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American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590 • Alexandria VA 22314
Tel: (703) 683-6100 • Fax: (703) 683-6122
E-mail: Chronicle@atanet.org • Website: www.atanet.org
An Easy Reference To ATA Member Benefits

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

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lmccormick@hayscompanies.com
http://ata.haysaffinity.com

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(484) 242-7226
michael.horoski@rmsna.com
www.rmsna.com

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

The ATA Chronicle Submission Guidelines

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

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

Standard Length
Letters to the editor: 350 words; 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)
29 Facts About Unemployment Insurance
By Ann M. Morris
An explanation of unemployment insurance benefits and the various functions and qualifications involved.

31 2004 Tax Year: Mary Q. Translator
By John Matthews
A look at possible deductions and how to itemize them. Warning: Do not attempt this without first seeing a qualified tax preparer.

33 Translating for the Publishing Field
By Enrique Torner
Some tips on how to become a translator for publishing companies, including the challenges and benefits of working in this area.

36 Where Does Plain English Fit In?
By Cynthia Hazelton
Should translators edit legal documents to make them more readable by the general public? Deciding when and when not to translate legal terminology poses an interesting issue.

37 In Other Words, Part II
By Leland D. Wright, Jr.
Every language has at its disposal a wide range of stylistic alternatives. Using Spanish-to-English examples selected from commercial, legal, and technical documents, this article discusses how some translation decisions are obligatory while others are optional.

41 Translation Technology Breeds New Translators
By Vassilis Korkas
Translation tools have changed not only how we work, but also how we think as translators. The author helps us tune into the right mindset.

42 At Your Command: Creating Customized Keyboard Shortcuts
By Becky Blackley
Save time with keyboard shortcuts designed to meet your individual needs. Gain quick access to keyboard commands not normally available when using a foreign keyboard layout.

47 Running Your Translating/Interpreting Business From Home
By M. Eta Trabing
Whether you are an interpreter or translator, you will benefit from this useful checklist of do’s and don’ts for establishing your business.

Guide to ATA :
Continuing Education Points
Check it out at www.atanet.org
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64 SDL International
www.sdl.com/synergy

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Reprint Permission:
Requests for permission to reprint articles should be sent to the Chronicle editor at jeff@atanet.org.
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Maribeth Bandas currently serves as a translator in the Executive Office of the Mayor on Latino Affairs in Washington, DC. She runs an internship program for Hispanic Link News Service to train students in the Master’s in Translation Program of the Universidad de Puerto Rico on aspects of journalistic translation. Contact: Maribeth.Bandas@dc.gov.

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Ann G. Macfarlane was the first graduate of the University of California at Santa Cruz to receive a Marshall Scholarship. She studied Russian and ancient Greek at Cambridge University before serving as a diplomat in Pakistan, Germany, and on the Soviet desk of the U.S. State Department. She served as ATA president from 1999 to 2001. She is an ATA-certified (Russian ↔ English) translator. She was appointed executive director of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators in 2002. In addition to volunteering on behalf of translation and interpretation, she provides training in leadership, parliamentary procedure, and meeting management. Contact: info@russianresourcesint.com.

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Ann M. Morris is a bilingual workforce advisor for Iowa Workforce Development in the Unemployment Service Center in Des Moines, Iowa. She has translated the forms that are available to Iowa Workforce in Spanish and the Facts about Unemployment Insurance Guide that is accessible on the organization's website (www.iowaworkforce.org). She presented the translation of this guide at the first annual Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association’s conference in February 2005. Contact: morrisad6812@msn.com.

Leland D. Wright, Jr. has been a freelance translator since 1982, focusing primarily on Spanish legal and commercial documents. He has been a member of ATA since 1975 (ATA-certified, Spanish ↔ English). He served two consecutive terms as an ATA director (1978-84), and was editor of the ATA Chronicle from 1983 to 1987. He was a founding member of the Northeast Ohio Translators Association, which became an ATA chapter in 1979. In addition to his work as a freelance translator, he also taught Spanish-to-English commercial/legal translation in the M.A. translator training program at Kent State University from 1989 to 2004. He is currently an online instructor in Spanish-to-English translation for New York University. Contact: lwright3@neo.rr.com.

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The Changing Tides of Translation

ATA Translation Company Division 7th Annual Conference April 20-23, 2006
From the President
Taking Office and Getting Started

was happy to see so many of you in Seattle, my last event as president-elect. I now hand that mantle, along with the organization of the next two Annual Conferences, over to Jiri Stejskal.

While we were 1,650 attendees in Seattle, our second largest conference, wouldn’t it be great if our biggest numbers came next year to support the rebuilding of New Orleans? ATA Headquarters and Conferon—our meeting planning contractor—staff, Jiri, and I will be doing our site visit to New Orleans in March, so watch the April Chronicle for Jiri’s report on the great shape the Sheraton Hotel and the nearby French Quarter are in.

By now you will have seen the November election results. (If not, please see page 8.) I want to thank all the candidates for caring enough to run. I hope those who were not elected are willing to serve ATA in other ways and that they will think about running again in the future. Of course, my hearty congratulations to Jiri Stejskal, who moves from treasurer to president-elect; Alan Melby, who was re-elected to a second term as secretary; and Peter Krawutschke, who rejoins the Board as treasurer after serving as ATA president from 1995-97; and welcome to the new directors Jacki Noh, Boris Silversteyn, and Liliana Valenzuela.

When I was elected president-elect in Phoenix in 2003, I laid out my plans for ATA:

• Continuing the effort to make ATA such a vibrant organization that any respectable client will demand ATA credentials, and any serious translator will agree with our colleague Márcio Badra, who wrote: “The best investment I ever made in my life was to join ATA.”
• Offering a wide variety of high-quality professional development opportunities.
• Striving for continual improvements in the certification program.
• Supporting the association’s public relations efforts.
• Seeking enhanced member benefits.

I continue to focus on these areas, many of which the ATA Board of Directors will be discussing at our long-term planning meeting this month. I hope you’ll send me your ideas for achieving these goals and tell me about other matters of concern to you. I can be reached at president@atanet.org.

Following up on member feedback, one of the initiatives started in Toronto in 2004 and repeated this year in Seattle was “The Board: We are listening.” This is all about seeking your input, and it is particularly important now, as we plan the future of ATA. Please send your thoughts to ATA Executive Director Walter Bacak at walter@atanet.org so he can compile all the input for us.

One change you’ve already seen is in the ATA dues structure. Division membership no longer affects the amount of dues you pay. I encourage you to be active in the divisions you join.

Being active dovetails with a theme I’ve been discussing a lot lately. I call it enlightened self-interest. I have basically built my career on my involvement with the New York Circle of Translators (NYCT) and ATA. Most of my clients come to me through NYCT or ATA. ATA is and will continue to be what we, the members, make it. Pick an area that interests you and volunteer. By getting involved, you can help shape its direction, make it more vibrant, and, while you’re at it, network, network, network. I am sure you will find your involvement to be very rewarding, both personally and professionally.

I look forward to serving you and thank you for this honor.

2006 Cambridge Conference Interpretation Course
Refresher Course for Professional Conference Interpreters
August 13-25, 2006
Cambridge, England

An intensive course in simultaneous conference interpretation. For more information, please visit www.cciconline.net, or contact Christopher Guichot de Fortis at c.guichot@aic.net.
For ATA, 2006 brings a big change in membership.

Starting this year, ATA members no longer have to pay separate dues for divisions. ATA membership now provides access to any or all of ATA’s 13 divisions—and their specialized in-depth content and networking opportunities—at no additional cost.

You can join or renew any of the divisions when you renew your ATA membership or by going online and updating your listing in the Members Only section of ATA’s website: www.atanet.org/membersonly.

In related division news, three groups held organizational meetings at ATA’s Annual Conference in Seattle to investigate establishing new divisions. They are tentatively the Korean Language Division, the Financial Division, and the Legal Division. More on these efforts will be published as the groups take steps to organize.

To access the divisions and all the valuable benefits of ATA membership, please renew your membership today. You can renew online in the Members Only section at www.atanet.org/membersonly or go to the same link and download the renewal form, complete it, and then fax or mail it to ATA. If you have already renewed, thank you. If you are undecided, please contact ata@atanet.org to see if we can help answer any questions or concerns you may have. We want you to stay a part of the largest professional organization for translators and interpreters in the U.S.

2005 ATA Membership. ATA closed out 2005 with a record 9,554 members. The prior record was 9,041 members in 2003. Thank you for your support of the American Translators Association.

2005 ATA Annual Conference. Speaking of records, ATA’s 46th Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington, drew the second largest attendance with over 1,600 registrants. (ATA’s largest conference was

Report of the Inspector of Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For election of president-elect:</th>
<th>For election of three directors for three-year terms:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiri Stejskal 311 votes Elected</td>
<td>Boris Silversteyn 277 votes Elected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tony Beckwith 213</td>
<td>Jacki Noh 245 votes Elected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Macfarlane 1</td>
<td>Liliana Valenzuela 214 votes Elected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wanda Boeke 1</td>
<td>Tereza Braga 200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boris Silversteyn 1</td>
<td>Laurie Gerber 198</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Richard Paegelow 193</td>
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<td>Ines Bojlesen 187</td>
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<td>Tony Beckwith 2</td>
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<td>Steve Hanley 2</td>
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<td>Fabienne Sophie Chauderlot 1</td>
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<td>Steve Sette 1</td>
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<td>Scholem Slaughter 1</td>
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<td>For election of secretary:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alan Melby 361 votes Elected</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arlene Kelly 149</td>
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<td>For election of treasurer:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Kravutschke 474 votes Elected</td>
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<td>Chantal Wilford 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatriz Bonnet 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tony Beckwith 4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>J. Henry Phillips 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Sette 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholem Slaughter 1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Continued on p.25
The Judicial Conference, in September 2002, adopted a recommendation of the Judicial Resources Committee on the use of background investigations and checks in the courts. The new policy, which became effective May 16, 2005, creates two categories of positions based on the nature of the work and the position’s potential to impact the judiciary adversely. For “sensitive” positions, a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint check is required, and a credit check is optional depending on the duties of the position. For “high-sensitive” positions, an Office of Personnel Management (OPM) 10-year single-scope background investigation is required, as well as five-year updates. Five-year updates are also required for all employees in “high-sensitive” positions who had FBI background investigations prior to this policy being implemented. The policy applies to all newly hired employees. In addition, fingerprint checks are mandatory for contractors with duties that would otherwise be performed by judiciary employees, regardless of whether the court or federal public defender organization actually has employees working in such similar positions. Since some courts have staff interpreters and these positions have been designated as sensitive (thus requiring an FBI fingerprint check), all contract interpreters must also be fingerprinted. A complete background investigation is not required for contract court interpreters.

Recognizing the unique nature of contract court interpreters, rather than requiring a fingerprint check each time an interpreter is hired by a court, interpreters who perform contract work for the courts will be required to be fingerprinted every two years. Interpreters will be fingerprinted by the federal court. The fingerprint check will be processed by the FBI, with the results available for review by the appointing official, usually the clerk of the court. Access to the results will be strictly limited based on a need to know, and maintained confidentially.

Courts have received the processing procedures for background checks, which became effective May 16, 2005, and are working toward implementing the procedures locally. Some courts have decided to ask all interpreters and other contractors to come to the court during a certain time period to be fingerprinted; others are fingerprinting the interpreter the first time the interpreter provides services at the court. Once you have been fingerprinted at one court, you will not need to be fingerprinted at any other court for two years. During the four to six weeks it may take for successful completion of the fingerprint check process, you may continue to provide interpreter service for the courts. This process will not affect or slow down a court’s current process for payment of contract work. There is no charge to the court for this process, but any charges will not be reimbursed by the court.

For more information, please contact the Personnel Security Group at (202) 502-3396.

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Through the Lens: A Snapshot of ATA’s 46th Annual Conference
Seattle ATA Round Robin Tennis Results

Avid players
Winners: Alex Alvarez and Martha Haro Zuñiga
Runners-up: Arturo Valdivia and Marion Rifkind

Casual players
Winners: Stephen Frank and Michele L. Johnson
Runners-up: Michael Blumenthal and Lida Ouwehand (shared by Linda Pollack-Johnson)

Thanks to everyone who helped make this event such a success. See you next year in New Orleans!
Honors and Awards: Calls for Nominations and Applications

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.

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.

Continued on p.14
Attention Exhibitors

47th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association

New Orleans, Louisiana
November 1-4, 2006

Plan now to exhibit at the American Translators Association’s 47th Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 1-4, 2006. Exhibiting at the ATA Annual Conference offers the best opportunity to market your products and services face-to-face to more than 1,300 translators and interpreters in one location. Translators and interpreters are consumers of computer hardware and software, technical publications and reference books, office products, and much more. For additional information, please contact Matt Hicks, McNeill Group Inc.; mhicks@mcneill-group.com (215) 321-9662, ext. 19; Fax: (215) 321-9636.

New MA Degree Started Fall 2005

Master of Arts in Translation and Localization Management (MATLM)
The MATLM degree combines translation, localization technology, and business management. The program is offered as both a two-year (four semesters with 60 credits required) and a one-year degree - Advanced Entry (two semesters with 30-32 credits required).

Two New On-line Translation Workshops Offered from Monterey
Translation for Website Localization Wksp and Translation Project Management Wksp
Call 831-647-4170 for more information, dates, and how to register.

Fall 2005 T&I Training Conference Abstracts Available on WEB
Professional Translator and Interpreter Education in the 21st Century
To access conference abstracts, go to http://gsti.miis.edu/conference/welcom.htm.

Please log on to www.miis.edu for detailed information about the new MATLM degree program, new short-course translation workshops and Fall 2005 conference abstracts.
ATA 2006 Student Translation Award

In 2006, the American Translators Association will award a grant-in-aid to a student for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project.

The award, to be presented at ATA’s Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana (November 1-4, 2006), is open to any graduate or undergraduate student, or group of students, attending an accredited college or university in the United States. Preference will be given to students who have been or are currently enrolled in translator training programs. Students who are already published translators are ineligible. No individual student may submit more than one entry.

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

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

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


Award: $500, a certificate of recognition, and up to $500 toward expenses for attending the ATA Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana (November 1-4, 2006). One or more certificates may also be awarded to runners-up.

Please send your nominations and/or applications for any of the above awards and honors to:
Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Chair, ATA Honors & Awards Committee • American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590 • Alexandria, VA 22314 • Phone: 703-683-6100, Fax: 703-683-6122, E-mail: ata@atanet.org

2006 Harvie Jordan Scholarship

ATA Spanish Language Division

Purpose: To promote, encourage, and support leadership and professional development of translators and interpreters within ATA’s Spanish Language Division and to honor Harvie Jordan’s lifetime contributions as a language professional.

Description of Award: Paid registration to ATA’s Annual Conference or the SPD Annual Conference, as desired.

Eligibility: Limited to ATA Spanish Language Division members in good standing with two or more years of membership.

Deadline: September 18, 2006

Criteria for Selection:
1. Demonstrated leadership skills and career goals;
2. ATA Spanish Language Division involvement and commitment to service;
3. Special contributions to translation and interpretation.

Please limit your response to each of the selection criteria above to 100 words or less. Send your application via e-mail to AFTI at: afitorg@aol.com.

Applications will be numbered, de-identified, and distributed to the Scholarship Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will consist of members of ATA’s Spanish Language Division.

All selections are final. The number of scholarships available will depend on the funds available. Scholarship winners will be asked to contribute an article to Intercambios, the SPD newsletter, reporting on the conference or a session they attended.
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.afti.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).

American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation
JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation

This is a $2,500 non-renewable scholarship for the 2006-2007 academic year for students enrolled or planning to enroll in a degree program in scientific and technical translation or in interpreter training.

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

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

Application Process:
1. Application forms may be obtained by contacting the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation at: Columbia Plaza, Suite 101, 350 East Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, MI 49007; or by e-mail at aftiorg@aol.com.
2. Completed applications must be received by AFTI by June 1, 2006
3. A completed application consists of:
   a) Application cover sheet;
   b) Three letters of recommendation in a sealed envelope with recommender’s signature over the envelope flap;
   c) Essay;
   d) A copy of the applicant’s academic record with a copy of the major/minor or other program form, or a departmental statement of admission to the translation or interpretation program.

Award:
A national award committee will announce the name of the scholarship award winner by the end of August 2006. The committee’s decision is final. Disbursement of the award will occur at the beginning of the Fall Semester, 2006.
Christina Dolvin, a graduate student at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, is the 2005-2006 recipient of the JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation. Christina holds a bachelor’s degree in environmental sciences and hopes ultimately to obtain a position in which she will be able to use her translation and interpretation abilities in this area, ideally with an environmental nonprofit organization. To acquire some practical experience, Christina took a leave of absence from Monterey during the 2004-2005 school year to live in Panama.

During her stay, Christina lived and managed the Canopy Tower, an eco-lodge world famous for bird watching located in the middle of a national park near Panama City. Since the majority of guests to the Canopy Tower are English-speaking while the Panamanian staff speaks little English, this position required Christina to put her bilingual skills to good use. Christina was especially enthusiastic about the richness of the flora and fauna in the area and by the numerous conservation measures being taken at the Canopy Tower to minimize adverse environmental effects. For example, natural ventilation and fans are used instead of air conditioning, guests are asked to conserve water, showers are equipped with biodegradable soap dispensers, and bath water is routed to a special tank where it can be used to water the garden. Organic food waste is also composted and materials are recycled whenever possible.

While Christina was living in Panama, she had the opportunity to do some Spanish-to-English translation work for the Nature Conservancy. She reports being thrilled to work on a translation project dealing with the conservation of a biologically rich area, the Alto Chagres, because the Chagres River supplies 40% of the water used in the daily operation of the Canal locks.

We believe Christina has an excellent future ahead of her, and are pleased to assist her in achieving her goals with the JTG Scholarship.

About JTG, Inc.

Founded in 1995 by ATA Past President Muriel Jérôme-O’Keefe, JTG, Inc. is a language consultancy that supports homeland security, intelligence, and global business with cross-cultural communications. From threats to national security to global market penetration, JTG, Inc. provides an open channel to people and markets in Europe, Asia, North America, and other countries around the world. JTG has underwritten the AFTI scholarship since 2001.

JTG, Inc.
99 Canal Center Plaza, Suite G-10
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 548-7570 (voice)
www.jtg-inc.com

About AFTI

The American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) was established in 1997. AFTI’s primary charitable and educational activities consist of sponsorship and dissemination of research and education in the fields of translation and interpretation through research grants, scholarships, conferences, and commissions for the production of education materials, as well as through the establishment and maintenance of an archive for the collection of documents and artifacts related to translation and interpretation. For more information, contact AFTI President Peter Krawutschke at (269) 387-3212; fax: (269) 387-6333; peter.krawutschke@wmich.edu, or ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6100, ext. 3006; fax: (703) 683-6122; walter@atanet.org.
A pro bono project is an astonishingly significant undertaking that brings a large number of people together with the aim of doing their absolute best work for nothing more, or less, than a good cause.

For 2005, the outstanding cause was the Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA), an organization that brings together the best of three internationally renowned cancer-care institutions: Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, University of Washington’s UW Medicine, and Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center. The project itself consisted of the translation of two of the SCCA’s brochures—one on the institution itself and another on its billing policies—into Korean, Russian, and Spanish.

Many people devoted countless hours to the production of the project, and I must first thank immediate past ATA President Scott Brennan for entrusting me with its coordination. Jessica Cohen, of the Seattle conference organizing committee, deserves many thanks for finding such a worthy beneficiary of our services.

And now, my personal, heartfelt thanks to all those translators, editors, proofreaders, and desktop publishers who made incredible sacrifices and worked long hours on what ended up being quite a challenging project, which they completed on a pressing deadline.

The Korean translation was done by Nam Choi and Paul Yi, and was edited by Ji Eun Lee and ATA Board director Jacki Noh. Ji Eun Lee and Vania Haam, the administrators of ATA’s Korean Special Interest Group, proofread the translation. Special thanks to Ji Eun for all the work she did in coordinating numerous rounds of edits and for essentially managing the Korean project as a whole.

The Russian translation was done by Emma Garkavi, Eliana Pick, and Vadim Khazin, with the outstanding editorial and project management support of Slavic Languages Division Assistant Administrator Nora Favorov.

The Spanish translation was done by Martin Gaspar, Teresa Triana, Sarah Heller, and Rudy Heller.

And a very special thanks to NCS Enterprises, LLC of Carnegie, Pennsylvania, for donating their multilingual desktop publishing expertise to this project. I’d particularly like to recognize Charlene Nagy and Debbie Gregg of NCS, who handled the tight deadline with perfectionism, not to mention their coordination with the printer for ultimate delivery of the files to the SCCA with astonishing grace.

I also thank ATA Chapter and Division Relations Manager Mary David and ATA Executive Director Walter Bacak for their assistance with this project, and must again thank the Korean Special Interest Group, the Slavic Languages Division, and the Spanish Language Division for their generous, selfless, and immediate support and enthusiasm for this project. Finally, I thank all the agencies who provided such an overwhelmingly positive response to my e-mail request for desktop publishing support on this project. Although only one agency, NCS, was called upon to provide their services, the generosity of so many companies willing to reach out for a good cause embodies the essence of what these projects are all about.

Kirk Anderson
2005 Pro Bono Project Coordinator
paellero@aol.com

ATA Past Pro Bono Projects

In conjunction with ATA’s Annual Conference, a group of members have performed pro bono services for a non-profit organization based near the conference site.

Here are past projects.

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Thank you to all the volunteer translators, reviewers, and desktop publishers. If you are interested in offering your services for a pro bono project in conjunction with the ATA 47th Annual Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 1-4, 2006, please contact Walter Bacak at ATA, walter@atanet.org or 703-683-6100, ext. 3006.
Letter to the Editor

A Member’s Gratitude to the T&I Community: Hurricane Katrina

Dear friends and colleagues,

I would like to express my thanks to everyone who offered their aid to me in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and would like to send a special thank you to the members of the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association and the Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters, the former for welcoming me in Houston with open arms, and the latter for pulling together to offer me a great deal of assistance. The response that I received from so many of you, most of whom were previously unknown to me, was unexpected and inspiring. My ability to quickly get back on my translator’s feet was due in large part to your contributions of dictionaries, money, technology, and even office space and lodging. For those of you to whom I did not respond, please accept my apologies. I received a flood of e-mails in the weeks following the tragedy that befell my community, and was not able to answer each one personally.

It was not long ago that I decided to enter the field of translation, but I already feel a sense of community within this profession that I am very proud and privileged to be a part of. I hope that, perhaps at some future ATA function, I have the opportunity to personally thank all of you who have shown me such kindness, concern, and generosity.

With many kind regards,
Corey J. Roy
Houston, Texas

“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 or Saturday evening activity:
  “New York City by Night”
• 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!

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The recently released third edition of the ATA Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey should prove to be an invaluable benchmarking tool for nearly everyone in or affiliated with the translation and interpreting profession.

The survey was compiled, tabulated, and prepared for ATA by Industry Insights, Inc., a professional research and consulting firm that provides management and marketing services to dealer organizations, individual membership organizations, and trade professional associations and their members. The company specializes in compensation and benefits studies, industry operating surveys, member needs studies, educational programs, and customized research activities.

An e-mail was distributed to approximately 8,200 ATA members and non-members in May 2005 containing a link to an online questionnaire. In total, 1,509 completed the questionnaire, and useable survey forms were submitted directly to Industry Insights, Inc. This represents a response rate of 18%. Forms received after the final deadline and questionnaires with incomplete information were not included.

Upon receipt, all data were checked both manually and by a specially designed computer editing procedure. Strict confidence of survey responses was maintained throughout the course of the project. Final results were tabulated, and the report was completed in October 2005. The survey data uses information as of December 31, 2004.

The seven employment classifications analyzed in this report include: full-time independent contractors; part-time independent contractors; full-time in-house private sector personnel; part-time in-house private sector personnel; company owners; educators; and government employees. For detailed analysis, responses were broken down by geographic region, education, years of employment, primary language combination, ATA membership status, and ATA certification status. Some of the key findings of the report follow.

**Respondent Demographics.** Survey respondents had varying backgrounds and experience. As shown in Figure 1, two-thirds were female and nearly 40% were born in the U.S., 75% had a bachelor’s or master’s degree, and nearly two-thirds had 15 years or less of employment in translation and interpreting.

![Figure 1: Respondent Demographics* By Percentage](image)

**Income Varied by Employment Classification.** As shown in Figure 2, T&I company owners reported the highest gross income at $59,230, slightly ahead of the Full-time Inhouse Private Sector ($58,147), Government Employee ($54,306), and Full-time Independent Contractor ($54,205). The lowest income was reported by the Part-time In-house Private Sector, at $18,083.

**U.S. Based Respondents Earned More Than Non-U.S. Based.** For example, Full-Time Independent Contractors based in the U.S. earned an average gross 2004 income from translation and interpreting of $54,207, compared to only $47,587 for those based outside the U.S. (see Figure 3).

**ATA Certification Counts.** Respondents who were ATA-certified earned a higher gross income in 2004 than those who were not ATA-certified. Using the Full-Time Independent Contractor as an example, Figure 4 shows the impact ATA certification had on gross income. Those with ATA certification earned 12% more than their non-certified counterparts ($56,294 vs. $50,211).

**Rates Per Word and Hourly Rates.** At an average of $0.18 per word, the language combinations commanding the highest rate per word were English-to-Arabic, Danish-to-English, and Finnish-to-English. At an average of $0.11 per word, the language...
The highest average hourly rates by language combination were Japanese-to-English ($67.09), and English-to-Japanese ($62.27).

**Trends.** More than half of the respondents reported that their 2004 gross income from translation and interpreting increased compared to 2003. One-quarter reported no change in income, while 18% reported a decline.

**Education and Experience.** Three out of four respondents had achieved either a master’s degree (42%) or a bachelor’s degree (32%). Nearly one-fifth reported having a degree in translation, while nearly 11% reported having a degree in interpreting. One-third reported having a non-degree certification in translation, while 26% reported having a non-degree certification in interpreting. Other credentials reported include court certification (5%), passing the State Department exam (8%), and passing the UN exam (1%).

**Areas of Specialization.** The most common areas of specialization reported were Law (50%), Business/Finance (49%), Medicine (47%), and Industry and Technology (36%). Non-common areas of specialization included Pure Sciences (9%), Natural Sciences (14%), and Entertainment (17%).

**Translation Speed.** The average respondent reported a translation speed of 506 target words per hour. Average translation speeds ranged from 443 to 569, depending on the employment classification.

**Technology Tools Used.** The most common technology tools used were word processing applications (90%), translation memory tools (36%), desktop publishing software (29%), and terminology management software (26%).

**Ordering Information.** ATA’s 48-page *Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey* presents the survey results in much greater detail than is possible in this summary article. The complete report includes charts...
Did you know that ...  
the translators who responded to ATA’s *Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey* charged an average of $0.18 per word and that the language combinations commanding the highest rate per word were English-to-Arabic, Danish-to-English, and Finnish-to-English.

Want to know more?  
The full report is available to ATA members for $45 and non-members for $60. Order today!

Complete the form below and fax it to ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6122.

You can also order by mail, phone or e-mail—ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 683-6100; e-mail: ata@atanet.org.

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Company/Organization

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ATA’s Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey

$45 (for ATA members)  
$60 (for non-members)

American Translators Association

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Alexandria  
Virginia  
22314

703.683.6100  
703.683.6122 Fax
Did you know that it was once illegal to teach German in Nebraska? After the Great War of 1914-17, or World War I as we now call it, hostility to the recent enemy resulted in state laws that forbade instruction in German in the public schools. Those laws didn’t last long—a challenge to the Supreme Court overturned them, resulting in freedom of subject for public school curricula. We’ve been able to teach any language we choose ever since.

The decade of the language instruction laws also saw federal statutes with far longer effect. From 1924 until 1965, immigration visas to the U.S. were allocated by country of origin, according to a quota system based on the proportion of residents in this country under the 1890 census. This meant that lots of visas were available for people coming from the British Isles or Scandinavia, but very few for those from Asia. The intent was to allow immigration on a scale designed to preserve homogeneity in the population of the U.S.; the effect was highly restrictive.

The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 changed everything. That law abolished national origin quotas, apportioned immigration visas on the basis of professional skills, and broadened the category of family ties. Not only spouses and minor children, but brothers and sisters of U.S. citizens, and their families, became eligible to move to the U.S. as permanent residents and become citizens.

When I took up my post as a consular officer in Lahore, Pakistan in 1972, the effects of the 1965 act were already being felt. We processed dozens of immigrant visas per year, where they had been a rarity only a few years earlier. That number was still a trickle, though, compared to the current figures. As I write this, residents from Pakistan, India, and other countries of South Asia are an integral part of the U.S. social fabric. The Pakistan Association of Greater Seattle is deeply involved in earthquake relief. The Wing Luke Museum has just opened a special exhibit on Sikhs in the Pacific Northwest. The movies “Bend It Like Beckham” and “Bride and Prejudice” are commercial successes, while my son’s college has a “Desi Club” to help preserve South Asian culture and inform others about it.

I believe that the current flowering of language issues in our society derives in large part from the 1965 act.

“…I hope that many ATA members will value the opportunity to help spread the word about our little-understood but essential career…”

As someone born into a family of six, I know the power that large families exercise in preserving culture and keeping individuals connected. For most of the world’s population “sibling loyalty” plays a much larger role than “sibling rivalry.” Family ties have created major changes in the cultural and ethnic makeup of our country, and the trend will only continue.

All of us in ATA are familiar with the cultural and societal challenges that this change in our country’s population patterns has brought about. It’s been my privilege, over the last three years, to be involved in an educational project that is making a difference to teenage children of non-English-speaking families seeking their way in life. Over 30% of the students in the Highline Public Schools (HPS), just south of Seattle, come from families where a language other than English is spoken. The Translation and Interpretation Institute at Bellevue Community College, founded by ATA’s own Courtney Searls-Ridge and Susana Stettri Sawrey, has partnered with the HPS to develop an innovative program training high school students in the fundamentals of interpreting. Students in these classes learn the necessary introductory skills, practice and strengthen both their languages, and explore the various career paths that may be open to them as bilingual adults. Those who are qualified and motivated may receive additional training as student interpreters, volunteering in carefully selected school settings where their level of ability is matched with the need.

We have developed a series of short video presentations on bilingual career options as part of this program. ATA was generous enough to sponsor the video on the career of a “freelance translator.” This video profiling ATA member Jessica Cohen was shown during the 2004 ATA Annual Conference in Toronto. It is now available to ATA members at a significant discount, in appreciation for our sponsorship. If you would like to show your own siblings,
and tables that provide a detailed profile of each of the seven employment classifications mentioned in this article.

The full report is available to ATA members for $45 and non-members for $60. Please call or write ATA to order your copy: ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 683-6100; fax (703) 683-6122, e-mail: ata@atanet.org.

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Summary of ATA’s Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey
Continued from p. 20

Note: This information does not constitute legal advice or opinion. ATA encourages all translators to make their own independent business decisions and avoid all activities that might be considered anticompetitive or in violation of the antitrust laws, such as agreements on prices or fees or agreements to refuse to do business with any company. The compilation and reporting of survey data by ATA was conducted in compliance with all applicable laws, including antitrust laws.

How to Order

Go to www.speakyourlanguages.com and use discount code 4CFJG2Y6 to obtain the Freelance Translator video for $20, nearly 60% off the regular price. This is a special discount for ATA members only. Proceeds from video sales are used to fund programs for the benefit of bilingual students.

• The website includes streaming video to give an excerpt on each of the seven topics:
  • Court interpreter (Spanish)
  • Freelance translator (Hebrew)
  • In-house translator for game-card company Wizards of the Coast (Japanese & German)
  • International baseball scout (Japanese)
  • Nonprofit promoter of international trade (Russian)
  • Counselor aiding refugees and immigrants (Tagalog and Khmer)
  • Police officer who became city mayor (Chinese)

Members of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) may obtain the court interpreter video for a similar discount using a different code available from NAJIT, which sponsored that video.

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 list-serv 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.

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As those who know me will attest, I love to socialize. However, being a translator, another thing I love, is a rather solitary profession. The closest ATA chapter, the Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS), meets in Seattle. Although NOTIS does attempt to reach out to its Oregon constituents, its geographic scope is just too broad to hold frequent events all over the Pacific Northwest. In 2002 I started musing about how I could periodically escape from my computer, meet other local language professionals, and exchange ideas about our profession. Having worked at a consulting firm, I borrowed an idea from my corporate colleagues: many computer experts and business people meet monthly to network over drinks in a casual environment.

So in October 2002, four translators met for drinks and a game of French Scrabble at the Rogue Ales Public House in Portland, Oregon. During this “launch” meeting of what would become the Associated Linguists of Oregon (ALO), we chatted about what we’d like to see happen, and there was genuine interest in setting up our own local group. The next month, I compiled a list of every Oregon translator, interpreter, or agency I could find from the NOTIS and ATA directories, phone book, my networking contacts, and other resources. I sent an e-mail inviting all those people to a networking event at a restaurant, and about eight people showed up. This went on for several months. Each time the gathering around the table got larger, and I collected more e-mail addresses to add to my list. Finally, after we had a crowded and noisy table of approximately 20 people, someone proposed that we meet in a quieter venue than a restaurant.

Realizing that ALO needed a centrally located meeting place, ALO board member Doug Foran, who works part-time at a Portland church, obtained for us a regular and free meeting room at that church. The only open time slot available at the parish hall was on Tuesday evenings, so we grabbed it. Now, three years later, we’re keeping our minds open to possible venues that are available on weekends or that are located further south. Such locations would make it easier for translators and interpreters to participate from other parts of our topographically diverse state.

“…ALO has burgeoned from four members to roughly 200 members in less than three years!”

Early on, the association’s founding members also realized that we needed to come up with a name for our growing group—a name that would include translators and interpreters and other language professionals. Many ideas were proposed, but a final vote during our fourth gathering settled upon the Associated Linguists of Oregon, an apt choice since Webster’s says a “linguist” is someone who is fond of or proficient at languages. The welcoming acronym “ALO” (a homonym for the French “allô,” Spanish “alô,” German “hallo,” etc.) also charmed members debating and voting on the new name.

Over the ensuing years, ALO has grown into a welcoming and educational organization for translators, interpreters, and language professionals. The group has burgeoned from four members to roughly 200 members in less than three years!

I firmly believe that every language professional participating in ALO has both something to contribute and something to learn. If we can all contribute a little something—a contact who makes an intriguing speaker, a tidbit about computer tools or dictionary resources, a presentation on public relations—we will continue to learn and thus improve our own businesses and each other’s, together strengthening the whole industry.

At every meeting I remind attendees that I’m constantly seeking volunteer speakers or topic ideas for roundtable discussions. You really don’t have to search far to come up with some really appealing topics. Our monthly meetings have covered hot topics like marketing, ethics, and technology. Our guest speakers have included a lawyer, an accountant, a Web developer, and a conference interpreter. We have joined forces with other regional translator/interpreter organizations, especially NOTIS and the Oregon Judicial Department, to present the experiences of diplomatic interpreter Harry Obst and “A Translator’s Tool Box for the 21st Century” by ALO (and ATA) member Jost Zetzsche.

Here are some great ideas that have worked for ALO and that you can reuse in your local community group:

1. Contact the Small Business Administration (www.sba.gov) or SCORE (retired executives, www.score.org) for a speaker to talk about business structures and starting a small business (this is a free service);

2. Ask your accountant to talk about tax and record-keeping issues that small businesses/sole proprietors face (remind your accountant that this is a way to market his/her business);
3. Present anything related to marketing;

4. Get group members to share their expertise, either individually or as part of a discussion panel (e.g., telephone interpreting, technology, project management, ethics).

So far, ALO has distinguished itself from other organizations in that we do not ask for monetary contributions, just active participation. And yet, I am constantly amazed at how much we have accomplished with just the goodwill and enthusiasm of our members.

Our latest idea, a job fair for the language industry, was suggested by ALO board member Ines Bojlesen. This exciting event was held on International Translators Day 2005 (September 30, 2005). The ALO board (Ines Bojlesen, Doug Foran, Marcello Napolitano, Mark Oliver, and myself) invited virtually every company in Oregon and Vancouver (Washington) that frequently hires translators or interpreters to attend as exhibitors. Twenty-two local companies sent representatives. More than 100 local translator/interpreter professionals and students attended and marketed their services. This enthusiastic response exceeded all of our wildest expectations. Even the translation agencies seemed awed by the number of language professionals right here in Oregon. I hope this awe turns into a practical realization: “Why send the work across the country or overseas when the talent is literally on our doorsteps?”

At first, the idea of hosting a job fair seemed daunting—an insurmountable hurdle for a few translators to tackle alone. By dividing the planning process into manageable tasks among a handful of volunteers, what seemed overwhelming quickly became a concrete and successful reality. For example, one person took charge of reserving the venue, another sent press releases to regional and ethnic newspapers, a third coordinated with the caterer, etc. I won’t bore you with all of the planning details, but I would like to publicly thank Ines, Doug, Marcello, Mark, and Cristina Castro for their integral roles in planning ALO’s first job fair. I believe the success of this and other ALO events demonstrates a definitive need for an organization like ALO within the Oregon community.

I also appreciate all the individuals and organization leaders, including leading ATA members, with whom I have exchanged ideas and efforts over the last three years. Without your encouragement and insights, ALO would not be spreading its wings quite so far and the magnitude of Oregon’s translation/interpreting industry would still be a hidden secret.

Many nonprofit organizations claim that their reliance on volunteers limits their abilities to hold complex or frequent events. This may be true to some degree, but by taking many small steps and persevering, you can accomplish almost anything you set your mind to. You’d be surprised how easy some complicated things turn out to be. I have every expectation that ALO will continue to grow and flourish, and I can’t wait to see what surprises are in store next month... Will you join us?

ALO’s discussion list can be found at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/alo-oregon.

From the Executive Director
Continued from p. 8

in San Francisco, California, in 1997 with 1,725 attendees.) If you were unable to attend the conference, all is not lost. New this year, most of the conference sessions were recorded and are available on DVD-ROM. (For more information, please see page 63.) The DVD also includes the presenters’ PowerPoint presentations and many of their handouts.

For another look back at the conference, be sure to check out ATA’s website for dozens of conference photos. To view the photos, please go to www.atanet.org/conference/conference_photo.htm.

2006 ATA Annual Conference. It is not too early to consider submitting a proposal for ATA’s 47th Annual Conference, November 1-4, 2006 in New Orleans, Louisiana. You can submit your proposal online at www.atanet.org/conf2006/abstract_online.htm.

Looking ahead for 2006, please renew your ATA membership if you have not already done so. There are plenty of exciting changes planned for this year. I look forward to sharing them with you.

Happy New Year!
The Language Access Act of Washington, DC

By Maribeth Bandas

The Language Access Act was passed by Washington, DC’s City Council in April 2004. The Act stipulates equal access to municipal programs and services for District of Columbia residents with limited or no English proficiency. “For purposes of this act, the term: (1) ‘Access or participate’ means to be informed of, participate in, and benefit from public services, programs, and activities offered by a covered entity at a level equal to English proficient individuals.” In contrast, under the Federal Guidance regarding Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, “recipients of Federal financial assistance have a responsibility to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency (LEP).” To achieve the goal of providing the District of Columbia’s LEP population with equal access to government services, the Language Access Act of 2004 lays out a phased implementation plan to bring all Washington, DC government agencies into compliance with its provisions by 2007. The plan is currently in its third phase, which began October 1, 2005.

Immigrant Populations in Washington, DC

The accelerated growth of non-English-speaking immigrant populations in Washington, DC made legislation governing their rights to services necessary. In a scant 10 years, from 1990 to 2000, these populations had grown by 80%. The proportion of LEP residents grew from 5% to 7% in the District of Columbia during this period. As of July 2003, the District of Columbia’s Office of Planning reported an overall population of 564,326. The Latino population stands at approximately 10%, with 53,289 residents, and Asian and Pacific Island residents number 18,108, or approximately 3% of the city’s population.

The Impetus Behind the Language Access Act

The impetus for gathering support and drafting this legislation came from the Language Access Coalition, formed in 2002 and comprised of community social services and legal aid organizations. The community organizations faced various obstacles attending to their clients, such as difficulties enrolling clients in public benefits programs, a lack of bilingual personnel within government agencies, and urgent issues surrounding the capacity and training of interpreters. The absence of bilingual employees in government agencies and readily available community interpreters resulted in these organizations having to send their own bilingual staff to interpret for clients, without compensation from the client or the government agency charged with providing the service.

These organizations’ advocacy efforts culminated in the June 2002 Washington, DC City Council Oversight Hearing, which addressed the “Review of the Spanish Translation Law.” During this hearing, community groups testified that they were frustrated when trying to use the resources available through these government agencies because of a lack of adequate language support services for LEP individuals. An important result of the hearing was the determination that Spanish was not the only language that should be covered in legislation pertaining to equal access by all to government services. Two years later, the Language Access Act stipulated that: “District of Columbia government programs, departments, and services with major public contact assess the need for, and offer, oral language services; provide written translations of documents into any non-English language spoken by a limited- or no-English-proficient population that constitutes 3% or 500 individuals, whichever is less, of the population served or encountered, or likely to be served or encountered…” (Sec. 1). Ultimately no one language is stipulated in the Act, affording the same protection of the law to future waves of immigrants to the nation’s capital. Currently, the languages most represented are Amharic, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), French, Korean, Vietnamese, and Spanish.

Two more hearings were held in preparation for consideration by the Council’s Committee of the Whole to ratify the Act: in November 2002, an Oversight Hearing regarding Washington, DC’s compliance with Title VI; and in April of 2003, a special hearing to assess the fiscal impact of the Language Access Act. During this process, the advocates for the Act realized that their efforts would fail if budgetary issues were
not resolved. During the April 2003 hearing, the Coalition brought in experts from the University of Maryland and the DC Fiscal Policy Institute to address budget issues that were jeopardizing passage of the Act. One of the major costs identified was the hiring of new government employees trained to provide interpretation services. The compromise reached was to hire bilingual employees for the front-line service positions that became vacant. Regarding public contact personnel, the law reads: “To the extent that a covered entity requires additional personnel to meet its requirement to provide oral language services based on the determination set forth in this section, the covered entity shall hire bilingual personnel into existing budgeted vacant public contact positions” (Sec. 3 [d]).

Passage and Implementation

The Language Access Act passed, and in April of 2004 implementation of the law began. Funding was established at $300,000 to recruit a language access director and a staff assistant, and to translate documents that are disseminated to the public. The language access director and staff assistant positions were filled by employees of the Office of Human Rights, the agency required by the Act to, “coordinate and supervise District of Columbia government programs, departments, and services in complying with the provisions of this act” (Sec.1). In fiscal year 2004, the Office of Human Rights funded the translation of 255 vital documents for the first eight government agencies designated by the Act, at a cost of $190,629. The Act defines vital documents as, “applications, notices, complaint forms, legal contracts, and outreach materials” (Sec. 2 [7]).

At the time, the Office of Contracting and Procurement had three translation companies on the contracting schedule. The language access director, in consultation with the Executive Office of the Mayor on Latino Affairs and the Executive Office of the Mayor on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, set up a quality control system to monitor the work of the three translation companies. Unfortunately, the quality of the translations into Asian languages and Amharic provided by all three companies was deficient. One of the companies did not comply with the Statement of Work governing the contract, which stipulates that if a company’s translations are found deficient, the company will redo the work, free of charge. Another stipulation is that if a company is found to produce translations of unacceptable quality in three rounds of quality control sampling, after a warning the second time, that company will be removed from the contracting list of vendors for the Washington, DC government.

There are no District of Columbia government standards for the provision of oral language services. The Washington, DC Superior Court was written out of the law, the reasoning being that compliance with the Language Access Act would create added administrative burdens to the courts. Currently, the District of Columbia’s Superior Court has an Office of Court Interpreting Services that requires all interpreters to hold federal court interpreter certification. This is a necessary step in the direction of formalizing judicial court interpreter standards. However, the Office of Court Interpreting Services is not able to afford membership in the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) because of the Superior Court’s dependence on federal funding for all of its operations. The District of Columbia Superior Court’s inability to avail itself of support from the NCSC is a matter that must be seriously addressed. The Language Access Act may be a tool to advocate for more solid support of language services in the District of Columbia’s Superior Court.

Bilingual Employees

On a positive note, a tremendous community resource of bilingual individuals has emerged with the increase of immigrant populations over the last 15 years. In many cases, the children of recent immigrants are fully bilingual. The District of Columbia government’s need for bilingual employees affords this group an opportunity to be compensated for an important skill. To foster this resource, for two years the Office on Latino Affairs funded a community interpreter training program geared toward supplying the culturally competent interpreters needed to guide non-English-speaking residents through the often confusing and intimidating panoply of District of Columbia social services. This experiment is currently undergoing modification so that it may become even stronger and forge a closer link to government services.

The Office of Personnel has established a separate category for bilingual positions in its online database of employment opportunities in the District of Columbia government. This allows people with the necessary bilingual proficiency to go directly to the site and apply for positions that require their language abilities.

As a translator for the Mayor’s Office on Latino Affairs, I put forward a proposal to establish an assessment tool to determine and categorize the language skills of current and future bilingual employees, with the support of the Office of Human Resources.
Rights and Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs. The assessment will be administered by the Office of Personnel. The proposal advocates for implementing a scaled pay differential for bilingual employees linked to several categories of proficiency. The proposal recommends establishing training within the Center for Workforce Development, which is under the Office of Personnel, providing courses in improving written and oral workplace skills in a variety of languages. This would mean that bilingual employees could aspire to a higher level of pay by improving their proficiency, and that their employer would encourage their aspiration through training. As an incentive, the director of the Office on Latino Affairs offered to fund a pilot project that would make a course in community interpreting available to employees whose bilingual proficiency in Spanish reaches the level needed for such training, and who would want to acquire this type of qualification. This course would be given through the Center for Workforce Development.

Translation Services
Currently, there are 10 translation companies on the Washington, DC Office of Contracting and Procurement schedule. The language access director, the Office on Latino Affairs, and the Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs are in the process of creating a template to guide and report quality control findings. The lack of general standards for translators in the industry led us to require that translation companies contracting with the District of Columbia government provide proof that their translators hold certification—either through ATA certification, a university program, U.S. State Department qualification, or a similar educational venue. We initially sought to bring rigor and accountability to the Washington, DC government’s quality control process by modeling our template on ATA’s certification exam grading standards. In order to understand grading criteria more fully we met with an ATA member with extensive experience in grading standards whose suggestions and explanation of the criteria for grading ATA certification exams proved very valuable to us. After this meeting we decided that a formal standard for the review of translations in government must address issues of cultural competence in grammar, syntax and tone, beyond the published standards for ATA certification. We are grateful for the support and guidance we received from an ATA member with expertise in grading. Thanks to the enthusiastic support of ATA, the District of Columbia’s standards for the procurement and review of translations will be rigorous, and may well serve as a model that other municipal and state governments can follow.

Opportunities
The Language Access Act affords bilingual individuals employment opportunities by requiring that newly vacant positions in the District of Columbia government be filled by bilingual employees. Their levels of proficiency will be enhanced within the government system with an assessment, a pay differential, and coursework to improve their skills. Individuals with linguistic aptitude and the desire to help the community can be qualified as community interpreters, thereby helping to address the lack of bilingual services in the government. Advocates for the Language Access Act can engage in the discussion to improve the support for language services within the District of Columbia Superior Court system. With help from members of ATA, much needed standards are being set to guide contracting translation agencies and assess the quality of their work.

I believe collaboration between ATA and the government of the District of Columbia is paramount to establishing rigorous standards for public entities. As an ATA member, I strongly suggest that the association create a committee on government to study the different municipal and state standards and procedures regarding translation and interpretation. The knowledge and authority held by ATA are needed to create formal systems of qualification and review of translations that can be adopted by governments nationwide.

Notes

Visit us on the web at www.atanet.org
Facts About Unemployment Insurance

By Ann M. Morris

Unemployment insurance is one of the most misunderstood services available. For many, the application process seems complex, and this is particularly true for those who speak limited English. For this reason, it is very important for those who work with the unemployed to remember that information on the procedures associated with applying for unemployment benefits must be explained and understood clearly in order to ease the stress of the situation for the client. Clear communication will also serve to lighten the workload for the unemployment service agents. Using Iowa as an example, the following will provide a brief explanation of unemployment insurance benefits and the various functions and qualifications involved.

Each state has its own laws and procedures for handling unemployment insurance benefits and eligibility, but most states have several things in common. Here are some facts to keep in mind:

• Employers pay unemployment taxes quarterly on employee wages.
• Employees need to qualify monetarily for benefits.
• Employees do not contribute anything to unemployment.
• Unemployment benefits are not a right.
• Benefits are taxable, as they are considered income.

When filing for unemployment benefits, the person will need to check with the local state office to find out if there are any special requirements. To make things easier, many states now have call centers where claimants may apply by phone or online. In the case of a mass layoff, local workforce agents may visit the place of employment to take mass unemployment claims. Many employers also now have the capability of filing online on behalf of their employees.

It is necessary to be either a U.S. citizen or a legally documented worker or resident in order to receive unemployment benefits. To qualify, claimants must be able to prove that they are out of work due to no fault of their own. Unless the reason for unemployment is a temporary layoff or the claimant has received approval for training or education, the claimant must be actively seeking employment. Claimants must consider compatible job offers, and can be disqualified from receiving benefits if appropriate offers are refused. Claimants must report any pensions they receive, since certain pensions can affect the amount of unemployment benefits allowed weekly. Claimants must report any payroll wages earned, including vacation pay and severance and/or holiday pay. All of these can affect the amount of benefits paid. In Iowa, applicants are allowed to claim any dependents that they would normally list on their income tax. Doing this will actually raise the amount of their benefits. Claimants are also allowed to have federal and state income taxes withheld from benefits to help lower the amount of their tax liability at the end of the year.

Claimants must report the above information regularly to their state workforce agency in accordance with that state’s policy. In many states, weekly reporting is required. In Iowa, this information is reported via the Interactive Voice Response system. This is an automated system that allows claimants to report their weekly unemployment activity and status by using a touch-tone phone. The system is available in English and Spanish. Weekly reporting is necessary, as qualifying criteria may vary from week to week.

Each state has its own qualification requirements and formulas for calculating weekly benefit amounts, as well as its own re-qualification procedures if a claimant has been previously denied benefits. The wages used to calculate benefits can include wages reported from other states, the federal government, and the military. In Iowa, a special request must be filed in order to include this type of wage information on a claim. Self-employment income is only applicable if the employer pays him/herself wages and pays unemployment insurance on those wages.

The important thing for claimants to understand is that in addition to filing a claim in the state where they physically reside, they also need to file a claim with any states where they earn money. For example, someone living in California who has “base period” wages in Iowa must file with Iowa and California. Once this is done, the wages can be combined to allow a higher benefit for the claimant.

In Iowa, claimants receive a monetary statement in the mail that advises them of the wages and employers included in the period used to calculate their benefit amounts. This is not a confirmation of eligibility. The statement is for their knowledge and for the purpose of advising the Iowa Workforce Development agency if the wage information being reported...
is incorrect. These statements enable the agency to verify all information with claimants in order to correct any problems that may affect their benefits.

When an unemployment claim is filed in Iowa, there is a period when employers from prior quarters (frequently the first 12 months of the most current 18), plus the most recent employer, are notified of the claim. An employee who reports that he/she has either quit or been fired from a position will automatically be scheduled for a fact-finding interview, where an Iowa Workforce interviewer gathers information from the employer and the employee in order to determine if the claimant is legally eligible for benefits. In other cases, employers are given the opportunity to protest their liability for the amount of the claim or the claimant’s eligibility. A claimant can be eligible for benefits without an employer being liable for payment. In Iowa, fraud occurs when an undocumented claimant actually files for and receives unemployment benefits. Any benefits received dishonestly constitute fraud, and recovery of those benefits can be pursued through prosecution by state laws.

When a decision is made regarding an employee’s eligibility, both the employee and the employer have the right to appeal that decision if they do not feel it is correct or fair. There is a formal appeals process that includes subsequent interviews involving administrative law judges who have the power to affirm or reverse the original decision.

Unemployment benefits can be paid by direct deposit or check. Those paid by check are delivered via the U.S. Postal Service and cannot be forwarded. In Iowa, undeliverable checks are returned to the Unemployment Service Center. It is the client’s responsibility to maintain current contact information with the Iowa Workforce agency. If a claimant does not receive a check, loses it, or reports it stolen, there are procedures to stop payment on the first check and issue another, or to sign affidavits of forgery and proceed with the subsequent issuance of a new check.

If a claimant has been receiving benefits for any reason and it is determined that those benefits have been paid in error, the claimant will be required to repay the amount given. This is called an overpayment. Overpayment could result from an appeal reversal or due to the claimant’s failure to report severance or vacation pay or any deductible pay that would reduce the amount of benefits they receive. Claimants could also be required to pay back benefits if they stated their ability to work, but are unable to do so when offered a position.

In Iowa, state information is shared with several agencies. Child support may be withheld from unemployment benefits. Lottery winnings and state income tax may be accessed to help offset overpayments. Employment information is made accessible to the Unemployment Division so they can track claimants who have become employed and are earning wages. These cooperating systems are beneficial to the Iowa Workforce agency and help keep the claimant accountable.

As can be seen from the information provided here, the unemployment benefits system in the U.S. is quite technical and difficult to understand. This is especially true for non-native English speakers. As such, it is important for those translating or interpreting for a person with limited English language skills to be aware of the different factors, such as cultural background, that can affect how well a person understands the unemployment process. Adequately communicating the unemployment system’s procedures and the claimant’s responsibilities is crucial. States that have bilingual representatives offer a distinct advantage for their clientele. For example, Iowa has access to a telephone interpreting line to conference with claimants, and there are New Iowan Centers that help new residents with many services, including translation and interpretation. As Spanish is the second most common language spoken in Iowa, the Facts about Unemployment Insurance Guide (updated through 2004) has been translated into Spanish. For added convenience, this guide is also available online at www.iowaworkforce.org/ui/handbook.htm.

For more information on unemployment procedures for a particular state, visit http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/map.asp (just click on the state you are interested in).
Note: The information in this article 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 advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA.

Over the past few issues, we’ve taken a look at the ways a freelance translator can reduce his or her income tax by deducting business expenses. The following is a sample income tax return for Mary Q. Translator for 2004 that demonstrates some of the deductions she might take on her income tax return and how she does it.

Bottom Line:
$15,302: Mary’s Total Tax without deducting her business expenses.
$10,122: Mary’s Total Tax when she deducts her business expenses.
$5,180: Savings by deducting business expenses.

Let’s see how she reduced her taxes by one-third.

Mary Q. Translator
• Freelance translator, ATA-certified (Spanish-to-English). Member of ATA and the Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA).
• Specializing in the translation of business matters, especially those relating to the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).
• B.S. in Spanish, M.B.A. focusing on Latin America.
• 30-year-old living in Kansas City, Missouri. Single with no children.

• She rents an apartment by herself, and 15% of this space is dedicated to her home office that she uses exclusively and regularly as her primary place of business.

Mary is dynamic and works all the time. She has established a good relationship with four translation agencies in Kansas City, Missouri, and does work mainly for them. The Mexican Consulate General in Kansas City and the international department of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce are among those who recommend Mary highly. These recommendations have lead to additional smaller translation jobs.

Income
Since all the translation agencies paid Mary over $600 in 2004, each had to issue her a Form 1099 early in 2005 and send a copy to the IRS declaring how much they had paid. Each of the smaller jobs was under $600, so the clients did not have to issue Mary a 1099. Mary is fastidious and keeps neat business financial records using Quicken. Her income in 2004 was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency A Form 1099</th>
<th>$10,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency B Form 1099</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency C Form 1099</td>
<td>$16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency D Form 1099</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller job totals:</td>
<td>$ 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deductible Expenses
The following are various expenses Mary had throughout the year which she will deduct on her taxes.

Assets to Depreciate
• New computer and printer she bought on January 1, 2004 for her business. She uses them exclusively and regularly for business. She likes to keep business and personal things separate, and has an older notebook computer she uses to surf the Web and for personal e-mail. She has a wireless network, so she can use her personal computer anywhere in the apartment. Amount: $1,900.

• New translation software she bought on January 1, 2004 for her business. Amount: $900.

• New dictionaries and other reference documents she bought throughout the year for her business. Amount: $1,000.


• Mary moved some furniture she owns from her living room to her office on January 1, 2004, because this setup works best for her concentration. The market value of these two pieces of used furniture is $100. She originally bought these items in 1999 for $500.

Items to Deduct
• New supplies she bought throughout the year for her business. Amount: $500.


...A smart tax preparer would interview Mary about her business to find out what deductions she might be able to make...
2004 Tax Year: Mary Q. Translator Continued

• She visits the four translation agencies each week during 50 weeks of the year. She uses a logbook to document the mileage from these trips, as required by the IRS. The round-trip between her apartment and:
  — Agency A: 10 miles;
  — Agency B: 15 miles;
  — Agency C: 20 miles;
  — Agency D: 15 miles.

• She attended ATA’s Annual Conference. The related costs were:
  — Registration: $280;
  — Airfare: $250;
  — Shared hotel room: $300;
  — Meals: $150 (these will be deductible at 50%);
  — Local transportation: $75;
  — Airport parking: $30;
  — Round-trip mileage to the airport: 45 miles;
  — Sightseeing: $50 (not deductible!).

• She attended the annual workshop of the Mid-America Chapter of ATA (MICATA). The related costs were:
  — Registration: $75;
  — Round-trip mileage: 150 miles;
  — Shared hotel room: $50;
  — Meals: $30 (these will be deductible at 50%).

• She is a member of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and is listed in its directory as a translator. Annual membership: $100.

• ATA annual membership in 2004: $180 (cost includes membership in several divisions); Membership in ATA’s Spanish Language Division: $15.

• MICATA annual membership: $15.

• Website she developed to advertise her translation services. Monthly Web hosting fee: $12 x 12 months = $144.

• Business cards: $30.

• She took a course on NAFTA at Johnson County Community College. Costs were:
  — Tuition: $150;
  — Books bought at campus bookstore: $100;
  — Round-trip mileage: 10 miles x 8 classes = 80 miles.

• Apartment-related expenses:
  — Rent: $900/month;
  — Monthly utilities on level-payment plan: $150/month x 12 = $1,800;
  — Renter’s insurance: $300/year;
  — Business phone/fax line: $25/month x 12 months = $300.

• Health insurance: $250/month x 12 months = $3,000.

• She owns a 2003 Toyota Camry. The odometer reading on January 1 was 5,123, and 10,987 on December 31, 2004:
  — 10,987 – 5,123 = 5,864 total mileage in a year;
  — Business mileage is 3,280 miles;
  — Personal mileage is 5,864 – 3,280 = 2,584;
  — No commuting mileage because she does not work in an office.

• She paid personal property tax in 2004 to Jackson County on her Camry. Amount: $600.

Non-Deductible Expenses

• Internet service: $45/month x 12 months = $540. Although Mary is fastidious about keeping good business records, she did not keep a record of how much time on the Internet was dedicated to business as opposed to personal use. She told her tax preparer that sometimes she used her personal computer in the living room or in the bedroom, and connected to the Internet through the wireless router. The tax preparer explained that this item could be flagged by the IRS as grounds for a potential audit. The IRS would want to see Mary’s written log book detailing the business versus personal computer use. Consequently, Mary agreed with her tax preparer that claiming this item as a deductible just wasn’t worth the risk of inviting an audit.

Quarterly Estimated Tax Payments
Mary made quarterly estimated tax payments by the due dates of the 15th of April, June, September, and January. She made quarterly payments of $2,500 to the U.S. Treasury and $300 to the Missouri Department of Revenue.

Overview of Mary’s Tax Forms
IRS Forms and Schedules that Mary Q. Translator files:

Continued on p.35
Translating for the Publishing Field

By Enrique Torner

Less than two weeks after I joined ATA and one of its local chapters, the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA), Dr. Lawrence Bogoslaw, UMTIA president, contacted me to ask if I would be willing to offer a presentation on translating for publishing companies at UMTIA’s 2004 regional conference. He told me he was impressed by my resume, which showed eight book translations, and that perhaps I could provide some needed insight on the subject, especially considering that this field remains a mystery to many freelance translators.

Being a college Spanish professor whose translation work had mostly been a side job completed during vacation time (even though I had been a translator for a publishing company in Spain for about one year before I came to the U.S. as a fellow and graduate student), I was both flattered and surprised by Dr. Bogoslaw’s invitation. Such an offer rarely happens in the field of languages and literatures, and it certainly had not happened to me before. Of course, now I have been asked twice in the span of one year to talk about this subject. Because I am a “Borgean” (I do not believe in accidental coincidences!), this seems to verify what Dr. Bogoslaw and other translators at the UMTIA conference told me: freelance translators are very interested in translating for publishing companies and encounter great obstacles in their pursuit. Therefore, it is the purpose of this article to demystify the realm of publishing companies and the process of becoming a translator for them.

Introduction to the World of Publishing Companies

According to Publishing-Guide.com, there are three types of publishing companies, categorized by the manner in which they fund their publications: commercial/traditional; subsidy; and companies that publish on demand. Commercial/traditional publishing companies are the largest ones and “work by investing their capital into the development and production and promotion of certain authors.” Subsidy publishers work “by charging the author a fee to edit, typeset, proofread, and manufacture a specific number of books from the author’s manuscript.” Finally, companies that publish on demand start “with the author submitting a digital manuscript to the publishing company, who then sets the text pages, designs an original cover, and then (upon approval by the author) submits a copyright application to the Library of Congress and puts the book up for sale, typically in an online store. The work is then usually available for purchase in paperback or e-book form...” (Dessauer).

For obvious financial reasons, the potential book translator should first approach commercial and traditional publishing companies before the other two markets. The reason for this is that commercial and traditional publishers tend to be comprised of the largest companies, including Random House, Penguin Putnam, HarperCollins, Holtzbrinck, Time Warner, and Simon & Schuster, so this group would most likely have the resources to pay for translators. There are also medium-sized and small/self publishers. According to Dan Poynter, there are 300-400 medium-sized publishers and 86,000 small/self publishers. Poynter also notes that between 8,000-11,000 new publishing companies are established each year. Also keep in mind that several opportunities might exist within a single company, since many of the larger publishing houses have various divisions that are each responsible for specific publications. This presents a huge selection from which a translator may choose!

Whatever market they decide to approach, translators interested in offering their translation services to publishing companies should first consider the following questions: What subject areas need more translators? What publishing companies are the best match for their expertise? Which companies will be most receptive to the idea of hiring a professional translator? Who is the contact person at each of these companies?

As mentioned above, from a financial standpoint, large companies might be in a better position to offer translators a job. However, it is important to remember that there is more competition to do business with these companies, especially with popular (hence, more profitable) subject fields.

According to John Dessauer, “religious [books], professional books, and children’s books are among the most profitable categories in the industry” (Dessauer, 78). Another advantage is the fact that many religious and children’s publishing companies are either mid-sized or small, so one can be quite successful. In fact, religious and children’s books experienced the most growth in 2004: the latter, which comprise 10% of the sector, grew by 19%; the former, which comprise 5%, “grew by an astounding 37%” (Poynter).
Personally, all the books I have translated belong to the professional and religious categories, so I can attest to the fact that there is a need for professional translators in these areas. As a father of a bilingual three-year old, I have been reading a great many children’s books in both English and Spanish, and it is sad to see how poor these translations tend to be.

Regarding professional books, as Morry Sofer states, “many publishers turn to academia for translators…others turn to established translators with name recognition” (Sofer, 144). This is why professional translators with a specialized field will have a better chance of finding a publisher willing to look at their credentials, especially if the publishers have paid the price for standard translation work in the past. As an academic, I can attest to a certain degree of success dealing with publishers who needed a translator who is very knowledgeable in a certain area. On one occasion, an author asked me to retranslate an anthropology book that dealt with Spanish history because the project required substantial familiarity with the subject, which the previous translator had lacked.

It is surprising, particularly in the publishing industry, that many companies do not take the time to hire professional translators. As a matter of fact, according to Gerald Gross, “there are only a few publishers who do translations with any degree of regularity…There are comparatively few editors, then, who approach translations with knowledge and conviction and concern for the translator’s contribution…Publishers all too often have to grapple with poor translations. Good [translators] continue to be at a premium. They are heavily booked up” (Grossman, 156-7). Even though Grossman wrote this in 1970, and the situation has improved somewhat since then, there is still a great deal of work to be done in this regard.

Translation As Research

Translating books is different than translating technical short texts. Book publishers are more demanding in terms of the translator’s expertise on the subject at hand, and require a translation that is as fluent and natural as the original. As a general rule, book translators should be excellent writers in the target language. They should also be knowledgeable of the cultures of both the source and target languages. Style is also extremely important, even more so than translation accuracy.

Translators who work in this area need to hone their researching skills. Many professional books delve into subjects that will require even the most specialized translators to consult library books (often through inter-library loan services) and/or people who are highly specialized in a specific area. When I was translating a history book dealing with the discovery of America into Spanish, I encountered quotations from 16th-century Spanish books that had been translated into English by the author. I could not retranslate the quotes into Spanish, and the project was made more difficult by the fact that the quotes came from extremely rare and hard to find manuscripts that even the best inter-library loan service would have a hard time obtaining. My solution? I contacted the publisher and asked for permission to contact the author (I even asked for his address and phone number). After explaining the situation over the phone, the author agreed to provide me with all the original quotes. The time and effort he saved me were enormous!

From the above, it should be apparent that translating books can be quite labor-intensive, requiring the translator to be highly organized and to have ready access to various resources and contacts to overcome obstacles to clarity.

The Process of Becoming a Translator for a Publishing Company

Anybody wanting to translate for publishing companies will first have to decide whether to become an in-house or a freelance translator. I started working as an in-house translator for Crítica Publishers when I lived in Barcelona, Spain. I became a freelancer after I relocated to the U.S., without asking for the job or even knowing what a freelancer was! Word-of-mouth references were the sources of my first jobs. Later, as I added more book translations to my resume, I found jobs easier to obtain.

The main difference between being an in-house translator and a freelancer is that one has much more control over what he/she translates and how to charge if he/she freelances. In-house translators are all paid the same, with few exceptions. However, being an in-house translator guarantees one a steady job.

Regardless of the type of translator one wants to become, the process for finding a job is very straightforward. First, one needs to select the publishers one wants (a Google search will quickly lead to several). Second, one needs to send their editors a letter of inquiry and a resume. After that, one needs to wait a reasonable length of time for a response. If one has not received an answer in a month or so, it is very important not to give up, but, instead, follow up by phone. There is nothing like personally discussing one’s interests, skills, and experience to land this kind of job. Many publishing companies will request that one complete a sample translation (usually...
• Form 1040: Basic form to figure taxes owed to U.S. Treasury.
• Schedule C: Basic form for self-employed individuals who are not incorporated and operate a business.
• Schedule SE: Form used to calculate self-employment tax.
• Form 2210: This form is used to calculate whether Mary underpaid her estimated taxes, and if so, what the penalty is.
• Form 4562: This form is used to calculate the depreciation deduction for assets that Mary bought for her business or transferred to her business.
• Form 8829: This form is used to calculate the deduction for Mary’s apartment home office.
• Form 8863: This form is used to calculate education credits for Mary’s night school class. There are too many pages of these tax forms and schedules to print the sample federal income tax return here, but you can refer to my website (www.JohnMatthews.us) to view the entire return.

Conclusion
As we have seen, translating books can be a challenging and time-consuming job, but it can be very rewarding. Depending on the publisher, the financial payoff can be handsome. As an added bonus, the translator is generally publicly acknowledged on the inside cover of the book. Of course, there is also the pride one feels in having done an important job. Finally, it is important to develop a reputation for excellence. After all, high quality translations are one’s best advertising.

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www.publishing-guide.com
www.publishers.org/industry/index.cfm

2004 Tax Year: Mary Q. Translator Continued from p. 32

New York: Continentum.

Payment
It might take one quite some time to translate a book, usually anywhere from several weeks to a few months, depending upon length and complexity. Payment methods will also vary. Most publishers pay translators after the whole book has been translated, though some may be more flexible and offer partial payment after the first few chapters have been translated. When I was a full-time translator in Spain, the publisher I worked for issued checks once a month, and translators would submit whatever finished chapters they had translated by a certain date in order to be paid for the work they had done until that date. Some publishers pay by the word or by the page. Translators may be able to negotiate payment.

As we have seen, translating books can be a challenging and time-consuming job, but it can be very rewarding. Depending on the publisher, the financial payoff can be handsome. As an added bonus, the translator is generally publicly acknowledged on the inside cover of the book. Of course, there is also the pride one feels in having done an important job. Finally, it is important to develop a reputation for excellence. After all, high quality translations are one’s best advertising.

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www.publishers.org/industry/index.cfm
With all due respect to Matthew Adams, I would like to respond to his article, “Plain English: The Cure Against Translating Infectious Legal-Speak” (September 2005), in which he suggests that translators should clean up legal translations by discarding the legalese, or as he refers to it, “the rubbish in the target language.” Is there a place for Plain English in legal documents in general, and legal translations in particular?

The Use of Plain English in Legal Documents

As an attorney and translator, I have considered this topic from both perspectives. When I was working on my law degree in 1980, the new theory of “Plain English” was being widely discussed. The Plain English movement was born in 1974, when Congress established a Commission on Federal Paperwork.1 One of its findings was that the government should write documents in clear language and formats.2 There followed a flurry of federal, state, and corporate rulings requiring documents to be written in Plain English.

One of my classmates, who was working at a prestigious law firm, drafted a will using “Plain English.” As an example, the sentence “I give, devise and bequeath all the rest and residue of my property, real, personal or mixed, of every kind, nature and description whatsoever, and wheresoever situated, to my beloved children,” became “I leave everything I own to my children.” This law student was called into his manager’s office and told that if he ever drafted another document using Plain English, he would be fired immediately.

My classmate brought this story back to our legal research and writing course, where the professor discussed his opinion of the Plain English movement. He felt that the legal profession has had a long and proud history as a discipline that requires advanced education, philosophical debate, and scholarly writing. As such, it deserves intellectual, scholarly terminology. In addition, he spoke of the “Mystery of the Law.” Certain concepts have always been expressed by certain terminology that, in fact, has come down through centuries of British common law.

“...To lower the register of a translated legal document in order to make it more readable for the general public violates a basic tenet of translation...”

Thus, “I swear this is my signature” has always been expressed by “In witness whereof, I have hereunto signed my name and acknowledged and published this instrument.” The use of historical expressions creates an aura of seriousness, authority, and respect for the law. It is for this same reason that “archaic” terminology is still used in many of our cultural rites of passage, such as weddings, baptisms, and funeral services.

Of course, cynics may argue that the “Mystery of the Law” theory is nothing short of job protectionism by lawyers, since it causes average citizens to feel that they need a lawyer to decipher and/or draft a legal document. They also claim that legal terminology keeps the price of legal services high. (How much would a client be willing to pay for a contract that read “I promise to paint your house and you promise to pay me $500?”) But similar “outdated expressions” are preserved in other professional disciplines as well. Read a physician’s surgery report or an engineer’s patent application. You will not find any “Plain English” there, either.

Through the years, the only legal documents I have seen drafted in Plain English were wills written at a legal aid office. The director felt that it was more important to give the clients, who were elderly and not highly educated, a simple document that they and their families could understand, rather than a complex will requiring interpretation, since most if not all of the wills would never be read by anyone but the client’s children. In this case, the decision to use Plain English was appropriate.

But the fact remains that lawyers around the world continue to use traditional legal terminology, partly because of precedence, but more importantly out of the need for clarity and precision. In many instances, it is an “archaic” expression that most clearly and concisely expresses the concept at hand. Lawyers have no problem understanding “legalese,” so no adaptation is required.

What about Plain English in Translations?

For a translator, the question is whether to remove what he or she considers to be “rambling verbosity” and “outdated expressions” that the author intentionally used. With the possible exception of consumer warranties, most legal documents are meant to be read by other legal professionals. Contracts, wills, articles of incorporation, discovery documents, and legal...
In Other Words, Part II

By Leland D. Wright, Jr.

This is a much-delayed sequel to an article I wrote for the Chronicle five years ago, entitled “In Other Words: Literal vs. Non-literal Translation,” which appeared on page 56 of the August 2000 issue. The article briefly described a number of translatatorial pitfalls and their solutions related to avoiding overly literal and defective renderings when these would result in a distortion of the source-language message and/or meaning. The various situations I discussed included false cognates, the importance of recognizing when a literal equivalent of a source-language (SL) word or phrase would not be appropriate in the target language (TL), strict adherence to the SL word order, calques of SL syntax, morphology and parts of speech, and a lack of attention to discourse links.

In this sequel, I am going to focus on a different aspect of translation that, at least to me, is often overlooked: the fact that every language has at its disposal a wide range of stylistic alternatives. This means that the translator has to examine all of the possible choices offered by a given SL message for conveying that message accurately in the TL, and then decide which of those options would be the best one in any given situation. The topic of comparative/contrastive stylistics has been one of my favorites ever since I was in graduate school back in the late 1960s, when I was learning how to teach Spanish at the college level. Later on, it was natural for me to apply the same principles to my translation work, as well as to emphasize the importance of stylistic alternatives when teaching Spanish-to-English translation. This interest in the subject was made even stronger after I read Gerardo Vázquez-Ayora’s book Introducción a la traductología (Georgetown University Press, 1977) and subsequently prepared my own English translation of that opus over 25 years ago.

It is important to emphasize, first of all, the fact that the notion of style is not limited in any way to literary or non-technical texts. It is equally applicable to technical documents, especially since every writer of every technical document tends to be rather idiosyncratic, revealing a strictly personal, rather than universal, style.

“…The notion of style is not limited in any way to literary or non-technical texts…”

To be sure, there are many cases when both languages can, or even must, express an idea in exactly the same way, a so-called one-to-one equivalence. This happens most often, of course, with specialized terminology. In the steelmaking industry, for example, the Spanish term lamindadora desbastadora reversible de una sola caja can only be translated as single stand reversible roughing mill because that’s exactly what people say. Similarly, in a business/finance context, the Spanish word hipoteca must be rendered as mortgage. And if the Spanish text deals with book binding, the term engrapado al lomo has to be translated as saddle stitch in English.

On the other hand, of course, in both languages we have the countless examples of polysemy, where, depending on the context, a given term can mean widely different things. Just as a simple example, the Spanish word cámara can refer to many things, including a device for taking photographs, a section of a building, structure, or device (a room, a chamber), an abstraction (“chamber of commerce,” “clearing house,” or a legislative body [cámara de diputados]), a cabin on a cruise ship (“stateroom”), part of an internal combustion engine (combustion chamber), a manhole (cámara de inspección/registro), and a basin (cámara de decantación). In these cases, the translator clearly has to know the context and choose the appropriate TL equivalent accordingly.

The concept of obligatory versus optional style typically comes into play more frequently when dealing with a language’s structures than with its lexicon, and some languages are clearly more “flexible” than others in this regard. This is particularly true of Spanish versus English. Each of these languages has a set of basic structures (syntactical patterns), but the Spanish language offers a wider choice of structures than English. The same might be said for just about any other Romance language. For a detailed discussion of the Spanish/English contrast, see section 3.3 of Vázquez-Ayora’s book.

Spanish, for example, enjoys the freedom to combine numerous phrases and clauses together into long sentences, but imitation of this tendency in an English translation is likely to cause confusion or simply information overload on the part of the reader. Consequently, as noted above, the translator must stop and analyze all aspects of the SL structure, consciously identify the various stylistic alternatives, and then pick the one that seems best, recognizing that another translator might easily make a totally different choice and still produce a perfectly good TL version.

To start with, here’s a brief paragraph from a Spanish text I recently translated. The document was a study on the effects of precipitation on a soccer playing field in
Santiago, Chile.

Incorporados en esta capa drenante se encuentran ocho tubos de PVC diámetro 75mm para el sector norte y ocho para el sur situados aproximadamente a una profundidad de 0,70m contados de la cota del césped y ubicados perpendicularmente al eje mayor de la cancha y cuyo objetivo es sacar rápidamente parte del agua que filtra y evacuarla en la foso existente en el costado poniente desde donde se elimina por evaporación.

My English version reads as follows:

Incorporated into this drainage layer are eight 75 mm diameter PVC pipes for the north sector and eight for the south, located at an approximate depth of 0.70 m from the grass level and perpendicular to the main axis of the playing field. Their purpose is to rapidly remove part of the water that filters through and carry it to the ditch located on the west side, where it is then eliminated by evaporation.

As can be seen, it was necessary to split the long Spanish sentence into two English sentences:

Eight 75 mm diameter PVC pipes for the north sector and eight for the south, located at an approximate depth of 0.70 m from the grass level and perpendicular to the main axis of the playing field, are incorporated into this drainage layer.

In yet another paragraph of the same document we find this sentence:

En esta sala existen cuatro bombas, encontrándose una de ellas en reparación, de 10 HP cada una comandadas por un tablero eléctrico que permite trabajar en el sistema manual o automático.

Here the equivalent of the initial Spanish prepositional phrase (En esta sala) has to be moved to a different location because it’s more natural in English to place it at the end of the sentence. Other obvious changes include the recategorization of the noun in the Spanish verb phrase encontrándose en reparación to is being repaired, as well as the recategorization of the two adjectives manual and automático to adverbs.

The need to relocate entire SL phrases often occurs in legal texts. The following sentence appears in the arbitration clause of a contract:

Si, dentro de tres (3) meses desde la fecha de aviso de tal contienda, las Partes no han llegado a un acuerdo amigable, el asunto será sometido a arbitraje que establece el sometimiento del Tribunal de Arbitraje de la Cámara de Comercio Internacional (CCI) y resuelto de conformidad con el Artículo 4.28 del Reglamento de Operaciones Petroleras sobre el arbitraje, con la excepción de la lengua, el lugar y la ley aplicable que serán como se especifican en el siguiente punto.

Although it would certainly have been possible to imitate the SL phraseology in the translation, the English reads far more naturally when the long series of prepositional phrases is relocated:

If an amicable agreement has not been reached by the Parties within three (3) months following the date of notification of said dispute, the matter shall be submitted to arbitration...

As previously noted, Spanish writers often tend to put prepositional phrases and other non-thematic elements up front in a sentence, whereas English writers generally take a different approach, as shown in this next example from a Dominican Republic contract document. Here the initial prepositional phrase has to be relocated, and the resulting translation reveals a considerable amount of recasting.

Para el pago del producto de ABC por XYZ, ésta tendrá un período de gracia de 60 días, al término del cual deberá cubrir el pago total de las partidas del producto adquirido de ABC a través de la línea de crédito mencionada.

XYZ shall have a 60-day grace period to pay for ABC’s product, at the end of which time it shall pay the entire amount of the product purchased from ABC using the aforementioned line of credit.

In contrast, sometimes the Spanish phraseology gives the translator the option of either following the SL or reorganizing the word order, as can be
No se requiere ninguna autorización, aprobación u otra acción, notificación o registro con ninguna autoridad gubernamental u organismo regulatorio para la debida ejecución y aplicación de este Acuerdo.

**English version #1:**

No authorization, approval or other action, notification or registration by any government authority or regulatory agency is required for the proper performance and enforcement of this Agreement.

**English version #2:**

This Agreement requires no authorization, approval or other action, notification or registration by any government authority or regulatory agency for its proper performance and enforcement.

Spanish often switches the subject-verb-predicate word order around, but this can rarely be done in English, as illustrated by the following example, this time from a Spanish lease agreement:

*Conviene expresamente el arrendatario en que todo mes de arrendamiento le es forzoso y que lo pagará íntegro aún cuando únicamente ocupe la localidad un solo día y que, por falta de pago de una sola prestación podrá el arrendador solicitar la desocupación, rescindiéndose el contrato.*

Lessee expressly accepts his obligation to pay the rent every month and agrees that he will pay the entire amount of the rent if he only occupies the leased property for one day, and, if he fails to make a single payment, lessor may request that he vacate the premises, thereby terminating the agreement.

Yet another very simple but common characteristic of Spanish usage is the omission of a subject pronoun when the subject is implicit from the macro- or micro-context, whereas English generally requires either an explicit subject or the omission of the copula. This happens in definitions like the following:

*Barril: Es la unidad de medida del volumen de hidrocarburos líquidos que consta de cuarenta y dos (42) galones de los Estados Unidos de América, corregidos a condiciones estándar (una temperatura de sesenta grados Fahrenheit (60°F) y a una (1) atmósfera de presión absoluta).*

Here English could say either *Barrel: This is the unit of measure...* or (preferably) *Barrel: The unit of measure...*

Another typical Spanish feature is the omission of an explicit subject with certain verbs, as illustrated below in a sentence from a Venezuelan lease agreement:

*Queda expresamente convenido entre las partes contratantes que si en razón de los trabajos de urbanismo el inmueble objeto de este contrato queda afectado por un Decreto de Expropiación por causa de utilidad pública o social, de cualquier Oficina Gubernamental creada o que se cree, aun cuando sea de los denominados Organismos Autónomos que dependen de ellas, afectare directa o indirectamente el inmueble objeto del presente contrato, sus propietarios se verán obligados a enajenar, disponer, derribar o en cualquier otra forma gravar el inmueble y proceder a su desocupación, este contrato quedará resuelto de pleno derecho sin que el ARRENDATARIO pueda...*
reclamar al ARRENDADOR ni a terceros ninguna clase de indemnización.

Not only is this sentence extremely long and rather convoluted, but there are a couple of places where the Spanish lacks an explicit subject, so the English translation must explicitly state the understood subjects:

It is expressly agreed by the parties to the contract [or The parties to this contract expressly agree, etc.] … even when it [reference to Oficina Gubernamental] is one of the so-called Autonomous Agencies…

In this next example, taken from a set of guidelines applicable to occupants of a retail shopping center in Buenos Aires, the second sentence clearly shows a typical Spanish method of linking the content of two successive sentences:

Las instalaciones sanitarias sólo serán usadas para las finalidades que les son propias. En ellas no podrán ser arrojados objetos o sustancias que pudieran tapar los conductos o deteriorar cañerías o artefactos.

The English has to read as follows:

The toilets shall only be used for their intended purposes. No objects or substances that could block the pipes or damage the pipes or fixtures may be thrown into them.

Upon reading the second Spanish sentence above, the translator might be inclined to think that it is actually a veiled command and be tempted to translate it as such (i.e., Do not throw any objects or substances into the toilets that could block the pipes or damage the pipes or fixtures.) However, this would not be appropriate within the context and style of the entire document, even though it is a perfectly valid stylistic alternative.

In some of the foregoing examples one can clearly see the tendency of Spanish to be more verbose than English, but in this final example, taken from a Mexican services agreement, the translator needs to come to serious grips with the Spanish “logorrhea” and streamline the English version, since a literal rendering would greatly overload the communication circuits of the TL reader.

En virtud de que entre el personal del PRESTADOR involucrado en los servicios que el PRESTADOR preste conforme a este contrato y el CLIENTE no existirá vinculación contractual de ninguna naturaleza, pues en todo momento son y serán empleados al servicio del PRESTADOR, éste se obliga a cubrir todas las prestaciones, derechos, impuestos, cuotas y cualquier otro concepto que corresponde frente al Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, Instituto Nacional del Fondo para la Vivienda de los Trabajadores, Ley del Impuesto sobre la Renta y cualesquiera otras existentes o que llegaren a establecerse en el futuro.

Since there will be no contractual relationship whatsoever between the personnel of the CONTRACTOR involved in performing the services hereunder because they are and will at all times be employees of the CONTRACTOR, the CONTRACTOR undertakes to pay all compensation, duties, taxes, fees, and any other items required under the provisions of the Mexican Social Security Institute, the National Workers Housing Fund Institute, and the Income Tax Law, as well as any other existing or future obligations.

Needless to say, there are countless other instances where the Spanish-to-English translator must be mindful of the stylistic differences between the SL and the TL and apply that knowledge to the rendering of each text. In this article, I have merely selected a few outstanding examples from documents I have translated over the years. I will gladly receive more contributions illustrating the translation strategies described here. If you would like to read the first “In Other Words” article and can’t find your copy of the Chronicle issue in which it was published, let me know and I’ll send you a copy.

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We welcome all proposals for talks on subjects related to translation, interpreting, editing, language, and professional and technical tools. Papers may be in Hebrew or English (other languages are a possibility). Proposals may be submitted to Alan Clayman, ITA deputy chair and conference organizer, at route1@bezeqint.net. For more details, visit www.ita.org.il.
The following originally appeared in the May-June 2005 ITI Bulletin, the official publication of the Institute of Translation & Interpreting (www.it.org.uk). It is reprinted here with permission.

In early December 2004, the Institute of Translation & Interpreting Terminology Network organized a very successful workshop at the University of Surrey on the basic functions of TRADOS Workbench and MultiTerm. Before actually getting to talk about the tools themselves, I spent some time explaining what could be the basic structure of a translation project and how to deal with file management when using a tool like TRADOS. It seems that this particular facet of a translation project, even for professional translators, both beginners and experienced (such were the people attending the workshop), added a whole new perspective to how they approached a job.

To be perfectly honest, this didn’t come as a big surprise. In my experience so far as a tutor, I have come to realize that, before I can tell my students how to use a translation tool, I need to explain why.

Translation has a very long history, but in the last 10 or 15 years things have changed so much that these changes could almost account for all the major landmarks in the history of translation put together. Nowadays, with buzzwords such as “localization” and “content management” floating around, even the most “technophobe” of translators needs to adapt, at least gradually, to the new conditions. Computers have been extremely pervasive in the translation world, and now people of many different profiles and target groups (students only just beginning to learn what translation is about, graduates with some basic skills but no real experience, beginners with basic understanding of a translation project but only limited working experience, experienced translators with wide hands-on experience in the translation business) need to come to terms with this reality.

Translation software, with more recent versions featuring tools and aids that one could only imagine a few years ago, has radically changed the way we work as translators. A client can send the original document in pretty much any format out there and we can process it, isolate the text that needs to be translated, apply our translation skills to that text, reprocess the document, and send it back to our client in exactly the same format. How difficult can it be to train myself in the use of such tools and get to use them in my translation work, one could ask?

Normally, it isn’t too hard, but it can be—if someone can’t “think” like a translation tool!

The simplest set-up for a translation project is having to deal with just two files, one with the source text which you receive from the client and another one with the translation which will be sent back to the client. What happens when the client, for the same project, sends five different source files and a termbase of his own and asks for you to merge the text files into one when you send the translation, and to also send a clean translation memory and an updated termbase? Technically this is quite straightforward, but one needs to have some kind of file management system in place, otherwise all the above might end up looking like a Greek salad! Where do I keep my source files? Where do I keep my target files? Where do I keep my translation memory, and how do I distinguish between clean and unclean memory? Where do I keep the client’s termbase and where do I keep the updated version(s) I create as I go along? How do I label every new file and folder (very important for future reference and retrieval)? Also important—where do I keep back-ups? One can also add here storage of reference material, archiving of queries to and from the client, and so on. And as you can see, I haven’t even started translating yet.

All the above is essentially part of the management of a project, and obviously it extends to freelance work as well, since these are not issues that only large translation companies need to tackle. Without having to resort to the self-sustaining “the chicken or the egg?” question,
At Your Command:
Creating Customized Keyboard Shortcuts

By Becky Blackley

I attended Jost Zetzsche’s ATA Translation Software Tools Seminar in early July because I consider myself to be a complete idiot when it comes to computers. This may be due to the fact that most of my friends are professional computer programmers, technicians, computer specialists for the government/military, college computer science instructors, or website designers. Most of the time, I have no idea what they are talking about, nor do I have any desire to understand it. I just want my computer to do its job and do it well. So, off I went to Chicago to learn more about how to set up my computer more efficiently. But something strange happened there. I realized rather quickly that I actually do know a thing or two about the computer. I guess if you work with computers long enough you’re bound to learn something about them.

The following details what I have learned about two types of customized keyboard shortcuts for MS Word: AutoText shortcuts and shortcut key commands. While many of my examples are for working with a Russian keyboard layout (the one that comes with Windows XP), the same methods should work for other languages, including English. Learning to create your own keyboard shortcuts will be of value to all translators and anyone who works with a computer. You can save a lot of time by creating keyboard shortcuts designed specifically to suit your own computer needs.

First, some words of advice. Create only one AutoText shortcut and one shortcut key command and try them out to see if they work properly before you create a whole bunch of them. Also, make a list of your customized shortcuts as you create them. I have no idea where the computer stores these shortcuts, so I can’t tell you how to include the shortcut commands themselves in your regular backups. (You do make backups, don’t you?) You will need your list if you have a major system malfunction or if you mess something up and need to reset everything back to the defaults to start over again. You’ll also need it when you upgrade to a new computer. (Hint: Make this list a file in Word, which you can then include in your backups, so you won’t ever lose it.)

“…You can save a lot of time by creating keyboard shortcuts designed specifically to suit your own computer needs…”

AutoText Shortcuts

AutoText entries allow you to quickly insert a frequently used word, phrase, sentence, address, heading, or symbol without actually typing it out in full or using the Insert menu. You type just a letter or two, hit the function key F3, and your word, phrase, or symbol will appear on the screen. For example, if I were publishing the Chronicle, I would not want to have to repeatedly type the name “American Translators Association.” I’d create an AutoText entry, probably using just the single letter A. Then I’d have to type only the letter A or a (AutoText does not distinguish between upper and lower case), hit F3, and, voilà, the words “American Translators Association” would appear. This type of shortcut gives me direct access to all the symbols on the English keyboard (such as @, #, $, &, [ ], and { }) that are not available on the Russian keyboard, and I don’t have to switch back to the English keyboard to get them. I can also get quick access to other symbols that I use frequently, such as ✓ and ø (the degree symbol). You can easily change $ to €. The possibilities are limitless. AutoText will be of particular value to technical translators who use symbols repeatedly.

How to Create AutoText Shortcuts

Chart 1 (page 43) shows some of the AutoText shortcuts I created. The process is simple.

• Just type the text (in English or Russian) that you want to create a shortcut for (e.g., “American Translators Association,” @, #), or go to Insert, Symbol and browse through the various fonts and symbols and insert the one you want (e.g., ✓, €, ▶).
• Highlight the text you typed or the symbol you inserted and go to Insert, AutoText, New and type the shortcut (in English or Russian) that you want to use to retrieve your highlighted text or symbol in the Please name your AutoText entry box (e.g., A, «, №, =, $, >).
• Click OK.

Note: If you use a letter or number as an AutoText entry for a symbol that normally comes immediately after a word (such as ®), you need to put parentheses around the AutoText entry: for example, (r) for ®. Another way is to insert a space between the word and the letter or number before hitting F3 to change the AutoText, and then go back and delete the inserted space. (See the examples in Chart 1.)

Try to create AutoText entries for the first two examples in Chart 1 (one is a text entry, the other a symbol). Here’s how:

• For a text entry, type and highlight American Translators Association.
• Go to Insert, AutoText, New and
AutoText Shortcuts for Accented Russian Vowels

Sometimes I want to type accented vowels in Russian. These are available as symbols, but you have to use Insert, Symbol and scroll to the accented vowel, insert it, and close the pop-up window each time you need one. That takes too long, so I created AutoText shortcuts for them. I used the “/” symbol with accented vowels because it slants the same way as the accent. Since AutoText does not distinguish between uppercase and lowercase, I type the letter twice to get the uppercase accented letter. Using a single uppercase letter will result in a lowercase accented letter. Here’s how:

- Go to Insert, Symbol and choose the Russian font you most commonly use (I use Timesse Russ almost exclusively).
- Scroll through the Cyrillic Subset to find the accented vowels and insert all the ones you want.
that, while most of the basic shortcut keys (such as CTRL+C for Copy) work for the Russian keyboard, many keyboard commands won’t work while typing in Russian. For example, you can access the “Format Font” pop-up window with ALT+O, F, but you can’t select Color, Small Caps, All Caps, Hidden, etc., with shortcut keys. Likewise, you can go to the “Borders and Shading” pop-up window with ALT+O, B, but you can’t switch between the tabs without using a mouse.

I couldn’t understand why some commands worked with the Russian keyboard while others didn’t. I felt there had to be a faster way to access certain commands that I use frequently without using the mouse. After searching through the Help program, I found that you can indeed create your own customized shortcut key commands. You can assign new shortcut keys or change or remove existing ones. You can assign more than one shortcut (e.g., one for English, one for Russian) to the same command.

All the possible commands are listed in the “Customize Keyboard” pop-up window, including those which have not had shortcuts already assigned to them by Microsoft. To view the entire list, go to Tools, Customize, Keyboard (a button, not a tab) and scroll down through all the commands in each category. You’ll see there are hundreds of choices, many of which you probably never knew were there. Besides the obvious categories (Format, Edit, Table, etc.), there are commands for Mail Merge, Drawing, Macros, Common Symbols, Styles, and Fonts. The category All Commands offers still more possibilities, including many e-mail commands and even a “Japanese Greeting Wizard Closing Sentence” command, which I’m sure makes sense to those of you who work with Japanese.

How to Create Shortcut Key Commands

When creating shortcut key commands on some older computers, I found that I had to create them while using the Russian keyboard layout if I wanted them to work in both Russian and English. If I created them while typing in English, they would not work in Russian. That doesn’t seem to be true with my newest computer, so Microsoft may have fixed that flaw. If, however, you find that a command that you created in English won’t work when you’re typing in another language, try reassigning the command while using the foreign keyboard layout. It should then work in both languages. Here’s how:

- Go to the “Customize Keyboard” pop-up window by selecting Tools, Customize, Keyboard (button).

- Highlight the Category and Command for which you want to create a shortcut. Some commands, like Format Color and Format Font Size allow you to select more specific options in a separate box. For example, for the Format Color command there is a box labeled “Color” where you select from 16 color choices for text fonts. In Format Font Size, you can select fonts from 8 point up to 72 point in the “Font Size” box.

- When you have made your choices, go to the Press new shortcut key box and perform the shortcut sequence you want to use for your chosen command. For example, you might type “ALT+C, R” to make the font color red. (Note: Even if you use the Russian
keyboard when creating the shortcuts, the letters will appear in the box in Latin letters, not Cyrillic. Don’t ask why, since it won’t make any difference. It’s the key that’s important, not the letter on it.)

### Chart 3: Shortcut Key Commands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shortcut Keys</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commands with ALT + R (Russian shortcuts):</strong> These commands were originally created to use when working in the Russian keyboard (hence the prefix key R), but they also work for the English keyboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R+ F8 (Function key)</td>
<td>Font Size 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R+ F10</td>
<td>Font Size 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R, A</td>
<td>All Caps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R, S</td>
<td>Small Caps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R, H</td>
<td>Hidden Text (toggles on and off)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + R, T</td>
<td>Timesse Russ Font (Russian font)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commands with ALT + C (Color):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + C, H</td>
<td>Color Highlight (uses most recent highlight color)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + C, R</td>
<td>Color Red (font)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + C, L</td>
<td>Color Blue (font)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + C, K</td>
<td>Color Black (font)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commands with ALT + B (Borders):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, A</td>
<td>Border All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, B</td>
<td>Border Bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, H</td>
<td>Border Horizontal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, L</td>
<td>Border Left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, N</td>
<td>Border NONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, R</td>
<td>Border Right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, T</td>
<td>Border Top</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + B, V</td>
<td>Border Vertical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commands with ALT + D (Shading):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, 0</td>
<td>Shading 0% (Clear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, 1</td>
<td>Shading 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, F1 [function key]</td>
<td>Shading 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, 9</td>
<td>Shading 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, F9</td>
<td>Shading 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALT + D, F10</td>
<td>Shading 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Now look just below the box where it will say “Currently assigned to.” It will tell you that the shortcut is either unassigned or that it has already been assigned to another command. You can choose to override a previously assigned shortcut (if it’s one you’ll never use) or keep that shortcut and create a different shortcut for your new command.

- When you have chosen the shortcut keys you want to use, click Assign to create the shortcut.

If you want to assign another shortcut for the same command in another language, do this:

- Change the keyboard language.
- Return to the Press new shortcut key box.
- Enter the new shortcut keys.
- Click Assign.

If you change your mind, highlight the shortcut under Current keys and click Remove. This will remove the current shortcut, but it won’t reinstate a previous shortcut that you may have decided to override. You will need to go back and reassign the shortcut to the previous command if you want to reinstate it.

Important note: Don’t use ALT plus F, E, V, I, O, T, A, W, H, or S as prefix keys! (For example, you might try to make ALT+ I, R be the shortcut for “Insert a Row” in a table.) These letters are prefix keys that have been preassigned by Microsoft as shortcuts to the drop-down menus at the top of the screen (File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Tools, Table, Window, Help), and for Save. If you use them as the prefix keys for any other shortcut command, then they will no longer work as shortcuts to the drop-down menus or to the Save command.

**Warning:** If you try to use one of these letters with ALT, you will
be misinformed that it is currently unassigned. Don’t believe it! However, if you do accidentally use one of these letters as a prefix key and find that you can’t access one of the drop-down menus with its shortcut command, then just go back and remove the shortcut you created. (This is another good reason why you should keep a list of the shortcuts as you create them.) You will automatically regain access to the drop-down menu, and you won’t have to reassign the shortcut to the drop-down menu.

To use your new shortcut, position the cursor in the desired location (for creating borders, etc.) or highlight the appropriate text (for changing the color or font size), and type the key sequence you created for the command you wish to execute. For example, if you created shortcuts to change the font color (shown in Chart 3), you can highlight the word and press ALT+ C, R to change the text to red or press ALT+ C, L to change it to blue.

Chart 3 lists a few of the shortcut key commands I have created on my computer. Try one of them and then make up some of your own. Keep in mind that some shortcut key commands (as opposed to AutoText shortcuts) are case sensitive. If you accidentally select Caps Lock, the commands won’t work.

You can see from the examples that there are endless possibilities for customizing your shortcut keys to suit your own particular needs. Spend a few minutes looking through the complete list of commands available in the “Customize Keyboard” pop-up window. (Don’t forget to look in the All Commands category for commands that don’t fit into any of the other categories.) You’ll probably see lots of commands that you use often enough to warrant a shortcut. After you create all your keyboard shortcuts, you can print out a list of your customized commands: File>Print>Print what: Key assignments>OK.

Conclusion
I find that both types of shortcuts described here are extremely useful to me. Whether you choose to create AutoText shortcuts or shortcut key commands, I’m sure you’ll find many ways to make your job easier. I hope you save yourself lots of time—at least enough to sit down and enjoy a nice cup of tea.

Where Does Plain English Fit In? Continued from p. 36
pleadings are intended to be read by judges or lawyers, not reprinted in a local newspaper or magazine. To lower the register of a translated legal document in order to make it more readable for the general public violates a basic tenet of translation.

My experience with legal translations has been the exact opposite of Mr. Adams’. My clients have preferred more, not less, legal jargon. Before beginning a legal translation, the translator should discuss the use of legal terminology with the client and ask who the target reader will be. This is the best way to ensure that the client’s needs will be met.

Notes
2. www.english.udel.edu/dandrews/bcq/plainenglish.html

Translation Technology Breeds New Translators Continued from p. 41
one can wonder: would all this be part of my work as a translator if translation tools didn’t exist? If we consider that presently there are translation project management tools that can answer all the questions raised in the previous paragraph at the click of a button, it might be unfair to say “no.”

Translation tools have indeed greatly improved our output capabilities and helped us automate some of the more tedious aspects of our job, but the flipside is that some of those “tedious” aspects are there because of them. And with clients raising the bar as time goes by, there is only one way to catch up: learn how to use such a tool and allow its usefulness to grow with every new project.
This is an outline of all the things to be considered when running a business from home.

**Getting Started**

**Define your personal objectives:**
- Will you work full-time or part-time?
- Do you have sufficient income to tide you over until your business gets going?
- Will you freelance or work for someone else, such as in-house for a translation company or a translation bureau?
- Will you work out of your home or rent an office?
- What language pairs will you work in?
- What areas of expertise do you have?
- Do you have the necessary hardware, software, dictionaries, office supplies, modem, e-mail, fax and phone lines?
- Do you have restrictions that may get in the way (a baby, a relative that needs care, travel with your spouse)?
- Are you willing to edit, proofread, type, or provide desktop publishing?
- Will you need a state license?
- Do you have any other language-related skills?
- You will need health, life, and business insurance.
- You will need an IRA-SEP or 401(k) for retirement savings.
- You must do bookkeeping and accounting.
- You must pay taxes in advance (federal, state, local, sales, value-added tax, etc.), usually quarterly.
- Remember, this a service business. As such, you need to be available when the client needs you, not when you want a client.

**If you freelance, you...**
- Must do your own marketing/sales.
- Set your own prices within the going market (national, regional, international).
- Will have only one boss—your client.
- Will need a lot of self-discipline to work from home.
- Can turn down work you don’t like or want.
- Will have to manage your time carefully.
- Can be a recluse, up to a point.
- Must learn to set aside funds for taxes and lean times.

“...Ask questions if you think there is an error in the original or if you don't understand something—you may be the last person to catch an important error…”

- Will have to learn to live with great insecurity in a “feast or famine” kind of business.
- Will have to pay your own retirement fund, health insurance, and 15% Social Security.

**If you work for another, you...**
- Will have less independence.
- Will have to do whatever jobs come along or are given to you.
- Will have various “bosses.”
- May be allowed to do what you do best, but not always.
- Will have a monthly income that provides some security.
- Will get your Social Security payments matched and income taxes withheld.
- May or may not get benefits.
- Will have to face traffic every day.
- May have to work overtime at the office.

- Will have more interaction with people.
- Will have your working time managed by office rules.

**Specialize...**
- Specialize in one or more subjects that have a good market and that you are personally interested in; you will do better with subjects you like.
- There is much competition and it’s hard to get started, so don’t get discouraged!!
- It will take at least two years to be running at full speed.

**Improve Your Skills...**
- Take courses, learn new terminology, meet new people, keep up-to-date on trends in your field.
- Get certified, since this provides clients with assurance that you are qualified.
- Join professional organizations and find out more about your chosen profession (not just translator/interpreter groups, but those in your specialties as well).
- Travel abroad, if at all possible.
- Read, read, read—in all your languages!
- Subscribe to trade magazines in your areas of expertise.
- Keep up with the latest industry jargon, slang, new words, new technology, etc., in all your specialties.
- Add to your hardware/software, learn new programs.
- Obtain the latest dictionaries and glossaries; develop your own glossaries.
- Learn to work quickly—deadlines are sometimes tough. You will have a higher income if you can work quickly and well.
- Attend seminars in your specialty, network, and look for new customers.
Starting Your Business
• Get help from your local branch of the Small Business Administration (check out www.sba.gov for lots of useful information).
• Check your local community college for classes in accounting, taxes, business management, marketing, etc.
• Check out assistance from women’s or minority business organizations if you fit those categories.
• Check out your local zoning laws and housing restrictions if you work at home.
• Write a proper business plan (see www.entrepreneur.com, go to “Starting a Business” and then “Business Plans”).
• Learn all the details before applying for a loan so that you know what to expect.
• Look for one or more mentors in your field, especially those who have already started their own business. A useful place to start is the Service Corps of Retired Executives (if you go to www.score.org, they will match you up and provide help).

Marketing Yourself...
• Get business cards printed. Be unique! Make sure you have an eye-catching design for your card.
• Develop a good curriculum vitae.
• Make cold calls to companies in your specialty.
• Network, network, network!
• Write follow-up letters to really good prospects.
• Send out repeat reminders of your services to clients.
• List your name in the Yellow Pages and in all local directories.
• Invest in dictionaries for particular projects (they will pay for themselves).
• BE HONEST as to what you can and cannot do.
• Prepare your rates and terms of payment. Rates can vary for different types of clients (agencies, direct clients, pro bono). Occasionally, you can barter your services.
• Do not limit your services to a specific geographic area...there are no barriers on the Internet.
• Be available in your clients’ time zones.
• Do the absolute best work you can every time—that’s how you get repeat customers.
• Keep increasing your skills.
• Research the area you live in for prospective clients.
• Check the Blue Pages of the telephone book (listing all the government, federal, state, county, and city agencies) for potential sources for jobs.
• Read local business newspapers and keep up with the changing business scene in your area.
• Read foreign newspapers online and keep up with business information and terminology.
• Do volunteer work to get known in your area.
• Let everyone know when you move or change e-mail addresses or telephone numbers.
• Keep proper records of who you contact.
• Be available upon short notice.
• Know your productivity level for different jobs.
• Keep track of your clients’ accomplishments and congratulate them when necessary.
• Write a proper business plan (see www.entrepreneur.com, go to “Starting a Business” and then “Business Plans”).
• Learn all the details before applying for a loan so that you know what to expect.
• Look for one or more mentors in your field, especially those who have already started their own business. A useful place to start is the Service Corps of Retired Executives (if you go to www.score.org, they will match you up and provide help).

Time Management in Your Home Office...
• Do you have a separate room where you can shut the door?
• Maintain work discipline.
• Work when your energy is high.
• Get an answering machine and make the message professional, NOT cute!
• Keep a master calendar for work and family responsibilities.
• Set specific working hours and stick to them, and ask family members to cooperate.
• Don’t do housework during business hours.
• Combine business and personal errands at times when the shops, and you, are least busy.
• Consider asking a friend or family member to help out with chauffering children to various activities.
• Find a way to politely tell well-meaning neighbors who stop by for a visit during the day about your working hours.
• When business is good, hire someone to do your housework and/or gardening (consider what your time and someone else’s is worth).
• Control telephone and e-mail interruptions.
• Sign up for the National Do Not Call Registry (www.donotcall.gov or 1-888-382-1222) and avoid telemarketers who call during the day.
• Get spam-blocking software.
• Organize snail mail and bill payment.
• Ask friends not to e-mail you silly stuff (chain letters, jokes, etc.).
• Control all online forums you belong to.
• Respond to all business e-mails and print or save any that are important or you think might be needed for follow-up correspondence.
• Answer all phone calls that matter—use caller ID.
• Remember, sometimes you just can’t be a perfectionist!
• Consider saving time preparing meals by buying “just heat and serve” foods at the grocery store. You could also cook in large batches and put the food in the freezer, so you are not constantly worrying about what to have for dinner.
• Become organized at home. Multi-task while waiting do something else—read, write notes, pay bills, etc.
• When alone, also do things that can’t be done while others are around (meditate, soak in a bath, etc.).
• Call in a professional organizer—expensive, but worth it for those of us who just can’t seem to get organized and stay that way.

Your Home Office…
• Get the best equipment you can afford and update as often as you can. You will need:
  — Desk and comfortable chair.
  — Good lighting.
  — Computer (desk top/laptop).
  — Modem (high speed, broadband—dial-up is too slow!).
  — E-mail service provider.
  — Printer (color) scanner/copier.
  — Software (everything you can afford). Make sure to purchase terminology management software (SDLX, TRADOS, Déjà Vu, etc.).
  — Telephone (business/personal) and fax, answering machine, beeper, and cell phone.
  — Office supplies.
  — Reference materials (dictionaries, glossaries, grammar books, style books, atlases, etc. in all your languages).
• Remember to budget for all items you think you might need.
• Remember to read articles on home offices and how and where to set them up.
• Remember that all of the above may be tax deductible.

How to Estimate Costs…

For translations:
• What is the word count (physically count, scan, or have the computer do a word count).
• How technical is this job?
• How much research is required?
• Is this a rush job? What’s the deadline?
• Are there many graphs and tables? How are these to be handled?
• Are you getting an electronic copy to work with?
• Is there much statistical typing?
• Does the project involve converting numbers and changing dates?
• Will you need to pay an editor/proofreader?
• Does the translation have to be camera-ready?
• Will you need to scan in graphics?
• Will you charge for changes the customer makes after you are finished? If so, how much?
• All mistakes that are yours should not be charged—apologize profusely!
• Will you do extra proofreading after the document is typeset? If so, say so.
• Will this job affect your regular job if you are working part-time?
• What is the finished format to be? Do you have the software to do it?
• Calculate how long it will take to do the translation—set a fair deadline, if you can.
• Establish the price.

Remember, some jobs or parts of jobs are quoted by the hour, not by the word. These include:
• Advertising layouts;
• Special layouts, graphs, tables, columns, forms;
• Editing/proofreading;
• Desktop publishing;
• Proofreading after the document has been typeset;
• Making changes after the translation is finished.

Preparing price quote…
• Use a standard form or contract detailing what you will/can do.
• Get a copy of the client’s written request for your translation services.
• Decide upon the final deadline and price.
• Decide upon the final format.
• Sign and date your translation.
• Thank the client for giving you the job.

Quality control for translations…
• Read through the document first to make sure you understand the content. This is also the time to bring up any concerns or to ask questions.
• Find all the unfamiliar words.
• Start a glossary for each client (use translation memory software).
• Do the translation.
• Proofread the translation at least twice (once to ensure that every sentence has been translated, and once for style and readability).
in the target language).
- Run a spell check.
- Double check number conversions.
- Make sure that all decimal points, periods, commas, and dates are correct.
- Print a draft copy.
- Proofread the paper copy—count bullets, paragraphs, etc.
- Make any necessary corrections.
- Print a final copy.
- Back up the translation on a separate disk or CD.
- Use your instinct. If you “feel” that something is still wrong, keep checking.
- Prepare an invoice.
- Send the translation: Electronic file via e-mail, including invoice; Hard copy by fax or mail, including invoice.

How to Estimate Costs…
For interpretation jobs:
- Is the job in town or out of town?
- Are you providing equipment for simultaneous interpretation? Quote a separate price for equipment lease.
- Ask for all materials ahead of time or an agenda so you know what to study—the client may not always send you the requested materials, so study as best you can.

If the job is in town:
- Quote an hourly fee—door to door, if you can get it.
- Include driving time and mileage.
- Include parking costs, if you can.
- You don’t charge for your lunch hour unless you are working.
- Have a price for overtime.

If the job is out of town:
- Quote a daily fee—door to door, including overtime.
- Include travel time, mileage, parking (when driving or flying).
- Make sure you quote (or the client pays) for: meals, hotel, airfare, ground transportation, parking at airport, other incidentals.

Translator/Client Relationship…
- Attitude—be helpful, cooperative, and go the extra mile to make the client happy.
- If a situation sounds impossible—don’t accept the job!
- Have a basic contract or communicate in writing (letter, fax, or e-mail—keep copies).
- Return phone calls as soon as possible, even if you don’t want the job.
- Know your fees and terms of payment.
- Check the client’s terms of payment (30-60-90 days, perhaps within 10 days if you offer to give a discount).
- Do NOT quote a job sight unseen!!!
- Respect all deadlines, no matter what.
- If you can’t meet a deadline, notify the client immediately.
- Provide quality work every single time—don’t get sloppy or hurried.
- Proofread, proofread, proofread!
- Your trustworthiness is very important!
- Maintain client confidentiality at all times!
- Be flexible. There will most likely be last-minute changes, so be gracious!
- Decide how many free changes you’ll make prior to charging extra.
- Beware of the client who wants “just a few words,” “only one page,” etc.
- Ask questions if you think there is an error in the original or if you don’t understand something.
- Accept criticism as constructive and learn from it.
- Explain cultural differences to the client in order to avoid possible gaffes.
- Do not tell the client how to run his or her business.
- Do not accept work for which you are obviously unqualified.
- Ask for assistance from another colleague if you feel you cannot complete the job on your own.
- Use the client’s glossaries, even if you disagree with them. Again, ask questions if you think there is an error in the original or if you don’t understand something.
- Enjoy yourself!!

Ethics…
- See ATA’s Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices (www.atanet.org, click on Membership)—and follow it.
- See the Judiciary Interpreters Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics, available at the website of The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (www.najit.org/ethics.html)—and follow it.
- See the Code of Ethics for Interpreters in Health Care, available from the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (www.ncihc.org)—and follow it.

Bookkeeping…
- Set aside a portion of your income for payment of taxes:
  — Self-employed Social Security;
  — Federal Income Tax;
  — State Income Tax;
  — Any county or city taxes, fees, and charges.
- Hire a professional accountant to give you advice on how to set up your books and to do your taxes at the end of the year.
- Set up a chart of accounts.
• Use accounting software (i.e., Quicken or other bookkeeping software).
• Get a business bank account.
• Be business-like!!!

Record-keeping...
• You **must** keep business records.
• Send invoices out together with each completed job, not weeks after the job has been delivered.
• Keep receipts of everything, filed under the same chart or account headings as your bookkeeping software.
• Keep a copy of your invoice (indicate when it was paid; follow-up when it is overdue).
• Use bookkeeping and accounting software.
• Pay your taxes quarterly, in advance.
• Pay other translators/interpreters promptly.
• Keep a notebook of: car mileage, meals, tolls, parking, etc., when traveling (these are tax deductible).

Computer Age...
• Learn MS PowerPoint, Excel, Word.
• Learn other programs your client or languages may require.
• Become familiar with terminology management software (TRADOS, Déjà Vu, SDLX, others).
• Learn to attach and send files via e-mail and how to zip/unzip files.
• Learn how to convert and open files that have different extensions (.pdf, .rtf, .doc, .mim, etc.).
• Learn how to insert clip art or charts in Excel.
• Get A Translator’s Tool Box for the 21st Century A Computer Primer for Translators by Jost Zetzsche, published by International Writers’ Group, LLC, P.O. Box 1098, 770 Beach Boulevard, Winchester Bay, Oregon 97467; (541)271-0503, toolbox@internationalwriters.com.
• Jost also publishes Tool Kit, a biweekly newsletter (in English) at toolkit@internationalwriters.com containing updated and additional information that is well worth subscribing to.

Filing Systems
Purpose of a filing system:
• To find what you need when you need it.
• For preparation of glossaries.
• For legal, personal, or tax purposes.
• For other interests.
• These files can be paper (in filing cabinets, drawers, cupboards, shelves, boxes, baskets, etc.) or electronic (disk, CD-ROMs, magnetic tape, etc.).
• The only limitation is space.
• Clean out files periodically.
• Spend time mapping out your work patterns—think things through!
• Sort files by client, subject, or date.
• Separate legal, accounting, and tax files.
• Separate follow-up files.
• Separate pending files.
• **Back up all electronic files at all times!!!!**

If filing by client:
• By name.
• By date or other numbering system the client uses.

If filing by subject:
• One file or one section per subject.
• Add newspaper/magazine articles, drawings, maps, etc., per subject (these are also good sources of terminology).

Legal files can include:
• Personal papers (house, car, insurance, diplomas, birth/marriage/death certificates, will, living will, power(s) of attorney).
• Keep these in a fireproof box.

Bookkeeping and tax files can include:
• All receipts and bills.
• All paid invoices.
• All bank statements and checks (balance them **every** month!).
• All credit cards—check accuracy **every** month and watch out for identity theft!

Follow-up files can include:
• Unpaid invoices.
• Clients’ forms for invoicing.

Future reference files can include:
• Price quotes provided.
• Pending projects or telephone calls.
• Follow-up on these within a reasonable period of time.

Files are not worth keeping if:
• The translation bureau keeps an electronic file.
• The client keeps an electronic file (keep in mind that their computers are also susceptible to crashes!).
• The job was small or unimportant.
• The job was from a one-time client.

Files that are worth keeping:
• Documents that clients will request minor or major changes on (watch for software changes over time and update old files as necessary).
• Materials that will change very little.

Continued on p.53
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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Nicaragua**
Managua
March 4, 2006
Registration Deadline: February 17, 2006

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.

New Certified Members

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

### English into German
- Esma A. Gregor
  Woodside, NY
- Iris U. Nussbaum
  Berne, Switzerland

### English into Spanish
- Ruby Aldana
  Dallas, TX
- Javier Barreiro
  Rancho Cordova, CA
- Tatiana Contreras
  Lakewood, CO

### Japanese into English
- David R. Newby
  Philadelphia, PA
- Michael Ring
  Ramat Gan, Israel

Active Membership Review

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

- Melinda Gonzalez-Hibner
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- Milly Suazo-Martinez
  Allentown, PA
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  Indianapolis, IN
- Ana M. Corbacho
  Davis, CA
- Paola Maria Nuñez
  Mexico City, Mexico
- Antonio E. Rangel
  Rockville, MD
Business Smarts:
Freelancers and Confidentiality

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.

At its meeting in July 2005, ATA’s Board of Directors approved the creation of a new Business Practices Education Committee to help disseminate information to ATA members about sound business practices. As part of that effort, the Committee will answer questions submitted by members in a monthly Chronicle column.

Our very first letter expresses a concern about Social Security numbers.

Q. “I’ve become increasingly aware of requests by agencies to submit my Social Security number for minimal assignments or even before any assignment is offered. Yet no assurance is given to me that such confidential personal information is safeguarded from misuse or even identity theft. What can I do to minimize this risk, which appears to be increasing in today’s environment of mergers and acquisitions, even in our industry?”

—Worried Freelancer

A. “One way to get around reporting a personal Social Security number on a Form W9 is to apply for a so-called “Employer Identification Number” (EIN). The IRS (www.irs.gov/businesses/small) will issue such a number, within one day, to anyone who is self-employed. You do not have to employ others to get such a number.

Since I try to keep my personal and business finances strictly separate, I use only this EIN number for W-9 reporting to agencies. I feel that the use of this second number reduces my risk and does not allow people to check into my financial situation. I also report my earnings on IRS and other tax forms under the EIN.”

—Dorothee Racette

Send your questions about the business of translation and interpretation to:

ATA Chronicle—BPEC Q&A
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314
Fax: (703) 683-6122
E-mail: businesspractices@atanet.org

Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.

ATA members can also discuss business issues online at the following Yahoo! group:

http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/ata_business_practices

You will need to register with Yahoo! (at no charge) if you have not already done so, and provide your ATA member number in order to join the group.

Running Your Translating/Interpreting Business From Home Continued from p. 51

• Your resume (update periodically, re-emphasize specialties as needed).
• Fax cover sheets per client.
• Electronic invoice forms per client.
• Personal mailing lists.
• Make a directory for each client, with files or subdirectories for each project, or subject directories with alphabetical files.
• Use document management or indexing software if you have a lot of files.

Consider becoming a member of the following professional organizations...
• ATA—www.atanet.org, (703) 683-6100.
• A local ATA chapter.
• Your local Chamber of Commerce.
• Any and all translator/interpreter groups, or any other group in your areas of interest and expertise.

Visit us on the web at www.atanet.org
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Animal lovers are a particular breed, and horse enthusiasts, it seems, are even more passionate than most.

Yet goings-on at the Bartabas Equestrian Academy, housed in the Grand Stables of the palace at Versailles, may still raise a few eyebrows, at least as recounted on the English version of that institution’s website.

A quote from guru Bartabas himself sets the stage: “To speak with a horse, there does not need words. It is a carnal pressure which feeds our dreams.”

The site goes on to review the man, the teaching, the shows, and the techniques: “Under the contaminating passion of Bartabas and Jacques Coupry, the riders conduct their dressage with careful attention and patient listening.” And shows certainly take place in striking surroundings: “Outstanding both their size and the magnificence of their architecture, these stables undoubtedly are the most beautiful worldwide.”

In short, while the English texts are certainly understandable they are skewed enough to demonstrate at every turn that this is a corner-of-ze-kitchen-table translation, unlike the top-tier equestrian talent so obviously on display.

Our call to the Academy’s communications team revealed that they had taken the opposite tack to usual practice in would-be bilingual websites by starting with a smooth text from a professional translator. Parts of this are still on display at www.acadequestre.fr.

But when information was updated, in-house, non-native talent was used as an inexpensive stopgap pending a full-fledged revamp in early 2006. A basic rule of thumb in the language industry is that translators work into their native language only.

“We will be revisiting our English texts early next year,” our contact assured us, noting that a professional translator would be called back in at that point.

In the meantime, penny-pinching pulls the entire site down, as does a slipshod approach to proofreading—“Beautifully restored for the Academy of équestrian arts, the stables now accommodate some thirsty horses.”

Such beautiful animals in such a glorious setting deserve better. But there’s no use closing the stable door after the native speaker has bolted.

Hot and Healthy, Pity About the Text

Meanwhile, in Dubai, the food elves at Hunter Foods Limited are hard at work producing spicy Shikar brand “Gourmet Green Chilli & Garlic Poppadums,” touted in English as “guilt free snacks.”

Unfortunately, phrases on the French label went through the blender, too, including a prominent la culpabilité libère des snacks—literally “guilt liberates snacks.” This is computer translation, confirmed by “crushed garlic” translated as Ecrasé ail; computers don’t necessarily know that word order can change from one language to another.

And yet other small bits of French text on the box are reasonably accurate. Our guess: Shikar took a last-minute shortcut for missing snippets, perhaps as print deadlines loomed. Hunter Foods was clever enough to use “Shikar” (hunt in Urdu) as its U.K. brand name. It’s a pity the language sensitivity stopped there.

More Food for Thought

In Argentina, a reader flags odd English dishes on menus in restaurants in both Salta and Buenos Aires, where vacío al horno is sold as “Emptiness to the oven” and papas al vapor are “Popes to the steam.” Vacío is actually a cut of beef, while papas are potatoes.

Computer-generated translation is traditionally a direct route to egg on face, with these examples a reminder that food specialties are among the most difficult translations around—is it that passionate cooks enjoy giving flamboyant names to their dishes, or that basic ingredients have so many colorful, colloquial names?

Often a simple description of ingredients and how they are prepared is the best solution, say the experts—after all, what’s wrong with “filet of beef with fresh mushrooms in a red wine sauce?”

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.

With thanks to Bob Blake, John Davidson, Rod Riesco, and María Lebret-Sánchez.
Elsevier's Dictionary of Automation Technics: in English, German, French, and Russian

Compiled by: B. Zhelyazova
Publisher: Elsevier
Publication date: 2005 (hardcover)
No. of pages: 996
ISBN: 044451533X
List price: £103 €150 $165
Available from: amazon.com Barnes & Noble (www.bn.com) alibris abebooks.com Blackwells

Reviewed by: Alex Lane

The marketing material for this tome describes the entries as being from the fields of “automation, technology of management and regulation, computing machine and data processing, computer control, automation of industry, laser technology, theory of information and theory of signals, theory of algorithms and programming, philosophical bases of cybernetics, cybernetics, and mathematical models.” I found this to be a fairly aggressive agenda for a dictionary containing a jolt less than 13,000 terms, even if we add the 4,000 cross-references contained in the book to that sum. Interestingly, the list does not include the key two words from the title—“automation technics”—which is a fairly arcane term that nets fewer than 200 hits on Google and for which no entry can be found in the book itself.

Physically, the book is solid, has a nice heft, and is visually appealing. Inside, I found the display font to be readable and the layout to be fairly standard: guidewords are displayed on the upper outboard side of each page (thus, delineating terms for each pair of facing pages), with entries arranged in two columns beneath. Entries are arranged alphabetically in English, with German, French, and Russian equivalents listed below each entry. Entries occupy about 65% of the book’s approximately 1,000 pages. The rest of the volume is divided into indices listing German, French, and Russian terms with corresponding numbers pointing to the entries in the main part of the book. I reviewed the book primarily as to its usefulness to a translator working in the Russian and English language pair, though I did make use of my French and German skills at times in my review.

Apropos of the theory of information, it is said that “information is proportional to astonishment,” meaning that the value of information rises depending on how surprising it is. An example of high information content in terminology is the pairing of the term “eigenvector” with the term “sensor,” because the pairing is surprising, i.e., one cannot easily derive one from the other without special knowledge (of, say, German or mathematics). An example of low information content—which I found to occur uncomfortably often during my review—might be the term “processing capability” (возможность обработки), which is followed by “processing capacity” (производительность обработки), “processing cycle” (цикл обработки), “processing method” (метод обработки), “processing module” (модуль обработки), and five more entries that follow the same basic scheme of modifier + noun, where no individual word is much of a mystery. (It might be argued that, in cases such as this, definitions given for the other languages might have higher information content, thus justifying their inclusion in a dictionary, but I did not find this to be the case. Typically, all three definitions were simply combinations of otherwise ordinary words.)

In addition, I found the equivalent terms given for entries to be too brief, rarely exceeding two alternatives offered for a term. This tends to reduce the usefulness of the dictionary, in my opinion, since a number of terms end up short-shrifthed. For example, only чувствительный элемент and детектор are given in the entry for “sensor,” ignoring the widely used term датчик and the less popular сенсор (forms of which are nonetheless used in this dictionary for all Russian terms where sensor is used as a modifier). Similarly, “fluid flow control” is rendered as регулирование потока жидкости, leaving the quite serviceable (and in my mind, preferable) term регулирование расхода жидкости out in the cold. A byproduct of this brevity is a strong flavor of inconsistency as you encounter various other, correct ways of rendering words in other entries.

There is evidence of poor proofreading here and there in the book, things you would not expect to find so often in a high-end book from a serious publisher. Perhaps the most egregious example I found was the use of “principle” for “principal” in
both an entry and a cross-reference pointing to that entry.

What annoyed me more about this dictionary was the uncomfortably common occurrence of entries about which I have serious doubts. The entry that got me started in this direction was “process control system,” which is rendered unashamedly (and literally) as

As another example, “process equipment design” is rendered as

In the end, if it were merely a matter of what I perceive to be an excess of common word pairs among entries or the lack of some useful terms, then your buy/no-buy decision basically would boil down to answering the question: “How useful will this book be to me?” Indeed, such a tome might be very useful to someone just starting out in this area of technical translation. However, I feel the brevity of the entries and the occurrence of a number of entries with whose renderings I would take issue drastically reduces the book’s usefulness to the less experienced translator. Thus, overall, I find it difficult to recommend this book.

Alex Lane is an ATA-certified Russian-to-English translator. Before devoting himself full-time to translation and interpretation, he worked for nearly a decade as a licensed professional engineer (P.E., Florida, currently inactive) in the fields of control system design and implementation and computer engineering. Contact: words@galexi.com.

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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.

Many of us at one time or another have gotten ourselves roped into a Big Project. These situations usually seem to occur when an enterprise—say, a law firm—suddenly spews out millions of words, and virtually all translators with that particular language pair who can demonstrate that they are able to sit up and take nourishment are called upon to help on short notice, often at very favorable rates. Imagine the Bigness of the Project undertaken in Spain during the waning years of its Islamic period, when followers of Islam, along with Jews, Christians, and Mozarabians (Christians in Iberia deeply influenced by, and inclined toward, Islam) undertook within a relatively short time to translate almost the entire canon of ancient pre-Christian authors. Once lost to the West, the knowledge these scholars imparted has now been restored, thanks to professionals like us. Without our intervention, it never would have happened. You’re welcome, Western World!

[Abbreviations used with this column: Da-Danish; D-Dutch; E-English; F-French; G-German; Gr-Greek; H-Hungarian; I-Italian; Pt-Portuguese; Sl-Slovenian; Sp-Spanish; Sw-Swedish.]

New Queries

(D-E 1-06/1) In a report about e-government, a ProZ user had trouble with “aangaan van rechten.” Here’s the context, which no one can claim was too meager: “Burgers en bedrijven krijgt wordt in principe bepaald door burgers en bedrijven zelf, met uitzondering van de bijzondere handhavingstaken van de overheid. Voor het afhandelen van transacties (aangaan van rechten, nakomen van plichten) zullen burgers en bedrijven uiteraard de relevante informatie moeten verstrekken, wat geregeld is in de betreffende wetten.” What to make of this?

(E-Da 1-06/2) Legal problems exist for this ProZ user. No, not the kind that cause a person to lose sleep, but rather translation work. The worrisome phrase appears in bold: The construction, validity and performance of this agreement will be governed by the laws of the Netherlands. However, this shall not prevent us from bringing any action in the court of any other jurisdiction for injunctive or similar relief. It’s not Dutch, but Danish that is wanted for this.

(E-E 1-06/3) Beancurd dregs, says a Chinese translator who frequents Lantra-L, is the literal translation of a Mandarin phrase that indicates poor quality, as in the Three Gorges [civil engineering] project is not like beancurd dregs. But what nice and colloquial equivalent can be found for this in English?

(E-Gr 1-06/4) The term causing problems for this ProZ user is Downline organization, as in Group Volume or GV is the total of a Member’s PV and the PV of all the Members in their Downline organization. GV is reset to zero at the beginning of each calendar month. The context, if you haven’t already guessed it, is sales and marketing. What is this organization, and how could it be rendered into acceptable Greek?

(E-I 1-06/5) The term call ticket system understandably posed problems for a ProZ user when attempting to track down what it might be in Italian. Here’s where it came from: In the Request Estimates section tracks the estimated effort and associated costs to do the work. Tracking effort and cost is useful for new project requests and work requests.

(E-Sp 1-06/6) This phrase, model footing and pile experiments, occurred in a report on the activities in a mechanical laboratory dealing with soil mechanics. The ProZ user attempting to deal with this wanted good Spanish for it. Obviously, the best reply is from someone whose resume includes working in a soil mechanics lab.

(F-E 1-06/7) Software programming, never a piece of cake, is the context of this query from a Lantran: “Nous allons configurer le dépôt de document de notre CMS afin qu’il communiqué bien avec...” Hints are needed for how to accurately deliver the entire phrase into English.

(F-E 1-06/8) A ProZer got stuck with a report in French that analyzed the competition faced by a radar technology company. The phrase in bold print posed problems for her: “1) une compréhension de la structuration de la gamme de vos concurrents (strate commerciale—architecture de marque) et des bénéfices clients préemptés ou non.” How to put this last into English?

(G-E 1-06/9) This mechanical engineering query came from ProZ, and the problem phrase was “Rückstauverschluss mit verbesserter Zulauf—Teilverschluss-Klappe.” The
request was for Polish, but the English might be almost equally challenging.

(I-E 1-06/10) This must have been a tough one because nearly two hours had gone by on ProZ and no one had attempted an answer. In the field of thermoforming, “svolgifilm” proved a difficult term. Let’s put a little more meat on the bones: “Scatto termico motore svolgifilm contenitore.”

(Pt-E 1-06/11) A Lantra-L member had trouble with “copo da suspensão” in this automotive text: “Verificou-se que no copo da suspensão se encontra gravado a frio - alto relevo - o VIN nº XXXXXXXX, que não corresponde ao primitivo, com evidentes sinais de rasura mecânica, por desbaste.” French was originally wanted for this, but we’ll take English if need be.

(SI-E 1-06/12) A hearty first-time welcome to Slovenian (we never turn down a challenge). A ProZ member got stuck with a highly abbreviated reference in a document having to do with radiology report on a patient with lumbar problems. The problematic phrase was “Nap. dgn.: Lumbalgija i.o.” The only part she could reasonably presume to understand was “dgn.,” which likely stood for “diagnosa.”

(Sw-E 1-06/13) Bill Halstrick has offered complaint merry-go-round for “besvärskarusell” in the following quote, but is far from sure his rendering is optimal. The entire phrase: “Ala var medvetna om att skolan var i akut behov av bättre utrymme. En besvärskarusell kunde ha försenat bygget med flera år.”

(Sw-E 1-06/14) The terms (14.a) “kona till bränslelager” and (14.b) “dosskruvar” were problems for a frequent flyer on Lantra-L Airlines in the following paragraph: “Vi kommer den 30/11 at leverera en Blue flame typ BF 30 och en BF 60. Dessa är kompleta med var sitt styrsystem, kona till bränslelager diam 600 med stativ samt spänning och 2 st dosskruvar längd 1400 mm inkl växellådor.” What are the two items?

Replies to Old Queries

(E-D 9-05/1) (radical scavengers): As Denzel Dyer reports, a radical is a chemical, usually organic, that includes an unpaired electron. This is quite a reactive structure, and if the desire is to suppress undesired reactions, a radical scavenger might be employed. The Dutch for this might be quite similar to the German: “Radikalfänger.”

(E-Pt 9-05/4) (morph-into-monster): Gabe Bokor provides a simple equivalent for this, “transformação em monstro.”

(E-Pt 10-05/3) (reserving jurisdiction over termination of marital status): Enéas Theodoro Jr., though a legal translator himself, felt it necessary to consult a Brazilian lawyer about this, and she suggested “extinção” for termination, and he himself suggested “estado civil” for marital status. To present the whole feijoada, so to speak, he offers “Reserva de competência sobre a extinção do casamento.”

(E-Sp 7-05/5) (crisis center): Simply known as “refugio” by the first wave of Cuban immigrants coming to Miami who needed food, medical aid, supplies, and sometimes overnight stays, the term seems adequate for today. In contrast, “centro de crisis” implies a focal point for where a crisis is actually going on, be it political, military, or meteorological. Jarl says that Sonia Claro’s suggestion of “centro de coordinación” simply indicates a coordination center, such as one used for emergency phone calls or communication to police or fire departments in order to speed up their operations.

(F-E 10-05/5) (statements by psychiatric patient) [see page 46, October 2005 Chronicle]: Linda Beamer would like to know what the patient is being treated for, and WHAT “on peut ambitionner” is. But nonetheless she is willing to offer this as a translation: The patient feels he keeps himself fairly well in line. He has occasionally experienced difficulty setting limits. The patient says you can think about actually doing it once or twice, but then that’s it.

(G-E 8-05/5) (Schweinemetz): So many replies came in for this one that the Translation Inquirer deems it only right to save them for the February issue, to do even minimal justice to those who responded. Thanks to you all!

(G-E 10-05/6) (Wandschrankan): Selma Benjamin renders the phrase found on page 46 of the October 2005 issue as from the classical built-in cupboard to the state-of-the-art wall cupboard. Andrea Black and Sibylle Frnka call the second “Wandschrankan” a “Schrankwand,” which would make the initial query a typo. Andrea calls the second item a piece of furniture typically found in the living room and used to hold a television set, books, and various display items. Her suggestion: From stylish wall closet to clever wall unit.

(G-E 10-05/7) (Pflugfalzkopf): Sibylle Frnka says this is an attachment on the part of the machinery that folds the paper, and that it is shaped like a plow.
September 2005 issue]: Denes Marton says this means something like they work according to a graduated schedule. Hans Fischer calls the next-to-last word illegible due to garble. Gabe Bokor indicates that it is a Gantt diagram.

In view of the lack of extended context for the second fragment of the query, “halós védelemelet [again note the spelling correction], Denes can only say that it is something like network protecting element or protecting device with grid. Hans Fischer notes that “véde” means protective, while “elem” is either element, cell, or battery.

(I-E 8-05/7) (odierna attrice): Elizabeth Hill says the latter word, or a variant, “attore,” is a plaintiff.

(I-E 8-05/8) (controvolte): Again, Elizabeth Hill responds with the insight that a “volte” and “controvolte” are ceiling vaults (counterforce archbands hold the structure up).

(Sp-E 7-05/11) (Rico vacilón): Boy, has this one brought out the creative and explanatory juices! Mara Tepper has a lyric for the whole thing: Let your eyelids droop against the smoky air / as the crooner onstage announces with a growl / that the next tune for our dancing pleasure / will be “Tasty Teaser” this is, of course / Rico Vacilón.

Jarl Roberto Hallemalm-Ashfield says that Rich Playboy is the seemingly most appropriate song translation for this group’s musical intention. Jarl adds that the song title is enough to bring back a vanished era, the early 1960s when this and other songs, heard in Miami over the radio on programs like “La Tremenda Corte,” had the capacity to soften the tears of the refugees and convert them into laughter at times. However, it should be mentioned that the seriously-thought-out implications of the Playboy role are anything but funny.

Marián Pico’s altogether different take on this is that “el vacilón” was a name made up for a dance number with a cha-cha beat, composed in the 1950s in Cuba. Like the Locomotion and the Mashed Potato, it was the sole specimen in its genre. The refrain went like this: “Vacilón, qué rico vacilón. Cha cha cha, qué rico cha cha cha!” In English (It’s so much fun, the vacilón! It’s so much fun, cha cha cha!) In other words, “rico” = delightful, enjoyable, fun. “Vacilón” = a fun time, a blast. There is currently a radio show in Miami that makes fun of everyone and everything, entitled “El vacilón de la mañana.”

Lastly, Victor de la Puente notes that in many Latin American countries, “¡qué rico vacilón!” means What a great time! Wonderful party! Having a very good time! He notes that “vacilar” and “vacilarse” carry the same meanings.

(Sw-E 10-05/10) (Klädeskläder): This, says Peter Christensen, is translated into German in one of his dictionaries as “Tuchkleider.” Harriet Genberg says it is derived from “kläde” (a fine woolen fabric for Sunday or holiday dress) and “kläder” (clothing). In contrast, she says “vadmal,” a coarser, thicker, mostly homespun material, was used for everyday clothing.

I shall end with the error-provokes-humor department. This column was the site of a typo in E-Sp 9-04/1 (never gets old) in which “esfuerzos” (efforts) became “escurzos” (toads). But, as I asserted in a later column, quoting the late humorist Jean Shepherd, unconscious humor is the best kind, so such errors, as long as they do not become too frequent, just add to the appeal.

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A bou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Dreamt of war (may it never cease!)

As I learned in elementary school, the correct second line of James Leigh Hunt’s (1784-1859) poem is “Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace.” But even someone totally unfamiliar with the poem may think peace rather than war belongs in the second line, because “peace” is an expectable rhyme word.

Peace is even more conspicuous by its absence in the Sirventes in Praise of War, attributed to the Provençal poet Bertran de Born (c. 1146 - c. 1214). Here is the fifth stanza of the original Provensal, together with Ronnie Apter’s literal translation:

I tell you that there is no such savor for me
in eating, drinking, or sleeping,
as there is when I hear crying:
and I see fallen in the ditches,
in the weeds, the lowly and great,
and I see the dead who through their ribs
have stumps with flag-silks.[

The rhymes on -atz, repeated in every stanza, together with the other harsh iz sounds, contribute to the poem’s driving ferocity. But among all the -atz’s, there is no “atz” (“peace”) until the very last word of the poem, in a phrase warning against being at peace for too long.

Most critics take the poem at face value. Dante places the poet in hell for being a warmonger. But, to a modern sensibility at least, the poem’s over-the-top pro-war stance can also be taken as an ironic and blackly humorous call for peace.

Ronnie Apter, in her book Digging for the Treasure: Translation after Pound, discusses several translations of the poem into English. First is the Victorian John F. Rowbotham, who follows the original sense, but, to maintain the rhyme and meter of the original, employs as rhymes the liquid English sounds -igh and -elling, sounds quite unlike the more ferocious -atz and -atge. The Edwardian Barbara Smythe also follows the sense, rhyme, and meter of the original, though she changes the rhymes from verse to verse. However, her struggle to maintain the rhyme scheme causes her to invert English word order, among other things, and makes her translation far inferior to Rowbotham’s. Nonetheless, perhaps because her translation is complete whereas Rowbotham’s is not, her translation, first published in 1911, was reprinted in 1929 and then again in 1966.

Ezra Pound’s translation of 1909, the famous “Sestina: Altaforte,” strives to reproduce some of the poem’s overall effects, rejecting formal equality in favor of formal substitution. A sestina uses a single set of six words, ordered differently in different stanzas, to end each of the six lines of a stanza. It is thus as obsessive and repetitive as the original, though in a different way. Pound also repeats many non-end words, and his English phrases mimic the harsh ferocity of the original: “swords clash”; “swords swords opposing”; “spiked breast”; “winds shriek”; and “stinks peace.” Most contemporary readers would consider Pound’s translation an improvement over the others, but the sestina form, tied to six end-words, cannot mimic the original’s increasing fierceness of action as the poem progresses. Also Pound uses “peace” as an end-word. It therefore occurs in every stanza (as in “stinks peace”) and is not withheld to the end.

Any pro-war poem can be taken as an ironic anti-war poem by someone so inclined, but all three of the translations discussed lack the increasing ferocity and/or the withholding of peace that make plausible the reading of the sirventes in this way. In 1970, James J. Wilhelm, to emphasize the anti-war interpretation of the poem, made it explicit by changing the ending: “Barons, put up as pawns / Those castles, cities, and villas well-stored / Before bringing each other war!”

A definitive English translation of Bertran de Born’s sirventes has yet to be written.

Humor and Translation

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@earthlink.net or via snail mail to Mark Herman, 1409 E. Gaylord Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-3626. Discussions of the translation of humor and examples thereof are preferred, but humorous anecdotes about translators, translations, and mistranslations are also welcome. Include copyright information and permission if relevant.

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