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An Easy Reference To ATA Member Benefits

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

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Horoskim@dnb.com

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...And, of course, as an ATA member you receive discounts on the Annual Conference registration fees and ATA publications, and you are eligible to join ATA Divisions, participate in the online Translation Services Directory, and much more. For more information, contact ATA (703) 683-6100; fax (703) 683-6122; and e-mail: ata@atanet.org.
Towards a New Model for the Evaluation of Assignments in the Study of Translation

By Richard Finks Whitaker

For students and instructors alike, formal instruction in translation involves meeting a number of intriguing challenges, among which is the worrisome and often burdensome practical matter of grading translation assignments. The present article details one approach to turning this problematic task into a positive learning experience for all involved.

Call for Candidates:
Putting a Human Face on Linguists

“The American public doesn't understand the relationship between interpreters and translators and their own prosperity, well-being, and security,” said former White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers in November 1999, acknowledging an image vacuum that plagues language service providers.

One way to raise awareness, she told her ATA audience, is to “put a human face on the translators and interpreters who are out there doing the hard work.” To connect translation to the lives of the American public by telling the story of translators on the job, “whether it’s at the Olympics or at a trade summit, or as part of some private business deal.”

ATA’s PR Committee agrees. And in our ongoing effort to raise awareness of the profession, we will be profiling a selection of translators and interpreters drawn from the association’s membership this year.

If you have a story to tell—an interesting assignment, a notable success, an unusual language combination, or simply a passion for your work—please contact us. If you can recommend a colleague with a story, we’re interested, too. You provide the background, we’ll do the write-up. Send a brief description of what makes your practice special to ata@atanet.org (mark your mail “translator profile candidate”), and help us promote the profession!

Kevin Hendzel
Co-chair, ATA Public Relations Committee
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Co-chair, ATA Public Relations Committee
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About Our Authors...

Anne Milano Appel specializes in commercial and literary translations from Italian into English. Formerly a director of public libraries, she has also taught English, Italian, and English as a Second Language, and holds a Ph.D. in Romance languages and literature. Several of her book-length translations have been published, and shorter works have appeared in other venues. Articles and reviews that she has written, edited, or translated have appeared in professional and literary journals such as the ATA Chronicle, Tradurre, Beacons, and Forum Italicum. Contact: aappel@aol.com.

Herbert E. Craig recently published Marcel Proust and Spanish America: From Critical Response to Narrative Dialogue (Bucknell University Press, 2002). He continues to work on various aspects of the relation between the French novelist Marcel Proust and the Spanish-speaking world. His publications in the area of translation criticism include “Assessing the Spanish Translations of Marcel Proust’s First Volume” (ATA Chronicle 30.11) and “Pedro Salinas as Proust’s First Translator” (Confluencia 18.1). Contact: craigh@unk.edu.

Nanette Gobel is a Los Angeles-based, ATA-certified (English → German) translator and dialect coach. She works closely with the Walt Disney Company in creating the French and German versions of their theme park attractions throughout Europe and the U.S. Her services in the entertainment industry range from subtitling and voice-over to legal translation. As an adaptation specialist, she contributes to many advertising and marketing campaigns. Before settling in Southern California, she studied at the University of Berlin and at the Sorbonne, earning a master’s degree in French language and literature. Contact: eandn@verizon.net.

Tom Lathrop, Ph.D. from UCLA (1970), is a professor of Romance languages at the University of Delaware. He is the founding editor of Juan de la Cuesta–Hispanic Monographs, which publishes studies about Spanish language and literature (130 books published), and the publisher of Linguatext Ltd., which publishes college-level language textbooks (Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and French). He is the author of books about the Spanish language and medieval literature, and textbooks in Spanish and Portuguese. He recently translated Don Quixote for university-level Literature in Translation courses. Contact: lathrop@udel.edu.

Maureen Lucier holds an M.A. in English literature and a B.A. in French language and literature. After years of teaching writing and serving as an academic advisor for the English department at Purdue University, she has recently redirected her lifelong interest in languages, words, and dictionaries toward literary translation. Contact: lucierm@math.purdue.edu.

Richard Finks Whitaker recently returned to Guadalajara, Mexico, after teaching translation and other subjects in the field of language at the University of Quintana Roo, on the Turquoise Coast of the Mexican Caribbean. He now teaches full-time in a program he helped create (and, for several years, directed) the Master’s Program in Translation and Interpretation in English and Spanish at the Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara. Contact: richard_finks_whitaker@hotmail.com.

Harvie Jordan Endowment Fund

Throughout his multifaceted career, Harvie Jordan fostered the development of a great number of translators and interpreters, many times in ways some of us did not fully recognize until he was no longer with us. Harvie’s sudden death on November 8, 2002, was an immeasurable loss for all of us who knew him and for all the groups in which he participated.

To honor Harvie for his lifelong contributions, carry forward his personal goals, and serve ATA’s Spanish Language Division, the Harvie Jordan Endowment Fund was created to provide financial assistance for continuing education for translators and interpreters. If you would like to help carry forward Harvie’s legacy, please consider making a donation to the fund by writing a check to: American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation, Columbia Plaza, Suite 101, 350 E Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007. Include the annotation in the memo section, Harvie Jordan Endowment Fund.
From the President  
Scott Brennan  
president@atanet.org

Paying Your Dues: What’s in It for You?

From time to time an ATA member will ask why they should renew. It’s a good question, to which an officer of the association should have a good answer. Here’s mine: you decide whether it’s any good.

Many members would point straightaway to their listing in ATA’s online directories of translators, interpreters, and translation companies. Thousands of searches a month channel work to ATA translators and interpreters. Just one job a year from this source would be a handsome return on investment as an ATA member.

The ATA Chronicle also leaps to mind, with articles and features we can use every day at our desks or in the booth. And, of course, there are the ATA member benefits listed on page four of the magazine, such as small business services and group insurance and retirement programs for the self-employed.

But as I go to write my dues check each year, I can’t help thinking what else I could buy with the $120. After all, that’s three Starbucks cappuccinos a month, all year long!

But without ATA, there are some things it won’t buy.

• It won’t buy me a certification program that sets a high standard for the translation industry, giving potential clients an objective measure of my skills. Good for them, and good for me.
• It won’t buy me a professional development program that provides the tools to enhance my skills at subject-specific seminars and language-specific midyear conferences around the country. Not to mention ATA’s Annual Conference, an industry fixture with well over a hundred distinguished speakers and opportunities to build our translation or interpreting practices.
• It won’t buy me a proactive media campaign that positions translators and interpreters in the public eye as gatekeepers in a new global marketplace, and ATA-certified translators as professionals to seek out and pay a premium for.
• It won’t buy me a mentoring program that helps newcomers up our profession’s long, steep learning curve, and helps more seasoned translators and interpreters keep in touch with new developments.

None of these programs pays for itself, even factoring in the considerable time and energy volunteered by hundreds of translators and interpreters to bring them to me. My annual dues help to make these and other programs sustainable.

Yet for me, to think of ATA membership as a fee-for-service proposition is to fundamentally misunderstand the nature and history of our association. One of my favorite things about ATA has always been its tradition of generosity and sharing among colleagues. We are volunteer-driven, and whether we are able to contribute through our time and energy or only through dues, we are all working toward the goals set by our founders:

1. To promote the recognition of the translation and interpretation professions;
2. To promote the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of translators and interpreters;
3. To formulate and maintain standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence;
4. To stimulate and support the training of translators and interpreters;
5. To provide a medium for cooperation with persons in allied professions; and
6. To promote professional and social relations among members.

ATA is here to help you ...

Website: www.atanet.org  
Phone: 703.683.6100  
E-mail: ata@atanet.org  
Fax: 703.683.6122

Mail: American Translators Association  
225 Reinekers Lane  
Suite 590  
Alexandria, VA 22314
American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation

JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation

Description of Award
This is a $2,500 non-renewable scholarship for the 2004-2005 academic year for students enrolled or planning to enroll in a degree program in scientific and technical translation or in interpreter training.

Eligibility
1. Applicants must be graduate or undergraduate students enrolled or planning to enroll in a program leading to a degree in scientific and technical translation or in interpretation at an accredited U.S. college or university.
2. Applicants must be full-time students who have completed at least one year of college or university studies.
3. Generally, an applicant should present a minimum GPA of 3.00 overall and a 3.50 in translation and interpretation related courses.
4. Applicants should have at least one year of study remaining in their program; however, in certain circumstances, one residual semester may be accepted.
5. Applicants must be U.S. citizens.

Selection Criteria
1. Demonstrated achievement in translation and interpretation;
2. Academic record;
3. Three letters of recommendation by faculty or non-academic supervisor;
4. A 300-500-word essay outlining the applicant’s interests and goals as they relate to the field of translation or interpretation.

Application Process
1. Application forms may be obtained by contacting the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation at: Columbia Plaza, Suite 101, 350 East Michigan Avenue Kalamazoo, MI 49007; or by e-mail at aftiorg@aol.com.2. Completed applications must be received by AFTI by June 1, 2004.
3. A completed application consists of:
   a) Application cover sheet;
   b) Three letters of recommendation in a sealed envelope with the recommender’s signature over the envelope flap;
   c) Essay;
   d) A copy of the applicant’s academic record with a copy of the major/minor or other program form, or a departmental statement of admission to the translation or interpretation program.

Award
A national award committee will announce the name of the scholarship winner by August 2004. The committee’s decision is final. Disbursement of the award will occur at the beginning of the 2004 Fall Semester.

Call for Nominations
ATA 2004
Lewis Galantière Award

The American Translators Association invites nominations for the 2004 Lewis Galantière Award. This award is bestowed biennially in even-numbered years for a distinguished book-length literary translation from any language, except German, into English published in the United States. (A German translation award is awarded in odd-numbered years.)

To be eligible for the award, to be presented at the ATA Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, October 2004, the published translation must meet the following criteria:

- The work was translated from any language, except German, into English.
- The work was published in the United States in 2002 or 2003.
- The translator’s name appears on the title page, preferably on the dust jacket. (Preference will be given to works that include a translator’s biographical information.)
- The translator need not be an ATA member, however, the translator must be a U.S. citizen or resident.
- The nomination must be submitted by the publisher of the translated work.

The nomination must include the following:

- A cover letter with complete publication information for the work being nominated;
- A brief vita of the translator;
- At least two copies of the nominated work with one extra copy of the dust jacket;
- Two copies of at least 10 consecutive pages from the original work keyed to the page numbers of the translation (this item is essential!)
- Two copies of the translated pages that correspond to the 10 consecutive pages provided from the original work.

Nomination Deadline: May 1, 2004. Publishers are encouraged to submit nominations early!

Award: $1,000, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, October 13-16, 2004.

This award honors distinguished ATA founding member Lewis Galantière (1894-1977). His translations from French drama, fiction, poetry, and scholarship enriched cultural life during the middle decades of the 20th century, and are still being read a quarter-century after his death.

Please send your nominations to:
Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee
American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria VA 22314
Phone: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: ata@atanet.org
Applications Now Open

ATA 2004 Student Translation Award

In 2004, the American Translators Association will award a grant-in-aid to a student for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project.

The award, to be presented at the ATA Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, October 2004, is open to any graduate or undergraduate student or group of students attending an accredited college or university in the United States. Preference will be given to students who have been or are currently enrolled in translator training programs. Students who are already published translators are ineligible. No individual student may submit more than one entry.

The project, which may be derived from any facet of translation studies, should result in a project with post-grant applicability, such as publication, a conference presentation, or teaching material. Computerized materials are ineligible, as are dissertations and theses. Translations must be from a foreign language INTO ENGLISH. Previously untranslated works are preferred.

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

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


Award: $500, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference in Toronto, Canada, October 13-16, 2004. One or more certificates may also be awarded to runners-up.

Please send your entry form and application materials to:
Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee
American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria VA 22314
Phone: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: ata@atanet.org

Call for Nominations

ATA Alexander Gode Medal

The Alexander Gode Medal, the American Translators Association's most prestigious award, is named for its first recipient, ATA's founder and guiding spirit. This award recognizes an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translation and interpreting professions. Thus, the list of medalists is a record of achievement in a variety of venues including not only translators and interpreters, but lexicographers, theorists, association leaders, and institutions. This award may be given annually.

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

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


Please send your nominations of the individual or institution you consider worthy of receiving the next Gode Medal to:
Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee
American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria VA 22314
Phone: (703) 683-6100; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: ata@atanet.org

Call for Speakers

New England Translators Association
8th Annual Conference • Saturday, May 1, 2004 (Boston Area)

Presentations may focus on theoretical or practical/technical aspects and relate to translation or interpretation. Please send resumes/CVs and presentation outline to:
Kenneth Kronenberg
51 Maple Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

From the Executive Director

Walter Bacak, CAE
Walter@atanet.org

Achieve Your New Year’s Resolutions Through ATA

While ATA may not help you exercise more or lose weight, it can definitely help you with your resolutions to improve your business. ATA’s professional development opportunities can help you be better at what you do through increased expertise and greater efficiencies.

Renew Your Membership. Topping your list of resolutions should be to get more involved in ATA. Start by renewing your ATA membership. For reasons to renew, please be sure to read “From the President” on page seven.

Final renewal notices have been mailed. If you have already renewed, thank you. If you have not, please do. To renew your membership online, go to www.atanet.org/membersonly. You can also have a renewal notice faxed to you by contacting ata@atanet.org or by calling Maggie Rowe at (703) 683-6100, ext. 3001.

Professional Development Seminars.
Six professional development seminars have been scheduled for 2004. Aside from the Translating for the Pharmaceutical Industry Seminar held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in January and the Legal Translation and Interpreting Seminar held in Los Angeles in February, here is what is coming up:

- Translating and Interpreting for the Government, Washington, DC, April 3
- Translating and Interpreting for the Entertainment Industry, Jersey City, New Jersey, May 22
- Medical Translation and Interpreting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 10
- The Business of Translation and Interpreting, Seattle, Washington, August 28

These one-day seminars offer in-depth specialized information. In addition, most of them feature a second half-day seminar sponsored by the local ATA chapter or group. You can register for all these seminars through ATA. For more information, please visit www.atanet.org/pd/calendar.htm.

For ATA-certified members, each one-day seminar counts as seven Continuing Education Points (CEPs). Additional CEPs will be given for the half-day seminars.

Annual Conference. For the year’s premiere professional development opportunity, be sure to attend ATA’s Annual Conference. Mark your calendar for ATA’s 45th Annual Conference, October 13-16, 2004 in Toronto, Canada. The Sheraton Centre Hotel in downtown Toronto will be the site for ATA’s first conference outside the United States. Toronto’s vibrant downtown and such flourishing multicultural and multilingual neighborhoods as Corso Italia, Portugal Village, Chinatown, and Little Athens are a natural attraction for translators and interpreters.

Please consider giving a presentation at the conference. Share your knowledge and expertise with your peers. The deadline for submitting a conference presentation proposal is March 12. You may complete the presentation proposal form online at www.atanet.org/abstract.htm, download a copy, or have a copy faxed to you by contacting ata@atanet.org or by calling Teresa Kelly at 703-683-6100, ext. 3014.

For ATA-certified members, full conference registration counts as 10 CEPs. (As a reminder, 10 CEPs is the maximum number you can earn in a year. Twenty CEPs must be earned over a three-year period to maintain your certification.)

If you are serious about your profession, invest in yourself through membership in ATA and your local chapter/group, and by continuing your education through ATA professional development opportunities.
Creative Adaptation

By Nanette Gobel

A

n increasing number of clients in the entertainment and advertising industry are no longer looking to hire translators for their scripts and ad materials. Instead, they are asking for “writers,” and mention specifically that they do not want a translation. Are they handing us a ticket to creative freedom?

The first time I was approached by the Walt Disney Company with the request to come in as a writer (French and German), I felt both honored and confused. When I asked what the session was about, I was told I would be meeting with the original (English) show writers to discuss the present German and French versions of their script for a theme park attraction in order to determine if changes needed to be made. An on-site editing job, I thought, somewhat relieved—but no. “It’s a creative writing session, you know,” explained the Disney executive on the other end of the line. “We want to see if the foreign language texts work the way they are supposed to, if everything that’s funny in the original is as funny in the translation, and especially, that there is nothing embarrassing for us in those translations. You and our writers will go over everything together and if you don’t like something, you rewrite it on the spot.” Okay!

Now, I had worked with Disney before and knew that they had some previous trouble with the French versions of the scripts for their attractions that were going to be featured in—exactly!—Paris. The script I was going to work on, Disney’s Studio Tram Tour, was to be filmed with a set of celebrities, one for each language (the other languages being Dutch, Spanish, and Italian). At this point, the English version had already been shot with Jeremy Irons, and I was to review the tape and compare it to the German and French scripts. The stakes were high! Luckily, like everyone else involved at Disney, the writers turned out to be extremely nice, respectful, and genuinely interested in the translation/adaptation process. That initial conference session with the writers marked the beginning of a long collaboration, which culminated for me when I had the opportunity to be involved with the actual filming of the German version with Nastassja Kinski, where I served as her dialect coach and codirector. The final step of the project was to supervise, together with the director, the editing process for both the German and French versions, which featured Irène Jacob (taped in Paris), to make sure the best takes were being chosen from a linguistic point of view.

As you might have guessed, the scripts were not completely rewritten on the spot. Instead, the original as well as the foreign language versions went through numerous rewrites. What we discussed in that first session were the basics of the script, its style and tone, how the theme park attraction where the script would be used was set up, what kind of audience they were expecting, and the do’s and don’ts particular to the Walt Disney Company. Terminology and jokes were two major topics. Taken together, all these aspects give a pretty good overview of what you are dealing with when attempting a foreign language version of any kind of script or advertising material. Let’s take a closer look.

Close-Up: Linguistic Aspects

As I became more involved with these types of assignments, I tried to determine what the materials I was working with had in common, other than the fact that they were all part of the entertainment and advertising industry. I discovered the very obvious fact that I am always dealing with pure dialogue, whether I have to adapt a screenplay, a voice-over script, or subtitles. Even advertising material is usually written as a form of dialogue, trying to speak to and engage the consumer. Each of these modes come with their own set of challenges, but they all try to imitate the way people speak—la parole, as I remember from my university days. And what characterizes the spoken word more than anything else is how highly individualized it is. Everybody has a different way of expressing themselves, which changes constantly depending on who we are dealing with, what situation we’re in, and how we are feeling at that particular moment. So just like the actor who is going to play a part, when adapting a piece of dialogue, the translator has to consider who the character is, what the circumstances are, and who the character is addressing. And this must be done not simply for one part, but for all the characters in the script! This can be quite an overwhelming task, especially when subtitling. Not too long ago, I was hired to provide quality control for the German subtitles of all 10 episodes of Spielberg’s mini-series “Taken.” I had to review the entire show, which had been adapted by different translators, and
make sure everything matched and worked and made sense. It involved a lot of editing, and the hardest part was to keep track of the story and the characters (spanning three generations) while working on two episodes per week—in reverse order…!

Subtitling does let you get away a little easier if you can’t convey every subtlety of tone, because the audience sees and hears the characters on the screen and does not rely solely on the adapted text. Of course, this text flies by very quickly, so that condensing what is being said into an easily readable line or two becomes more important than matching the style of a character 100%. Still, you do want to do your best and stay true to circumstance and character. A simple question like “What’s up?” has various meanings (and, therefore, affects your rendition), depending on whether it is blurted out by teenage friends as a form of greeting or if it is used as a question asked by a father concerned about the behavior of his son. And there is nothing worse than seeing someone change from using a very formal style of dialogue into outright slang, if nothing justifies him or her to do so! The way someone says something can give you important hints to determine if he or she is making a choice of words you agonized over for hours, leaving the stage to the actor and his version!

However, even the actor has to be valued enough! However, in entertainment and advertising, specialist terms don’t always mean you have to study up. There can be just as much fantasy involved with these types of scripts, and you won’t find a trace of “horned slugs” in your zoological reference book. That’s when the fun starts and you can let your imagination run wild, provided you end up with something just as creepy and slimy as a “horned slug” in your native tongue.

Sometimes certain terms have already been adapted for other shows or products, and you need to know if the client wants to keep them the way they are or prefers a new rendition for a fresh approach. The latter is often the case in advertising campaigns. In these cases, the guidelines you follow will read like you are truly going to
copyedit a new marketing line. From “finding a new voice for the packaging” and “creating an emotional attraction to the products” to “forget everything you know about the brand,” it’s all geared towards being as creative as possible and thinking “outside the box.” As for myself, I discovered a helpful tactic is to eliminate words I feel have the potential to go in the wrong direction in terms of tone and style. I then replace these terms with ones that carry the appropriate tone. For example, in a packaging assignment for computer giant Microsoft, where the client was looking for a more personal and inspirational connection to the customer, I eliminated the recurring terms “elegance” and “comfort,” which seemed to me somewhat old-fashioned and stale, and instead used German words that pertain to “individualistic” and “functional.” However, had I been assigned to the French version of the same project, chances are I would have come up with something completely different or I might have chosen different terms to be replaced. Why? Because, as we know more than anybody, every culture is defined by a different mentality, a different taste, a different sense of style, of humor, of beauty, all of which is reflected in your translation. The most important thing here is to let go of the original and dare yourself to come up with something new—as long as it stands in the proper cultural context. Time for the next close-up!

**Close-Up: Cultural Aspects**

Words not only change meaning depending on their immediate linguistic context, but also when they pass from one cultural context into another, which is what happens when we adapt a text in a different language. Words we use to address each other, for example, differ tremendously from culture to culture. Americans can get away with calling complete strangers “honey,” while in France you will be frowned upon in most circles if you do not add the obligatory “Madame” or “Monsieur” to your greeting. Determining when the English “you” corresponds to the informal “du” or the formal “Sie” in German isn’t always an obvious decision. And at what point in a relationship does the form of address change?

Within a culture, every social group has its own codes and customs. Some are reflected in the language itself, as in sociolects and colloquialisms. The latter ones are a red flag for translators of every field. However, in entertainment and advertising, we find them in particular abundance, not only because they are so popular in everyday speech, but also because they tend to define the person(s) using them. And people of every social background and of any age group can be represented in a film or advertisement. Not only do we need to be able to recognize and identify the way someone speaks and what he or she is saying in the text provided, but also to determine and express how the same type of person would say the same type of thing in the target language. When I revised the Spielberg series, which was originally translated by translators living and working in Germany, the greatest problem I ran into was that the German translators were not familiar with a lot of American colloquialisms or slang (in short, with vital parts of contemporary American culture). I have the advantage of being part of the American culture every day, but in return I have to keep up with what is going on in Germany and France and how culture and language are changing and developing there. Our knowledge of both the source and target language cultures is our greatest treasure. Everything from nursery rhymes and sports to science and literature can become indispensable.

In his introduction to Chekhov’s *Three Sisters*, which he adapted into English, playwright Lanford Wilson goes to great lengths to describe his efforts to understand everything about the play and its characters. What he came to understand, however, was that no matter how hard he tried, nothing could make up for the fact that he had never lived in Russia or been part of the Russian culture.2 Knowing about Humpty Dumpty, Tic Tac Toe, and baseball is not enough. To know which fairy tale character or sporting event means something similar to a similar group of people in the target culture and to be able to work it into your text is where the challenge begins. On the Walt Disney Studio Tram Tour in Paris, guests pass through Catastrophe Canyon, where the host points out how powerful the water pumps are that create rainstorms on the screen. In the English version of the script, the powerful pumps are described as being capable of catapulting a football over the Eiffel Tower, and the host speculates how many points someone would get for such an achievement. At first sight, this seems easy enough to adapt into French. The writer already thought of a popular tall structure in France, and a football becomes a soccer ball just by translation. However, the sense of competition and ambition associated with scoring points is very characteristic of the American culture, but is less apparent in the French culture. To add a touch of irony in the script seems a lot more appropriate here. So, think of the face a tourist would make while watching a soccer ball fly over his head as he’s admiring Paris.
from the top of the Eiffel Tower! Wouldn’t you make a funny face?

Humor, songs, and wordplay must frequently be replaced by a target language equivalent in the adapted script version. Humor is a very obvious example: something that’s funny in one culture might not be remotely funny in another. Translating jokes is usually an exercise in futility. Therefore, comedies are the most difficult genre to adapt. On a recent visit to Germany, I saw a trailer for the TV show “Friends” and mentioned to my sister how much I liked the show. To my surprise, she told me she couldn’t stand it. When we sat down and watched an episode together, we discovered that the dubbed German version could not convey the particular humor of this sitcom. To make it really work, you would not only have to rewrite the entire show for a German audience, but you would also have to reshoot it with German actors. That is rarely an option. Interestingly, this is the way the U.S. film industry often chooses to “import” foreign movies—as remakes, re-made to suit the taste of the American audience. Think of “Three Men and a Baby” (“Trois Hommes et un Couffin”), “City of Angels” (“Wings of Desire/Himmel über Berlin”), or last year’s “Insomnia” (which featured no less than three Academy Award winners!). Germany, on the other hand, dubs almost every import, while France offers a choice between subtitled and dubbed versions. As for “Friends,” with its unique (American) characters and humor, the best approach, in my opinion, would be to write the dialogue to sound as natural as possible (making it easy for the actors to overdub) and let the general familiarity of most Europeans with American culture do the rest. If viewers are not laughing with “Friends,” they might end up laughing at them, which can be just as hilarious. An entirely German “Friends” version could be a total flop!

You are the judge of the material and (unless specifically directed by the client) you have to decide where to add more of the local flavor and where to leave in something that is more typical of the source culture, but which is still well known to your target audience. It often comes down to very basic traits. While American humor favors bold, punchy lines, the French prefer humor that is more elegant and ironic. In the special effects show “Armageddon,” the host warns the audience of the approaching meteor (excuse me, Mr. Meteor), big and bad and ready to attack. His French counterpart, however, reveals himself to be a bitter, resentful titan whose bad intentions are the result of ten thousand years of loneliness, not mere force and aggression. Another personalization, sure, but doesn’t this one seem a lot more “French”? For a dubbed or subtitled version, however, our bitter meteor bit would have been way too long.

No matter what format you’re adapting, considering the target audience is always the key. What do they like? What do they hate? What do they know? Are we writing for children, teenagers, adults, or all of the above? You don’t have to spell everything out, but keeping in mind or actually adopting the mindset of who you are writing for helps tremendously, especially in advertising and when writing for a young audience. For instance, children look at the world from a much more universal perspective. They are not yet aware of as many cultural distinctions, and these differences don’t matter to them as much. The story is what counts, not the location. On the other hand, every generation of teenagers has their own linguistic code, and nothing is more important than what is hip and what is out. As for advertising, the dialogue is always directed at the consumer, so matching the context and expectations of the target audience is what good marketing is all about. You might even be able to apply some of the lessons learned from the translation of advertising copy when marketing your own services!

Conclusion

So how do I present myself on resumes, business cards, etc.? Am I a translator, an adaptation specialist, a writer, or all of the above? To your disappointment, or relief, I simply call myself a translator. I do, however, list on my resume all the services I offer, which include creative adaptation, subtitling, voice-over, and copyediting. I also don’t correct anybody who prefers to address me with a different title (script consultant is another favorite). After all, what I set out to do is to render the written and spoken word from one language into another, and this, to me, is overall a process of translation, even if it involves recreating a text to best convey its meaning.

Still, as this article has hopefully shown, there are differences, and these differences change the way we approach a project and affect how attached or detached our work is from the original text. According to Paul Auster, we are either the “servant of the text” (as the translator) or “its creator” (as the writer), but I have found that there are many areas in between. We always serve a text that has been created by someone else, but at the same time we create a new text that is sometimes closer,
Operation “Knights Errant”: In Search of the Holy Grail of Visibility

By Anne Milano Appel

Recently I was looking through the presentation offerings for the 26th Annual Conference of the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA), held November 12-15 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, when one session in particular caught my attention. Kathrin Razum’s panel discussion, “Seeing Ourselves As Others See Us: The Self-Perception of Literary Translators and Their Standing or Perception in Their Respective Cultural Contexts,” suggested a comparison of how literary translators from various countries regard their professional image. Her proposal immediately called to mind a recent initiative undertaken by a group of literary translators in Italy associated with the Biblit online discussion list. Though I had followed the Biblit project from a temporal and geographic distance (from far-off California), I was closely committed and connected in spirit, and decided to share the details with Kathrin, since it seemed to fit right in with her topic. (Unfortunately, circumstances prevented me from actually participating in the panel at the conference.)

After I wrote to her about Biblit, Kathrin, an English-to-German freelance editor and literary translator from Heidelberg, Germany, responded: “What interests me is the interrelation between our ‘self-image’…and the way we are perceived by others, including the reading public as well as publishers, critics, etc.”

The Biblit initiative I told her about involved a group of translators, the majority of whom are based in Italy. Aware of the difference (although, gap or chasm might be a more accurate term!) between their own “self-image” as passionate, dedicated professionals and the way they are perceived by others (or not perceived at all), these translators decided to do something proactive to try to improve their professional image with those who come into contact with their work. Working together through the Biblit online discussion list, they prepared an open letter to members of the press who regularly and systematically “forget” to mention the names of translators when reviewing or referring to the books they translate.

The initiative was dubbed the “Cavalieri Erranti,” or “Knights Errant,” taking its name from the definition provided by the Italian writing team of Fruttero & Lucentini. The preface to the letter quotes the duo as follows:

“The problem of translating is actually the very same as that of writing, and the translator is at the heart of it perhaps even more so than the author. He is asked […] to master not only a language, but everything that lies behind it, that is to say, an entire culture, an entire world, an entire way of viewing the world. […] He is asked to pull off this arduous yet impassioned effort without calling attention to himself. […] He is asked to consider his greatest triumph the fact that the reader isn’t even aware of him […] an ascetic, an essentially selfless hero, ready to give his all in exchange for very little and to disappear into the twilight, anonymous and sublime, when the epic deed is accomplished. The translator is literature’s last, true knight errant.”

According to Marina Rullo, Biblit’s moderator, “Cavalieri Erranti,” or “Knights Errant,” is a battle cry chosen to represent the activist spirit of the group. She describes Biblit as a “virtual community” of translators. Having originated in 1999 as a simple electronic discussion list, Biblit has no formal or legal identity and no source of funding except for voluntary contributions from its participants. The list now has over a thousand members, and has become a major point of reference for literary translation from and into Italian.

The organization and synchronization of the initiative that launched the letter campaign was phenomenal. No one person was “in charge,” but everyone took on whatever responsibility they felt they could handle. In a coordinated mailing, the letter was sent to major Italian dailies on a date chosen to coincide with the Turin book fair on May 9th. As might be expected (especially in a country like Italy, where the penchant for raccomandazioni, or who-you-know, has been developed to a fine art!), personal connections played a big role in who contacted which newspapers.

The letter itself was written as a surprisingly successful group exercise, and was made available on the Biblit website (www.biblit.it/cavalieri_erranti.htm) in several translations. (My own contribution was to provide the English translation.) The letter basically demanded “greater respect and just recognition” for the all-too-often overlooked figure of the literary translator; greater visibility for that individual who, though his or her name may appear on the book
Overall, I think it can be said that the response to the letter initiative was gratifying, especially some of the messages of support written by those who signed it. Still, in some respects, the comments from supporters were all over the map. One writer said that he was in favor of the immediate formation of a union and standardization of pricing, the latter being something that no one had ever mentioned or even wanted! A journalist complained that he did not like the sketch of Don Quixote that accompanied the letter, saying that it made him think of a heraldic order for losers! He suggested an image that did not associate the role of the translator with the figure of the poor knight. Others were full of admiration for what the translator accomplishes. Perhaps one of the most unusual responses was from an aspiring writer who wrote a brief message entitled: “Six Minutes and Twenty-Nine Seconds.” In translation it reads:

“I am an egregious nobody, a passionate reader and aspiring writer. I have paid homage to you by shutting myself in my room and reading your names aloud, chanting them. The time it took: six minutes and twenty-nine seconds. I have granted you the honor of my meager arms. Best regards…”

But let’s get back to the more tangible results of the letter campaign. Once the letter was mailed, reaction from the press was eagerly awaited. Again, the feedback was mixed. Although the initial response from the press was encouraging, some publications printed only a concise version of the letter, and others did not find space to print the entire list of supporters. Some publications simply referred their readers to the letter on the Biblit website. But one journalist, who had once been a translator himself and hoped to be so again, headlined his piece “Translators in Revolt, ‘We Demand Visibility.’” And perhaps the most spectacular payback came when Italian President Carlo Azelio Ciampi, at the national awards ceremony for translation prizes for 2002, explicitly referred to the “Knights Errant,” citing the Fruttero & Lucentini passage and many of the concepts expressed in the letter (though not mentioning Biblit by name).

Despite such expressions of solidarity, there were those members of Biblit who felt the letter had little impact, that indeed it had been largely ignored by the press. There was a certain bitterness in some list members’ comments. One individual noted the astonishing abyss that exists between the sensibility of the press (“the journalists and critics who ignore us”) and the positive response on the part of readers, and suggested that the next step might be to create a bridge to unite these two worlds. However, she neglected to say how! Others, more positive in their outlook, suggested that the results were something to be proud of, and that the press coverage achieved, including an early evening news segment and various appeals on Internet sites, was not a bad haul, not to mention the great number of signatures that had been collected, many of them from prominent individuals. Perhaps it was a matter of one’s expectations. In her practical way, Marina Rullo, Biblit’s moderator, reminded everyone that it had taken seven days to create the world, and that it would take much longer than that to change a mindset (especially since we weren’t
equipped to perform miracles!). And yet, she went on, a miracle had indeed taken place: the success of having rallied hundreds of people around an idea, of having taken that positive step from generalized whining to concrete action.

Another member of the list summarized the experience as follows:

“Although there may have been some flaws here and there, in the end it was a satisfying experience of which everyone could be proud….The mission was accomplished in a short time, and at very little cost (if you don’t count the expenditure of personal effort), and was able to achieve broad consensus and a fair amount of visibility and publicity….Whether it will have the desired result of ensuring that the translator’s name is always cited by the press, remains to be seen….Moreover, the only way to be sure of this would be to set up a monitoring process by creating a so-called ‘press watch’ to act as watchdog….This would require some effort, however, and though citing the translator’s name is important, perhaps it is not the primary battle to be fought….Perhaps we should aim higher, at the publishers themselves…”

Striving for balance, another translator shared her observations with me this way:

“On the other hand,” she continues, “it seems to me that there have been zero results with respect to what we were demanding, that is, the systematic citation of the translator’s name by everyone who reviews books in translation or cites passages from them. Those who used to do so, continue to do so; those who did not do so before, continue to ignore the translator, at least from what I can see.”

Her solution:

“To attain our objective, I think we must seek a working alliance with publishers who, through their press offices, would compel newspapers to cite the translator along with other bibliographic data, such as the number of pages and the price. This will not be easy, however. In part because due to fierce competition and the number of titles published each month, publishers are indeed grateful to have one of their titles reviewed as opposed to one from their competitors, so that’s more than enough for them. And in part because systematic attention paid to translators, and perhaps a ‘good word’ for the translation itself, would bring about a selection process among translators themselves in which the most talented ones would stand out a little more and would rightfully begin to demand more money. Naturally, the publishers don’t want this to happen, at least not those who mainly work in the mass market sector and who are more concerned with fast turnaround times for delivery rather than with the textual quality of the translation.”

So what does all of this tell us about “self-image” and perception? About a proactive approach? Can a similar effort work elsewhere? Would it have similar results? During the course of what I’ve come to think of as “Operation Knights Errant,” a number of associations outside Italy were contacted (Ireland, Spain, Norway, and Belgium come to mind), and the letter also had the support of Ros Schwartz, chair of the European Council of Associations of Literary Translators. I personally made several attempts to contact literary translator organizations in the U.S. to inform them of the initiative and see whether they might want to be involved or show support in some way. The fact that I did not receive a response from any of these groups is definitely below the line on my optimist-pessimist glass.

Notes
1. Fruttero & Lucentini. 2003. *I ferri del mestiere (Tools of the Trade)*. Torino: Einaudi. (This and other English translations of sources cited are my own.)
The Two New Ways of Translating Proust into Spanish (Volumes II-III)

By Herbert E. Craig

Since the publication of my article, “Assessing the Spanish Translations of Marcel Proust’s First Volume” (ATA Chronicle, November/December 2001, Ref. 1), and my related presentation at ATA’s Annual Conference in Los Angeles (November 2001, Ref. 2), two new translators from Spain of A la recherche du temps perdu have contacted me regarding their progress on their versions of this monumental work. Carlos Manzano not only published his translation of Proust’s second volume, A la sombra de las muchachas en flor, in September 2001, but also made his third volume, La parte de Guermantes, available at the end of 2002. Likewise, in October 2002, Mauro Armiño provided the second double volume of his translation of A la busca del tiempo perdido, which includes La parte de Guermantes and Sodomía y Gomorra.

The race between these two prize-winning translators to complete Proust’s seven-volume novel contrasts sharply with the efforts in the English language to re-translate Proust’s work. As some of you may know, under the editorship of Christopher Prendergast, Penguin of London is now publishing a new version of In Search of Lost Time (2002), but each of the seven volumes has been rendered by a different translator.

It might be interesting to compare the various styles and techniques of the translators who worked on the Penguin edition and to assess the relative value of their work using the principles of Katharina Reiss (Translation Criticism—The Potentials and Limitations: Categories and Criteria for Translation Quality Assessment, Ref. 3), which I outlined in my previous ATA article. Or one might even attempt to prove that Penguin’s edition, no matter how varied, is superior not only to the first English translation, Remembrance of Things Past by C. K. Scott Moncreiff (who finished six of the seven volumes himself between 1922-1930), but also to the revised and updated texts by Terence Kilmartin (1981) and D. J. Enright (1992-1993).

However, I personally believe that the publications of Carlos Manzano and Mauro Armiño are of greater interest, since their work seems braver and even more original. Both Armiño and Manzano, who studied translation together at the Facultad de Filosofía y Letras of the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, have declared their intention of creating in a single style a Spanish version of the entire Recherche. Furthermore, they have developed their own ideas on how to translate Proust, which they explained in two articles published in the November 2, 2002 issue of the cultural supplement of the Madrid newspaper ABC.

According to Mauro Armiño, who began to translate Proust first and who has remained a step ahead of his colleague, it is acceptable, and may even be preferable, for a translation to not be totally fluent. Armiño cited Jesús Aguirre, a famous man of Spanish letters and former Duque de Alba, who asserted that a translation may contain “rastros y raspas de su origen” [traces and chaff from its source] (Ref. 4). Thus, for Armiño, a translator serves as a mediator between the original author and the foreign reader. The reader of a translation should have a reaction to the work that is similar to the one experienced by the person who read it in the original language. It would be difficult to provide exactly the same reading in both languages due to the fact that the differences between modes of expression and cultures are often too great. Moreover, to aid the Spanish reader of Proust, Armiño prepared a lengthy prologue, glossaries containing information about Proust, his acquaintances, characters, and fictional locations, as well as extensive linguistic and cultural notes.

In contrast, Carlos Manzano, whose work consists exclusively of the translation itself, has made it his goal to render a text that could have been written by a native speaker of Spanish (Ref. 5). Even though such an ideal of language fluency is accepted in general terms today as the standard for most literary translations, the actual task of fluently rendering the work of Marcel Proust into another language is particularly difficult.

The author of the Recherche wrote in a very intricate style, with extremely long sentences composed of clauses embedded within clauses. To some extent, as Manzano has acknowledged, his task has been aided by the baroque tradition of Hispanic literature, which began in the 17th century with the hermetic poetry of Luis de Góngora and continued into the 20th century with the very complex narrative prose of Cuban writers Alejo Carpentier and José Lezama Lima. The baroque tradition of Spanish contrasts with the more simple, rational, and direct style of French, which Proust chose specifically not to follow. Furthermore, Manzano’s experience of translating into Spanish such challenging authors as Italian novelist Giorgio Bassani and British writers Malcolm Lowry and Evelyn Waugh helped to prepare
him. Nonetheless, it has required considerable skill and effort on his part to make Proust’s text appear to be totally fluent in Spanish.

To this end, Manzano has resorted to certain modifications. Fortunately, he has avoided the constant reordering and, at times, simplification of the syntax that was characteristic of a previous Spanish translator of Proust’s later volumes, Consuelo Berge, but he has clearly altered the punctuation. Most notably, Manzano chose to use dashes more frequently than Proust to set off clauses that were less closely bound to the principal clause of the sentence—although the French novelist also employed this device at times. Manzano points out that a writer will use dashes more regularly in Spanish than in French. But I would also add that punctuation is only related to the written word, thus making it the most exterior and conventional aspect of language. Furthermore, Proust’s editors have often modified his placement of commas.

In actual practice, the difference between these two ways of translating Proust into Spanish is not immediately obvious. Even though in my previous studies of the translations of the Recherche I observed numerous contrasts between the versions by Armiño and Manzano, I did not discover any patterns that might suggest a deviation from the principles of quality translation as outlined by Katharina Reiss. I simply concluded that both texts were more complete and accurate than those by the famous poet Pedro Salinas, the first to translate Proust into Spanish, and his successors. I also found that Armiño often seemed more literal than Manzano, but not excessively so (Ref. 1 and 2).

I would underscore, however, one notable difference that did attract my attention, which, in light of an explanation provided by Armiño, now makes more sense. Unlike Manzano, who retained the time-honored general title in Spanish of Proust’s work, En busca del tiempo perdido, Armiño selected a new and less fluent one, A la busca del tiempo perdido. It is indeed possible that editorial concerns may have affected this decision. The new title immediately alerted book dealers, prospective customers, and bibliographers to the fact that this version was not the one initiated by Salinas. Just the same, the new title more closely resembles the original French, A la recherche du temps perdu; with its slightly foreign ring, it informs the reader that he is dealing with a translation.

Perhaps, likewise, to make a statement of his intentions, Carlos Manzano began his translation of Proust’s second volume, A la sombra de las muchachas en flor, by setting off a dependent clause with dashes. I note that Proust had used commas, but similarly wished to engage his reader immediately in the personal relationships and circumstances involved:

Ma mère, quand il fut question d’avoir pour la première fois M. de Norpois à dîner, ayant exprimé le regret que le professeur Cottard fût en voyage et qu’elle-même eût entièrement cessé de fréquenter Swann…mon père répondit… (Ref. 6, Vol. 1, p. 423)

Like Salinas (Ref. 9, p. 9), Armiño simply began the first sentence with the circumstantial clause: “Cuando se trató de invitar a cenar por primera vez a M. de Norpois…” (Ref. 7, p. 385). However, more similar to Proust, Manzano chose to use the circumstance as an interruption in the narrator’s thought:

Como—cuando se habló de invitar por primera vez a cenar al Sr. de Norpois—mi madre lamentara de que el profesor Cottard estuviese de viaje y ella misma hubiera cesado por completo de frecuentar a Swann…mi padre respondió…. (Ref. 8, p. 7)

I would further observe in the initial lines of this volume the care with which Manzano handled matters of style. Unlike both Armiño and Salinas, who on two occasions within close proximity used forms of the same word “tratar” (“se trató de invitar” and “tratar a Swann,” or “todo trato con Swann”), Manzano meticulously avoided such an unsightly repetition. He apparently alluded to this general intention when he wrote “yo me he propuesto hacer la traducción estilísticamente más idónea de la obra de Proust” [I have proposed to make the most stylistically fitting translation of Proust’s work] (Ref. 10). He attempted to retain the baroque style of the Recherche, while making this work as understandable and natural as possible for the Spanish reader.

In comparing numerous other passages from the two new Spanish translations of the second and third volumes of the Recherche, I have continued to find that these versions are consistently better than those by Salinas and the other translator of the second volume, Julio Gómez de la Serna. Indubitably, the fact that both Armiño and Manzano have used the most recent French editions of Proust’s work as their basis has contributed to the superior result. But their clear, personal understanding of translation theory and their wide range of translation techniques have also been important factors.

Another passage further illustrates the desire of Manzano to create
a text that is more fluent in Spanish. I am referring to the beginning of the second part of A la sombra de las muchachas en flor, whose title in French was Nom de pays: le pays.* This section starts with a relatively short sentence followed by a much longer one. I will quote the first and the beginning of the second:

J’etais arrivé à une presque complète indifférence à l’égard de Gilberte, quand deux ans plus tard je partis avec ma grand-mère pour Balbec. Quand je subissais le charme d’un visage nouveau, quand c’était à l’aide d’une autre jeune fille que j’espérais connaître les cathédrales gothiques…je me disais tristement que notre amour…. (Ref. 7, p. 569, my emphasis)

In his version, Mauro Armiño followed the original quite closely, and even employed the Spanish equivalent of “quand” three times in very close proximity: “cuando” dos años más tarde partí para Balbec con mi abuela. Cuando sufría la fascinación de una cara nueva, cuando era con la ayuda de otra muchacha….” (Ref. 7, p. 569, my emphasis). In contrast, Carlos Manzano reordered and rephrased, using an alternate construction in Spanish to avoid the repetition:

Cuando, dos años después, partí con mi abuela con destino a Balbec, había llegado a sentir una casi completa indiferencia para con Gilberte. Al sentir la fascinación de un rostro nuevo, al esperar conocer las catedrales góticas…me decía con tristeza que nuestro amor…. (Ref. 8, p. 229, my emphasis)

Most certainly it is possible to debate whether Proust repeated the temporal conjunction “quand” in order to emphasize the effect of time and the contrast between distinct moments. If such is the case, Armiño was correct in retaining this stylistic feature of the original. On the other hand, by beginning with the word “cuando” and the time elapsed, “dos años,” Manzano also drew attention to the subject of time. His use of “al” plus the infinitive in two parallel constructions allowed him to avoid the repetition of “cuando.” The second sentence, which lasts for 10 lines, remains equally baroque, but it does seem more natural because it flows better in Spanish.

Such alterations by Manzano continue into his version of the third volume, La parte de Guermantes, whose first paragraph once again seems intended to suggest his purposes with regard to punctuation. Proust (Ref. 6, Vol. 2, pp. 309-310), and in turn Armiño (Ref. 11, pp. 11-12), employed two sets of dashes here, but Manzano increased the number of pairs to nine (Ref. 12, pp. 9-10). Although this change might appear somewhat exaggerated, I do believe that this mode of punctuation helps the reader to distinguish between the essential parts of each sentence and those elements which Proust employed to enrich his text.

Concerning the third volume, I would like to interject that both Armiño and Manzano have been able to rectify certain obvious deficiencies of the previous version of El mundo de Guermantes. This title, apparently chosen by Salinas, had no clear parallel with the title of his first volume, Por el camino de Swann, even though Proust had intended such a form of symmetry. Thus, when Armiño and Manzano renamed volumes I and III Por la parte de Swann and La parte de Guermantes, they once again made explicit the two alternate paths or ways through the countryside of Combray, which were suggested by the original titles Du côté de chez Swann and Le côté de Guermantes.

Furthermore, by basing their translations on the most recent French editions of the Recherche, both Armiño and Manzano automatically eliminated the mistakes committed by Salinas in his version when he used one of the first French editions (circa 1920), which contained numerous printing errors, as the basis for his translation. Since no one until this time had revised or retranslated the third volume into Spanish, some of these mistakes were particularly glaring. There existed, for example, in the first paragraph of El mundo de Guermantes an erroneous statement that any devoted reader of Proust should have noticed. Even though the protagonist did not adapt well to new environments and suffered near trauma in the previous volume when he spent his first night at the hotel in Balbec, one still found in all editions of Salinas’s version: “yo, que asimilaba tan fácilmente las cosas nuevas como abandonaba tan fácilmente las antiguas…” (Ref. 13, p. 9, my emphasis).

Armiño and Manzano avoided this error because all French editions since the late 1920s replaced the first instance of “aisément” with “difficilement” (compare Ref. 14, p. 9 with Ref. 6, Vol. 2, p. 309). In this case, Armiño’s version only differs from that of Salinas by the similar substitution of “difícilmente” in the first part (Ref. 11, p. 11). On the other hand, Manzano preferred to employ a different structure: “yo…que asimilaba las cosas nuevas con tanta dificultad como facilidad tenía para abandonar las antiguas…” (Ref. 12, p. 9). Once again, we can attribute this modification to the translator’s
desire to have the translation read as if it had been written by a native Spanish speaker. Anyone who teaches Spanish knows that the repetition of adverbs ending in “-mente” is regularly avoided. But it is also interesting to note that, in his recently published memoirs, Gabriel García Márquez confessed that he banished such adverbs from his entire literary work (Ref. 15, p. 310).

I would also observe that the new translations of the third volume were far more carefully executed. Having abandoned his version one quarter of the way through, Pedro Salinas left many obvious mistakes, which were not corrected by the translator who completed this volume, José María Quiroga Pla. This son-in-law of Miguel de Unamuno was otherwise a very good translator. I have found few mistranslations by him, but since he also used a very early edition of Le côté de Guermantes, printing errors in the original led to mistakes in his version.6

In the two new translations of the third volume, I also found it interesting how Armíño’s use of notes contrasted with Manzano’s refusal to make such explanations. On one occasion, however, this decision even meant reducing the text. Like Salinas (Ref. 13, p. 23) before him, Armíño felt the need to add a note to explain the incorrect usage of French partitives by the cook Françoise, but he showed the mistake in his text by including the preposition “de” without the remainder of the article:

Por lo demás, si ponía tanto empeño en que se supiese que teníamos “de dinero” (porque ignoraba el empleo correcto de lo que Saint-Loup llamaba los artículos partitivos, y decía “tener de dinero,” “traer de agua”), en que nos creyesen ricos….(Ref. 11, p. 22)7

For his part, in order to avoid the explanation, Manzano eliminated from his text the misuse of the partitive and the parenthetical commentary, which had always been included in the original. Thus, we find in his version only the following: “Por lo demás, si tanto le interesaba propalar que teníamos dinero, que éramos ricos…” (Ref. 12, p. 22).8

I would observe, on the other hand, that Manzano was very skillful in his translation of puns, which allowed him to avoid some of the notes that appear in Armíño’s version, as well as that of his predecessors. One case in point is the “bureau d’esprit” that the Duc de Guermantes attributed to Madame de Villeparisis, and which the young protagonist later associated with a desk (Ref. 6, Vol. 2, p. 448-449). Here, Manzano made his own play on words by using “despacho intelectual” in the first instance and “escritorio de despacho” in the second (Ref. 12, pp. 157-158). In contrast, Armíño felt the need to explain by means of a note the relation between “oficina de ingenio” and “buró,” but he also included another to state that the French phrase “bureau d’esprit” was derived from the Satires by Boileau (Ref. 11, p. 135 and p. 1,017).9

In the race to finish translating Proust’s text, Mauro Armíño remains in first place because A la busca del tiempo perdido II also contains Sodoma y Gomorra. This, the fourth volume, unlike the preceding one, already had three versions: the first by the Argentine Marcelo Menasché (1945) and two others by the Spaniards Fernando Gutiérrez (1952) and Consuelo Berges (1967). Although I could indeed compare these to the new translation by Armíño, I would prefer to wait for the text by Manzano. I will merely end by noting that Armíño is more faithful to Proust than Berges, who tried to improve and simplify Proust’s style. As I demonstrated in my presentation in Los Angeles, Consuelo Berges (whose version appears in the most widely distributed edition) reordered and omitted several elements in the first sentence of Sodome et Gomorrhe (Ref. 2, pp. 198-199). For this reason, among numerous others, I am very pleased that the Recherche is being retranslated into Spanish, and I look forward to the publication of the final volumes by Mauro Armíño and Carlos Manzano. I hope to study these translations in the future. Thus, I will reserve my final judgment on their texts until they have been completed.

Notes
1. Both translators have contacted me by e-mail. Finding my Los Angeles presentation in the online listing of ATA’s Annual Conference Program, Carlos Manzano wrote in November 2001 to inform me of the appearance of his second volume and to request copies of my studies. He then explained how he came to translate Proust and his intentions as a translator of the Recherche. Similarly, at the end of October 2002, Mauro Armíño, who had been informed by Manzano of our correspondence, wrote to tell me of the publication of the most recent volumes by both of them, and to encourage me to study these.

2. Losada Editorial of Buenos Aires has continued to publish the Argentine translation of the Recherche that Estela Canto left at the time of her death in 1994. Although A la sombra de las muchachas en flor (2002) and Del lado de Guermantes (2003)
seem to be fine translations, like Del lado de Swann (2000), I have chosen not to discuss these versions in this study because I have found no information on Canto’s theory of translation.

3. In my Los Angeles paper, I compared in detail the versions by Salinas, Gómez de la Serna, and Armiño of another passage from A la sombra de las muchachas en flor (see Ref. 2, pp. 195-197). I have subsequently determined that, like Armiño, Manzano more adequately translated the passage in question.

4. I must observe that the second part did not even begin at the same point in the version by Salinas. Following the first French edition, whose division of the text became outdated in 1925, the text by the Spanish poet (which was used in most Spanish editions until 2000) has the second part commence after the protagonist’s arrival in Balbec rather than before his trip there (See Ref. 9, p. 319).

5. As I observed in Los Angeles, “el siglo xvi” does not correspond to “le XVIIe siècle,” “catarros” is not the equivalent of “rhumatismes,” and “gratitud” is a mistranslation of “gratuité” (Ref. 2, pp. 197-198).

6. Concerning one of the servants of Madame de Villeparisis, one reads in all French editions since the late 1920s the following: “Un jeune domestique, à l’air hardi et à la figure charmante (mais rognée si juste pour rester parfaite...” (Ref. 7, Vol. 2, p. 497, my emphasis). However, in the first editions (Ref. 14, p. 179) one found the word “rogue” (arrogant) instead of “rognée” (trimmed), which obviously confused Quiroga Pla. For this reason, he attributed the servant’s perfect features to his arrogance and shifted around some of the elements: “Un criado joven, de apuesta planta y fisonomía encantadora (pero arrogante, lo justo para seguir siendo perfecta...” (Ref. 13, p. 226, my emphasis). Neither Armiño (Ref. 11, p. 178) nor Manzano (Ref. 12, p. 209) were confronted by this problem.

7. Armiño’s note is the following: “La incorrección de Françoise estriba en la eliminación del obligado artículo partitivo en este tipo de construcciones en francés: avoir de l’argent, apporter de l’eau” (Ref. 11, p. 996).

8. This version is very different from the original French, which is the same in the 1920 and 1988 editions: “Si elle tenait tant d’ailleurs à ce que l’on sût que nous avions ‘d’argent’ (car elle ignorait l’usage de ce que Saint-Loup appelait les articles partitifs et disait ‘avoir d’argent,’ ‘apporter d’eau’), à ce qu’on nous sût riches...” (Ref. 14, p. 20 and Ref. 6, Vol. 2, p. 321).

9. Furthermore, I would point out that Armiño’s “oficina de ingenio” is better than Salinas’s “abierta tienda de ingenio” (Ref. 13, pp. 169-170) because a desk is more likely to be found in an office than in a store.

References
The challenge of translating humor is presented full force in Fouad Laroui’s novel De quel amour blessé, a social satire in the guise of a Romeo and Juliet takeoff featuring a Jewish girl, Judith, and an Arab youth, Jamal, in present-day Paris. Tone is the novel’s predominant element. The challenges the novel presents to the translator arise from its extravagant use of allusions, the equally extravagant use of clichés, sayings, and proverbs, and an abundance of puns and other word play. Alain van Crutgen’s description of certain authors exquisitely captures my experience translating this novel:

...writers who like words, who caress them, who turn them over, who manipulate them lovingly, but above all who treat the sense and the sound of words like a plaything, maybe because, to a certain extent, they have retained a childlike spirit within their adult shells and consider existence to be a tragedy about which it is best to laugh. They are also, each in his own way, virtuosos, jugglers, whose rich knowledge of their own language and of foreign languages enables verbal acrobatics that initially elicit delighted laughter from the translator, whose joy quickly turns to despair when he sets about the task of reproducing this humor in [his target language].

...Evidently, loss of meaning is unavoidable when such authors give free rein to their demons of the grotesque, of humor, of derision. (26-7, my translation)

Could a theory of humor have been of use to me during the translation process? One such theory proposed by Thomas Veach (1998) seems to adequately explain many aspects of humor. In essence, Veach claims that there are three necessary and sufficient conditions for humor perception (humor perception and humor are used interchangeably, as it is assumed that humor exists only when perceived):

1. V(iolation): A principle the perceiver cares about is Violated.
2. N(ormal): The perceiver has a strong view of the situation as being Normal.

“...In literature, the sound of language is important...”

Veach claims that the subjective moral order is being violated when humor is perceived. He assumes that by “moral order” we are talking about the principles that define “the way things are supposed to be, the right way to do things, ...the proper arrangement of the natural and social world, the proper conduct of behavior.” We readily concede that the principles governing behavior vary greatly from one culture or individual to another: moral order is subjective. Under discussion here is not the capital-M, absolute Morality of philosophers and ethicists. Rather, Veach is considering the lowercase-m morality, defined very broadly as “the issues people actually care about.” Thus, “a condition [or principle] is moral if and only if, first, the perceiver thinks it ought to be a certain way, and second, the perceiver cares about it.” It follows that a “subjective moral violation” is “a violation of a moral principle that the perceiver cares about” (Veach 1998).

Veach goes on to claim that humor perception varies with the perceiver’s degree of commitment to the moral principle that is being violated. Table 1 on page 24 (adapted from Veach 1998) presents a three-level scale correlating moral commitment to humor perception. Perhaps the best way to explain this idea is through examples. Consider the potentially highly charged category of religious jokes and assume a perceiver who has been raised Roman Catholic. Level 1: If this perceiver hears a joke that makes fun of the tenets of Judaism or Islam, she may not understand or get it, so, in this case, she will be neither offended nor amused. Level 2: If, on the other hand, she hears a joke that pokes fun at some minor aspect of Catholicism or Christianity, she will likely get the joke and may be amused, but not offended. Level 3: In the third case, a joke based on what the perceiver considers to be one of the most sacred tenets of Roman Catholicism is likely to be found offensive by her and not amusing, even though she may very well get the joke.

For translators, the implications of Veach’s “moral violation” theory of humor are quite simple. First, if humor is based on violations of dearly held principles, and these principles vary from one culture to another, then something that is funny in the original may be not funny or even offensive to the target audience. Second, the ability of the translator to identify the specific principles violated will affect his ability to discover what is funny and to reproduce the humor in his translation.

Veach’s analysis of the humor of satire is tangentially interesting, given that our motivating novel is a satire. Essentially, satire consists of a moral violation presented deadpan as though it were normal or unremarkable.
Furthermore, there is an implied audience who do not detect the violation. This inability of the implied audience to detect moral violations is itself another moral violation (Veach 1998). As for the persuasive impact of satire, Victor Raskin (among others) claims that a prerequisite to understanding a satire is that the reader must have already been persuaded of the satire’s rhetorical point (quoted in Veach 1998). That is, if the reader has no commitment whatsoever to the moral principles being violated, he will simply not understand the satire (see Table 1).

However, in this article we are mainly interested in linguistic humor or word play. In making a case that linguistic humor is explained by his moral violations theory, Veach falls back on the idea that word play is not a violation of an absolute morality, but rather a violation of things people care about. Or, simply put, word play is language that is not “normal.” The brief, and incomplete, typology of word play below illustrates this concept (types are taken from Veach, Leibold, van Crugten, and Raskin). Examples are drawn from Laroui’s De quel amour blessé and my translation of it, Judith and Jamal.

Types of Word Play

A. Linguistic ambiguity (puns and set jokes): Two scripts, one a violation, one normal

The following is the unspoken reaction of Jamal’s mother (in contrast to the rage expressed by Judith’s father) when they discover their children are dating each other:

Bah! Une Juive, une Grecque…De toute façon, son fils était un homme. (43)

Bah! A Jew, a Greek…Either way her son was a man.

The normal script in this example is, of course, that her son is “grown up” (a man), and the second script, the violation, is that the son is “not homosexual.”

B. Malformation (dialect, register): Strong opinions about “correctness” violated

Here, the narrator (who is Jamal’s cousin) recalls how Jamal’s older brother, Mohamed, slurred his words together when he was a teenager:

—Tftpriéomin?, ce qui, déroulé, voulait dire: Tu fais ta prière, au moins? (34)

“Yasedyerprairahope?” which, stretched out, meant, “You said your prayer, I hope?”

Note the greater condensation in the original, and the change from at least (au moins) to I hope in English, to achieve a smoother flow when running the sounds together.

C. Double-shift effect (“twisted” expressions): Metaphors taken literally or allusions altered

After their visit to Mohamed, the narrator admits to Jamal that he doesn’t know if Jamal’s brother has been brainwashed in Morocco. Even if the brother has been brainwashed, the responsibility for his dramatic transformation to a zombie-like state rests elsewhere:

Cela dit, rendons à Marianne ce qui lui appartient: c’est la France qui a esquinté ton frère. (35-6)

But, be that as it may, let us render unto Marianne that which is Marianne’s: it was France that screwed up your brother.

The twist, of course, is that Caesar has been replaced in this famous biblical quotation (Matthew 22:21, quoted in Bartlett) by Marianne, the symbol of the Republic of France.

D. Anachronisms, neologisms, euphemisms: “Weird” words in a “normal” communication

Judith’s father reacts melodramatically when he finds out that the young couple did not split up as he thought they had:

Il se précipita chez Nouvelles Frontières, acheta un passage sur le premier galion en partance pour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Violation Interpretation</th>
<th>Commitment to Principle</th>
<th>Humor Perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>no violation</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Gets it  Is offended Is amused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>violation + normal</td>
<td>weak</td>
<td>yes   no yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>violation, not normal</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>yes   yes no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tel-Aviv et expédia la jouvenelle loin, très loin, de la rue de Charonne. (42)

He rushed to Nouvelles Frontières, secured a passage on the first galleon bound for Tel-Aviv, and conveyed his demoiselle far, far away from Rue de Charonne.

The use of anachronisms here produces a chivalric tone—Judith’s father protects his chattel from the invader (Jamal) by spiriting her away to a safe haven. Galleon is a direct translation. Damsel could have been used in place of demoiselle, but the latter was chosen for its French echoes. (As a general principle, anachronisms and euphemisms were translated via English appropriations from the French whenever possible, in lieu of English words of other derivation.)

E. Sound play (alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, rhyme, rhythm, etc.): Sound—meaning correspondence highlighted

En route to visit Mohamed, Jamal and the narrator are stopped at least nine times by gendarmes. After having hurled Jamal’s French passport into the roadside bushes, the last gendarme demands to see what is in the trunk of the car:

— Qu’est-ce ?
— Cassettes. (25)

“What’s zat?”
“Cassettes.”

In these two very short lines, the reply introduces a momentarily frivolous tone by establishing a singsong rhythm (two-syllable utterances: one rising, the second falling) and an echoing assonance (repetition of sounds, not necessarily alliterative or rhyming).

This frivolity underscores the narrator’s basic refusal to take the gendarmes and their roadblocks seriously.

Is Humor Translatable?

Thus, armed with a theory of humor and a definition of word play, we turn our attention to what translators have to say about translating humor. Van Crugten’s view, “Translation, a re-creation? Maybe, but foremost a recreation” (32, my translation), corroborates nicely with Herzberg and Mones’s observation, “The essence of humor is the willingness to play.” Furthermore, Herzberg and Mones’s proposition that humor is “an enjoyable juggling of social taboos” is not dissimilar to Veach’s claim that humor involves a violation of the (subjective) moral order.

So humor is fun, but is it actually translatable? Ronald Landheer admits that intentional ambiguity, often the root of humorous discourse, presents a challenge demanding “skill, ingenuity, perseverance (if not a cryptogrammatic mind!) on the part of the translator.” Nevertheless, he lambastes translators who subscribe to the “a priori dogma of intranslatability,” for, as we know, ignoring word play results in a tangible loss in the target text. Landheer suggests, instead, that searching for an équivalent communicatif can yield an entirely satisfactory translation 80-90% of the time. He elaborates that neither conforming to the “good usage” norm in the target language nor fidelity to the source text is an essential requirement in translating humorous ambiguities. An analogous ambiguous effect can often be achieved by slightly changing the linguistic form or even the content of the message, using one type of word play in place of another. To do this, one must exploit the strengths and weaknesses of the languages with which one is working (34, 41-2, my translations). (We would extend Landheer’s ideas to all types of word play.)

Landheer does raise the question of the effect on translatability of the specific language pair (39), leading to the perhaps obvious observation that the more similar the two cultures and languages are, the greater the possibility of effectively translating humor (Raphaelson-West 129, 133). In the case of French-into-English translation, the translator benefits from the rich historical interaction that has bequeathed us, first, an English vocabulary more than 40% derived from French, and second, the many parallel concepts resulting from a shared Judeo-Christian tradition, Western cultural heritage, and general world view (moral order in Veach’s terms). Recall Veach’s statement that to both understand a joke and find it funny, one must have a not-too-strong moral commitment to the principle being violated. It follows that closely related cultures will have similar, though not identical, senses of humor.

Now let’s go back to communicative equivalence, which Landheer summarizes as follows:

The essential thing about the translation of word play is neither its linguistic structure nor (often) the exact content of its message, but more often its pragma-rhetorical value. What is important is less its internal structure, its micro-contextual coherence, than its external and argumentative structure, and its macro-contextual coherence. (42, my translation)

Landheer is, in fact, talking about what Nida and Tabor call dynamic equivalence, “a translation principle according to which a translator seeks to translate the meaning of the
original in such a way that the TL [target language] wording triggers the same impact on the TC [target culture] audience as the original wording did upon the ST [source text] audience” (Leonardi 1.3). (Like humor, equivalence is a hotly debated term: see Leonardi for an overview.) Most fiction translators today would agree that dynamic equivalence is their goal, with literal translation employed only to the extent that it fulfills this goal.

Clifford Landers, administrator of ATA’s Literary Division, points out that comedy and self-referential language (discussing its own grammatical structure, or involving puns and other types of word play) are prime candidates for adaptations (i.e., dynamic equivalence) rather than literal translations (56-58).

The examples given earlier were more or less literal translations that were presented to illustrate various types of word play. The following examples posed translation problems requiring varying degrees of adaptation to achieve dynamic equivalence.

In this first excerpt, Jamal’s mother, Mina, comes to the rescue of Judith and Jamal, who have just walked in the front door, unaware that Jamal’s father is at home. The young couple stop dead in their tracks with Judith trapped, unseen, behind Jamal, until Mina releases them all from this freeze frame by whisking Judith away:

Mina…enveloppe [Judith] dans son vaste mouvement et l’entraîne ni vue ni connue, la belle corpulence de l’une occultant la minceur modieuse de l’autre, dans l’escalier qui mène vers les chambres d’en bas. (48)

Mina…envelops [Judith] in her vast movement and trails her along, neither seen nor her presence even noticed (the beautiful corpulence of the one obscuring the fashionable emaciation of the other), down the stairway that leads to the bedrooms below.

In the original, modieuse, a neologism formed by combining mode (fashion) and odieuse (odious), and modifying minceur (thinness), means “odiously fashionable.” No existing equivalent word was found in English, nor did this translator succeed in inventing one. Instead, a negative connotation has been incorporated into the concept of “thinness” by expressing it as emaciation. And, because the noun follows the adjective in English and vice versa in French, in each case a description that seems, at first, to be a compliment is transformed into an insult by the second word in the noun phrase.

The second example is taken from the very end of the story, where the narrator pays a visit to Jamal’s father, during which he surreptitiously discovers, by deciphering a form lying face down beside the phone, that Jamal is in prison. He has just made out the final heading on this prison visitation form (something like “Relationship to Detainee”), and is now deciphering what is written next to the heading:

En regard, tracées en majuscules maladroites, quatre lettres frêles et nettement séparées, dressés haut comme autant de signaux de détresse, quatre lettres qui me semblent soudain contenir tout le malheur du monde: FÈRE. (148)

Opposite it, traced in an awkward capitals, are six frail and distinctly separate letters (oh-so-tall, like oh-so-many signals of distress), six letters that seem suddenly to hold all the sorrow of the world: FATHER.

The sadness in this passage is conveyed in large part by the sounds themselves. The first underlined phrase, said aloud, is as awkward as Jamal’s immigrant father himself. In the second underlined phrase, the repetition in each language of the sound /o/ forms an onomatopoetic lament, “oh…oh…oh…” Much would be lost if these and other sound plays were ignored in this passage.

The third and final example is perhaps the most interesting because it is to some degree a failed translation. Another cousin of Jamal’s, an Islamic fundamentalist, has just banned after-dinner checkers and music from the household. The narrator has tried to defend these leisure activities by engaging the cousin in a scripture-quoting duel. Jamal’s father, Abal-Khaïl, is the final arbiter:

Abal-Khaïl n’avait pas compris grand-chose à l’affaire mais, entre le glabre et le goupillon, son choix fut vite fait. (57)

Abal-Khaïl hadn’t understood much of the exchange, but between the Clean-Shaven and the Bearded One, his choice was quickly made.

The underlined phrase in French is an incredibly rich and funny twist on a standard expression, le sabre et le goupillon, which translates literally as the sword and the aspergillum (holy water sprinkler). The phrase refers metaphorically to the military and the Catholic church, historically the two great powers in France and the two traditional occupations of non-inheriting sons of the aristocracy. The concept generalizes to “secular versus
religious.” No equivalent English expression was unearthed.

The twisted expression le glabre et le goupillon transfers the dichotomy to an Islamic context, where glabre (literally clean-shaven) is opposed to goupillon, a visual metaphor for bearded (imagine “hairy” evergreen branches formerly used to sprinkle holy water on the congregation at Catholic masses). Thus, in an Islamic context, we have the secular or clean-shaven man (the narrator) juxtaposed with the religious or bearded man (the other cousin).

The most satisfactory English solution found retains the rhetorical device used in the original (synecdoche: the part representing the whole). Clean-shaven is preferred to crew-cut (hints at a military aspect; serves no referential purpose in the Islamic context) and smooth-cheeked (implies a youth as opposed to one who chooses to shave, i.e., loses reference to secularism in the Islamic context). Bearded One nicely echoes earlier references to the cousin and his fundamentalist brethren. Unfortunately, two entire layers of humor have been lost: the twist or shift from the standard expression (sabre + glabre) and the shift from Catholic to Islamic context for goupillon (aspergillum + beard).

Traduttore, traditore. Translator, traitor. Guilty as accused in this case.

So, how does a translator achieve dynamic equivalence? How do you recognize word play in the source language? How do you even begin to translate word play? First, if something doesn’t quite make sense in the target language, it was probably translated literally when it shouldn’t have been. To unearth multiple meanings of the original (and then to find equivalent terms), search and research dictionaries, phrase books, and the Internet. Use a dictionary of slang. An excellent resource is Dictionnaire des proverbes/Dictionary of Proverbs (Françoise Bulman, Les Presses de L’Université de Laval), which cross-references proverbs in the two languages. Bartlett’s Famous Quotations is also surprisingly useful.

Read the original (and your translation) out loud. Be playful, free associate, take your time, and let problems simmer. Don’t forget to make good use of that most valuable of resources, other people. Consult native speakers of the source language. Hang out with punsters and people who like to play with language. Test out your translations on others ("Have you ever heard an expression something like this?" "How would you express this idea?" "What would you say in this situation?"). And I repeat, because it can’t be stressed enough, read the original (and your translation) out loud. In literature, the sound of language is important.

In closing, we turn to Debra Raphaelson-West whose words summarize, albeit simplistically, the ideas explored in this article: “It is possible to translate humor if you keep in mind that the translation will not always be as humorous as the original. What is essential is to keep the cultural context in mind, to locate the humorous… aspects of the text, and to try to… duplicate these aspects” (140).

References


Veach, Thomas C. “A Theory of Humor.” Humor: the International
A New Series of European Classics in Translation for American College Students

By Tom Lathrop

It is surprising how one thing leads to another. Life is a series of unplanned occurrences, twists and turns, where casual thoughts or minor coincidences can lead to wonderful things. A case in point is my translation of Don Quijote. Who would have thought that my resolve to improve upon the translation of a classic would eventually lay the groundwork for an entire series of European classics in translation? How the notion of this series got started goes back quite some time.

Shortly after reading Don Quijote for the first time in 1964, I decided to attempt a fresh translation of the work myself. At that time, there were already plenty of translations available in English (by J. M. Cohen, Walter Starkie, John Ormsby, Samuel Putnam, Peter Motteux, and several others). Since then, at least three new translations have been published (by Burton Raffel, John Rutherford, and, most recently, Edith Grossman). So why in the world did I feel that another translation of Don Quijote was urgently needed? My primary reason for undertaking this translation was that most, if not all, of these earlier translations were based on defective Spanish editions that were not true to the original.

How could such a great classic be published in a less-than-perfect edition? This kind of thing couldn’t happen to Shakespeare, but it has occurred frequently with Cervantes. Here’s why.

Cervantes stated that he wrote Don Quijote to satirize the popular 16th-century romances of chivalry, with the goal being to poke so much fun at them that no others would be written. In Spain at the time, more than 50 such romances had been published. These books always dealt with knights in armor roaming the world seeking adventures, clashes, and amorous encounters. The stories were quite far-fetched, with unrealistic plots and exaggerated characters. (For example, the hero of one such tale, Belianís de Grecia, received 101 mortal wounds, and that was just in the first half of the book!) Doubtless, Cervantes felt completely justified in his decision to create a satire of the popular genre. Apparently his approach worked beautifully, because there were no new romances of chivalry written after Don Quijote.

…”The Spanish editions are fine for Spanish students, but American students were stumbling over the text…”

When writing Don Quijote, Cervantes sought to create an intentionally ridiculous piece of storytelling to emphasize the flawed and sloppy nature of the classic romance. Since the principal characters of these romances frequently involved a knight and his squire, Cervantes created the characters of the knight Don Quijote and the squire Sancho Panza, and sent them on outrageous adventures. Cervantes also ridiculed the stilted dialogue of those early romances. For instance, in his role as knight errant, Don Quijote uses plenty of archaisms that are frequently misunderstood, mostly with amusing results.

But Cervantes’s satire went beyond poking fun at the characters, action, and language of the romance stories. He also imitated the careless writing style prevalent to the genre. The popular romance authors were interested in telling a story, but were not too concerned about how they relayed its details. As a result, inconsistencies due to sloppy plot organization abound. Many authors didn’t bother to correct inaccuracies, so these generally appeared in the published version. After all, they reasoned, who cared? In addition to general carelessness on the part of the authors, many of these manuscripts were divided into chapters just before going to press, typically by someone other than the author. This also attributed to errors in plot organization (such as erroneous chapter titles) and slipshod storytelling. To mimic this lack of organization and inconsistency, Cervantes made sure that almost everything that was stated in Don Quijote was contradicted at some point in the story.

However, it seems that Cervantes’s carefully planned intentions for satire, which he achieved so wonderfully in the original version of Don Quijote, have been misconstrued in the years following the story’s publication. Because Cervantes was so successful in replicating the style, or lack of, of the old romances, many later-day scholars don’t seem to realize that he intentionally wrote Don Quijote as a satire. As a result, after encountering the many intentional flaws Cervantes inserted into the story as a means of emphasizing the utter ridiculousness of popular romance, many have called Cervantes himself careless. Consequently, when editors and translators edited and translated Don Quijote, they actually corrected the inconsistencies and contradictions, doubtless thinking they were doing Cervantes a service. However, all they really accomplished was to cheat adroit readers out of the enjoyment of the total satire Cervantes was creating.

Even the Royal Academy of the Language (guardians of the Spanish language, composed of a body of linguistic scholars whose number...
included the best writers and academics), in its own edition of *Don Quijote* made during the 1780s, “rectified” inconsistencies and “fixed” contradictions. A number of modern editions and translations have based their texts on this falsified Academy edition. Thus, the falsifications have continued into the translations. Even those editions and translations based on the original editions of 1605-1615 correct and homogenize the text. In addition, some translators have taken enormous liberties with Cervantes’s novel. For example, of the 272 items attributed to Cervantes in *Bartlett’s Quotations*, 182 were made up by the translator Peter Motteux.

For these reasons, it was my plan to prepare a translation based on a solid and reliable Spanish edition of *Don Quijote*. But whose edition could I trust? My own, of course. So, before I could start on the translation, I needed to prepare a new Spanish edition of the text that preserved the contradictions and inconsistencies of the original in all their splendor.

It was my intention that this book would be used in American college classrooms. Until my version came out, students in the U.S. had to use editions prepared in Spain for Spanish students. The Spanish editions are fine for Spanish students, but American students stumble over the text. Besides coming from a different cultural background, most American students do not understand Spanish well enough to read the text critically and accurately. Obviously, the problem with the Spanish versions is that there are many cultural-specific references that are readily understood by Spanish readers, but not by American students. Furthermore, since modern Spanish editions have been prepared with Spaniards in mind as the main audience, insufficient footnotes are provided for the benefit of a person who is not a native Spanish speaker. Needless to say, American students need a lot of help to get through the book. To assist students, I included 10,504 marginal glosses in English to save them many trips to the dictionary. I also added 3,742 notes containing information on biblical, historical, and mythological personages, as well as other cultural-specific terms and concepts they might not be familiar with.

As I worked, I discovered many places where students would benefit from such notes. For instance, at one point in my translation, I came to the word *noria* in the text, which means “waterwheel.” But I thought that the context of the passage in which *noria* was being used indicated that the term did not signify a waterwheel in a river, but rather a horse-driven waterwheel just like the one my brother photographed in 1956 in Mallorca (see photo).

In order to help American readers visualize the term, I decided to include a photograph of this type of waterwheel in the text. I figured I could just italicize *noria* in the text and put a short caption under the picture. This idea soon blossomed into my using dozens of small illustrations. In this way, American readers would be given a visual reference to unfamiliar items in the text, while, at the same time, I could avoid excessive reference notes that would be cumbersome to annotate (and that would probably only confuse the reader even more). For instance, what do the stone Bulls of Guisando look like? What does the Giralda Tower in Seville look like? How about the Moorish palace in Zaragoza, or the windmills on the plains of La Mancha (they’re not like the Dutch ones Americans automatically think of)?

From there, I thought about other things my readers, and I suppose even Spanish readers, probably wouldn’t know concerning other cultures and historical contexts. For instance, *Don Quijote* mentions an astrolabe. What did one look like and how was it used? He describes the Pantheon in Rome, so I thought it would be a good idea to include an illustration of this structure. He talks about flute and drum players. From this, we might imagine two instrumentalists, but the description actually refers to a single person.
To round out the translation, I included the illustrations that Gustave Doré used at the beginning of each chapter in his 1863 French translation. In addition, every page has lines numbered in the margin, and at the top of each page there are a few words about what the page contains.

I am pleased to say that this edition has been enormously successful (in academic terms). This project has led me to think that it would be useful to have an entire series of European classics in translation. The reaction to this idea, which I elaborated on during my recent presentation at ATA’s Annual Conference in Phoenix, was quite positive.

Currently, I am in the process of seeking translators, most probably from the ranks of academics who teach courses in literature in translation, to collaborate in this project.

I think that this annotated, illustrated series will help students better understand the works of Flaubert or Tolstoy, as well as many other classic novelists, and will make these texts more enjoyable.

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Very Punny: Translating Word Play in Literature
Continued from page 27


* All articles from Meta were online at www.erudit.org/revue/meta.

The Two New Ways of Translating Proust into Spanish (Volumes II-III)
Continued from page 22

10. E-mail from Carlos Manzano to Herbert E. Craig. December 5, 2001.


Towards a New Model for the Evaluation of Assignments in the Study of Translation

By Richard Finks Whitaker

Few aspects of formal training in translation are more time-consuming for teachers and more fraught with discomfiting uncertainties for students and instructors alike than the grading of homework assignments. Nearly everyone would agree that translation skills are best developed through practice—the more, the better. It is also generally acknowledged that complementing interactive classwork with independent homework naturally broadens the range of opportunities for skills development. Yet, what is the most advantageous way for the instructor to evaluate these assignments so that feedback is both constructive and motivating?

Must considerable translation practice invariably lead to long, uneasy hours of grading for the instructor? Can anything still the rippling circles of bafflement and frustration that widen around the classroom when graded papers are handed back?

To raise the topic of the assessment of homework in the study of translation is to invite such questions—and many others. How is the translation instructor to escape the tedium of marking the same corrections on paper after paper? How is the translation student to avoid the confusion and demotivation that often result from finding one’s best efforts mercilessly scrawled upon with a bewilderment of strike-throughs and pen-overs? Can the instructor, faced with an otherwise lackluster rendering, remain objective about overall achievement when wowed by the occasional elegant turn of phrase or an unexpectedly apt spin on wording? When the purpose of an activity is to develop valued skills, which merits higher marks—the flat but conventionally correct rendering, or the flawed translation that is nevertheless clever or even brilliant in patches? And, since having students take turns reading their translations aloud (long a customary mode for checking the accuracy of translation homework in class) conveniently obviates the need for at-home grading, but leaves no record of all the acceptable and intriguing options variously proffered, how can the instructor more effectively share with the whole class the several interesting solutions that surface when students offer different ways of meeting the same translation challenge?

...In whatever form it may take and however it may be carried out, evaluation must always strive to remain true to its ultimate purpose: improving the quality of accomplishment...

What Language Theorists Say

Unfortunately, little so far in the rapidly expanding field of translation theory adequately addresses the practical instructional concerns of homework errors and their correction. The suggestions that do emerge from theorists specializing in translator training often seem to focus more on the perceived need for evaluation techniques applicable to the study of translation from the abundant literature on language instruction in general. Even in this area, however, matters of assessment tend to focus more on methods of testing than on techniques for evaluating class assignments. Apparently, some reluctance to tackle the topic head-on exists everywhere despite—or perhaps precisely because of—the fact that, as Jeremy Harmer (in The Practice of English Language Teaching) says: “Homework is not easy for teacher or students to get right.”

Interestingly, while Michael Lewis writes that “the question of the teacher’s attitude to mistakes and correction is probably the single most important issue in a language teacher’s development” (and adds: “In many ways, it is also central for [language] students”), not much space anywhere gets dedicated to dealing with the specifics of the matter. Alan Duff, in his guide to reappraising the role of translation tasks in the foreign-language class, has written: “Practice in translation does not mean setting written assignments to be returned to the students with the errors marked in red. It means, rather, giving students regular opportunities to compare and discuss their work with others, and to respond to suggestions.” Duff’s recommended approach purposely sidesteps the need for the marking of assignments. Instead, he encourages having language students translate orally and correct one another as they listen. (Duff states: “I am not suggesting...that we dispense altogether with written transla-
tion [in language classes]”—but he certainly sounds less than thrilled at the prospect when he then says: “It must be done, and needs to be corrected.”  

Clearly, another of Lewis’s observations about language instruction also holds true regarding the teaching of translation: “The kind of activities the teacher encourages in the classroom, and the kind which the teacher avoids or minimizes, will be strongly influenced by the teacher’s views of the role of mistakes and correction in learning.” Just as there are language instructors who cast a prescriptive eye on all that gets said or done in their class in Spanish or English (to cite the languages that will serve the present discussion as examples), there are no doubt translation instructors who regard “getting it right” in some limiting, cut-and-dried sense as a banner mission when teaching folks to translate. Still, over the years, language instruction as a discipline has become more effective as it has grown more welcomingly descriptive in its approach, and the teaching of translation today is undeniably more amply accommodating—and most promising—where educators acknowledge that there are more ways than one to say the same thing.

**Accepting an “Array of Rightness”**

In *Correction: Mistake Management: A Positive Approach for Language Teachers*, authors Mark Bartram and Richard Walton wisely stress that “there is a wide range of ‘correctness’ in a language.” They urge the recognition and application of what Lewis has called “a spectrum of likelihood—with forms being more or less likely to occur—especially in particular situations or media of expression.” The remarks are meant to encourage language instructors to be more tolerant of variant forms of wording and phrasing. Translation instructors should also find these comments worthy of note, since translating—as Duff has correctly observed—“is an activity which, by its very nature, invites speculation and discussion.”

Practice in translation is all about possibilities—exploring, finding, and weighing an array of acceptable ways for expressing things. Such practice should be concerned less with striving for some blinkered, arbitrary view of “rightness” than with venturing in clear-eyed quest of variously suitable options. It is not enough for the translator to acknowledge that different manners of expression exist. Rather, whoever would translate well must actively seek out these variants and carefully compare and contrast them, weighing the strengths and weaknesses of the respective tasks they take. Translator and instructor Brian Mossop puts it succinctly: “We do not want students coming out of translation schools thinking there’s the ‘right way’ to do something. We want them to be able to look at what they are doing and to figure out what works for them, and to understand that there’s no such thing as one ‘right way’ to check your text.”

Would-be sharpshooters know to approach a practice range alert to the various possibilities that may present themselves. Likewise, translators-in-training would do well to draw near their text with a similar respect for remaining open and responsive to whatever may occur to them as they coolly take in the terrain and size up the scene. Like target practice, translation practice exists to provide invaluable chances to train one’s eye to pick out and narrow in on things with increasing accuracy and precision—and, time and again, to try one’s hand at hitting the mark. What matters at the level of such training is skills development: sharpening one’s ability to draw a bead on things, learning to keep a target well within one’s sights, refining mind and motor coordination almost to the point of reflex action, steadying and steeling the nerves—and then ultimately firing off one’s best shot. What matters is not getting a bull’s-eye with every pull on a trigger or tug of a bow. When practicing, what counts are all the signs one is steadily learning to zero in on that will bring one ever closer to the intended target. The main thing to keep in mind about a bull’s-eye is that there is room enough for several different shots to score their mark—not just space for a single, direct hit.

**Regarding Exercises and Assignments**

In translation study, it is helpful to distinguish between two main kinds of activity: 1) the *exercise*, which is often designed to provide opportunities for in-class pair or group work on controlled-focus tasks and for follow-up discussions on the lessons thus learned inductively; and 2) the take-home *assignment*, which is usually selected and structured to allow the student a chance to independently take on meaningful challenges of a broader nature. Exercises are often devised to help students hone in on a specific translation problem (for instance, how to match modal auxiliaries in English with verb forms for a corresponding tense in Spanish, or ways to work Spanish phrases involving descriptive adjectives into equivalents that conform to English syntax). Assignments are usually chosen differently, for either their practical value (such as when they are based on documents that professional translators are regularly called upon to translate: *constancias, actas de*
The in-class translation exercise allows the instructor to employ a variety of interactive instructional techniques. The tasks involved can be tackled by the class working in pairs, small groups, large teams, or as a whole, and the solutions may be spontaneously produced aloud (as in sight translation) or jotted down, exchanged and amended, reported on for discussion, or orally assessed. However, these tasks should not be evaluated for a grade. The homework assignment, on the other hand, is meant to encourage the student translator to be as individually resourceful as possible. The product of these assignments is often viewed as a sample of the student’s ability to successfully apply various strategies to solve several translation problems at once. Due to the considerable individual effort implied in carrying out the formal assignment, and because numerous resources are available to the student grappling independently with the task, such work is regularly considered appropriate for grading. While students benefit from both kinds of activities, formal evaluation figures in only on the comparatively more rigorous assignments, which consist of open-ended kinds of challenges which the student is individually responsible for meeting to the best of his or her ability. It is this autonomy of performance—this coming-to-grips and taking-a-stand alone, and thus putting one’s personal stamp on a text—that lends assignments the cast of an adequate enough reflection of the student’s level of mastery of the craft to warrant evaluation.

**Working Phrase by Phrase**

The question of how to assess translation homework is seldom resolved by the heavy penning of corrections. Teachers of composition in any language know that crosshatching student essays with scratch-outs and ink-ins is often sadly counterproductive. It is exhausting for the grader, deflating for the student, and seldom as instructive as it is meant to be. When it comes to marking translations with heavy-handed deletions and insertions, there is also the added risk of conveying that a single “right” way to handle things exists that the student has missed. Such correction implies that some golden phrase is turnable, and strongly suggests that only the person wielding the marking pen has the Midas touch.

The burden this attitude places on both parties is unfortunate. The student labors under the dispiriting likelihood that his or her efforts will fall short of a mark someone else has set that is beyond his or her capabilities, while the teacher bears the onus of always having to know the one true way through the woods. Although certain elements of pathfinding are indeed employable on the trek through the wilds of any new text to be translated, often neither trainer nor trainee knows whether it is the trees or the forest that one should keep eyeing. The text of an assignment should always be viewed as fresh terrain, as uncharted and open for the crossing as every new territory is to any explorer. Be it prairie or jungle (and a text will often have stretches and patches of both), the lay of the land will pose challenges that can be met by various approaches, rather than a single, well-defined path. Of course, it falls to the translation instructor to share rough-country trekking tips, but each student must ultimately find his or her own overland route. And once the topography has been separately crossed, it behooves all hikers to sit a bit to reflect on the several trails independently blazed. Only then can decisions be made about the relative efficacy of certain inroads and the viability of other byways.

It may help the instructor—as it should aid the student—to consider the text of a translation assignment not so much as a sweeping, thicketed expanse of print, but, rather, as a series of separate but linked “autonomous units”—clumps of trees, stands of trunks, even bundles of branches and twigs. Translation instructor and author Christopher Taylor defines the autonomous unit as, “at clause, phrase, or word level[,]...a stretch of language that can be translated as a single unit in the target text.”11 The average sentence consists of several such natural word groupings, which can be thought of as “chunks of meaning” or semantic clusters that, “when bound together within the confines of the text, ‘mean’ something which is more (or less) than the sum of its parts.”12 These are phrases /that syntactically hold together, /making little snippets of linguistic sense /as the sentence gradually takes shape /and runs its course.

As “a unit of text corresponding to a unit of meaning for translation purposes,”13 the inelegantly labeled chunk is both an integral part of the broader context from which it can be broken off and an essentially “autonomous” construct. It can stand apart as a translatable entity: a manageable set of lexical items linked in some graspable sense by grammar and syntax. As such, the autonomous unit frees the translator to work through a sentence piece by meaningful piece, rather than looking...
at it either word-for-word (almost never a reliable approach) or as a whole (often the least wieldy way).

Obviously, identifying what constitutes viable units for translation requires both language sensitivity and a feeling for how translation works. The teacher should take the lead in this by modeling the process and scanning the text for units that are autonomous. However, students will quickly acquire this skill, and will soon be able to break long strings of words down into short, cohesive phrases that facilitate translating. The procedure, known as “minimal bracketing,” has been defined as follows: “in a translation context, the dividing of text into the fewest semantically autonomous units possible.” This is a process that not only helps the translator move forward through the text, but also assists the translation instructor in evaluating the student’s ability to work through a text line by line.

**On Two-Toned Highlighting and Feedback Sheets Listing Translation Options**

The realities of grading are difficult to prettify. There are all these papers in heaps with all these words all over them. Instructors are usually reluctant to begin the process of marking stacks of homework, while students quickly grow wary of this most uncertain and ego-threatening aspect of their academic growth. Yet instructors and students alike know that feedback is essential. Neat bows on children’s sneakers do not just happen; from time to time, the nimbler fingers and harder nails of elders are needed for loosening fretted laces. Over and over, student translators must loop their loops loosely and tug, and instructors need to repeatedly hold out to their charges the freed aglets and patiently model the process again after every snarl has been worked out. All the well-tied shoes traipsing across the planet—and many a competent, securely tight translation—attest to the need for and effectiveness of this mentoring approach.

The translation instructor who assumes the role of mentor can let it literally color his or her approach to correcting homework assignments. Forget the dreaded red grading pen. Instead, use two text-highlighting markers with contrasting colors (lavender and lime green, perhaps). Then, with text highlighters at the ready, make a single stack of the students’ translations that need to be checked, and put the original text next to these for easy comparison. Scan the original text, pinpointing those autonomous units that you consider representative of the text and also significant linguistic challenges to students. Set up a two-column feedback sheet on the computer containing two parallel columns running down the page. On the left side of the sheet, type in the autonomous units selected from the original to be checked. The right column will be used to record the various ways students choose to translate these semantic clusters. Now the evaluation process can begin.

Where a proposed translation works well, color over the corresponding words on the student’s paper (in, say, lavender), and then record this version in the right column of the feedback sheet next to the original passage, possibly using bold-faced type to further distinguish the translation from the original (which remains unbolded in the left-hand column). What is ill advised or erroneous gets highlighted on the student’s homework in the contrasting color (lime, for instance). Where a student’s translation may be intriguing, but of dubious reliability or limited applicability, the student’s words can be marked in lavender, but also underscored by a thin wavy lime-green line to indicate that some reservation exists about the employability of this phrasing.

In this way, instead of reading an entire assignment from start to finish over and over again, a time-consuming and fatiguing process, the instructor can quickly assess the salient features in the students’ translations by reading only the segments of their renderings that correspond to the units chosen for the feedback sheet. By focusing on how each student has translated the same autonomous unit, and taking on only one such chunk at a time, the instructor can move through even a thick stack of papers surprisingly quickly, marking successful renderings in lavender and inadequate versions in lime, and recording, one below the other in the right column of the feedback sheet, any well-handled target-language phrasing worthy of note.

As the instructor reviews the papers, certain ways of wording things will likely seem more accurate, precise, or effective—or simply more felicitous—than others. The instructor will find it beneficial to shift these particularly employable options towards the top of the growing list in the right-hand column of the feedback sheet, so that they are the first versions students see when the feedback sheets are handed out with the returned homework. Doing so will also ensure that the best translations will be the first to be discussed in class when each autonomous unit is reviewed. Interesting but not wholly recommendable translations may be moved towards the bottom of the list for that autonomous unit, and perhaps even set apart in distinctly smaller type. While it is not necessary in each case for the instructor to strive for a perfectly prioritized set of
The grader assumes the role of both pleasurable and something of an adversary. The grader's role is to consider the most accurate and adequate translations there, unit by autonomous unit. Creating feedback sheets and keeping them organized is often easier than scratching tiny corrections and rewrites through errors and squeezing tiny commentary scribbled in margins. Highlighting homework is a pleasantly involving task for the instructor to consider and mark in rapid succession the ways in which all students have translated a single chunk of text. Limiting the focus to a single translation process is more objective and fairer than an approach in which the instructor feels obligated to check one translation of a text all the way through before moving on to the next. For one thing, a grader's mood and energy will fluctuate—and his or her memory and tolerance for errors will likely wax and wane—when working on correcting complete translations over a protracted period. The technique recommended here allows the instructor to consider and mark in rapid succession the ways in which all students have translated a single chunk of text. Limiting the focus intensifies and speeds the process. What grading cannot be completed in one sitting can be resumed at a later time with little chance that this lapse will affect either favorably or adversely the assessment of any individual student's achievement. Also, the grader who employs this method quickly loses sight of which student is proposing which translation, so there is less tendency for preconceived notions about a student's abilities to influence positively or negatively the instructor's appraisal of the work at hand. By colorfully contrasting what is successful with what is less so, the instructor provides feedback, graspable at a glance, on how well a student's efforts measure up—without the clutter of crimped interlinear rephrasings and commentary scribbled in margins. Using contrastive highlighting on the student's paper wordlessly yet clearly attests to the instructor's detailed evaluation of each translator's work, while the feedback sheets—as handouts separate from, yet based on and complementary to the students' homework—offer valuable additional guidance in an orderly fashion.

One particularly appealing aspect of this evaluation model is that the evaluator's efforts are both discreetly corrective and critically constructive. Assessing homework in this way becomes a productive undertaking, rather than a counterproductive chore. Teacher and students alike end up with a roster of possible ways to handle translating the source text—a register, resulting from everyone's input, that clearly reflects the dynamic re-creative nature of the translation process. Instructors who spend hours penning-in corrections understandably grow disgruntled when students gaze at their grade and then either disregard the corrector's markings or chafe at their sheer profusion and density, or simply opt to ignore what the instructor dedicated so much time to writing and wording with care. Feedback sheets are positive, interactive, and engaging in ways that traditional marking procedures seldom even aspire to be.

One of the subtlest frustrations instructors experience when correcting translations conventionally is the fact that the teacher is regularly the only one who is privy to all the interesting and often excellent options that pop up on students' papers. Feedback sheets offer graders who are uncomfortable with this situation a simple, gratifying solution that allows everyone to benefit from the strong work being done by each member of the class.
Towards a New Model for the Evaluation of Assignments in the Study of Translation Continued

Since the options recorded as feedback appear anonymously, students can weigh all listed renderings with objectivity. No translation and no translator is singled out as best or worst, and it is likely that all students will recognize several fragments of their own translations among the numerous phrasings supplied on a feedback sheet. The student who consistently does acceptable work can benefit greatly from the opportunity feedback sheets afford for considering different ways in which a translation can be carried off. The variety of fine renderings presented helps everyone avoid the assumption that his or her good work is above comparison. On the feedback sheet, students will often find translation options that had not occurred to them before, but that now strike them as workable and perhaps even preferable to their own. The least gifted translator in class can regard feedback sheets as personally non-threatening and filled with welcome models to study and emulate. And no one comes away with the impression that some lone preordained way of translating things was out there, wholly beyond the reach of any mortal less divinely inspired than the oracular instructor/ grader. All the translations featured emerge straight from, or are directly prompted by, the homework of students. This should prove to be satisfying for both instructor and trainees.

Where, during a given semester, an instructor may teach the same course to more than one group, student responses to the same assignment can be evaluated jointly and recorded on a feedback sheet meant to serve both or all groups. When the instructor offers the same course in consecutive or alternating semesters, it is best that the feedback sheet be created afresh for any assignment that is repeated, based specifically on the translations prepared by the present group. In this latter instance, a valid approach for the instructor is to open a new file with a copy of the latest prior feedback sheet for the assignment. The instructor who opts to check the same autonomous units may employ or adapt the format on file, but should replace the former group’s phrasings with translations from current students’ homework. Of course, the instructor may also elect to evaluate different word clusters. Once new entries have been made on the feedback sheet, by displacing but not yet removing the ones from prior students, it will be useful for the instructor to then read the phrasings from the former group’s translations. In most cases, present and past versions will be similar if not actually identical; nevertheless, some differences may be noted. The instructor will need to decide whether to include on the new feedback sheet a particularly appealing option from among a former group’s responses, if this was not a rendering that occurred to students currently enrolled in the course.

It should prove especially interesting to instructors, when comparing phrasings on new and old feedback sheets, to see if they can detect any differences that may reflect changes in their own judgment regarding the acceptability of the options chosen for inclusion on the sheet. Since languages are constantly evolving and, particularly in matters of style and form, one’s knowledge of and tastes for certain linguistic features may expand or alter, it should not really be surprising for the instructor—especially when reappraising ways to translate a text after a year has passed since last reviewing the material—to anticipate that a range of possible solutions to a problem can serve them well. Learning how others—one’s instructor, yes, but especially one’s classmates (soon to be colleagues)—handle a given phrase in a translation makes the budding professional better skilled at anticipating the need for a selective and sometimes collaborative approach towards translation. It also alerts erstwhile doubters to the value of teamwork, an especially important consideration for future professionals, since many major translation jobs call for teams of translators working both independently and in tandem to achieve a seamless product and meet a shared deadline.

More on the Applicability of this Model

The trainer who is open to the approach described here may still wonder how a lengthy translation assignment can be evaluated in this way. It is useful to point out that feedback sheets themselves can assist one in determining when enough of any text has been checked. Instructors are wont to assign students long texts to translate, only to later lament and bemoan their decision as they drag callous-fingered hands across the seemingly endless pages turned in for
correction. This is one reason why completing a feedback sheet is recommended, since it allows the instructor to be selective about the items to evaluate and eliminates the need for repeatedly marking the same corrections on every assignment turned in for review.

When presenting an assignment, the instructor should make it clear to students that not all of their work will be evaluated for a grade. Instead, the instructor will select parts of the assignment (not always the beginning lines, but often passages from different sections of the text) to be graded. Students should be alerted to the fact that points in their grade for a given task can be earned simply by completing the entire translation as assigned. Experience in applying this model has shown that when a feedback sheet reaches eight pages or so in length, enough text has been evaluated for the purposes of assessing overall performance.

Make sure to specifically ask students to translate all of an assigned text. This practice will teach students to carefully examine each element in a text, and how these units work together to make the text function as a whole. Randomly choosing from the complete translation only certain items to grade is justifiable on many counts. Doing so affords the instructor an opportunity to draw attention to the passages he or she considers especially worthy of note. It allows for sampling achievement in translation in much the same way as readers, editors, and critics do (that is, piecemeal, by focusing particularly on details that are telling). Finally, since the same features are graded on all papers, this evaluation method is fair.

Students usually acknowledge the efficacy of this procedure, but an especially earnest few may express some resentment about not being evaluated on every part of the translation they have labored over. An intensely grade-conscious student may feel (not necessarily wrongly) that some of his or her best work may go unconsidered in the scoring process. Instructors need to be prepared to explain the appropriateness of random-item analysis, which is, after all, common to testing, if not traditional for assessing homework. It may help to point out that, from a practical point of view, 6 or 8 pages of feedback are easier for students to assimilate than 16 or 18 pages would be. It is not realistic to expect anyone to carefully consider and internalize too large a number of corrections. In grading homework, more is not always better, however thorough it may seem. Still, some instructors may opt to reduce the length of the original assignment in order to be able to mark a translation in its entirety, and thus reduce student uneasiness about the matter.

In a course in which five assignments are evaluated for a grade, it is probable that around 40 pages of feedback sheets will be generated for study and review. Where the number ofgradable assignments is higher, a greater amount of feedback sheets will result. The level and objectives of a program should guide the instructor in deciding just how much homework assessment is really sufficient.

It should be emphasized here that feedback sheets are especially useful as springboards for follow-up discussions in class. You are not taking full advantage of this technique if you simply return homework with pages of feedback attached. The focus of discussion sessions can be best determined by the items featured on these handouts, which can serve first as study sheets and, later, as review sheets from which testable items may be drawn. (It should prove motivating to remind students of this fact.) Throughout a course, periodic spot checks can be applied to quiz students regarding forms and phrasings presented on the feedback sheets. Midterm and final exams can more fully test student mastery of the principles underlying the correct options outlined on these sheets (in addition to other matters dealt with in controlled-feature exercises, class lectures, and assigned readings on translation theory and practice). Moreover, feedback sheets have a long post-course afterlife as useful references for future consultation. Since assignments provide challenging examples of the kinds of texts professional translators are expected to handle, feedback sheets serve as good sources for optional wording with direct applications for future translation work.

Just as colored highlighting allows students to gauge at a glance how well they have done on a given assignment, the visual impact of highlighted homework is of considerable benefit to the instructor as well. Such coloring, void of outright corrections, helps the grader keep in perspective each student’s overall performance on the assignment, and encourages all students to focus attention on both strengths and weaknesses in their translation technique. Particularly important is the opportunity this model affords students to individually analyze their errors and independently attempt to correct them. Students who try to determine on their own where their work has gone astray are often eager to further explore with the instructor any remaining uncertainties about precisely what needs improving. If students, from assignment to assignment, begin to detect a pattern of repeated areas of weakness in their own work, this insight can be especially useful for assisting them.
in assessing their achievement. It is also likely that this will motivate them to strive to improve their mastery of effective strategies for avoiding similar errors in the future.

**Quantifying Quality**

In whatever form it may take and however it may be carried out, evaluation must always strive to remain true to its ultimate purpose: improving the quality of accomplishment. The concept of quality is at the heart of all assessment. And quantifying is one way of converting general impressions of quality into a measure that communicates this value concretely and directly. The realities of academe demand that efforts and achievements must ultimately be transformed in the assessor’s crucible to a recordable grade. Reducing to a letter or number wide-ranging opinions based on pages of work is not usually the easiest part of the homework evaluation process. Yet, by following the model for evaluation proposed above, assigning grades can be done surprisingly expeditiously.

Once one has marked translation homework as suggested above, a specific grade for overall achievement can be arrived at in the following manner. First, the highlighting can be put to the practical task of assisting the grader in quickly sorting students’ papers into several piles, so that all homework that attains a generally similar level of accomplishment is grouped together. The colors used to denote the level of achievement make evaluation possible at a glance: papers where lavender predominates (or whatever color signals acceptability) go into one pile; work with a few more highlights in lime (or whatever tint indicates unacceptable form) go into the next. The sorting continues through to the final stack, which contains those papers with the largest amount of lime highlighting. This initial color-based sorting allows the grader to rapidly group papers of similar achievement, and facilitates the next step in the grading process.

Beginning with the predominantly lavender-hued stack, the grader should assign a numerical value to each error marked in lime and make a quick mental tally (which may be penciled lightly somewhere, but should be erased before returning the graded homework to the students). A simple scoring system might assign two points for each erroneous or missing word or word group (that is, subset of a larger chunk), and assign one point to any mechanical error (such as a typographical error, faulty spelling, an inappropriate or absent mark of punctuation, nonstandard capitalization, etc.). This rapid tallying system may be less than perfectly precise, since a total is needed only to help the grader locate the numerical range within which each work falls, but the count must be carried out scrupulously following the same criteria for scoring every student’s work.

Once a rough estimate of the points accrued for errors has been calculated for each paper, homework should be restacked into five or six piles, based on point totals and the scoring scale adopted for grading the assignment. Table 1 shows a point scale designed for use with intermediate-level student translators in Mexico in a university English program in which four courses in translation are offered to advanced students of English in the seventh through tenth semesters of their ten-semester undergraduate program.

Such leniency in scoring is appropriate where the marking of errors is done in a highly exacting way, where the difficulty of the text and the size of the sample evaluated are considerable, and where the student translators have had limited experience with the specific type of translation involved. Instructors who elect to be more tolerant in their highlighting may need to be more demanding in their scoring. Also, as students’ skills improve, the range of permissible errors can be tightened. A shorter assignment, prior experience with the topic or form, a higher level of training in the particular translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NUMBER OF ERRORS</th>
<th>NUMERICAL GRADE (10-POINT SCALE)</th>
<th>LETTER GRADE</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>A or A+</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>A- or B+</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 to 35</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B or C+</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 to 45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>C or D+</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 or 55</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>D or F</td>
<td>Acceptable/Poor/Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 or More</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scales provided here are intended to serve as models to assist the grader in the evaluation of overall quality. However, these scales do not take into account additional factors aside from quality that may well merit inclusion in the grading criteria to be applied. For instance, as was mentioned earlier, the instructor is wise to assign a point value just for completing a lengthy assigned translation. Similarly, graders may wish to factor in points for such considerations as turning in assignments on time (since responsibility in meeting deadlines is an essential part of the professional translator’s commitment to his client) and compliance with the specifications established regarding the manner of presentation (where the instructor wishes to accustom students to the need to meet the variety of demands regarding format, font style and size, layout and design, spacing, etc., that the professional translator may be called on to meet). Whatever the instructor feels should be evaluated may be included in the point system he or she opts to apply.

One does well not to lose sight of the fact that all grade-reporting systems exist primarily to provide—for instructors, for program administrators, and especially for students—information on achievement and progress. A grade stands as a mark on a measuring stick calibrated for showing accomplishment in terms of the instructor’s criteria and expectations, the curriculum’s objectives, the performance of classmates, achievements in past and future groups, and—most usefully of all—each student’s own advancement.

With this in mind, it is recommended that the instructor clearly convey that the reporting of a grade is the culminating stage of a multiphase process that is as objective and reliable as possible. One way to do this is to return homework to the students so that the uppermost sheets are those bearing color highlighting. A grade-reporting slip that details the grading criteria is a useful reporting device (and, if filled out in duplicate, can serve the instructor as a convenient means of record keeping). Such a slip should be stapled behind the last page of the student’s homework. This positioning subtly suggests to students that they should look at their grade after first perusing the overall assessment of their work represented by the two-toned highlighting. Placing an assignment’s grade discreetly at the back of the student’s work, where the roving eyes of classmates can less easily get a fix on the mark, is a professional courtesy and also an effective way to communicate that one’s main concern should not be the grade. However thoroughly and meticulously an instructor may go about arriving at a student’s grade for an assignment, it is the work itself and its particular strengths and weaknesses that matter most to the instructor, and students need to understand this.

### Moving Beyond Errors

In *A Training Course for TEFL*, Peter Hubbard and his fellow coauthors echo an opinion expressed earlier here: “The teacher’s attitude to error [in language study] is of crucial importance.” What they assert is true for the instructor of English as a foreign language clearly also applies to the trainer of translators: “…the teacher must have a positive attitude to error and be prepared to do something about it.”

The model presented here emerges from the view that assessment is most productive when it focuses on what works well, and the method recommended is proactive in turning this theoretical stance into practical procedures for evaluating homework for courses in translation. Central to this approach is the conviction that, while correctness is requisite in translation work, a range of “rightness” is possible when translating nearly anything. The lessons to be learned from considering the validity of different ways to translate things well can

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<td>Very Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>B or C+</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>C or D+</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 or 50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>D or F</td>
<td>Acceptable/Poor/Unsatisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 or More</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Sample Narrowed-Range Scale for the Conversion of Translation Errors into a Grade
inform and enrich students’ developing skills as translators.

Harmer, also writing from the perspective of the English-teaching field, concurs about the value of positive feedback. What he asserts about errors being an integral element in a language student’s ever-evolving personal repertoire in a foreign tongue has particular implications for translators-in-training and their instructors:

Errors are part of the students’ interlanguage, that is, the version of the language which a learner has at any one stage of development, and which is continually reshaped as he or she aims towards full mastery. When responding to errors teachers should be seen as providing feedback, helping that reshaping process rather than telling students off because they are wrong.17

While it is sorely hoped that few instructors anywhere actually approach grading as an opportunity to “tell off” their students, Harmer nevertheless taps into an aspect of correction that is of signal importance: “reshaping”—assisting students in finding suitable ways to keep moving beyond their errors to form and fortify a constantly broadening linguistic base for skilled and confident expression—is indeed a valid goal of the evaluator of performance in the study of not only languages, but especially translation.

No single assessment model, however well-intentioned and carefully applied, can pretend to satisfactorily answer all questions teachers may have about evaluation or meet every demand students may make with regard to the grading of their work. But surely in a field like translation study, where homework represents such a major challenge for instructors and students alike, it is always worthwhile to find new approaches to evaluation that can better meet the goals of everyone involved. Those who must grade and those whose work must be graded can perhaps be best served by moving in a direction that leads beyond errors and towards improvement by training the eye to keep ever on the lookout for more successful solutions.

Notes


5. Ibid., p. 15.


7. Ibid., p. 5.

8. Ibid., pp. 62 and 7.


12. Ibid., p. 69.

13. Ibid., p. 317.


16. Ibid., p. 144.

17. Harmer, p. 100.
When the membership voted in November 2003 to change the name of ATA accreditation to certification, they added clarity to the credential. (In general, programs and institutions are accredited and individuals become certified.) However, some confusion may remain regarding this change in terminology, which I hope to clear up in this article.

I won’t go into a long, involved description of what it means to be “certified.” Ann Sherwin gave an excellent in-depth explanation in her article, "Professional Certification, What is it? Do I need it? How do I get it?" in the August 2003 ATA Chronicle (also available online at www.atanet.org/acc/Article_Sherwin.htm). Jiri Stejskal, ATA Treasurer, also did a comprehensive study of certification programs around the world, which is available in book form from ATA (International Certification Study). Certification varies in its requirements and meaning depending upon the body that issues it, but in all cases it testifies to a certain level of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Until November 2003, in the U.S. the term "certified translator" usually referred to someone who worked in the federal or state court system, with credentials received through those systems or from the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT). Though ATA Headquarters has always received calls requesting "ATA certification," it was fairly easy in the past to explain that our credential was called "accreditation" and that ATA did not "certify" translators. When callers needed the credential to work in a court system, we referred them elsewhere. But now the term "certified translator" has multiple meanings in the U.S., and the differences need some explanation.

Many of our members come from countries where certification is granted by a government body and is required in order to work as a translator or interpreter. This differs greatly from ATA certification, which is a voluntary credential. Specific agencies or employers may want to hire only ATA-certified translators, but certification is not required in order to work as a translator in the U.S. Members seek to be certified because of industry respect for the credential, not because it is required to work in the field.

In the past, claiming the ATA credential simply meant that a member had passed our examination and maintained ATA membership. As of January 1, 2004, ATA certification has additional meaning. Members who gain the credential after that date have offered proof of education and experience levels in order to qualify to take the examination and then have received a passing grade on the exam. Furthermore, all ATA members who retain ATA certification in years to come will have made a serious decision to maintain their membership in a professional organization and to keep their skills current through continuing education. Certified members should consider these program enhancements as a marketing tool. The credential means much more than simply passing an examination on a given day. It signifies a professional commitment.

For further details about ATA certification, eligibility requirements, the examination, and continuing education requirements, please visit the ATA website at www.atanet.org.

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Certification Forum:
Certification: What’s in a Name?

By Terry Hanlen, Certification Program Manager and Deputy Executive Director

Second Conference of the American Translation Studies Association
March 26-28, 2004
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Campus Center

Theme: “Translation Studies in America: Theory, Research, Training, and Technology”

The American Translation Studies Association provides a scholarly association and forum for researchers working in areas of translation and interpretation studies and is conceived as a complement to ATA and the American Literary Translators Association.

For more information, contact: Edwin Gentzler at gentzler@complit.umass.edu, Maria Tymoczko at tymoczko@complit.umass.edu, or visit http://appling.kent.edu/ATSAHome.html.
Shanghai Property: Location, Location, Location

Shanghai’s Shimao Riviera Garden is on record as the highest residential building in China. But it has other unique features, starting with a fine view of “watery scenery,” according to a full-page ad in The Wall Street Journal (September 17, 2003).

“You can have a bird view of the night scenery of Bund and relax you the extreme,” the text lurches on. This view is visible through the “two layer hollow net glass windows” from a “Jaccuzi” (“We give world-famous deluxe embedded double massage bathtub to the owners room as a present.”).

Attractive photos (“Real Scene Pictures”) bring the message home, not least the site’s “high greening coverage of 70%” (read: lots of trees and shrubs).

The Onionskin reader who sent us this example of non-native translation felt The Wall Street Journal should alert foreign advertisers when advertising copy falls so far short of the mark.

After all, advertising is all about image—shaping public perceptions of what company X, Y, or Z is capable of delivering. For space sellers, letting advertisers at a linguistic disadvantage come across as naïve and inarticulate is hardly likely to serve a long-term relationship. For advertisers, the question is even simpler: Why spend big bucks buying premium media space only to run content that makes you look parochial and, in some cases, downright silly?

And the bucks are relatively big. The Wall Street Journal’s rate card sets the cost of Shimao’s full-page black and white display ad, which ran in the paper’s western U.S. edition, at a hefty $16,000. A proper translation of the text’s approximately 500 words by a qualified professional would have cost a tiny fraction of this figure, and reinforced the splash Shimao was clearly trying to make.

The Onionskin’s investigations confirmed that ultra-tight deadlines are a chronic problem in advertising copy for the daily press. We discovered, too, that business publications often invest more time screening out non-PC visuals (e.g., photos of scantily dressed ladies lounging around a property’s pool) than reviewing advertisers’ submissions for text errors. Finally, many advertisers appear to be simply unaware that promotional texts are more reliably produced by translators and copywriters working into their native language.

Newspapers acknowledge the problem. “Bumpy translation can dilute an advertiser’s message,” says Deborah Falcone, National Real Estate Advertising Manager at The Wall Street Journal.

Shimao’s ad ends: “The developer reserves all rights to interpretation & explanation of this advertisement.”

It may also have been an ego-booster for Shimao Group chairman Hui Wing Mau, ranked the second-richest man on the Chinese mainland by Forbes magazine in 2002. Mr. Hui was a featured speaker at the 2003 Forbes Global CEO Conference (theme: “Energizing Global Business: The China Factor”) held in Shanghai on the day the advertisement ran.

Unfortunately for Mr. Hui, The Wall Street Journal text establishes above all that his company is flush enough to throw $16,000 out the two-layer hollow net glass window.

Perhaps that’s not so important (the sum will buy you a scant eight square meters worth of luxury digs at the Shimao Riviera Garden). But for businesses seeking to impress foreign investors, the initial space buy is only part of the cost. Image is the issue, and the readers of The Wall Street Journal were left with a decidedly un-international impression of Shimao.

It’s a pity no one bothered to tell this dynamic businessman and his entourage what a professional translation of their text by a native speaker of English might have done for them in the U.S.

Copies of ATA’s Translation, Getting it Right brochure have been dispatched to The Wall Street Journal and Mr. Hui.

With thanks to Sharlee Merner Bradley.
Dictionary Reviews  Compiled by Boris Silversteyn

Silversteyn is chair of the ATA Dictionary Review Committee.

Publisher:
HarperCollins Publishers, Ltd. 2002
Softissimo 2002
Publication date:
2003 (second edition), version 2.0
ISBN:
0-00-714234-X
Price:
$55
Available from:
HarperCollins Distribution Services
(Tel: +44 [0] 141 306 3767, or via most good bookstores in the U.K.)

Reviewed by:
Françoise Herrmann

For translators to and from French, the new millennium has ushered in the publication of electronic versions of major institutional giants such as the Harrap’s Shorter, Le Petit Larousse, Le Petit Robert, and the Larousse Chambers, although you have probably wondered about an electronic version of the Robert & Collins. Currently, you will find four electronic products that correspond to the printed Robert & Collins: the Collins French Dictionary on CD-ROM (published by HarperCollins in the U.K.); two versions, respectively called Lexibase Collins Pro and Lexibase Collins Standard, English → French (bilingual dictionaries), published by the French software design firm, Softissimo; and the long-awaited Le Grand Robert & Collins, published (Sept. 2003) by Le Robert in France. This review covers the HarperCollins product from the U.K. (with Softissimo as the design firm). Beyond navigating the thickets of the marketing and business maze, the following review highlights major features and specifications of the Collins French Dictionary on CD-ROM (Second Edition), a welcome, lightweight, and low-cost addition to your electronic library of institutional giants.

The Collins French Dictionary on CD-ROM is based on the printed Collins Robert French Dictionary (6th Edition) sold in France as the Senior Robert & Collins. (See the August 2003 ATA Chronicle for a review of the R&C Super Senior, which corresponds to the printed edition following the Senior R&C, used as content for this CD-ROM version.) With 350,000 words and expressions and more than 480,000 translations, this CD includes all of the research that is performed on the Collins Wordbanks. These databases, collected for English and French, Spanish, and German, contain source texts, both written and recorded, culled from a wide variety of media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, TV, and websites, with a combined total of 800 million terms. They are used systematically to compile dictionary entries and translations, to determine collocations, and to ensure that the content of the dictionary reflects true, everyday usage. In fact, it is this lexicographic research performed on a live and constantly updated corpus that has become the hallmark of the Robert & Collins dictionaries in France (Collins–Robert in the U.K.).

In addition to the already established excellence of the content of the dictionary, you will also find new features, thanks to the CD-ROM support medium. These media-specific features tend to transform and enhance both the original printed tool and the experience of consultation. These features include: a pop-up mode (allowing you to consult the dictionary while working in another application); hypertext-enabled searching (allowing you to click and find translations for any term appearing in an article); reverse, progressive, and full-text search engines (allowing you to switch the direction of the translation, to search articles, or to search for all occurrences of an item on both sides of the dictionary); and a well-designed parser (allowing for a successful search even if you misspell your search word or enter a partial word), along with display options (via a Preferences menu) and a Zoom function (allowing you to customize the display). Each of these features is reviewed here in relation to consultation and usage of the dictionary tool.

The Collins French Dictionary (Second Edition) on CD-ROM is compatible with PCs running Windows 95/98/NT4/ME or XP; and requires 32 MB of RAM (64 recommended) and 32 MB of disk space. A small, succinct, and easy-to-follow 12-page User Manual is included in the CD packaging that will supply you with instructions for loading and using the software. The Installation Wizard has a single option for complete installation, “so you can use your CD-ROM drive for another application.” This tradeoff, in comparison with other partial or minimum space-saving options, appears to be a major tour de force in compression, since the whole package actually fits into 27 MB of space and does not cause crashes. This also means that once your Collins French Dictionary is installed, it is there permanently, for whenever you want to use it, without having to reload the CD.

During the installation, you are prompted to choose a “hotkey”...
sequence for the pop-up mode (the default is “Ctrl+Shift+C”). With this hotkey sequence you can highlight any word in an application you are using to call up Collins French Dictionary translations. This works instantaneously, without glitches, and allows you to bypass launching the application from either the Windows toolbar or the Start menu. Once launched, the display appears (see Figure 1).

Like driving on the left side of the road in the U.K., hypertext searching in this electronic dictionary is enabled in a slightly different way. To call-up hyperlinked translations for any of the words in an article, rather than double-clicking, you must right-click on the item. The menu that appears supplies you with the option to Search or to Copy. Selecting Search will send you to the translation for the right-clicked term via a hyperlink. Selecting Copy allows you to copy the right-clicked term into any application you are using. Words that are underlined in an article are links that send you, via a left-click, to cross-referenced articles and translations. In general, both hypertext searches and cross-linked references allow you to access any translation or cross-reference immediately upon a left or right click, without having to retype the search word. This option allows you easy and immediate access to a new translation.

Beyond these quite standard electronic dictionary features, there are two search modes in the CD version of the Collins French Dictionary (progressive and full-text), one of which uniquely transforms consultation and usage, since it supplies you with far more complete access to the contents of the dictionary. Both search modes are activated via icons on the toolbar of the display, or via the Search menu.

The progressive search mode is the basic default search mode. It allows you to replicate, with the added convenience of electronic immediacy and ease, the kinds of searches you perform in the print dictionary. You type your search word in the input line, and on the left side of the display the tool returns your searched term along with an accompanying list of words. The right side of the display provides you with a corresponding article where the term is used, along with its translations. The display of articles is particularly clear, with color codes for the source and
target text. It also divides translations of the term according to parts of speech, and each part of speech is then divided according to the semantic dimensions (boldface for compounds and expressions). When a targeted term is embedded in a long article, it is highlighted for easier reference.

The full-text search mode transforms both usage and consultation of the dictionary. It allows you to find all of the occurrences of a particular term anywhere in the dictionary. The search results are returned in a structured summary format, sorted according to entries and compounds, examples and phrases, and contexts (see Figure 2). This is particularly useful when you are searching for compounds or expressions, or when the target term does not appear in the list of entries and headwords of the progressive search mode. For example, say you are searching for the translation of the expression “Long live […]!” but do not know whether it is listed under “long” or “live,” and it is not listed as a separate entry in the progressive search mode. You can use the full-text search mode to further search and find a translation for the expression. Most importantly, however, since the full-text search mode returns occurrences of a targeted term anywhere in the dictionary, it vastly optimizes your searching capabilities. For example, say that you are searching for a translation of the term “committed.” In the progressive search mode, you will find three translations (as displayed in Figure 1), whereas in the full-text mode, you will find all the occurrences of the term “committed” and its translations, sorted according to entries and compounds, examples and phrases, and contexts anywhere in the English-to-French direction (as displayed in Figure 2). Furthermore, you can access all of the occurrences of the targeted term in the other direction of the dictionary, from French-to-English, when you reverse the direction of the full-text search (see Figure 3). This means that you can finally take full advantage of your Collins-Robert dictionary since such a feature supplies you with vastly augmented access to content anywhere on both sides of the dictionary, in comparison to the kinds of flip-page searches you can perform in print versions (where you would not even attempt to find all of the occurrences of a term that do not appear as headwords or sub-entries).

Reversing the direction of your search occurs instantaneously with a click on the flag icons of the display toolbar. And the program reverses the direction of the search automatically when, for a new hyperlinked search, you right-click on a source item listed in an article. A well-designed parser allows you to input searched terms either incorrectly or partially, which also means that you do not have to type the accents when searching for words in French. And you can customize an already crystal-clear display (according to font size, type, color, and style) for each of the fields of information that appear. Not only will this preserve your eyesight, but it will also appeal to your sense of aesthetics, since you can choose your color preferences. In addition to these elaborate and easy-to-set Preferences, other features include: a Find function to locate an item within a long article; Arrow keys to navigate backwards and forwards on your search path; a Zoom function to magnify the current display; Print, Copy, and Paste clipboard functions; and Mouseover definitions for every button on the display, which appear at the bottom of the screen.
the screen so you do not have to remember what the icons mean. All this adds up to a well designed tool affording vastly increased access to the full contents of the Collins–Robert dictionary, including translations that you might not be able to find otherwise.

There are many more familiar features of electronic mediation that are unexploited in the CD version of the Collins French Dictionary. You will find, for example, no links to the web, no audio pronunciation of terms, no verb conjugator, no metric conversion tool, and no cross-indexing according to regional and stylistic varieties. However, and perhaps as a tradeoff, the dictionary is both a bargain (at $55) and a really portable, glitch-free tool that stores easily on your hard drive. It is both user-friendly and easy to navigate. Additionally, and of prime importance, the full-text search mode supplies you with structured access to the translations and occurrences of a targeted term on both sides of the dictionary. This feature alone, and its design, come as new ways of harnessing the unique functions of the medium, and in comparison to print modes, dramatically transforms and vastly augments consultation and dictionary usage. For translators in constant search of fast and reliable resources who do not want to spend too much money and who love the Collins-Robert dictionaries, this is another electronic turbo tool. Enjoy.

**Lexibase Collins Pro 10.2. Spanish ->English, English ->English**
**Publisher:** HarperCollins Publishers Ltd 2002
**Publication date:** 2002, version 5.0
**Price:** £99 for French, German, and Spanish (The pricing on the Internet is not clear.)
**Available from:** Softissimo in Paris (www.softissimo.com)
**Reviewed by:** Sharlee Merner Bradley

This review concerns one CD, covering both a Spanish’English and a monolingual English dictionary and thesaurus. The Spanish dictionary will be the main focus here. For additional comments on this electronic dictionary, see the discussion of the Collins French’English CD by Françoise Herrmann in this issue. Her comments on the technical aspects of using the French CD are also applicable to the Spanish disc. These features include: a pop-up mode (allowing you to consult the dictionary while working in another application); hypertext-enabled searching (you can click and find translations for any term appearing in an article); reverse, progressive, and full-text searches (allowing you to switch the direction of the translation, to search articles, or to search for all occurrences of an item on both sides of the dictionary); a well-designed parser (you can type your search words incorrectly or partially); display options via a Preferences menu; and a Zoom function (allowing you to customize the display).

With regard to the Spanish dictionary, other features as described in the literature indicate that there are more than 430,000 translations. You can also choose the interface to be in Spanish or English (or French or German, for that matter!).

**A Comparison of Content**

Table 1 on page 47 gives a comparison of terms and expressions I found in the Oxford Spanish Dictionary (1994), my standard first look-up source, and the Collins Electronic (differences appear in boldface).

**Technical Questions**

When a word cannot be found in the Collins, it is indicated in one of three ways:

1. When a word is typed in the Search box, the entry list pops up in the alphabetical listing where the word should have appeared, allowing you to see that it is not listed.

2. After you type the word in the Search box, a box appears saying, “Not found.”

3. For phrases in a Text Search, a page comes up with other phrases that use one of the words, but not the phrase you are looking for (for example, *en subsidio*). You can search for it on the page(s) with the usual Control + F.

For all the advantages of electronic searches and economy of space in the office, I found this program not 100% user-friendly. First, to install the CD, one has to install the Spanish -> English using its code, and then do another installation with another code for the English -> English, even though they are on the same disc. On the
other hand, the Collins French→English can purportedly be installed, and then either the French or Spanish accessed without leaving the program (I have not tried this yet, and do not see how it is possible to change discs without leaving the program).

It took me a while to discover how to browse on the index past the 20 or so terms shown in the window. At first, the icons for switching from entry index to full-text index didn’t work, so I had to use the dropdown menu. Although the User’s Guide says you can highlight a term in a Word document and go to the dictionary, where the term will appear in the Search box, it didn’t work for me. I had to copy and paste.

There was also the copy and paste problem. I tried the usual highlight and Control-C, but the most I could do was highlight a single word at a time. Days later, I stumbled on the trick (an e-mail to the company representative went unanswered). To highlight, double click on the unit you want. If the terms are separated by commas, they are all highlighted and you cannot copy just one of them. However, I’m getting the hang of the highlighting feature the more I use the program, and am finding it more and more useful. Aside from user problems, the ample content seems to suit my needs. For Spanish projects, I now have the CD in the drive as my default dictionary.

The English→English Dictionary

Having a monolingual English dictionary on the same disc is a good idea for translators who may...

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th><strong>Oxford</strong></th>
<th><strong>Collins Electronic</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>trimestralmente</td>
<td>every three months</td>
<td>Quarterly every three months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxativo</td>
<td>(formal) restricted specific</td>
<td>1. (=restringido) limited, restricted (sentido) specific 2. (=tajante) sharp, emphatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxativamente</td>
<td>(formal) specifically</td>
<td>not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>un tanto</td>
<td>a (certain) percentage /amount so much</td>
<td>1. (=cantidad) amount, so much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el x, de suyo</td>
<td>not listed</td>
<td>in itself, intrinsically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toda suerte de (gente)</td>
<td>all kinds/sorts of x</td>
<td>all kinds/sorts of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en subsidio [subsidiarily]</td>
<td>not listed</td>
<td>not found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sortear</td>
<td>(un problema/dificultad) get around, deal with, handle</td>
<td>(+dificultad) avoid, get round (+pregunta) handle, deal with, deal with skillfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hematologia [complete blood count]</td>
<td>hematology</td>
<td>not found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>herborista</td>
<td>not listed</td>
<td>not found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interlocutor</td>
<td>(formal) interlocutor</td>
<td>(gen) speaker, interlocutor frm (al teléfono) person at the other end of the line, the person I was speaking to, the person who spoke to me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lavandina</td>
<td>(RPI) bleach</td>
<td>(Cono Sur) bleach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ley de estranjería</td>
<td>(Esp) immigration law</td>
<td>immigration laws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>libreta de enrolamiento</td>
<td>(Arg) military service record</td>
<td>not found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar en juego</td>
<td>be at stake, <strong>be on the line</strong></td>
<td>be at stake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dórico</td>
<td>dorian, doric</td>
<td>not listed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
need to clarify a term, especially if the bilingual translation(s) found for a given term proves to be unsuitable for the context.

This English dictionary is easily accessed using the drop-down File menu or a hotkey. The English dictionary is an electronic version of the hard copy version of what must be the collegiate or desk-size Collins (no literature was provided). An example of the easy-to-use and easy-to-read search result is shown in Figure 1 above.

The definition “four times a year,” such as applied to stock dividends, is missing; it would suggest why English uses a “quarter” base and French a “tri-” base (trimestral) for the same concept. Nevertheless, there is a wealth of information provided throughout this resource.

“You can never have too many dictionaries.”

It is not hard to make a choice between the Collins and the Oxford. The electronic Collins is so much quicker than consulting the hard copy Oxford, which heretofore has been my dictionary of choice. For me, having two CD drives (one on the PC and another on the iMac, although there are fewer dictionaries supplied in Mac format) allows me to have two different electronic references open at the same time, one general and the other specific. The remaining resources are hard copies open on my desk, most of which are not available electronically.

Being electronic, the Collins is more versatile than the Oxford (I have not heard of an electronic version of the Oxford). However, as illustrated in the table of terms searched, each has words and translations not found in the other, with some, naturally, not found in either. Collins is to be commended for making its dictionary available in electronic form. May many more dictionary publishers do likewise.

Lyrics of the French Renaissance:
Marot, Du Bellay, Ronsard

Author:
English versions by Norman R. Shapiro
(Introduction by Hope Glidden, Notes by Hope Glidden and Norman R. Shapiro)

Publisher:
New Haven & London: Yale University Press

Publication date:
2002

ISBN:
0-300-08759-4 (Cloth)
384 pages

Price:
$45

Reviewed by:
Carrol F. Coates

In graduate school, I spent much time laboring over the French Renaissance poets. Most of my troubles were due to the fact that the language these poets wrote in was evolving, wavering somewhere between old French and the 17th-century beginnings of modern French (La Fontaine, Molière, Racine, et al.). Along with the surface difficulties of the 16th-century language, the reader has to deal with a mode of thought still deeply marked by medieval history, theology, as well as by rediscovered ancient philosophers. Of course, today’s students might have it a bit easier, thanks to the work of Norman R. Shapiro. Once again, Shapiro, with some complementary scholarly assistance from Hope Glidden, has come to make the whole business appear easy and effortlessly enjoyable!

Here are a few examples of what I mean. Take the first stanza of a Rondeau (pp. 32-33) by Clément Marot (whom I always held at a distance as a stuffy Protestant dissident, mostly preoccupied with his refined theological angst):

Hors du Couvent l’autrehyer soubz la
Couldrette
Je rencontray mainte Nonne proprette
Suyvant l’Abbesse en grand devotion:
Si cours apres, & par affection
Vins aborder la plus jeune, & tendrette.

Without the convent walls the other day,
In a hazel grove, I met, passing my way,
A band of comely nuns, all piously
Behind their abbess. I, quick to make free,
Approached the tenderest and said my say.

It may not take a dictionary to figure out that “l’autrehyer” means “l’autre jour” (the other day). I am not sure I would have made the connection between Marot’s poetic form of “la Couldrette” and “la coudraie” (a grove of hazelnut trees) without pulling from the shelf a dusty lexicon of 16th-century French, since I rarely touch this area any longer. The volume is translatorially useful for a non-specialist reader of French, but Shapiro also shapes his translations with the intention of giving the closest idea of the original poetic form without any feverish compulsion to reproduce exact metre and rhyme scheme. In this poem, he has come quite close to the original form by rendering the 10-syllable French lines in iambic pentameter and following the exact rhyme scheme, AABBA.

Shapiro has given a bit more weight to Marot than to Du Bellay and Ronsard (pp. 137, 97, and 115, respectively). This is possibly because he uncovered such delightful examples of wit with a hint of eroticism in the less studied older poet. In “Des Cerfz en rut, & des Amoureux” (“Of Stags in Rut and Lovers,” pp. 126-127), Marot speaks of the similarity between the bellowing of love-sick stags and human lovers:

Les cerfs en rut pour les Bisches se battent,
Les Amoureux pour les Dames combattent,
Ung mesme effect engendre leurs discords:
Les Cerfz en rut d’amour brament, & crient,
Les Amoureux gemissent, pleurent, prient,
Eulx, & les cerfz feroyent de beaulx accords:
Amants sont Cerfz à deux pieds soubz ung corps,
Ceulx cy à quatre: & pour venir aux testes,
Il ne s’en fault, que ramures, & cors,
Que vous Amants ne soyez aussi bestes.

Du Bellay’s poetic production was important, but it was cut short by an early death (1522?-1560). L’Olive was an early volume of sonnets, written under the influence of Petrarch’s Rime. Extreme antithetical swings of mood abound, along with laments about the dictatorial power the beloved wields over her swain. The poet requests, for instance, that his lady allow him, like the Phoenix, to see a new dawn and rise from the ashes of his own funeral pyre (pp. 172-173).

O grand’ douceur! ô bonté souveraine!
Si tu ne veulx dure & inhumaine estre
Soubz ceste face angelique et seraine,
Puis qu’ay pour toy du Phenix le semblant,
Fay qu’en tous pointcz je luy soy’ resemblant,
Tu me feras de moymesme renaistre.

O peerless grace! O goodness unforeseen!
Lest you would ruthless be, and inhumane,
For all that tranquil and angelic mien,

Since I appear a Phoenix in your eyes,
Let me resemble it in every wise
And from my ashes born, arise again.

There are small departures from
the literal wording of the original
(from “bonté souveraine” to “goodness unforeseen” in the first quoted line) as he searches for a sometimes ingenious rhyme—but there are others (“unforeseen” and “mien”) that work marvelously.

An important part of Shapiro’s continuing strategy is his effort to give the non-specialist reader a broad selection from the work of each poet. In this anthology, he offers poems from every compendium or volume of Du Bellay’s work. My own long-standing preference goes to Les Regrets (1558), the poetic collection in which Du Bellay managed to make a very personal statement of his disillusionment with Roman politics (he served as private secretary to his uncle, Cardinal Jean Du Bellay) and his nostalgia for his home village of Liré (Loire Valley). Here is the poignant second quatrain from the famous sonnet, “Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage” (p. 210-211):

Quand revoiray-je, helas, de mon petit village
Fumer la cheminee, & en quelle saison
Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison,
Qui m’est une province, & beaucoup d’avantage?

Alas! When shall I end my banishment,
To see my village rooftops smoke, to cease
My wandering, see my humble home, in peace,
More grand to me than realm magnificent

For me, none of the little shifts of word order and terminology fall outside the spirit of Du Bellay’s impatience to leave behind the political ecclesiastical intrigues in which his uncle was involved and to return to the more modest comforts of home.

Some of Ronsard’s most famous poems (“Ode à Cassandre...” pp. 324-325) are included.

Mignonne, allons voir si la rose
Qui ce matin avoit desclose
Sa robe de pourpre au Soleil,
A point perdu ceste vesprée
Les plis de sa robe pourprée,
Et son teint au vostre pareil.

My pet, come see, this eventide,
If that fair rose that opened wide
Its crimson robe, at dawn, unto
The sun, sees not already flown
Its crimsoned folds, and, like your own,
Its blush of morning’s tender hue.

Here, I have one minor quarrel. In spite of my usual admiration for and delight with Shapiro’s translations, I would have kept the key word “Mignonne” in the English version, because of the sonorities. “Mignonne” is still found in Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (1986), and the Oxford English Dictionary cites occurrences as recent as the 19th century. Surely nobody with the inclination to open a volume of poetry would be so thoughtless as to associate “Mignonne” with “filet mignon!”

Included are some virtually forgotten pieces such as the excised “Ode,” which would seem to be echoed in the folk song (which I assume came later), “Alouette, gentille alouette,” still known today:

Tay toy babillarde Arondelle
Ou bien je plumeray ton aile
Si je t’empoigne, ou d’un couteau
Je te couperay la languette...
Qui matin sans repos caquette
Et m’estourdit tout le cerveau.

Hush, Swallow! Stop your jabbering,
Lest I pluck bare your feathered wing,
If I can catch you, or cut
Your little tongue, which, morning long,
Cackles its neverending song,
And jars my weary brain about.

In brief conclusion, Norman R. Shapiro gives readers a fair and diverse sampling of poetry both light and serious from three of the most important French poets of the 16th century. His knowledge of French verse forms is combined with his brilliant command of poetic English to give translations that are often masterful and ever playful. Hope Glidden’s concise introduction and the notes

Caroll F. Coates teaches French language and literature at Binghamton University-SUNY. His latest translation, in collaboration with Edwidge Danticat, is the third novel of Haitian novelist Jacques Stephen Alexis, In the Flicker of an Eyelid (University of Virginia Press, 2002). Contact: ccoates@binghamton.edu.

Continued on p.55
he upper echelons of our profession become wildly active whenever a major news story appears involving translators or interpreters. Here’s another way of looking at it, though: What is the highest political rank ever achieved by someone who, at any time in his or her career, worked full-time as a translator or interpreter? So far, the best the Translation Inquirer has unearthed is Filippo LaGuardia, mayor of New York City from 1934 to 1945. As described in a new biography, *The Napoleon of New York*, LaGuardia worked full-time as an interpreter at Ellis Island from 1907 to 1910. Knowing what I know about Ellis Island, I can easily imagine that the job was at least full-time as we now define it.

[Abbreviations used with this column: E–English; F–French; G–German; I–Italian; Po–Polish; Ro–Romanian; Sp–Spanish; Sw–Swedish.]

**New Queries**

**(E-F 2-04/1)** Staging, plus two sub-forms of this term, posed problems for a denizen of Lantra-l. It was found not only in an English text, but a German one as well. I will quote both: Finally, PET-CT proved more precise in classifying metastasized lung cancer—upstaging cancer that had spread to bones and downstaging cancer that had spread to soft tissue. Overall, the researchers concluded, “PET-CT has greater specificity in staging patients with non-small-cell lung cancer.”


Well, what is it and what would be a good French equivalent?

**(E-I 2-04/2)** What does cyanylating mean, as in novel cyanylating reagents, asks a ProZ correspondent. How can it be converted into Italian?

**(E-Po 2-04/3)** We have all dealt with nuts-and-bolts instructions on how to assemble things. But in this case, *super-nut* is a term that is: a) unknown, and b) needs a Polish equivalent. Three steps in the instructions are given as context: 6.) Spin the *super-nut* so it comes loose and away from the elevator plate. 7.) Loosen the Acme screw support brackets at the top and bottom. 8.) Pull the Acme screw loose from the bottom bracket and spin the *super-nut* off the bottoms of the screw threads. The last seven words may indeed provide a good clue as to what this is.

**(E-Sp 2-04/4)** The word in the following sentence, taken from a textiles document, created problems for a correspondent of ProZ. What is brownstock and how can a decent Spanish equivalent for it be found? The sentence: *The use of low specific gravity wood can produce a lower brownstock viscosity for a given kappa number target. All right, let’s be rigorous: what’s really wanted is the whole term, brownstock viscosity.*

**(E-Sw 2-04/5)** What part of an automobile’s anatomy is the parcel shelf? The original English text reads *XXX anchors are fitted in both sides of the rear seat to enable quick, easy, and secure installation of a child seat. The related tether anchors are located on the parcel shelf.* The latter in Swedish would be simple enough (“hatthyllia”), except that this location is hardly the place to secure a child seat properly. What’s going on here?

**(E-Sw 2-04/6)** NASCAR enthusiasts, listen up. A text on this subject, cited by a ProZ member, speaks of *Walbro round slide-style carburetor.* What does the qualifier in bold print refer to, and how about good Swedish for this item?

**(F-E 2-04/7)** A ProZ member struggled with “équipotentielle” in a document having to do with fire precautions in a chemical factory. The context is a paragraph that, among other things, speaks of “masses métalliques fixes ou mobiles doivent être connectés électriquement de façon à assurer leur liaison équipotentielle.”

**(G-E 2-04/8)** The question is blunt and clear from a medical translator from ProZ. What is the difference between “Blutdurchfluss” and “Blutfuss”?

**(G-E 2-04/9)** Even more blunt, and less genteel, is the question of how to render “Klysmen und Einläufe” into English, when evidently both seem to denote *enema*. What’s the difference?

**(I-E 2-03/10)** Here, the word “ostensioni” is raising a ruckus for a ProZ member. The context is a text about a botanical garden in Bologna used by the university: “Nel giugno del 1568 venne finalmente definito l’accordo con la Gabella Grossa per gli stipendi ai due dottori, Cesare Odone e Ulisse Androvari, che si sarebbero occupati della cura dell’orto e delle *ostensioni* per gli Scolari.”

**(Ro-I 2-04/11)** This has to do with an abbreviation, so it could just as easily have been a Romanian-to-English query. In a contract, “CUI” is the problem: “Firma *** inregistrata la Registrul Comertului sub nr. ***. CUI ***...” But what is the latter?
“A plaque,” a query from a ProZ member, is some sort of industrial process carried out on metal seat rails in the automotive business. Is anyone familiar with this? Perhaps the same whizzbang who might know about parcel shelf in the English-to-Swedish query mentioned earlier?

This query comes from Lantra-l, and has to do with a census abbreviation, NBI. By no means an isolated reference, it appears thus: “Porcentaje de hogares según NBI”; “Porcentaje de hogares por número de NBI: Con 1 NBI, 30,2; con 2 NBI 11,1; con 3 NBI 3,7; con 4 NBI 0,5; sin NBI 54,5.” What on earth could it be?

Renato Calderón wonders whether he is alone in noting the misuse of Spanish in confusing “y” and “ll,” specifically “pan rayado,” meaning bread with lines drawn over. In fact, this product, labeled as “pan rayado,” is bread-crumbs (bread that is scraped or grated to make it into crumbs).

Replies to Old Queries

(“la langue d’Esope”): J. Kates notes the lack of context in this query, but believes it to be a reference to aesopic language (i.e., veiled, indirect language often couched as allegory or fable, usually to avoid political censorship or other dangerous constraints).

(“frère juré”): Paul Hopper did some serious research on this matter concerning Hieronymus Bosch’s membership in a brotherhood. Paul did a Google search and narrowed it down until he discovered “geschworener Bruder” (sworn brother) in an article that described how Bosch used his membership in the Brotherhood of Our Lady to advance his social standing and obtain artistic work in adornning a chapel within the Johanneskirche at s’Hertogenbosch.

What!? Only two responses? But remember when this column was compiled (late December 2003, squarely between Christmas and New Year’s Day). It is a wonder there were responses of any kind. I can easily imagine over 95% of the people in our profession have other concerns at that time of year. Not me, though: the Column, that grand obsession, occupies my every waking moment, regardless of illness, holidays, interior decorating, hardware and software upheavals…everything.

Is your ATA chapter planning an event? Does that event have need for a distinguished, dynamic, industry-relevant speaker? If so, ATA’s Professional Development Committee wants to help! ATA’s Professional Development Committee offers a seed money fund for speakers. Be sure to call ATA today for application guidelines and a list of fabulous speakers who could be guests at your next meeting, workshop, or seminar.

ATA’s chapters play a key role in the continuing education of their members. Since the chapters vary greatly in number and composition of members, it can be hard for some chapters to offer educational opportunities to everyone. As a service to all ATA members and as a benefit of chapterhood, ATA would like to support these educational efforts by subsidizing presentations that might otherwise prove to be a financial burden for individual chapters.

The fund was designed for ATA chapters, so don’t let the opportunity pass you by. Contact: Mary@atanet.org at ATA Headquarters soon for all the details!
Few publishers would commission someone who cannot recognize a chemical formula to translate a chemical text. Unfortunately, many translators would commission someone who cannot recognize a joke to translate a funny text.

Mozart’s 1782 German Singspiel Die Entführung aus dem Serail [The Abduction from the Seraglio], to a libretto by Gottlieb Stephanie, Jr., mocked the then-new tendency of romantic literature to signal emotions with physical phenomena. In this Singspiel, love causes Belmonte and his girlfriend Konstanze’s hearts to pound and lungs to pant to comic excess. In Act III, Scene 2, when the character Pedrillo is contemplating escape from captivity, he is nervous, and claims his heart is pounding and his breathing is labored—from fear. But then he adds that it is “als wenn ich’s größte Schelmstück vorhätte.” This is a double entendre. It means both “as if I [the character Pedrillo] were performing a very bad deed” and “as if I [the actor playing Pedrillo] were performing in a very bad play.”

Almost immediately thereafter, Pedrillo tells Belmonte:

Singen Sie indessen eins. Ich hab’ das so alle Abende getan; und wenn Sie da auch jemand gewahr wird oder ihnen begegnet—den alle Stunden macht hier eine Janitscharenwache die Runde—, so hat’s nichts zu bedeuten, sie sind das von mir schon gewohnt;

This is another double entendre. Pedrillo is telling Belmonte to sing, and that if he does, since Pedrillo himself sings every evening, “the Janissary guards are so used to hearing me [the character Pedrillo] that they will ignore you if you also sing.” But it is not much of a stretch for the actor to perform the part so that the phrase within quotation marks also means: “the Janissary guards have heard me [the actor playing Pedrillo, supposedly the secondary tenor], so when they hear you [supposedly the star tenor] singing, they won’t think very highly of it.”

Both double entendres occur during spoken dialogue, so there is no need to set words to a musical line. Also, both, unlike many jokes, are easy to translate into English.

Nonetheless, they usually are not translated, leading to the frequent complaint that everything good in the original is lost in translation.

Edward J. Dent, in his translation (Oxford University Press, 1952), omits the scene entirely.

Perhaps omission is preferable to the translation by Morton Siegel and Waldo Lyman (International Music Company, 1956), whose versions of the two passages, including Pedrillo’s reference to his heart, are:

My heart couldn’t beat any faster if I were committing murder.

and

You sing a little in the meantime. I do it every night. If you meet anyone, for the guards make hourly rounds, it will make no difference, as they are used to me.

Better translations are possible. The versions by Ronnie Apter and me are:

My heart is in my throat. It is as if I were engaged in some foul play.

and

Sing something while I’m gone. I sing every night, so if the Janissaries hear you they won’t think much of it.

Even if the Jokes are Directly Translatable…

Creative Adaptation Continued from page 14

sometimes further from the original.

How far we go should always be determined by who we are writing for, by the target culture, by the target audience, as well as by the readability of the text we create.

A ticket to creative freedom? Yes, but a tricky one with its own set of limitations. Above all, you want the result of your work to be an uninterrupted, flowing line.

Notes


ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

All candidates applying for ATA certification must provide proof that they meet the certification program eligibility requirements. Please direct all inquiries regarding general certification information to ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from the ATA website or from Headquarters.

- **District of Columbia**
  - April 4, 2004
  - Washington
  - Registration Deadline: March 19, 2004

- **Florida**
  - March 20, 2004
  - Miami
  - Registration Deadline: March 5, 2004

- **Kansas**
  - April 18, 2004
  - Manhattan
  - Registration Deadline: April 2, 2004

- **Michigan**
  - August 7, 2004
  - Novi
  - Registration Deadline: July 23, 2004

- **New Jersey**
  - April 24, 2004
  - Jersey City
  - Registration Deadline: April 9, 2004

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  - May 22, 2004
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- **New York**
  - March 20, 2004
  - New York
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  - Registration Deadline: June 4, 2004

- **Texas**
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  - Houston
  - Registration Deadline: July 30, 2004

- **Washington**
  - April 24, 2004
  - Seattle
  - Registration Deadline: April 9, 2004

- **Brazil**
  - March 6, 2004
  - Sao Paulo
  - Registration Deadline: February 20, 2004

New Certified Members

Congratulations! The following people have successfully passed ATA’s certification exam.

**Italian into English**
- Christopher V. Scala
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**French into English**
- Elena A. Jahouach
  - Oakland, CA
- Ann Marie Temple
  - Arlington, VA

Active Member Review

The Active Membership Review Committee is pleased to grant active member status to:

- Sonya S. Gerisch
  - Christiansburg, VA
- Alexis B. Siegel
  - New York, NY
from both collaborators are helpful for identifying literary allusions and some of the more important poetic antecedents.

Update from Arlene Kelly

As a follow-up to the ACEBO review of the Portuguese materials (November/December, 2003), I wanted to mention that the best way to render “legal interpreter” in Portuguese would be “intérprete judiciário.” My appreciative thanks go to Mr. Enéas Theodoro, Jr., esteemed colleague and fellow member of ATA’s Portuguese Language Division.

In addition to that improvement, I wanted to mention the existence of some other training materials for Portuguese that have been prepared by people more familiar with the Continental and Azorean styles of the spoken language. The following is an excerpt from the website of the Southeastern Massachusetts Area Health Education Center.

“Practical Portuguese for Health Professionals, the commonsense guide to mastering Portuguese for doctors, nurses, dentists, and technicians by Maria Moreira, Ph.D., and Carol Mailloux, R.N., is now available. To order, send a check for $20 (plus $2.50 for Postage and Handling) made payable to SMAHEC, P.O. Box 69, Marion, Massachusetts 02738. A limited supply of companion cassette tapes is available for $30 (plus $2.50 for Postage and Handling). Each set of companion cassette tapes includes 12 individual tapes that correspond to the textbook.”

ATA’s Portuguese Language Division

For more information, see www.ata-divisions.org/PLD or contact Tereza Braga (terezab@sbcglobal.net)

10th Annual Spring Meeting
Providence, Rhode Island
April 16-17, 2004

ATA’s Spanish Language Division

For more information, see www.ata-spd.org or contact Virginia Perez-Santalla (virginiasps@comcast.net)

3rd SPD Mid-Year Conference
Hyatt-on-the-Hudson
Jersey City, New Jersey
April 23-25, 2004
Proposals are invited on topics in all areas of translation and interpreting, including the following:

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Suggestions for additional topics are welcome. Proposals for sessions must be submitted on the Conference Presentation Proposal Form to: Conference Organizer, ATA Headquarters, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; Fax: (703) 683-6122. All proposals for sessions must be in English.

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