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American Translators Association
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The ATA Chronicle Submission Guidelines

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

1. Articles (see length specifications below) are due the first of the month, two months prior to the month of publication (i.e., June 1 for August issue).
2. Articles should not exceed 3,500 words. Articles containing graphics or words or phrases in non-European writing systems (e.g., Japanese, Arabic) should be submitted as a PDF file or mailed.
3. Include your fax, phone, e-mail, and mailing address on the first page.
4. Include a brief abstract (two sentences maximum) emphasizing the most salient points of your article. The abstract will be included in the table of contents.
5. Include a short author biography (three sentences maximum). If you wish to include your photo (color or B/W), please e-mail it as a JPEG or TIF file. Do not mail irreplaceable photos.
6. E-mail submissions (Word or PDF files) to Jeff Sanfacon at jeff@atanet.org.
7. All articles are subject to editing for grammar, style, punctuation, and space limitations.
8. A proof will be sent to you for review prior to publication.

Standard Length
Letters to the editor: 350 words;
Op-Ed: 300-600 words; Feature Articles: 750-3,500 words; Column: 400-1,000 words
(See Chronicle editorial policy—under Chronicle—at www.atanet.org)

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About Our Authors…

Martin Alianelli is a business translator specializing in film and television. His clients include the NBC, Telemundo, and Mun2 Television Networks, as well as several other film and television production companies around the country, including Promofilm-Globomedia, RTI Studios, Skycastle Entertainment, and the talent management company of Walter Mercado Management. He is president of Martin Alianelli Translations, Inc. and a member of the International Federation of Journalists and the Newspaper Guild of the Communications Workers of America. He is an active member of ATA and the current president of the Florida Chapter of ATA. Contact: martin@alianelli.net.

Katharine Allen is a freelance interpreter and translator in California. She is the current president of the California Healthcare Interpreting Association. She is also an active ATA member and assistant administrator of ATA’s Interpreters Division. She is active in a range of projects involving interpreter training, language access consultation to health-care facilities and other community organizations, and promoting the translation/interpreting professions locally and statewide. Contact: sierrasky@schat.net.

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Alan K. Melby was re-elected in November at the Seattle ATA Annual Conference for a second term as ATA secretary. He has been involved in language standards for many years, as a member of the U.S. delegation to ISO Technical Committee 37 (Terminology and language and content resources) and as a member of the Steering Committee of OSCAR (www.lisa.org/sigs/oscar). More recently (about five years ago), he became involved in the development of the American Society for Testing and Materials translation quality assurance standard that falls under subcommittee F15.48 (www.astm.org). Contact: akmtrg@byu.edu.

Brenda Nicodemus has been a professional signed language interpreter since 1989. She holds a certificate of interpretation and a certificate of transliteration from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and an M.A. in linguistics from Indiana University. She is presently a doctoral candidate in educational linguistics at the University of New Mexico, where she was selected as the 2003 Teaching Assistant of the Year. Her dissertation is entitled The Use of Prosodic Markers to Indicate Utterance Boundaries in ASL Interpretation. Contact: nicodemusb@comcast.net.

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S. Alexandra Russell-Bitling has been on staff at the Inter-American Development Bank as a translator, reviser, and editor for 18 years, translating from Spanish, French, and Portuguese into English. She has also taught translation at Georgetown University and the Université de Paris VIII. She is the president of the National Capital Area Chapter of ATA, an active member of ATA, a regular contributor to the ATA Chronicle, and a member of ATA's Public Relations Committee. Contact: alexandrarb@yahoo.com.

Jiri Stejskal is the current president-elect and former treasurer of ATA. He also serves as the treasurer of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation and chairs the International Federation of Translators (FIT) Committee for Information on the Status of the Translation and Interpretation Profession. An active translator, he joined ATA in 1991, and founded a translation company, CETRA, Inc., in 1997. In addition to his duties as a translator, company owner, and volunteer for translator and interpreter organizations, he teaches graduate language courses at the University of Pennsylvania. Contact: jiri@cetra.com.

Peter Unseth is on the faculty of the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics in Dallas, Texas. Previously, he worked in Ethiopia, leading courses in translation for the Ethiopian Bible Society, teaching linguistics at Addis Ababa University, and serving as exegete for a Scripture translation program into a minority language with SIL Intl. Contact: pete_unseth@gial.edu.

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From the President
Taking An Active Interest in ATA

F
ollowing on my column in the January Chronicle, I would like to continue with my theme of doing well by doing good, or, as I called it in January, enlightened self-interest.

This time I’d like to urge those of you who are associate, student, or corporate members yet are working translators or interpreters to take the very easy steps necessary to become active members of ATA and thus be able to do your part as “association citizens.” This will give you the right to vote and, if you so choose, run for office. After all, this is a volunteer-driven organization and we have thrived on having a diverse pool of translators and interpreters to govern it.

Just as a reminder, there are two routes to becoming an active member:

1) Pass the certification exam;
Or
2) Submit the documentation required for peer review. This peer review is not a qualitative review. It is merely a way of documenting that you have studied translation or interpreting and/or are actively engaged in the profession. You can find the various means of documentation (there are five different options) and the procedures to be followed at www.atanet.org/bin/view.pl/13518.html.

Continuing Education Points Reminder
Some other forms of enlightened self-interest will earn you continuing education points, help you keep your skills current, and also serve as promotion for your services while giving back to the profession. Remember that if you’re ATA-certified, you need to earn 20 continuing education points by yearend 2006. If you have been caught short, because this is the first reporting period, you can apply for a one-time six-month extension of the deadline. To do so, contact Terry Hanlen, terry@atanet.org by yearend 2006 for the appropriate form.

Included among the options for earning points are several that accomplish all of the above goals: teaching a seminar or offering a conference session; mentoring; becoming a certification exam grader; or writing an article for the Chronicle or some other publication. These are all highly rewarding experiences and go a long way toward raising your profile among potential employers.

There are, of course, several other options for earning your points, including attending courses, seminars, and conferences, or working through the 2005 ATA Financial Conference CD-ROM and/or the 2005 ATA Annual Conference DVD-ROM.

For those of you still looking for ideas on how to top off your points, see www.atanet.org/acc/low_cost_ideas_for_ce.htm for low-cost ideas on how to earn points.

Upcoming Professional Development Seminars
I am looking forward to seeing many of you at the Translating Science and Technology Seminar in Los Angeles this month and at the other seminars we will be offering around the country this year. Look for the schedule posted at www.atanet.org.

Second Annual School Outreach Contest
Join ATA’s School Outreach movement and start educating clients one classroom at a time.

It’s easy • It’s fun • It’s free
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2. Pick the age level you like the best and click on it.
3. Download a presentation and deliver it at your local school or university.
4. Get someone to take a picture of you in the classroom.
5. Send it to ATA’s Public Relations Committee at pr@atanet.org (subject line: School Outreach Contest) or to 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include your name and contact information, the date, the school’s name and location, and a brief description of the class. The deadline for submissions is July 14, 2006.

The best photograph wins free registration to ATA’s 2006 Annual Conference in New Orleans! The winner will be contacted no later than August 18, 2006. You may submit multiple entries, and any member of ATA or of any ATA-affiliated organization is eligible to enter.

Any questions? Contact: Amanda Ennis, germantoenglish@earthlink.net or Lillian Clementi, lillian@lingualegal.com
One of the key aspects of ATA’s growth and success over the years has been the feedback from the members, then incorporating those comments and ideas into the association’s policies and practices.

Over the past year, the ATA Board of Directors and staff have intensified the organization’s efforts to elicit member feedback. Specifically, in November, we conducted an ATA member satisfaction survey. We worked with Customer Care Measurement and Consulting (CCMC), which consults with Fortune 500 companies and various associations, to structure the survey and analyze the results.

The survey, which was sent to the entire ATA membership via broadcast e-mail messages, resulted in 1,868 members responding for an excellent 22% response rate. Thank you to those who took the time to complete the survey and share your thoughts.

This long overdue survey provides quantifiable data on the membership’s concerns. With this defined list of issues, the association will be able to address the truly deep-seated problems before concerns raised by a “squeaky wheel” or a minority of members.

The survey confirmed that members were most satisfied with:

- ATA’s efforts to promote the translation and interpreting professions;
- Keeping members informed of new developments in their respective fields;
- Being a critical information resource;
- Current member benefits and services; and
- The *ATA Chronicle*.

The items that the membership was not satisfied with or felt needed attention:

- High cost of attending the ATA conference, which was cited more than twice as often as any other issue;
- Certification exam results were unclear;
- Difficulty in obtaining information on membership benefits and services;
- Limited range of membership services and benefits; and
- Difficulty in getting problems resolved—especially not knowing whom to contact for a problem or question.

Digging deeper into these areas needing attention, CCMC reported on the comments that elaborated on what the respondents thought were the most serious problems or concerns.

The issue of the high cost of attending the ATA conference is a tough one. To offer a conference with the breadth of sessions, exhibits, networking opportunities, plus over 600 guest rooms, as we now do, requires a very large hotel, which is not going to be inexpensive. That said, we will look at ways to better explain the value of attending the conference and some cost savings ideas.

The comments about the exam, which will be shared with the Certification Committee, touched on many areas. The ATA Certification Program has always drawn spirited discussions. In my nearly 25 years of association management work, I can tell you that this is the norm. Any group that administers a certification program has internal debates about its credential.

As for the limited range of membership services and benefits, the comments showed that the primary desire is health insurance. As I have written many times before, we have heard the membership loud and clear on this matter. However, this problem is much, much bigger than ATA; it is a national issue—really a crisis, if you will. I will continue to monitor this matter, and I will keep you posted on any changes or any new opportunities. In addition, there are other benefits that we will investigate offering, and we will continue reviewing our current benefits.

The last two survey items to address are the difficulty in obtaining information and in getting problems resolved. I will be working with the Board and staff to act on these two areas. I can say with confidence that the new ATA website, which should be online this month, will help those looking for more info on ATA benefits and services.

Thank you again for sharing your thoughts. This vital feedback will only help strengthen and enhance your association.

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Letters to the Editor:  
More Details on the Mohammed Yousry Case

On March 1, 2005, the board of directors of both the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and ATA issued a joint statement on the case of Mohammed Yousry. The following explanatory comments, prepared by NAJIT Director Judith Kenigson Kristy in response to two articles published by the New York Circle of Translators in its October 2005 newsletter, are reprinted here as published in the December 2005 issue of The Gotham Translator. We believe our members will find them informative.

Dear colleagues:

In response to the articles published in the October 2005 issue of The Gotham Translator, Judith Kenigson Kristy has prepared the following remarks, which are a faithful reflection of the views of both NAJIT and ATA. We appreciate the opportunity to provide a detailed explanation of the rationale behind our stance.

Marian S. Greenfield  
President  
American Translators Association

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In the wake of the conviction of Mohammed Yousry for defrauding the U.S. government and concealing material support to terrorist activity, a number of letters have been written supporting Mr. Yousry. Now two articles with a similar theme have appeared in the October 2005 issue of The Gotham Translator, the newsletter of the New York Circle of Translators, a chapter of the American Translators Association: “Occupational Hazards,” by Marguerite Shore, and “Perils of Translation in Post 9/11 America: The Case of Mohammed Yousry,” by Alison Dundy. These letters and articles decry Mr. Yousry’s conviction as “wrongful” (Dundy), and take the ATA and NAJIT to task for maintaining a neutral stance on guilt or innocence while underlining the need for education and vigilance in upholding the strict standards for ethics and protocols demanded of interpreters in the legal domain.

In the light of anticipated appeals, our associations have preferred not to publish statements containing concrete examples of some of the ethics issues in question. However, the rhetoric has reached a level where the Gotham articles have characterized our response as “cowardly and evasive” (Shore), and representing mere “legalistic bombast about protocols and neutrality” (Dundy). We beg to differ. While respecting the right of every individual to have and express his or her opinion, we would be doing the interpreting community a disservice if we did not continue to stress that the frequently mentioned “risks of doing one’s job well” (Shore) are greatly reduced, if not completely eliminated, by strict adherence to proper interpreting standards of performance.

In the specific case of Mr.Yousry, it is regrettable that instruction about these important standards does not seem to have been provided, or if it was, it was not sufficiently absorbed and/or reinforced to allow Mr.Yousry to withstand pressures to perform tasks and take positions that are patently contrary to the most basic canons observed by legal interpreters.

The defense strategy used by Mr.Yousry’s legal representatives emphasized that he was “just doing his job” and the majority of articles in support of Mr.Yousry underline this idea—that Mr. Yousry was merely “carrying out his duties as an interpreter, following the instructions of Stewart, the lawyer” (Shore), suggesting that if he can be convicted for that, then interpreters and translators in the legal domain are in danger when interpreting for attorneys or their agents who may be carrying out suspect or even illegal activities themselves. But is this really the case? More to the point, was Mr.Yousry really just doing his job, performing as a “court-appointed interpreter,” or was he doing something else—taking on a role that allowed a jury to view his actions as independent and self-initiated? Is the “translator” defense really any more than a red herring?

In the reports of both Shore and Dundy, there are many references to the proper role of the interpreter. Shore reports on the presentation of Ellen Sowchek, stating that an interpreter is “required to speak in the same grammatical person as the individual for whom he/she is interpreting,” and must “convey not only the speaker’s meaning, but also the style and register of speech, and to do so in a neutral fashion, without adding or subtracting from the original message.” This is quite correct and in accordance with the canon of ethics that requires accuracy and prohibits changing, adding to, or omitting the words of the speaker. Nevertheless, if one reads the actual transcripts used as evidence in the case, that is, the transcripts of the videotaped jail visits in which Mohammed Yousry acted as interpreter between client Sheik Rahman and attorney Lynne Stewart, there are so few instances of accurate interpreting and so many continuous examples of paraphrasing, information added, information omitted, and personal commentary offered, that it is hard to see how this performance can be classed as “interpreting.”

Likewise, Dundy states: “It is the job of the translator to facilitate communication. A translator’s own views and voice are essentially invisible and silent.” Yet the jail interview transcripts are literally filled with Mr. Yousry’s opinions, clever strategies, and personal comments. Is this the work of a “neutral” party, an “impartial” interpreter? If Mr. Yousry had
limited himself to interpreting what the two parties said (acting exclusively as their voices instead of introducing his own voice, his own ideas) in strategy planning and personal exchanges with the Sheik and Stewart, would a jury have been able to consider him as part of a conspiracy or would they have seen a mere language conduit, detached and uninvolved in the process?

Shore speaks of the “impossibility of neutrality in charged situations,” yet every day, in hundreds of courts, depositions, attorney visits, proffers, and so on, interpreters are performing impartially, maintaining neutrality and keeping their ideas and opinions to themselves. This is one of the hallmarks of a professional interpreter in the legal domain. Those who do not maintain neutrality are, indeed, subjecting themselves to risks, ranging from burnout to prosecution, but true professionals generally have sufficient trust in their own abilities, as well as in the fact that they do not really know, nor do they need to know, who is guilty and who is innocent. Neutrality, for court interpreters, is precisely that: it means not taking sides at all, under any circumstances; not helping, not harming, not participating—in short, not doing anything that can be construed as an activity that does not constitute completely impartial interpreting or translating.

There are so many examples of ethical errors to be seen in the 275 pages of the jail visit transcriptions (see box), and so many defects in the entire role and performance of Mr. Yousry as an “interpreter” in this case, that it would be impossible to outline all of them here. Suffice it to say that if people continue to follow the red

Ms. Dundy states that “Mohammed Yousry was convicted for doing nothing other than his job.” In our view, a judiciary interpreter is not doing his job when he does the following:

1) Fails to speak in the same voice, register, or manner of the speaker. This occurs throughout all 275 pages of the May 19 and 20, 2000 videotaped jail interview transcriptions. Starting on 19, v. 1, p. 6, l. 11*—Yousry: “She is saying, Sir, that her favorite person is Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman.” This type of inaccurate, indirect speech continues throughout.

2) Summarizes, adds to, and omits parts of the speakers’ communications. This occurs throughout all of the transcriptions; in fact, it is difficult to find many examples of actual, accurate interpreting in the entire corpus. Examples:19, v. 1, pp. 12-15, 21-25, also 20, v. 1, pp. 1-3.

3) Carries on lengthy personal conversations with the client in a foreign language, in spite of the fact that the attorney is not speaking of, or may not even have knowledge of, the matters they are discussing. This occurs throughout; see 19, v. 1, pp. 16-18—“I’m telling about Tuesday now”; 19, v. 2, pp. 2-8—at the end of these seven pages Stewart says: “Yousry, stop and translate now,” since she has no idea what they are talking about; 20, v. 2, pp. 30-31.

4) Offers political advice or suggests strategies.19, v. 1, pp. 24-25—Yousry suggests that even if Farrakhan does not succeed in visiting the Sheik, it will be good publicity for him if the newspapers say that he has not been allowed to visit the Sheik. This is one of many suggestions made.

5) Receives or has possession of faxes, letters, and telephone calls on behalf of the client. 19, v. 1, p. 7; 19, v. 1, p. 38; 20, v. 2, p. 25, l. 22.

6) Deceives the authorities about his true intent in speaking to the attorney. 19, v. 1, pp. 49-51 (starting on p. 49, l. 18); 19, v. 2, p. 29, ll. 4, 13, 15; p. 30, l. 9; 20, v. 2, p. 3 (“I am looking at you, [Lynn] so they get to think I am translating…”); 20, v. 1, p. 17, l. 5 to p. 18, l. 11; 20, v. 1, p. 24, l. 19, and so on...

7) Is responsible for ancillary activities connected with the case, such as making calls, buying newspapers to read to the client, bringing him candy, handling money. 20, v. 1, p. 3, ll. 22-26, and pp. 19-20; 20, v. 3, p. 2, ll. 1-10. There are also frequent mentions of “we” (“we received a letter…”), indicating that he is considered part of the defense team, rather than just an interpreter.

* The above references are taken from the transcripts of jail visits made on May 19 and 20, 2000, available at www.lynnestewart.org/transcripts.html. The date of the visit is indicated by 19 or 20; the specific videotape is indicated by v. 1, v. 2, or v. 3; pages are indicated by p. 1; and lines are indicated by l. 1, etc. For example, 19, v. 1, p. 1, l. 1, indicates: Jail visit May 19, 2000, videotape transcription 1, page 1, line 1.
Developing a Mentoring Program?
Key Questions to Guide Your Journey

By Brenda Nicodemus

When Paula McCluskey boarded the flight for her 2,000-mile trip from Albuquerque to Boston she smiled, thinking of the piece of notebook paper carefully tucked away in her suitcase. On that paper the self-assured young interpreter had outlined each of her career goals. At the top of the page in block letters she had boldly printed her number one ambition, “BECOME CERTIFIED.” Paula, a recent graduate from a signed language interpreter education program, had just been hired at a prestigious university in Boston with a reputation for using excellent interpreters. Paula was moving to a city she had never seen and was doing so without an established support network of family or friends. She took this risk knowing that she needed an intense work environment in order to achieve her goal of becoming certified.

What Paula didn’t anticipate was the culture shock of moving from a familiar and relaxed southwestern town to a huge eastern metropolis. Her self-confidence plummeted as she struggled with the demands of a job that positioned her as “the new kid” among seasoned interpreters. Within a year her dreams had faded and the paper with her carefully written goals lay crumpled in a dresser drawer. Paula secretly began scouring college bulletins, considering a career change into accounting. Although her interpreting skills had developed, her self-esteem was at an all-time low and she was on the verge of spinning out of the profession.

“…Mentoring can serve a key role in the professional development of interpreters and translators at any point in their career…”

She credits her mentor with helping her transition from an anxious novice into a self-assured professional who was able to re-focus on her career goals. Within a few years Paula accomplished her dream of becoming a fully certified interpreter. Today, with 12 years of experience in the field, Paula is a successful veteran interpreter, holding a lead position with a video relay interpreting center. She is also involved with state and national interpreting committees.

Professional Mentoring

Mentoring can change lives for both new and veteran practitioners. A mentor can guide novices like Paula, an interpreter with theoretical knowledge but limited real-world experience in the field. A mentor can also support and sustain experienced interpreters who want to develop specific skill sets or achieve certain goals. Among professional interpreters and translators, there is a tacit acknowledgment of the need for ongoing growth and improvement. As a result, mentoring can serve a key role in the professional development of interpreters and translators at any point in their career.

The concept of “mentoring” has its origins in Homer’s epic poem, The Odyssey. Mentor was the friend who Odysseus left in charge of his home while he was away in Troy. Mentor served as the teacher and protector of Odysseus’ son, Telemachus, in his absence. The modern usage of “mentor” continues to signify a highly trustworthy person who serves as an advisor and guardian to someone in need of support.

In the past, certain professions had built-in ways to transition beginning workers into the world of work. For example, tradesmen formed guilds that supported novice workers until they had achieved a certain degree of mastery. Other professions attempted to close the gap between entry-level and experienced workers through structured internship and apprenticeship programs. In other fields, older professionals with experience and influence took on promising individuals as protégés.

Mentoring has long been a part of the interpreter’s and translator’s experience as well, but in the past it usually unfolded in an informal, random fashion. Today’s interpreters and translators have recognized the need for more structured ways to guide their own and their colleagues’ development. The ATA, for example, has established a mentorship program for interpreters and translators (see www.atanet.org/mentor). As stated on
the association’s website, ATA offers workshops that, “look at the best practices of successful mentors and mentees, introduces tips for structuring a successful mentoring relationship, and provides mentee-strategies that newcomers to translation and interpretation can implement immediately.”

Mentoring programs specifically designed for signed language interpreters are also springing up around the nation. One example is Project TIEM.Online (Teaching Interpreting Educators and Mentors), a nationally funded program at Northeastern University that trains individuals to establish and run mentoring programs within their communities (see www.asl.neu.edu/tiem.online/mastermentor.html).

These large-scale innovative efforts provide exciting options, however, many interpreters and translators don’t have ready access to established mentoring programs. Perhaps interpreters work for a referral agency that could benefit from planned educational opportunities. Or an interpreter knows a talented individual who is interested in interpreting, but doesn’t know how to get started. Or maybe a translator just wants to link up with colleagues in a study group to read and discuss translation-related journal articles.

A mentoring program can take many forms and serve multiple functions, including educational development, networking opportunities, and recruitment. If a person is interested in creating a small mentoring program for a business or membership organization or would like to create a structured support program for local colleagues, where does one begin?

The starting point for developing a mentoring program might lie with considering the eight key questions provided here. This article also presents a case study of how these questions were answered by a group of dedicated volunteers as they pursued their dream of establishing a statewide mentoring program for signed language interpreters.

**Eight Key Questions**

There are numerous issues to consider prior to establishing a mentoring program. The following eight questions are offered as a way to provide a process for questioning your thinking in the early stages of development.

**Question 1: What is the goal and mission of the mentoring project?**

The first question focuses on the specific goals of the mentoring program. Should the program:

- Improve the overall skills of interpreters and translators?
- Help colleagues gain credentials?
- Attract more interpreters or translators to the field?
- Encourage fellow interpreters/translators to join a professional association?
- Develop confidence in uncertain interpreters/translators?
- Provide rural interpreters/translators with networking opportunities?
- Retain professionals in the field?

This process can be served by brainstorming your goals as quickly as possible. Write them down without making judgments on their feasibility. This activity can be especially fruitful when done with colleagues who are interested in the benefits of mentoring. Consider them all, but eventually hone in on the specific mission you want to accomplish. A clear mission statement will guide the work ahead.

**Question 2: How can I move from a great idea to an action plan?**

How many times have you heard someone say, “Hey, I had that idea years ago and they stole it!!”? The roadblock for many a great vision is making the giant leap from thinking into an actual plan of action. Since not all visionaries are expert planners, you might consider drawing on specialists to jump-start the process. For example, consider drawing on the ideas in David Allen’s book Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-free Productivity (2001, Piatkus Books). In his book, Allen observes that all ideas “suffer the stress of infinite opportunity” and that people must reconcile that one project will never resolve every need. Allen suggests that productivity happens by creating an inventory of the “open loops” that might sabotage the project and proactively identifying the steps to close them. He encourages people to take advantage of what he calls “weird time,” i.e., those brief periods in our day that often go wasted, but which could be highly productive.

Ideas like Allen’s can serve to unify a start-up group and create a common language for moving forward on a project. Other inspiration may be found in a variety of resources, such as tapping the skills of successful and organized people in your own community. The point is to do something, anything, to keep the project in motion before it becomes one more great idea that just sits on the shelf.

**Question 3: Who are the stakeholders?**

Another question to consider is who will be affected by a mentoring program. Too often we assume that mentoring services only benefit the person being mentored. In fact, the benefits can be far-reaching. The consumers of interpreting services receive better services. The mentors have an opportunity to share.
their expertise. Employment agencies have a more qualified pool from which to hire. State government better serves its citizens.

Consider the beneficiaries of your mentoring program carefully because they will drive the program’s success through their participation, marketing, and often, financial contributions. In fact, the buy-in of stakeholders can make or break the success of your program.

**Question 4: What will it cost?**

Mentoring programs require resources. Even for a small-scale program, there will be costs involved. Establishing a budget helps clarify what is needed and defines the goals and philosophy of your program. A budget may include items such as:
- Training materials;
- Payment to mentors and administrators;
- Office supplies;
- Printing costs;
- Travel expenses;
- Marketing brochures; and
- Equipment (videocameras, Web cameras, etc.).

Creating a budget can help determine where to seek resources. And, like moving from ideas to action, the next step is finding the money to support the budget. With a concrete plan and budget in place it is easier to find the necessary resources, including hard cash.

**Question 5: Where can I get the money?**

A program budget is now in place, but where does the money come from? The answer might be found by piecing together a variety of funding sources. Consider the following possibilities:
- Federal, state, and local grants;
- Participation fees;
- Financial support from state agencies;
- Employers;
- Fundraising events; and
- Corporate donations.

Make sure that investors are provided a clear benefit for their involvement. Does a corporate donor want the company name on all advertising? Does a political group want to claim the program as their own? Finding what “motivates the money” will help fill the coffers.

**Question 6: How will my program deliver mentoring services?**

These days, we are no longer limited to face-to-face mentoring opportunities. Technology provides us with e-mail, Internet, instant messaging, and remote video capabilities, among other options. Assess the scope of the project and who is trying to be reached (and seriously consider involving a technology wizard along the way).

**Question 7: What is my time frame?**

It goes without saying that setting up a quality mentoring program takes time. Unfortunately, it will probably take longer than you would like. Creating a timeline accomplishes several goals. First, it helps the stakeholders see the progression of the project. Timelines also reassure funding sources that the program is more than a dream; it has a clear plan. Keep in mind that a timeline will need to be revisited often, and may need to be revised periodically, but a timeline serves as the roadmap for measuring your progress.

**Question 8: What obstacles may arise?**

The reality of obstacles must be faced. Most people can envision the successes that lie ahead, but equally important is to have a vision of the obstacles. Obstacles can demoralize participants and can derail an entire project. Unfortunately, obstacles are unavoidable, so it’s best to be ready for them. Then when obstacles arise, as they inevitably will, they just become another expected part of the plan. Are certain individuals going to resist the project proposal? What if the funding falls through? Will there be technological glitches? It’s always better to have the answers to potential obstacles in mind and to do proactive troubleshooting.

With a little change in attitude, obstacles can be seen as a critical part of the program’s development. So don’t just expect obstacles, embrace them as an important aspect of the project!

**New Mexico Mentoring: A Case Study**

As the popular adage goes, talk is cheap. It’s great to consider these ideas for establishing a mentoring program, but will they really work? It might be useful to hear a story of others who had the same question. The following case study describes the efforts of a group of dedicated volunteers in New Mexico in their pursuit to establish a statewide mentoring program for signed language interpreters.

In 2004, a forward-thinking interpreter by the name of Yoshiko Chino decided enough was enough. Working as a signed language interpreter in New Mexico, she had seen too many of her colleagues receiving little or no professional support. Many interpreters worked in isolation in rural New Mexico towns, with limited resources and without professional development plans. Other New Mexico interpreters lived in more urban environments with the benefit of formal training, but found that the leap from student to professional was
a difficult one to make. They often graduated, with high hopes and degree in hand, but with little professional, or life, experience. Many interpreters moved out of the state in pursuit of an environment that could offer needed assistance.

Rather than continuing to feel frustrated by these situations one more time, Chino took action. She started by having in-depth conversations with lots of people. She worked the topic of mentoring into her discussions in break rooms, over dinners, and even on bicycle rides. She listened to her colleagues' ideas and began to formulate a plan for how to move from thinking into an action plan. When she felt confident that she had cultivated a level of excitement for the establishment of a mentoring program, she asked key stakeholders to form an advisory board to make it happen.

The early stages were exciting times. The advisory board meetings became “mini think tank” sessions where thoughts flowed freely. The board members sifted through all of the ideas and devised a plan that focused specifically on the pressing needs of rural educational interpreters in the state. Ultimately, they designed a mentoring program using structured curriculum packages that focused on specific skills sets. The mentors, both deaf and hearing, would serve as instructional guides to move mentees through the workbooks.

Over the course of a year, the board had formulated a rough plan of action for developing a mentoring program for the state of New Mexico. By April 2005, a pilot project was underway and six mentee/mentor pairs were working together on two specialized curricular packages. Most of the work was done at a distance and the participants used technology as a means of communication. After eight weeks of work, the pairs met again at a wrap-up meeting and shared their perceptions of the pilot program, including the strengths and weaknesses, and offered suggestions to improve the program.

Finances were considered the major obstacle to the success of the program. Some mentoring programs use volunteer mentors, but the board was determined to pay their mentors as a way to recognize their contribution. There was also a clear need for a program administrator who could market the program, recruit mentors and mentees, gather resources, and oversee the budget. Who could do the job and how could the person be paid?

A major breakthrough occurred when the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing decided that the mentoring concept dovetailed perfectly with their own mission statement. They offered to fund a program administrator position and provide an additional $35,000 for start-up expenses. In addition, the New Mexico School for the Deaf saw the program as a way to reinforce their own mission of supporting rural educational interpreters, and came on board by offering over $20,000 for curriculum development. With these resources, along with a small grant from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (www.rid.org), the program found its financial legs.

After two years of dreaming, planning, and working, New Mexico Mentoring officially kicked off in January of 2006. With a program administrator in place and an advisory board to guide the future of the program, hopes are high that the original dream of supporting New Mexico signed language interpreters is well on its way. (For more information about New Mexico Mentoring, contact the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at nmcdhha@doh.state.nm.us.)

Conclusion

This article opened with the story of how one motivated interpreter was transformed by the guidance of a caring mentor. Each of us probably has a similar story of someone who has guided our professional journey. If you want to offer your fellow colleagues the same promise of guided mentoring, we hope you are able to establish a solid foundation for a mentorship program by using the information in this article. Best wishes in your journey!

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A recent survey showed that freelance translators who are also ATA members derive 60% of their income from translation companies.1 This article provides insight into what translation companies in the U.S. expect from resumes they receive from freelance translators or interpreters. The following information is loosely based on a presentation made by Jiri Stejskal at the September 2005 annual meeting of the Northeast Ohio Translators Association (www.ohiotranslators.org), a very active ATA chapter headed by Jill Sommer.

First, let us clarify our definition of a resume. Unlike a curriculum vitae (CV), which is more detailed and includes publications, presentations, awards, and other professional achievements, a resume is a one- to two-page summary of relevant skills, experience, and education. A resume must be brief because the reader typically spends less than a minute reviewing its contents.

You need to make sure your resume is concise, well written, and that it contains the information translation companies are looking for, and, by the same token, that it does not contain anything that is irrelevant or unnecessary. The suggestions below can serve as a guideline for writing an effective resume that makes the first cut, and can be used as a basis for a successful business relationship. Use the list of “do’s” and “don’ts” below to ensure that your resume goes on file and not in the recycling bin.

Resume To-do List

Here are some suggestions on how to make your resume stand out.

• Keep the document to one or two pages. Remember, this is a resume, not a CV. As such, it is important to summarize the most significant highlights of your professional skills that are relevant to the position you are applying for. A project or vendor manager’s time is limited. They spend only a few seconds looking at your resume to see if it is worthwhile to keep reading.

• Indicate your source and target languages. This information is important and having it clearly visible at the top makes it easier for project or vendor managers to find when they go looking for a specific language pair among the many resumes they have on file. If you translate more than one language, include it, but differentiate your strongest language pair from the others.

• Indicate your specialization. It is likely to be the second thing a project or vendor manager looks for on your resume. When looking for a particular area of expertise for a project, many translation companies use indexing and key word search tools to help them sift through the resumes on file. Having your specializations listed will help ensure that a word search leads to your resume. For example, if you are a German medical translator, make sure you list the words “German” and “medical.” If you are just starting out, you may not have substantial experience in a particular field, but it is still a good idea to indicate something you would like to specialize in and that you are actively pursuing.

• Submit your resume online, preferably in PDF format as an e-mail attachment. A PDF file looks professional and can be viewed on different platforms without altering the fonts you use. It also indicates that you know how to create a PDF file, which many translation companies see as a valuable skill.

• List complete contact information. Make sure you include your mailing address, phone number, fax number, and an accurate e-mail address that you check regularly.

• When saving your resume on the computer, use your last name for the filename. Don’t name your resume something generic like “U.S. resume” or “translator1.” This just makes good sense, especially when submitting your resume online, since translation companies will typically file an applicant’s material under their last name.

• Indicate your educational background in the proper place. If you graduated recently and do not have much work experience, make sure you emphasize your education. If you are an experienced translator or interpreter, you can move the education information to the end of your resume and emphasize your work experience instead.

• Provide relevant information only. For a freelance position, it is not necessary to show that there are no gaps in your employment history. You don’t need to write down that summer you spent...
pouring concrete or waiting tables, unless perhaps you were waiting tables at a cafe in Paris or Madrid.

- Indicate your experience with computer-aided translation (CAT) tools and whether you use such tools on a regular basis. Do you own and are you proficient in the use of a particular tool, such as TRADOS 7 Freelance? If the answer is yes, make sure it is reflected on your resume. Make sure you list specific CAT tools, since this is another area where translation companies use indexing and key word searches.

- Provide information on your desktop publishing (DTP) capabilities. Skills in using DTP applications such as InDesign or QuarkXpress are good to have, as they might set you apart from other translators.

- Proofread your resume thoroughly and have others proofread it. This is particularly important if your native language is not English. Of course, even native English speakers are not immune to typos and poorly worded English. Remember, you have designed your resume as a tool for selling your linguistic skills. If a resume is not flawless, your capabilities will appear questionable.

- Include relevant association memberships and credentials, such as ATA certification.

- Update your resume frequently. Sending out an updated resume is a good excuse to make additional contacts with translation companies. This will also help to keep your name fresh in the minds of prospective clients.

Things to Avoid

To further enhance your chances of getting a translation company to put your resume on file, we suggest you steer clear of certain practices that are quite common.

- Don’t use colors, photos, word art, and graphic images unless you have a good reason to do so (such as using your logo).

- Don’t state your date of birth, number of children, marital status, or other similar personal information. This is a common practice in other countries, but is not advisable for U.S. resumes.

- Don’t include an objective that is too broad. It is not necessary to state your objective at all if it is clear from your cover letter (which will typically take the form of an e-mail message that you send with your resume attached) that you are a freelance translator or interpreter who wants to work with a translation company as an independent contractor. If you choose to include an objective, be sure to be concise. Do not make sweeping statements such as “To gain experience as a translator” or “To use my foreign language skills.”

- Don’t provide a list of your dictionaries. You can provide this information if requested, together with other resources you are using.

- Don’t describe your hardware and don’t list standard software applications such as MS Office. It is assumed that you already know how to use these programs, and the reader will wonder why they are listed. However, you might want to mention which platform(s) you are using, especially if you are a Mac user.

- Don’t leave the Track Changes feature on in Word. This may seem obvious, but the number of resumes submitted with tracked changes visible is surprisingly high. Though it is a good source of office ridicule, it is not a good way to present yourself to a potential client. Check your view settings and make sure you see what you want everyone else to see. This blooper can be easily avoided if you submit your resume in PDF format as suggested earlier.

- Don’t leave unused generic fields when using a template. Resume templates are fine to use, though they are fairly obvious to a reader who has seen hundreds of resumes. There is nothing wrong with using a template, provided it is appropriate for your purpose and is correctly customized to suit your needs.

- Don’t submit your resume in non-standard applications, such as MS Publisher.

- Don’t include your rates. Of course, it is important that the project manager knows what you charge, but your resume is not a good place to provide such information. It is a good idea to submit a separate document containing your rate information, or to include such information in an accompanying message (or cover letter).

- Don’t use silly or unusual fonts. Use a common font like Arial, Helvetica, Times, or Times New Roman.

- Don’t use acronyms. Most of us know what ATA stands for, but standard resume writing suggests you spell out all proper names. If the name occurs more than once on your resume, it is fine to
Resume Writing for Freelancers Continued

- Don’t use an acronym for subsequent occurrences.

• Don’t write “references available upon request.” You can provide references in a separate document or in your cover letter.

• Don’t submit hard copies. While a paper resume can be printed on fancy paper and look impressive, it is the content, not the form, that is important to the project or vendor manager. More importantly, a digital resume is searchable and does not take up physical space.

• Last, but certainly not least, don’t make things up—be truthful and accurate.

Most translation companies receive resumes on a daily basis and have thousands on file. Because your resume is one of many, you need to make sure you use other marketing tools, in addition to providing a resume, to establish a relationship with a translation company. Examples include follow-up communication and networking at events attended by translation companies, such as a social function at a professional seminar hosted by ATA or another industry association.

Having a professional resume is an absolute must for a freelancer who wants to do business with a translation company. Investing time and effort in getting it right will lead to new business and a successful career.

Notes

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herring of the “just doing his job as a translator” defense, and if they neglect to read the jail interview transcripts, they will never correctly understand the basis for the ATA/NAJIT joint statement, and will not know what it means to say that “we do not take a stand on guilt or innocence.” Mr. Yousry may be guilty or innocent of the criminal charges brought against him. We do not know and probably will never know what his intentions may have been in this respect. His lack of professionalism, however, quite surely had a serious impact in increasing the dangers to which he exposed himself. As members of the interpreting and translating community, that is what ought to concern us most.

Judith Kenigson Kristy
Director
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators

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The Entrepreneurial Translator

By Martin Alianelli

The American Heritage Dictionary defines an entrepreneur as “someone who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk of a business venture.” And as simple as that definition sounds, there is much more to being an entrepreneur than just a dozen words. An entrepreneur, from my own experience, is “someone mad, who under crushing doubts, tautly organizes, painfully operates, and foolishly assumes the mammoth risk of a business venture.”

When the 1996 Florida State legislature retired me 20 years early from my vested position as a senior commercial officer with the Florida Department of Commerce, I found myself out of a job for the first time in my life, at 45, and with very specific out-of-the-ordinary skills. There were no more checks at the end of the month and I could no longer lean on corporate culture for direction.

Getting Started

Organizing my new office was a challenge in itself, but starting my translation practice was a real test. A thorough inventory of skills and talents accumulated throughout my life helped me identify my unique experience set and apply it to managing my business and marketing my translation practice. In the past 20 years, I had been a policeman, door-to-door salesman, restaurant chain marketing executive, wholesale tour operator, airline sales representative, telecommunications project manager, and tourism government official. These jobs taught me how to listen carefully, nurture efficient interpersonal relations, project an image of professional credibility, conduct business based on ethical and social considerations, and recognize the importance of superior service as a defining factor of success.

Marketing the Practice

Learning about the translation profession was not difficult, thanks to the vast resources to be found within ATA, the Florida Chapter of ATA (FLATA), and many other trade organizations. I discovered an abundance of education and reference materials, particularly in the Spanish-to-English language pair, and a support network of fellow translators whom I now call friends. Even with these resources, however, marketing my practice would prove an extremely difficult challenge.

“…A happy customer is likely to come back, as long as we know how to communicate effectively while showing true dedication to service excellence…”

As a relative newcomer to the profession, I started by acknowledging the fact that my translation skills, while accurate and effective, were perhaps not as efficient as a result of the industry’s long learning curve, my lack of hands-on experience, and the dynamic nature of language itself. But I knew that I could somehow overcome these deficiencies by using the business skills I had learned in other industries and by choosing to specialize.

My understanding of marketing soon revealed what my corporate clients needed and that I could fulfill those needs because I knew how to speak their language. I believe corporate people can deal very effectively with other corporate people because they all live inside controlled corporate cultures. But when they go out into the outsourcing world, they cannot understand why some contractors don’t subscribe to basic corporate-like behaviors such as answering the phone immediately, returning calls promptly, and performing other basic functions more efficiently. The point is that above and beyond credentials and talents, clients are more impressed with the way we service their needs than anything else. And I believe that when it comes to service, a happy customer is likely to come back, as long as we know how to communicate effectively while showing true dedication to service excellence.

And when we talk about service excellence, I believe we are talking about absolute and total dedication to serving our clients’ needs and solving their problems to our fullest ability with minimum interference. But I have heard a few translators say that there is a need to “educate” our clients, and I agree that organizations such as ATA, FLATA, and many others should undertake this task. But when it comes to individual translators, I believe we also need to be educating ourselves in the art of providing a superior customer service experience.

The Salesman

My law enforcement background has always come in handy to measure people from afar. These days, I use it to spot salespeople when they approach to sell me something. I size them up and stay away as much as I can. And I don’t think I am unique when it comes to “resisting” a sale.

In that spirit, I resist using the whole “sell” proposition when it comes to marketing my translation practice. I really feel more like a doctor than a salesman, since when it comes to “selling,” I follow the “build it and they will come”
rule. Yes, I believe building my practice, promoting it very subtly, and being competent in the way I carry myself and talk to my clients gets me more attention than trying to convince clients they should hire me instead of somebody else.

In my personal and professional experience, credibility is king. And nowhere is credibility more urgently needed than with our own peers. I have always placed the highest value on my practice of listening to and getting a reading on other translators, in addition to networking with my peers. When I started doing these very things, my practice and credibility took off for good. In just two years, my practice has grown extensively. I have also received the great honor and personal privilege of being elected by my peers to serve as president of FLATA for two years in a row. I am also invited to write articles, make presentations, and give interviews on a more regular basis.

The Route Map

When it comes to marketing my practice, I place great value on attending professional gatherings, being invited as a speaker, being asked to write articles for trade or mass media, or being interviewed for newspapers, radio, or television. But these are all after-the-fact results of having attained credibility through my peers and my industry.

Since I started working as a translator, I have seen translators copying formulas from books on how to market and sell, and always thought that these strategies must work well for them. I have read some of the same books, but in my personal case, I don’t want to do what everybody else does. I want to try my own material. And I don’t want to know how much other translators charge. I don’t really care about competition. I believe too much emphasis is placed on knowing what the competition does, when in reality it is more important to be persistent in our ability to provide accurate translations and in our determination to offer a superior customer service experience to our clients. An attitude of persistence and determination is what continues to work for me. As U.S. President Calvin Coolidge once said: “Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.”

The Crystal Ball

This attitude of persistence and determination responds to a very strong indication that there are not enough translators in the U.S. to meet the increasing local demand. In my opinion, no matter how many start in the business in the next 20 years (which is about how much longer I’ll be around in the profession), there probably will not be enough translators around to meet future demand.

Take Hispanics in the U.S. as a perfect example of how future demographics will affect the translation business and our individual professions here in the U.S. by checking the following data on Hispanic populations:

- **Percentage vs. Total State Population**
  - California: 32%  (Population = 33.9 million)
  - Texas: 32%  (Population = 20.8 million)
  - Colorado: 17.1%  (Population = 4.3 million)
  - Florida: 16.8%  (Population = 15.9 million)
  - New York: 15.1%  (Population = 18.9 million)
  - Illinois: 12.3%  (Population = 12.4 million)

- **2002 Hispanic Purchasing Power:** $600 billion
- **2020 Projected Hispanic Purchasing Power:** $1.3 trillion
  (Sources: U.S. Census Bureau –Telemundo Television Network)

Another indication that there is a great need for our services is that when it comes to languages, this country is an infant crying out for attention. Take the average person living in Europe who speaks two or three languages with native proficiency and compare him or her to our average American who only speaks English. Actually, a not-so-recent study of representatives in the U.S. Congress found that more than half of our elected officials have never applied for a U.S. passport!

As the U.S. continues to open up to the world, I see demand for our services here growing at a geometric pace. And if I was ever concerned with translation overseas stealing my clients away, I don’t worry any more. There will be enough work for all once demand in America for language services grows at a faster pace to keep up with the new market demographics. Further, I believe our competitive advantage will respond to the need for cultural awareness and
education in American corporations, and most especially to the unique report and cultural understanding between an American client and his or her American translator or interpreter.

On the other hand, the federal government can’t find enough qualified interpreters and translators, and the same is true of state and local governments and private industry around the nation. Cities which just 10 or 20 years ago had no need for interpreters in their courts or translators in their businesses are perfect examples. Now cities such as Atlanta, Denver, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Portland, and Seattle have been overwhelmed with a demographic invasion of enormous proportions, one which has brought about new market segment opportunities along with the stretching of public and private resources.

These indications clearly show that our country is at the gates of a real cultural and linguistic dilemma from which those in our industry will all profit. This has been somewhat recognized by the federal government’s designating 2005 as the “Year of Languages,” heralding the beginning of a long and torturous road to teach Americans other languages, but most importantly, to make Americans more comfortable with other cultures.

These facts underscore the incredible blue skies above for those of us in this business in the years to come. I further submit that the present infrastructure, the rapidly increasing globalization of American culture, and the increase in specialization will bring about a feeding bonanza for U.S. translators and interpreters that, in the next 10 to 20 years, will make our profession one of the most promising for Americans of all ages.

The Competitive Advantage of Superior Service

The Ritz Carlton Hotel Corporation is one of the best five-star hotel chains in the world, and the first recipient—as a hotel chain—of the coveted “Malcolm Baldrige” award, which had previously only been presented to individual hotels.

A few years ago, while attending the Florida Governor Conference on Tourism, I had the privilege of listening to Horst Schultze, then the chairman and CEO of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Corporation. His explanation of how a collective attitude toward providing superior service had changed the famous hotel chain drew feedback from the specialized audience of hoteliers and other tourism professionals. It wasn’t until he spoke about repeat business that I understood the difference between providing “service” and providing a “superior client service experience.”

Mr. Schultze was talking about client satisfaction and repeat business, explaining that, as great as the Ritz Carlton Corporation was (at the time, the number one hotel chain in America), they were still losing about 30% repeat business due to inconsistencies in their service. When the crowd reacted with laughter, he said, “Oh, don’t worry for us because you…you are losing much more.”

And as arrogant as the statement sounds, it is both accurate and revealing. To get a job in the door is relatively easy, but to hold onto an account is extremely difficult. Repeat business is a measure of greatness reserved for translators who, besides being expert word and meaning craftsmen, have a personal and professional commitment to service excellence.

So when it comes to marketing my translation practice, I believe in keeping it simple and tightly inside a manageable circle where I am the hub and my clients are the spokes. And the circle can only work if I can continue providing a superior service experience by listening attentively and understanding exactly what my clients’ needs are. Service is superior when we:

- Are accessible and easy to reach;
- Take ownership for our errors;
- Provide answers without further consultation;
- Never promise what we cannot deliver;
- Consistently respect our clients’ needs;
- Provide regular project updates;
- Communicate briefly, effectively, and without interference; and
- Keep current on our client’s industry news.

Speaking Clearly

Charlatany is phony and easy to detect. Unless victims of a professional con job, we usually know when someone is trying to lie, misrepresent, or even sugarcoat something. In the specialized environment of business, charlatanry can be detected much faster because the business information we exchange with clients is usually factual and very much to the point.

Excuses are the best example of charlatanry and the fastest way to lose clients. It is even worse than not completing a project on time or being mildly inaccurate, because an excuse is regarded as an evasion of responsibility and a very childish act. A client will most likely forgive anything, except excuses. In the professional life of an entrepreneur translator, charlatanry and excuses are sure tickets to losing credibility and ultimately gaining a reputation for scaring repeat business away.

Speaking clearly means being honest and taking ownership of our own mistakes when, for whatever...
reason, we cannot provide a superior service experience. And this attitude is in line with our clients’ own corporate cultures, where employees take ownership of their own mistakes, which are seen as learning opportunities allowing for corrective measures that help nurture effective business relationships based on mutual respect and better understanding.

The Kindness of Superior Service

When I was a little boy growing up in Buenos Aires, I always loved to go to the candy store near the San Isidro railway station, because no matter what I bought, Señor Alberto would always let me put my hand inside the big black “mystery jar” filled with candy. And that one candy I always got out of the jar was the best. This was not because it was free, but because even though Señor Alberto had no obligation and presumably didn’t gain much by doing it, he was telling this little boy, “Hey, I love you coming around.” Señor Alberto knew about providing a superior service experience and added value. As a result, all of the kids loved going to his candy store.

That is why superior service entails a caring attitude and a commitment to excellence based on a personal understanding and a professional dedication to upholding old and proven personal principles of civility and good manners. It means going one step further beyond just doing what we are being paid for. It means doing the right things and doing them right. It means doing things in a more complete fashion. This is what marketers call “providing added value.”

That is what superior service means to me. That is what Señor Alberto knew so well in a most empirical way, and that is the first marketing skill I ever learned.

The “Value-Added” Benefit

The addition of value to service is a great competitive advantage in my practice, as it creates client goodwill that results in repeat business. To produce the desired effect, this service must have a concrete and obvious value that, while clearly benefiting the client, will not convey something offered for “free.” Good examples of the kind of added value services I provide my clients without charging are:

- Pointing grammatical errors or typos out in the source copy;
- Translating technical language;
- Doing rush jobs; and
- Counting words on a copy bearing the least number of words.

Actually, I came up with the idea of these value-added competitive advantage points from other translators’ collateral materials announcing their “extra charges.”

Practicing Common Sense

They say common sense is the least common of the senses, and, at least in my experience, superior service is nothing but plain and simple common sense. It is no wonder this kind of service is so hard to find! Simply put, superior service is treating others the way we would like to be treated; to value every person as such and not as an entity.

Common sense dictates that in order to provide superior service and a superior client experience, we must conduct ourselves in a civil manner, including:

- Never interrupting while someone is talking;
- Listening with attention and intent;
- Taking notes on what is being said;
- Wrapping up conversations with next-step action plans; and
- Following up meetings and conversations with thank-you e-mails.

Some of these skills were transferred to me while working at Delta Airlines, a company with an incredibly efficient team-based, self-directed corporate culture, where each individual must act responsibly, take ownership of deficiencies, and measure individual and team performance to achieve corporate goals.

Providing superior service is also about one of the only noticeable advantages that may distinguish our service from others. And I keep reminding myself that too much confidence breeds contempt. The idea that “they’ll keep coming because I am the best translator” is beside the point and a recipe for possible professional failure.

Conclusion

Many times I have been asked, “What did you do to make big corporations be interested in your services?” And without giving away everything, I will say this…I did it and continue to do so by being myself and by creating and projecting an image of credibility horizontally into every environment I frequent, whether it be with family, friends, friends of friends, the church, gym, social club, children’s school events, or community work.

I also try to be in as many places as I can. I never carry business cards
Translator Profile: Izumi Suzuki Loves a Challenge

By S. Alexandra Russell-Bitting

Japanese interpreter Izumi Suzuki has just spent a nine-hour day at a manufacturing plant in Jefferson City, Missouri, interpreting presentations for engineering professors during a Total Productive Maintenance audit. Tomorrow she is flying home to Detroit, where she will drive directly to a senior citizen’s center to interpret for a traditional Japanese comedian during a performance, which will be followed by a local television interview. “That’s my crazy life,” she cheerfully observes, “and I love it.”

What exactly is so appealing about “total productive maintenance?” “TPM,” Izumi explains, “involves much more than maintenance. Its ultimate goal is to change people’s attitude through consistent, continuous activities in various areas of a manufacturing business.” As part of the process, the Japan Institute of Plant Maintenance (JIPM) conducts audits. Izumi’s Jefferson City client is a manufacturing company that hired her to interpret for the JIPM auditors sent to verify compliance.

A Nod of Approval

During the tightly scheduled nine-hour audit, each manager gives a presentation on his or her team’s activities, after which production floor operators present case studies. Simultaneous interpreting is required from start to finish, including questions and answers. “Auditors are usually college professors in engineering,” says Izumi, “and when they speak, I try my best to convey their message in the most understandable way to the plant people.”

Client satisfaction is one of the most rewarding aspects of her assignment: “Both the plant people and the auditors are quite tense in the morning. When the day goes smoothly, though, both sides are very happy. Of course there is no ‘perfect’ plant, but when people feel that they could convey what they have achieved and have received constructive criticism that makes sense, they appreciate the interpreters wholeheartedly.” She adds, “Many professors understand English quite well, and it is wonderful to see them nod approvingly during my interpretation of their comments.”

The Best Medicine

After the TPM meeting, Izumi headed straight for the senior center in Detroit to interpret for a rakugo artist. “Rakugo is a traditional Japanese art that started 800 years ago,” she explains. “It is like stand-up comedy here in the U.S., but the stories are moving as well as funny. The only props allowed are a fan and a towel, which may turn into chopsticks, a wallet, a letter, a banana—or whatever else the performer can make an audience imagine with his skillful gestures.”

Rakugo performer Kyoraku Sanyutei had volunteered to come to Michigan to do shows for seniors through ArtBridge, an organization for cultural exchanges between the U.S., Canada, and Japan run by Izumi’s husband, Steve Myers. Izumi donated her time, too, and in return witnessed with her eyes and heart the impact of a job well done. “It was so rewarding to see these old people—some of them in wheelchairs—laugh and enjoy themselves, forgetting about their age and illness through my interpreting,” she says. Izumi also interpreted for Sanyutei during a local television interview. She herself was also interviewed, giving the general public a chance to appreciate the crucial role of interpreters.

A Childhood Dream

Ironically, Izumi’s first love wasn’t languages at all, but ballet. She started at six and vigorously pursued a dancing career, landing a slot in the Tchaikovsky-Memorial Tokyo Ballet Company at 17 and eventually studying under a Royal Ballet Academy teacher in England.1 Alas, having sprouted to 5’7”, Izumi learned she was “too tall” to be a translator.

1 Nice kick! Izumi practices her rond de jambes à terre at the barre during the ballet class she takes three to four times a week. She has also taught ballet.
soloist, putting a sudden end to her aspirations and prompting major soul searching. Had she wasted her whole life?

Luckily for the world of language professionals, at her mother’s suggestion Izumi had already been taking some courses at the Japan Interpreters Training School (JITS) to give her brain some exercise. One of her professors reassured her that she could pour all the discipline and focus she had developed in ballet into a career in interpreting. And she rapidly saw results: “Compared with ballet,” she says, “everything was easier.”

A Holistic Approach

Izumi is adamant that interpreting is not just about developing skills and expertise in technical areas like automotive terminology. “Interpreting is human communication,” she notes, “and in order to become an effective communicator, an interpreter has to keep learning many, many aspects of human communication.” In her opinion, that also means enriching your general culture through music and art.

“An interpreter should be a deep wellspring of information, able to accurately and effectively communicate what a speaker wants to express.” Appreciation of the arts, she says, helps interpreters understand a variety of human expressions. She is passing on this approach in the interpreting classes she’s been giving at her office on Saturday mornings for the past 15 years.

“I tell my students that they should read good books, see great movies, and visit museums. I also assign them each to give a speech on a subject they are interested in and have other students interpret the speech. They are so alive and expressive when they talk about something they like, and I learn a lot, too.”

Challenging Herself

The harsh discipline of ballet gave Izumi the drive to excel. “In ballet,” she says, “I had a teacher who scolded me to do better all the time. In interpreting, I don’t have teachers like that, so it would be easy to become complacent and let my skills deteriorate.” When she heard that the Michigan State Court had decided to join the National Center for State Courts and started giving court interpreting exams, she was excited to learn that it was a tough exam.

Izumi was also motivated by professional conscientiousness. At the time of the Michigan exams, she was interpreting in a criminal case of child abuse in which legal complications arose because the interpreters originally used were not professionals. One of them did not even know the correct Japanese translation for “right” in Miranda rights.

“I felt strongly that qualified interpreters must educate the court system so that they select competent interpreters. But to do that, I needed some credentials in court interpreting besides my experience.” Izumi soon discovered that certification in Japanese court interpreting was being offered only in California, and invested considerable time and money to fly out—three times—and get certified.

Peak Performance

According to Izumi, simultaneous interpreting is a lot like a double or triple pirouette: “Some days you can turn so well, you feel great, and other times it’s just not there and you might even fall. In which case you try to recover as quickly as possible so that people will forget about your fall.” On the other hand, she says, “small jumps, such as assemblé, jeté and pas de chat, are not hard to do individually, but when combined in rapid succession, they take energy and speed.” They remind her of interpreting in automotive engineering, “where you know the vocabulary and must catch concepts and convey their meaning quickly.”

By the same token, coming up
with the right expression in the target language and getting a deep nod from the listeners is a grand jeté: “You are high up in the air with every limb stretched out and you hover there for a moment. It’s exhilarating, like dancing a Sugar Plum Fairy solo.” She remembers a particularly rewarding assignment interpreting quality control seminars for a brilliant Japanese instructor who spoke with perfect timing. “I could clearly see where he was going, so I could concentrate on how to express what he was trying to say so that the audience would understand best,” she recalls, “quite close to a pas de deux.”

“To me,” she concludes, “every interpreting assignment is a performance. For a short time, I become the person I am interpreting for. And when I become so transparent I disappear, my performance is at its best.”

Websites of interest:
Arbridge: www.artbridge.org

ATA Japanese Language Division: www.ata-divisions.org/JLD/index.htm

Japan America Society of Greater Detroit & Windsor: www.us-japan.org/gdwjas

Japan Business Society of Detroit: www.jbsd.org/index.asp

Michigan Translators & Interpreters Network (MiTiN): www.mitinweb.org

National Association of Women Business Owners: www.nawbo.org

Ohara School of Ikebana: www.ohararyu.or.jp/english/index_e.html

Suzuki, Myers & Associates: www.suzukimyers.com

World Trade Club of Detroit/Windsor: www.wtcdw.com

Notes
Interpreting in medical and health-care settings is a sector of our profession that is expanding exponentially. California, where 40% of the residents speak a language other than English at home, is one of the states at the forefront of this trend (U.S. Census Data, 2000). The medical interpreting profession, while young, has seen tremendous growth over the past 10 years, much of it in just the last two to three years. To assist with the growing demand for language services, the California Healthcare Interpreting Association (CHIA) has been there to help its members navigate this rapidly changing area through its many professional development initiatives.

Founded in 1996 by a group of hospital-based medical interpreters and program managers, CHIA is a 501(c)(3) public charity dedicated to improving the quality and availability of language services in the delivery of healthcare. The association’s name was changed in 2003 from “Interpreter” to “Interpreting” to better reflect CHIA’s mission of serving the public interest, and particularly the interests of limited-English-proficient (LEP) patients, rather than acting only as a professional association for interpreters. Today, CHIA’s diverse membership includes interpreters, physicians and other healthcare providers, hospitals, interpreting agencies and language service companies, educators, and government policymakers. Its mission: “Healthcare interpreters and providers working together to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers to high quality care.” Currently, CHIA provides a range of benefits and projects for its membership.

Efforts that support the development of the profession include:

• Disseminating and supporting the California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters, comprehensive professional ethics and standards of conduct created in 2002.

• Supporting CHIA’s seven regional chapters based in San Diego, Los Angeles, the Eastern Sierra, Central Valley, Sacramento, Bay Area, and Santa Rosa.

• Creating and sponsoring high quality trainings and presentations at the regional chapter level. Chapters try to meet quarterly, often at hospitals. Meetings include presentations by interpreters or interpreter trainers, healthcare professionals, educators, or government personnel. Attendees can join CHIA at the meetings, which provide those who work in language services an opportunity to share information and build relationships.

• Holding an annual two-day educational conference.

• Publishing a quarterly newsletter.

• Providing bi-weekly updates to all members via e-mail which typically include the latest developments on legislation related to healthcare interpreting and language access, upcoming trainings and events, and any other news of interest.

• Maintaining a professional website that includes training resources, an interpreter registry, a listserv, and links to other valuable resources.

• Publishing a directory of all CHIA members (beginning in 2006).

CHIA also has several projects that work towards our overall mission of overcoming barriers to accessing care for LEP communities.

Language Access in Healthcare Facilities. The LISTEN® (Language Interpreting Services and Training Evaluation Network) program helps hospitals, clinics, and medical group practices develop or improve their language access programs and enhance the cultural competency of their staffs. First developed and piloted in 2003, LISTEN® services include consultation, training, individual or group coaching, and a comprehensive assessment of a healthcare facility’s language access program. When hospitals commit to removing barriers to access to care for non-English-speaking patients, working conditions, pay, professional recognition, and resources for interpreters inevitably improve.

Interpreter Skills Summary. With funding from The California Endowment, CHIA is currently developing an online interpreter “Skills Summary” to help interpreters present their credentials and purchasers of interpreting services compare interpreter training and experience. Through the interpreter registry on the CHIA website, interpreters will be able to list specific training, areas of specialization, and job experience that consumers of interpreter services will be able to search to find the skill set they need. CHIA views the development of the “Skills Summary” as a crucial building block towards eventual
certification for healthcare interpreters.

Education in Legislative Arenas. CHIA helps to educate state lawmakers, regulators, and other policyholders about the importance of providing adequate language services. CHIA is a key voice in the evolving debate at the state level on how best to provide language access. Recent and pending legislation in California is pushing the demand for quality language services ever higher. State Bill 853 is a portent of major change in the field. Passed in 2003, it takes effect in 2006. One of the bill’s regulations requires that all commercial health plans provide language services comparable to those guaranteed to Medi-Cal recipients. Similar regulations are forthcoming later in 2006 from the Department of Insurance, which regulates indemnity insurers and preferred provider type products, disability, and long-term care insurance. CHIA plays an active role in helping to define what quality language services are and in building the infrastructure to make them available.

Publications. In addition to its quarterly newsletter, CHIA creates and partners with other individuals and groups to publish monographs and policy briefs. Recent publications include:

- California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters (CHIA);
- Training for Healthcare Interpreters: Toward a More Comprehensive Professional Future (Adam Kinsey, Niels Agger-Gupta, Don Schinske, and Tom Riley);
- Survey of Salaries and Benefits (Adam Kinsey);
- Careers for Healthcare Interpreters in California: Helping Limited-English-Proficient Patients Receive Better Care (Marian Schinske);
- Giving a Voice to Limited-English-Proficient Patients in California: Healthcare Interpreters Share Their Stories (Marian Schinske); and
- Survey Results: Environmental Scan June/July 2005 (Niels Agger-Gupta).

Networking and Collaboration. CHIA is committed to helping move healthcare interpreting forward inside and outside California in a spirit of consensus and collaboration. The association works with a broad range of key groups and individuals. One recent example was the very successful collaboration between CHIA, the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC, www.ncihc.org), and the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association (MMIA, www.mmia.org) to present a unified voice on the newly published National Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care. The three associations worked together to write a letter of endorsement supporting NCIHC’s creation of national standards, which represent a critical step in the professionalization of healthcare interpreting. The letter recognizes the important historical and ongoing contribution of state standards created by MMIA and CHIA, while strongly supporting the use and dissemination of the national standards.

Future Projects. CHIA is currently considering projects and activities that include:

- Taking the next steps towards healthcare interpreter certification;
- Reviewing and updating the California Standards for Healthcare Interpreters to reflect changes in this rapidly evolving field and to better incorporate the new national standards; and
- Creating trainings for dissemination statewide.

In the two years since CHIA moved away from functioning strictly as a professional association for interpreters, the organization’s range and reach have been greatly extended. As noted, healthcare interpreting has not yet matured sufficiently to be able to sustain a full-service professional association. Ironically, shifting our mission focus to work towards the end result of providing high-quality interpreting—and thus better access to care—has made it easier for CHIA to effectively impact the individual interpreter’s job experience and learning. It has allowed CHIA to collaborate with health maintenance organizations, physicians, health plans, and in the legislative arena as an educator. This in turn helps raise awareness of the importance of healthcare interpreting, ultimately benefiting the individual interpreter’s work conditions.

It is appropriate to finish this profile with a focus on CHIA members, without whom the association could not function. All of CHIA’s members—from the individual freelance or hospital interpreter, to the program manager, educator, policymaker, or board member—provide invaluable service, expertise, time, and resources to the association. It is an exciting time to be involved in healthcare interpreting in California. Speaking from my own experience, above and beyond all the specific benefits CHIA works so hard to provide, the best aspect of being involved in this association is getting to collaborate with and learn from the dedicated and extremely capable individuals who work tirelessly in their respective fields to improve language access and promote healthcare interpreting.

To become a CHIA member or find out more about healthcare interpreting

Continued on p.31
O! Pioneers: A Commentary on Nebraska’s Translators and Interpreters

By Janet Bonet

This article is intended to serve as both catharsis and catalyst. Thousands of translators and interpreters working in what I used to defensively call marginalized areas are as passionate about our professionalism as any practitioner. We are what might be called undocumented professionals. Like that first generation of the profession, our careers as translators and interpreters were born of necessity, that tough-love mother of innovation, rather than planned academic preparation. Our communities were catapulted into language access mayhem without any, or very little, academic or professional infrastructure to support the booming demand for language specialists. Challenging stereotypes by coming from unexpected backgrounds, we are creatively learning our craft via truly independent study, striving all the while to find our place among colleagues who we often feel do not welcome us.

I take pride in my Nebraska colleagues who have accomplished so much with so little, forging ahead on extraordinary strength of will, scant resources, and little, albeit increasing, respect from our coastal colleagues. We are mostly isolated, by either distance or finances, from the traditional, formal educational institutions venerated by the profession and preferred by the marketplace. We feel a sense of frustration and hopelessness, of being left behind or pushed aside when job postings in our state include requirements for degrees that are simply unavailable to us in Nebraska. It is with a collective sigh that we acknowledge it may be our own professional insecurity that oversensitizes us to the response, or lack of it, from our fellow practitioners who have traveled the world and earned university degrees in a foreign language, translation, or linguistics. We do not expect standards to be lowered to allow us professional parity. Our goal is still to achieve certification, as have others with academic or geographic advantage. We ask only for an appreciation of the fact that our road to professionalization is different, and in many ways more difficult, in comparison to those in sectors of the U.S. where an educational and social infrastructure supportive of language service providers has been in place for decades.

In this article, I share my own journey toward professional growth in the hope that it will stimulate discussion and formulation of a deeper understanding of our professional paradox, thus elevating the level of appreciation for this generation of self-made translators/interpreters.

One Story to Set the Stage

The old adage that children learn what they live is as true about language as any social interaction. Social studies and Spanish classes in my high school never showed movies or pictures of the places and faces I knew from real life. To teach us about ethnicity and culture, our textbooks were filled with pictures of Mexico and Ireland, Egypt and India, or Japan and Cuba. It was a kind of subliminal message that we had to go somewhere else to experience “ethnicity” and “culture,” that it existed anywhere but in our homes, schools, and neighborhood streets. In those pre-Millennium days, my neighborhood’s racial rainbow and cultural kaleidoscope were as rich as Miami or Seattle, because Ireland, Cuba, Mexico, and Japan were represented among my neighbors and friends. Ethnicity effervesced throughout my community every day. It never dawned on me then to ask why this multinational populace was represented only by a monolingual voice.

While studying at the university some years later, I learned that acculturation and third generation homogenization would be a sociologist’s explanation for both my ignorance and the monolingualism. As a teen, my foreign language exposure consisted of an hour-long class each day at school, but practical, real life usefulness of a second language was not part of the average 1960s teenager’s mindset in Nebraska. Why would it be? At that time, being able to speak a second language was not valued as a useful part of our heritage because it would not get us a job when we finished high school. Some of those who excelled in a foreign language were the ones who actually planned to do something with this knowledge; they just did not know what, since no guidance counselor could show them any options besides teaching. It was a struggle to convince my family and friends that Spanish was a good thing to study, especially when most adults called it a waste of time unless I planned to be a diplomat or spy. I laughed with them. People simply believed that for low to moderate income blue-collar-job-bound kids in
my neighborhood, learning a second language held no income potential. I was fortunate to have had a Spanish teacher, Helia Pico, who showed me the value of bilingual fluency.

Because of that inspiring teacher, in 1973 I participated in a high school foreign exchange program that lead to a college semester abroad. This evolved into eight years of learning and living in Mexico, where I was introduced to conference interpreting. I went home to Omaha in 1983 to find it bubbling with newly found ethnic pride, but suffering in linguistic transition. I saw the same faces on the streets of my hometown that I had seen in the markets of Cholula, Mexico. In Nebraska, a state stereotyped by my fellow Americans as the land of red-necked cowboys whooping it up on Mutual of Omaha’s Wild Kingdom, I now heard Spanish as much as English in the stores and parks, all mingled with a variety of other previously unheard languages.

No example is clearer than that of a corner Dairy Queen that had metamorphosed into the “Chinese Mexican Pizzeria and Buffet with the best Polish sausages in town.” The Korean owner proudly declared that her patrons all understood her multilingual menu. Although the Sudanese cook had a hard time understanding English, the owner just spoke Korean to him and waved her hands a lot. I could see much more cooking in that microcosm than egg rolls, couscous, and fajitas. One room, 20 people, and half-a-dozen languages—what a joyful noise! And in Omaha, Nebraska, of all places. I envisioned employment galore for a bilingual person.

However, it was not until almost 20 years after my return to Omaha, when the statistical reports started sprouting from the 2000 Census, that the folks in my neighborhood finally caught up with the rest of the world and realized a second language was a marketable and in-demand skill. Suddenly there were statistics to show the budget gurus that hiring translators and interpreters was a justified expense. In August 2000, Executive Order 13166 opened the floodgates of language access demand. Within a matter of months, a new career path, “the translator” (a term used to referred to both interpreter and translator positions), appeared in want ads where once there had only been the heading “bilingual telemarketer.”

It is oxymoronic that, by that time, even as our politicians and business leaders on CNN touted a globalized economy, most of our local public school systems had phased out or scaled down the majority of foreign language classes in order to phase in much needed English as a second language programs. State colleges and universities had reduced the foreign language requirements for admission and graduation. I sadly realized I had come home to a linguistically enriched neighborhood, but a state basically deprived of formal language education or career opportunities beyond the same modern language departments focusing on channeling students into becoming teachers.

I had studied translation in Mexico and wanted to apply that training in Omaha. However, in spite of the need I had perceived, there was little employment opportunity. Upper level employment candidates were recruited from the coastal states where universities and social contexts cultivated language skilled professionals. Nebraska had no readily available formal training, let alone degree programs in translating and interpreting. If you or your last name looked like you spoke Spanish, you were hired over trained bilingual candidates and called “the bilingual.” The majority of local independent contractors were beyond their college years, and our families rooted us in our communities. Anyone in Omaha seeking a degree program in translation would have had to move to another state and another life, and interpretation was not even seen as a distinct skill set within the profession.

The Self-Study Dilemma

The boom brought on by revealing Census reports and Executive Order 13166 is bound to go bust at some point. As consumers becomes more selective, new practitioners with stronger skill sets hang a shingle, and technology is refined to replace the human touch, the market will cull the chaff. As a result of this perceived future threat to their market share, many still see other translators and interpreters only as competitors rather than colleagues from whom they could learn. Self-study in relative isolation is a fact of life for Nebraska translators/interpreters, but many do not realize that they are teaching themselves some bad habits. It gets lonely out there for some, making it easy to kingdom build and create or even teach “standards” based on idiosyncratic habits. Lack of friendly critique by a colleague makes it difficult to evaluate and improve presentation or vocabulary choices. How to offer a constructive critique is a learned skill, but where do we learn it?

The average Nebraska translator/interpreter must do 80% of their professional development on their own. This is not the continuing study a practitioner does during the life of his or her career, but rather the rudimentary “how to be a translator/interpreter.”
learning done by trial and error. In the days before the establishment of the Nebraska Association for Translators & Interpreters (NATI, www.natihq.org.) and the University of Nebraska at Kearney translation and interpretation courses, it was 100% self-training, and this may still be the case for those in more rural areas, unless a local hospital or community college offers a seminar or short course. Training opportunities are increasing as programs like the Mirta Vidal-Orrantia Interpreting and Translating Institute and The National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research, and Policy (NCITRP, http://web.arizona.edu/~ncitrp) in Arizona go mobile and more online courses are offered. However, technological connectivity may not be an option in more remote areas. Cost is still prohibitive in rural states like Nebraska. For example, a three-day seminar will mean taking off four or five days from work, hotel and other travel expenses, and usually between $300-$500 in registration fees. Many of the practicing translators and interpreters simply cannot afford this expense and choose to try and learn the information on their own. Of course, technique and professional practices are not easily attained through self-study alone. With more local employers and the public becoming increasingly aware of the skill sets and professional standards they should expect from those they hire, proof of formal training is becoming a prerequisite for many jobs. Those translators and interpreters with the credentials will be deemed the most valuable and stand a better chance of receiving higher compensation for their services.

Building Beyond Self-Study

A few modest undergraduate certificate programs did sprout under unique circumstances in Nebraska, but even today they are struggling to gain support for becoming degree programs. ATA and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) were, and continue to be, motivationally supportive of anyone personally striving for professional development. That support energized a small group of us to form NATI. In 1999, we held our first conference and, expecting 20 and hoping for 30, we registered 90 participants. For six consecutive years, NATI has brought expert trainers to our state and mentored other states as they formed similar organizations. But it is only a drop in the ocean of need.

When Nebraska joined the National Center for State Courts Consortium, it proved to be an intermediate evaluative tool between the “I can do that” self-qualification method prevalent in Nebraska and the mythical federal exam. Serious interpreters and translators and our clients were overjoyed to finally have an accessible instrument by which to measure relative skill levels and gain a sense of confidence. However, when only five of us passed the first Consortium exam in 2000, we were all taken aback. Predictably, in knee jerk reaction, many blamed the exam, calling it an impossible goal, and quit trying. But a more rational look revealed the obvious. Those who passed had previous experience in the courtroom and, more importantly, formal training. Obviously, that formal training made a measurable difference. Unscientific as that conclusion may be, it is nonetheless sensible to state that training is the key to success. In Nebraska, self-study is, practically speaking, the only avenue available for professional skills development.

I began this article with a stated intent that did not include a “woe is me” whine. Neither is there an expectation of a lower professional standard for the sake of us in Nebraska. My point is that there are hundreds of frontier practitioners starved for professional development who are distanced financially or geographically from universities or specialty programs. We are diligently working to improve our skills and are painfully aware that we need formal training. Now, after writing this piece, I have come to appreciate our position, not as marginalized but rather as pioneering on a frontier of professional development. The marginal zone has in some sense become the leading edge. I believe this change in our professional self-image is significant because it gives the non-traditionally trained translator and interpreter a fresh sense of place and direction within the profession. Thus, catharsis.

I am sure that there are many who attended ATA and NAJIT conferences for the first time last year as awestruck, intimidated career hopefuls who ended up going home to their rural communities or small cities feeling totally unworthy or frustrated that they might never be as good as the certified ATA translator or federal interpreter. Some will be angry at the patronizing Ph.D. in linguistics, the “come to my program on the coast” professor of modern languages, or the many venerable experts with titles, diplomas, and resumes that amaze, but who take no time to talk to a 40-year-old general equivalency diploma holder with a dream. Others will have the good fortune to meet and be encouraged by veteran professionals, but will still return home to self-study and relative professional isolation and frustration.

How can ATA and the other national organizations help the pioneering spirits on the High Plains reach their potential as translators and interpreters without moving them
to California, Florida, or Minnesota to get a degree? First, I would challenge the individual members and the boards of national associations like ATA, NAJIT, and the Professional Conference Interpreters Worldwide to do all they can to promote and support the local professional associations by sponsoring speakers at state conferences (NAJIT already does this) and possibly generating a scholarship fund to support greater attendance by those in the central United States. The long-term challenge is to motivate educational institutions in the U.S. to invest once again in language acquisition programs. I went to Mexico on a student exchange program. Could a similar interstate exchange program be developed for the non-traditional student to attend a summer session in California or Arizona? Affordability is the key for any proposal. Life for a full-time court interpreter in New York City is very different from that of a part-time translator in Table Rock, Nebraska. Are there government funds applicable to help implement such ideas? Are we too late? Do we care?

The Entrepreneurial Translator

and I never talk about my business until I am asked…and I usually am. I also read business literature with a passion and do research on the Internet every day. I regularly write to newspapers and magazines from all over the country—sometimes I am published, most times I am not. And I never write about my service, like I am doing here, but rather about peripheral issues I know and understand and that are somehow connected with my profession, but most importantly, with my service.

Hopefully, I will never get close to learning everything there is to know about the business of being a translator. And that is fine, because it will help me keep my humble feet on the ground, my learning kit primed and tuned, and my attitude in check. I have much to learn and hopefully my more established peers will continue to graciously share their experience and skills with me. It is also my hope that my clients will continue to be loyal to my service.

And perhaps I will continue growing in this profession, thanking the powers that be for putting me on this path and showing me that being an entrepreneur and a translator is no different from being a “good guy” who cares for his family, his friends, and his clients, treating everyone with the same deference, honesty, and respect.

The California Healthcare Interpreting Association: Celebrating 10 Years in the Field

in general, visit the CHIA website at www.chia.ws, or contact:

California Healthcare Interpreting Association
1 Capitol Mall, Ste. 320
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 669-5305

Attention Korean Language Translators and Interpreters!

A special interest group has been formed to explore the possibility of establishing a Korean Language Division within the American Translators Association. If you are interested, please subscribe to the discussion listserv by sending an e-mail to ata-Korean-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Note: You must be an ATA member to belong to any of its divisions.
A Second Pair of Eyes: 
Revision, Editing, and Proofreading

By S. Alexandra Russell-Bitting

The following article is based primarily on my 25 years of experience in translation, revision, editing, and proofreading. After studying journalism and translation at French universities, I worked in-house as a translator in a small French publishing company, at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in the press section at the French Embassy in Washington, and in the translation section of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). For the past year, I’ve been an editor in the IDB press section.

In each institution, I had to learn the procedures for document production, which invariably included revision or editing of draft text (and sometimes both) and final proofreading. In the following paragraphs, I demonstrate how these processes work and give readers a chance to see them in practice by reviewing selections from a sample document.

Quality Control in Translation

First, we need to examine what we mean by quality in translation. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has a standard for quality management called ISO 9000. It defines quality as follows: “In the everyday context, like ‘beauty,’ everyone may have his or her idea of what ‘quality’ is. But, in the ISO 9000 context, the standardized definition of quality refers to all those features of a product (or service) which are required by the customer.”

What features of translation are required by the customer? In my experience, what the customer wants first and foremost is an accurate translation, that is, one that faithfully expresses the source text, without any errors or omissions, in an idiomatic style that reads as if it were originally written in the target language.

To achieve this standard, a service provider must “manage” quality. Under ISO 9000, quality management is defined as “what the organization does to ensure that its products or services satisfy the customer’s quality requirements and comply with any regulations applicable to those products or services.”

For practical purposes, quality management in translation—whether in a publishing company, a foreign embassy, or an international organization—means having a second pair of eyes (and often a third or a fourth) review each document to make sure it meets the requirements of accuracy and style. In other words, quality management means following the basic principle of “Two heads are better than one.”

Consequently, a translator checking his or her own work, or “self-revision,” is not enough. A reviser, generally an experienced translator, needs to take a fresh, critical look at the translation and make any necessary improvements in both accuracy and style. Decisions about the appropriate terminology and register for both the translator and reviser depend on the type of document and its author, medium, and target audience, that is, the context.

Revised translations may also be subject to editing, especially when they are to be published as a book, an article, or website content. Editing is similar to revision in that it involves a second pair of eyes taking a critical look at a text. In addition to correcting any mistakes, such as grammar and spelling, an editor standardizes the style used (capitalization and hyphenation conventions, for instance) and enhances “readability.”

In a recent article, New York Times Op-Ed page editor David Shipley explained how Times editors make an article more “readable”: “To make a piece as clear and accessible as possible, the editor may add a transition, cut a section that goes off point or move a paragraph. If a description is highly technical, the editor may suggest language that lay readers will understand. If it isn’t clear what a writer is trying to say, the editor may take a guess, based on what he knows from the author, and suggest more precise language.” Shipley also stressed that an edited article must always be cleared by the author before publication.

Proofreading is the last step in the production process before actual printing or posting, a final check to make sure no mistakes have slipped through. Proofreaders do not make any changes in content, but read the text through from beginning to end to verify that the spelling and grammar are correct and the text is properly formatted (no missing headings, misnumbered or upside-down pages, inappropriate changes in font, and so forth). They must have focus, an eye for detail, and knowledge of the subject matter.


The examples we’re going to look at in our discussion are drawn from the 2004 Annual Report of the IDB, which I edited as part of my current duties. The primary purpose of this document is to report to the IDB’s Board of Governors on the year’s activities and present the IDB’s financial statements,
Revision

We mentioned that revision means checking a translation for accuracy and style. It involves answering two questions: 1) Does the translation accurately reflect the original in content and register? 2) Is the style idiomatic in the target language? In other words, does it read like original English (in this case)?

To do a thorough job on a revision, I recommend reading the translation sentence by sentence, using a ruler to mark your place in the original and checking the translation as you go. First of all, you want to make sure that everything is there. Under the pressure of a ticking clock, especially with telephone calls and other interruptions, even a seasoned translator can inadvertently miss a word, phrase, line, or an entire paragraph.

While you’re checking that everything is there, verify that it’s correct. Besides mistakes in spelling and grammar, look for inverted figures and dates, for instance, which may happen as fingers fly over the computer keyboard. Sometimes decimals are misplaced or the wrong style is used. For example, change “$10,000” to “$10,000.” Be on the lookout for typos in the original, such as omitted diacritics, that may distort the meaning. For instance, one missing accent in Spanish can make the difference between “will total” and “had totaled.”

Specialized terminology requires knowledge of the field in question. The first chapter of the Annual Report, for example, is an essay on economic development in Latin America during the year that gets quite technical. The reviser needs to know, for instance, that “direct foreign investment” should be “foreign direct investment.”

Always bear in mind the author, target readership, and medium to determine whether the terminology, register, and style of the translation are appropriate. For example, in a document like the Annual Report, which is written in a very formal style, snappy journalistic writing is inappropriate: change “Fiscal positions have been beefed up” to “Fiscal positions have been strengthened.”

As you check for accuracy, make any necessary stylistic adjustments. Capitalization, hyphenation, and punctuation seem to be the most recurring headaches because many different options are correct. Follow corporate or institutional guidelines if they are available or any other guidelines the client may refer you to, such as the Chicago Manual of Style. Otherwise, decide on your own personal preferences and stick to them. The key here is consistency, which is easier said than done in a document like the Annual Report that has multiple contributors.

Among the many stylistic questions that came up in the Annual Report were whether or not to use accents on place names (“Bogotá” or “Bogota”?). We also had to standardize hyphenation, for instance, changing “subregional” to “subregional,” and remember to alphabetize lists of country names, taking into account that alphabetical order will be slightly different in English and Spanish.

Revisers have little leeway to improve an original that might be inconsistent, ambivalent, or unclear. However, they should avoid the “garbage in, garbage out” approach: there is nothing wrong with a translation reading better than the original, provided there is no change in meaning. No one will complain, for instance, if you eliminate redundancies. Dividing or combining sentences can also help make a text more readable.

Editing

Editing is more creative work than revision in that you have the freedom to make improvements in the text for readability. As in translation and revision, the three main criteria for editing are context, context, context: Who is the author? What is the purpose of the document? Who are the target readers? What medium will the text be published in (an internal document, newsletter, journal, book, website, or other)?

The key question to ask yourself when editing is simply, “Does it sound right?” Besides not containing any errors in spelling or grammar, the text should flow smoothly, that is, have no awkward, ambivalent, or unclear passages. In the Annual Report, for example, a phrase
such as “teacher training centers at the national level” could be rendered more idiomatically as “teaching schools throughout the country.”

Taking that basic question a step further, ask yourself if the text conveys all the necessary information. Given the target audience, does anything need to be added, deleted, or reshuffled to achieve the desired effect? For instance, the draft version of Box 6 of the Annual Report on social inclusion originally described publications and meetings before operations. However, since the main concern of our primary readership, the IDB governors, is lending, we decided to move the paragraph on operations to the top.

Internal consistency is another factor to bear in mind. For example, in the section on poverty reduction, information on lending had to be added so that it would be consistent with the other sections. Any redundant passages were deleted, such as the analysis of current trade negotiations in the section on regional trade that had already been included in a previous chapter.

Finally, ask yourself if the information provided is accurate. As mentioned by the New York Times editor, the editing process also means fact checking (and double-checking). For example, the photograph of the board of executive directors in the front section of the Annual Report lists all the names and constituencies of the directors. You can be sure this editor checked them against their office listings numerous times. Special attention was also paid to such key figures as yearly and cumulative lending.

**Proofreading**

As mentioned above, proofreading is a final check before publication. The term “proof” dates back to the early printing process when every letter or character was a small block of metal or wood that had to be lined up for each page. A trial sheet or “proof” would be printed and checked against the original for errors before printing. Even though the process is now electronic rather than mechanical, we still use the term “proofreading” for that final check.

Here the question is, “Does it look right?” Once the document is laid out in its final format, you may notice a few stylistic inconsistencies, such as capitalization, hyphenation, and punctuation, that were overlooked. Proofreaders also check the format, including fonts and font sizes, use of italics, and alignment (indents, footnote format). When proofreading the Annual Report, for instance, we noticed inconsistencies in the decimals used in the figures cited in the project descriptions and decided to standardize them to just one decimal ($1.9 billion instead of $1.89 billion).

The pressure to finish intensifies at this stage because of time constraints for printing and shipping the document. The 2004 Annual Report, for instance, had to be produced in time to be shipped to the site of the 2005 IDB Annual Meeting in Okinawa, Japan. That meant allowing two weeks for shipment of the book from the United States. Several members of the editing team were involved in proofreading, from the managing editor to the proofreader, at several stages: the master text file, which was also forwarded to IDB management for clearance, several versions of the laid out text, and the “bluelines” or proofs from the printer.

Each member of the Annual Report team contributes towards improving the final product. For shorter documents, like a one-page press release, this collaborative process may take the form of an informal exchange with a colleague. Freelance translators working from home may want to do likewise.

**Managing Quality**

According to the ISO standards for quality management, you need to “plan and manage the processes necessary for the continual improvement of your quality management system” (9001:2000). How do we do this as translators? By improving our knowledge, skills, and resources on an ongoing basis. Below are some suggestions.

**Keep up-to-date on current events.**

Read daily newspapers and other periodicals, particularly journals in our area of expertise. For practical purposes, it is unrealistic to expect to read an entire newspaper in both your source and target languages. With the overwhelming quantity of information available now, focus on your target language and on news headlines and your area of expertise. Many newspapers are available online free of charge. Radio and television can also be a good source of news.

For example, in editing the financials in the Annual Report, it helped to be aware of the Enron scandal fallout, from accounting standards and financial reporting to the Sarbanes-Oxley legislation. The Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), which was mentioned in the section on regional integration, had been in the news as well. You should also follow your inclinations and read about culture, which in addition to giving you a break from drier topics like business
Watch Your Language! Translating Euphemisms

By Peter Unseth

Whatever language we are translating, we frequently find ourselves wrestling with euphemisms, those words or phrases used by people of all cultures to refer politely to subjects they feel awkward mentioning openly in simple or direct terms (i.e., death, certain body parts, legal problems, sexual activity, bodily functions, and the supernatural). For instance, translators are likely to come across euphemisms (or find the need to insert them) in documents discussing some type of trauma, psychiatric evaluations, court testimony, or police reports detailing family violence and abuse. They also appear in medical literature written for a general audience.

So how do we translate euphemisms or determine if one is really necessary in our target text? For one thing, good translators not only know the vocabulary and grammar of the languages they translate between, but are also familiar with each language’s culture, including which subjects a particular group considers sensitive. In many cases, the source language will address a subject with plain language while the target language uses a euphemism, or vice versa. Regardless of where euphemisms are encountered, translators must strike a balance between choosing words that adequately convey the original message while avoiding language that will be offensive to the target audience.

To help us in this task, I will outline four possible tactics for handling euphemisms in translation:

- Translate the euphemism literally;
- Translate the original euphemism using a different euphemism that has a similar meaning in the target language;
- Translate the euphemism using plain language; or
- Translate the euphemism using a combination of two of the above.

Hopefully the following discussion will make translators more aware of some of the issues they need to consider in order to deal more effectively with this tricky subject.

Translate the euphemism literally. If the source and target languages both have similar euphemisms, then translating a euphemism fairly literally is not difficult. For example, Spanish speakers often refer to the death of a person by saying “pasar a mejor vida” (“to pass on to a better life”). In this case, a literal translation into English is acceptable because English speakers will understand the connotation. Another example where an alien sounding euphemism may still be clear enough to communicate the intended meaning comes from Sesotho, one of the official languages of South Africa. The sexual euphemism “ho arolelana dikobo” (“to share blankets”) would likely be understood by English speakers, as in the following passage translated from a Sesotho police report detailing a rape: “He pushed me into the bed and then told me to give him blankets…he told me not to deny him the—the—cake…he pushed his pipe…inside my cake” (Thetela, 2002:183,184). Though the individual words are not instantly obvious to an English reader, the tragic meaning soon becomes very clear.

Translate the original euphemism in the source language with one that has a similar meaning in the target language. When the meaning of the original euphemism will be lost if translated literally, translators can opt to substitute it with one that will be readily understood by the target audience. The form the euphemism takes in the target language may be radically different, but the meaning should be the same. For instance, the English euphemism “she is in a family way” can be translated into Spanish as “está esperando” (“she is hoping”), or into Amharic as “näfsä t’ur nat” (“she is a caregiver for a soul”). These all politely communicate that a woman is pregnant.

When adopting this tactic, it is important for the translator to substitute a euphemism that is appropriate to the original context. For example, the man who translated Tim O’Brien’s Vietnam war story The Things They Carried into Vietnamese struggled to find Vietnamese military euphemisms for “killed” to translate the American euphemisms “greased” and “zapped.” Euphemisms for killing used only in a criminal setting would not have been as appropriate for a military situation.

Translate the euphemism using plain language. Sometimes what the original author expresses can be translated using plain language in the target text (although what is considered “plain” language today is often yesterday’s euphemism, such as “bathroom” or “intercourse”). The decision whether or not to use plain language cannot be made without first understanding the original author’s intentions and the audience he or she was writing...
for. For example, the rape victim in the Sesotho police report mentioned earlier might have used euphemisms when describing her ordeal (i.e., “they did abominable things to me”), but those reading the document want to have the reported facts rendered as concisely as possible. However, if the purpose for using a euphemism in the original was to convey the victim’s embarrassment or shame, it may be best not to translate using plain language.

**Translate the euphemism using a combination of two tactics.** Literally translating the original euphemism might preserve some of the flavor of the source text, but the meaning may not be clear to the target audience. Sometimes a translator will want to maintain the flavor of the original, but add a word or phrase to clarify the meaning for readers in the target language. In this way, the translation succeeds in transmitting the meaning clearly while maintaining a sense of the original context.

For example, the following sentence discusses the experience of two former victims of the Soviet labor camps:

> “Dolgun and Militariev quietly talked together of their earlier times together working in the labor movement…”

Notice that the men refer to their internment obliquely as “working in the labor movement.” To clarify such comments, the translator could add one of the following explanatory notes at the end of the passage.

- “Labor movement”: a sly reference to the penal labor camps.
- “Labor movement”: an insider’s reference to the Siberian labor camps.
- “Labor movement”: an under-stated reference to the years the two men had worked 12 hours a day in a Siberian labor camp.

Authors of literary texts have frequently incorporated this approach into their work, using euphemisms that are not widely known in order to give the flavor of a certain time, place, or segment of society. In *The Great Train Robbery*, Michael Crichton uses euphemisms to describe the actions of criminals, after which he gives the reader an indication of what is actually meant. For example, the plans of a shady character named Spring Heel Jack are euphemistically discussed by two men, with an author’s note inserted:

> “Jack was going south to ‘dip the holiday crowd.’ In those days, London pickpockets left in late spring…to other cities.”

**Trouble Spots**

The following explains some possible problem areas to watch out for when deciding how to handle euphemisms in translation.

**Keeping Euphemisms Obscure**

Sometimes a euphemism is meant to be deliberately vague. For example, in J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Fellowship of the Ring*, the wizard Gandalf falls into a great crevasse in a cave. It is later reported that Gandalf “has fallen into shadow.” The reader understands this to be a report of his death, but it is actually a deliberately veiled reference to Gandalf being engaged in a great struggle with an evil being, and of eventually being mysteriously transformed. Translating this euphemism calls for finding a way to suggest death while still maintaining the ambiguity Tolkien intended. In this case, the translator should not attempt to clarify the author’s original wording.

**Being Deliberately Offensive**

There are times when what is said plainly, even offensively, in the original should not be translated with a euphemism. For example, in Sylvia Maulasth Warsh’s *To Die in Spring*, the kidnappers say to their victim, “They will get you to talk, Jewish whore.” The captors’ use of “Jewish whore” is intended to be maximally insulting and demeaning, which is part of their pattern of abusing and intimidating the victim. The narrative continues: “A gun barrel was pushed into her side as they rode down the elevator. The blanket still over her head, they threw her down onto the floor of a car. Their feet perched on her body, the gun barrel stuck in her back as they drove away.” To convey the harsh impact of the kidnappers’ insult in the original, this passage must be translated with equally strong language in the target language.

**Inserting Euphemisms**

When translating archaic or historic language, a good translator must gauge the impact of the original wording on a modern-day audience. If leaving the original phrasing will only serve to distract the audience from the message, the translator might decide that it is necessary to insert a euphemism. To take an example from an historical context, the 16th-century English politician and theologian Thomas More spoke of Luther “with his filth and dung, shitting and beshitted.” To today’s readers, especially readers of theology, this seems incredibly vulgar, but in More’s day, this was not the case. When translating such a passage, a translator might consider using euphemisms so that the readers...
will get the point without becoming offended by the original wording. Another option might be to insert a note at the end of the passage to explain to the reader that it was quite common to use such crude language during the time More was writing.

**Misidentifying Euphemisms**

Sometimes we might mistake something that is said in the source language for a different euphemism from our own language. For example, an Amharic translator coming across the English phrase “she went out to the yard” might mistake it for a standard Amharic euphemism related to personal hygiene, not realizing that it is simply a factual statement in English (that the woman merely walked into the yard). Therefore, translators must be aware of how each language uses euphemisms in order to readily identify them in the source text.

**Conclusion**

There is no single technique for translating euphemisms, as how we handle them will depend upon where they are found. By using the approaches outlined here, we can find a way to communicate clearly without offending our audience.

**References**


**A Second Pair of Eyes: Revision, Editing, and Proofreading Continued from p. 34**

and economics, enriches your general background and may even come in handy in your work.

**Learn.** Of course, professional development events such as ATA’s Annual Conference help improve knowledge and skills, giving us a chance to get away from our routines and stimulate those grey cells. These events also provide an invaluable opportunity to meet other professionals.

**Network.** Meeting other linguists can help do more than find potential clients. You never know when you might need to share an urgent assignment, refer a client looking for another language combination, ask a question, or find a reviser or editor.

**Be prepared.** Lastly, have all the necessary tools at your fingertips. Invest in some solid general monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, a few key specialized ones, a style guide or two, and a thesaurus. Bookmark useful websites. The references section at the end of this article lists just a few of the resources you may need.

**Take responsibility for your work.** A former supervisor of mine used to urge his staff to translate “in self-defense.” Imagine being questioned by a client on your choice of a term or sentence structure and having to present your case. Our goal should be to produce documents we would be proud to have our names on. Enlisting a second pair of eyes will help us get there.

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Business Smarts:
Word Counts and Confidentiality Agreements

The ATA Chronicle | February 2006

The information in this column was compiled by members of ATA's Business Practices Education Committee for the benefit of ATA members. The following is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisers as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors.

This month’s questions concern the practice of submitting a word count and the wording in a confidentiality agreement.

Question. “Now that I have submitted my invoice, a client of mine is arguing over the word count of a project. The project included more than 80,000 words. In my word count, I deleted all tables of contents as well as headers and footers. Having used four different kinds of programs to figure out the word count, with each giving me a different number (one being thousands of words off), I decided to go with an average. Now the client says that there were already English words in the documents that shouldn’t have been included in my count. I must admit that there were English words, as you can imagine there would be in any technical document.

“How can one possibly discount these English words? How many were there in this project? 100? 1,000? 2,000? Regardless, the customer wants a 25% discount. I could offer a reduction for repetitive words, but I’ve already ‘bent over backwards.’ Any good advice?”

Wolfgang Brech

Answer. Once again, this points out the absolute necessity of settling the terms and conditions up front before beginning work on a project. That includes how the word count will be calculated and how such issues as text that has already been “translated” and repetitive text will be handled. As to your specific case, here are some thoughts:

1. Were the English words really “English?” That is, were they written in English (proper orthography) in the proper place (English syntax)? For instance, “management” in the following sentence is NOT English: “Den Organen der Gesellschaft obliegt das Management.” In this example: 1) the “English” word has to be corrected to lower case; and 2) the entire sentence must be written in English syntax.

2. Did the English in the original consist of complete sentences or merely individual words? If the former, the client “may” have a point, but the issue still should have been discussed and settled before the translation. If the latter, see #1 above. Such “English” words must be processed in context and “fixed” accordingly.

3. To obtain an approximate count of the English words in the original document (assuming it is a Word file), you could try setting “autodetect language” and then search and replace all language: “= German (or English) with font = hidden text.” I doubt it would be very accurate, but it may give some very rough indication of how many words the client is looking at.

4. Probably the best argument you can advance is that a translation must be viewed (and made) from a holistic viewpoint. Individual words, be they in English or German, must be viewed within the context of the whole sentence, paragraph, and document and “processed” accordingly. Asking for a discount for “English” words in a German text is nonsense because these words must still be processed within such a context. Such a request is similar to the “logic” behind not paying for spaces between words because they aren’t “words.” Should we then not be paid for proper names because we don’t “translate” them? Should we not be paid for numerals or paragraph markings because they aren’t translated? “I. A. 1. b)” in “German” is “I. A. 1. b)” in “English,” but I want to be paid for it.

Personally, I can’t see granting ANY discount for English “words” in a German text. I could see not counting complete sentences, but not words. And as you have probably already shortchanged yourself by using an average word count, why take even less?

Ted R. Woźniak, freelance translator
(Reprinted with kind permission of both colleagues from the mailing list of ATA’s German Language Division)

Question. “Several translation companies, even long-time ATA members, have sent me confidentiality agreements containing unacceptable wording. The clause would require me to return, at the end of the assignment, ALL documents related to it, including my own copy and computer file of the translation. Once my work leaves my hands it often undergoes several phases of editing and then desktop publishing by non-linguists, so errors may naturally occur. If a
legal challenge to the translation subsequently arises, I would be left with no documentation whatsoever to defend myself. What should I do in such a situation?"

Answer. My company’s only experience with this issue has been very recent, when we were required by our client to return or destroy all paper or electronic materials associated with a project and to sign an affidavit stating that this had been done. So this situation may be becoming a fact of doing business in today’s world. I recommend that the translator simply call the project manager at the company to discuss the situation in general, in a professional and collaborative tone and manner. Why is such an agreement being required? Is any part of the agreement negotiable? What is the project manager’s answer to the translator’s question about being able to defend himself? This conversation may or may not result in an acceptable arrangement between the company and the translator, and the translator may have to choose not to work on that project or for that agency, but at least a valuable attempt to understand and educate each other has been made.

Kim Vitray
Administrator of ATA’s Translation Company Division

S. Edmund Berger Prize
In Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation

The ATA and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) invite nominations for the annual S. Edmund Berger Prize.

The $1,000 prize is offered to recognize excellence in scientific and technical translation by an ATA member.

Individual translators or translation companies wishing to nominate a translator for this prestigious award may obtain a nomination form from the AFTI website (www.afi.org) or from AFTI at the following address:

AFTI  •  Columbia Plaza—Suite 101  •  350 East Michigan Avenue  •  Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Nominations must be received by September 18, 2006, and will be judged by a three-member national jury. The recipient of the award will be announced during the 2006 ATA Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana (November 1-4, 2006).

Contact: www.atanet.org or ata@atanet.org
What is nice (or important) about language standards? About 60 people went to cold, gray Germany in December to find out. Hang in there to the end of this article and you can find out for yourself, without suffering from jet lag.

A number of ATA members were at the “Berlin” conference, as it is called in this article (officially it was called “Language Standards for Global Business”), held in Berlin, December 12-13, 2005, and organized by Global Meeting Services (http://global-conference.com). Our own Sue Ellen Wright, chair of ATA’s Terminology Committee, was on the organizing committee, and ATA is listed as a supporter (www.internationalization-committee.org/languagestandards/index.html).

In this initial report on the conference, I will: 1) categorize the various kinds of language standards that were discussed at the conference; 2) provide some additional information on data standards; and 3) suggest why language standards are important to ATA members, both individuals and companies. In future issues, other attendees will write reports focused on other aspects of the conference.

Languages and Locales

One very basic kind of language standard is the set of codes we use to unambiguously specify the languages of the world for computer processing. Another basic language standard governs locale identifiers. The main components of a locale identifier are a language code and a code for a region. A locale consists of the identifier itself and various pieces of information about that locale, such as currency, date and time formats, and decimal point representation. Locale information is needed for computers to properly present text and customize user interfaces. You would think that language codes and locale identifiers were standardized long ago. However, it turns out that there are multiple international standards for language codes. The best known of these standards (ISO 639 Part 1), the two-letter codes such as “en” for English and “de” for German, of which there are only about 140, is woefully inadequate to cover the more than 6,000 languages of the world. The problem is that there are multiple approaches to extending language codes from two to three characters. The answer,

“...Translators: do not think of language standards as entirely someone else’s problem; please use your power by making yourself heard!”

according to a presentation by Jennifer DeCamp at the conference, would seem to be the new ISO 639 standards Parts 3-6. Unfortunately, even if language codes are agreed on, there are important variations among various sets of locale identifiers. However, there is a project (www.unicode.org/cldr), presented by Tom Garland, whose sole objective is to “make available a common set of locale data.”

Translation E-Business

There is considerable discussion within the translation community about the pros and cons of posting translation jobs for auction-style bidding. Setting that debate aside for another time, there is another aspect of translation e-business that is generally recognized as needing standardization. Once a translation job has been arranged, by whatever means, it is more and more common to transmit the source text and associated files electronically from the “requester” (the client from the perspective of the translator) to the translation service provider and back to the requester. The use of physical mail has certainly decreased, and the use of faxes seems to be on the decline overall. It would be helpful to have a standard way of electronically packaging all the components of a translation job so that they stay together all the way through the steps of translation, bilingual editing (sometimes called revision), proofreading, and delivery. It is not clear whether such a standard should touch on billing questions. Hopefully, an e-business standard that includes a “package” for a translation project would reduce time wasted in keeping all the pieces of a project together and would decrease the time from delivery to payment. We heard from Peter Reynolds about such a project, called Translation Web Services (www.oasis-open.org/committees/trans-ws/charter.php). Peter invited all interested parties to join Oasis and participate in the development of this standard, emphasizing that he does not believe there has been sufficient involvement by freelance translators and translation companies.

Translation Quality Management

Two translation quality management standards were presented. One, the forthcoming ASTM International standard, is focused on the kinds of information that should be agreed upon in advance by the requester and provider of translation services, in the context of the translation process, using a flexible approach to quality assurance that is compatible with functional approaches in translation
that was used to create documents. According to the version of a package, but also because there are variations in software packages, this becomes even more important when using translation tools that require the source text to be in machine-readable form to allow automatic leveraging of a translation memory and automatic lookup of terminology. In that case, there are basically two options: either 1) everyone associated with a project, including the requester side and the supplier side, agrees to use the same version of the same translation tool and keeps all translation data in the proprietary formats of that tool; or 2) everyone agrees to use tool-independent data standards. Once you begin looking at the second option, which was strongly supported by the participants at the Berlin conference, three types of translation data standards become highly relevant: text, translation memory, and termbase (terminology database). We will look at each of these separately.

Text Data. There are two very distinct approaches used in translation tools. One approach is to use a word processor as the user interface, presenting to the translator formatted text that uses the native format of the word processor. The other approach is to separate the plain text from the format codes (which are often called markup) and present to the translator just the plain text, later applying the stored markup to the target text. This second approach involves the use of filters that perform this text-markup separation. The XLIFF (XML Localisation Interchange File Format) standard (see www.oasis-open.org/committees/xliff/faq.php#WhatIsXLIFF) is designed to represent the output of these filters in a standard way. An XLIFF file can also include helpful information for the translator, such as whether a particular item is to be translated or left in the source language.

Another set of standards relating to marked-up text is grouped under GMX (Global information management Metrics eXchange). These GMX standards, still under development within LISA OSCAR (see www.lisa.org/sigs/oscar), will facilitate standard measurements of the “volume” of a document in words or characters, exchange of descriptions of the complexity of a document, and representation of particular quality metrics in a standard format.

Yet another area of standards activity is focused on representing documents in XML. A detailed discussion of these emerging XML standards is beyond the scope of this article, but the interested XML-proficient reader is referred to an introduction to DITA (www-128.ibm.com/developerworks/xml/library/x-dita1), the OASIS ITS charter (www.w3.org/2004/11/i18n-recharter/its-charter), and an article about xml:tm (www.w3.org/2004/11/i18n-recharter/its-charter). It became clear at the Berlin conference that these three XML standards (DITA, ITS, and xml:tm) need to be integrated for use within translation and localization.

Translation Memory Data. It is becoming more common for a translator to receive a translation memory file along with a source text and be expected to leverage the translation memory. The relevant standards are TMX (Translation Memory eXchange: see www.lisa.org/standards/tmx) and SRX (Segmentation Rules eXchange: see www.lisa.org/standards/srx). A major purpose of the TMX format is to allow a translator to use a translation memory file created using a different tool.

One of the major obstacles to effective use of TMX is differences in the segmentation of the source text used to create the translation memory.
and the segmentation of the current source text being translated. Even minor differences in segmentation can keep relevant units in the translation memory from being retrieved properly. The SRX standard is intended to address this problem by providing a formal and open way to describe how text is segmented by a particular tool. A subsequent step could be for vendors to program translation tools to adapt to various segmentation methods specified in SRX.

**Termbase Data.** When terminological data is to be passed between translation tools, the relevant standard is TBX (TermBase eXchange: see www.lisa.org/standards/tbx). TBX is not needed to represent a simple two-column glossary consisting of paired source and target language terms. Such a glossary would not be considered proper terminological data and has limited usefulness, since it lacks even basic documentation such as subject field and source. TBX is an application of an international standard (ISO 16642) that specifies what constitutes a proper termbase exchange format. TBX cannot compensate for fundamental differences in structure and required information between various termbases. However, TBX is useful in overcoming superficial differences that would inhibit data exchange were it not for a neutral intermediate representation.

**Do Standards Matter?**

Some have suggested that language standards are not very important and that their main purpose is to provide job security for academics. However, the fact is that standards from the main standards organizations (ISO [www.iso.org] and its national bodies, such as ANSI in the U.S. and the various specialized bodies accredited by the national bodies, as well as W3C, which is also know as the World Wide Web Consortium, the Unicode Consortium, and OASIS, just to name a few) usually require a balanced representation of all stakeholders, including various segments of industry, with academia being only one of the stakeholders.

So why do companies, associations, and universities send people to standards meetings, providing travel money and time away from regular assignments? And why do many individuals spend personal resources working on standards with no promise of financial return? For one thing, there is the belief that everyone benefits from a level playing field, both producers and consumers.

A classic story of standardization is the railway system. Until the distance between rails was standardized, people had to interrupt their journey, get off a train, and get onto another train midstream because different stretches of rails were incompatible. Neither distance between the rails was clearly superior. The important thing was a standard that all railways followed. Some complain that standards impede innovation. The VHS standard for movies on videotape did not keep the DVD standard from appearing and now largely replacing the VHS standard. However, the battle between Beta and VHS formats was a nuisance for consumers. Do you think DVD players would be as inexpensive and widely used as they are now if there were a different DVD standard for each motion picture studio and you had to buy a number of different players to watch movies from different studios? History appears to be repeating itself in the looming battle between two incompatible standards for storing high definition movies on second generation DVDs. If a single standard is not agreed on, all sides will pay dearly.

Standards for language codes and locale identifiers become important to translators when they fail. An example of failure would be a translator trying to mark a piece of text as being for a particular locale and discovering that the needed locale is not on the list available in the word processor being used. A consequence of this failure could be that an improvised identifier used by a translator would not be understood by people or tools downstream.

There are several reasons for termbase data to be available in a standard electronic format. One is for all members of a translation team to have access to the same terminology and receive frequent updates without wasting time and paper sending out paper glossaries. If this were the only reason, it would suffice to send out a word processing file. However, another reason is that some tools allow automatic lookup of terms. This requires terminology to be imported in a structured exchange format, unless all parties involved are using the same version of the same terminology management tool. Another reason is to facilitate two-way communication of terminology information between requester and provider.

The grand hope is that the various standards discussed at the Berlin conference (including locale, e-business, translation quality management, and language data standards) will complement each other by making the translation process more efficient while leaving the translator in control of the target text.
Back to the Title. The title of this article is taken from a famous quote attributed to a professor of computer science, “The nice thing about standards is that there are so many of them to choose from” (www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Andrew_S._Tanenbaum). Although the original intent was to comment cynically on the fact that there are often competing standards for the same task, such as how to transmit WiFi data (a, b, g, etc.), we can apply the same quote to point out that the Berlin conference brought together a lot of nice people who made each other aware of the various standards they have been working on. Hopefully, the result of the Berlin conference will be more involvement by various stakeholders, improved coordination among standards, increased pressure on vendors (by you) to implement standards, and consequently, more healthy competition among vendors, and more good choices for translators.

Another application of the quote is to point out the need for one place to go for information about all standards. There is a MITRE webpage (http://flrc.mitre.org/References/Standards/index.pl) that mirrors a webpage at Kent State University and provides official information from producers of standards. And an influential member of the Wikimedia community who attended the Berlin conference has agreed to work toward a wiki site for standards that would allow users and developers of various kinds of standards to interact and share ideas and provide a forum for wide-ranging discussions of language standards among producers and users of standards.

The Power of Standards.
Standards for language data (XLIFF, TMX/SRX, TBX, etc.) are important to innovation and competition in that they level the playing field among vendors of software tools and make it more feasible to introduce a new product. By analogy, it is World Wide Web standards that have allowed Firefox to obtain quickly a significant market share among browsers. Of course, there is always room for innovation in translation tools, even with standards in place. For example, one fundamental problem in the current direction of translation processes is that translators are sometimes asked to translate segments of text out of context. This problem was discussed at the Berlin conference. The solution to this problem may require new kinds of tools and new standards. Another problem with language standards, particularly data standards, is that vendors who are doing well with their products are not motivated to implement standards that make it easier for customers to migrate their data to competing products.

In summary, the various standards discussed at the Berlin conference help everyone store and exchange their data in tool-independent formats, thus providing increased flexibility for translators, requesters, and translation companies, as well as fair competition among tool vendors.

Translator Power
Pressure to implement language data standards needs to come from both translation providers (individuals and translation companies) and from requesters, especially large companies that purchase high volumes of translation. Translators are an important constituency. Prospective purchasers of translation tools and those who specify which tools are to be used by translators have the power to pressure vendors to implement standards if they make it clear that standards are a factor in software purchasing decisions. Only translators know whether the standards are adequate or need improvement, so translation companies and requesters of translation and tool vendors need to listen carefully to translators. Translators: do not think of language standards as entirely someone else’s problem; please use your power by making yourself heard!

Don’t deposit it—report it!

Report fake check scams to the National Fraud Information Center/Internet Fraud Watch, a service of the nonprofit National Consumers League, at www.fraud.org or (800) 876-7060. That information will be transmitted to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.
Dictionary Reviews

Compiled by Boris Silversteyn

Silversteyn is chair of the ATA Dictionary Review Committee.

Le Prépositionnaire

Author:
Françoise Bulman

Publisher:
ViaMedias Éditions (France)
L’Instant même (Canada)

Publication date:
2004 (France)
2003 (Canada)

ISBN:
2-84964-020-4 (France)
2-89502-150-3 (Canada)

Price:
€14.90 (France)
$24.95 (Canada)

Available from:
www.amazon.fr
www.archambault.ca

Reviewed by:
Françoise Herrmann

Just in case you are wondering, the term “prépositionnaire,” composed of the common noun “préposition” and the suffix “-aire,” meaning “to include” or “to contain,” refers to that which includes prepositions. Just like “questionnaire” contains “questions,” “ovaire” [ovary] contains “ova [eggs],” and “dictionnaire” contains “dic(t) [dire/to say],” Le Prépositionnaire contains prepositions, even if it does not yet appear listed in any of the major institutional dictionaries.

Le Prépositionnaire, as the subtitle Dictionnaire des verbes et adjectifs pouvant être suivis d’une préposition indicates, is a wonderful resource that lists French verbs and adjectives with their correct prepositions. Written by Françoise Bulman, professor of translation since 1974 at the University of Laval in Québec, this resource was written by a translator, primarily for French translators and editors. As Bulman notes in the preface of her work, even the most experienced translators sometimes hesitate, “...la plume en l’air, ou plutot les doigts en suspens au dessus du clavier...” [“quills in mid air, or fingers above keyboards”], wondering which preposition to use. Do you write “merci de votre fidélité” [thanks for your patronage] or “merci pour votre fidélité?” Is it “travailler chez IBM” [to work for IBM] or “travailler pour IBM?” To save you time looking up the answers in several dictionaries, in several grammar books, or both, Bulman has regrouped all these types of questions concerning prepositions into a single, user-friendly “prépositionnaire” work.

Le Prépositionnaire contains 1,800 verb or adjective entries, listed in alphabetical order, with numerous examples and succinct explanations concerning usage and/or syntax and semantics, which will immediately and clearly resolve many of your hesitations. In answer to the above-mentioned queries, consider for example the entry for “remercier” [to thank]:

REMERCIER qqn; ~ qqn de ou pour qqch. (Il m’a remercié des ou pour les renseignements que je lui ai fournis.); ~ de + inf. (Je vous remercie de m’avoir aidée à déménager. Je vous remercie d’être aussi patient avec moi.)

And consider the entry for “travailler” [to work]:

TRAVAILLER; ~ à (l’hôpital), chez (lui), dans (un bureau, une usine), en (usine), pour (un maçon) ? Éviter: Travailleur «chez» IBM car on ne travaille que chez des personnes. On peut donc dire:

Je travaille chez Bayer, dans ou pour une banque, pour IBM; ~ dans qqch. (Il travaille dans l’informatique.); ~ qqch (son style, son piano); ~ à qqch. [mettre tous ses efforts] (Travailler au maintien de la paix, à la réélection d’un homme politique.); ~ à + inf. (Il travaille à mettre en place un programme efficace.); ~ à ce que + subj. (Il travaille à ce que ces changements s’effectuent rapidement.); [sujet: chose] ~ contre, pour qqn (Le temps travaille contre vous.)

You’ll notice immediately that not only do the entries supply valuable clarification to the prepositional quandaries previously mentioned, they are also surprisingly easy and pleasant to read. Without heavy grammatical descriptors for transitive and intransitive verbs and their different types of objects, it is the consistent use of stylistic conventions—of bolds and italics, of common abbreviations, of the tilde—and excellent punctuation which contribute to this friendliness, as well as the simplicity of the explanations and the appropriateness of the examples. You could perhaps have found part of your answers in Le Petit Robert (the entry for the verb “travailler” [to work] is almost three pages long) or Le bon usage, had you time to invest and reflect. But why would you want to, especially when an expert has compiled all of the prepositional information you need in a single, handy format tailored for translators? Plus, the entries also contain pointers and explanations of the most common pitfalls, marked with the symbol “?,” as in the above example regarding the use of “chez” [at].

You may have also noticed that
there are two editions of *Le Prépositionnaire*. There is an edition distributed in France by ViaMedias, and an edition distributed in Canada (“Outside of French-speaking Europe”) by *L’Instant même*, even though you would eventually find out that both books are printed in Canada! This review covers both editions. Upon inquiring about the differences between the two, I was told that localized cultural references in some of the examples, reflecting the French spoken in Montréal, were changed in the edition published in France. For example, reference to hockey teams and to the store “Canadian Tire” in the Quebec edition were changed to football and “Fnac” in the ViaMedias edition. This leaves unchanged the bulk of the prepositional information in both editions, which is consistent with the belief held that there is only one French language with regional variations. What was perhaps more surprising was the absence, in the ViaMedias edition, of the bibliography to which Bulman refers in the introduction to *Le Prépositionnaire*. Upon inquiry, I was assured that future ViaMedias editions would reinstate this bibliographic information.

If by chance you have never heard of *Le Prépositionnaire*, grab a copy of this wonderfully practical resource and add it to your tools of the trade. It deserves to sit on your shelf right next to the Bescherel for French conjugations. You’ll need it to resolve some of your hesitations. Is it “continuer de remplir” [continue to fill-in] or “continuer à remplir?” Is it always “responsable de” (responsible for)? You’ll need it any time you are translating, just in case there is a preposition you cannot quite grasp. And you’ll love finding the answer to your prepositional queries in *Le Prépositionnaire*. Enjoy!

**Reference**


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### Call for Papers

**47th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association**

New Orleans, Louisiana • November 1-4, 2006

Proposals are invited on topics in all areas of translation and interpreting, including the following: Agencies, Bureaus, and Companies; Financial Translation and Interpreting; Independent Contractors; Interpreting; Language-Specific Sessions; Legal Translation and Interpreting; Literary; Media, Medical Translation and Interpreting; Science and Technology; Social Sciences; Terminology; Training and Pedagogy; and Translators and Computers. Suggestions for additional topics are welcome. Proposals for sessions must be submitted on the Conference Presentation Proposal Form (available at www.atanet.org/conf2006/abstract_online.htm) 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. Submission deadline: March 10, 2006. There’s no time like the present!
The Translation Inquirer  By John Decker

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821, or fax them to (570) 275-1477. E-mail address: jdecker@uplink.net. Please make your submissions by the 25th of each month to be included in the next issue. Generous assistance from Per Dohler, proofreader, is gratefully acknowledged.

n the process of switching from a failed laptop computer to a new one late in December 2005, the Translation Inquirer lost a few e-mails from some of you, despite the retailer’s promise that everything on the old machine would be transferred to the new one. If you submitted something to me toward the end of 2005 and do not find it below, please resubmit and I will be glad to include it in one of the 2006 issues of this column. Thanks!

[Abbreviations used with this column: Da-Danish; E-English; F-French; G-German; H-Hebrew; I-Italian; Po-Polish; Pt-Portuguese; R-Russian; Sp-Spanish; Sw-Swedish.]

New Queries

(E-Da 2-06/1) This ProZer stumbled over **mist coat** in the following sentence: The preferred system for use with inorganic zinc silicate is to apply a **mist coat** followed by a full coat of [product] at 40 microns (1.6 mils) dry film thickness. How about some Danish?

(E-G 2-06/2) I feel sorry for the ProZ translator who had to deal with *We bucketed these planks*, because frankly it sounds like some of the nonsense titles that try to lead you into junk e-mails. Maybe it has meaning in some version of English, but in a marketing context: A couple of years ago, we set the stage for steadily improving performance based on a solid strategy that focused on Colour, Channel coverage and efficiency, Services, and the new business of xyz... *We bucketed these planks in Office and Production. We still do... it’s how we go to market. Huh?*

(E-Po 2-06/3) For one ProZ user, inoculation cycle proved to be a bit more than she could handle in this context: **Preservative products were incapable of preventing microbial growth during 6 full inoculation cycles.** Microbial growth was already established after the first contamination. Who wants to try the Polish for this?

(G-E 2-06/4) Tina Banerjee questions the legal term “Fortsetzungszusammenhang” found in the phrase “Verzicht auf die Einrede des Fortsetzungszusammenhangs.” There is no real cultural approximation in English. What, she asks, is the closest term from legal terminology? She is looking for a concise term to substitute for the paraphrases she has used in the past.

(G-Sw 2-06/5) The term “Abnutzungsvorrat” caused trouble for a Lantra-L user in a text which discussed the horror film industry. Here’s the entire context: “Razem z kolejnym wzrostem popularnosci filmów grozy Hollywood ponowio zainteresowało się horrorrem z czysto ekonomicznego punktu widzenia. Tego rodzaju filmy maja szczególnie oddanych fanów, którzy kupia bilet na nawet największy gniot (a o taki na tym rynku nietrudno).” What about the bold-print word in the quote?

(Sp-E 2-06/8) This query comes from the sphere of mining and minerals. The context sentence is: “No hay una prestación de servicio de extracción en el rajo (de xx a xx) ni documentos ni situaciones que impositivamente tendrían que ser considerado como un servicio.” What to do about English for the bold-print phrase encountered by a ProZ member?

(Sp-Pt 2-06/9) “Portarótulo” was the problem word in this electronics text puzzled over by a ProZ denizen: “Placa con bastidor, 179X150X10mm con portarótulos, para 4 módulos anchos o 8 módulos estrechos (2 filas), para cajas de superficie o de emportar.” English is acceptable as an answer, but French was originally wanted.

(Sp-Pt 2-06/10) The following is the first Spanish-to-Portuguese teaser since I took the column over. The phrase “fijaciones de vagas de seguridad” appeared in an electronics text. The ProZ member in question turned to her fellow users for support.
Responses to Old Queries

(E-H 1-05/1) (vice president for financial affairs): Josephine Bacon puts her finger on one of the major problems that affects this query. Israeli commercial law is based on British commercial law, with its chairmen and managing directors. But now the Israelis all want to go American, implying an introduction of chief executive officers, vice-presidents, etc., and these titles simply don’t fit into the Israeli legal framework. In the end, business people will call themselves whatever they want.

John Kinory agrees that some Americanisms have crept into these titles, resulting in an increased use of “nasi,” but the word has only limited penetration in the business world. “Nasi,” he says, is a term that originated in reference to the heads of the Israeltie tribes, and literally is he who is raised up.

(F-E 11-05/4) (une pepinière d’entreprises): Bob Killingsworth calls it a business incubator. The first noun in the phrase literally means a tree nursery.

(G-E 8-05/5) (Schweinemett): Oy, an avalanche of responses came on this one! Ursula Baker says the food is ground pork, eaten uncooked, and is a dish known to anyone living south of Lower Saxony. Ulrike Lieder calls it ground meat, noting that “-matt” is the generic term for any ground meat, with the particular type being a prefix to that. Sibyllle Fmka says that “Mettwurst” is a spreadable deli meat in a sausage casing. Hans Liepert calls it minced meat. Kerstin Roland claims it is served on a slice of bread, with salt, pepper, and sliced onions. Thomas Huber says that coloquially it is called “Hackepeter.” Sabine Michael prefers the word to be untranslated, but will accept cured or smoked pork spread. Lindsay Wagner calls it a regional term for “Hackfleisch,” or what the U.K. calls pork mince. Sabine Whaley provides a German definition of “Mett,” namely “gehacktes Schweinefleisch ohne Speck,” i.e., lean ground pork.

(G-E 11-05/6) (cluster of hunting terms): Luckily, Daniel Gore has an uncle who is a retired forester and hunter from former East Germany. Watch out in what follows, because often no equivalent terms exist in English.

“Regiejagd” (6.a) is a hunt directed by an individual or organization, and, based on the number of game taken in the text on page 52 of the November-December issue, this was a drive, i.e., game was driven ahead of a group of stalkers. Best translation: organized drive.

The species spoken of in (6.b), “eingegajte deutsche Wachtelhunde,” means field-trained German Springer, being a medium-sized, spotted, longhaired German pointer and retriever.

A technical term, “Stechen der Waffen,” (6.c), means setting the trigger, a process that involves activation of two triggers in hunting rifles. The first trigger is pulled after target acquisition, while the second actually fires the rifle. A “Druckjagd” is similar to the drive mentioned in (6.a), but is called a silent beat.

“Anschlüss” (6.d) ought to be “Anschläge,” or shot marks. Proper English for the full phrase is After the hunt please break shot marks for the search and inform the stalking guide. These shot marks are evergreen branches that are bent and driven into the ground at the place where an animal was standing when it was shot, if the shot merely wounded it and it managed to run away.

Finally, the “Streckenplatz” (6.e) is the location where, after the hunt, all the hunters meet with their collected game. The game is then “stretched out” or displayed. “Schüsseltreiben,” though not part of the query, is an amusing aside, because it is the feast following the hunt, during which the bowls (“Schüsseln”) are driven, like game, around the banquet table. So the whole phrase is best translated by: Collect game, quarter by the dog handler, gather at the display area, feast!

(I-G 11-05/7) (scarpe da passeggio uomo, scarped a passeggio donna): Giovanna Massari had to go from English into Italian in one of her jobs and hit on this very phrase, which she calls street shoes, as opposed to athletic shoes. Next step: to provide the German that was originally wanted.

(Po-E 11-05/9) (PKN Orlen): Thomas Hedden and Gerard Majka say this is the name of a Polish oil refining company. PKN is “Polski Koncern Naftowy.”

(R-E 11-05/10) (обм): For Elizabeth Adams and Olga Grayvoronska Sharpe, it’s object intelectualnogo sobstvennosti, which she translates simply as intellectual property. Rob Valliere agrees, as do Viktor Shevelyov, Leonid Gornik, and Thomas Hedden. Henry Christoffers adds that a good source for abbreviations of this type is the Dunwoody Dictionary of Contemporary Russian Abbreviations, Acronyms & Initialisms. The alternatives he offers to the above are: отдеылняя информационная система, and опытно-испытательное судно.
(Sp-E 7-05/11) (rico vacilón): Alex Schwartz used Google to find these lyrics: “Vacilón, que rico vacilón./ Cha-cha-chá, que rico cha-cha-chá / A la prieta hay que darle cariño, / a la china tremendo apretón, / a la rubia hay que darle un besito, / pero todas gozan el vacilón.” The source was the December 14, 2005 edition of Unión Liberal Cubana. Evidently differing versions of the lyrics existed even in the 1950s.

Thanks to all who contributed, especially Daniel Gore with his detailed and informative response.

ATA 2006 Lewis Galantière Award

The American Translators Association invites nominations for the 2006 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 New Orleans, Louisiana (November 1-4, 2006), 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 2004 or 2005.
- 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, but 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, 2006. 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 New Orleans, Louisiana (November 1-4, 2006).

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.

Contact: www.atanet.org or ata@atanet.org
Even Chronicle columnists can form a tight little circle. Chris Durban, writer of “The Onion-skin,” spotted a typographical error in John Decker’s “Translation Inquirer” for March 2005: “esfuerzos” (efforts) became “escuerzos” (toads).

ATA Active Member Doug Foran submitted excerpts from a user manual for a portable electronic piano purchased in September 2005. The manual, obviously translated into English from some other language, was so bad that, according to Foran: “MS Word’s spelling and grammar checker crashed when [he] tried to process it!…By the way, there is no indication (in the manual, on the product, or in the packaging) of where this keyboard was manufactured.”

Here are some examples, with the original errors intact.

100 tones and rhythms are available for product…it’s not only for professional players, but go for beginners as well, connect it with earphone, one can play it silently, with numerous functions…

…Button Interface Area at right side is the Principal Area…for playing of demonstrative sons…

Press [RECORD] button, the numeric of “E” shall displayed…you can operate the keyboard…and rhythms came out shall be saved.

…avoid direct contact of sharp and hard angles or sharp weapons, which shall bring crack on keyboard…thus makes the keyboard cannot function normally.

Please do not disassemble the parts of this product or it has fell down and resulted in damage.

And finally, Alex Schwartz has proved that it pays to save your old Chronicles (and National Geographics, etc.). Having come across a humor column discussing traduttore traditore in a Chronicle of 10 years ago, he:

… immediately thought of the Hungarian version produced in the late 1990s by the late, great Louis Korda: “Ki fordít, ferdít.” The word “ki” means “who” or “he who,” the word “fordít” means “translates,” and the word “ferdít” means “skews,” so that the literal meaning of the Hungarian sentence is “He who translates distorts.” A particularly nice feature of this translation is that, just as in the nouns of the Italian original, the second Hungarian verb repeats the consonants of the first verb, in the same sequence, and differs from it in only one vowel.

ATA Alexander Gode Medal

The Alexander Gode Medal, the American Translators Association’s most prestigious award, is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translation and interpreting professions. This award may be given annually. Individuals or institutions nominated do not have to be members of ATA; however, a history of constructive relations with ATA and the language professions in general is desirable. Nominees do not have to be U.S. citizens. Petitions and letter campaigns are not encouraged.

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

Nomination Deadline: May 1, 2006. Contact: www.atanet.org or ata@atanet.org
ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

There will be many more exam sittings scheduled for 2006, but these are the sites confirmed at this time.

California
San Francisco
April 15, 2006
Registration Deadline: March 31, 2006

San Diego
June 24, 2006
Registration Deadline: June 9, 2006

Colorado
Boulder
March 18, 2006
Registration Deadline: March 3, 2006

Denver
September 16, 2006
Registration Deadline: September 1, 2006

Iowa
Des Moines
April 29, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 14, 2006

Kansas
Overland Park
April 30, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 14, 2006

Louisiana
New Orleans
November 4, 2006
Registration Deadline: October 20, 2006

Massachusetts
Somerville
May 7, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 21, 2006

Michigan
Kalamazoo
April 15, 2006
Registration Deadline: March 31, 2006

Novi
August 5, 2006
Registration Deadline: July 21, 2006

Nebraska
Lincoln
July 7, 2006
Registration Deadline: June 23, 2006

Nevada
Las Vegas
April 29, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 14, 2006

New Jersey
Jersey City
April 23, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 7, 2006

New York
Albany
July 20, 2006
Registration Deadline: June 16, 2006

New York
New York City
August 5, 2006
Registration Deadline: July 21, 2006

New York
White Plains
August 5, 2006
Registration Deadline: July 21, 2006

North Carolina
Raleigh
September 23, 2006
Registration Deadline: August 28, 2006

Ohio
Columbus
July 13, 2006
Registration Deadline: June 29, 2006

Oregon
Portland
August 20, 2006
Registration Deadline: July 26, 2006

Pennsylvania
Philadelphia
August 12, 2006
Registration Deadline: July 28, 2006

South Carolina
Charleston
April 9, 2006
Registration Deadline: March 31, 2006

Spain
Madrid
September 1, 2006
Registration Deadline: August 3, 2006

Tennessee
Nashville
September 10, 2006
Registration Deadline: August 25, 2006

Texas
Houston
May 27, 2006
Registration Deadline: May 12, 2006

Washington
Seattle
April 29, 2006
Registration Deadline: April 14, 2006

Argentina
Buenos Aires
July 1, 2006
Registration Deadline: June 16, 2006

Italy
Ascoli Piceno
May 27, 2006
Registration Deadline: May 12, 2006

New Certified Members

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

English into German
Iris Heerhold
Seattle, WA

Arabic into English
Jody R. Jaffe
Great Neck, NY

Spanish into English
Mark McCaffrey
Los Angeles, CA

English into Spanish
Mario A. Flores
Seattle, WA

Russian into English
Jan A. Pendzich
Seattle, WA

Cristina Jaouen
Lorca, Spain

Sarah R. Wilson
Puebla, Mexico

Susan G. Rascon
Clintonville, WI

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.
Upcoming Events

February 25, 2006
American Translators Association Science and Technology Seminar
Los Angeles, California
www.atanet.org/scitech

April 8, 2006
Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters
2006 Annual Conference
College of Charleston
Charleston, South Carolina
www.catiweb.org

April 20-23, 2006
American Translators Association
Translation Company Division 7th Annual Conference
Jersey City, New Jersey
www.ata-divisions.org/TCD

May 6, 2006
New England Translators Association
10th Annual Conference
Radisson Hotel
Marlborough, Massachusetts
www.netaweb.org

May 19-21, 2006
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
27th Annual Conference
J. W. Marriott (on Westheimer by the Galleria)
Houston, Texas
www.najit.org

June 23-25, 2006
Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association
2006 Conference
Des Moines, Iowa
www.itanet.org

August 13-25, 2006
2006 Cambridge Conference Interpretation Course
Refresher Course for Professional Conference Interpreters
Cambridge, England
www.cciconline.net

November 1-4, 2006
American Translators Association 47th Annual Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana
www.atanet.org

You'll find the most up-to-date contact information for your ATA colleagues online, day or night! Search by name, location, even by email address—just click www.atanet.org/membersonly.

ATA’s Membership Directory
Keeps You Connected All Year Long

The best TECHNICAL Euro, African & Brazilian PORTUGUESE TRANSLATIONs

You'll find the most up-to-date contact information for your ATA colleagues online, day or night! Search by name, location, even by email address—just click www.atanet.org/membersonly.
ATA Chapters, Affiliated Groups, and Other Groups

**ATA Chapters**

Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators (AAIT)
P.O. Box 12172
Atlanta, GA 30355
Tel: (404) 729-4036
aaitinfo@aait.org • www.aait.org

Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI)
9304 Bonita Lane, #1617
Charlotte, NC 28262
Tel: (919) 577-0840
catiweb@pobox.com • www.catiweb.org

Delaware Valley Translators Association (DVTA)
606 John Anthony Drive
West Chester, PA 19382-7191
Tel: (215) 222-0955
DVTA@cs.com • www.dvta.org

Florida Chapter of ATA (FLATA)
7891 W Flagler Street, #347
Miami, FL 33147
Tel: (305) 274-3434
Fax: (305) 437-7663
president@atafl.org • www.atafl.org

Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network (MiTiN)
P.O. Box 852
Novi, MI 48376-0852
Tel: (586) 778-7304 • Fax: (248) 344-0092
info@mitinweb.org • www.mitinweb.org

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

Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters (MATI)
542 S Dearborn Street, Suite 1060
Chicago, IL 60605
Tel: (312) 427-5450 • Fax: (312) 427-1505
moirapujols@aol.com • www.matiata.org

National Capital Area Chapter of ATA (NCATA)
P.O. Box 5757
Washington, DC 20016-5757
Tel: (703) 255-9290 • Fax: (202) 234-5656
alexandrarb@yahoo.com • www.ncata.org

New York Circle of Translators (NYCT)
P.O. Box 4051, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-4051
Tel: (212) 334-3060
president@nyctranslators.org
www.nyctranslators.org

Northeast Ohio Translators Association (NOTA)
33425 Bainbridge Road
Solon, OH 44139
Tel: (440) 519-0161
president@ohiotrslators.org
www.ohiotrslators.org

Northern California Translators Association (NCTA)
P.O. Box 14015
Berkeley, CA 94712-5015
Tel/Fax: (510) 845-8712
ncta@ncta.org • www.ncta.org

Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS)
P.O. Box 25301
Seattle, WA 98165-2201
Tel: (206) 382-5642
info@notisnet.org • www.notisnet.org

Southern California Area Translators and Interpreters Association (SCATIA)
mary@atanet.org

Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA)
Minnesota Translation Lab
University of Minnesota
218 Nolte Center
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Tel: (612) 625-3096
mtl@tc.umn.edu • www.umi.com

**Affiliated Groups**

Houston Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA)
P.O. Box 421343
Houston, TX 77242-1343
Tel: (713) 202-6169
www.hitagroup.org

Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association (IITA)
P.O. Box 5757
Urbandale, IA 50323
Tel: (515) 865-3873 • Fax: (515) 278-5841
info@iitanet.org • www.iitanet.org

**Other Groups**

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

American Literary Translators Association (ALTA)
The University of Texas at Dallas
Box 830688 Mail Station JO51
Richardson, TX 75083-0688
Tel: (972) 883-2093 • Fax: (972) 883-6303
www.literarytranslators.org

American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association (ATISA)
c/o Dr. Geoffrey S. Koby, President
Kent State University MCLS, SFH 109
Kent, OH 44242
Tel: (330) 672-1814
Fax: (330) 672-4009
gkoby@kent.edu
http://appling.kent.edu/atisa/atisahome.html

Association of Language Companies (ALC)
1911 N Fort Myer Drive, Suite 702
Arlington, VA 22209-1605
Tel: (800) 338-4155 (within North America)
(703) 812-0883 • Fax: (703) 875-0301
info@alcus.org • www.alcus.org

Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA)
P.O. Box 13331
Austin, TX 78711-3331
Tel: (512) 707-3900
president@aattria.org • www.aattria.org

California Court Interpreters Association (CCIA)
345 S Hwy 101, Suite D
Encinitas, CA 92024
Tel: (760) 635-0273 • Fax: (760) 635-0276
ccia345@earthlink.net • www.ccia.org
Chicago Area Translators and Interpreters Association (CHICATA)
P.O. Box 804595
Chicago, IL 60680-4107
Tel: (312) 836-0961
webmaster@chicata.org • www.chicata.org

Colorado Translators Association (CTA)
941 Cedwick Street
Lafayette, CO 80026
Tel: (720) 890-7934
kathy@kdtranslations.com
www.cta-web.org

Delaware Translators Network (DTN)
2401 Pennsylvania Avenue #912
Wilmington, DE 19806
Tel: (302) 655-5368
levinx@cs.com

El Paso Interpreters and Translators Association (EPITA)
P.O. Box 27157
El Paso, TX 79926
Tel: (915) 598-4757 or (915) 256-0590
mhogan@elp.rr.com

The Kentucky Translators and Interpreters Association (KTIA)
P.O. Box 7468
Louisville, KY 40257-0468
Tel: (502) 449-4499
E-mail: ktiapresident@yahoo.com

Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association (MITA)
712 Cornfield Drive
Arlington, TX 76017
Tel: (817) 417-4747
www.dfw-mita.com

National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT)
603 Stewart Street, Suite 610
Seattle, WA 98101
Tel: (206) 267-6100 • Fax: (206) 683-6122
Mary@atanet.org

New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association (NMTIA)
P.O. Box 36263
Albuquerque, NM 87176
Tel: (505) 352-9258
uwescohoeter@comcast.net
www.cybermessa.com/~nmtia

The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG)
962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 500
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: (301) 563-6450 • (866) 563-6456
Fax: (301) 563-6020
info@ttig.org • www.ttig.org

Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society (WITS)
P.O. Box 1012
Seattle, WA 98111-1012
Tel: (206) 382-5690
www.witsnet.org

International Groups
FIT—Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs/International Federation of Translators (FIT)
2021 Avenue Union, Bureau 1108
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 2S9
Tel: (514) 845-0413 • Fax: (514) 845-9903
secretariat@fit-ift.org • www.fit-ift.org

AUSTRALIA
Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators, Inc. (AUSIT)
PO Box 1070
Blackburn North VIC 3130 Australia
Tel: +61 3 9597 9958
national@ausit.org • www.ausit.org

CANADA
Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta (ATIA)
P.O. Box 546
Main Post Office
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 2K8
Tel: (780) 434-8384
info@atia.ab.ca

Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario (ATIO)
1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1202
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1N 7B7
Tel: (613) 241-2846,
Toll-free: 1 (800) 234-5030
Fax: (613) 241-4098
info@atio.on.ca • www.atio.on.ca

Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTTAQ)
2021 Union Avenue, Suite 1108
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3A 2S9
Tel: (514) 845-4411
Toll-free: (800) 265-4815
Fax: (514) 845-9903
info@ottiaq.org • www.ottiaq.org

Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia (STIBC)
850 W Hastings Street, Suite 514, Box 34
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
V6C 1E1
Tel: (604) 684-2940 • Fax: (604) 684-2947
office@stibc.org • www.stibc.org

ENGLAND
Institute of Translation & Interpreting (ITI)
Fortuna House
South Fifth Street
Milton Keynes
MK9 2EU England
Tel: +44 (0) 1908 325 250
Fax: +44 (0) 1908 325 259
info@iti.org.uk • www.iti.org.uk

MEXICO
Organización Mexicana de Traductores A.C.
Capítulo Occidente
Av. Vallarta 1525–304
Col. Americana Guadalajara, Jalisco Mexico
Tel: +52-33-3124-0236
Fax: +52-33-3124-0237
postmaster@omt.org.mx
www.omt.org.mx

PERU
Asociación de Traductores Profesionales del Perú (ATPP)
Casilla Postal 18-0251
Lima 18 Perú
Tel: +51 (1) 264-2214 • Fax: +51 (1) 264-5567
postmaster@atpp.org.pe
http://www.atpp.org.pe
“The Changing Tides of Translation”

ATA Translation Company Division 7th Annual Conference
April 20-23, 2006

Hyatt Regency on the Hudson • Jersey City, New Jersey

Highlights:

• Thursday evening reception and banquet
• Two days of informative educational sessions tailored to the needs and concerns of translation company owners and managers
• Plenty of time and opportunity for networking, networking, and more networking!
• Optional Friday evening activity: “New York City by Night”
• Special invitation: Join the ATA Board at their Saturday evening reception
• Sunday morning buffet breakfast and optional excursion to Ellis Island

Advertising, exhibit, and sponsorship opportunities available. Stay tuned to www.ata-divisions.org/TCD for more information!

Online registration coming soon!

Kim Vitray
TCD Administrator
vitray@mcelroytranslation.com
(512) 472-6753

Ellen Boyar
TCD Assistant Administrator
ellen.boyar@thomson.com
(215) 386-0100 ext. 1331

Vigdis Eriksen
Local Conference Organizer
vigdis@erikseninc.com
(718) 802-9010

Alexandra Farkas
Local Conference Organizer
alexandra@erikseninc.com
(718) 802-9010
If you are now certified, your first 3-year reporting period ends on January 1, 2007. If you become ATA-certified after January 1, 2004, your first reporting period ends 3 years after the certification date.

You can begin accruing continuing education points on January 1, 2004, or as soon as you become certified. ATA-certified translators who will be 60 and older on the date their reporting period ends are exempt from continuing education requirements. All others must provide evidence of their continuing education activities as described here.

Keep track of your continuing education points and supporting documentation: this is your responsibility. Use the forms on pages 57 and 58 to request approval, if required, either before or after the event. ATA Headquarters will notify you and provide materials for reporting your continuing education points, when due.

You must earn 1 continuing education point on the ethics of translation and interpreting during your first 3-year reporting period. You may choose between attending an ethics workshop at the ATA Annual Conference or taking a self-directed course available online and in print. The self-directed course is available online at www.atanet.org/acc/ce_online_ethics_component.htm The Continuing Education Requirements Committee may approve other ethics classes.

Eligible Continuing Education

You can earn continuing education points in any of 6 categories. Each has a maximum number of points per year or 3-year reporting period.

A. Translation/interpreting courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences
Points: 1 point per hour for attending translation/interpreting seminars, workshops, and conferences (up to 10 points per event); 1 point per hour for college and university courses (up to 5 points per course); 2 points per hour for teaching/presenting classes, seminars, workshops, and conference sessions.
Maximum: Up to 10 points in any given year.
No approval required: ATA annual/regional conferences, preconference seminars, and professional development seminars. ATA chapter and division seminars, conferences, and workshops. Courses, seminars, and conferences offered by nationally accredited university translation/interpreting programs in the United States. ATA Certification Program grader training.
Approval required (before or after the event): Translation/interpreting courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences offered by other translation/interpreting associations in the United States or abroad, or by university translation/interpreting programs abroad. Privately offered seminars on translation/interpreting.
Approval process: While no approval is required, ATA chapters, divisions, and nationally accredited translation/interpreting programs in the United States are encouraged to submit an approval request to ATA Headquarters for record keeping prior to their classes, seminars, and conferences.
For other events, use the forms on pages 57 and 58 to submit instructor credentials and a session abstract, course description, syllabus, conference proceedings, or other supporting documentation to the Certification Program Manager at ATA Headquarters for approval, either before or after the event.
Examples: ATA Spanish Division Mid-Year Conference; NYU Translation Program online courses; Kent State University’s Terminology Summer Academy; conferences organized by the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators.

B. Other courses and seminars
Points: 1 point per hour for attending, 2 points per hour for teaching/presenting (up to 2 points per course or seminar).
Maximum: Up to 5 points in a 3-year period.
No approval required: Courses, seminars, and workshops in your area of specialization, such as law, medicine, finance, or technical fields. ATA translation/interpreting ethics workshop. Target-language grammar and writing courses. Seminars and workshops on translation-support software and other tools of the trade.
Approval required (before or after the event): Seminars and workshops on running your business.
Approval process: You will be asked to provide a statement at reporting time attesting that each course, seminar, or workshop relates to your specialization. You can claim the ATA ethics workshop only once.
For seminars and workshops on running your business, use the forms on pages 57 and 58 to submit instructor credentials and a session abstract, course description, syllabus, conference proceedings, or other supporting documentation to the Certification Program Manager at ATA Headquarters for approval, either before or after the event.
Examples: Financial Accounting course at the University of Vermont; California Bar Association online legal continuing education; training sessions on TRADOS, Déjà Vu, Star, Transit, and other translation-support tools; Pharmacological Update at the Georgetown School of Nursing and Health Studies.

Continuing Education Points

ATA-certified translators must earn 20 points of continuing education credit over 3 years, with a maximum of 10 points in any given year, to keep their certification current.
C. Memberships in professional associations

Points: 1 point for each current membership in a professional association of each type: translation/interpreting or specialization-specific.

Maximum: Up to 2 points per 3-year period.

No approval required: Membership in a translation/interpreting professional association.

Approval required: Membership in a specialization-specific professional association.

Approval process: You will be asked to provide evidence of membership at reporting time. For specialization-specific professional associations, you will be asked to provide a description of the association and how it relates to your translation work.

Examples: ATA and ATA local chapters; National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators; International Association of Conference Interpreters; Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association; Société Française des Traducteurs; Society for Technical Communication; Society of Automotive Engineers; European Society of Clinical Pharmacy.

D. Mentors, mentees, and ATA Certification Program graders

Points: 1 point for each activity per year.

Maximum: Up to 6 points per 3-year period.

Approval required: ATA certification exam grading. ATA certification exam passage selection. Participating as a mentor or mentee in the ATA Mentoring Program.

Approval process: ATA Certification Program graders must have graded exams or selected passages during the year for which they claim points. Mentors and mentees must provide a statement from the Mentoring Committee Chair at reporting time.

E. New certifications and accreditations

Points: 1 point for each new certification or accreditation acquired from an approved professional organization or government agency.

Maximum: Up to 3 points per 3-year period.

No approval required: National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, Federal Court, and foreign sworn translator credentials.

Approval required: Other credentials.

Approval process: National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, Federal Court, and foreign sworn translator credentials are pre-approved, but proof must be provided. For other credentials, a description of the criteria for conferring the credential must be submitted to the Certification Program Manager at ATA Headquarters for approval. Attach a copy of the certificate awarded to your approval request.

F. Authoring articles or books

Points: 4 points for each new book published; 2 points for each new article published.

Maximum: Up to 4 points during the 3-year period.

Approval required: Published book on translation/interpreting. Published article on translation/interpreting in a professional journal/publication. (Translating a book or article is not counted as authoring a book or article.)

Approval process: Submit a copy of the title page of the book or article with the author’s name.
# Approval Request Form

**ATA Continuing Education Points (Individuals)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please print or type.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name of requesting individual:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Event sponsor’s contact information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Event/presentation:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Brief description of content:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Speaker’s name &amp; title:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For conference or multi-day events, please list names and titles of speakers on a separate sheet.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Date(s) of activity:</th>
<th>7. Time of activity: (from) (to)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. Number of continuing education points requested:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*1 point per hour credit for seminars, workshops, and conferences, with a max. 10 points/event; 5 points max./university course*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Signature of requesting individual:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### For ATA Use Only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points approved:</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed by:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Approval Request Form

### ATA Continuing Education Points (Groups)

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

Refer to CE Guidelines in print or online at www.atanet.org for further information!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please print or type.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Event sponsor’s contact information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Name of Sponsor:  
  - ATA Chapter/Division: ________________________________________________  
  - Other*: ________________________________________________________________  
  
*Approval for non-ATA-sponsored activities must be sought by either the sponsor or the individual attending the activity |
| Contact Person: Email: |
| Address: |
| Phone: Fax: |

### Event/presentation:

3. Brief description of content:

4. Speaker’s name & title:

_For conference or multi-day events, please list names and titles of speakers on a separate sheet_

5. Date(s) of activity:  
6. Time of activity: (from) (to)

7. Number of continuing education points requested:

_1 point per hour credit for seminars, workshops, and conferences, with a max. 10 points/event; 5 points max./university course_

8. Signature of requesting individual: Title: Date:

---

**For ATA Use Only**

Points approved: Comments:

Reviewed by: 

Date:
Instructions for Completing ATA Continuing Education Approval Request Forms

General Information:
• ATA maintains a database of approved events at which ATA-certified members may earn continuing education points (CEPs).
• Approval may be requested either prior to an event or after an event, with the understanding that the approval may be denied if documentation is insufficient or if the educational content does not meet ATA criteria.
• Individuals and groups requesting CEPs will be notified by ATA Headquarters that the event has been approved for a particular number of CEPs or that approval is denied.
• Individuals must keep track of their earned CEPs and report them to ATA Headquarters every three years upon request.

Select one of the following forms to complete:
1. If you represent a chapter, regional group, organization, institution, or other sponsor of activities, complete the Approval Request Form for Groups (page 58).
2. If you are an individual, complete the Approval Request Form for Individuals (page 57).

CEP Request Form for Groups
1) Provide the name and contact information for the group sponsoring the event.
   a) Check the appropriate box for your group and provide the group’s name.
   b) “Other” can include affiliated groups, international translation organizations, and universities.

   All ATA chapter educational events are automatically eligible for continuing education points. Events not sponsored by ATA or ATA chapters must be approved individually. Approval may be denied if documentation is insufficient or if the educational content does not meet ATA criteria.

2) Provide the name of the event or presentation.
3) Provide a brief description of the content of the event or presentation—two or three sentences should be sufficient.
4) Provide the speaker’s name and title.
   a) If this is a single session, one name and descriptive title are sufficient.
   b) If this is a conference or multi-day event, provide all names and titles on a separate page.
5) Provide the date(s) of the event.
6) Provide the starting and ending times.
   a) If this is a conference or multi-day event, provide the number of session hours for each day of the event. Session hours do not include breaks or meals.
7) Provide the number of CEPs you are requesting for your attendees—one hour of creditworthy activity equals one CEP—no partial hours can be counted.
8) The form must be signed and dated by the individual recommending the presentation or event for CEP approval.

CEP Request Form for Individuals
1) The individual requesting the CEPs must provide his/her ATA membership number and sign and date the form.
2) Provide the name and contact information for the group sponsoring the event.

   All ATA chapter educational events are automatically eligible for continuing education points. Events not sponsored by ATA or ATA chapters must be approved individually. Approval may be denied if documentation is insufficient or if the educational content does not meet ATA criteria.

3) Provide the name of the event or presentation.
4) Provide a brief description of the content of the event or presentation—two or three sentences should be sufficient.
5) Provide the speaker’s name and title.
   a) If this is a single session, one name and descriptive title are sufficient.
   b) If this is a conference or multi-day event, provide all names and titles on a separate page.
6) Provide the date(s) of the event.
7) Provide the starting and ending times.
   a) If this is a conference or multi-day event, provide the number of session-hours for each day of the event—session hours do not include breaks or meals.
8) Provide the number of CEPs you are requesting—one hour of creditworthy activity equals one CEP.

REMINDER
• ATA offers 1 CEP per hour for approved seminars, workshops, conferences, and presentations based on full hours (not including meals and breaks), up to a maximum of 10 CEPs per event. No partial hours will be counted.
• ATA offers a maximum of 5 CEPs for an approved college, university, or other course regardless of its length.
• The requesting group or individual will be notified if ATA does not approve the number of points requested.
• When reporting points, an ATA member is allowed a maximum of 10 CEPs for any given year.
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Vacant

To ASTM Translation User Standards Project
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<th>ATA Member #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company/Organization</td>
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To learn more about the ATA Science and Technology Seminar, please visit www.atanet.org/pd/scitech or contact ATA at (703) 683-6100 or ata@atanet.org.

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City  State/Province  Zip/Postal Code  Country  
Telephone  Email  

Seminar Registration Fees  ATA/SCATIA Member  Nonmember  Payment  
Early-Bird (by February 17):  $145  $260  $_________  
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An ATA certification exam sitting will be held on Sunday, February 26. This will be a standard exam, not specialty-specific. Visit www.atanet.org/certification to obtain the Eligibility Requirements and Registration Form.
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