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

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

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

...And, of course, as an ATA member you receive discounts on the Annual Conference registration fees and ATA publications, and you are eligible to join ATA Divisions, participate in the online Translation Services Directory, and much more. For more information, contact ATA (703) 683-6100; fax (703) 683-6122; and e-mail: ata@atanet.org.
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Hungarian has an extraordinary number of expressions relating to dogs.

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A discussion of the art of literary translation

Many of this month’s advertisers will have exhibits at ATA’s 44th Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. Be sure to check them out!

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Kathy Foster is an ATA-accredited (English↔French) translator. She is an active ATA member with 25 years of experience as a technical translator and simultaneous interpreter. She holds an M.A. in French and was a Fulbright scholar at the Université de Fribourg in Switzerland. Currently working as a translator/editor for SH3, Inc. in Kansas City, Missouri, she is active in the Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA), serving on the MICATA board of directors and completing her second tenure as editor of the MICATA Monitor. Contact: kfoster@sh3.com.

Kevin Fountoukidis was born in New York City. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Immediately upon graduation in 1992, he moved to Eastern Europe in search of “fortune and glory.” He is the managing director of Argos Company Ltd., which he founded in 1996. In just six years, the company has become one of the market leaders in providing Eastern European translation and localization services. He has resided in Poland since 1993. Contact: kevin@argos.com.pl.

Romina L. Marazzato is a translation specialist with over 10 years of experience. She is ATA-accredited (English↔Spanish) and is certified (English↔Spanish) by the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS). In addition, she works from French and Italian. Trained in biochemistry and translation at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata in Argentina, she pursued an M.A. in translation at MIIS, where she has taught computer-assisted translation and localization classes. Her specializations include medical instruments, localization, telecom, development, marketing, and creative writing. She teaches courses on technology for translation and writing techniques in Argentina and the U.S. Contact: romina@localizationfocus.com.

Philippe Mercier has an extensive background in software engineering. The author of 10 computer programming books published in France by Marabout (Hachette group), he has nearly 10 years of experience in the localization industry, where he has used his engineering skills to develop tools, processes, and infrastructures particular to the translation and software localization industries. Joining the Teelinguia group in 1997, he is now the managing director of Teelinguia Software SA, the software branch that Teelinguia created in partnership with the Catholic University of Louvain. Before working for Teelinguia, he was project manager for Mendez Translations. He began his career as a software engineering consultant. Contact: pmercier@teelinguia.com.

Tom Moore has been fascinated by the language and culture of Brazil since 1994. In addition to Portuguese, he translates from Spanish, French, Italian, and German. He is the music/media librarian at The College of New Jersey. Contact: querflote@yahoo.com.

Naomi James Sutcliffe de Moraes was born in Detroit, Michigan, and completed a B.S. in mechanical engineering and her M.S in physics, both at UCLA. After graduation, she worked in the defense industry on radar and tracking projects before moving to Brazil. There, she began translating technical documents (Portuguese↔English), fell in love with languages, and is now working toward a Ph.D. in Lusophone African literature at the University of São Paulo. She has a diploma in translation/interpreting from Associação Alumni, where she currently teaches scientific, engineering, and medical translation. She is acting newsletter editor for ATA’s Medical Division, and is one of the two principals in the translation company Just Right Communications Ltda., based in São Paulo, Brazil. Contact: nmoraes@justrightcommunications.com.

Alexandra Russell-Bitting has been a staff translator-reviser at a Washington-based international organization for 15 years, working from French, Spanish, and Portuguese into English. She has worked freelance for other international organizations such as UNESCO, the Pan American Health Organization, and the Organization of American States, as well as for the U.S. Department of State. She has taught translation at Georgetown University and the Université de Paris VIII. She is an active member of ATA, a regular contributor to the ATA Chronicle, and serves on ATA’s Public Relations Committee. Contact: alexandrarb@iad.org.

Ros Schwartz is the chair of the European Council of Associations of Literary Translators (www.ceatl.org), and vice-chair of the advisory panel to the British Centre for Literary Translation. She is the translator of more than 30 works of fiction and nonfiction from French. Contact: schwartz@btinternet.com.
From the President

Accreditation Changes and Member Feedback

I have heard from a few ATA members regarding the changes to the accreditation program, specifically the new eligibility and continuing education requirements. Thank you for sharing your interest, your support, and your concerns.

There were a few common threads among the messages.

Tracking continuing education credits. You cannot track continuing education credits until January 1, 2004. Therefore, for those currently accredited, you do not need to submit your paperwork until January 2007. As we get closer to that time, those currently accredited will be sent the necessary forms and information. For more information on continuing education, please see the grid that accompanied my April column. The information is also on ATA’s website (www.atanet.org).

Credits and membership. If you decide not to recertify, you can still be an ATA member. Accreditation is separate from ATA membership. However, let me make it clear that you still need to be an ATA member to sit for the exam. The ultimate plan to decouple accreditation from ATA membership is still years away.

Is ATA doing this for the money? ATA is doing this to further enhance our credential and to bring it into line with other professional credentials. Continuing education is an integral part of every professional credential I can think of. The reality is that you do not have to attend ATA-sponsored events to meet the requirements. Of course, speaking as the ATA president, I would prefer that you attend ATA conferences and seminars to show your support for your association, but there are a number of other ways to satisfy the continuing education requirements.

Not enough ATA events where I live. The answer to this concern is addressed above. You do not have to attend ATA events. There are two areas in the continuing education requirements that cover them: “Approved U.S. non-ATA, non-Chapter seminars/conferences” and “Approved foreign translation/interpreting association seminars/conferences.” The key term here is “approved.” It will be up to the organization putting on the conference or seminar to apply to ATA for approval to offer credits to attendees. Incidentally, this is common practice. For example, we apply for approval from the Judicial Council of California so that California court interpreters can get credit for attending ATA events. Of course, we will work with these other groups and ATA members to get the necessary approval.

Bylaws amendment proposal. The Board approved submitting to the membership a motion to amend the bylaws to change the name of our Plan now to exhibit at the American Translators Association’s 44th Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, November 5-8, 2003. Exhibiting at the ATA Annual Conference offers the best opportunity to market your products and services face-to-face to more than 1,300 translators in one location. Translators are consumers of computer hardware and software, technical publications and reference books, office products, and much more. Face-to-face selling, as you know, is the most effective and successful method of marketing. The ATA Annual Conference is the perfect venue, and you are assured of excellent visibility. Exhibit space is limited, so please reserve your space today. For additional information, please contact Drew MacFadyen, McNeill Group Inc.; dmacfadyen@mcneill-group.com; (215) 321-9662, ext. 37; Fax: (215) 321-9636.
From the Executive Director  Walter Bacak, CAE  Walter@atanet.org

Preliminary Conference Information

This year, we are making some changes regarding the marketing and promotion of ATA’s 44th Annual Conference. First, the Preliminary Conference Program was mailed with this issue of the ATA Chronicle. Second, and more drastic, we have given the program a more streamlined look. The new format offers the highlights of the conference, while the in-depth information—abstracts, bios, and more—is online and up-to-date (www.atanet.org).

While the program booklet may be slimmed down, the conference sessions are not. ATA President-elect and Conference Organizer Scott Brennan has coordinated a full schedule of educational sessions for ATA’s 44th Annual Conference, November 5-8, at the Pointe South Mountain Resort in Phoenix, Arizona. Thanks to all those who submitted conference presentation proposals.

Each conference develops its own feel and experience. The resort and southwest ambience promise to make this year’s conference special. The Pointe South Mountain Resort—situated on 300 acres adjoining South Mountain Park—features six pools, hiking trails, several tennis courts, and excellent meeting space. So not only can you learn, but you can also relax and network in Arizona’s warm and sunny November climate. The property is located just inside the Phoenix city limits and is 15 minutes from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, so you are near downtown while taking advantage of a resort setting.

Discounted room rates have been negotiated for ATA members. As an added bonus, all the guest rooms are suites. Be sure to make your hotel reservations as soon as possible.

Be sure to register today for this ATA southwest experience. You can even register online. If you have any questions, please contact ATA at (703) 683-6100 or conference@atanet.org. More information on the conference will be published in the ATA Chronicle and posted online.

Language Company Survey Results Published

ATA has just published the Language Company Profile Financial Survey. This is the first time that I am aware of ATA undertaking a finance/operations survey specifically for companies. ATA recently published the second edition of the Translator and Interpreter Compensation Survey that covers individuals. The Language Company Profile, which is the result of a survey of ATA member and nonmember language services companies, contains the most complete, accurate, and up-to-date information on business practices and financial data concerning translation and interpreting services. The survey includes detailed comparisons of compensation, revenue distribution, employee benefits, and the types of tools that are used. This analysis shows how your company compares with your colleagues.

An executive summary of the survey will be published in an upcoming issue of the ATA Chronicle. To order the Language Company Profile Financial Survey, please see the ATA website or contact ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6100 or ata@atanet.org.

A Florida Chapter of ATA Seminar  FLATA and ATA member Edith Vanghelof, a financial translator in Vienna, Austria, will speak on the new translation and interpretation standards now in force in Austria, as well as the other standards being formulated for Europe. Edith is a member of the committee to establish European T&I standards, and her company was one of the first to be certified in Austria. For more information, please contact FLATA President Giovanna Lester at translanguage@iname.com.

European Translation and Interpreting Standards
Saturday, August 2, 2003
RGFT specializes exclusively in financial and corporate translations. We also have strong in-house teams of translators, as well as using excellent freelancers. We believe these two differentiating features allow us to deliver superior quality services to our clients, who are some of the world’s leading investment banks, asset management firms and listed companies. We are ISO 9001 certified and official financial translators to the EU. For more information visit www.rgft.com or contact one of our offices in London, Madrid and Paris.


Professional Outreach

I am a Spanish teacher currently working with local dairy producers who have Mexican employees. I interpret at staff meetings and help handle problems as they arise (e.g., helping employees to understand the duties of the job). I also fill a training role, interpreting for the producers during the training of new employees. I came to this work by way of the back door, and find it extremely satisfying. I believe I’ve helped the producers create a more stable and well-trained workforce. I feel the workers, being better trained, are taking on more responsibilities and becoming of greater value to their employers. I help the producers understand the culture of the employees and vice versa. I also direct a language, cultural training, and travel program for the producers and their employees. This program is unique and creative, and I feel it does a lot to help bridge the gaps with our newest workers. I absolutely love doing this kind of work, although I don’t know a lot about professional interpreting. I tend to follow my gut reactions and to apply my professional standards as a teacher. Language teachers are so often the first to be called upon when there is a need.

The reason I’m writing is because I’ve been asked to speak at a conference (“Managing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in the Workplace”) at a local university. My part will be to talk about how to successfully work with an interpreter. My questions for you are the following:

1. What resources might you suggest as I develop the presentation (organizations, materials, etc.)?

2. Is there a generic code to which interpreters subscribe? I understand that organizations like yours have their own codes, but is there a general “rule of thumb” of practice for interpreting in regards to conduct, responsibility, etc.?

3. Is there an association for interpreting for businesses?

4. Are there schools, conferences, etc., that might help me to become more proficient as an interpreter?

5. When there are cultural differences, does the interpreter’s job change from interpreter to that of “explainer”? When does (or can) the interpreter become a trainer? Or should they?

I know what I have done has been helpful and successful. However, before I tell others about it, I need to know if I am saying anything contrary to what a professional interpreter would say.

Many thanks in advance for your help.

Spanish teacher/director

Sending the Right Kind of Message

Thank you for your e-mail. I am very glad you wrote ATA about this subject, and applaud you for having the courage to admit your shortcomings. Your willingness to recognize possible limitations and to seek answers to better yourself is a wonderful character trait, and I admire you for this.

First, let me state that being a “bilingual” person does not a professional “interpreter” make. After reading about your work at the dairy, I don’t feel that this experience alone, though certainly beneficial, qualifies you to speak at a conference as a formal representative of the interpreting profession. What you have been doing can be classified as “loose” interpreting, not professional interpreting. The technique of interpreting, of speaking in the target language in the “voice” of the speaker (in the source language), requires formal training, intuition, innate language ability, life experience, an understanding of the protocol and culture of the source/target language, public speaking abilities, general knowledge, and the ability to think on one’s feet. Your confusion on some of the basic facts regarding the profession leads me to the conclusion that you still have much to learn before you can speak knowledgeably on this subject to others.

One point you must be clear on is that an interpreter is not a trainer. Do not mistake “interpreting” with “training.” You interpret, period. You are the speaker’s voice in the target language for the target audience. When you interpret for the audience, you are the audience’s voice in the source language for the benefit of the speaker. When you become the dominant speaker, or if you don’t interpret what the speaker says faithfully and contextually, you violate the ethics of being a “professional” interpreter. This is not to disparage your previous work as a bilingual person. But by becoming an explainer/teacher, you are compromising the objectivity that is the hallmark of a professional interpreter. Further, if you use the term “trainer” in your definition of an interpreter at a public forum, you may be doing damage to your reputation and creating great misunderstanding regarding what the interpreting profession is all about.

It seems to me that your previous experience puts you more in line with the role of a “cross-culturalization” consultant rather than an interpreter. Interpreting is not required for such a position. Cross-cultural consultants are trainers who explain/teach things about cross-cultural matters, including bicultural, multicultural, and transglobal issues. The job may involve language, but it is not dependent upon bilingual ability. In the business world, cross-cultural or diversity consultants usually help corporate employees learn about the different cultures they will come in contact with during their professional interactions. Obviously, if you are interested in training a foreign audience about American culture, then you will need to speak more than English.
As I stated before, you don’t need to be an interpreter to work as a cross-cultural consultant. You may be required to be an expert in cross-culturalization and cultural diversity, as well as in the art of survival in different cultures (here, personal experience always helps). Obviously, one would be required to have the ability to teach or train. Since you are already bilingual and a teacher by profession, you are more than halfway there in terms of your qualifications for this position.

There are schools for students who want to pursue this type of career, along with consulting companies who hire bilingual personnel and teachers. Let me emphasize once more that being a cross-cultural trainer is not the same as being an interpreter. These two careers are totally different. There is also a great disparity in income and job stability. Comparatively speaking, the interpreting profession is not as stable. On the flip side, it is not easy to find a job as a cross-culturalization consultant. However, if there is a lack of cross-culturalization consulting services in your hometown, you might have a niche market!

If you are serious about pursuing a career as an interpreter, there are many well-known and respectable interpreting and translation schools located throughout the country. Many are members of ATA and contribute to ATA’s high quality standards in support of the translation and interpreting profession. More information can also be found by ordering ATA’s *Programs in Translation Studies: An ATA Handbook* (www.atanet.org). You might also want to check out the website of ATA’s Interpreters Division (www.ata-divisions.org/ID), where information specifically geared toward interpreting is listed and updated regularly.

As I stated earlier, while you have been helpful in your work with the dairy producers, this does not make you an interpreter. For this reason, I strongly recommend that you turn this assignment over to a more qualified individual, such as a professional interpreter or translation agency owner. Having someone who is thoroughly knowledgeable about the industry (not to mention someone with years of experience in the field) speak in your place would be most beneficial to the conference attendees, as well as to you personally and professionally. You will definitely come out better for it.

You could invite a member of ATA or someone from a local agency who also does interpreting work. You will find both represented in ATA’s *Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services and Directory of Language Services Companies*, available online at www.atanet.org. If there is money involved for this job, negotiate a finder’s fee with the person you find for getting him or her this assignment. Perhaps you can do this presentation together using a Q&A style (staged, of course). This may be more refreshing than a monologue. Your personal experience as a novice interpreter could liven the presentation, while sending the message loud and clear that “a bilingual person is not automatically an interpreter.”

You were very smart to contact ATA for advice. I mean no disrespect to you personally. Your previous work is by no means being negated or diminished. However, I am most concerned that your lack of information and misinformation will damage the image of hard working, ethical, professional interpreters. If you still want to risk it and give the talk, you could take a learning shortcut and read all the past journals published by ATA and books written by professional interpreters about this field.

Of course, simply reading this information will not give you the expertise needed for such a presentation, especially during the Q&A period. Not being able to answer questions from the audience accurately will certainly injure your professional reputation.

Again, I would strongly recommend that you let those who have been formally trained as interpreters talk about their profession. I hope you will (in the words of talk show host Dr. Laura Schlessenger) “do the right thing!”

Elizabeth A. Tu
Assistant Administrator,
ATA Interpreters Division
etuta@aol.com

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**Publication Date:** March 2003

**Hardback, 704 pages**

**ISBN:** 0245 60714 5
Conferences and Events

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Translators Discussion Group
Borders Books and Music
18th & L Streets, NW
Meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00 pm at Borders. For more information, please contact Borders at (202) 466-2152.

Guadalajara, México
7th San Jerónimo International Translators Day Annual Conference of the Organización Mexicana de Traductores (OMT)
Alliance Française de Guadalajara
September 26-28, 2003
For more information, e-mail: michele@iteso.mx or visit www.omt.org.mx.

Athens, Greece
Choices and Difference in Translation Conference
University of Athens
December 3-7, 2003
An awareness of what features might constitute linguistic/cultural identity is significant in modern culturally interactive societies, in that it contributes to intercultural understanding. Papers that raise questions on linguistic and interdisciplinary issues in the context of translation are particularly welcome in the following areas: news and media translation; translation at the upcoming Olympic Games; scientific and/or environmental studies translation; translation and the EU; advertisement translation; literary translation; and theater and film translation. Information: www.cc.uoa.gr/english/C&D/C&D1.htm.

Washington, DC
Localisation Industry Standards Association Annual Meeting
December 8–11, 2003
For more information, visit www.lisa.org/events/speakerform.html

Lisbon, Portugal
European Society for Translation Studies 4th Congress
"Translation Studies: Doubts and Directions"
Faculty of Letters, University of Lisbon
September 26-29, 2004

American Translators Association
Localization Translation Seminar
Omni Austin Hotel
Austin, Texas
September 6, 2003

As the international community grows increasingly intertwined, localization is becoming crucially important and so is the need for translators who specialize in localization. Whether you are translating website content, training materials, computer software, or other documentation, ATA’s Localization Seminar will provide the insight and training to enhance your skills for translating in the global marketplace.

The American Translators Association (ATA) will provide a full day of in-depth sessions, including a continental breakfast in the morning and a Networking Session following the final presentation. All presenters will be active localizers specializing in various fields, including Carla DiFranco, Software Localization Engineer for Microsoft Corporation Windows International.

Hotel Information: Be sure to make your hotel reservations at the Omni Austin Hotel, 700 San Jacinto, Austin, TX 78701. A small block of rooms has been reserved at $99 single/ double a night, plus tax. To take advantage of this special rate, reservations must be made by August 16. Contact the Omni at 1-800-THE-OMNI (843-6664) for reservations and be sure to ask for the ATA group rate.

The Omni is located in downtown Austin, steps away from the 6th Street Entertainment District and 11 miles from Austin Bergstrom International Airport.

Registration

Early-Bird (by August 29)
ATA Members $145
Nonmembers $260

After August 29 & Onsite
ATA Members $215
Nonmembers $330

Visit www.atanet.org for more information

An ATA accreditation exam sitting will be held on Sunday, September 7. This will be a standard exam, not specialty-specific. To register, please visit the ATA website to obtain the Accreditation Examination Registration Form.
In the last issue, we reviewed the credentialing possibilities for translators and interpreters in the U.S. in general, and those offered by the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Program, the State Court Interpreter Certification Program, and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) in particular. This time, we will take a close look at our own credential for translators, currently known as ATA accreditation, which is undergoing significant changes. Some of the information below was presented at the XVI FIT World Congress in Vancouver, British Columbia, last year by the author of this series and was subsequently published in the Congress Proceedings.

This article could not have been completed without the generous assistance of those who have shaped ATA’s credential into its current form, and who strive to improve it even further:

- Lilian Novas Van Vranken, chair, ATA Accreditation Committee (lilivv@houston.rr.com);
- Celia Bohannon, deputy chair, ATA Accreditation Committee (bohannon@sover.net);
- Ann Macfarlane, past ATA president and current executive director of NAJIT (info@russianresourcesint.com);
- Marian Greenfield, ATA director and chair of the Ad-Hoc Continuing Education Requirements Committee (msgreenfield@mkgreenfieldtranslations.com); and
- Terry Hanlen, ATA accreditation program manager (terry@atanet.org).

Information on the current structure of ATA’s accreditation program is available in great detail on the association’s website (www.atanet.org), so we will focus on new developments here rather than on existing procedures.

Looking back, the first accreditation examination was available only for German-into-English candidates. The inaugural sittings were held simultaneously in New York City and Camden, New Jersey, September 22, 1973, for 31 candidates. In 2002, almost 1,000 candidates took the exam at nearly 50 exam sittings in 20 states within the U.S. and in 7 other countries. Today, there are more than 2,000 accredited ATA members, many in more than one language pair. The credential is currently available in 24 language combinations, and the number is growing.

The accreditation exam is challenging, with an overall pass rate below 20%. ATA accreditation exams take place during ATA’s Annual Conference and are also scheduled by local groups and chapters, agencies, or translators in cooperation with ATA throughout the U.S. and in various countries.

Offering sittings abroad is a unique feature of the credential, which makes it possible for the growing number of non-U.S. ATA members to be accredited. However, the fact that the accreditation exam can be taken in many countries has not been uncontroversial. In 1999, the ATA Board of Directors decided to suspend ATA accreditation sittings abroad in response to concerns expressed by some ATA members about unfair competition. A survey was conducted in order to quantify the opinions of the membership regarding a variety of important international accreditation issues. The ultimate purpose of the 2000 ATA International Accreditation Survey was to obtain results that could be readily used by ATA to consider the question of future accreditation offerings abroad. The results of the survey were rather interesting.

In February 2000, survey forms were sent to 7,433 members. 1,875 completed forms were received by the deadline (a 25% response rate). The study and subsequent report (prepared by Industry Insights, Inc.) focused on such key issues as:

- Respondent demographics, such as member type, ATA accreditation, and country of residence;
- Opinions regarding ATA’s structure and priorities;
- Whether ATA accreditation examinations should be held only in the U.S. or worldwide;
- Predicted likelihood of various possible outcomes; and
- Degree of agreement or disagreement with various statements regarding international accreditation.

Roughly 4 out of 10 respondents were ATA accredited. Most respondents (82%) lived in the U.S. The majority of respondents (57%) felt that ATA should be a national organization with an international orientation. Over 60% of respondents thought...
ATA should treat all members equally in terms of protecting and defending interests. In terms of where accreditation exam sittings should be held, which was the key issue of the survey, the responses were divided evenly between “in the U.S. only” and “throughout the world.” As could be expected, members living outside the U.S. were more often in favor of holding exam sittings worldwide. The entire report is available online at www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl/17218.html.

Having studied the results of the survey and after reviewing the implications of the issue in terms of the association’s bylaws, the ATA Board resolved in March 2000 that the suspension of international accreditation sittings that had been enacted in 1999 for the purpose of studying the issue should be lifted. The practice of offering international accreditation exam sittings has continued ever since. At the same meeting, the Board also decided to commission Michael Hamm & Associates to review the accreditation process, with then-president Ann Macfarlane leading the effort.

Michael Hamm, former executive director of the National Organization for Competency Assurance and the principal of Michael Hamm & Associates, reviewed and evaluated ATA’s accreditation program and provided the association’s leadership and members at large with a number of valuable insights. The purpose of what came to be known as the “Hamm Report” was to point the way toward strengthening the program and improving the benefits of accreditation. In the report, the following strengths were identified:

- The association is using an actual performance assessment rather than a knowledge-based multiple-choice examination.
- The association has invested many hours and extensive fiscal and human resources in standardizing the error-marking framework, establishing comparable grading standards within and across language pairs, and training language chairs and graders.
- The association has developed careful procedures for grading, crosschecking by a third grader, and review.
- The association has established clear expectations and guidelines for applicants.
- ATA translation examinations are considered to be quite rigorous.
- Accreditation Committee members and staff are quite committed to improving the accreditation process.
- ATA’s Board of Directors is also very supportive of improving this program.
- Applicants stated that the accreditation process has become more objective and reliable than it used to be.

The report then pointed out several areas in which the accreditation program could be improved:

- Changing the name of the process to “certification.”
- Creating an independent or semi-independent governing body for the program.
- Offering certification to nonmembers of ATA.
- Establishing eligibility requirements.
- Establishing continuing education requirements.
- Developing more extensive criteria for selecting, training, and evaluating graders and language chairs.

As its name suggests, the accreditation program offers “accreditation.” This term was chosen for the program at its inception in 1971, but it is not the most accurate way to describe qualifying an individual person. In the U.S., the term “accreditation” is used for a conformity assessment process for systems, organizations, or institutions. Certification, on the other hand, is a process by which an organization grants recognition of a certain level of competence to an individual who has met predetermined qualifications. For an organization whose main focus is on language and linguistic competence, ATA’s Board judged it important to use the customary term for the process of certification in order to avoid confusion about the credential. The name change involves an amendment to the association’s bylaws, to be voted on in November 2003. The author of this series sincerely hopes ATA’s membership will support this initiative, since it will be a welcome change that will make the program more transparent to translation users and providers alike.

An independent certification body is something to be considered in the future and is closely related to the next point, namely offering certification to nonmembers. Michael Hamm observes that while most credentialing efforts are initially developed to meet the needs of the members, the most effective ones are not tied to any membership criteria for participation, since competence and quality have nothing to do with the payment of dues to an association. The credibility of the credentialing effort is enhanced if it is viewed as a service to the wider public rather than a service to members. The move from a membership-based to a freestanding credential is a significant one in the evolution of any voluntary certification program. In the case of ATA, the quality of the standard is already equivalent to that of many freestanding certifications. Opening the
The new requirements will become effective on January 1, 2004. The eligibility requirements will apply to new candidates only, whereas the continuing education requirements will apply to both new candidates and members who currently hold accreditation, within the first three-year period after accreditation (certification) holders will need to complete an ethics workshop or course. During that same three-year period, and over successive three-year periods, they will need to complete at least 20 hours of continuing education credits through coursework, seminars, conferences, and other activities as evidence of involvement in translation and/or interpreting.

Finally, ATA has been working on developing more extensive criteria for selecting, training, and evaluating graders and language chairs. Evaluation of linguistic skills is necessarily subjective, and can be dependent on the individuals performing the evaluation. Thus, it is important to establish a process for selecting and evaluating graders. As for training, attaining a general consensus regarding what standard of competence to adopt, particularly when that standard will be applied to individuals trained in many different cultural backgrounds, is not an easy task. ATA has been working for a number of years to develop training seminars and other tools to create and uphold uniform standards across multiple languages, and among graders within a single language. The Accreditation Committee has conducted several regional grader-training workshops, in addition to the workshops held during ATA’s Annual Conference, and continues to
develop new programs to train and upgrade the skills of graders. This is a unique effort in the assessment area, and ATA has invested significant resources in pursuing it.

A new grading system has been in place since last year’s ATA Annual Conference in Atlanta. The new system is a point-based marking system in which the grader assigns 1, 2, 4, 8, or 16 points for each error. This scale reflects experienced graders’ judgments about the relationships among different types of errors, and about what sorts of errors might be allowed in a translation that meets ATA standards. Criteria include whether a target-language reader would certainly recognize the error, and how serious the consequences would be in the context of the passage. One of the main advantages of the new point system is that the grading now reflects five different levels of seriousness for each error, rather than the former system with two levels.8

ATA’s 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. One passage is mandatory for all candidates. This general text 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 characteristics of typical texts within these domains, but should not contain specialized terminology or require mastery of a particular field. An examination receives a grade of Pass if the translation of the general passage and one elective passage meets the standards established by the accreditation program.9

This is the last article in this series describing credentialing procedures in a specific geographical area. In the next issue, we will conclude the series with a summary of the information published here over the last two years, including an analysis of various modes of credentialing in the T&I field. As the editor of this series, I encourage readers to submit any relevant information concerning certification or similar programs, as well as comments on the information published in this series, to my e-mail address at jiri@cetra.com.

Notes
2. English (U.S.) is always one of the languages in the combination. For English as the target language, tests are available for Arabic, Danish, Dutch, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. For English as the source languages, tests are available for Chinese, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Currently, there is no Chinese-into-English or Finnish-into-English test, and no English-into-Arabic or English-into-Danish test.
3. An effort is underway to establish ATA accreditation in one or more language pairs involving Bosnian, Croatian, and/or Serbian. For more information, contact the Volunteer Committee at dbaplancha@aol.com.
4. Hertog, Erik, ed. Aequitas: Access to Justice Across Language and Culture in the EU. The 116-page report is available online at www.legalintrans.info/Aequitas.pdf or in print from erik.hertog@lessius-ho.be.
6. Celia Bohannon, ATA Accreditation Committee deputy chair, is the author of the “tripod” metaphor. She illustrated her point very persuasively with an actual tripod at several meetings of both the Accreditation Committee and ATA Board.
7. The members of the Eligibility Requirements Committee are: Jiri Stejskal (chair); Beatriz Bonnet; Jean Leblon; and Rosalie Wells. The members of the Continuing Education Requirements Committee are: Marian Greenfield (chair); Virginia Benmaman; and Georgeanne Weller.
9. Ibid.
Excited applause greeted Portuguese Nobel Prize-winning author José Saramago as he stepped up to the podium to give the keynote speech at the Fourth Latin American Conference on Translation and Interpretation, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on May 1, 2003. Without translators, he told the spillover audience of over 1,300 linguists, writers could never get international recognition.

How could a translators association in a country just barely peeking out from under the worst economic crisis in its history get such a distinguished speaker and such a huge turnout? It was no accident. The Colegio de Traductores Púlicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires City Association of Sworn Translators) (CTPCBA) spent two years planning the conference and many months reaching out to prospective speakers and attendees. The association paid special attention to students as the next generation of translators and to the media for coverage of the event, and consequently more exposure for the profession.

Crisis? What crisis?

That the Argentines would even consider organizing a conference in the midst of devastating economic turmoil prompted disbelief, admiration, and an outpouring of support from the out-of-town guest speakers. All of them eagerly accepted the invitation, and many even found alternative sources of financing for their trips from other Latin American countries, Europe, and the U.S.

“Some of my colleagues couldn’t understand why there would be a conference in Argentina now,” said Josep Peñarroja Fa, president of the Catalanian Association of Sworn Translators and Interpreters (quoted in the April/May issue of the CTPCBA journal). “The conference is a way of saying: we translators were here, are still here, and will stay here.”

Conference organizing committee member Laura Ojeda was thrilled with the response from abroad. “With the crisis, we can’t afford to travel anymore,” she noted, “so it’s important for us to get international speakers.”

“…That the Argentines would even consider organizing a conference in the midst of devastating economic turmoil prompted disbelief, admiration, and an outpouring of support…”

The audacious idea of inviting Saramago to speak at the conference occurred to Gabriela González, also a committee member, when she first learned that the writer would be in Buenos Aires during the event. “We thought she was crazy,” said CTPCBA President Beatriz Rodríguez. But Gabriela persisted, and Saramago—a translator himself, who also happens to be married to a translator—gladly accepted, even waiving his fee.

The organizers were extremely gratified to see all their hard work pay off. “When I finally saw the program on the [CTPCBA] website,” said committee member Cristina Madden, “I got all choked up.”

The Next Generation

To attract students to the conference, CTPCBA members visited all five universities in Buenos Aires that have translation programs to publicize the meeting. For the other nine universities in more far-flung provinces, they held meetings with program directors from throughout the country.

Knowing that attending the event could be a financial hardship for many students, the association offered discounted rates, one-day-only facilities, and grants for students willing to work as conference room attendants. As a result, so many young people packed the opening session that Saramago commented on their number.

The organizing committee also reached out to translators and...
translator associations outside of Argentina. Its members scoured the Internet to build up a database, and then sent a mass mailing to the 13,000 e-mail addresses they had gleaned.

Media Outreach

Early on, the CTPCBA decided to hire a professional to get media coverage of the conference and the association’s many other activities. According to press agent Miriam Simcovich, the key to coverage was to build ongoing personal contacts with reporters. First, she launched a small publicity campaign for International Translators Day on September 30. She carefully placed items in publications that would reach target audiences, such as student newspapers. A former reporter herself, Miriam knows how to package information to make a journalist’s job easier.

For conference publicity, she placed notices in major Argentine newspapers and magazines, including the Buenos Aires Herald, an English-language publication, and the German community weekly Argentinisches Tageblatt. To attract young people, she used the angle of web localization as a potential job opportunity. For women’s magazines, she zeroed in on the high percentage of women translators, who make up 92% of the CTPCBA membership.

With limited funding available, she sometimes had to get creative. For instance, the free daily Diario del Viajero agreed to cover the conference in exchange for distribution of the paper at the event. Invitations to the opening session at which Saramago was speaking were offered to reporters in exchange for conference coverage.

“A Magical Conference”

Beatriz Rodríguez, the association president, credits the CTPCBA board’s hands-on approach to conference organization with its success. “For the previous conference, we had hired an outside organizer, and frankly it didn’t work out,” she admitted. As they say in Argentina, El ojo del amo engorda el ganado (“the farmer’s watchful care fattens the cow”); in other words, they had to look out for their own interests.

Besides the splendid coup of getting a Nobel Prize-winning speaker, the conference had two other big draws. First, a Regional Center for Latin America, made up of translator associations from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela, was formally established during the event, under the umbrella of the International Federation of Translators (FIT). Representatives of several Latin American associations held a panel discussion during the conference to report on the initiative.

According to Beatriz Rodríguez, the Regional Center plans to carry out a comparative analysis of the status of translators and interpreters in all member countries and to recommend guidelines based on the results. It will also organize professional development events in different member countries, which will rotate on the board. Argentina will chair the board for the first two-year term.

Second, the recently established Argentine Federation of Sworn Translator Associations held a meeting at the conference. Because

Continued on p. 61
That Dirty Little Four-Letter Word

By Kevin Fountoukidis

No, it doesn’t start with an “S” or an “F,” and there is no “Q” in it. This word in our industry is cena, Polish for “price.”

ROI: Don’t bother localizing if you can’t make a profit.

There is plenty of talk about return on investment (ROI) in localization and how it affects pricing. The concept of deciding whether it pays to localize something before you enter a market sounds obvious. Why do we see companies complaining about localization costs in the context of their ROI?

What these companies are really complaining about is that their products are not competitive in the target market. Such complaints are understandable, since no matter how you slice it, it comes down to money. If there is not enough demand backed by money for a product, then localization doesn’t pay. If an application is designed for Eastern European end-users, then it either has to be relatively inexpensive or should be tailored to a specific niche market where lower sales volume gives an acceptable return. After all, the Eastern European software market will not usually generate huge sales based on its size alone.

Unfortunately, localization decisions are often put on a back burner, and investment decisions are based on poor information about the market. The result—a company finds itself marketing its product in Eastern Europe before it has properly estimated sales potential. Normal business processes also come into play. Managers are pressed to make a profit, so we see the localization problem handed over to the local distributor. Suddenly, a local company that specializes in software distribution also finds itself responsible for the software publisher’s image and brand quality in the local market. These local distributors are often very small, with little infrastructure, inadequate resources, and small translation budgets (which come out of their own small pockets). Above all, the distributors usually have no experience in localization.

Software publishers fool themselves into thinking that they don’t need to worry about the overseas market for their products. They take it for granted that the local distributor will understand that it is in their best interest to do a great job localizing the product (ergo, the distributor will have an easier time selling the product). However, the truth of the matter is that the distributor usually doesn’t understand the complex issues connected with localization. Even if a distributor does recognize what’s involved, the “simple, low value-added service” attitude toward localization prevails. The result is poor localization, which does serious damage to the software publisher’s image and brand.

What’s going on among the bigger buyers of translation/localization services?

What are the organizational structures of larger buyers of localization services, and how do they affect the price of translation? It seems as if Microsoft is getting its act together by limiting the number of vendors and giving them more work. IBM and Oracle also seem to be well organized in this respect. Unfortunately, there are other large buyers of translation and localization services that have not addressed the issue of centralizing or streamlining costs.

It is quite remarkable how some large buyers deal with localization. Our translation company, Argos Ltd., works with one particular client directly through two different offices and indirectly through three other localization companies. Of course, we are paid different rates, negotiated completely independently with each of these channels. And now the punch line: the rates we receive working through one localization company are much higher than what we receive working directly for the client. So where are the savings? Where is the streamlining? What about consistent terminology? The value of working through a limited number of multi-language vendors is understandable, but what is the point of doing it a little this way and a little that way?

How the biggest clients deal with their translation and localization is only one issue. Another question is how far these companies are willing to go to lower localization costs. Last year, Argos Ltd. was in negotiations with a very large global company to take over a significant portion of their Slovak localization work. I am not going to give names here, but suffice it to say that this is one of the elite, with over $50 billion in annual global sales. Since this was a large, long-term client, and due to the fact that the project involved a significant volume of words (mostly documentation), we decided to quote this client an extraordinarily attractive price.

The company got back in touch with us to tell us that they really liked our experience and wanted to...
choose us, but the issue was price. We asked whether it was a question of one or two Euro cents, and they made it clear that the price would have to be “significantly” lower. It was obvious that we weren’t even close to their price expectations. How is it possible that the rates being paid by this particular global giant were so low? What does this mean for our industry? The only answer I can offer is that the client has the final say regarding the level of quality he or she is willing to pay for.

Quality: Does anybody really care?

I was recently dozing through a translation conference as one of the speakers, a professor of linguistics, was discussing the ethical importance of high-quality translation. I was suddenly jolted awake by a statement he made along the lines of “it is the translation vendor’s ethical responsibility to ensure the highest quality translation.” When question time arrived, I duly asked what we should do if our client does not give us enough time to do the job in an “ethically responsible” manner. The gentleman told me that it was our moral responsibility to ask for more time.

Unfortunately, the real world is different. I tried to imagine the response I would get if I were to call my client and suggest, “Listen, I know this is a 1.2 million-word project, but you really should have met your development schedule. And I know that your priority was to ship FIGS first, but this was delayed. And now, on top of all that, you want us to use this outdated TM software because this is what your previous version was in, yet the TM database we have received is full of inconsistencies that need to be removed before we start translating the new version. What it really comes down to is that we are only going to have time to do the translation and have it reviewed independently, TWICE. This won’t be enough to maintain our ethical language standards.”

Unfortunately, the truth is (and maybe I shouldn’t be saying this too loudly) that our business is full of concessions. It is a humorous concept, really, when you take into consideration that we are supposed to offer incredibly high quality, incredibly fast turnaround times, and incredibly low rates. Obviously, something has to give, and I believe that the way localization companies handle this contradiction says something about our industry’s definition of excellence. The best companies in our industry are the ones that have the best quality assurance systems in place to provide the highest possible quality, in accordance with real world business conditions. It is that simple, really.

So, how does the issue of quality affect price?

I believe in markets and the fundamental mechanics behind them. In the end, you are going to get what you pay for because all companies need to be profitable or they die. This means that the software publishers and the larger buyers of translation and localization services control the prices. They define prices simply by deciding what level of quality they are willing to accept. The same is true for Eastern European localization services. You can find a wide range of prices, but in the end, you get what you pay for.

What about profit?

Just because a company is based in Eastern Europe doesn’t mean that it doesn’t have serious costs. We all know that you can’t get TRADOS® or SDLX any cheaper in Poland or the Czech Republic. Every computer has to have an operating system and other basic software. The top staff needed to run a professional localization company don’t come that cheaply either.

Low rates are fine if we assume that professional localization companies will continue to operate in this industry without making any real money. The truth is that nobody is operating a business with the intention of losing money, so something has to give, and something does give. There are two routes to making a profit at these price levels in the short term:

El Cheapo: Of course, you can get the one-off translation that is good and cheap, but try getting it day-in, day-out. If you were to come to a country such as Poland and open the phone book, you would find that companies are charging very little per word for translation. These are real companies, and they are somehow operating, paying rent… even advertising in the telephone book. I invite all the skeptics to see for themselves. This is real. Companies such as these can be extremely profitable. I am not going to even start to discourage anyone to use these services. However, I will continue to stand by my prior statement—“you get what you pay for.”

Higher volumes: This is the model our company follows, and we are profitable. You need to have a high enough volume to lower your fixed costs. With higher volumes, you can hire better people full-time, including very high quality, in-house translators, and you can offer better customer service. However, you must have the work day-in, day-out. This is key. Of course, the
profitability will not be as high as with the “El Cheapo” model, but at least the business makes sense.

**Price Dumping: A Reality in Eastern Europe**

“Dumping” is actually not the right word here since it implies that a company might be acting strategically to drive other companies out of the market. This is not the case with the Eastern European translation market. The reason why localization companies find it economically viable to offer such cheap translation services is that there is a market for it. The high demand for cheap translation reflects the prevailing attitude in these countries that translation is a menial task.

We joke that we are “garbage men” (to be politically correct, we should say “waste disposal specialists”), but we really are treated as such. Translation is seen as a non-value-added service that almost anyone can do. When choosing their garbage company, most people base their decision on price. The same is the case here. “Make my problem go away, and the cheaper the better.”

The prices that are paid in public tenders are a good indicator of the state of the market in Eastern Europe. Our company doesn’t compete for public tenders at all because the prices are just ridiculous. Companies working at these rates neglect the concept of quality and standards altogether. “You get what you pay for.”

**The Light at the End of the Tunnel**

I am sure there will be some people out there who will not be pleased that I have revealed the “dirty little secret” here in Eastern Europe regarding the true prices available on the market. Possibly, there will be some readers who are encouraged by the news that you can get “even cheaper” translation services. I am totally confident that this will change in the future. The numbers are real, but they can’t last forever. Something has to give, and quality standards will be victorious in the end.

We are still in a period of transition in Eastern Europe, so it will just be a matter of time before the market sets itself straight. No company is going to stay in business by offering low-quality services over a long period of time. The time of quick and easy money in this business is coming to an end. The more fingers that are burned with these ultra-cheap translations, the faster the market will adjust.

Once Western companies understand that Eastern European companies can offer the same level of service or better than their EU and U.S. counterparts, we will see a real level playing field.

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225 Reinekers Lane

Suite 590

Alexandria, VA 22314
Computer Science for Internauts—How E-mail and Other Internet Services Actually Work

By Naomi James Sutcliffe de Moraes

I will begin with a theoretical introduction to computer networks and how they function. I will then use this framework to describe how an e-mail system works. The information presented here should help both the technical translator of networking texts and all other translators, especially when their e-mail and web services are down or when they are trying to decide which service provider to contract with.

The OSI Reference Model

The Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) reference model roughly describes most networks (a schematic is shown in Figure 1). The message to be sent from PC1 to PC2 begins at the application layer. It is then compressed, broken up into smaller pieces, or encapsulated (put into an electronic envelope) at each subsequent layer until it arrives at the physical layer. After being transferred to the other computer, the layers of data comprising the message are peeled (like an onion) and converted back into a format the receiving application can understand.

Let us look at an example. PC1 is being used to send e-mail. The e-mail client (Eudora, for example) creates a unit of data called an e-mail packet (application layer), compresses it (presentation layer), and requests a connection with the Simple Mail Transport Protocol (SMTP) server at the Internet provider (session layer). The session layer establishes connections between applications on different computers (like when a web page is requested or e-mail is up/downloaded). The transport layer is where a specific port is set up (a port is the channel through which data is sent). Each standard application has a well-known port: HTTP, 80; POP3, 110; FTP, 21. The destination Internet Provider (IP) is recognized at the application layer, and the topology of the network is recognized at the network layer. This is where routing decisions are made. Routing is how packets get from one Local Area Network (LAN) to another. The packet is sent to a gateway (usually a router) if the destination is outside the LAN (see Figure 2), or directly to the destination PC if the destination is on the same LAN. At the data-link layer, only the sending and receiving PCs on a LAN are involved, regardless of how many devices are actually present. At this layer, the Media Access Control (MAC) address is used. The MAC address is a number assigned to each device. It is valid only inside a local network, and is different from the IP address (discussed later). Routers are the key here, as they are officially on two or more LANs simultaneously and serve as stepping stones for the packets to hop from one LAN to another. The physical layer deals with the type of medium used (the type of cable, for example).

As previously mentioned, the OSI reference model is like an onion, containing many layers of data constructed by the sender. During the message delivery process, these layers are peeled away as necessary and converted back into a format the receiving application can understand. This process ensures that a packet will reach its destination. For example, the MAC address is valid only within a local network and is used by the data-link layer. Each time a packet moves from one LAN to another, it must have its first two layers changed by the equipment operating on it (a router, for example). In Figure 2, this conversion process can be seen taking place as the packet passes from PC1 to the first router. To get the packet to the router (in this case, a gateway), the packet contains the router’s MAC address in the data-link layer envelope. The router peels off the lowest two layers to read the destination IP address (network layer information). It then determines the next router on the path to the destination and places the MAC address of this next router in the packet and reconstructs it. Why

“…With all that is involved, it is amazing the Internet even works!…”
are two layers necessary? One determines the type of cable and standard used (V.35, X.21, etc.), while the other determines the type of data-link (HDLC, PPP, Ethernet, Frame Relay, X.25, etc.). LANs normally use Ethernet, whereas Wide Area Networks use the Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP) or other options. Some protocol combinations do not fit exactly into the OSI reference model (Asynchronous Transfer Mode, for example) and either more or fewer layers must be peeled off at each step.

I will not discuss routing here except to say that there are various protocols (RIP, OSPF, and BGP-4) in use, and each router keeps its own table of neighboring routers. Each time a packet comes through for a new destination, the router asks around (kind of like gossip). If it receives an answer from a neighboring router, it updates its table and sends the packet to the indicated next router. If the router does not get an answer, it sends the packet to the default gateway. Run winipcfg on your IBM-compatible PC (while connected to a network) to see your computer’s IP address and the default gateway router at your access provider. Any packets not destined to the access provider itself (an e-mail to technical support, for example) will be forwarded to this gateway router.

Figure 3 gives a sampling of acronyms you may already have seen, along with the OSI layer they represent. I will not indicate what each acronym stands for, as the names are unnecessary for this discussion. Please see the section on “Further Reading” at the end of this article for more information on acronyms.

Some protocols are interoperable and some are not. When transferring a packet from a TCP/IP network to a SPX/IPX (Novell) network, all the layers up to the network layer will have to be stripped off the packet and replaced with values appropriate to the receiving network. With all

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**Figure 3: Protocols Associated with Each OSI Layer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSI Layer</th>
<th>Typical Protocols</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application/Presentation/Session</td>
<td>ftp (file transfer), telnet, ssh, SMTP (e-mail), http (web)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>TCP, UDP, SPX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>IP, IPX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-link</td>
<td>HDLC, PPP, Frame Relay, X.25, Ethernet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Ethernet 802.3, RS-232, V.35, X.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that is involved, it is amazing the Internet even works!

Routing and the Domain Name System

Routing was discussed briefly above. On a network using the IP protocol, routing is performed using an IP address. An IP address is a 32-bit number generally written as four 8-bit numbers (for example, 200.241.120.25). IP addresses are geographically distributed, though I do not know if there is a rule for their distribution. My website (IP address 216.234.189.104) is based in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The site http://where-is.info/ claims to be able to identify the country for any IP address, and correctly identified that my site is in Canada.

So, when someone types www.justrightcommunications.com in their browser, how does the request packet reach its destination? First, the application looks in a local file to see if some application has requested this domain name recently. If so, the IP address will still be registered in the file (similar to the routing table mentioned above). Most entries in these types of tables have a self-destruct time delay. If a site is not accessed for a certain amount of time, its entry will be removed from the local table. Next, the application will send a request to the Domain Name System (DNS) server (also visible by running winipcfg and choosing “additional options”). DNS is the largest distributed database in the world. If the access provider’s DNS server does not know the IP address for the domain, it will send the request forward. After an IP address is determined and the request packet zipped up in all its layers, routing proceeds as described in the previous section.

To be registered, every site must have two DNS servers that are constantly ready to respond to requests about its domain name/IP address. These two DNS servers are indicated in the “whois” information (see www.whois.net), which is also useful to discover who owns a site. For my site, for example, they are: ns1.tera-byte.com (IP address 216.234.189.104); ns2.tera-byte.com (IP address 216.234.189.12); and a spare ns3.tera-byte.com (IP address 204.209.56.2). A bit of investigation shows that www.tera-byte.com is the website of my Internet service provider (my web hosting company).

Internet Access and Service Providers

There are two kinds of Internet providers: access providers and service providers. Access providers allow you to dial in to a network (either with a modem or other device), and service providers provide hosting, e-mail, and perhaps content (a newspaper or other text, for example). Access providers frequently offer e-mail services as well, though they are not necessarily the best option for translators. If you change access providers (due to poor service, elevated prices, or other reasons), the e-mail address is lost. Few providers forward mail, even for a fee. This is a good argument for purchasing your own domain name! That way, you have a permanent e-mail address and control over how you send and receive e-mail.

In Figure 4, a minimal Internet access provider is shown. The paying user calls in using a modem and is connected to the provider’s LAN. From there, the Internet can be reached through the provider’s gateway router. The provider may or may not have SMTP, POP3, and HTTP servers. Let me explain what these are for.

E-mail and other Internet applications use the client/server model. Your e-mail programs (Eudora, Pegasus, Netscape Mail, Outlook Express) are e-mail clients (also known as User Agents) and are located on your PC. They interact with SMTP servers (also called Mail Transfer Agents) to send mail and POP3 servers (also called Mail Box Managers) to receive mail. These two servers are not related in any way. The SMTP and POP3 server programs may be located on the same physical server (a very small service provider) or in different countries. In my case, I use my Canadian service...
provider’s POP3 server to receive mail and my Brazilian access provider’s SMTP server to send mail (using an outgoing e-mail address with the domain name I purchased).

An HTTP (HyperText Transfer Protocol) server provides content. My website is on a computer with an HTTP server program. When someone wants to see my site, the HTTP server accepts the connection and responds with the appropriate HTML file.

This division of services into separate servers means that you do not need a site in order to have an e-mail address with your own domain name. Some service providers offer e-mail-only packages. They will host your domain (including a POP3 server and two DNS servers) without providing HTTP server services. Simple! If you decide to create a site later on, just upgrade.

A drawback of the division of services is that e-mail may not actually be coming from its apparent destination. Returning to the OSI model, the recipient’s e-mail address is converted into an IP address when the e-mail packet is constructed (in the application layer). The sender’s e-mail address just goes along for the ride. The address is usually “read-only” (no changes to the text can be made) when the packet is peeled by the e-mail client at the destination. An exception is my ex-access provider. I sent e-mails with my domain e-mail address (nmorais@justrightcommunications.com) as the return address for over a year, until one day they started peeling the packet layers off (up to the application level!) and let through only those e-mail packets with their domain e-mail address (xxx@uol.com.br). No warning, no error messages. My e-mail just disappeared! Next, I moved to an access provider who bases outgoing e-mail acceptance on my IP address (I have a dedicated connection and therefore a dedicated IP address). They peel the packet to the network level and make sure my IP address is on their network. These safeguards are necessary (though not always used) to avoid spam. The return e-mail addresses on spam are almost always false.

For those who are worried about the security problems related to having 24-hour access to the Internet, keep in mind that any client/server interaction must be initiated on the client’s side. Most PCs (Linux and Windows NT excluded) have no server programs! A virus that acts like a client program would have to install itself on your computer and connect (without your permission) to a server somewhere else to transfer your data/passwords through the connection. For added protection, you could install a firewall, a hardware device or software program that protects networked computers from intentional hostile intrusion that could compromise confidentiality or result in data corruption or denial of service. The term “firewall” comes from the fact that by segmenting a network into different physical subnetworks, firewalls limit the damage that could spread from one subnet to another—just like firedoors or firewalls. To learn more about this, see the information about firewalls and client security at www.symantec.com.

E-mail: Options and Client Programs

Now that I have described how e-mail is routed (or not!), I will describe the options of various popular e-mail programs. The two most common are Netscape Mail and Outlook Express. Many people become dissatisfied with these and end up purchasing Eudora. I use Pegasus (www.pmail.com), a free alternative to Eudora which seems to have the same options. I could not get Eudora to install on my computer, so I tried Pegasus and have never looked back. If you are still using Outlook, try Eudora or Pegasus for a week to see the benefits. Each e-mail client implements a different subset of the available functions. They each have different sorting capabilities, address book features, and spell-check options. Some even allow you to delete e-mails without having to read them first.

When sending e-mail, most of the options (blind carbon copy [BCC], return receipt, priority) are...
coded into the packet at the application level. (The priority, for example, is ignored at the network level where packets are routed). If you look at the text of an e-mail (hidden by most e-mail clients), the header will contain the information in Figure 5. To see this information, choose “raw view” in Pegasus, “view->message source” in Netscape Mail, or something similar in Outlook Express or Eudora.

The received fields indicate the path which the e-mail took from the sender’s SMTP server to the recipient’s POP3 server. These are not the routers, but rather intermediate e-mail servers. The field “X-Priority” (the priority of the e-mail: Urgent, Normal, or Bulk) is not used by all client programs. The “X-Confirm-Reading-To:” is a nice feature of Pegasus that, unfortunately, is not recognized by all receiving e-mail clients. When an e-mail with this option is received, the user is asked if they would mind sending a return receipt. The sender can then find out if the recipient (a translation client?) received the e-mail, even if no formal reply has been sent. This option could save you from having to make an international phone call to confirm the receipt of your message. Pegasus can send return-receipt e-mail and process it when it is sent by others. I believe Outlook Express and Netscape can process incoming return-receipt messages. The return-receipt is just an automatic e-mail stating that the e-mail was opened, with a date and time.

Let me end with a quick discussion of BCC (blind carbon copy) etiquette. There are three ways to address an e-mail to a recipient: TO, CC (carbon copy), and BCC. CC is normally used when the e-mail is directed at the person designated in the TO field (and that person is expected to reply), and the CC’d person is included for information purposes only. BCC is used when the people to whom the e-mail is directed are not supposed to know that the e-mail is being sent to another person. For example, suppose I receive a really nice job offer and respond saying, “Yes, I’m available.” Instead of writing another e-mail to my husband to tell him we have to cancel our romantic dinner plans, I can just put him in the BCC field. That way, he has the news and my prospective client does not know another person is receiving a copy of the message. Another use for BCC is when various recipients should not have each other’s addresses. An example is when a translation agency sends out a message to see who is available, or sends out a job for a quote. BCC is very appropriate here, and the sender’s address should be used in the TO field. For those who like to send Internet jokes to all their friends, BCC should also be used in case the message is forwarded five times and the addresses fall into the wrong hands. And for all the translators who have sent me their CVs as a CC and CC’d 100 other agencies in the same e-mail: stop! This gives a very bad impression!

Further Reading

When confronted with an unknown networking term, your first stop should be http://whatis.techtarget.com/. There are no translations, but many explanations and links. For a nuts-and-bolts lesson, try www.howstuffworks.com/web-server.htm. Technical translators who wish to keep on top of where the Internet is going can visit www.isoc.org and www.w3.org/Consortium/.

References


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.”
What are the difficulties or potential problems that may arise if we want to switch from one TM software application to another? Can we exchange TMs between systems; are they compatible? Can we switch from one system to another? What will be the cost of such a move? Is TMX the solution? Likewise, can we use the same TM when translating an XML document, an MS Word document, or a FrameMaker document? We can, but some unexpected results may occur.

**Why should we worry about this?**

The problems that may arise are quite simple. Segments that are considered to be 100% matches by one TM software application could be considered as lower matches by another software application. In other words, 100% matches in one TM software application could become 97% matches, 70% matches, or maybe even less in others. The same could happen when changing the documentation format. So, if we have millions of words being calculated as 100% matches in our TMs (and we obviously don’t want to lose a high percentage of these), we had better be careful.

**What is a translation memory system?**

To understand how this could happen, IF it will happen, and how we can avoid it, we must first understand what a translation memory system is and how it works.

A translation memory, or TM, is a repository of human translations. It is filled by a TM software application which stores each sentence and its associated translation into the memory as soon as it is translated. The elements stored in that repository are called translation units, or TUs.

When a new sentence needs to be translated, the TM software application can first run a search to see whether or not that sentence already exists in the program’s memory. If it is found, the associated translation will be proposed to the translator. When searching the memory, three situations can happen:

1. Nothing is found. This is called "no match" in TM terminology. The translator has to translate the full sentence.
2. The exact same sentence is found. This is called a "100% match." The system will show the translation to the translator who will, most of the time, simply validate this translation in the current context.
3. A similar sentence is found. This is called a “fuzzy match.” Depending on the differences between the source sentence and the sentence found (number of different words, position of the words), the system will calculate a similarity match and express it as a percentage. We’ll say that this is a “75% fuzzy match” or a “84% fuzzy match,” or any other value. The translator can then modify or adapt the proposed translation.

**The Translation Process**

Now, let’s see how this works practically for the translator. Many different TM software applications are available on the market today, but they all work the same way. The translation process is always the following:

**Step 1:**
Break the document into segments. A segment is generally a full
We Must Compare Apples and Apples

When searching for a potential translation in the TM, it is critical for the TM system to compare apples and apples, not apples and pears. A TM system stores and searches for “segments” in a TM, but what exactly is a segment? Is it a sentence? Is it a full paragraph? Is this important? Of course it is. The way to define a segment is essential. We must search the TM for the same kind of data that was previously stored on it: search sentences if we have stored sentences; search paragraphs if we have stored paragraphs; etc. For example, if we decide that a segment is a sentence, then the TM will contain sentences and their translations. If we later change the definition and decide that a segment is a paragraph (which can, of course, contain several sentences), we’ll search for the translation of a full paragraph by comparing the current paragraph with all the sentences existing in the TM; in other words, we compare apples and pears. Obviously, we’ll never find a paragraph that is equal to a sentence, or only extremely rarely (when a paragraph contains just one sentence). So, if we change the segmentation between two projects in any substantial way, we’ll probably lose ALL our translations and the TM will become useless. This is the worst case scenario and should not happen, but it serves to effectively illustrate the problem.

A similar situation can happen if we build a TM with one TM software application and then later decide to use it with another software application. The way each software carries out the segmentation may be slightly different, and that will cause some problems similar to the ones we have just described. But those problems could also happen when using the same software, as we’ll see below.

Segmentation Rules

The method used by a TM software application to break the text into segments is called segmentation. Segmentation is based on rules; a rule tells the system what to consider as an end of segment marker. A common rule defines the “.” as an end of segment marker (some other common end of segment markers are: the end of paragraph sign; the “!”; the “?”; and the tabulating character). This means that the system will start comparing each character of the document. When it encounters a “.”, it will decide that the end of the current segment has been found (See Step 1 of the process at the top of page 27). That segment will then be presented to the translator for translation (Steps 2 & 3). To better understand this, let’s take the paragraph at the beginning of this section as an example. With default rules, a TM system with only the “.” rule thinks the sentence contains two segments:

Segment 1:
“The method used by a TM software application to break the text into segments is called segmentation.”

Segment 2:
“Segmentation is based on rules; a rule tells the system what to consider as an end of segment marker.”

Those two segments will be translated and stored into the TM. Now, let’s suppose that six months later, we need to translate an update of this document. A new rule has been added that defines the “!” as an end of segment marker. Thus, our paragraph above will now contain three segments instead of two:

Segment 1:
“The method used by a TM software application to break the text into segments is called segmentation.”

Segment 2:
“Segmentation is based on rules;”

Segment 3:
“a rule tells the system what to consider as an end of segment marker.”

When searching for the translation of segment 1 in the TM, the TM system will find and retrieve it from the previous job as a 100% match. No problem. However, when searching for the translation of segment 2, the TM will not find anything because too many differences exist between the new version of segment 2 and the old
version (the new one contains considerably fewer words), thus making a match very difficult. And finally, when searching for a potential translation of segment 3, the TM won’t find anything at all for the same reason.

Let’s do some math now. If our document contains only those three sentences, it has a total of 37 words. Because we have changed the segmentation rules (or switched to another program that has different rules), only 17 words (segment 1) remain as 100% matches, while we have to retranslate 20 words from scratch. (We know that the translation is in the TM, but the system won’t find it because segment 2 is now divided into two segments!) We can see that more than 50% of the total words need to be retranslated because of the different segmentation rules. If we extrapolate that to documents containing millions of words, the cost of having changed the segmentation rules could become astronomical.

We must also make sure that translators working on the same project or using the same TM don’t change the segmentation rules to meet their individual preferences. If this were the case, the TM could become a real mess. It would get filed with completely different segments, and with consequences that we already know (i.e., an extremely low reusability of the segments). So, we strongly advise NOT to change the segmentation rules, and if you decide to switch to another TM software application, make sure to configure it with the same rules you were using before instead of using default rules.

### Abbreviation Lists

Another important part of a segmentation algorithm is the abbreviation list. As we have seen, the “.” is the most common segmentation rule, but it is also the character used in abbreviations such as Mr., Dr., and many others. Thus, when abbreviations are used in the middle of a sentence, there must be a way to tell the system that the “.” should not be considered as an end of sentence marker. To achieve this, the segmentation algorithm will consult its abbreviation list. If a word followed by the “.” is in the list, it will be ignored and won’t be considered as an end of sentence marker.

So, this abbreviation list influences the way a program carries out segmentation. Let’s look at the example below comparing two existing TM software applications. In TM Software A, the abbreviation “Ph.D.” is defined and the system does not segment on the “.” in “Ph.D.” Meanwhile, the abbreviation is not defined in the list of TM Software B, and the system considers the “.” in “Ph.D.” (see Segmentation done by TM Software A) as an end of segment marker. This causes a segmentation error (see Segmentation done by TM Software B) where the system detects the presence of two segments instead of one (see Figure 2).

Thus, if the TM has been created with Software “A,” the full sentence will be translated as a segment and stored into a TM. Later, if we move to Software “B” or change the list, the system will search for the translation of “Harris received his Ph.D.” but it will never find this segment because too many words are different. It will then search “in Political Science....” as a segment, which it will never find.

The conclusion is the same as before. Don’t change the segmentation list. If you switch to another program, discard their list and use yours. If you don’t, you may lose a lot of your TMs.

#### Other Cases

There are some other instances where periods should not be considered as end of segment markers by the system. Figure 3 offers some examples.

In this case, there is nothing we can really do to influence the segmentation algorithm. Some TM systems will handle these cases properly, some will not. This will imply some minor differences in the segmentation, which will cause some losses of 100% matches. However, these

---

**Figure 2: Comparing two existing TM software applications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Sentence</th>
<th>Segmentation done by TM Software “A”</th>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Segmentation done by TM Software “B”</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harris received a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>Harris received a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>“Ph.D.” has been recognized as an abbreviation</td>
<td>Harris received a Ph.D. .................................................. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison</td>
<td>“Ph.D.” has NOT been recognized as an abbreviation (segmentation after “.” followed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
losses should be minimal, as we don’t have URLs or phone numbers on every line.

Figure 4 gives some more examples which highlight the segmentation algorithm differences of the main TM software applications available on the market today (using default rules). We see also that some bugs can cause segmentation differences (clearly the software should not segment on the “:” in “Scott D. Harris”). Again, this is something that cannot be fine-tuned.

BackOffice versus Front End

A very simple solution to avoid all segmentation problems between different TM systems would be to separate the TM handling from the segmentation handling. One software application does the segmentation on the translator’s computer, while the TM software applications only handle the management of the TM (storing segments, searching segments). For example, if you use T-Remote Memory (a software program developed by Telelingua that allows the use of TMs remotely via the Internet) as a Front End (translator interface) and any other TM program in the BackOffice as a TM engine, you eliminate all the segmentation problems described above instantly. You can exchange memories or switch to another system at any time.

What About Formatting?

Formatting is another serious problem. Depending on the format of the original document (XML, HTML, MS Word, Framemaker, etc.), a TM created when translating one kind of document won’t be 100% usable when translating another kind of document. Why not? Well, simply because the Internal software codes for bold, italics, or any other formatting won’t be the same.

For example, if we were to translate the sentence “The toast is burning in the kitchen” from an MS Word document based on an HTML page, here are the two results that would be stored in the TM (pay attention to the codes recording the fact that the word “toast” is in bold:

**HTML**

```
The {\text{\textit{\textsc{\textbf{toast}}} is burning in the kitchen}}
```
The toast is burning in the kitchen.

As you can see, the HTML formatting of bold "<b>toast</b>" is not the same as the MS Word formatting of bold {b}.

As such, if we have a TM created from MS Word documentation and if we move this documentation to HTML or XML format (or any other), the system will find exact matches for sentences in the new HTML or XML format, but it will see that the formatting codes are different and will consequently apply a formatting penalty to the segments found. As a result, you will lose all your 100% matches for those segments containing formatting! The formatting penalty is very low, but this is a real problem. So you might want to reconsider before moving all your documentation from MS Word to XML, especially if you have millions of words in your TMs. Making this change could cause all your 100% matches to become 97% matches.

**TMX Format**

The TMX format is an exchange format that allows you to export a TM from one system and import it into another. However, one must be aware that this does not address the segmentation problem. It is merely a standard format used to exchange data between two TM systems. The Oscar TMX segmentation committee has some interesting ideas for incorporating segmentation rules inside the TMX itself, but those have not been developed yet.

One must also be extremely careful of the fact that there are two levels of TMX: TMX level 1 (which does NOT support formatting) and TMX level 2 (which does support formatting). What does that mean? Well, TM software applications are supporting this TMX standard at various levels, since developers are not always eager to offer a solution to export TMs and provide people with an opportunity to move away from their system to another. Some, for example, do not export the formatting properly. This formatting will then be totally lost when switching from one TM software to another. The issue of formatting is extremely important, and you should run extensive tests before deciding to make any move.

**Conclusion**

We see that many of the problems mentioned throughout this article can be avoided with a bit of fine-tuning and good preparation. If you don’t want to lose your 100% matches, then don’t change the segmentation rules between projects, make sure that all translators working on a project are using the same rules, and don’t change the abbreviation list.

The same rules apply if you decide to switch to another TM software application. Use TMX to convert the memories, but first do a test to see if the formatting is properly converted. Don’t...
Scenes from a Regional Conference: MICATA Workshop on Science and Technology

By Kathy Hall Foster

W

hew, we made it! The Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA) annual workshop has taken place, and by all accounts, it was a great success. The weekend of May 2-4 was a busy one for MICATA board members and other volunteers. With a welcome reception on Friday evening, a full day of presentations on Saturday, a casual dinner gathering on Saturday evening, and an accreditation exam sitting on Sunday, there was plenty of work to be done. Despite this hectic program, there was also time to renew old acquaintances, make new friends, and promote our profession.

The actual planning process began last fall, when the board met to consider a theme for the workshop. For the 24th annual MICATA workshop, we decided to focus on science and technology for language professionals, choosing “Keeping Current in Kansas City” as the theme. Preparations for this event included selecting a location and hotel, contacting potential speakers, and lining up the presentations. In addition to calling on outside speakers, we were also able to utilize the talents and expertise of MICATA members to put together a well-rounded program to benefit translators and interpreters in the Kansas City area and beyond.

Once the workshop weekend arrived, MICATA hosted a reception Friday evening to give attendees a chance to get advance information about workshop activities, meet their colleagues, and do some networking. A number of lively conversations were overheard, and a great many business cards traded hands throughout the evening. With a total of 70 registrants for the workshop, there was a wide range of languages, specialties, and interests represented.

The workshop began on Saturday with MICATA President Frieda Ruppaner-Lind conveying greetings and good wishes for a successful meeting on behalf of ATA President-elect Scott Brennan. Saturday’s focus was on the educational portion of the workshop, with 14 presentations offered during the day to give translators and interpreters a variety of information related to the profession.

“…Attendees took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions of some seasoned professionals…”

One of our most popular sessions is always “Getting Started in the Translation Business.” This panel discussion focused on translation and interpretation as a career and what aspiring professionals need to know about the profession itself, including what equipment they need to have, what skills they need to possess, and the contacts they should make. Attendees at this session took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions of some seasoned professionals.

Also geared towards both translators and interpreters was the presentation on “Websites for Language Professionals.” This presentation by MICATA member Michael Wahlster covered the creation of a more effective web presence and some of the important elements and often-neglected factors that make a successful website. (Michael is a technical translator from English-to-German who offers desktop publishing and web development services.)

Presentations for translators included a look at “CAT Tools—Past, Present, and Future for the Translation Industry” and a demonstration of some of the translation memory software available today. Translation memory and other CAT tools have revolutionized the translation industry. Jackie Smith, of SH3, Inc., discussed the impact of CAT tools on profits, processes, and customer expectations.

“Translation Opportunities in the Biological Sciences,” presented by MICATA member Ben Tompkins, gave translators an idea of the need for translators specializing in the biological sciences. Pharmaceutical companies continue to produce drugs, researchers have information to share with their colleagues who speak other languages, corporations continue to file bio-related patents, and lawsuits over these patents generate mounds of documentation requiring translation. Attendees learned to identify these opportunities and the specific strategies for pursuing them. (Ben translates preclinical and clinical study documentation and patents related to the biological sciences from Japanese into English.)

Since most translators operate in a world dominated by the use of MS Office, MICATA member Bill Bergerson presented “Office Isn’t Always Officious.” This session examined the practical applications of some largely underutilized aids, such as invoice tracking, self-marketing, to-do lists, and content manipulation. This interactive session allowed participants to share their own insights with the group. (Bill is a German-to-English translator, with a focus on medicine and intellectual property.)
For the interpreters in attendance, Cristina Helmerichs and Judith Kenigson Kristy, of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (www.najit.org), presented a session on ethics for court interpreters. They also presented a session on terminology useful for court interpreters.

Continuing in the terminology vein for interpreters, MICATA member Norma Pringle presented a session on “Dirty Spanish,” focusing on obscene, insulting, and objectionable terms in Spanish and English. This vocabulary is sometimes crucial as part of courtroom testimony. A bibliography of reference material was available to participants. (Norma is an instructor of Spanish at Columbia College, and has acted as a court and conference interpreter.)

Several other aspects of courtroom technology were covered in the workshop. Brian Hoey and Will Randall, crime scene investigators for the Missouri State Highway Patrol, discussed “DNA Evidence in the Courtroom” and “Trace Evidence.” They showed how science is changing the way evidence is used in many trials, including high-profile cases such as O.J. Simpson and Jon Benet Ramsey.

Other terminology sessions were included in the workshop. “Traffic Engineering and Terminology” was presented by Brian Shields, city traffic engineer for Overland Park, Kansas. The focus of his presentation was the role of traditional methods and emerging technologies to help manage traffic more safely and efficiently. Discussion topics included neighborhood traffic calming, red light running cameras, and automated traffic control systems.

Keith Hustings, a freight forwarder, discussed shipping and provided some explanations about the concepts of U.S. foreign trade zones and Mexican maquiladoras in his presentation on “Shipping, Containers, Ships, and Ports.”

“Contract Research Today” was the subject of the presentation by Dr. John Phillip, director of vaccine R&D at Midwest Research Institute in Kansas City. Contract research is continuing to grow due to the government’s response to the threat of bioterrorism and biowarfare and the desire of pharmaceutical companies to avoid investment in the fixed assets of R&D and manufacturing. Some of these research contracts involve international clients.

In addition to the above presentations, the keynote speaker for the workshop was Frederick L. Baehner, president of the International Trade Club of Greater Kansas City and chair of the Heartland International Business Alliance. He works with companies and organizations both here and abroad to help them plan international marketing and communications strategies. His speech on “Translation and the Media” stressed the use of the best practices of plain English when presenting information for media use. He also described the International Trade Club of Greater Kansas City and gave an overview of the ad hoc group formed to bring international trade associations together in the Midwest.

Following this array of educational sessions, the group adjourned to the Flea Market Bar and Grill for an informal dinner where workshop participants relaxed and shared their impressions of the day’s activities. Eventually a guitar appeared and music became the order of the day, with translators and interpreters showcasing their singing and playing talents, proving that these professionals also know how to have fun.

Serious business returned bright and early Sunday morning, as seven candidates sat for an ATA accreditation exam. This brought to a close the MICATA workshop for another year.
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ATA and Two Radical Technologies (2RAD) have teamed up to provide ATA members an opportunity to build their own customized websites. Through 2RAD’s online creation tools—RADTown—ATA members will be able to set up their own online presence. The offer includes obtaining a domain name and creating links to ATA’s online directories. For more information, please contact 2RAD at radtown@atanet.org or log on to www.atanet.org/radtown.

From the President Continued from page 7

program from “accreditation” to “certification.” The members will vote on this proposal at the ATA Annual Conference in November. This name change is purely semantic, and its purpose is to bring our terminology into line with widely accepted usage. In common parlance, institutions are “accredited,” whereas individuals are “certified.” The vote on the name change will have no bearing on the new eligibility and continuing education requirements, which have already been implemented. However, now that the other changes are in place, it makes sense to clean up our terminology as well.

Too busy or too experienced. A few members have said they were either too busy or too experienced and basically didn’t need more training. My first response to this is that doctors, lawyers, nurses, and accountants are also very busy and gain new experience in their jobs every day, but mandatory continuing education is still part and parcel of their professions. The second thing that occurs to me is that the vast majority of translators work in a vacuum (i.e., they work alone and often receive little or no feedback). Given this situation, continuing education seems even more crucial for translators than for those in other professions. Finally, it is clear that progress is constantly made in the various areas of knowledge that we translate. Just recently, I received a large translation about International Accounting Standards, which did not even exist 10 years ago. The fact that the new continuing education requirements will encourage more and more people to organize training programs on topics like this is really something to get excited about.

Thank you for your feedback and help as we move forward with these significant changes.
Do You Speak XML? Crash Course on Markup Languages for the Technical Translator

By Romina L. Marazzato

Markup languages (ML) are an increasingly popular data exchange tool that translators must use while working on marked-up files or when using ML-based translation software. This article covers definitions, examples, and the fundamental concepts of HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and eXtensible Markup Language (XML) to help translators understand this technology.

A Little History

We will start with HTML, as it is a simpler language. HTML was the first markup language specifically developed for the web in the 1990s. We can compare HTML to controlled English, in the sense that it is a subset of a more comprehensive language called Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML). SGML’s development started back in the 1980s as a language for describing markup languages. SGML is device independent and system independent, and allows for integrated text processing. Essentially, SGML indicates the nature and relationship of data within a document. ¹ SGML became an ISO standard in 1986 (ISO 8879), and was used in the creation of technical documentation for the aerospace and automotive industries.

The problem with a controlled language is that it is only useful in creating certain kinds of documents; neither Shakespeare nor Joyce would have been able to write their works in controlled English. Similarly, HTML has proven insufficient to manipulate all the information that HTML users have come to expect.

As a result, the development of a new SGML subset for large-scale electronic publishing, XML, was started in 1996 as an initiative of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).² In February 1998, XML became a recommendation of the W3C. Today, XML plays an important role as a tool for exchanging all sorts of data. It complements, rather than replaces, HTML.

What is a Markup Language?

The notion of markup comes from the publishing world, where typesetters need to distinguish between the text to be printed and the instructions about how to print it. This set of instructions (such as font size, color, etc.) is called “markup.”

…A basic knowledge of markup languages, especially of XML, will make translators better equipped to face processing issues when working with translation technology…”

Our daily lives are full of examples of markup. We have all probably highlighted textbooks when studying. By highlighting, we are classifying, or “marking up,” the information contained in the text. As a result, we not only see the original text, but our highlighted marks serve to classify, or prioritize, the information contained within the text in terms of its relevance. Some students may even use several colors to highlight main ideas, supporting ideas, and relevant details. However, if you choose one set of colors and I choose another, we will run into problems if we want to exchange our textbooks. Therefore, it is important for students in this scenario to adopt a standard marking system that establishes a meaning for each color, so that books can be exchanged without confusion.

From this example, we can already establish two conditions that valid markup should meet: 1) to have a standard defining what constitutes valid markup; and 2) to have a standard defining what that markup means. In the example above, highlighting represents the valid markup. The highlighted area indicates to the reader that marked items in a text are of particular importance. If we choose several colors for highlighting, we need to agree on a set pattern, such as red for “important,” blue for “support,” and green for “details.” In linguistic terms, when we provide our signs (colors) with values (messages) that are derived from their mutual and exclusive relations, we are defining a language through a system of differences (de Saussure).³ An example of a set pattern of symbols that will be familiar to translators is the notation system for proofreading. Many of us, even in the digital era, still have to proofread hard copies and use standard proofreading symbols to clearly indicate how to modify the text.

Translators who use translation memory (TM) are familiar with the infamous system of tags of TM applications. These tags have to be protected to avoid file corruption or even destruction! Whether we choose to see the tags spelled out, to “minimize” them, or to “hide” them, or even if they are hidden from us in the form of color-coding, they still mark up the text, so it is our job to deal with them correctly.

Tags in TM systems delimit the translation units (TUs), which consist of source and target text. However, TM tools not only mark up text to indicate source and target language, but can include data such as time.
and date of creation, percentage of matching, TU creator, and so on.

The highlighting example used earlier confirms an established semiotic fact. In order to talk about a language, we need another language. It is one thing to use the language to say “Goblins are the most annoying creatures in literature,” and another to mention it, as in “The English word ‘goblin’ is derived from Middle French ‘gobelin’.” This fundamental distinction between “use” and “mention” is based upon the theory of the hierarchy of languages, which distinguishes an object language and a metalanguage (any language or symbolic system used to discuss, describe, or analyze another language or symbolic system).4 Many times, as in our example, metalanguages are based upon the object language they try to manipulate. This is why a markup convention is so important.

**HTML Markup**

Hypertext Markup Language is one of the most popular markup systems that define how a browser presents the text, images, and sounds of web documents. It meets the two conditions of a markup language:

1. A standard defining valid markup. Tags delimited by the < and > symbols (which enclose the <Tag Name>).

2. A standard defining the meaning of the markup. Each tag communicates a layout message by associating a structure or style rule to the marked-up text. For instance, <p> indicates that the text to follow will be a paragraph.

Just as highlighting is meant to be interpreted by the human eye, HTML is meant to be interpreted by HTML processors. These are usually browsers that read the instructions and present the document accordingly. We can still read and edit HTML, as it uses a textual, rather than binary, language to store information. This is actually a feature that creates confusion for translators. All we need to edit HTML is a simple text processor such as NotePad.

Sometimes, it is hard to understand that what we see or write in a text processor or even in an HTML editor differs from what the browser presents us with on the screen. Figure 1 shows the difference between a browser’s display of an HTML file and the same file as read by a text processor.

There are different HTML editors, from Netscape Composer to Macromedia Dreamweaver, which allow us to view and edit the HTML file almost as if it were displayed by a browser. These are called WYSIWYG editors (what you see is what you get). They do a simultaneous interpretation of HTML markup into the visual display, but their source language will always be in the form of tags. Let’s take a look at some HTML tags:5

- **<b>** specifies a rule instructing the browser to display the marked-up text in bold.

---

**Figure 1: The Modern Word Home Page**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seen with Netscape Navigator</th>
<th>Seen with NotePad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Netscape Navigator" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="NotePad" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• `<center>` instructs the browser to center the marked-up text.
• `<table WIDTH="100%">` creates a table as wide as the screen.
• `<a href="mailto:EMAIL"></a>` creates an e-mail link.

In written language, we distinguish words by separating them with spaces. HTML markup sequences are distinguished by opening and closing each tag using the following syntax: `<tag name>marked-up text</tag name>`. Such syntax shows an opening or start tag and a closing or end tag that are paired and differ in the adding of a forward slash to the end tag. Tag pairs delimit the elements or building blocks of HTML documents. Elements can contain plain text (aimed at the human eye), other elements (to be deciphered by the HTML processor), or both. Some elements are defined by "lonely tags" which (in the first version of HTML) need not be closed, such as `<hr>`, to display a horizontal bar. Tags can have attributes defined by a property and a value. For instance, the tag `<table>` may have the property "width" and a value given in a percentage of the window width or in pixels (the minimum visual unit available in digital media). What happens if we want to assign two tags to the same text, for example, to make the text appear both bold and centered? For this, we need to consider a third condition for markup languages (besides defining their signs and meanings):

3. A standard defining how markup signs can be combined (i.e., a grammar).

Tags, like words, can be combined in order to produce complex instructions. The sequence: `<center><b>` ATA 43rd Annual Conference`</b></center>` will be displayed by the browser as depicted in Figure 2.

HTML, as a controlled language, has its limitations. Its original grammar allowed several combinations that became confusing, such as opening and closing tags in different orders, or writing tags in lower or upper case. Tags grew more complex, mixing style and content (or structure) tags within the document. The W3C decided to separate style instructions from content instructions. Content instructions, such as `<h1>` (which defines the largest title possible), would continue to be part of HTML markup within a document, while style tags, such as `<font>`, would be used in style sheets separate from, but associated with, the document. These style sheets, called Cascading Style Sheets (CSS)*, may be published internally within the document or externally using a sort of hyperlink.

Separating design from logical structure elements allows us to control the style without compromising the structural integrity of the data. This allows us to associate the same HTML document with different style sheets, depending on the display needs at hand. For instance, we may want the `<h1>` title to be interpreted so that it appears in 36-point font, upper case, and in red on the home page, but not on the rest of the site, where we want to use 24-point font, small caps, and blue for `<h1>` titles.

HTML’s evolution resulted in a more standardized language, called XHTML (eXtensible HyperText Markup Language), with the following main features:

• Tags must be written in lowercase.
• Tags must be opened and closed. Lonely tags, such as `<hr>`, must contain a closing instruction such as `</hr>`.
• Attributes must consist of a property (name of the attribute) and a value, which must be declared and quoted. For example: `<hr shade="noshade">`, `<table WIDTH="100%">`.
• Tags must be embedded in order—the first tag that was opened is always closed last.
A complete HTML document must also comply with an overall valid syntax, indicating a header and a body within the document (see Figure 3). Nowadays, since there are different versions of HTML, we must also declare the dialect of HTML that we will use in our document. A typical declaration indicating that we are using version 4.01, as per the W3C, is: `<!DOCTYPE HTML PUBLIC '-//W3C//DTD HTML 4.01 Transitional//EN'>

XML: Evolution or Revolution?

XML (eXtensible Markup Language) is another dialect of SGML. XML is less strict and complicated, but it offers the possibility of creating specialized languages to work in different disciplines. XML is the language upon which the new version of HTML (XHTML) is based.

Although any analogy has its limitations, comparing markup languages to the Indo-European family of languages can give us an idea of the complexity and productivity of each. HTML is to controlled English what XML is to English. SGML would be comparable to Indo-European, the original language from which the other two originated.

XML is extensible because it does not have a predetermined set of tags. Tags can be created according to the author’s needs. Some standardized languages have been created with XML, such as MathML (for mathematics); SMIL (for multimedia [Synchronized Multimedia Integration Language]); and CML (for manipulating molecular information in chemistry).

The power of XML comes from its ability to create original languages. We can create categories, called “elements,” such as `<father>`, `<mother>`, `<daughter>`, etc., to work on genealogy, or `<recipe>`, `<author>`, `<ingredients>`, etc., for culinary arts, and so on.

XML’s syntax is similar to HTML’s:

- Tags must be opened and closed.
- Tags must be correctly embedded.
- Tag names are sensitive to lower and upper case use.

```xml
<Message>This is incorrect</message>
<message>This is correct</message>
```

- Attributes must have declared values and such declaration must be quoted.

```xml
<memodate="11/17/2002">
```

- XML documents must embed subelements correctly within root elements.

```xml
<root>
  <subelement father>
    <subelement child>
      <subelement child>
        <subelement father>
          </subelement father>
        </subelement child>
      </subelement child>
    </subelement father>
  </subelement father>
</root>
```

As in XHTML, XML documents must have an XML declaration defining the XML version and character encoding used (the latter indicates the language and alphabet to be used as well as the binary definition for them). The declaration `<xmlversion="1.0" encoding="ISO-8859-1">` indicates that the document complies with XML specification 1.0 of the W3C and uses the character set ISO-8859-1 (for Latin-1 characters of Western European languages).

As in a natural language, when XML syntax is used correctly, the document is well-formed. An XML document can also be validated against a Document Type Definition (DTD). DTDs define which elements are legal within a document. If the document follows the DTD, we say it is a valid document.

In order to use a DTD, we need to include a tag in the document indicating the DTD’s name (`<!DOCTYPE contactinfo SYSTEM "entry.dtd">`). Elements declared in a DTD can include attributes. In an address book entry, for instance, we may want to include the element “telephone” and the attributes “work,” “cellular,” and “fax,” which can be declared with the following lines:

```xml
<ELEMENT telephone (#PCDATA)
<ATTLIST telephone type (work|cellular|fax) CDATA #IMPLIED
```

Two other important components of DTDs, which may play an important role in documents for translation, are:

- **CDATA** (Character Data): CDATA delimits non-markup character data that will be skipped by a syntax analyzer. This information may look like markup text, which is why it needs to be identified as non-markup.

- **PCDATA** (Parsed Character Data): PCDATA delimits markup character data that will be analyzed and processed by a syntax analyzer. This information may appear within a string of non-markup text intended to be skipped by the analyzer, which is why it needs to be identified as markup.

Due to the fact that DTD syntax differs from XML, the W3C has proposed an alternative, called Schema or XML Shema, to define legal
elements within a document. Valid element definitions with Schemas are known as XSD or XML schema definitions. An XML Schema, like a DTD, defines the legal elements and attributes of a document, their quantity, relationship, order, and content type. The main advantage of using Schemas is the fact that they are written in XML, making the use of different rules unnecessary. In our example of an address book element, the declaration lines would look like Figure 4.

They may seem more complex, but in reality they make the declaration very clear. The help of comments, which are indicated by <!-- comment -->, is worth noting. Comments will not appear in any final visual rendition of the document, but they help read, edit, and correct the document. Usually, comments, although intended for the human eye, are skipped in translation, but sometimes if document creation is shared, the client may want comments translated. Let’s look at Figure 5 for the simple XML document for a memo.

This classification of data will allow us to parse a set of documents and obtain, for instance, all the memos written to Ximena. Such a semantic search is impossible with HTML. It is worth noting that the power of XML stems from the use of a very strict set of rules. Any error in an XML document may result in a crash of the processing program or in its inability to display the document. This is quite an important concept to remember for translation. When translating XML documents, extreme attention should be paid in order not to alter the metalanguage. In doing so, we risk corrupting the document. However, it should be noted that having the ability to understand the mechanics of XML when working in XML files with translation tools may allow us to find errors that are the responsibility of the document’s creator rather than the translator.

**XML Files Display**

Visually, a browser will not display this document in the same way that it would display an HTML document. It will present us with a well-formed XML document or with

---

**Figure 4**

```
<!— definition of simple elements —>
<xs:element name="tel" type="xs:string"/>

<!— definition of attributes —>
<xs:attribute name="type" use="optional">
    <xs:simpleType>
        <xs:restriction base = "xs:string">
            <xs:enumeration value="work"/>
            <xs:enumeration value="cellular"/>
            <xs:enumeration value="fax"/>
        </xs:restriction>
    </xs:simpleType>
</attribute>
```

**Figure 5**

```
<?xml version=1.0 encoding="ISO-8859-1" ?>
- <memo date="11/17/2002">
  <to>Ximena</to>
  <from>Florence</from>
  <message>Meeting cancelled. New date TBA.</message>
</memo>
```
an error message indicating the line and position of the problem. For instance, if we forget to quote the attribute’s value in the date line of our memo document, the error message shown in Figure 6 will appear.

In order to visually display XML documents, we need to define style interpretations. We can have different renditions of the same XML document according to the use we are looking for (screen presentation, printed document, audio file, etc.). Style for XML can be defined with style sheets, but the W3C recommends the use of another method that is better suited for XML, called XSL (eXtensible Style Language). XSL is to CSS what XML is to HTML. XSL allows us to transform an XML document into: another XML document; an HTML document for web display; a spreadsheet to be processed by a financial program; a DTP file to be used for printing.

Differences Between XML and HTML

The fundamental difference between XML and HTML lies in their application. While HTML is used to obtain a visual interpretation of marked-up data, XML is used to obtain a semantic interpretation. These two markups represent two types of digital languages: procedural and structural. Procedural markup describes the form and meaning of typographical operations to be applied to documents in order to create a visual representation. Structural markup describes only the logical structure of a digital document and is not concerned with its display. In addition, typographical operations in HTML are preset and can be found in the HTML 4.0 specification published by the W3C. The logical structures used by XML are endless. There are no constraints for the category types allowed, although there are sets of categories defined for standardized applications.

Conclusion

We introduced the concept of a markup language as a metalanguage that describes instructions for the object language. We briefly analyzed the fundamental linguistic components of HTML and XML.

We determined what constitutes a valid sign in each markup language, and reviewed their signs, basic meaning, and the grammar of each language. Recognizing these elements will help translators scan a document to separate out the markup language from the sections representing the actual text in need of translation.

Also, a basic knowledge of markup languages, especially of XML, will make translators better equipped to face processing issues when working with translation technology, providing them with the opportunity to look for metalinguistic errors and ask more informed questions.

Another important aspect, beyond the scope of this article, is the understanding of translation tools and other applications that make use of markup languages for internal data processing.

Notes


2. The W3C is an organization dedicated to the development of web technologies. See www.w3.org.


The Hungarian and His Dog

By Paulo Rónai, Translated by Tom Moore. © By Cora Tausz Rónai and Laura Tausz Rónai, Rights granted by Solombra Books (solombrabooks@solombrabooks.com)

I had in mind to take a brief excursion into the mysterious domains of expression, to tally the imaginative wealth of language and surprise it in its picturesque contradictions. For this purpose, I intended to borrow some examples from my mother tongue. In picking up one of those strips of paper on which one usually writes for the press, it occurred to me that such a strip would be called a “dog’s tongue” in Hungarian. I had never thought this worthy of note; one always accepts the expressions of one’s maternal language as natural. It was the first time I had picked up on the strange association. And, thinking more about it, I realized that Hungarian has an extraordinary number of expressions relating to dogs.

The phenomenon can be easily explained. The primitive, the essential, occupation of the Hungarian is raising livestock. The Magyar shepherd spends part of his life on the limitless pusztá on the Great Hungarian Plain, following his cattle in the company of his dog, the only creature that he speaks to for weeks on end. In spite of the increasing industrialization of the country and the development of urban centers with apartment complexes where there is no longer any room for animals, the dog still maintains his old place in the Hungarian vocabulary.

There are numerous expressions about the horse, the ox, and the sheep, but they are of more restricted usage. The phraseology relating to the dog is part of the vernacular, whether in the countryside or the city.

As in English (or in Portuguese), in Hungarian the dog is generally known by two names (kutya and eb). The use of the second is less frequent and more literary. From the logical point of view, however, the two terms used to recognize someone’s worth. “Not even fit for a dog” is how one describes bad food. “It’s his duty as a dog” indicates an obligation which the individual cannot shirk. “To not even treat someone like a dog” is a sign of the most absolute disdain. Barking impresses no one, since “a dog’s bark doesn’t reach heaven,” and as everyone knows, “a dog barks, and money talks.” No matter how sad the fate of the poor animal, it has no other until its death, and even after: “dogs don’t make bacon.”

Is there a humbler rank in the army than that of orderly? In Hungary, this individual is a “dog-washer.” And though no one is between a rock and a hard place in Hungary, many Magyars are in a “dog-squeeze.” One who has no mount, and therefore cannot go on horseback, has to go on foot; that is, “to go by dog.” Another verb, derived from the same noun, and even less translatable, is synonymous with “to flatten one’s self, to shrink in front of another” (similar to avacalhar in Portuguese; literally to “cow,” although the English verb cow seems not to be related to the common noun).

Similar disdain for the dog’s life marks one of the most significant episodes in Magyar history. When, at the beginning of the 18th century, Rákóczi’s rebels resolved to dethrone the Hapsburg house, they did so by shouting “the bay [horse] commands the dog” (meaning “but not us”).

But since any situation in this world can give rise to envy, even a dog’s life is judged enviable by some. And thus the locution “the frost will yet come for the dog” is a threat hurled at those who are too comfortably well-off in order to remind them that they won’t miss the water till the well runs dry.

Other expressions, in flagrant contradiction with the morality of the popular tales, are evidently suspicious of the standards of ethical behaviour among dogs. “There’s a dog in the backyard” (in traditional Portuguese, “there are Moors on the coast”) alludes to some suspect occurrence. After having verbally agreed on a contract, the parties take leave of each other saying, “He is a dog who reneges.” Woe to him who does not keep his word and seeks to enrich himself through fraudulent means, for “he who earns like a dog will lose like a dog.” A third verb formed from the noun alludes to sexual practices which are irregular. When a husband is accused of “dogging” (in English, this would be “cutting around”), we can be sure that he is not a model of conjugal fidelity. “He’s a big dog,” which indicates an elevated position, though generally spoken with a certain amount of envy, nevertheless includes a condemnation of the means by which the position was achieved.

“…In spite of the increasing industrialization of the country, the dog still maintains his old place in the Hungarian vocabulary…”
Even the figures of speech alluding to the iron constitution of the dog are lacking in tenderness. Quite the contrary, they show a healthy dose of cynicism. If you break a bone, you receive this consolation: “Dog’s bones mend.” If someone is complaining for no reason, the doctor is quick to reassure him or her by saying “What you have is a dog’s disease.” Nevertheless, if the sufferer should reply “I’m sick as a dog,” the physician will stop joking around and look for some potent medicine. The homeopath, it is clear, should not have to ponder long. The diagnosis itself will point out the cure, since “the dog’s bite is cured with the hair of the dog.” The patient either improves or doesn’t. Of course, in the latter case, let the patient not blame himself for having consulted an incompetent doctor, seeing that “tardy repentance is thinking like a dog” (in English usage, there’s no use crying over spilled milk).

Let us note also “as the dog runs,” that is, in a hurry, a few more traces of our creature’s passage through the Hungarian vernacular. The audacious man who will not turn back at any cost “ties his dog to the stump.” One who finds the key to a mystery that had intrigued him exclaims “Here is where the dog is buried.” And one who has missed his chance for good can say to himself “There was only one dog market in Buda,” alluding to a curious historical fact that no one remembers.

Here are two more phrases which are full of perfidy. The meddlesome friend, who exhorts another not to take an offense sitting down, will hypocritically whisper “Far from me to sic the dogs, but I wouldn’t stand for it.” And the rich man who is hard-hearted when approached by the poor man will give him, instead of a handout, this proverb: “Dig, dog, and you will have some as well.”

In curses, which are numerous in Hungarian, the dog must certainly be present, since even the French, with no talent for cursing anyone’s mother, speak of the “nom d’un chien.” But this fact, if examined closely, rather than diminishing the language, surrounds it with a sort of mythological aura. As the ethnologists have shown, it is these curses which preserve the last vestiges of the ancient pagan religion of the Hungarian, dating to before the year 1000. Insulting someone, but without much force, the Hungarian will say that “the dog barked at him”; really bad-mouthing him, he will say that he was “raised by a dog.” The mysterious insult “dog’s tree,” whose meaning has been lost over time, is not directed at people. It is a general protest against the miseries of the world.

I am citing all these expressions from memory. If I had some good Hungarian dictionaries, I could certainly cite many which are no less interesting. But “one who has no dog must bark on his own.”

Do Translation Memory Systems Compare Apples and Pears? Continued from page 31

use the new software’s default rules. If you make sure to use the same segmentation rules and abbreviation list as before, everything should be okay. You may lose a few 100% matches because of the differences in segmentation with special cases, but that shouldn’t be critical or significant.

Finally, if you want to change the source format of your documentation and move it from MS Word to XML, for example, you will lose a small percentage of matching for segments containing formatting (the formatting penalty percentage). While this percentage is low, unfortunately, there is really nothing you can do to avoid this.
Milan Kundera was being interviewed on the publication of his latest work to appear in translation. The journalist remarked: “I see you’ve completely changed your style in this new novel.” Kundera replied: “No, I changed translators.”

The above comment highlights the extent to which a translation is very much one person’s reading of the work. No two translators, like no two readers, are alike. A translation is refracted through the prism of the translator’s subjectivity. Even when the translator thinks she or he is acting as a transparent pane of glass, providing a mere conduit for the author as a transparent pane of glass, the translator thinks she or he is acting much like a prissy, bourgeois woman of 35. She is addressing a young man with whom she entertains a somewhat ambiguous relationship. For the Francophone reader, this unwitting switch from “vous” to “tu” signals an important shift in the woman’s feelings. The problem for the translator is how to convey this to the English-speaking reader with equal subtlety, especially when English only has the word “you” for both “tu” and “vous.” The characters are already on first-name terms, so that “you” is not an option. I decided to have the woman put her hand on the man’s arm.

As-tu remarqué que depuis tout à l’heure tu me tutoies?
Elle ne s’était pas rendu compte et rougit violemment.

Haven’t you noticed how you’ve suddenly become quite familiar with me?”
She had put her hand on his arm without realising and blushed deep red.

I think this works in terms of cultural equivalence. And that is what translators need to do—find cultural as well as linguistic parallels. We make choices. Some people may agree with those choices, others may disagree, but we need to have a coherent approach and be prepared to defend it.

What do reviewers mean when they talk about a “good” or “bad” translation? Reviews of translated books rarely mention the translator. There is no discussion of the criteria for evaluating a translation. Few critics are able to read the book in the source language, so how can they judge the translation? Often,
what is termed a “good” translation is one that reads like a piece of seamless English. A “bad” translation is somehow bumpy, or difficult. There’s a fine line between making foreign authors accessible to English-speaking readers and making them sound like English writers. Their rhythms and patterns, their “foreignness,” is what makes them interesting. Salman Rushdie wrote: “to unlock a culture you need to understand its untranslatable words.” That is why he uses a lot of Urdu words in his novels. Publishers and copyeditors do not always agree, and sometimes try to pressure the translator into bowing to what they think readers can cope with and ironing out all the “foreignness.” But if we flatten the text to keep the copyeditor happy, we are in a way “colonizing” the writer. And this is an ethical problem for translators that calls for vigilance.

Interestingly, writers in English sometimes sound more “foreign” than translations. Joyce, for example. Author and translator Tim Parks, who teaches translation in Italy does the following exercise with his students. He takes a passage in English and the same passage in Italian, without telling the students which is the source text and which is the translation. One is a seamless piece of flowing Italian prose, and the other, a quirky, stilted piece of English. The students are asked to identify which is which. They always assume the Italian is the original and the English a poor translation. But in fact, the English source text is a passage from a novel by D. H. Lawrence and the Italian is the translation.

I believe translators need to be more explicit about what they do, even writing a foreword or an afterword to let the reader know how their intervention influences the text. This goes against the grain here in the U.K., where one of the great publishing myths is that the public is reluctant to buy foreign authors, so publishers better not draw their attention to the fact that a work is a translation.

Nicholas de Lange, the translator of Israeli novelist Amos Oz, compares the translator’s role to that of the performing musician. “People don’t say that there’s a right way or a wrong way to perform a Tchaikovsky symphony. There may be unsuccessful versions of it, but on the whole the good orchestras produce good but totally distinctive renderings. Every soloist performs in a particular, personal way, and that performance is signed by the performer. People will go to a record shop and ask for a recording by a specific artist…I wonder if there’ll ever be a day when customers go into a bookshop and say they’d like something translated by a particular translator. That responsibility of the performing musician is analogous to the way I see the responsibility of the translator. The translator is giving a personal interpretation, a personal rendition. The text as it exists on the page in the original language is like a musical score, and it’s like the musical score also because it’s locked up, because the English readers don’t have access to it, just as only the few people that can actually read music and hear it in their heads can read the score. It needs to be performed. So it’s there in potential, and the performance is going to be totally unique and distinctive.”

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Getting into Print

So how do you break into the publishing world? Many translators have a book they are burning to translate, but don’t know where to start. Publishers are always on the lookout for new writers, and approaching them proactively is a good way to build contacts. It isn’t easy: only 3% of published works in the U.K. and the U.S. are translations, as compared with 40-50% in some European countries. But a number of literary translators have launched their careers by taking suggestions to publishers (myself included), so it is not impossible. The main thing to bear in mind is that publishers are deluged by books already in English, so a foreign book needs to be really special for them to even consider it. Below are some guidelines:

1. First, check that the English language rights for the book are available. Contact the foreign rights manager of the publishing house, and, if the rights are free, ask for permission to seek a publisher for your proposed translation. Some countries work through agents, but most foreign publishers are delighted that a translator wants to do their job for them!

2. Identify potential publishers. Publishing directories such as *The Directory of Literary Magazines* or *Writer’s Market* list all publishers with descriptions of their spheres of interest and the names of the editors. It is important to write to a named person.

3. Professional presentation is very important. Put together a “pack” which should include:

- A letter describing the book and, most importantly, explaining why you are so enthusiastic about it and why you think it is appropriate for that particular publisher (give references to other titles in their list);

Continued on p.58
Hae-Young Kim of Duke University attributes recent diplomatic upsets over North Korea’s nuclear capability to ideological rather than linguistic differences.

In a contribution to the *Guardian Weekly’s* May 2003 “Learning English” supplement, Professor Kim discussed a case in which a single syllable triggered confusion over the meaning of a radio announcement by North Korea (http://education.guardian.co.uk/elf/story/0,3500,955964,00.html). In November 2002, South Korea’s Yonhap news agency quoted a spokesperson for the North announcing that the country “has come to have nuclear and other strong weapons.” Yet CNN later cited a South Korean official who suggested this was a mistranslation. This source said the phrase meant that North Korea was “entitled to have nuclear weapons.”

The differing interpretations revolve around two auxiliary verbs, toe-t-da (“have come to” or “have turned out to”) and toe-it-da (“is entitled to” or “is supposed to”). While confusion may have arisen from a subtle difference in the pronunciation or audibility of the crucial “i” sound, says Hae-Young Kim, it is unusual for a single semantic distinction to assume such importance. In most texts, context contains essential clues as to the real or intended meaning.

Her conclusion? “Without any hard evidence of North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons at the time, the U.S. and South Korea opted for the interpretation that North Korea was claiming an entitlement to their development.”

Conflicting versions resurfaced in April 2003, when North Korea issued a written statement claiming to have reached the stage of reprocessing fuel rods (The Onionskin, June 2003).

This time, the claim was reinterpreted by a senior U.S. official, who described the original Korean text as “unclear.” He said what the North Koreans meant was “to the point of reprocessing” (i.e., stopping short of reprocessing itself).

Professor Kim insists that most Korean linguists disagreed, since the U.S. rewording did not make sense in grammatical terms. Whether misinterpretation or deliberate reinterpretation, North Korea nonetheless modified its English translation to conform to this U.S. version.

For Hae-Young Kim, such cases demonstrate how “translation in the public arena leave(s) a space where both parties can negotiate their agendas […] by tinkering with superficial problems of translation.” Making assumptions about the other party’s intentions and adjusting one’s own positions accordingly is all part of the deal, she says, since “focusing on appropriateness or accuracy of translation is less face-threatening than confronting the truthfulness of the expressed message.”

The Onionskin needs no convincing that language is a powerful negotiating tool, both in international relations and in commerce. Here’s hoping that those with their finger on the button look beyond staking out bargaining positions to create a space for mutual understanding.

**Language Moves Bond Markets in New York and Paris**

Semantic jousts over North Korea recall an Onionskin story from June 1997, when bond prices tumbled after Japan’s then-prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, indicated that his country might sell some of its huge stock of U.S. Treasury securities. Mr. Hashimoto was speaking through an interpreter in a Q&A session following a luncheon speech at New York’s Columbia University.

As noted in *The Wall Street Journal*, the U.S. was able to run a sizeable budget deficit in large part because the Japanese central bank and investors in that country continued to buy U.S. government debt. Mr. Hashimoto’s comments were read by some observers as a threat to divest part of these holdings, whence ensuing turmoil.

It was above all the tone of the minister’s remarks that took markets aback. “We hope the U.S. will engage in efforts to maintain foreign exchange stability so we don’t have to succumb to the temptation to sell off U.S. Treasury bills,” were the words attributed to the interpreter.

“It did strike me as a relatively strong commentary regarding a sensitive subject,” said John Youngdahl, then a market economist at Goldman Sachs, who noted, “It’s very unusual to almost threaten the U.S.”

The incident was a timely reminder that language can and does move financial markets.

For The Onionskin, it recalled comments by Reuters journalist Myra MacDonald to a group of financial translators in France. Reuters regularly prepares on-the-spot translations of monolingual press releases.

Stressing the importance—and difficulty—of rendering cross-border messages accurately, MacDonald cited former French Finance Minister Alain Madelin’s call for “une réappréciation” of the franc in May 1995.

“Markets first assumed they knew what he meant, i.e., that the authorities just needed to take a fresh . . .”
look at the franc,” she said. “Then traders started thinking that maybe he meant the whole thing was to be revalued; perhaps he was talking about a devaluation. And they started selling the franc very heavily. It was a classic example of what can happen when you use an ambiguous word in the source language.”

Ms. MacDonald made a plea for both translators and the companies that employ them to think international from the start. “When you are addressing an international audience, your source text has to be completely clear. If not, by the time your message gets out—translated into English, then into German, Spanish, or Japanese—that little ambiguity in the French source text might represent a huge difference in, say, Tokyo.”

Or, as Mr. Hashimoto discovered, in New York.

Exit Juicy Morsels
(www.chefsimon.com)

“Frog’s legs jumped in the garlic” and “Almost cheese-dish of mold in spice on bed of spinach” are no more. Nor, thankfully, “Another guinea fowl stinks to it and its farce with cheese-topped dish.”

Until February this year, blow-by-blow recipes for all three specialties appeared on www.chefsimon.com, an extraordinary website dedicated to French cuisine and produced as a labor of love by Bertrand and Sabine Simon. A former chef, Mr. Simon now teaches cooking in a state school in northern France, where sauter can mean “jump” but also “sauté,” and moule “mold” but also mussels.

The site is a treasure trove of recipes, cooking tips, and kitchen lore in the original French, but until its overhaul, was a hilarious jumble of fractured phrases in English and German. Examples include clear, user-friendly instructions (in French) transformed into gibberish (“typify the softness of molds with spices,” then “cremate slightly”).

For linguists, the bizarre terminology and skewed grammar were a sure sign of translation software at work, borne out by the Reverso logo featured prominently on each page. Reverso is the flagship product of Softissimo, a French company that bills itself as “the leader in translation software.”

Machine-generated translations are notoriously unreliable, and with the Simons’ lively language, recipes, and downright passion, Reverso clearly met its match.

News that the foreign-language versions were nonsensical caught M. and Mme Simon off guard. Their very considerable expertise lies in cooking and communicating to site visitors the excitement of preparing tasty French dishes—in French.

“We simply can’t judge the English or German,” Sabine Simon told The Onionskin when we first called in January, adding, “Would we be better off displaying only French text?”

“Yes!” howled language professionals in an informal poll. After due consideration and a steady stream of negative comments from translators and academics, the Simons thus set about axing their Reverso links, returning chefsimmon.com to its original state. No easy task: the site counts some 1,500 pages, and each link had to be removed manually.

In cases like this, who is at fault?

Software vendors, for one, who systematically hype their wares to a monolingual audience, falling back on the fine print only when caught out. Softissimo’s website is a good example, displaying the bold claim “Softissimo’s translation software looks to be near word perfect. Businesses and consumers alike have not been very pleased with the translation software packages currently on the market. It is not hard to see why. Many of the packages offer translations that are often no better than the poor subtitling found on many Hong Kong action pictures.”

The texts produced by Reverso for Chef Simon tell another tale. Anyone for “Nut of Holy Jacques jumped,” or “Tails of Scampis in green coat of the Academie francaise in the vapor of soya”? At best, this is the pot calling the kettle black.

But linguists themselves are also to blame, given their reluctance to explain to buyers how to leverage translators’ skills.

Machine-generated translation comes into its own in clearly defined circumstances—when there is simply no other option, as one Systran representative explained candidly to The Onionskin last year. It is extremely risky to use raw machine output for outbound, promotional texts (e.g., your own website), but it can help you decipher, sort of, what the other guys are up to by producing a gisted version of their websites.

Had this basic information been available upfront to Chef and Mme. Simon, they would probably not have opted for foreign versions at all.

Bertrand Simon remains upbeat, updating the website almost daily. And www.chefsimon.com, now well past its millionth visitor, is certainly an exhilarating experience—in French.

Continued on p.58
The accessibility and latitude of the Internet for publishing any materials has made the emergence of online encyclopedias, glossaries, dictionaries, and reference materials possible. A patient web surfer will be rewarded with thousands of links to official, semi-official, and quite unofficial dictionaries. I decided not to even attempt an exhaustive review of all the available resources. Instead, I have deliberately confined myself to a short selection of dictionary links I usually use in my daily translating and editing activities. For most resources, it is not always possible to discover the authorship or the scope of the dictionary.

There are linguistic portals comprised of information about hundreds of sites dedicated to specific languages and their philological and linguistic research. I will mention only two of them: “Your Dictionary” (www.yourdictionary.com) and “I love Languages” (www.ilovelanguages.com).

Those who translate to and from English will find online explanatory English dictionaries very useful, for example, Merriam-Webster (www.m-w.com) or Cambridge (http://dictionary.cambridge.org/). Of course, there are online versions of all of the most prominent English dictionaries (American Heritage included), and it is not difficult to find them using search engines, information portals, and the above-mentioned linguistic portals.

Russian dictionaries are richly represented on the Internet. For example, you will find the electronic version of Rosenthal’s reference on orthography and literary correction (www.spelling.spb.ru), as well as the information-reference portal “Gramota.ru” (www.gramota.ru/), the official source of the “Institut Yazykoznania” (Institute of Linguistics), where the many questions asked at the site’s forum are answered by Institute staff. Besides new and recent articles dealing with linguistic questions, you can find Русский орфографический словарь РАН, Словарь трудностей произношения и употребления, and Толково-словообразовательный словарь. There are also dictionaries of synonyms and antonyms, names, methodological terms, and an argot dictionary, among others. The Русские словари project (www.slovari.ru) is equally interesting. Worth mentioning here are the semantic dictionary and the dictionary of foreign words. Another resource that we shouldn’t omit is Культура письменной речи (www.gramma.ru). Volumes available include dictionaries of collocations, paronyms, and phraseology units.

The Glossword.ru project (www.glossword.ru) offers a varied collection of about 30 reference and vocabulary materials, among which are such useful dictionaries as an English→Russian stock exchange dictionary, an architecture and construction dictionary, and the Chinese phonetic alphabet. The biggest Russian→English translation dictionaries, well worth the respect paid to them by translators in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, can be found at the Lingvo (www.lingvo.ru) and Multilex (www.multilex.ru) websites.

But most of all, and understandably so, we are interested in online Ukrainian dictionaries. The significant fact here is that no search engine or information portal was able to find an ordered selection of links to linguistic and dictionary Ukrainian-language resources. The links to all aforementioned sites were found either in private link collections or via blind searches. In the very near future, we will be celebrating the launch of the online version of the Ukrainian Language Information Fund, Словари України, which offers all inflections and the pronunciation for 150,000 words of the Ukrainian language, as well as the synonymy, antonymy, and phraseology. In the meantime, we can look at the demo page (dated 1997) at www.webber.net.ua/newdict.

The Laboratory of Computer Linguistics, Department of Philology, Institute of Philology, Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University, created the Лінгвістичний портал project (http://proling.com). Here you can find frequency-of-use word lists of Ukrainian created by the Institute of Ukrainian Language, as well as the online Ukrainian→Russian text translating program Плата-Онлайн and the electronic dictionary of Ukrainian and Russian languages Інф Олін, which offers translation, synonyms, and inflections for individually entered words.

One of the most popular online Ukrainian-language reference resources is the Бе́сіна project (www.slovnyk.org), created in April 2000 by Valentyn Solomko, and...
which offers not only an English-Belorussian-Polish-Russian-Ukrainian explanatory dictionary (although the explanations are currently provided only in Russian), but also numerous texts in Ukrainian, both classic and modern literary works, and reference materials (in particular, concerning the new/old spelling discussion), and many more interesting materials. The number of word pairs for different languages is amazing. For example, the number of word pairs for the Ukrainian and English languages exceeds 130,000. Another interesting private initiative project is the thesaurus of the Ukrainian language compiled by Thomas Chorny (www.geocities.com/hommah_chorny/h_1.html). A small but quick and easy online English-Ukrainian vocabulary can be found at the website “Ukrainian Language Resources Online” (http://ukrmova.virtualave.net/dictios/online/). I even managed to find a three-language (English-French-Ukrainian) explanatory dictionary of Ukrainian at www.unicorne.org/dictionnaireUkrainien/).

The Ukrainian Internet community’s interest in creating a purely Ukrainian computer terms system deserves respect and support. As stated, word-for-word, on the first page of the WORDS.UA project (http://hosting.gotdotnet.ru/words_ua): “this territory (i.e., site—note by M.D.) is dedicated to searching and finding Ukrainian matches for modern terms (in particular, in the computer science field).”

At one of the most popular Ukrainian information and search portals, UaPortal (www.uaportal.com), there is a “Ukrainian-Russian-Ukrainian translator,” based on the Promt program (www.uaportal.com/cgi-bin/translator.cgi?lang=r), which often comes in handy when you can’t remember a known word and have no dictionary available. Unfortunately, it is limited to only the most frequently used vocabulary. Here is another site containing an English-Ukrainian dictionary of technical terms: http://dict.linux.org.ua/dict/. As stated before, the best selections of links to Ukrainian dictionaries and linguistic resources are in private collections. One of them (some of its links lead to the resources we have discussed here) is “Ukrainian Online Dictionaries – Wordlists” at (www.personal.ceu.hu/students/97/Roman_Zakharii/ukrainian.htm). There is also a small (600 word) Ukrainian-Polish dictionary at www.personal.ceu.hu/students/97/Roman_Zakharii/ukrainski.htm.

Just as the number and scope of printed Ukrainian dictionaries (both mono- and bilingual) is less than the number of similar Russian dictionaries, the presence of Ukrainian on the web is also limited. The amount of sites supported by the state or prominent scientific and research institutions is obviously insufficient. Reference resources are also insufficient, but we can’t but admire the initiative and the enthusiasm of those who create and support such resources on their own. The already existing sites have a wide audience, which participates in their creation, development, and popularization. So, we can summarize that there is a sufficient scientific, methodological, and executive basis for further creation and development of large dictionary, reference, and linguistic resources dealing with the Ukrainian language.

Maria M. Dmytrieva is a postgraduate student at the Kyiv National Linguistic University. She has worked as a freelance translator for various agencies (Russian/English/Ukrainian). Her sphere of scientific and professional interests includes gender studies in linguistics (in particular, Slavistics). Contact: xmas@ukr.net.

Russian–English Dictionary of Words and Word Combinations in General Use by Scientists and Engineers (Русско-английский словарь общепотребительных слов и словосочетаний научно-технической литературы)

Author: Boris N. Klimzo
Publisher: ETS Publishing House, Moscow
Publication date: 2002
Number of pages: Volume 1 -644; Volume 2 -600
Number of entries: Volume 1 -about 22,000; Volume 2 -about 5,800 Russian and 5,800 English
ISBN: 5-93386-022-0
Price: $86
Available from: www.ets.ru

Reviewed by: Boris Silversteyn and Jim Walker
First, about the author of this dictionary. Boris Klimzo, an engineer by education and experience, has also worked as a science editor at Mir Publishing House, as editor-in-chief of a technical abstracts magazine, and as a technical translation lecturer at the Maurice Thorez Foreign Languages Institute in Moscow. To his credit, he has more than 20 books and papers on translating scientific and technical (S&T) literature.

Second, about the reviewers of this dictionary. One of us is a native English speaker and the other one is a native Russian speaker (we’ll let the reader guess who is who).

The dictionary (hereinafter, Klimzo) consists of two hardbound volumes. Volume 1 includes about 22,000 lexical units (words and word collocations) used in present-day Russian S&T literature, along with their English-language equivalents; Volume 2 consists of Russian and English indices of key words.

The paper quality is good, and the two-columns-per-page arrangement, with lexical units numbered and boldfaced, makes the Klimzo very user-friendly.

The introduction states that the Klimzo “is targeted mainly to native Russian speakers,” and should help them translate S&T materials using good, idiomatic English. (So the English-speaking half of the reviewing team is not a member of the target audience.)

The introduction further states that the Klimzo “will also be interesting and useful to those who have a good command of English, but who are not very familiar with the general vocabulary of contemporary Russian scientific and technical writing.” Here again lies a “problem.” Having translated many millions of words of technical Russian, the native English-speaking member of the reviewing team is “disqualified” from this group as well.

Anyway, it is with these claims in mind that we opened, tried to use, and have reviewed the Klimzo.

The общеупотребительный (in general use) in the title is quite accurate. Klimzo contains not a single specialized technical term. Anyone who has spent much time translating from Russian into English will no doubt be familiar with practically all of the Russian entries, but not necessarily with the English equivalents that are given. For native English speakers, this is the interesting part of the Klimzo: the thousands of examples of stylistically varied and creative wording taken directly from English technical writing.

English equivalents of the Russian lexical units are often given as part of a sentence. It is claimed that all sentences were taken from U.S. and U.K. S&T literature. Trying to make sure that the English equivalents were grammatically and stylistically correct, Klimzo used two selection criteria. First, the authors of English quotations had to have Anglo-Saxon last names. Second, the word collocations had to have been used by several authors.

It should be noted here that in the process of using the Klimzo, we, independently of each other, got an impression (wrong though it may be) that the dictionary, at least in part, was actually compiled in the reverse order. Sentences were collected from U.S. and U.K. S&T literature and translated into Russian, and then Russian words and word collocations were used as the dictionary entries. Incidentally, independently of each other is a collocation included in the dictionary (for независимо друг от друга).

Volume 1 has a rather unconventional structure. Normally, technical dictionaries arrange compound terms either by the first word of the term (e.g., network, network access, network access controller, network administrator, …) or by the headword (usually a noun or a verb), with headword modifiers listed in alphabetical order (e.g., network: active network, ..., dedicated network, ..., local area network, ...). Usually, the latter system is also used in phraseological dictionaries (e.g., bit, a bit, bit by bit, do one’s bit, it wouldn’t hurt a bit, not a bit).

In the Klimzo, the lexical units in Volume 1 are arranged by the first word of the unit, even if that first word is a preposition. Thus, for instance, there are over 28 pages of word collocations beginning with В/Bo, from preposition B to B [современном] языке. This arrangement could complicate the search process for a compound term, were it not for the indices in Volume 2. Indeed, if one were looking for the English for, say, промышленный образец, one would not find it in the II section of Volume 1. Volume 2 to the rescue. Under промышленный, as well as образец, one finds запись на промышленный образец—design application, so one concludes that промышленный образец = design.

The two-volume structure facilitates term searches and is a very good feature. Without Volume 2, Volume 1 would be almost useless.

The Klimzo has an impressive grasp of idiomatic English, taking these examples and translating them into simple, straightforward Russian. In the dictionary’s Russian → English arrangement, these Russian...
translations appear as the entry headings, while the examples of actual technical writing serve as suggestions for possible English translations. Some of our favorites are more superficial, like: further insight; variance (supersedes); potentially; we might be seeing; so much to contribute; in contrast to the other; do not tell our children; as the example head-
case: a few examples:
into a rut when translating common
terms from English into Russian.
Because we can understand the inclusion
of such terms as: менее (less, under,
below, less than), why include in a
technical dictionary здравый смысл (and
тоже здравый смысл подразумевает,
что); здравый смысл; как
можно быстрее; медицинский факультет (which is translated as the
county of medicine); or to translate
который часть и читать с
выражением? And we doubt a profes-
sional translator would be turning to a
dictionary, let alone a technical one,
for such words as: без, в, весь, вся,
иногда, иначе, на, небольшой,
oдин, одна, одно, по, с, or у.

Certain translations can hardly be
called idiomatic. Here are some
examples: бригада ремонтников
(repairing crew); без записки (uncon-
servative); документ, удостоверя-
ющий проведение работ (authorizing
document); антитеза об окон-
чании школы (school leaving certifi-
cate); неформальное предложение
(unsolicited proposal); неправильная
эксплуатация (operational malprac-
tice); Открыты углы допускаются
(Sharp edges are not defect; чище
(more usually).

Some are wrong, e.g., здравое
пользование for fixture (a fix-
ture is a generic term for any kind of
пользование); неоднородные
выражения (пентри) for back-
firing expressions; пины меропри-
ятия for schemes.

There are some unfortunate typos,
such as: “The are two major ob-
jections...” instead of “There are...
(Vol.1, O1003.1); GI1777-1800 and
G1801-1826 instead of I1777-1800
and II1801-1826 (Vol.1, pp. 432-
433); разнообразных instead of
разнообразными (Vol.1, P286).

In conclusion, the Klitzo is an
interesting dictionary. Translators of
Russian S&T materials will find there
a wealth of information. Thanks to its
structure, it can help English-
speaking technical personnel familiar
with the Russian language read
Russian S&T texts. And thanks to the
English index in Volume 2, it can also
be used when translating S&T ma-
terials from English into Russian.
A word of caution. Because of the
drawbacks mentioned above, a trans-
lator who is not a native speaker of
the target language should use the
dictionary with a grain of salt.
The enormous changes that have taken place throughout Eastern Europe over the past decade and a half have often left the translator scrambling to keep up with new terminology. In many cases, the introduction of previously unknown market concepts and political structures has led to the creation of neologisms that were completely absent from dictionaries published only a few years earlier. While a speaker of English or German could often extrapulate the meaning due to the large number of loan translations from those languages, especially in the world of business and finance, that approach was time consuming and unsatisfactory at best.

In Croatia, publishing activities in the early 1990s were impeded not only by economic upheaval and privatization shock, but also by the disruptions of war. Nevertheless, by the middle of the decade, Zagreb-based Školska Knjiga was publishing an impressive line of specialized dictionaries that gave voice to the new realities. The 1998 fourth edition of the dictionary under review here was a major improvement over the 1993 edition (which constituted a significant revamping of 1989’s Hrvatsko ili srpsko-engleski rječnik privrednog i društveno-političkog nazivlja). Even though the 1998 volume is now five years old (an eternity in a rapidly changing field), Vladimir Ivir remains an indispensable resource for Croatian-to-English translators.

Although the emphasis is on business and government terminology, this deceptively slim volume also features good coverage of legal terms, especially those concerning judicial institutions. In all of these areas, Ivir’s dictionary offers better coverage and depth than general dictionaries such as Buja’s Veliki hrvatsko-engleski rječnik or Drvodelić’s Hrvatsko-engleski rječnik (and it clearly outshines the seventh edition of the latter in terms of accuracy). Since the desperate Croatian translator is inclined to consult Serbian-to-English dictionaries as a last resort, a comparison with Landa’s Privredno-poslovni rečnik and Gligorijević’s Ekonomski rečnik is appropriate. In most cases, the Hrvatsko-engleski poslovno-upravni rječnik does a markedly better job.

Ivir does contain a number of specialized terms not found in other dictionaries (e.g., donos, malus), and in countless other cases, it provides...
several good translations where other works make do with just one (pret-projekt, rinfuzija, škare cijena). But perhaps this work’s biggest advantage is its thoroughness with common terms found in just about any dictionary, where it offers contemporary usage alternatives and sub-entries for specialized concepts, usually with very good contextual labels. Consider the following:

zalihe 1. (u skladištu) stocks, inventories, reserves, supplies 2. (naslage u zemlji) deposits
~ gotove robe: finished goods inventories
~ nedovršene proizvodnje: work-in-process inventory
~ novca: store of money, money stock, monetary holdings
~ sirovinja: raw material inventories, raw material stocks, stockpiles of raw materials
~ złata: gold reserves, gold stock
interventne ~ buffer stocks, stocks of intervention
neprodane ~ outstanding inventories
obrtné ~ revolving stocks, revolving inventories
prijelazne ~ buffer stocks
raspoložive ~ supplies on hand, available supplies
robne ~ buffer stocks, commodity stockpiles

primanja 1. (prihvaćanje) receiving, acceptance 2. (gostiju) reception, party 3. (novčana primanja) income, earnings
~ i izdavanje materijala: material receiving and issuing
indirektna –a: fringe benefits
neto-osoba –a: take-home pay, net disposable income
osobna –a: personal income, pay, wage, salary

poluproizvodi: semi-finished goods, semi-manufactured goods, semi-manufactures, semi-processed goods, goods in process, work in process, intermediary goods, intermediate goods, intermediates, sub-assemblies, component parts, components.

No other dictionary offers comparable depth and detail, and with only a few miscues in English usage (such as “store of money” or “material receiving and issuing” above). As the last example shows, contextual information is not always provided (perhaps inevitably in such a small but ambitious volume), but in most cases the user is smoothly steered in the right direction.

Ivir occasionally shows its age in rapidly developing areas, such as banking and insurance, but coverage and accuracy are nevertheless good. An example:

mjenica 1. (trasirana) letter of exchange, bill of exchange, B/E, bill, draft 2. (vlastita) promissory note (plus no fewer than 47 sub-entries, all of them well-translated – e.g., avalirana mjenica backed bill, guaranteed bill; izdane mjenice outward bills; mjenica za pokriće collateral note).

Entries on institutions of government are especially helpful, since much terminology in that field differs markedly from old Yugoslav usage. A large number of abbreviations and acronyms are included, as well as entries for national and international organizations and bodies.

Most remarkably, this dictionary is virtually free of “clunkers,” especially when it comes to false cognates. Thus, under malverzacija, the clumsy “malversation” seen in other works is dispensed with, and we are given simply (and correctly) “embezzlement, fraud.” Rebalans is rendered as “revision,” and although “adjustment” could also be included here, at least we are spared the awful and misleading “rebalancing.” The handling of the notoriously difficult organ (which should almost never be translated “organ”) is truly inspired.

The layout is clean and clear; white space is at a minimum, but without a cluttered feeling. Indentation and the contrastive use of boldface and italics within the entries greatly facilitate lookup. Apparently as a space-saving measure, most entries for adjectives refer the user directly to associated nouns, foregoing even a basic translation, which is occasionally annoying. Typos are few and far between, the binding is sturdy, and overall print quality is excellent (no small advantage for those of us with less-than-fond memories of pre-1990 East European publishing standards).

As for drawbacks, the compilers fail to distinguish adequately between American and British spelling and usage; thus, we see “defence,” “labour,” “organize,” and both “center” and “centre,” all with no explanation. Business terminology leans toward American usage, without any offer of British counterparts. Appropriate alternatives are occasionally omitted (“detective” for inspector; “surveillance” for kontrola; “standing” for dežurni; “property” for objekt(ı); among others). For no apparent reason, domovinski rat is translated as “patriotic defence war” instead of the more accurate “homeland war.” The translator working with Croatian texts from Bosnia-Herzegovina will find no guidance concerning the specific
t pleased the Translation Inquirer no end when Eileen Osmond Savdié wrote in appreciation of the little introductory piece about Catherine Winkworth that appeared in this column on page 65 of the November-December 2002 issue. When was the last time a woman translator from a century previous to the twentieth got any praise or recognition? Yet, there must have been many! Think about it.

[Abbreviations used with this column: D–Danish; D–Dutch; E–English; F–French; G–German; I–Italian; N–Norwegian; Pt–Portuguese; R–Russian; Sp–Spanish; Sw–Swedish.]

New Queries

(E–F 7–03/1) The term pedestrian power truck, presumably referring to the motorized device seen more and more on streets and sidewalks, posed a problem for a Lantra-l user, who then proposed “chariot automateur à conducteur porté.” Is that a reasonable solution?

(E–G 7–03/2) Selma Benjamin would like to know if there are German terms for Swiss chard and collard greens, and also for black-eyed peas.

(E–Sp 7–03/3) To properly answer this one, you likely need to know some slang from the film industry. A ProZ member puzzled about the word slate in the following sentence: The risk reduction strategy of the slate finds the studios making vast numbers of films. Just what is involved here, and what would be a good Spanish equivalent?

(F–E 7–03/4) This Lantran was dealing with a text by a politician from Burundi, and he wondered what “la population bénéficiaire” referred to. The quote: “Avant la crise que connaît mon pays depuis 1993, le Gouvernement du Burundi avait entrepris avec l’aide de la population bénéficiaire et le concours de la Coopération bilatérale, un vaste programme d’amélioration et de production de logements tant dans les centres urbains que dans les campagnes.” What is it?

(F–E 7–03/5) In planning for a new purchasing information system (and what serious firm can live without those?), the first phase, as found in a document worked on by a Lantra-l correspondant, was “Étude de cadrage.”

(F–E 7–03/6) A Lantra-l member is wondering if the company mentioned below really does feel that it is no longer so important to be first: “... il ne nous apparaît plus aussi évident que pour une entreprise comme la nôtre, il y ait un avantage significatif à être le premier à réaliser un développement.”

(G–E 7–03/7) In a medical article, a member of ProZ found a troublesome abbreviation, as highlighted: “In der a.p.-Ansicht erkennt man eine leichte Spondylarthrose im Segment L5/S1.” It’s probably something quite simple, but just what is it? And what about the English?

(I–Sw 7–03/8) In a language combination that is unlikely ever to appear again in this column (English will be acceptable!), a Lantra-l correspondent stumbled over “dispositivo di sicurezza uomo a filo” in a manual dealing with a machine that stacks pieces of cardboard and makes the stacks ready for transport.

(N–E 7–03/9) A ProZ correspondent had trouble with the word “polarviernark” in a description of a landscape. Can anyone help?

(Re–E 7–03/10) Another Lantran considers the Portuguese tourism expressions “sala de visitas” and “cartão de visita” to be the bane of her existence. Examples: “A Praça Camões, para muitos naturais de Ponte de Lima, é o espaço mais nobre, a sala de visitas de uma vila milenar” and “Cartão de visita de Ponte de Lima, o Largo de Camões ostenta ainda um chafariz monumental...” Who can help with the phrases in bold print?

(R–E 7–03/11) In a text regarding the shoe industry, a ProZ member encountered matériel de la production: Il y a deux types de chaussures, le cuir et la toile. The phrase is clear enough (it’s polyvinyl chloride), but what can be said about matériel? How would that fit into a description of shoe material?

(Sp–E 7–03/12) This one is especially convoluted. On the surface, the job is to go from Spanish into English. However, the Spanish is a translation of a document in Brazilian Portuguese, and it is suspected that the original document was written by a person who is subject to English (!) contamination. That said, the difficult word is “problematizar,” the guessed meaning of which is possibly analyze, approach, examine, or break down. Here are some examples: “¿Cómo problematizar en estos términos la política de subjetivización dominante en el contexto actual del capitalismo mundial integrado?” One more: “Un lenguaje que, producido desde este otro lugar, es portador de la exigencia y la libertad de problematizar la configuración actual del mundo como materia-forma.”

Replies to Old Queries

(D–E 4–03/1) (“draaikrans”): As a native German speaker who also reads Dutch, Carola Myers saw
immediately that “draaikrans” must mean “revolving crane,” and a quick look in her Dutch dictionary confirms it. In German, it would be Drehkran, so the words are very similar. The Dutch word was slightly misspelled: not draaikrans, but draaikraan.

(E-Da 5-03/1) (lite reagent): Suzanne Blangsted reports that there are two types: one is light (lite) reagent and the other heavy reagent. The correct translations in Danish are “let reagens” and “tung reagens.”

(E-Sp 8-02/6) (hard to kill): Graciela Daichman says that the translation “duro para matar” is incorrect. It should be “duro DE matar.” This use of the preposition “de” is highly idiomatic. It is illustrated in the phrase “un hueso duro de roer,” whose meaning is “hard to swallow,” in reference to a doubtful statement someone may have made.

(E-Sp 10-02/5) (set the table): Alicia Urteaga wonders what’s wrong with “poner la mesa;” the expression most people actually use, at least in her country of Argentina.

She has never heard “colocar” la mesa, which sounds very affected. She associates “montar” with the film industry or an industrial assembly line. She has sometimes heard “tender la mesa,” which she thinks is a metonymic (actually, a synecdochic) expansion of “tender el mantel.” “Tender” is a rather specialized verb used for clothes and cables, meaning “hang out” or, better yet in this case, “spread out” or “lay out.” As we first have to “tender el mantel” in order to “poner la mesa,” the other steps seem to be implicit in this metonymy. “Tender la mesa” is the generic expression.

(E-Sp 4-03/4) (strip malls): Eliza Gustafson thinks this is a good example of the importance of knowing the purpose or the audience of the translation. Does one need to create an image that will evoke the actual strip mall, or its commercial and social equivalent in another culture? Other than describing it with a bunch of words or with a rather awkward “hilera de tiendas,” which would be the only way around it in the first case, she thinks an equivalent would be “paseo comercial” or “paseo de compras” (or it could be “centro comercial” or “centro de compras”). In some cases, “mercado” might even be the closest equivalent.

Chris Marquardt believes that a possible solution might be found on Venezuelan websites (e.g., in the newspaper El Universal): “minicentro comercial” (with the component stores being called “minitiendas”). The “minicentro comercial” term shows up on websites from other Spanish-speaking countries, too, but it is hardly a widely used term, on the Internet at least.

John Shaklee asked a native speaker from outside Barcelona about this one. She simply said “fila de tiendas.” Later on, he found “serie de tiendas en un centro de comercio,” which is a bit clunky.

(F-E 11-02/6) (“La société produit, distribue et exploite les films”): Eileen Osmond Savdić, on the basis of nearly 43 years of residing in Paris, states that the word in bold print means to show a film in a movie theater and charge admission. Producers, of course, produce. Distributors buy the rights, contract for dubbing or subtitling, and make deals with the movie theaters. It is the latter who “exploit” the film.

(F-E 4-03/6) (“déstresser”): The last word is misspelled, says Alain Côté. It should read: “déstresser.” Runners are advised to arrive at the start line 20 minutes before the race in order to be able to do some muscle relaxation exercises and, consequently, to be less stressed, to unstress or destress. Carola Myers says that “déstresser” means simply to unwind or relax. She likes unwind better.

(G-I 5-03/8) (“Elektro-Rasentrimmer”): Sue Ellen Wright says that the inquiry obviously comes from someone a long way from suburbia, who doesn’t awaken to the whine of the anal-retentive lawn-worshiper neighbor with his electric edger or grass trimmer out creating a perfect vertical edge on his lawn at some early-morning hour. Terms that can be found on various websites include electric grass trimmer, string trimmer, and edge trimmer. These devices feature a nasty cutting line that takes out the weeds or unwanted grass, cutting a neat, sharp line. This is where the “Doppelfaden” and the “Schnittkreis” come in (see page 55 of the May 2003 issue).

(I-E 4-03/9) (“chiocciola portante” – automotive): A little trick that Dov Prombaum thought every translator already knew is to enter the non-English term you’re looking for into Google, but to specify that you want sites only in English. The idea is that you may stumble onto a site that provides the text in both languages (which is increasingly common). In this case, what comes up is a site for an automotive product with a PDF document, www.wumatex.ch/KPN-324.pdf in Italian, English, and German. According to the anonymous translator of this site, “chiocciola portante” is “main nut.”
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.

Consonants Of No Consequence

There were three responses to my request a couple of months ago for words including the names of consonants in their pronunciations, but not including the consonants in their spellings. All the words submitted were English. Below are the best examples for each letter.

Alex Schwartz pointed out that the actual names of three consonants, “sea,” “cure,” and “double u” (if you don’t mind that the last is not a single word), as well as one vowel, “yew,” are spelled without the letters they pronounce.

Wendy Ebersberger went on to point out that some of the names of consonants, which cannot be spelled without using the consonants themselves, nonetheless have another special property. That is, the sounds of two consonant names can be joined to pronounce a real word: BD (beady), PL (peel), MT (empty), and NV (envy).

Joyce Baghdadi speculated about whether or not the spellings of certain words would change to reflect changing pronunciations: nucular, nuptual, athlete, axing. Or whether such new coinages as “conversating” and “efforting” would become acceptable.

My own guess, given the history of the English language, is no to the new spellings, even if the pronunciations change completely, and yes to the new coinages.

Meanwhile, leave it to Congress to attack French fries and French’s Mustard. If they actually had the courage of their convictions, they would also have gone after French doors, horns, kisses, leave, and toast, and made all French curves, licit or illicit, grounds for impeachment. Also, they would have immediately torn down the statue of Lincoln in the Lincoln Memorial, whose sculptor was none other than Daniel Chester French (1850-1931).

But why stop at French? Surely, anything even vaguely related to Al-Qaeda is even more important to suppress. Why not call alcohol “joy juice,” consider alkali to be too base for polite discussion, and ban algebra altogether, much to the delight of millions of students. For, as ever alert Sally Lou Eaton wrote: By the way, did you hear about the math teacher from the U.K. who was detained for being associated with Al Gebra, as he was caught in possession of a compass, a protractor, a calculator, and other items of Math Destruction?

Finally, to close on a religious note, several months ago, some environmentalists speculated as to what sort of modern vehicle Jesus would drive. Any translator could have told them that Jesus would drive a minibus. What make? A Paxho minibus.

The Translation Inquirer Continued from page 54

(R-E 2-03/8) установочные элементы: Leonid Gornik says these are installation components. They include junction boxes, brackets, fasteners, clamps, etc. The term has nothing to do with software installation. It is doubtful that a conventional short wave transceiver even has any installation software. Russians also use the adjective установленный incorrectly to indicate an adjustment movement. Example: установленное перемещение.

This was a good month. Thank you very much! I hope everyone is in the midst of a prosperous and healthy summer.

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Between the Covers Continued from page 44

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The Onionskin Continued from page 46

But Simon also feels that some of the angry comments received from translators were unwarranted. “It’s clear that my wife and I produce our site for free,” he says. “It’s our passion; we are glad to invest the time and we like to hear from people who enjoy it.”

Over the years, other food enthusiasts have lent a hand, he says: food scientists write in to clarify a process, sociologists to correct or complete the history of a recipe. But linguists, he sighs, have never gone beyond negative criticism, including full-fledged tirades and offensive language in some cases. “No one has ever offered to help us translate anything.”

Food for thought.

With thanks to Bob Blake, Nigel Palmer, and Beth Rose.
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Buenos Aires is the political and business capital of the country, the CTPCBA dwarfs existing regional associations. The federation is designed to bring them all together for joint activities so that the provincial associations can have a voice.

Ms. Rodríguez noted how the conference emphasized the regions and countries rather than the individuals representing them. This focus on “what unites us rather than what divides us” created a sunny “microclimate” in the storm of the crisis. “It was a magical conference,” she concluded.

**Setting a New Standard**

The Argentines have shown us all how, with a little creativity, good will, and plenty of hard work, you can create something very positive out of a terribly negative—even devastating—situation. No translator could have witnessed the standing ovation for Saramago by hundreds of fellow translators during the opening session of the Buenos Aires conference without feeling inspired by the Argentine example of overcoming adversity.

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**Dictionary Reviews** Continued from page 52

institutions of that country (e.g., that županiya is “canton” in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as opposed to “county” in Croatia). Similarly, notes identifying concepts such as samoupravljanje or udrženi rad as historical would be useful.

But none of these minor flaws detracts in any important way from the meticulous work that has obviously gone into this edition of Ivir. It passed all of my tests for what should be included in such a work, usually with flying colors. I hope that Školska will continue to build on this success and soon release an updated edition that reflects the ever-changing usage as Croatia becomes more fully integrated into the global economic system.

David A. Stephenson is a freelance into-English translator of Croatian, Bosnian, Serbian, German, and Dutch, with 20 years of experience. He specializes in legal and financial documents. Contact: dsteph@pobox.com.

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Note: For more information on chapters or to start a chapter, please contact ATA Headquarters. Send updates to Mary David, ATA Chronicle, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; Tel: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; Mary@atanet.org.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conference Registration Fees</th>
<th>ATA Member</th>
<th>Non-Member</th>
<th>Student Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Early-Bird (by October 1):</td>
<td>$245</td>
<td>$335</td>
<td>$110</td>
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<tr>
<td>One-day:</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$170</td>
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<tr>
<td>After October 1:</td>
<td>$305</td>
<td>$420</td>
<td>$130</td>
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<td>One-day:</td>
<td>$160</td>
<td>$220</td>
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<tr>
<td>Onsite (after October 24):</td>
<td>$380</td>
<td>$525</td>
<td>$150</td>
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<tr>
<td>One-day:</td>
<td>$195</td>
<td>$270</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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