restrictions to halt an exodus of bank deposits,” “banking curbs,” or “curbs on bank withdrawals.”

**Pesificación**

According to Rut, pesificación is “the conversion of U.S. dollar-denominated deposits or credits into Argentine pesos prior to the devaluation of the peso.” Less than two weeks after De la Rúa resigned, Eduardo Duhalde was elected by the Argentine Congress to complete De la Rúa’s term. The Duhalde administration changed the dollar peg system, under which the Argentine peso used to be fixed to the dollar at a one-to-one rate, to a dual exchange rate. Dollar-denominated bank loans were converted into pesos at the old one-to-one rate and deposits at a 1.40-to-1 rate, and the peso was allowed to float for all other transactions. As the exchange rate plummeted to about 3.60 pesos to the dollar, depositors saw the value of their savings drop accordingly.

The English-language press again uses adaptations in the form of paraphrasing to render pesificación. For instance, the New York Times mentions the “government’s decision to pay dollar obligations in pesos at a one-to-one rate, but convert bank deposits at 1.4 to 1,” then “conversion to pesos.” Likewise, the Washington Post explains how the government “forcibly converted dollar deposits and loans into pesos.”

However, since the term pesificación does lend itself nicely to calquing in English, based on the “dollarization” structure, some reporters translate it as “pesofication.” The English neologism, however, is always initially given in quotation marks, with an explanation. For example, the Financial Times first describes the Argentine government’s “decision to devalue and redenominate assets and liabilities into pesos,” then refers to “a ‘pesofication’ of bank deposits and liabilities at different exchange rates” (note quotation marks).

**Convertibilidad**

The dollar peg was instituted in the early 1990s under the so-called Ley de Convertibilidad (“Convertibility “...Translations and interpreters have found it challenging to find English equivalents, but what about the English-language press...?”
The Argentine Crisis in the English-Language Press Continued

Law”), which established the Caja de Conversión (“Currency Board”). The law also required the central bank to have dollars before it printed new pesos. Originally enacted to stop hyperinflation, it was largely successful, but for a number of reasons had outlived its useful life by 2001.

Although the term “convertibility” exists in English, few English speakers would understand exactly what it means in Argentina if they were not familiar with the foreign exchange regime there. Therefore, English-speaking journalists usually use “convertibility” in quotes and/or with an explanation. For instance, the Wall Street Journal describes the system succinctly as the “currency peg, known as convertibility” or the “currency board” system (note use of quotation marks).

Similarly, the Economist first describes the system as “a currency board, under which the peso was fixed by law at par to the dollar, and the money supply restricted to the level of hard-currency reserves,” then refers to it as “convertibility” (in quotes) or the “currency board.”

Not surprisingly, references to convertibility or the currency board appear less frequently in the general press than in the financial press. But again, explanatory paraphrasing is the rule. For example, the Washington Post refers to “the system, called convertibility, that pegged the peso to the U.S. dollar at a one-to-one ratio,” while the New York Times describes “the Convertibility Law…, a modified currency board system that pegged the peso to the dollar one-to-one.”

Alternatives to Literal Translation

These new Argentine terms demonstrate how important it is in translation to focus on meaning rather than words in order to convey the source-language message most accurately and usefully to the readership of the target language. If we go literal, as in “convertibility,” we must be careful to use the expression in quotes so as to alert readers that it is being used with a new meaning, which we must specify.

If we chose to coin a neologism, such as “pesification,” we must likewise introduce it in quotes and provide a definition. We should also take care that the new term follows the linguistic structure of the target language: for example, “pesification” reflects the pattern of “dollarization” (name of currency + suffix “-ation”) better than “pesification” would.

And if the source term does not lend itself to either literal translation or a calque, as is the case for corralito, we can always devise an explanatory paraphrase, such as “the restrictions imposed limiting monthly withdrawals.” If it has to be long, we can invent an alternate short form, like “banking freeze.” In any event, our primary concern should be effective communication to the audience of the target language.

References


The B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing: Looking at the Flowing Water, Not the Canoe

By Christiane Melançon and Marco A. Fiola

All translation training programs, which require the assimilation of many different competencies (Valentine 1999, 32), aim to impart specific knowledge and skills to aspiring language professionals. In Canadian universities, translator training begins at the undergraduate level, as opposed to programs in the U.S. and a great number of those in Europe, where translation is taught mainly at the graduate level. Unlike traditional training programs, which usually focus on literary translation, Canadian translation programs leading to B.A. degrees concentrate on pragmatic texts. These undergraduate programs train students not to be specialized translators, but specialists of translation. Students usually specialize in legal, literary, commercial, or other types of translation at the graduate level within the context of a master’s or graduate diploma in specialized studies program.

The Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO) is not an exception to this rule. It has been training language professionals (translators, terminologists, and professional writers) at the undergraduate level for more than 20 years. The Department of Language Studies was recently created, crowning the significant development of programs in the language training sector. These include a one-of-a-kind program in Canada, the B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing, and an unparalleled program in North America, the Graduate Diploma in Localization.

In the early 1980s, the UQO’s undergraduate programs, whose content up until then was mainly based on literary translation, shifted to a career-oriented approach. The result was the creation of two 30-credit certificate programs to meet the professional development needs of an adult clientele with diverse occupational backgrounds. Over the years, these programs attracted a stable enrollment of students, and the analysis of their needs served as a basis for overhauling the programs during the 1990s. A third certificate was added in the fall of 1996, offering training in translation and leading to certification by certain provincial translators’ associations, such as the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario.

“…The structure of modern training programs and the job openings the labor market offers clearly suggest that the compartmentalization of skills is a thing of the past…”

Throughout their development, these programs have contributed to the emergence of a particular niche at the UQO: integrated training in translation (mainly from English-to-French) and professional writing. In fact, among the 17 Canadian universities offering programs in applied language disciplines, the UQO offers the only B.A. program that allows students to receive simultaneous training in translation and writing. Such a program leads to various career paths: translation, professional writing, editing, and terminology.

The B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing, created in 1998, is a career-oriented program. It has been recognized since its conception by the Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ), for which only programs including a sufficient number of credits in translation or terminology may lead to certification (Stejskal 2002, 18). The program’s foundation and structure are based on the most recent advances in applied translation studies and on the application of principles, rules, and procedures that govern translation and writing in a professional context.

Writing and Translating: Beyond the Historical Contiguity

The UQO’s B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing program is based on two fundamental principles. First, on the theoretical level, translation and writing are no longer viewed as simply inter-lingual (translation proper) or intra-lingual (writing and paraphrasing) praxes, as understood by Jakobson (1963, 78-86), but rather as two facets of a double competency: understanding and re-expression (Delisle 1993, 14).

Second, on the professional level, the writing profession can no longer be easily dissociated from translation or from any aspect of its activities (Poisson 1984, 247). This has lead program designers to integrate the writing-translation double competency. Thus, the goal is to train language practitioners who have the skills traditionally associated with translation—dissociation of languages, inter-linguistic transfer, mastery of writing techniques (Delisle 1993, 14)—as well as skills specific to writing, such as data collection, organization of ideas, hierarchical organization based on a communication strategy, selection of relevant information, writing, and

1. In Canada, one university credit is equal to 15 hours of instruction and about 30 hours of individual work.
The B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing: Looking at the Flowing Water, Not the Canoe Continued

critical examination (Larose 1993, xv). The application of the double competency of understanding and re-expression associated with translation and writing also requires the use of terminology as well as a mastery of technological aids.

Thus, the UQO’s B.A. program stands on the cusp between cognitive processes, traditionally associated with translation, and processes that focus specifically on professional writing. The program design fosters the understanding and assimilation of concepts and procedures specific to the act of writing and translation. It also develops the ability to go beyond ready-made recipes by creating and re-creating texts while considering the entire communication context, and by taking advantage of technological aids in order to improve quality and increase productivity.

By viewing writing not as a pedagogical activity that is subservient to translation, and by placing these two skills on an equal footing alongside terminology and competency in the use of technological aids, the UQO ensures that its graduates acquire a quadruple competency that turns them into modern language professionals. Graduates from the program will likely be able to meet the challenges associated with the two functions specific to all languages—i.e., conceptualization and communication (Roman 2002, 1).

In developing a career-oriented program, some serious questions soon arose. What are the professional requirements that our future graduates will have to meet? What form will the language market take in the future? After reflecting on the matter, we concluded that the role of the university was not to mold itself to the requirements of a market, however lucrative it may be, but to anticipate and ensure the evolution of knowledge and know-how through research, and the imparting of this knowledge through teaching. Therefore, the role of career-oriented university programs is not limited to producing language technicians, but genuine language professionals and language engineers who are able to bring language to life, develop it, make it productive, and, in particular, use language to express thought.

Thus, in addition to traditional translation methodologies, the program also includes writing methodologies based on the approach of Alexandre Covacs (1983): text analysis, joint, parallel, alternate, and shared drafting, etc. This approach enables our graduates to adequately master the various facets of the language professions in order to adapt to changes or even to create new trends. With this goal in mind, the UQO has added a productivity component to its program that includes courses on technological aids and linguistic services management. All these skills are first learned separately and then applied during professional practice workshops in a lab, where each student’s workstation is equipped with state-of-the-art language tools: writing software, spell/grammar checking software, computer aids for translation and localization, terminology banks, etc.

The goal of the UQO’s double competency program is to meet a need that is becoming increasingly apparent each year: finding versatile language professionals. In fact, according to the Canadian Translation Sectoral Committee, the borderlines that once clearly separated the skills of various language professions seem to be gradually fading (1999, 81). However, this does not mean that the modern language professional should be satisfied with a superficial understanding of these formerly related, and now inseparable, skills in writing, terminology, translation, and knowledge of multimedia tools. Moreover, the language professional’s skills must increase in both scope and depth. In this era of communication and globalization, where it is essential for translation to fulfill its role of cultural liaison in as transparent a manner as possible, there is no longer room for amateurishness. This is one of the reasons why the UQO is not attempting to train specialized language professionals, but rather professional language generalists.

Laurent Fontaine (1997, 27) reports that some businesses try to see whether candidates have the potential to adapt to three different positions before hiring them. Companies are looking for “mutants.” In an ever-changing world, a professional’s adaptability is his or her best security. In this context, the UQO decided not to set up a program based on the mold that has been used to train translators for the past 25 years in Canada. Instead, our graduates have to evolve within the language industry as if they were navigating on a river: “You have to look at the flowing water—not the canoe” (Fontaine 1997, 27). Giving our language professionals an opportunity to navigate on various bodies of water has thus become our motto.

Localization emerged from these waters. In addition to translation skills, localization requires competence in technological aids, project management, and cultural adaptation. Add to this list strategic communication skills, and we have the profile of the language professional in the truest sense of the term.

With their solid foundation of knowledge and analytical skills,
these “mutants” will become translators, terminologists, writers, and localizers. A quick look at the structure of the UQO’s programs will reveal how we train future language professionals.

Description of the Programs

The B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing at the UQO is a three-year program whose progression is mainly dictated by its components. The proposed activities total 90 credits, divided up as follows: 72 compulsory credits, 9 credits of elective courses, and 9 credits of open courses. The compulsory courses, which are three credits each, are divided into four large families.

The first family of courses, called linguistic foundations, cover themes traditionally associated with languages and linguistic studies: lexicology, grammar, lexicography, and the history of language. This course structure aims to give students a solid foundation of linguistic knowledge, which constitutes the basic tools for all language professionals.

The second family includes courses closely connected with translation and writing: written communication, translation and writing methodologies, documentation and terminology, translation and specialized writing, and creative workshops. The core courses deal mostly with pragmatic texts in the fields of administration and commerce. Other courses are added to supplement the program, such as specialized writing and technical translation. The studied topics are chosen based on the needs of the industry and the area of expertise of faculty members.

Courses in the third family focus on the practice of the profession: linguistic services management and professional practice workshops. During each of the three winter semesters, a professional practice workshop gives students an opportunity to apply the knowledge they acquired over the year to find out if they are achieving the program objectives, which are in order of increasing difficulty. Conducted in a lab, these workshops simulate working conditions that reflect professional reality. In the course entitled “Language Project in Collaboration with the Industry,” students work with a professional translation or writing service and are required to produce texts weekly over a 13-week period. During this period, they benefit from the knowledge and supervision of a language professional, which enables them to perfect the knowledge and skills acquired during their training program. This course is unlike traditional internships. It takes place within the students’ regular program of study, and they carry out their work outside the walls of the company or service that is collaborating on this project with the UQO.

Finally, the fourth family of courses deal mostly with technological aids for translators and writers. First, the use of word processors, spelling/grammar checking software, and terminology banks are covered, followed by the handling of more complex tools, such as writing-translation aids, summarizers, and translation memories. A few years ago, the UQO received a windfall of computer equipment, which has greatly benefited the translation and professional writing programs. The state-of-the-art facilities are available to students 24 hours a day throughout the entire year.

This technological aspect of the programs has allowed the UQO to further distinguish itself by creating the first Graduate Diploma in Localization in North America, one of the first diplomas of its kind in the world. The Graduate Diploma in Localization is intended to be both a continuation and an innovation. A logical continuation to the B.A. in Translation and Professional Writing program, the diploma’s goal is to perfect the training acquired by language professionals at the undergraduate level by giving them a double specialization: localization and hypermedia writing. After receiving their training, new specialized language professionals are able to write and translate texts by adapting them to new mediums (hypermedia) and other cultural realities (localization).

The innovative Graduate Diploma in Localization also aims to meet the new and considerable needs generated by the exponential proliferation of software and hypermedia documents in the world.

The Canadian Market: The Situation of the Ottawa Region

From the time its programs were developed, the UQO benefited from the rapid expansion of the language industry that Canada experienced after the passing of the Official Languages Act in 1969. Since then, French and English have been the official languages of Canada. Citizens can expect to be served in the official language of their choice in federal institutions. Soon after the passing of this act, the federal government launched a recruitment campaign to meet the overwhelming need for professional translators, and asked Canadian universities to train the individuals who would later become members of the largest translation service in Canada: the Translation Bureau of the Government of Canada.

Since that time, nearly half a century, the Canadian translation...
industry has been continually growing. Today, the translation market in Canada is in full expansion. According to the results of a study published in 1999 by the Canadian Translation Industry Sectoral Committee, the demand for new translators is increasing by 5% every year (1999, 6). The demand is not expected to slow down any time soon. The need for translation continues to grow, while those translators hired en masse following the passing of the 1969 Official Languages Act are beginning to retire (idem, 1). Therefore, it is necessary to find replacements quickly for these pioneers.

Due to its close proximity to the federal capital, the UQO is particularly affected by the urgent need for new language professionals. In fact, after Montreal, the Ottawa-Gatineau region has the most translators, i.e., 2,180 (idem, 6). Interestingly, the annual income of translators in the Ottawa-Gatineau region is 23% higher than in Montreal and 36% higher than in Toronto. What’s more, 62% of translators in the Ottawa-Gatineau region hold full-time positions, compared with 43% in Montreal and 39% in Toronto (idem, 22). Thus, the UQO is in a unique position to observe trends and train future translators, since a great deal of translation is done in the Ottawa-Gatineau region and the language profession is favourably recognized.

But what about languages other than French and English? Canada is a young country open to immigration; indeed, it is often compared to a cultural mosaic. This makes it fertile ground for the development of a multilingual translation market. However, for legislative reasons, English-French translation is currently in greatest demand, and universities offer training programs that reflect this reality. Nevertheless, the arrival of Mexico in the North American free trade area, and the possibility of extending this zone to Central America or even South America, may change preconceived notions drastically enough to justify a diversification of language combinations taught in translation programs. Therefore, we plan to expand the variety of language combinations offered in the translation and professional writing programs at the UQO.

Training the Language Professionals of the Future
The structure of modern training programs and the job openings the labor market offers clearly suggest that the compartmentalization of skills is a thing of the past. Traditional translation training is no longer sufficient to prepare candidates for the demands of the profession and market. Over the past few years, the UQO has attempted to revolutionize the language profession’s obsolescent perspective by leading it into the future era of interdisciplinary, which will ensure its survival and prosperity. Without better writing skills, a solid foundation in written communication using new media, as well as the mastery of technological aids, language professionals will not be able to meet the challenges of the future. At the UQO, we don’t fear the future—we prepare for it!

References


Continued on p.40
Interpreters often work in situations in which critical decisions about public policy, judicial proceedings, and international relations rely on the accuracy and completeness of their work. In spite of this, there is only a small body of theoretical work to guide the profession. The methods by which interpreters are trained and certified for employment are often based on intuitively derived criteria, anecdotal evidence, and preconceived notions about interpreter performance, rather than on empirical evidence. The variability of language makes it difficult to develop objective devices by which to quantify important aspects of interpreter performance. Corpus-based analysis may be adapted to the study of simultaneous interpreting in order to improve training methods by exposing areas of difficulty, patterns of linguistic and extralinguistic behavior, and coping strategies that can affect the quality of work done by interpreting students.

This article describes a study involving 40 interpreting students and their audiotaped renderings of a single source-language presentation. The audio recordings and their transcriptions were analyzed in order to measure how the students’ choices and treatment of utterances impacted the conservation of the source-language messages, as well as the mechanics by which those messages may have been altered. These observations have been used to identify specific interpreter training needs.

**Translation vs. Simultaneous Interpreting**

Interpreting is frequently viewed as a subset of translation, but it is important to recognize that interpreting also involves processes and goals different from those of translation. For the purposes of this discussion, “source text” (ST) and “target text” (TT) may be applied to either the spoken or written word.

A translator is in a position to:
- Comprehend a text in its entirety before rendering it in the target language.
- Consult reference materials at any point during the translation process.
- Devote full attention to comprehension while becoming familiar with the ST.

In contrast, the simultaneous interpreter is subject to time constraints that affect the rendering process. As a result, the interpreter must:
- Begin to render the source material as soon as the first unit of meaning is uttered, well before the speaker’s entire message has been stated.
- Perform multiple, often conflicting, tasks that divide attention between listening, comprehension, speech formulation, speech production, and output monitoring.
- Rely on research conducted beforehand, as there is seldom an opportunity to consult reference materials during an interpreting session.

Interpreting also requires specialized language skills in order to quickly and correctly reformulate source-language utterances into target-language renderings that are accurate, clear, and which conserve a high degree of ST meaning. Interpreters cannot always afford the time or cognitive strain required to achieve maximum equivalence of both the meaning of a message and its formal aspects (vocabulary, grammar, and syntax) to the same extent found in translation. Priority is given to the meaning of the message. In Danika Seleskovitch’s words: “Interpretation focuses on the ideas expressed in live utterances rather than on language itself; it strictly ignores all attempts at finding linguistic equivalents [...] and concentrates on finding the appropriate wording to convey a given meaning at a given point in time and in a given context [...]” (Seleskovitch 1976, 93). Interpreters must focus on the ideas contained within the ST, rather than on its formal aspects.

**Study Problems**

- **Defining Quality:** Interpreters, presenters, and conference organizers do not necessarily agree on which aspects of interpreter performance are most important (Collados Aís 1999, 789).
- **Extralinguistic Aspects:** Certain characteristics of interpreter renderings, such as tone of voice, are difficult to study. Existing transcription techniques can only approximate those aspects of speech.
- **Micro/Macro Views of Discourse:** Examination of discourse at the word or phrase level may yield misleading information.
message of the entire text must also be considered.

Solutions to Above Problems
- Although interpreters, presenters, and conference organizers may hold differing opinions about the relative importance of the various aspects of interpreter performance, studies have indicated three areas deemed critical by all three groups: accurate conveyance of the ST message; appropriate use of language (grammar, syntax, and vocabulary); and an “easy to follow” TT [ibid]. These criteria formed the basis for analyses performed on the audiotaped renderings completed by the interpreting students in this study. The denotative and connotative meaning of the ST message and the persuasive or rhetorical value of the target renderings were considered for this study. Another area of consideration was “receiver effort,” or the degree to which the listener must perform additional decoding of the interpreted renderings in order to comprehend the message.

- The transcriptions and audio recordings were cross-referenced in such a way that any given passage could be easily located in both the audio and text formats, making it possible to examine both the linguistic and extralinguistic aspects of each performance.

- The study was structured so that the audiotaped renderings could be analyzed at the word or phrase level, which allowed for the simultaneous examination of the function of these smaller verbal units within the text as a whole. Because interpreters are not expected to closely follow the form of the ST, this analytical method was designed to be flexible enough to recognize the effectiveness of a reformulated rendering of a message. This design was implemented because grammatical, syntactic, and cultural considerations may require a restructuring of an utterance such that one-to-one relationships between elements of the ST and TT may not be apparent at the phrase level, but may be seen in the context of a larger portion of the discourse.

Study Approach and Structure
Each error or shift in meaning was assigned a two-letter code. The first letter indicated the effect produced by the shift, and the second letter described the mechanics of that shift. A full description of the codes and their meanings is provided here.

As previously mentioned, the study is based on 40 student-interpreter audiotaped renderings of a Spanish-language speech containing 779 words and lasting approximately 7.5 minutes. The interpreting students worked from Spanish into English. The 40 renderings formed a corpus of approximately 35,000 words in the TL. All renderings were recorded simultaneously in a conference-interpreting language laboratory at the Universidad de Alicante in Alicante, Spain, in June 2000. All student interpreters were native speakers of Spanish who had acquired English in an academic setting, and received 90 hours of training in simultaneous interpreting as part of a bachelor degree program in translation and interpreting.

It is important to note that the findings of studies based on student-interpreter renderings may not be applicable to the work of professional interpreters (Shlesinger 1998, 487). However, the purpose of this study is to improve the methods by which interpreting students are trained. Additionally, statistical theory warns that small sample populations may produce misleading results. In order to mitigate this effect, only words and phrases that appeared problematic for at least 75% of the students have been selected as “units for analysis.”

Methodology
The original language laboratory recordings were transferred to digital audio and encoded in MP3 format. MP3 is an audio file compression method that converts recorded analog sound into a highly compressed (i.e., fast to download) digital format. This format offers several advantages. Recordings may be transferred onto computers, where they may be viewed as waveforms (a visual representation of sound patterns). Waveforms allow for the precise measurement of lag times between the ST and the TT. Also, the MP3 format is well suited to the sharing of data among researchers via the Internet, which is consistent with the long-term goals of the study.

The ST was transcribed. Hesitations, false starts, and similar nonscripted aspects of the ST speaker’s performance were approximately represented. The ST was divided into “units” consisting of either phrases or individual words. Each unit was numbered. The numbering system served as a locating device when comparing student renderings to the ST. Given the degree of variability among student renderings, all observations were referenced against the numbering system applied to the ST. In order to permit the examination of both transcriptions and audio recordings, this numbering system was also correlated with the
time codes of the TT recordings.

Student renderings were then transcribed. False starts, hesitations, hedges, and similar aspects of the speaker’s TT performance were also approximately represented.

Six TTs were randomly selected for the initial phase of analysis. During this phase, all shifts were noted, including those which would not necessarily be considered errors, but which illustrated some degree of awkwardness or imprecision in terms of content or target-language expectations. A second small group of TT renderings were randomly selected and subjected to similar analysis. Those units that caused difficulty for at least 75% of the students were selected for analysis.

A two-letter code was assigned to each shift in meaning or error. The first letter represented the type of error or shift, and the second letter identified the mechanics by which the shift occurred.

**Coding System for Shifts and Errors**

**First Letter:**
- **M** = altered meaning
- **R** = altered rhetorical device
- **C** = loss of clarity, coherency, or changes which require additional decoding by the listener (receiver)
- **P** = pronunciation errors which affect meaning or clarity
- **U** = unintelligible as a result of interpreter error

The source text excerpt below is a truncated version of the type of analysis performed for this study. In the interest of space, only the first 15 student-interpreter renderings are shown, and only a small sampling of observations are presented. The numerals shown above each phrase are part of the locating method previously mentioned. Words and phrases found in the interpreted renderings are referenced against these numbers.

In the study, the ST was a speech about the integration of handicapped children in the Spanish educational system. The speech described the progression from a time when handicapped children were excluded from the school system, through a period during which special schools and services began to be provided, and lead up to the present-day inclusion of handicapped children in conventional schools.

**Transcriptions**

**Source Text Excerpt (Unit 7)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>una enseñanza/adaptada a las necesidades/ de cada alumno</td>
<td>1. and a teaching adapted to...ah every pupil needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the learning adapted to...for...to the necessities of each student</td>
<td>2. adapted learning [omitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the adaptation of teaching to the special needs of each student</td>
<td>3. an individual education for the particularities of each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adapted [omitted] each student</td>
<td>4. a teaching which was adapted to [omitted]...each pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted] each student</td>
<td>5. the learning adapted to [omitted] each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted]...every pupil</td>
<td>6. a teaching which was adapted to [omitted] each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning adapted to...for...to the necessities of each student</td>
<td>7. teaching adapted to...[omitted]...every pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning adapted for...to the necessities of each student</td>
<td>8. a teaching which is adapted to the...to all...to every student...every single students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted]</td>
<td>9. learning adapted for...to the necessities of each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted]</td>
<td>10. learning adapted to...to the necessities of each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted]</td>
<td>11. [omitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and experience with the needs of every single pupil</td>
<td>12. and experience with the needs of every single pupil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the adaptation of teaching to the special needs of each student</td>
<td>13. the adaptation of teaching to the special needs of each student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[omitted]</td>
<td>14. [omitted]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the learning apl...ah...ah...[omitted]</td>
<td>15. the learning apl...ah...ah...[omitted]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Explanation**

(See Unit Analysis Grid on page 38.) Interpreters 6 and 7 made errors on item 74, *adaptada a las necesidades*. The errors did not change the meaning of the utterance, but they contained errors that affected the clarity of the utterance and required additional decoding effort on the part of the receiver. Therefore, their render-
ings were coded C (loss of clarity). In the case of INT 6, the verb *adaptada* was incorrectly conjugated in the TT; therefore, the letter G (grammatical error) was applied. INT 7 correctly collocated the verb “adapted” with the preposition “to,” but then made a self-correction that resulted in the use of an incorrect preposition, and then switched back to the correct “to.” This affected clarity and receiver effort in decoding, but not meaning; therefore the letter C was applied to indicate error type.

Interpreter 12 rendered items 73 and 74 in such a way as to completely change the meaning, but this same interpreter’s rendering of item 75 retained its original meaning. Item 73, *una enseñanza*, was rendered as “and experience,” illustrating the use of an incorrect lexical item that affected the meaning. The letter M indicates the changed meaning, and the letter L indicates that the choice of a lexical item caused the change. Item 74, *adaptada a las necesidades*, was rendered as “with the needs,” resulting in the loss of information carried by the verb *adaptada*. Because of this, that item is also marked ML.

**Discussion**

In the analysis of 40 renderings of this text, 10 units have been identified that appeared to cause difficulty for 75% or more of the interpreting students. A total of 50% or more of the students seemed to have difficulty with 33 units. During the initial, or “pilot,” phase, 47 units caused difficulties for more than half the students. Of the units which caused 75% or more of the students to experience difficulty, the following error types related to second-language training were identified:

- Manipulation of figurative and metaphorical use of language (Unit 3)
- Adaptation of the passive voice to the TL (Unit 4)
- Use of transitions and conjunctions (Units 8, 9, 10, 14, and 23)
The ST version of Unit 3, *y digo normales entre comillas*, was rendered using terminology associated with punctuation, but failed to capture the sense of *entre comillas* as it is used in the ST (to qualify the adjective *normales*). The ST speaker used the adjective to distinguish handicapped children from the general populace, and then seems to have felt that such a distinction was potentially offensive. The phrase *entre comillas* is commonly used in Spanish, and equivalent phrases in English, such as “in quotes,” would have been workable. However, several students used punctuation terminology, such as “between brackets” and “between commas,” thus failing to capture the speaker’s intentions. This approach seems to indicate that the students were focused on the formal aspects of the ST rather than the ideas which it expressed. Some of the more effective renderings abandoned the punctuation reference, rendering the phrase as “...who are considered normal” and “supposedly normal.”

Unit 4, *pocas veces se ha pensado en sus verdaderas necesidades*, was rendered by students as, “very few times we have thought about their true/real needs.” This rendering may not be difficult to understand, but clearly indicates difficulty in adapting the passive voice to the TL.

Unit 8, *no sólo en cuanto al contenido*, is part of a “not only x, but also y” comparison. Eight of the students used the phrase “not only about” for *no sólo en cuanto a*. Again, this phraseology is intelligible, but does not sound natural. Additionally, some interpreters failed to render the “but also y” portion of the utterance. These errors suggest the need for additional English studies, particularly in rhetorical usage.

Areas of difficulty involving language training specific to interpreting and translation include:

- Avoidance of calques and false cognates (Units 13, 29, and 31)
- Restructuring of SL utterances (Units 4 and 8)
- Manipulation of rhetorical and persuasive devices in the TL (Units 3, 4, 8, 10, and 13)

Unit 29, *se da cuenta de que no puede tapar la boca o fumar o masti car chicle durante la clase*, seems to have been problematic, although the phrase “cover the mouth” (or “cover his/her mouth”) would have been an effective solution. It may be that the students were attempting to avoid a calque (a word or phrase which follows the form of the original, but does not have the same meaning).

Unit 31, *debe hablar despacio y vocalizar bien*, was rendered by 28 students as “vocalize,” which refers to vocal exercises performed by singers or to the act of putting something in vocal form. However, this does not mean “enunciate” or “pronounce” (Webster 1997, 2,129).

Unit 10, *sólo sirvieron para segre gar o marginar*, is used to indicate that some accommodations designed for handicapped children had unanticipated negative effects on those who were supposed to benefit from them. This passage was frequently rendered with phrases such as “were only helpful to,” “were only useful to,” or “just made possible.” All these renderings make segregation and marginalization appear to be desirable, rather than unfortunate; a clear change of meaning from the ST.

These findings illustrate the need for additional second-language training. Interpreting and translation call for not only a high level of competence in all working languages, but also an awareness of, and training in, rhetorical and persuasive speech techniques. These aspects are not always covered in undergraduate language studies. Although conventional wisdom holds that translation and interpreter training programs should not include second-language education, these findings suggest otherwise. While it is reasonable to expect interpreters and translators to be well versed in their working languages (vocabulary, grammar, and syntax), the specialized use of these languages in interpreting situations requires special preparation and training. With practice, students will become comfortable with these rhetorical devices and grammatical adaptations.
thereby not only improving accuracy, but also reducing cognitive load and stress on the interpreters (Gile 1995, 216-9, 227).

Some errors may have been caused not by weak second-language skills, but by problems associated with cognitive load management. In some cases, students seemed to become sidetracked by their efforts to correct minor errors or imperfect word choices, at the expense of comprehension and accurate conveyance of important information. Mistakes of this type may also be examples of cognitive load exceeding capacity (MacWhinney 1997, 216).

Conclusion
Examination of this corpus has produced credible results, many of which were contrary to the author’s expectations at the outset. Preconceptions regarding the tendencies of interpreting students were clearly refuted by the data. Problematic tendencies assumed to be widespread proved not to be, and phrases that were expected to be easily rendered proved to be difficult for students. Clearly, this study is limited, but the approach shows great promise.

Future plans include examination of shifts and errors occurring at lower frequencies to see if the error types are consistent with those found in this phase. Language features, such as verb-preposition collocation, will also be examined using this corpus. One area for future study of this corpus involves the ability to view the audio recordings as waveforms, thereby permitting accurate measurement of time-related features of interpreter performance, such as “ear-to-voice span” (EVS). EVS considers the advantages of greater comprehension associated with waiting before rendering an utterance against the added burden on the interpreter’s memory. Lag times and accuracy may be correlated through such a study.

It is hoped that other researchers will consider developing corpora for the study of interpreter/translator performance. Forty additional interpreting samples have been collected to augment the present corpus, and the findings of this phase will be compared to the new group of samples. A similar corpus, in which a comparable speech is interpreted from English into Spanish using the same group of students, has been compiled. This corpus will be subjected to analyses along these same lines, looking for areas of difficulty encountered when working from one’s second language into one’s native language. While there remains substantial room for refinement in the application of corpus-based techniques to the study of interpreting, the initial findings are encouraging. This method is being further developed in hopes of improving objectivity in the development of interpreter-training curricula and materials.

References


A Brief Introduction On the Use of the Internet for Japanese Medical Translation

By Yuka Tamura

The medical translation market is an attractive field for beginning translators with nonscientific backgrounds, since there is always a need for this type of work, even during times of economic recession. Even though the current Japanese economy is troubled, the demand for medical translation does not change very much. However, it is hard for translators without medical expertise to enter this field. Reference books are expensive and difficult to understand, the actual jobs are too diverse to study, and it is often a challenge to find the information you need.

I started my medical translation business several years ago after getting a diploma from the pharmaceutical department of a university. Since I am currently living in the U.S., access to Japanese books is limited. However, thanks to the abundance of medical information available on the Internet, my workload is rapidly increasing. In this article, geared towards beginners, I will show you how to get the information you need from the Internet. This article also discusses dictionary tools you can download at reasonable prices, or for free, to increase your working efficiency.

Searching the Internet

It is necessary for medical translators to have access to the most current and appropriate terminology for their work. You may need several basic dictionaries, like Stedman’s Medical Dictionary (ISBN: 4-89553-631-9) and Nanzando’s Medical Dictionary (ISBN: 4-525-01028-2 C3547), both of which are available on CD-ROM. However, what if you can’t find the appropriate terminology for your document in these or other excellent print references? One of the easiest ways is to search the Internet.

Although no one will dispute that the Internet is a very useful tool, most of us have had the experience of spending lots of time on the web only to come up empty-handed. This might have something to do with the search engine you are using and your searching methods. There are many Internet retrieval systems (e.g., Yahoo!, Google, and Jeeves), but my recommendation is Google, which highlights the terms you are searching for within the displayed text. You can also find how the terms are used in a medical document and get other technical words without opening the page each time. Google also offers a toolbar system you can use to find information from anywhere on the Internet (Google Toolbar™: http://toolbar.google.com/).

Here are some search tips to help you save time and increase the probability of finding the information you need. The following searches for the word “hypertension” were performed using Google.

Be Specific

The more specific you are, the more likely you are to find what you want. Don’t be afraid to tell a search engine exactly what you are looking for. For example, for a glossary for hypertension, type “glossary” (or the equivalent Japanese word to find a bilingual glossary) and “hypertension” in the search field, with a space between the two words. This will pull up all the pages containing glossary items for hypertension.

Use the + Symbol (or add a space)

Sometimes, you want to make sure that a search engine finds pages that have all the words you enter, not just some of them. The + symbol lets you do this (or just adding a space between words can do the same thing). For example, if you want to find pages that have references to both hypertension and high blood pressure, you could search this way:

+hypertension +high blood pressure

Only pages that contain both words will appear in your results. If you wanted to narrow down your search even further, you could type:

+hypertension +pregnancy +high blood pressure

This pulls up the following information, showing how the term is used in a sentence. The link is contained at the end.

High Blood Pressure
... Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology High Blood Pressure in Pregnancy. Hypertension During Pregnancy. High blood pressure is a serious health problem that ... Description: An in-depth look at high blood pressure in pregnancy. Category: Health > Conditions and Diseases > ... > Hypertension obgyn.uihc.uiowa.edu/PatInfo/pregprob/hyper10n.htm

The + symbol is especially helpful when you do a search and then find yourself overwhelmed with information. This method gathers all the words you need to find in one entry.

Use the - Symbol

Sometimes, you want a search engine to find pages that have
one word on them but not another word. The - symbol lets you do this.

hypertension -men

That tells the search engine to find pages that mention “hypertension,” and then to remove any of them that also mention “men.”

In general, the - symbol is helpful for focusing results when you get too many that are unrelated to your topic. Simply begin subtracting terms you know are not of interest, and you should get better results. If you are looking for a page using Japanese, be sure to use a half-size character for the – symbol. The full-size character is equivalent to a + symbol or a space.

Phrase Searches Using Quotation Marks

This allows you to pull up only those pages that have all the words you are looking for, and in the exact order you specify. Your results should be more on target. You do this by putting quotation marks around the phrase, like this:

“hypertension during pregnancy”

Combine Symbols

Once you’ve mastered the above searching techniques, you can combine symbols to easily create targeted searches. For example:

“hypertension” –men + “dangers during pregnancy”

or

+pressure +checkup “hypertension”

If these symbols are annoying you, especially when you are using Japanese with the different character size, go to the “Advanced Search” option. You can also select language, file format, etc., to make your search more specific.

Check Your Sources

Although there is a lot of information available throughout the Internet, all websites do not necessarily contain good information. Because Japanese doctors prefer very professional (or square!) language, you have to use appropriate expressions in documents intended for medical providers. You may need to examine whether or not the website you found is intended for such healthcare providers. If the website itself is a translated document, you may also need to validate the quality.

Dictionary Software

Once you find the translation of “hypertension” or a useful glossary on the web, you may want to save it (using Excel) to your files for future use. Translation memory tools, like TRADOS Freelance or STAR Transit, also offer a glossary system. The following section will discuss other reliable Japanese dictionary tools.

PDIC (Personal DICTIONary) is shareware that can be downloaded from http://member.nifty.ne.jp/TaN/. You can create your own glossary or use an existing glossary, like Eijiro (www.alc.co.jp/eijiro/), the well-known (and free) English↔Japanese dictionary, with this software. Furthermore, you can retrieve multiple PDIC-format dictionaries or glossaries at the same time. Many Japanese translators recommend this tool because it is inexpensive and quick. If you already have your own Excel glossary, there is an option that will enable you to convert it to PDIC format (you will first need to save the Excel file in CSV format).

Some Useful Websites for Japanese Medical Translation

www.nifty.ne.jp/forum/fhonyaku/index.htm

For beginners in the medical field, the Honyaku forum offers basic information in Japanese.

www.nihs.go.jp/dig/ich/schindex.htm

The International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for the Registration
of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) is a project that brings together the regulatory authorities of Europe, Japan, and the United States. The organization provides a bilingual guideline, which you may find helpful when you are called upon to translate a drug application document.

www.biwa.ne.jp/~fumika/
A comprehensive medical website that provides various links related to medicine.

If you want to know how to translate the names of drugs, other chemical compounds, and diseases, which may be difficult to translate without technical references and must be precise, I recommend following sites:

**Drugs:**
http://medicine.cug.net/index.htm
http://moldb.nihs.go.jp/jp/

**Chemical Compounds:**
http://pharmasys.gr.jp/
http://moldb.nihs.go.jp/jp/

**Diseases:**
www.merck.com/pubs/
http://merckmanual.banyu.co.jp/
(This page is a translation of the Merck Manual [English version]. Always check to make sure that the terminology is correct and that the words are actually used in the medical field in Japan.)

There are many other useful websites I have not mentioned, so browse the Internet and find more!

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Strategizing Your Performance at the Witness Stand Continued from p.28

should not be used on the direct examination of a witness except as may be necessary to develop the witness’ testimony. Ordinarily leading questions should be permitted on cross-examination. When a party calls a hostile witness, an adverse party, or a witness identified with an adverse party, interrogation may be conducted by leading questions.


3. See Federal Rules of Evidence, Rule 701. *Opinion Testimony by Lay Witness*. If the witness is not testifying as an expert, the witness testimony in the form of opinions or inferences is limited to those opinions or inferences which are: a) rationally based on the perception of the witness; b) helpful to a clear understanding of the witness’ testimony or the determination of a fact in issue; and c) not based on scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge within the scope of Rule 702.

**Rule 702. Testimony by Experts:**
If scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge will assist the trier of fact to understand the evidence or to determine a fact in issue, a witness qualified as an expert by knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education may testify thereto in the form of an opinion or otherwise, if: 1) the testimony is based upon sufficient facts or data; 2) the testimony is the product of reliable principles and methods; and 3) the witness has applied the principles and methods reliably to the facts of the case.


7. Ibid. p. 105.

8. Ibid.
Translators’/Interpreters’ Historic Blunders Along the Frontiers of Languages and Cultures

By Richard Finks Whitaker

Throughout the history of the world, stories of encounters between peoples and cultures that don’t share the same language abound, and are replete with examples of misunderstandings occasioned by the lack of a good translator/interpreter.¹

The linguist Charles Berlitz tells us that when the conquistadors first arrived on the coast of Mexico in the early 1500s, the Spaniards asked the native inhabitants how they referred to this land. The Spaniards asked first in Spanish, then in Latin, and then back and forth in both languages until, at last, the Indians answered—in Mayan—something on the order of yu-ca-tan.² And that’s how it came to pass that, over the following five hundred years, this region would grow famous the world over as Yucatán.

But it happens that when the conquistadores first asked the name of the place, the Mayas said “Yucatán” not because that’s the way they referred to it in this way because when the English explorers asked the Indians that lived there “What do you say?”³

Some one hundred years later and several thousands of kilometers to the north, when the first Britishers came to colonize the New World, they originally settled permanently in what is now known as the state of Virginia. According to one linguistic historian, these settlers first called that region “Windgancon,” and it is believed that they referred to it in this way because when the English explorers asked the Indians that lived there “What’s the name of this place?” the Indians answered “Windgancon.”

But, yet again, there was some confusion. What the Indians said was not an answer to the English settlers’ question but, instead, an observation about the curious-looking colonists themselves. In the language of these northern Native Americans, windgancon meant something like: “What very snazzy clothes you’ve all got on!”⁴

The world over, curiously enough, quite similar examples of linguistic confusion have characterized the initial cross-cultural encounters between venturesome explorers and native peoples whenever they attempted to communicate without a language in common or a competent interpreter on hand.

Nome, Alaska, for instance, takes its name from ka-no-me—apparently what the Inuit of the region responded when the earliest adventurers from elsewhere asked the name of the place. “Ka-no-me” was the reply, but this Eskimo expression meant “I don’t know.”⁵

This sort of talk at cross-purposes is also apparently how the kangaroo got its name. The first English explorers in Australia inquired as to what that ever-present, large hopping marsupial might be. What the aborigines rattled off in reply rather resembled “kangaroo,” so that’s what we’ve long called this pouched mammal. But what in fact had the aborigines remarked? Their local version of “We don’t get what you’re saying.”⁶

In Quintana Roo, in the heart of the Mexican Caribbean, there is a similar example of this kind of linguistic mix-up. Cabo Catoche—on the northermost tip of the Yucatán peninsula—gets its name from the earliest Spaniards’ here having asked the first Mayas they encountered what this area was called. The Mayan response, cones cotoche, sounded, to ears attuned to Spanish, like a place name, so the conquistadors called the site “Cabo Catoche.” Still, for their part, the hospitable Mayas hadn’t named a thing; rather, they had extended an invitation: “Come on along with us to our homes.”⁷

Although no one today can be certain, it is thought by some to be true that the western coast of Africa, once known as the “Guinea Coast,” together with the countries of Guinea (officially the Republic of Guinea) and what was once called Portuguese Guinea (now known as [the Republic of] Guinea-Bissau),⁸ can all trace their name back to another example of miscommunication. It seems that the first European sailors to meet up with the natives of this part of the world were inquiring as to the name of the place. As they did so, they waved their arms around, trying to indicate “here...this area...all around here.” Now, this wild gesticulation made it seem to the bewildered viewers that these foreigners must be referring to a particular part of the crowd that had gathered nearby. Since it happened that, right in the direction the strangers appeared to be motioning, several tribal women were standing around watching, the men of the tribe took the explorers’ lively words and gestures to allude to the local ladies.

No doubt proud of the conspicuous charms of the women of their tribe, these African males responded to the foreigners’ inquiries with guiné—the Susu word for “woman.” For their part, the European adventurers quite naturally assumed that they had arrived at a place called “Guiné.” The French would soon start calling the land they would colonize “Guinée,”...
and, before long, all of Europe was calling the entire coast of Western Africa “Guinea”—a word used in one local language only as the common way to identify an adult female.9

China is yet another country apparently mistakenly known by a name that was not really a place name at all. As it happens, the ancient Romans were avid lovers of imported Chinese silk. Although quite unfamiliar with the land of this product’s origin, early citizens of Rome did come in contact, in Persian markets, with Chinese merchants, of whom the Latin speakers inquired the name of the country from which these glorious bolts of cloth came. The Chinese replied “Ch’in”—the name of the dynasty in power at the time—rather than “Chung-kuo” (the actual name of their land, which was known to them as the “Middle Kingdom”). Thus it was that China—populated even in prehistoric times, far longer than 500,000 years back, and home to a people with a tradition of agriculture and community living spanning some six millennia10—first became known in the Western world by a name that referred to a dynasty that, though important, lasted barely 14 years.11

Indeed, history reminds us that it is not always true that, as the popular phrase in Mexico goes, _hablando se entiende la gente_. Folks do not invariably understand each other by talking things over, especially when people speak in different languages and from the particular perspectives of quite distinct cultures.

Today, we live in an era that allows us to be in contact instantaneously with our fellow human beings in the most remote corners of the earth. With a speed and frequency never before experienced, nowadays opportunities arise for communicating with representatives of virtually all the diverse cultures in the world. At the present time, the more than 226 countries12 that can be found around our planet are all part of a single global community, a truly universal family, whose members speak some 2,796 different languages and between seven- and eight-thousand distinct dialects.13 It is increasingly clear that one of our great challenges, perhaps the greatest of all, is to figure out how to communicate effectively above and beyond the obstacles presented by the differences that exist between the various languages we speak. We must meet this challenge if we are ever to understand each other fully.

According to some of the oldest stories from a variety of different cultures, the very fact that there are so many different languages stems from people’s primordial impulse to aspire to the highest degree of comprehension possible. As the account goes in the Book of Genesis, Yahweh—on seeing that it was his people’s intention to broaden their understanding of life by drawing physically nearer to the divine—did not allow them to complete the construction of their great Tower of Babel. Yahweh made sure that the tower tumbled to the ground and, once this ziggurat had toppled, the stunned humans found themselves speaking not just one language, as had been the case before, but several different tongues.14

It was not only in the Holy Land that tales of this sort were told. In Mexico, the Mayas informed the conquistadors that there had been, in the remote past, a region where one tongue alone had been spoken...a single language, now lost, that all people once shared and understood.15

To the north of Mexico, as well, in that area of the U.S. now known as Louisiana and Mississippi, the Choctaws told a similar story. Once, long ago, when “everyone understood everyone else” in that idyllic land so blessed by their creator god Aba, men aspired to build a mound of stones rising heavenward:

That night, nevertheless, an extremely strong wind blew up from above and all the piled-up stones came tumbling down…. They didn’t kill the men, but, at dawn, when these fellows dug their way free from the rubble and began to talk amongst themselves, they were all astonished and afraid: They spoke many different languages now, and found at once that they all now no longer understood each other...16

 Traditionally, such tales have been taken to show that a god jealous of his singular omniscience—with the firm purpose of assuring a deep and fundamental lack of understanding amongst human beings—chose to force mankind to deal with myriad languages as punishment for overarching. But perhaps the divine message behind the abrupt shift from a single universal language to a profusion of different tongues was not that people should not dare to go earnestly forth in quest of understanding, but, rather, that there is much to be understood right here—on the lips, in the ears, and in the souls of all those around us.

We translators/interpreters dedicate our professional lives to putting our knowledge, talents, and efforts to the task of improving communication and comprehension among the peoples who share this planet with us. We do what we can to make our many-tongued world a place for understanding. There are few tasks on earth that are more noble or more important...and few undertakings...
more fraught with opportunities for failure.

As all of us who play hopscotch along the frontiers of different languages and cultures know, missteps are all part of the game. Falling short of perfection is never much fun at the time for the individual who stumbles or stubs a toe. Still, all humans, not just us translating/interpreting folks, become very familiar indeed with foibles and fumbling over the years. It’s not for nothing that “To err is human...” is such a popular, oft-quoted line—or that pencils come with erasers attached, or that the back-bent arrow on the “Undo” button is so prominent a standard feature of the toolbar on our personal computers.

Yet there’s another saying that folks quote a lot: “We all learn from our mistakes.” And it is in this spirit, and with this hope, that I’d like to cite just a few more of the countless examples that can be found of how misunderstandings between people speaking different languages have come about.

Before I can commit the major error of letting you believe that only “other people” make memorable bloopers, allow me to share with you one that yours truly made in my early days of living in Mexico.

Now, I like to eat. I especially like Mexican food, and one of my favorite desserts is chongos zamoranos, a sweet consisting of milk curds in heavy syrup (and something that tastes infinitely better than it sounds). Well, some years back, in a restaurant in Guadalajara, after I had indulged in a hearty meal, the waiter wheeled out an elegant dessert cart heaped with scrumptious-looking delicacies, tucked in amongst which was a tiny, discreet dish of chongos. “Todo se ve muy rico,” I said to the waiter, “pero dame nada más una orden de chongos, por favor.” The waiter, a model of comprehension and composition, served up the chongos quite as if I had not, with perfect aplomb, said: “Everything looks really delicious, but I’ll just have a bowlful of monkeys, please.”

Usually little mistakes like this lead to nothing more than a brief moment of embarrassment, instantaneous correction, and a hearty laugh all around—but not always. One slip of this sort led to a literally “monumental” error of a most enduring sort.

We all know that Michelangelo Buonarroti was a brilliant artist—a gifted painter, a talented designer and architect, and even a fine occasional poet. But it was as a sculptor that Michelangelo himself felt he expressed his artistry best. As those of us who remember the movie The Agony and the Ecstasy will recall, Michelangelo, late in his career, was assigned the task of painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel—a chore he at first resented and resisted, because he was already under commission from Pope Julius II to create several major sculptures that were to one day adorn this pope’s tomb in the then-still-under-construction Saint Peter’s Basilica. Nevertheless, as it was the Pope himself who ordered Michelangelo to “decorate” this chapel with suitable frescoes across the vast vault of its dreary ceiling, the artist had little choice but to set his cherished sculpting aside and comply.

Michelangelo never did get back to completing to his own satisfaction the sculptures he had envisioned for the tomb. In fact, he came to view this monument as his greatest failure as an artist.17 Nevertheless, Pope Julius II’s tomb remains a masterful creation. And the central figure in the composition of elegant statues is one of Michelangelo’s grandest masterpieces: the powerful portrait in marble of the seated Moses, fresh down from Mount Sinai with the tablets of the Ten Commandments poised in the crook of his right arm.

No doubt you have seen this statue, for photographs and replicas of it in miniature turn up everywhere. And surely you will have noticed that Moses, as Michelangelo depicts him, has two prominent horns sprouting out the top of his head. Have you, perchance, ever wondered just why? The reason has to do with translation—or, rather, mistranslation.19

Many of the major translations of the Bible have relied upon earlier texts in Hebrew and Greek. This is true of the King James (or Authorized) Version of the Bible in English, which first came out in 161119—nearly one hundred years or so after Michelangelo completed his Moses.20 If you turn to Exodus 34:29 in this most famous of English Bibles, you will find that Moses is described there as having come down from Mount Sinai with a startlingly luminous look on his face:

30 And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him.21

No mention of horns, there—right? That’s because in the original Hebrew text the word karan was used—and, in this translation, was correctly treated as referring to the “radiant” or “shining” skin on Moses’s face.

However, Michelangelo had access only to the Latin version of the Bible known as the Vulgate. For over a thousand years the Church had long preferred this version of the Bible,22 which, just shortly after the time the sculptor had completed his work on
this statue, would be formally recognized (at the Council of Trent, in 1546) as the only version officially sanctioned by the Roman Catholic Church. Apparently the translator of the Vulgate, working from original texts in Hebrew and other ancient tongues, mistook kāran for keren—this latter, a word that alluded to “the horns of an animal.” The Douay version of the Bible, the Catholic Church’s first authorized version in English, was a direct translation from the Vulgate. The Douay Old Testament came out in 1609 and 1610, and reflects this earlier mistaken translation from Hebrew into Latin:

30 And Aaron and the children of Israel seeing the face of Moses horned, were afraid to come near. It was Saint Jerome—the patron saint of translators, ironically enough—who was largely single-handedly responsible for the bulk of the translation that makes up the Vulgate text of the Old Testament, and so it is directly to his humble but long-hallowed door that the blame for this stunning error can be traced. Few translation mistakes in history have been more gloriously memorialized for posterity.

These latter examples involved tiny errors—a shift from one simple vowel sound to another, and switching one pair of letters for a different set in precisely the same pattern. Yet more broadly ranging and disturbing, even literally earthshaking, examples of miscommunication can be found in the pages of fairly recent world history. It was only twenty-some years ago, for instance, that then-President of the United States James Earl Carter, upon his arrival in Poland for an official visit, delivered a speech that, because of a number of quite large mistakes on the part of his interpreter, could well have triggered a major international incident. When the leader of the free world referred to having just left the States for this trip, the interpreter had Carter saying that he had “abandoned” his country. Where the future Nobel laureate meant to convey that the Constitution of Poland was worthy of being revered the world over, the interpreter had him saying that this Polish document was an object of “ridicule” worldwide. Poor Jimmy Carter stood there and, before the whole Polish nation and the world, said, through his interpreter, that he felt “carnal desire” for the Poles. All he’d wanted to express was that he was genuinely interested in the “desires for the future” of the fine people of Poland. Surely at no time in the last turbulent quarter century has a U.S. president unwittingly made a more memorable string of blatantly offensive proclamations right in the face of a foreign nation at the very start of a “goodwill” visit. In those Cold War days, Poland was frankly not amused by the many ways this just-arrived guest, the most powerful emissary from the capitalist world, in his very first minutes on Polish soil, kept putting his foot in his mouth and apparently thumbing his nose at the Poles, his hosts (“hundreds” of whom reportedly had thronged to the airport to greet him enthusiastically on his arrival). On this hapless occasion, precisely the sorts of tensions it may be assumed that Carter’s visit had been intended to lessen were instantly significantly increased...thanks to the presidential interpreter’s missing the mark in one big, blundering way after another.

Many mistakes are laughable, and some (in fact, several, over the course of a whole lifetime, if not in the course of a single brief speech) are pardonable. Still, there are certain errors for which no amount of forgiveness can repair the damage done. Surely the most astonishing and appalling example of a botched translation’s having truly major consequences is the following one. For this, we need to travel back through time only to the very end of the Second World War.

Although fighting in the European theater of conflict came to a final halt with the declaration of victory over the German forces in early May 1945, a peace agreement with Japan had not yet been reached. In the last week of July, the Japanese were given an ultimatum from the West: Japan could agree to an unconditional surrender, or that country could suffer “the consequences” of refusing to bring its warring actions to an end peacefully.

The governing powers in Japan appeared to incline towards peace, but the matter of “losing face” was, and still is, a serious concern in the Japanese culture. The Japanese people at large, and the country’s fiercely proud and patriotic military leaders in particular, were not likely to be easily convinced that surrender was a dignified and worthy way to conclude the war they had waged so determinedly. When Japan formally replies, the key to the Japanese government’s official response was couched in a word of singular importance: mokusatsu. Now, this is a word that has several different meanings. It can mean simply: “The matter is under consideration.” In fact, this is what the greater part of the people of Japan took the term to signify on this occasion. However, mokusatsu can also convey the following message:
Comment is being withheld at the present time—or simply: “No comment.” And the word can be employed to suggest something quite different indeed. It can mean: “We choose to ignore this matter.”

As the popular linguist Richard Lederer explains:

The man who prepared the English language translation of the statement for the Domei news agency used “ignore” in the broadcast monitored by the English-speaking press. To lose face by retracting the news release was unthinkable to the proud Japanese. They let the statement stand.30

As a consequence, the West took the Japanese response to be that of “choosing to ignore” the proposal for peace, whereas Japan’s official position was actually one of some willingness to continue “to consider” the conditions of such a settlement.

And the result? On the 6th of August, the world’s first atomic bomb was deployed on the city and people of Hiroshima, to be followed three days later by a second bombing, this time of Nagasaki. The number of victims of these atom-bomb attacks mounted, in the three weeks that followed, to a total of over 150,000 human lives.31 And a whole planet, surely, to learn. We must talk and we must listen, and wherever cross-cultural chatter amounts only to incomprehensible noise, we must find the best ways to convert such sounds into sense.

We who translate and interpret words for others have knowledge and skills that can function like filters for this kind of conversion. We come equipped with certain aptitudes and talents, and with capabilities that we should feel compelled always to strive to perfect, for turning confusion over words into comprehension of ideas. Whatever else we may do, and however we may at times falter or even fail along the way, our efforts to bring our fellow humans closer to understanding each other are a vital part of what must indeed be some divine master plan. For, no doubt, our abilities to be of service, like our impulses to help, are no accident. They must, like the winds that brought the very tongues we speak, come from somewhere beyond—both way above and deep within us.

When the Tower of Babel toppled to the ground and folks found themselves “babbling” to each other in tongues everyone no longer understood, man’s isolation from his fellow man could have become complete, were it not for the fact that Yahweh made it possible for us humans to learn these myriad languages and to benefit from the gifts of the most linguistically adept among us. We translators/interpreters provide an invaluable human service. We can be vital elements in a grand conversation chain—thinking links that make communicating possible where incomprehension would otherwise keep people apart.

As Yahweh showed the Babylonians and Aba revealed to the Choctaws, it is not by heaping bricks or stones together in piles staggering upwards towards the heavens that human beings attain the kind of understanding that matters most right here on earth. We must look to each other if we are to truly comprehend the things we were placed on this planet, surely, to learn. We must talk and we must listen, and wherever
Guadalajara—particularly the fourth talk in a five-lecture series entitled “Translation/Interpretation: Bridging the Communication Gaps Between Languages and Cultures,” presented for the faculty and students of the undergraduate program in English at the University of Quintana Roo in Chetumal (28-29–XI–96).

2. Berlitz, Charles. 1982. Native Tongues. New York: Grosset & Dunlap, pp. 4, 160. (Berlitz is the source for the anecdote recounted in this paragraph and that which follows, although the incident described is variously dealt with in numerous other references. Of these latter, perhaps worthy of special mention here is the treatment given the matter by Carlos Villa Roiz—for complete bibliographical data, see Note 7.

   In his historical novel, Villa [p. 117] indicates that the word the Mayas employed on this occasion was Tectetán, meaning “No te entiendo,” or “I don’t understand you,” and cites as his source [pp. 117 and 598] Fray Toribio Motolinía’s Historia de los indios de la Nueva España [México, D.F.]: Porrúa, 1990, Note 8, p. 271. (Villa gives the meaning of the Mayan phrase as “Anda acá, a mis casas,” or “Come over here, to my houses.”)

3. Ibid. (Berlitz), p. 160. (Emphasis added.)


5. Berlitz.


11. Ibid. (The Ch’in dynasty ruled from 221 B.C. through 207 B.C. Berlitz, whose discussion of the matter [p. 164] has informed the present paragraph throughout, suggests that “Ch’in” was given the Latinate pronunciation “Sina”; this latter form, Berlitz shows [p. 165], has carried over into the English prefix “Sino-” [which, of course, is applicable to things Chinese].)


15. Berlitz, pp. 4-5.

16. Farb, Peter. 1975. Word Play: What Happens When People Talk. New York: Bantam, pp. 354-55. (For citing here, the present author translated Farb’s version of this myth from English into Spanish and then back into English. The present back-translation

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e-mail 2: info@gmt-ils.it

Italian translations made in Italy by Italians for Italians
Technical/Non technical

Quality, Speed, Accuracy
differs from Farb’s original mainly in subtle matters of turns of phrase and rhythms.)

17. Michelangelo. Leicester: Magna, 1995, p. 19. (The artist is here quoted as describing as “the tragedy of my life” his inability to complete his work on this tomb as he had planned and hoped to do.)

18. The matter described here and in the following paragraphs was first brought to this author’s attention in 1996 by Michelle Lavin, then a master’s student in translation and interpretation, in the form of a photocopied handout sans bibliographical data. The present account represents a development of, and expansion upon, the information in that otherwise undocumentable source. The interested reader may wish to consult “Moisés con cuernos...una curiosidad artística” in La Atalaya (15-III-90, p. 7). This article, which confirms that a mistaken translation led the Renaissance sculptor astray in his depiction of Moses, was made available to the present author in 1998 by José Luis Borges Ucán, then a student and currently a professor in the English language program at the University of Quintana Roo.


20. Gibson, Ian (consultant). 1983. Miguel Ángel [Protagonistas de la civilización, XI]. Madrid: Debate/Itaca, pp. 29, 31. (It is thought that the Moses was begun in 1513 and finished in 1516, but not actually installed in the niche intended for it in the monument until 1542-45.)


22. Rosenbaum, pp. 650, 1,278. (St. Jerome’s contributions to the translation of the Bible came to an end upon his death, around A.D. 420 [p. 650]—that is, 1,096 years before Michelangelo [it is believed] put the finishing touches to his sculpture. The compilation of the texts that made up the Vulgate occurred in the century following that in which St. Jerome lived and worked [i.e., in the 500s], and the text was “universally established by 800” [p. 1,278]. Thus, the Vulgate would have been the Church’s preferred text, at the time Michelangelo was buffing up Moses’s horns, for somewhere between over seven hundred to nearly eleven hundred years.)

23. Ibid., p. 1,278.

24. Ibid., pp. 376-77.


26. Rosenbaum, pp. 650, 1,278.


28. Ibid. (Thomas).

29. Lederer, Richard. 1991. The Miracle of Language. New York: Pocket, p. 82. (The incident under discussion here and in the following five paragraphs is based largely on details supplied by Lederer [pp. 82-83], but also on a brief overview of the same events provided by Berlitz [p. 42].)

30. Ibid. (Lederer), p. 83.

31. Ibid.
An Interview with Tameme editor C.M. Mayo

By Lily Liu

C M. Mayo, a Texas native raised in Northern California and a long-time resident of Mexico City, was educated as an economist at the University of Chicago. She previously worked at a Mexico City investment bank and at ITAM (Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México), a private university, where she taught international and development finance in both the undergraduate and MBA programs.

She has authored many stories, essays, and poems that have appeared in numerous U.S. literary magazines, including Chelsea, Fourth Genre, The Paris Review, Southwest Review, Tin House and Witness, as well as the Los Angeles Times and Wall Street Journal. An article in the latter, on Baja California’s rock art, was named a finalist for the Texas Institute of Letters’ Stanley J. Walker Prize for Best Work of Journalism in a Daily Newspaper (1998). Other awards include residencies at Yaddo, the MacDowell Colony, the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, and fellowships from writers conferences at Wesleyan, Sewanee, and Bread Loaf.

In 1999, Mayo founded Tameme, the annual bilingual journal of new writing from North America—Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. One of the journal’s goals, she explains, is to serve as a way to make people aware of the art of English→Spanish literary translation, “of the pain-staking effort to get every word just right, of finding the elegance, the rhythm, and the charm, if you will, of the original.” In bringing artists of North America together under one cover, Mayo hopes readers and writers alike will use Tameme as a cultural, as well as literary, forum. The following outlines her efforts to make this vision a reality.

When—and why—did you first get the idea to publish a bilingual literary magazine of translations?

It was after the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) had been passed, when I was living in Mexico City and beginning to look around at what was being translated, both from English→Spanish and Spanish→English. I knew there was a lot of amazing work out there, and I was quite surprised to find how little of it was being translated.

...Literary translation is an art, and it matters very much how well it is done...

I was also surprised by the conservatism of many translators—picking the tried-and-true over newer, and perhaps riskier, writers. For example, I was seeing translations of the short stories of Ernest Hemingway and Eudora Welty, but none of, say, A. Manette Ansay or Sherman Alexie, two of the writers I think are among the best of their generation. This isn’t necessarily a criticism. After all, a wonderful writer is wonderful to translate, whether they’ve been dead for 500 years or whether they happen to be living and breathing next door.

Nonetheless, I wanted to encourage more translations of the many superb but relatively less-known contemporary English- and Spanish-language writers.

What are your goals for Tameme?

One goal for Tameme is to bring out literary translations and to let the magazine serve as a forum for the art of translation. Thus, Tameme includes biographies of the translators and extensive translators’ notes. There is a space reserved at the back where translators may write about whatever they want, from the specific technical issues that came up in the translation, to their general philosophy of translation, or even just anecdotes about how they happened to begin translating.

Championing quality translation is so important. There is such an ocean of ignorance. I’ve had many people tell me, “Oh, why don’t you save money and instead of hiring a translator, just run the story through a computer program?” It curls my toes!

Another goal is to put the writers and readers of North America together. By “North America,” I mean anyone who is from and/or lives in Canada, the U.S., or Mexico. Whatever one may think of NAFTA, the fact is that economic and financial ties among Canada, the U.S., and Mexico are becoming stronger.

It’s a wonderful thing to get to know more about each other’s cultures and languages. I like to think of, say, a Canadian reader coming across Margaret Atwood in the same issue of Tameme as Alberto Blanco, a Mexican poet he might not have heard of before. Or, similarly, perhaps a Mexican reader might find Edwidge Danticat or Charles Simic next to a favorite, such as Juan Villoro or Coral Bracho.

How did you choose the name Tameme, and what is its significance?

Tameme (pronounced “ta-meh-meh”) is a Nahuatl (Aztec) word meaning “messenger” or “porter.”

Who is your target audience?

Anyone who enjoys reading literature, and also English→Spanish and Spanish→English translators. Translators have been the biggest supporters of Tameme, both as contributors and as readers. Nonetheless, because Tameme publishes the
translations side-by-side with the originals, it can be read by someone who only reads Spanish as well as by someone who only reads English.

How did you go about turning a dream into reality (recruiting contributors, advertisers, etc.)? Do you have some good anecdotes?

Roger Mansell, my dad, who has more than 25 years of experience in the printing and graphics business, was a big help from the beginning. He gave Tameme space in his office in Los Altos, California, and also helped set up Tameme, Inc. as a California-based nonprofit, which was a very sticky wicket of paperwork!

For the first issue, I asked for work from writers and translators I knew, as well as from members of the editorial advisory board. I also just straight out asked for the work I wanted. That was the case with Margaret Atwood. I found her essay “The Grunge Look” in a PEN Canadian anthology, and wrote to her care of the publisher. She wrote back very kindly granting us permission, and we went ahead and commissioned the translation. That essay is in our first issue.

For the second issue, we cast the net very wide with calls for submissions in Poets & Writers, the Writers Carousel, and all over the Internet. We also sent flyers to around 200 universities. Some of the pieces we received were complete surprises, such as Silvia Tandeciarz’s translations of the poetry of Juana Goergen.

I also attended the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA, www.literarytranslators.org) conferences and queried several of the Spanish-language translators. It was at an ALTA conference that I met Cola Franzen, Claire Joysmith, Elizabeth Gamble Miller, and Mark Schafer for the first time. Right there, four amazing translators!

As for advertisers, most of our ads are “exchanges.” That is, we provide a free ad to other literary journals and, in turn, they each give Tameme a free ad. It’s an efficient way for a nonprofit “litmag” to get the advertising that our budget would not otherwise permit. I also hope our readers benefit from learning about other journals and translation programs.

When did your first issue come out?

1999. As I mentioned before, this is the one that contained Margaret Atwood’s “The Grunge Look,” a hilarious account of her travels in 1960s Europe and how she was always being mistaken for an American. In addition, there was an essay by Mexican Juan Villoro about his eccentric grandmother, and stories by A. Manette Ansay and Edwidge Danticat, and Mexicans Fabio Morábito and Daniel Sada.

What was the reaction to this first issue?

The reaction was, on the one hand, indifference, and on the other, this amazing sort of jump-up-and-down enthusiasm. The indifference mostly came from people who seemed to think that if they don’t read Spanish or have any interest in learning Spanish, it’s not for them. The enthusiasm came from people who love Spanish, have lived in Mexico or Central or South America, and from many people who write in Spanish. They were genuinely excited to see Spanish-language work getting a broader diffusion.

Many people wrote us heartfelt letters. I even had a few phone calls from people I didn’t know, just to tell us how much they liked it. So that was really a thrill.

We got a very generous review in the Bloomsbury Review and another, for the second issue of Tameme, in the Literary Magazine Review. Several other literary journal editors (including Jack Grapes of ONTHEBUS and Howard Junker of Zyzzyva) sent blurbs. Best of all, the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture gave Tameme a generous grant to do the second and third issues.

What was the theme of the second issue?

Issue #2 was entitled “Sun and Moon/Sol y Luna.” It featured poems by W.D. Snodgrass, “The Capture of Mr. Sun” and “The Capture of Mr. Moon,” together with their illustrations as the cover art, two gorgeous collage-like paintings of the same titles by DeLoss McGraw. The title for the issue, “Sun and Moon,” came naturally after the material had been assembled.

This issue opens with a very strange and darkly funny essay by Jeff Taylor about working in a meatpacking plant. It also includes stories by Lex Williford (winner of the Iowa Prize), Luis Arturo Ramos (one of Mexico’s most outstanding writers), and poems by Alberto Blanco, Alvaro...
Mitis, P.K. Page, Gabriel Zaid, and many others.

As you published additional issues, what were some “lessons learned” from the process?

Getting the text in Spanish to line up with the English side-by-side was much trickier than it looked at first. We had lines jumping and accents that wouldn’t print. Formatting that first issue was a nightmare. With all the snafus, it took us almost six months. Finally, our designer (bless her heart!) got the template down clean. For the second issue, I learned how to use Pagemaker so I could do it myself.

Who helps provide assistance during the editing process?

We have a couple of readers who help with the unsolicited material, and also an editorial advisory board of writers, translators, and readers who often make suggestions and send work. Once the issue has been assembled, I send it to Bertha Ruiz de la Concha, a really splendid Mexican translator and editor, for copyediting.

Tell us about the third issue.

The third issue, “Reconquest/Reconquista,” has been made possible by the grant from the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture, and I am really excited about it. The theme of “reconquest” runs throughout the issue, and is widely interpreted. For instance, we will feature a poem by Juana Goergen, “Reconquista,” and an elegant and very thoughtful essay by Philip Garrison, “The Reconquista of the Inland Empire.” One poem, “Arlington House,” by Washington, DC-area poet M.A. Schaffner, is about the mansion of Robert E. Lee that now sits in the middle of Arlington Cemetery surrounded by the graves of Union dead. The issue also includes work by Colette Inez, Alberto Blanco, and Eduardo Gonzalez-Viña, a wonderful novelist and short story writer from Peru who lives in Oregon. He is definitely a writer to watch. We’ve also got a beautiful short story by Jose Skinner, who, by the way, is an accomplished Spanish translator himself.

Please talk about your own background and writing/translating experience.

I moved to Mexico City in 1986 when I got married. I had never studied Spanish, only French and German, so I went to the Monterey Institute in Monterey, California, for an intensive four-week Spanish immersion course. Once in Mexico City, I took more Spanish classes and began working at an international investment bank. By 1988, I was able to teach finance and economics in Spanish.

My academic background is in economics (B.A. and M.A. degrees, University of Chicago), but ever since I was small I had always written stories. In 1990, I began taking my literary writing seriously and signed up for some summer writers conferences. By 1992, I was publishing stories and poems and had begun to translate Mexican poetry.

As for my current work, I have a book coming out this fall, Miraculous Air: Journey of a Thousand Miles Through Baja California, the Other Mexico (University of Utah Press), and a book of short stories, Sky Over El Nido (University of Georgia Press), which won the Flannery O’Connor Award. I’ve been publishing in literary journals, most recently essays in Fourth Genre and Southwest Review, stories in Natural Bridge and Turnrow, and poetry in West Branch. Right now, I am working on a novel set in Mexico City.

In recent years, my translating of Mexican poems has taken a back seat to editing Tameme, though I do have some translations of poems by Tedi López Mills in the anthology edited by Mónica de la Torre and Michael Wiegers, Reversible Monuments (Copper Canyon, 2002).

What has been the most “fun” aspect of publishing Tameme?

The fun part is finding something I feel really thrilled about bringing to a translator and to new readers. I’ve also enjoyed choosing the cover art. I like to have something kind of strange, powerful, and crazy-bright with colors. The translators’ notes, when they come in, are always a treat to read.

What has been the most challenging aspect?

The challenging parts of editing Tameme are: 1) the paperwork (just crushing at times), and 2) having to say “no” to so many of the submissions we receive. It’s never easy to say “no,” but, alas, there are only so many pages we can print. If we had no monetary limitations, we could come out more frequently. As it is, we can manage “once a year-ish.”

Do you have any suggestions about how to get literary translations published?

I really encourage anyone who is interested in trying to publish some literary translations to go ahead, try it! I think it’s easier to start with something relatively small, say, a poem you really like. Have a go at it, and then if you don’t have an address for the writer, simply write to him or her care of the publisher. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred, writers are thrilled to have a translator take...
an interest in their work.

A literary journal is the best place to send a literary translation. But I think the first thing to have clear is that literary journals, and I mean both the specialized translation journals such as Tameme, Beacons, and Two Lines, and the wide range of U.S. and Canadian literary journals that also consider translations, are open to unsolicited work. That means you don’t have to know the editor. Just check out the submission guidelines and then send in your work.

It is crucial to understand that “lit-mags” are nonprofit. None of them, however fancy their covers may appear, make a profit. Few have paid staff, and those few that do have very small staffs. In short, for the editors, it’s a labor of love. That also means that your “payment” will most likely be two copies of the journal. There are exceptions, but generally speaking, literary translation for literary journals is not a way to make money.

Thus, it is important to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for a reply, and to respect the editor’s time by having your permissions all lined up before you start sending translations out. A brief and business-like cover letter is fine. It should include: 1) your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address; 2) the basic information of what you are offering; 3) a copy of a letter from the poet or writer granting permission to publish the translations; and 4) a brief biographical note about yourself. More than a page of information, I think, is clutter.

It also helps to keep in mind that literary journals receive mountains of unsolicited work, so even excellent work can receive a rejection slip. No need to get discouraged. It’s just a question of being persistent and to keep sending, sending, sending. One writer compared sending work out to throwing spaghetti noodles against the wall—you never know which one will stick!

On my website (www.cmmayo.com) I have a workshop page with an essay containing more detail about submitting work to literary journals. It is meant for my writing students, but most of the advice also applies to submitting translations. Publishing in a literary journal can be very encouraging, both for the translator and for the writer or poet. I can’t recommend it enough.

Where can one find journals to submit literary translations?

One place to start is in your local bookstore, though not all carry literary journals, and even the best-stocked stores do not carry all of the many wonderful journals that are out there.
Public and university libraries often have excellent collections. And, there are directories of listings of journals with brief descriptions, addresses, and so on in The Writers Market. On the web, a superb source of information is the website of the Council of Literary Magazines and Small Presses (www.clmp.org), which has links to many of its members.

Last June, I attended the New York City Literary Magazine Festival, where there were 105 “litmags” represented. There is certainly no shortage of places to send work! In fact, several editors told me they were very eager for more submissions of translations.

You are wearing two different hats simultaneously—litmag editor and creative writer. Any advice for others?

Writers are often interested in starting litmags because they want to publish their own writing. I think that’s something to be very cautious about, because when motives are mixed, the quality can get muddy. It’s challenging to remain objective about one’s own writing. How can one be objective about one’s own child?

So, for me, Tameme is about translating and editing, and my own writing I send elsewhere. There are, of course, many cases of editors including their own writing in their journal. I am thinking of Harry Smith’s deliciously puckish essays that he published in The Smith. The one rule of the literary life is there are no rules.

You have a home in both the U.S. and Mexico. What insights into the culture of Mexico has the literature of that country given you?

Much of the literature of Mexico comes out of Mexico City, which is not any more representative of the country than, say, Manhattan is of the vast spaces between Seattle and Miami. So I would have to say I’ve gained a sense of the overwhelming importance of Mexico City. In terms of its cultural, financial, and political importance, it’s like a Washington, DC, New York City, and Los Angeles rolled into one.

On the other hand, not all of Mexico’s literature is coming out of Mexico City, nor is it necessarily in Spanish. Mónica de la Torre and Michael Wiegers’ new anthology of Mexican poetry, Reversible Monuments, includes poems in several indigenous languages—and their style and content were, for me, something entirely new.

But what is the definition of “the literature of the country?” I like to think of it as including the writing of foreigners about Mexico. There is Calderon de la Barca’s unparalleled Life in Mexico, Gooch’s Among the Mexicans, Crosby’s Last of the Californios, Flandreau’s Viva Mexico, and Steinbeck’s The Log from the Sea of Cortez. More recently, a whole new Mexico was opened to me through reading the American journalist Sam Quinones’ True Tales From Another Mexico. And then there is Alma Guillermoprieto, a Mexican journalist who writes in English for The New Yorker. Currently, I’m reading Maximilian von Habsburg’s astonishingly vivid and elegant Memories of My Life. He was an Austrian archduke, but also the emperor of Mexico. One of the greatest books ever written was the Spanish conquistador Bernal Diaz del Casillo’s memoir The Conquest of Mexico. In short, narrowing the definition gets complicated.

Do you have a favorite Mexican writer?

There are so many—Elena Poniatowska, Carlos Fuentes, Juan Villoro, Alberto Blanco, Coral Bracho, Fabio Morábito...

What do you wish your legacy will be as editor of Tameme?

I hope Tameme will be remembered as having brought writers to new readers, and having helped bring the message that literary translation is an art, and that it matters very much how well it is done. I would be thrilled if Tameme were remembered as having come along in the footsteps of some of the earlier international literary journals such as Botteghe Oscure, El Corno Emplumado, and Mandorla. I was inspired by their examples and I hope Tameme, in turn, will inspire others to start literary journals, and especially journals that feature translation.
For reasons of his own, Emilio never let me forget that I spoke Spanish poorly, like a foreigner. I felt ashamed because I'd been there my entire life, all 16 years of it. I was born in Argentina and had lived in Uruguay ever since. But my family originally came from Britain so we were ingleses, and even though I’d never been to the old country, my mother tongue was unquestionably English.

My alma mater was a local cosmopolitan institution that catered to children of the foreign community and a smattering of the local elite. It was modeled after English schools, and many of the teachers were “imported” from “home.” We were forbidden to speak Spanish; a rule I was never in any danger of breaking.

As a child, I played a game with friends during recess. A handful of little boys stood in a circle, and one said, “I’m a Canadian, what are you?” The next boy said, “I’m an Italian, what are you?” And so on around the circle, but when it was my turn I never knew what to say. To me, it wasn’t that clear-cut. What was I? I wasn’t exactly sure.

After graduating, I gratefully declined my father’s offer to send me to his old school in England to further my education, and instead got a job at an advertising agency in Montevideo. I was the office boy and Emilio was my boss. “Che inglés,” he said loudly so that everyone could hear. “Hey Englishman, when did you arrive from England?” I blushed and hung my head.

My sheltered life in the cocoon of my Anglo community was insular enough that I’d never needed more than a rudimentary command of Spanish—until now. I was shocked and humiliated to discover this inadequacy, and I yearned to speak with the same fluency and grammatical precision that I enjoyed in English. Emilio taunted me at every opportunity, saying things like “che inglés, cerrá el puerto que entra el mosco,” a scathing parody of my precarious grip on gender. He was right, I spoke like a foreigner. How embarrassing to be a stranger in my own land!

“…What was I? I wasn’t exactly sure…”

Emilio finally took pity on me. He said I desperately needed a transfusion of criollo culture, and invited me to a malambo club that he frequented in the old part of town. It was a funky dive in a ramshackle building that looked like a dimly lit stable, with a low roof, whitewashed walls, and wooden planks for a floor. We sat at rough wooden tables on an eclectic selection of chairs and drank the house red in heavy, stubby little glasses. The musicians hardly ever took a break, and most of the men in the audience danced with each other in the mano-a-mano Uruguayan folklore style, with much flashy footwork and staccato stomping of their heels to the rhythm of the guitars. Emilio was an excellent malambo dancer and was constantly out on the floor, lithe and graceful as a bullfighter, whirling and strutting with the best of them. Grinning all over his dark, sweaty face.

Lourdes was Emilio’s girlfriend, and she and I kept each other company at a table tucked away in a corner. “He always abandons me when we come here,” she pouted prettily. It was noisy and crowded and we had to sit very close together to hear what we were saying. Lourdes loved to talk and she was endlessly entertaining. Maybe it was her huge brown eyes, or maybe it was the wine and the music and the pounding heels, but as the night wore on, my Spanish miraculously improved. My words flowed like a mountain stream, with a rhythm and fluency that was new and exhilarating. Lourdes fluttered her eyelids and squeezed my hand encouragingly. When Emilio finally returned she said, “Look, I’ve got el inglés hypnotized! Now he believes he can speak Spanish.” She was quite right, and I’ve spoken it like a native ever since.

This is an exciting opportunity for you to share your knowledge and experience with appreciative colleagues. For more information, contact: Virginia Perez-Santalla (virginiasps@comcast.net).
Ask yourself if you are working “in” rather than “on” your business? For example, are you spending too much time dealing with the day-to-day aspects of running your company? That time could be better spent developing your business’ services or long-term goals. If you find yourself in this situation, there may be several obstacles keeping you from achieving your goals.

Are you having cash flow issues that discourage you from thinking about growth or hiring people to help with the management tasks? Are your management skills up to par? Do you have the insights necessary to see the big picture, or do you feel safer just dealing with what’s in front of you? These are two predicaments that can keep you from taking the steps necessary to grow your company.

If you are in a high-risk business, the stress could be keeping you from focusing on business strategy. This may require more than stress management to set right. You may need to bring in some outside money or talent to help you get things under control. You might also need to update the company infrastructure, which may also require bringing in additional help in order to integrate the proper systems.

Another obstacle might be that you feel you have nothing else to offer, in which case you need to find a niche where you can do what you do best. Last, when you are in a business where you sell your time (independent contractor/consultant/professional), it is important to keep yourself from being distracted when it comes to figuring out growth potential. You might spend so much time on the phone making contacts and lining up work that you feel there is not enough room in your schedule to develop new products and services that can increase your bottom line. Here, again, enlisting outside help might be the answer. Be aware, however, that relying on others can bring up trust issues.

A lack of trust in your people can steal valuable focus time. If you feel you are the only one who can do the job right and withhold delegation of authority, there’s going to be too much on your plate, and you’ll end up paying for support services you don’t use. You need to have a balanced level of trust with every member of your team. That level of trust dictates how much responsibility you can reasonably hand off. If you want more freedom in your business, you must expand your level of trust. If you’re going to grow a functional organization, one that grows exponentially, you have to learn to hand off some of the responsibility. Ask yourself, since you started in business, how much power have you given up? How have you given it up? Have you done it in a way that doesn’t keep you up at night or cause you to jump back in at the first sign of trouble?

Remember, when you give someone responsibility, you also have to give them authority. Make sure you are comfortable with a person’s ability to handle the authority you confer upon them. One way you can do this is to ask yourself, and your team members, what motivates the drive for success. Finding innovative ways to reward team members for taking on additional tasks is key here. For example, at Magellan’s, a catalogue and Internet travel supplies company located in Santa Barbara, CEO John McManus has a strong team that he can leave in charge when he does what he loves best—travel. One of his tactics is to reward team members for finding new hires that are capable and trustworthy. He pays a bounty of a few hundred dollars, in addition to giving his team the desired authority to oversee new tasks. The result is improved overall performance and continued motivation.

Find a way of doing business that keeps good people on board and draws the right people in. What you focus on expands upon what you are able to offer. Doing this helps us to become more aware of our business goals and to evaluate our strategies for success. If you don’t have a board of advisors or a focus (or “mastermind”) group to help you, let this be your starting point. Appoint such a group to help you create a realistic vision. From this, you will see the paths of possibility. Your board, focus group, and team need to be empowered to hold each other accountable for the responsibility that has been entrusted to them. With this kind of foundation, you can build anything.

For more information on establishing or finding a “mastermind” group, send an e-mail to wendy@bartongoldsmith.com with the word “Mastermind” in the subject line.

For complete membership information, visit www.atanet.org on the web.
Accreditation Forum:
Goldilocks and the Three Passages

By Celia Bohannon, ATA Accreditation Committee Deputy Chair

Last October, ATA Accreditation Program Manager Terry Hanlen forwarded to me a report from the National Certification Commission (http://pages.zdnet.com/washdc/ certification) about test anxiety among certification candidates. As I read, I noted that candidates preparing for the ATA accreditation exam could already take steps to alleviate test anxiety; for example, practice tests are readily available. I was interested in other suggestions: learn relaxation techniques, avoid caffeine, and chew gum. But I soon realized that I was not giving my full attention to the article’s message. Rather, I was assessing the clarity of its style, the complexity of its writing, the possibility that a 250-word excerpt would offer a self-contained text with adequate context and coherent inner logic. Like a collector ever on the lookout for buttons or butterflies, I had one question in mind: Could this article yield a good exam passage?

Clearly, the answer was No; candidates wouldn’t find the topic attractive. But two thoughts lingered. First, I was not the only single-minded seeker of texts. All summer long, graders in all language combinations had worked to identify and prepare passages appropriate to the exam format introduced in November 2002. Second, as the report mentioned, certification candidates benefit from improved understanding of their exam’s general content and structure. To meet that need, here are excerpts from what graders have come to call “the Goldilocks files”—examples of passages that are “too hard, too soft, just right”; too simple, too complex, just right; or too colloquial, too specialized, just right.

Guidelines
The ATA accreditation examination consists of three passages of approximately 225–275 words each. The passages present common translation challenges that may vary from one language combination to another. The level of difficulty is comparable to the level that professional translators would expect to see in their daily work.

The general text (mandatory for all candidates) is written for the educated lay reader in expository or journalistic style.

Each candidate must also choose between two elective passages, one from the domain of science/technology/medicine and one from the domain of law/business/finance. These passages have the character of typical texts within these domains, but should not contain specialized terminology or require mastery of a particular field.

Passage A—General
Sources include books, newspapers, and general-interest periodicals. Suitable passages are well written, pose interesting translation challenges, and require solid writing skills.

Meet George Kunkel, Jr., Philadelphia’s king of leaky pipes.

We’re not talking daily drips here, or even the toilet that won’t stop running. Mr. Kunkel is after the real thing: Rosie the Riveter–era water mains that have finally cracked under the pressure of time.

In the past, many municipal water systems didn’t worry about leaks. They reasoned that it was more expensive to send a crew out to find cracks and pinholes than to lose some water. “When it rains, they quit worrying about it,” says Marty Brown, a consultant at Heath Consultants in Houston. “For some it’s only during a drought that they look for leaks. We call it the ‘hydro-ilogic’ cycle.”

Goldilocks: Potential problems (underlined): too colloquial; reference is too obscure and culture-specific; name doesn’t indicate gender; pun may not translate well.

Organizations, like living organisms, grow and change in response to the environment around them. Plants and animals must continually adapt to their natural habitat or go the way of the dodo and the dinosaur. But human organizations often cling tenaciously to customs that have long outlived their original purposes. Instead of adapting to the demands of a changing society, they can regard outmoded programs and procedures as sacred cows, losing sight of their larger goals and becoming out of balance with their surroundings. Ironically, this ensures that big disruptive changes, rather than small adaptive ones, will eventually occur.

Goldilocks: Appropriate expository style. Good complexity and variety of sentence structure.

Passage B—Science/Technology/Medicine
These passages might be taken from specialized journals or periodicals, from clinical studies or other research reports, or from books or articles about science, technology, or medicine. The style should be scientific rather than journalistic. Other suitable passages include test procedures or specifications, instructions for operating appliances or machinery, and descriptions of industrial processes; these should be understandable without illustrations or diagrams.
A number of serious adverse reactions have been documented for cardiac catheterization procedures, including pulmonary embolism, myocardial infarction, stroke, cardiac tamponade, and death. The following complications associated with cardiac catheterization have also been reported in the literature: vascular bleeding, local hematomas, thrombosis, AV fistula, pseudoaneurysm, thromboembolism, vasovagal reactions, cardiac perforation, air embolism, arrhythmias, valvular damage.

Goldilocks: A dense and unappealing list of specialized terminology—a dictionary exercise, not a test of translation skill.

Water is the most common natural substance on this planet, covering almost three-quarters of the earth’s surface. Second only to air; water is the single most essential component necessary in nature to sustain life. Every living thing, be it plant, animal, or human being, must have water to live. Every living thing consists mostly of water.

Goldilocks: Not well written. Simple sentence structure.

What is it about TV that has such a hold on us? In part, the attraction seems to spring from our biological “orienting response.” First described by Ivan Pavlov in 1927, the orienting response is our instinctive visual or auditory reaction to any sudden or novel stimulus. It is part of our evolutionary heritage, a built-in sensitivity to movement and potential predatory threats. Typical orienting reactions include dilation of the blood vessels to the brain, slowing of the heart, and constriction of blood vessels to major muscle groups. Alpha waves are blocked for a few seconds before returning to their baseline level, which is determined by the general level of mental arousal. The brain focuses its attention on gathering more information while the rest of the body quiets.

Goldilocks: Terminology is understandable to the educated lay reader. Good complexity of thought.

Passage C—Law/Business/Finance

A business passage might be taken from commercial documents or financial reports, business magazines, or the business or financial sections of leading newspapers. A legal passage might be taken from legal notices, a legal code or government regulation, a legal opinion, a treaty, or a contract.

After Enron declared bankruptcy in early December, the other “energy merchants” ... disclaimed any sort of Enronesque behavior. They also downplayed the aftershocks, reiterating promises of big earnings, growth, and at times discussing how Enron’s downfall would actually benefit them.

Goldilocks: Not quite. Some of the “non-Enrons” have suffered huge stock price declines. And many have had to revamp their balance sheets.

...This Wall Street babble won’t amount to much; in the end these companies’ prospects depend on the enthusiasm of the markets and flawless execution of restructuring plans.

Goldilocks: Not suitable; the passage is about business, but the style is journalistic, even colloquial.

The lawsuits allege that BankC, BankA and BankB and certain officers and directors of BankC, Bank A and BankB (the “Defendants”) violated federal securities laws, namely Sections 9(a) and 23(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, and state common law upon issuance of a series of allegedly materially false and misleading statements, including representations and omissions in a Joint Statement Prospectus dated August 8, 1998 issued in connection with the Merger.

Goldilocks: Help!

In order to meet the requirements of Criterion 9F, an applicant must demonstrate that the planning and design of the proposed subdivision or development reflects the principles of energy conservation and incorporates the best available technology for efficient use or recovery of energy. The Department of Public Service (“the Department”) reviews permit applications for compliance with Criterion 9F.

Goldilocks: Looks good; let’s try this one out.

Good point, Goldilocks. The true test of a potential exam passage is to translate it into a specific target language. Does it present unfair challenges? A passage with baseball references might be appropriate for English-into-Japanese but not for English-into-Spanish. Attention deficit disorder may be a familiar topic in America, but is little known in Denmark. A text that seems routine to a translator who specializes in automotive technology could stump...
Terminal Twist to Medication?

There’s no reason to practice medicine if you can’t communicate with your patients,” says Dr. James Kennedy, director of clinical services at the University of Colorado Hospitals. Dr. Kennedy and his team take their commitment to client welfare seriously: patient-education materials distributed by the organization are produced in 17 languages.

Yet multilingual efforts in the doctor’s office are often not enough, says Dennis O’Dell, vice-president of health services for Walgreens, the nation’s largest drugstore chain. He notes, “Even if a physician can give instructions in a patient’s native language, studies show that by the time patients get from the doctor’s office to the pharmacy, many have forgotten half of the doctor’s directions.”

Mr. O’Dell’s remarks are borne out by informal surveys and anecdotal evidence from social workers and pharmacists, who cite eardrops in eyes and eyedrops in noses, not to mention over- or under-consumption of pills and potions. Industry sources put the cost of not taking medication properly at $50 billion to $100 billion a year, and claim that misuse of medication accounts for an estimated 10% of all hospital admissions.

Enter Walgreens, which operates 3,734 stores in 43 states and Puerto Rico, employs around 15,000 pharmacists, and reported fiscal 2002 sales of $28.7 billion.

This year, in an outreach program targeting customers whose first language is Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, French, Russian, or Polish, the company began printing directions on prescription labels in any of those languages on request. The system is based on human translation, not the much-derided machine output, and uses a wide range of stock phrases entered into the chain’s central computer network. Texts are called up on demand in the appropriate language, combined as necessary, printed out on the spot, and attached to packaging while patients wait.

Customers and healthcare workers have responded enthusiastically, and Walgreens competitors are said to be looking into similar programs.

The Onionskin applauds this commitment to patient welfare, with one major caveat: the French label reproduced in a recent article in the Denver Post is both ungrammatical and unclear: “Prendre une capsule oralement trois fois par jour pendant dix jours jusqu’à ce que tout soit terminé.” (Go to www.denverpost.com/Stories/0,1413,36%257E171%257E8 0556,00.html.)

Our investigation revealed that the newspaper had entered two mistakes of its own when reproducing the sample label; a reminder that careful proof-reading of foreign texts by a native speaker of that language is a basic rule of good practice in typesetting.

Yet even when these errors are corrected, the phrase is awkward and ambiguous. Eight native French speakers in France split 50/50 as to whether patients were meant to “take 3 pills a day until the package is empty” or “take 3 pills a day until all symptoms have cleared up,” which could have serious consequences in the case of, say, antibiotics. (All eight dismissed a third option, “take 3 pills a day until it’s all over” [i.e., until the patient dies], as “unlikely”). Two pharmacists in Paris termed the label “pidgin.”

When we phoned, Walgreens spokesman Michael Polzin told us that the translations had been produced in-house by bilingual pharmacists, which confirms expert views that self-proclaimed bilinguals are often not as fluent as they think when it comes to writing. Contamination from the source text can take a toll, even when subject-matter experts are on call.

Despite positive initial feedback from many consumers, the program poses an intriguing question: Is bumpy text better than nothing in an industry as litigious as healthcare?

It would appear so. Walgreens (“The Pharmacy America Trusts®”) has not taken out special liability coverage for problems arising from the translated labels, said Mr. Polzin, who nonetheless welcomes feedback (michael.polzin@walgreens.com).

Patent Polish from Abroad

A recent article in The New Scientist recommends nothing less than “deconstruction philosophy” to identify ambiguities in safety texts. But U.K. engineer Bill Courtney has a better idea—working with a skilled translator—and explained why in a letter to the editor published on September 28.

Mr. Courtney writes patent applications in his native English, which involves defining the precise features and scope of products and processes. To extend patent protection to France, this Chesire-based engineer turns to a professional translator who not only masters the field, but is also a native speaker of French. Yet “no matter how carefully I craft the wording of my patents, the translator still finds some ambiguity,” he marvels.

It is precisely this critical eye that Mr. Courtney values in translator Claude Camille, himself a qualified engineer and member of the U.K.'s
Institute of Translation and Interpreting.

In a recent patent for an “Improved Elastomeric Impact Absorber with Viscous Damping,” choices arising from French gender sensitivity forced the author to take a fresh look at documents that had made it past patent officers in the U.S., the U.K., and Europe. Nitpicking? On the contrary, Mr. Courtney told The Onionskin. “Pinning down precise meaning is critical, especially in cases where there is a risk of fatalities or huge expense resulting from ambiguity.”

When working with Mr. Camille, he was impressed at how challenges to meaning raised by the French translator aided his own thinking on the wording of the claims—whence his suggestion that translation might be a useful process for testing complex safety instructions.

Claude Camille notes simply, “I consider it my duty as a professional to point out where texts require clarification; you don’t translate words, you translate the concepts behind the words.” Clearly, no one reads an author’s text more carefully than a skilled translator.

Acid Test

One approach promoted by Steve Dyson, a Lisbon-based consultant in translation methods, applies in particular to areas where clarity, familiarity, and litigation proofing are essential. Examples include safety and way-finding signs in public places, warning notices, and, of course, drug labels and prescription instructions.

Familiarity is important because readers understand standard expressions more quickly and more accurately than they do new ways of saying familiar things.

The method is based on tracking down, wherever possible, equivalent expressions (in the relevant languages) that are already in wide use. Such expressions may derive from national standards or established practice. In some cases, they may even have been tested in court. They will typically be used by major, if not all, competitors in one or more countries where the language in question is spoken.

The initial investment in research may well be greater than having translators jump in straightforward, says Dyson—but then so is the payback, especially in fields where texts are strictly standardized.

In a pharmaceutical context, this strategy might involve Internet searches for standard expressions appearing on drug inserts or the exchange of such information between cooperating drug retailers or divisions of multinationals in the pharmaceuticals industry. (Could this explain news of a collapse in demand for translations of pharmaceutical inserts—highly formulaic texts at the best of times?).

Thanks to Bob Blake, Jane Lambert, Eve Lindemuth Bodeux, Elke Miot, and Stephen Reynolds.

NOTIS Directory of Translators and Interpreters Online!

The Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society’s Directory of Translators and Interpreters is now online, enabling translation and interpretation users to find the right professional for the job. Go to www.notisnet.org (click on “Need a Translator or Interpreter?”), and be sure to share the link! The NOTIS website hosts a wealth of client education information, from “beginner” education to payment practice reminders. White papers on our letterhead (in PDF format) are ready to send to your clients as is, or you are welcome to use some of our text to incorporate into a letter to the editor. Just click on “About Translation & Interpretation.”
Elleven an excellent dictionary, whose author or compiler has consulted all available sources, can be out of date the moment it is published. Despite the fact that this dictionary was updated in October 2000, there are many lacunae in terms of the Portuguese entries. Unfortunately, Mr. De Lucca, the compiler of this multilingual reference for insurance and risk prevention, has shortchanged the language of his host country. São Paulo, Brazil appears as his residence, yet, according to the bibliography listed, the grand total of Portuguese sources consulted is one. Italian, which is not even a language included in the volume, shows two sources! By October 2000, there were other sources that Mr. De Lucca could have consulted for the update, but evidently did not.

One published source lacking from the bibliography is the Dicionário de Seguros by A. Fonseca e Silva (Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, Ltda., 1994). An initial check of the first five entries against the Portuguese index in Elsevier showed that only one entry out of the five appeared in the Elsevier dictionary. Of course, the Fonseca is monolingual and includes definitions, so there is space for more detail. Another comparison between the Elsevier dictionary and a Brazilian insurance glossary with 189 entries (which can be found at www.fflch.usp.br/citrat/arquivo%20glossário%2013.htm), compiled by four people from the Universidade de São Paulo, revealed that 133 were not included in Elsevier’s dictionary. Out of the 56 entries that were in both compilations, only 25 had slight or no differences; there were 31 with significant differences. This glossary included English and Portuguese terms taken from respective insurance statutes with the pertinent terms highlighted.

Throughout the main body of the dictionary the English term is in bold with the translations underneath. There were a few misspellings, which could just as easily be typographical errors. There were occasional instances in which I would have chosen different words for certain phrases. For example, “vessel” is given as navio (ship) in Elsevier, when embarcação (vessel or embarkation) would perhaps be more representative of the meaning expressed in the original. There were several instances where words were left out of the equivalent terms, either nouns or prepositions.

Grammatical information: Verbs are generally indicated; otherwise there are no distinctions made.

Contextual and encyclopedic information: None offered.

Appendix tables and illustrations: There is an alphabetical index for each language at the end of the book; no tables or any illustrations. There is a list of abbreviations, but it is not organized by language.

Frankly, the overall quality of this volume’s content disappointed. Compiling and organizing glossaries and dictionaries requires much hard work, patience, and talent. In order to complete a true update of such a work, as much labor as was put into the original is once again necessary, but not always possible.

Arlene Kelly studied Portuguese language and culture at Coimbra University. She deepened her knowledge of the language and the culture by speaking Portuguese in Brazil, where she lived and worked for 12 years. She began translating professionally, with the help of mentoring by sworn translator Lila de Araujo Rayol, in Belem, Para (Brazil). In 1978, she interpreted at her first conference, also in Belem. After her
Kenneth Katzner worked as a linguist and Sovietologist for the U.S. government for many years, having previously served as an editor on a number of international encyclopedias and English dictionaries. He is well known among translators working from and/or into Russian, and is the author of a very popular English–Russian dictionary (one of the best, in many respects THE best, in this field). I, together with other members of ATA’s Slavic Languages Division, was fascinated listening to his Susana Greiss Lecture at ATA’s 40th Annual Conference in St. Louis in 1999, where he described the problems and difficulties involved in compiling the dictionary. So it was with great interest that I opened The Languages of the World.

Now in its third edition (the first one was published in 1977), the book consists of three parts. As noted in the preface, the languages of the world number in the thousands, and it is impossible to “establish an exact (or even approximate) figure for the total.” To wit, Africa has well over a thousand languages, with 250 in Nigeria alone. There are almost a thousand American Indian languages (in the U.S., more than 50 are spoken), and the island of New Guinea has some 700 more. So Mr. Katzner had to narrow down the field. The book identifies nearly 600 different languages, showing where each one is spoken, its approximate number of speakers, and the language family to which it belongs. The author notes that this number is arbitrary: “it could easily have been larger or smaller, but it attempts to cover the entire world without burdening the reader with a multitude of unfamiliar or unimportant names.”

The book consists of three parts. Part I, “Language Families of the World,” starts with a chart extending over nine pages identifying over 50 different language families, from Afro-Asiatic to Zuñian (a North American Indian language family), and listing major and minor languages in each family. The chart also lists artificial (Esperanto, Occidental, Interlingua) and Pidgin and Creole (Pidgin English, English Creoles, French Creoles, etc.) languages. The chart is followed by a brief description of each family and its subgroups, including information about their origin and history.

Part II, “Individual Languages,” contains sample texts in over 200 different languages, from Afrikaans to Zulu (practically every one that has ever been reduced to writing), followed by the English translation. Just below is basic information about that language: the features of its alphabet, the countries where it is spoken, the number of people who speak it, its relation to other languages, and, lastly, English words that have their origin in that language. This is probably the most interesting part of the book. The information is often unexpected. Thus, for instance, the reader finds out that tourmaline is of Sinhalese origin, and that serendipity comes from Serendib, an old name of Sri Lanka; that pal is of Gypsy (Romany) origin, and means brother; that teak comes from Malayalam; jai alai from Basque; broccoli, balcony, and lava from Italian; coach from Hungarian; and tattoo from Tahitian. Less surprising is that bard, whiskey, and clan are of Gaelic origin; vodka, pogrom, and troika of Russian; siesta, sombrero, rodeo, and vanilia of Spanish; and spaghetti, macaroni, and piano of Italian. The book...
Dictionary Reviews Continued

also mentions that many Yiddish words (some of the best known are listed) have entered the English language, and are now included in standard English dictionaries.

Finally, Part III, “Country-by-Country Survey,” contains an alphabetical list of every country in the world, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, giving each country’s population, the languages spoken there, and the approximate number of speakers of each. Here one finds out that, for instance, the 30,000 Australian aborigines speak 150 different languages; that the Bosnian language is a form of Serbo-Croatian (as indicated in Part II, Serbian and Croatian “are virtually the same language, often referred to as Serbo-Croatian”); that although the official language of Gibraltar (population 30,000) is English, the “permanent residents speak mainly Spanish”; that there is no “official” language in Luxembourg; that each of the four main islands of Micronesia (population 100,000) has its own language; and that none of India’s 12 major and perhaps 150 lesser languages are spoken by more than 40% of its population of one billion, while none of the almost 250 languages of Nigeria (population 120 million) are spoken by more than 25 million people.

The volume ends with a list of sources of the individual passages presented in Part II, and a detailed index listing every language mentioned anywhere in the book.

So, one may ask, what is in this book for the practicing translator and interpreter? Does it help one in his or her daily labor? I don’t think these are the right questions here. The right question to ask is whether the book broadens the translator’s and interpreter’s horizons. And the answer to this question is a definite YES.

Reading The Languages of the World gives one a better understanding, and appreciation, of the diversity and richness of languages. It opens new vistas and a new perspective on languages, including even one’s native language. At least this has been my experience.

Boris Silversteyn is a freelance Russian and Ukrainian translator and interpreter specializing in technical, business, legal, and financial translation. He has published a number of papers on translation and dictionaries, and has been a speaker at previous ATA conferences. He currently chairs ATA’s Dictionary Review Committee, and is an ATA-accredited (Russian ↔ English) translator. Contact: bsilversteyn@comcast.net.
Let’s pay tribute to a German-to-English translator whose name is likely to evoke no recognition at all within ATA, but whose work is certain to outlive our own. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878) recently came to the Translation Inquirer’s attention as he was preparing to teach a mini-course entitled *The Music of God’s Americans*. Catherine Winkworth was born in London, but at the age of 18 went to Dresden for a year’s stay. Back home after that, she began to create singable English translations of German hymns. One website I consulted, after my curiosity got the better of me, has high praise for her: “Her work is one of the principal means by which the great German chorale tradition of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries has been incorporated into English-language worship.” Ahead of her time, she promoted women’s rights, especially the right to higher education. She died near Geneva in 1878.

And no, this is not the start, in this column, of a series of mini-biographies of translators whom history has neglected. I just thought you might like to know!

[Abbreviations used with this column: CM—Chinese Mandarin; D—Dutch; E—English; F—French; G—German; Mc—Macedonian; Pt—Portuguese; R—Russian; Sp—Spanish; Sw—Swedish.]

**New Queries**

(D-E 11-02/1) A Dutch blurb included a list, and among the words in the list was the puzzling (to a Lantran) “natiebedrijven.” Here’s what was written: “Expeditiekanotten, natiebedrijven, scheepsagenturen, opslagbedrijven, douaneagenturen…Het zijn allemaal bedrijven die vroeger relatief losstaande activiteiten uitoefenden, maar die de jongste jaren inzake werkgebied steeds verder naar elkaar toe gegroeid zijn.” Just the one word, if possible, please!

(E-CM 11-02/2) An English-to-Chinese ProZ member had a dual problem with fuel feeding: its basic meaning, and then finding a Mandarin rendering he could feel comfortable with. Figure it out, and we here at the Translation Inquirer will figure out some way of putting it in proper characters, as well as a transliteration.

(E-Pt 11-02/3) Regarding a diesel engine: how to render *ground teeth* into Portuguese? The *ground teeth help the Engine Control Unit determine when cylinder #1 is at top dead center*.

(E-R 11-02/4) It is reasonable to suppose that a translator must make a choice between a literal rendering and a dynamic equivalent in dealing with the phrase “If you throw enough mud at a wall, some of it might stick.” Who’s willing to provide Russian for this ProZ user?

(E-Sp 11-02/5) Again, as directly above with the mud-throwing, in the query about to be presented, more than one approach is possible. It’s the *skeletons to be unearthed* metaphor that makes the overall phrase difficult… Still, there are around 240 companies that have yet to validate their statements later this year, so the potential for further skeletons to be unearthed remains. Who has the stomach to deal with the last remains?

(F-E 11-02/6) In this query, there appears to have been one verb too many for clear comprehension. The verb that pushed a ProZ member over the edge was “exploiter;” and the context was this: “La société produit, distribue et exploite les films.” What could possibly be implied by the last of the three verbs? What else can an organization do with movies besides make them and put them in users’ hands?

(G-E 11-02/7) An article about onboard automotive power systems contained a word, “Leitendzeit,” that stumped Cappie. Here is where it appeared: “Die Regelung der Ausgangsspannungen gegen Eingangsspannungs- und Laständerungen erfolgt durch die Variation der Leitendzeit des externen Power-MOSFETs und der Frequenz.” What is it in this context?

(G-E 11-02/8) “Exemplarsteuerungen” was the only word causing discomfort for this ProZ correspondent. The context was pure engineering: “Der Arbeitsabstand der Schaltstempelzähne berücksichtigt die Einflüsse von Versorgungsspannung, Temperatur und Exemplarsteuerungen. Innerhalb von 0-81 % des Nennschaltabstandes ist ein sicheres Schalten unter allen zulässigen Betriebsbedingungen gewährleistet.”

(G-E 11-02/9) This is an interesting one from a Lantra member: “Jetzt-erst-recht-Stimmung,” in the context of a business aviation convention that could not ignore the fact that one of the days on which it occurred was September 11, 2002. The sentence: “Doch statt Trübsal bestimmte eine fast trotzige Jetzt-erst-recht-Stimmung die Atmosphäre.” In English, what exactly was the public mood at this gathering?

(Mc-E 11-02/10) A ProZ user, who was attempting to provide good Dutch for this, encountered a puzzle with “vo vriska so Vaseto baranje” while translating a legal text. Just a few words more of context might help: “Vo vriska so Vaseto baranjeza priem vo dravijnin na...” If
you’ve been waiting decades for Macedonian in this column, here is your chance at last!

(Sw-E 11-02/11) following up on a query from last month, Barry C. wants to know exactly how “sylta” could be used in this obviously technical context of firing raw nickel ore: “Det hela [dvz 5 floor] täckes med en sylta och man tände på i fyra ställen.” Was it a substance of a certain consistency, or what?

Replies to Old Queries
(E-R 8-02/4) (pre-crime unit): Vera Chakhova has two suggestions for this, either group or podrazdelenie po profiliaktike prestuplenii, or either group or podrazdelenie po preduprezhdeniu prestuplenii. In particular, preduprezhdlenie is very appropriate, in that it means to prevent, advert by acting in advance. Alexander Aron likes служба профилактики преступлений.

(E-Sp 8-02/6) (hard to kill): Kathryn Lugo suggests “dificil de matar,” although a source in Mexico says she has seen the same show title there translated as “Duro de Matar.” Assuming the hero doesn’t die, maybe it could be rendered as “El Inmatable,” “El Invencible,” or “El Invulnerable.” Any similar word that would suggest indomitability would suffice. Jaime Vargas says that one need look no farther than “duro de matar.” It implies hardness, resistance, and ability to withstand force or attack. “Bicho malo nunca muere” and “matar definimente” are way off target, he believes.

(F-E 9-02/3) (“un diagnostic xylophage”): Mait Penna works in the real estate department of a major law firm in Paris, and can definitively state that the problem term refers to a termite inspection.

(G-E 7-02/5) (“verauslagte umlagefähige Betriebskosten”): Beth Kantus believes it ought to be disbursed expenses. And this, she says, raises the problem of allocable versus apportionable. To get a better grip, she consulted Barron’s Accounting Handbook. It defined to allocate as to spread a cost item over two or more accounting periods; charge a cost or revenue item to a number of departments, products, processes, or activities on some rational basis; or distributing the cost of an acquisition of two or more items based on their relative fair market values. Her previous context in a translation job involved costs to be split among, or shared by, several companies within a corporate group. She decided to use apportionable instead of allocable, based on the argument that costs can be allocated in whole without being divided among accounts, entities, etc., and therefore the term allocable would not express the shared aspect as well as apportionable. In the context of (G-E 7-02/5), that of shared utility expenses, she believes the second definition of allocable would fit. As an alternative, assignable might also work in the utility-expense context.

(R-E 9-01/8) (Сначала пил с умом, а потом они): Alexander Aron wants to preserve what was lost in previous translation attempts in this column. He offers “He started drinking with wisdom, and then, alone.”

(R-E 7-02/9) (последовательные деревянные избушки): Tim Sergay, in a detailed e-mail, objects to myopic village huts, considering it a glaring error involving unintentional humor. This is not an original, that is to say authorial, metaphor in Russian, but a common architectural term. It is based on the architectural and technical sense of wall. For example, стены are windowless walls. Such terms refer not to some personification of the buildings, but to the degree to which the walls are windowed.

(Sp-G 8-02/11) (“vaso” and “boquillas barredoras emergentes,” in the context of swimming pool bottom cleaners): Kathryn Lugo points out that, strictly speaking, “el vaso” (nothing more than the excavated hole where the pool will be built) is “die Grube” (excavation). But a Swiss source she knows chose to sidestep the term entirely, feeling that the phrase including “vaso” (page 63, August 2002 ATA Chronicle) would best be translated as “…Normal-erreweise werden sie beim Bau des Schwimmbades installiert” (usually they are installed during the building of the pool).

As for the “boquillas…” (pop-up nozzles), there is a vagueusness in the original Spanish regarding the final adjective, “emergentes.” Two native Spanish speakers Kathryn consulted had divergent ideas about it, one being emergency and the other being emerging. The Swiss man was in favor of “…ein System von einem Ventil und auftauchenden Reinigungsdüsen.” In-floor pool-cleaning systems involve high-pressure nozzles built into the floor, which pop up and rotate periodically, ejecting purified water and stirring up the dirty water at the bottom of the pool, after which they retract.

(Sw-E 9-02/9) (“i det godas tjänst”): Yngve Roennike says this is simply for the common good, an especially happy choice because, in English, it retains the cognate
Humor and Translation  By Mark Herman

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@earthlink.net or via snail mail to Mark Herman, 5748 W Brooks Rd., Shepherd, MI 48883-9202. Discussions of the translation of humor and examples thereof are preferred, but humorous anecdotes about translators, translations, and mistranslations are also welcome. Include copyright information and permission if relevant.

Bread on the Water

On the eve of Rosh Hashanah a couple of months ago, Sally Lou Eaton sent me this list of breads for casting on the water. She received the list from Mark Glasser. Rosh Hashanah, as many of you know, is the Jewish New Year, celebrated in September. In a traditional ceremony associated with Rosh Hashanah, called Taslich, people go to the ocean or to a river to symbolically cast their sins away in the form of breadcrumbs, so that the fish may devour them.

Ah, but certain breads are obviously more suitable for certain sins than others. Here is the list slightly rearranged:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If the sin is:</th>
<th>An appropriate bread is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ordinary</td>
<td>white, pumpernickel, multigrain, rice cakes, sourdough, nut bread, Yankee Doodles, rye, hero bread, kaiser rolls, milk toast, grits, popovers, stuffing, quick bread, challah, puff pastry, brownies, angel food cake, any long loaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dark</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tasteless</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ill-temperedness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eccentricity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chauvinism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>excessive irony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taking unnecessary chances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warmongering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cowardice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abrasiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dropping in without notice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overeating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impetuosity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raising your voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egotism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sycophancy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over-smothering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laziness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the sin is:</td>
<td>An appropriate bread is:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dumplings, waffles, matzoh, fresh bread, shortbread, stolen, caraway, tortes, tarts, French bread (bien sûr), hot buns, hot cross buns, cheesecake, pretzels, stoned wheat, poppy seed bread, crackers, Ritz crackers, bagels, corn bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trashing the environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sins of indecision</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sins committed in haste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sins of chutzpah</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not giving full value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>larceny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auto theft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>causing injury to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dressing immodestly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erotic sins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promiscuity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promiscuity with gentiles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indecent photography</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twisted sins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drug use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heavy drug use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>racism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sophisticated racism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being holier than thou</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>telling bad jokes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For heavy sinners, the submitters suggest a Taslich Mix available in three grades (lite, medium, and industrial strength), available at your favorite Jewish supply house.

The Translation Inquirer  Continued from p.66

The word _good_ = “god(as).”

Thank you to all. And this brings to an end another calendar year. The Translation Inquirer wishes that, whatever it is you are celebrating as the old year draws to an end, you will do it with joy and in perfect safety.

From the Executive Director  Continued from p.9

Related, ATA will be sponsoring a terminology seminar at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio, in June. More details and registration information are available on ATA’s website.

The minutes of the meeting are posted in the Members Only section of ATA’s website (www.atanet.org/membersonly). Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for March 7-9, 2003, in Alexandria, Virginia. As always, the meeting is open to the membership.
Translators and Interpreters Featured in Government Publication

Translators and interpreters are featured in the Summer 2002 issue of the Occupational Outlook Quarterly, an official publication of the U.S. government’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. The central message for outsiders interested in our professions: “These highly skilled workers enable the cross-cultural communication necessary in today’s society.”

To read the full story, please go to www.bls.gov/opub/ooq/2002/summer/art02.pdf.

Accreditation Forum: Goldilocks and the Three Passages
Continued from p.59

those who don’t. For this reason, graders translate and modify exam passages before presenting them to candidates.

Even in the fairy-tale world, after Goldilocks had found the chair, the porridge, and the bed that were “just right,” the bears came home. Likewise, in the real world, even the most carefully selected passage may bring surprises. Each time a candidate submits a translation, graders reexamine their expectations. Does the passage allow qualified candidates to demonstrate the language skills of a professional translator? Can the grader identify work that does not meet the criteria for understanding of the source text, translation strategies, and target-language writing?

If so, Goldilocks and her three passages live happily ever after—or at least until a new exam year rolls around. And that’s the happy ending.

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