In this issue:

Get a Head Start on Your Taxes
Are You a Band-Aid Interpreter?
The Team Interpreting Approach
LSP’s and Linguistic Departments are migrating to beetext flow. Here’s why:

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Taxes? Now?
By Dorothee Racette and Nicholas Hartmann
The end of the year is actually the perfect time to think about taxes!

An Overview of Vendor Management Today
By Charles Campbell
Why give business away by saying that your company “doesn’t do that language” when you could invest time and energy in finding, qualifying, and maintaining a network of vendors to provide these services?

Band-Aid Interpreter or Culture Consultant?
A Different Approach to Culture Brokering
By Zarita Araujo-Lane, Edited by Vonessa Phillips
Good interpreting is not just based on accuracy, but on how the interpreter manages the dynamics of the triadic encounter.

Team Interpreting: Does It Really Work?
By Giovanna L. Carnet
A discussion of the issues facing interpreters who would like to introduce the team interpreting concept into their districts, including tips on how to approach the subject.

An Update on Argentine Political Jargon
By Rut Simcovich
As a living reflection of reality, language is constantly evolving thanks to popular creativity, which uses current developments in any field to coin new and ingenious ways of describing things.

The Critical Role of the Medical Interpreter: An ATA Seminar
By Ivonne Blandon
Another opportunity to learn from experts in the field.

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We Want You!

The ATA Chronicle enthusiastically encourages members to submit articles of interest to the fields of translation and interpretation. For Submission Guidelines, log onto www.atanet.org/chronicle. The ATA Chronicle is published 11 times per year, with a combined November/December issue. Submission deadlines are two months prior to publication date.

Stay Tuned

Look for coverage of ATA’s 47th Annual Conference in New Orleans in the January issue.

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Ivonne W. Blandon is a partner in an English-→Spanish interpretation and translation practice in the Kansas City metropolitan area. She practices in both the legal and medical interpretation fields, specializing in the translation of technical and human resource manuals, employee training presentations, and general business forms and letters. She has a business degree from the University of California and attended extensive training at the Southern California School of Interpretation, where she mastered in simultaneous and consecutive interpretation. She also does freelance marketing translation for the wine industry in her native Chile. Contact: imw2b@yahoo.com.

Charles Campbell is the president of spanishbackoffice SA, a provider of Spanish translation and project management services, with offices in Córdoba and Mendoza, Argentina. He was born in New Zealand and lived in the U.S. for three years. He has been living in South America for the last 10 years. He has recently given talks at events such as ATA’s Translation Company Division 2006 conference in New Jersey and the ProZ conference in Buenos Aires. Contact: contact@spanishbackoffice.com.

Giovanna L. Carnet is the owner of All World Translation Services, L.L.C. in Sioux City, Iowa. She is a certified court interpreter in Iowa and Nebraska, and has been interpreting in legal and medical settings since 1996. In addition to ATA, she is a member of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators and the Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association. Contact: awtranslate@aol.com.

Nicholas Hartmann began working full-time as an independent technical and scientific translator in 1984, and now specializes in translating patents and related documents for attorneys and corporate clients in the U.S. and Europe. He has served ATA as director and secretary, administrator of the Science and Technology Division, chair of the Client Education Committee and the Science and Technology Information Committee, and co-chair of the Business Practices Education Committee. He has also been a member of ATA’s Terminology Committee and The ATA Chronicle Editorial Board. He holds ATA certification in French-→English, German-→English, and Italian-→English. Contact: nh@nhartmann.com.

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Vanessa A. Phillips is the director of the Cross Cultural Communication Institute at Cross Cultural Communication Systems, Inc. She is a Portuguese-→English legal and medical interpreter trained at Bentley College in Massachusetts. She is a contributor and editor of the Art of Medical Interpretation training manual series. She travels nationwide to present on healthcare interpreting and training. Contact: vonessapcosta@gmail.com.

Dorothee Racette works as a full-time freelance translator from her home in upstate New York. She is an ATA-certified (German-→English) translator specializing in medical and biomedical texts. She served as the administrator of ATA’s German Language Division from 2000 to 2004. She is an ATA director and co-chair of the Business Practices Education Committee. Contact: dracette@hughes.net.

Rut Simcovich has been an Argentine freelance English-→Spanish translator and interpreter since 1971. She is the manager of Meeting House, a conference services company. In 1996, she established the Rut Simcovich Interpreters’ School, emphasizing the role of interpreters and translators as facilitators of intercultural communication. She is the former president of the Argentine Association of Translators and Interpreters. In addition to ATA, she is a member of the International Association of Conference Interpreters. She works for clients such as the World Bank, the British Embassy, and the Coca-Cola Company. Contact: rsimcovich@fibertel.com.ar.
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As I write this column, I am eagerly anticipating our conference in New Orleans, where more than 1,200 of us will gather. Next up will be the January ATA Board meeting, when we will again take an extra day for planning and governance review. This is when we map out long-term strategy for the association. If you have ideas about the direction of the Association or new projects we should take on, yearend is a good time to send them to president@atanet.org so that they can be discussed at the January meeting.

In late September I represented ATA at the 40th anniversary conference of the Swiss Association of Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters (ASTTI, www.astti.ch). It was a great opportunity to meet with other association presidents and exchange ideas. It is quite interesting that ASTTI and ATA have many similar concerns, particularly about the domestic and global translation markets.

I was among several association presidents interviewed for Hieronymus, the ASTTI journal. The interview will appear in the December 2006 issue, and will be reprinted in a future issue of The ATA Chronicle. It was during this interview that my interviewer, Margret Powell-Joss, and I were surprised to find out how similar our associations’ concerns were, despite the differences in size, demographics, and geography. (ASTTI has about 350 members, with most having French, German, or Italian as one of their languages. It had 250 attendees at the conference.) Among the common concerns are standards and supporting the domestic market by emphasizing quality and specialization. A core mission of both associations is to educate clients on how to buy good translation and the need to hire qualified translators and interpreters, along with continuing education programs to help members maintain and upgrade their translating and interpreting skills.

In the coming year I hope to continue this “quality crusade.” I will again represent ATA at the Translation Summit in Salt Lake City, Utah, on March 12, 2007, where we expect to bring in clients (direct clients as well as language services companies) to hear their concerns and stress to them that you get what you pay for—quality is the key to success. I welcome any suggestions you may have for additional outlets to get the word out to clients. Please send them to president@atanet.org.

Enjoy the holidays and “see” you next year!
With the Annual Conference behind us, we look forward to the New Year. But first, two noteworthy items from 2006:

Membership: Congratulations on another record year for ATA membership. At press time, we had 9,716 members, with a few weeks to go for the year. This surpasses 2005’s record membership of 9,525.

New Orleans: The 47th Annual Conference in New Orleans attracted over 1,200 attendees from 35 countries, plus a sold out Exhibit Hall and Job Marketplace. The January issue of The ATA Chronicle will feature full conference coverage.

Now, looking forward...

Certification: For those members who received their certification prior to January 1, 2004, the first continuing education reporting date is January 1, 2007. ATA-certified members will be sent more information about submitting their continuing education records to ATA Headquarters. The submission information will also be posted online.

For now, if you would like more information on the continuing education requirements, please check out www.atanet.org/certification/about cont_overview.php and the other links under the Certification: Continuing Education for ATA Certification section of the website, which provide more information on the program.

May 4-6, 2007
ATA Energy & Oil Conference
Houston, Texas
www.atanet.org

May 31-June 3, 2007
ATA Medical Division
First Mid-Year Conference
Cleveland, Ohio
www.ata-divisions.org/MD
Report of the Inspector of Elections

For election of three directors for three-year terms:

Note: Required to elect is highest vote count.
Number of Votes Cast: 522
Spoiled Votes: 1

Elected: Gabe Bokor
Elected: Claudia Angelelli
Elected: Virginia Perez-Santalla

Results:
Claudia Angelelli: 283
Gabe Bokor: 290
Jean Leblon: 168
Beth Nazar: 131
Virginia Perez-Santalla: 263
Alexandra Russell-Bitting: 255
Aaron Ruby: 18
Arlene Kelly: 1
Joseph Hitti: 1
Jeffrey Hayes: 1
Jackie Murgida: 1

Number of Votes Cast: 522
Spoiled Votes: 1
Elected: Gabe Bokor
Elected: Claudia Angelelli
Elected: Virginia Perez-Santalla

ByLaws Revision:

Number of Votes Cast: 451
Required to Adopt: 302

Votes FOR Revision: 346
Votes AGAINST Revision: 103
Spoiled Votes: 2

The Bylaws Revision is Adopted.

Certified by:
Jim Lochrie
Inspector of Elections

Proposed Bylaws Change Chapters Officers and ATA Membership Requirements

The following is the proposed amendment to the bylaws intended to ease the membership requirements for chapter elected officials. Please note that the bylaws revision is denoted by crossing through text to be deleted. While the bylaws will still require chapter presidents and vice-presidents to be ATA voting members, other elected chapter officials will no longer need to be ATA members if the bylaws revision is approved. In order to be enacted, all bylaws amendments and revisions need to be approved by a two-thirds vote of the voting members.

Proposed Bylaws Change
(approved by the ATA Board of Directors, August 11, 2006, for submission to the membership)

ARTICLE XII
Chapters and Divisions
Section 3 - Membership and Bylaws

a. Membership in the Association is not required for membership in a local Chapter. The president and vice-president(s) of the Chapter must be voting members of the Association. Other elected officials must be individual members in good standing of the Association. Individual Chapter members may vote in chapter elections.

Resolution:
Votes FOR Resolution: 220
Votes AGAINST Resolution: 194

The alternate resolution passed.
RESOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION
(hereinafter also “ATA” and “the Association”)

WHEREAS
the infliction of torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment is abhorrent to all civilized societies and has been condemned by national governments and international organizations, including the United Nations in its Declaration and Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

WHEREAS
interpreters and translators strive to facilitate communication in the service of humanity, to create understanding and respect between speakers of different languages, and to break down linguistic and cultural barriers in order to ensure equal rights to all regardless of language; and

WHEREAS
members of the American Translators Association, in accordance with the Association’s Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices, commit themselves to the highest standards of performance and ethical behavior;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION
condemns and deplores torture in any form, anywhere;

explicitly defines knowing participation in, facilitation or countenancing of, cooperation with, or failure to report torture or other mental or physical abuse or degradation of any human being as unethical behavior that violates ATA’s Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices;

requires that its members who become aware that torture has occurred, is occurring, or is intended, promptly report those facts to a person or persons capable of taking preventive or corrective action;

expects governments and other national and international entities to refrain from retribution or other punitive action against interpreters and translators when they refuse to participate in or cooperate with the torture, abuse, or degradation of any human being; and

urges schools and programs responsible for the education and training of interpreters and translators to include in their curricula training in ethical behavior and in internationally recognized codes of professional conduct.

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Jill Sommer’s and Marita Marcano’s excellent article “What’s in a Word” (The ATA Chronicle, August 2006) rightly highlights the importance of the translator/client agreement on the method of charging for a given translation: by character, word, or page; by source or target; or by the hour. All of these are industry standards for certain tasks that are recognized around the world.

The authors discuss the issue of counting numbers and mention the argument that, “they should not be included...since they do not need to be translated.” This seems to me a fundamental fallacy for the reasons discussed below.

Translators Are Not Typists

We are remunerated not for the physical effort involved in pressing keys on a keyboard, but for using our brains (our knowledge, expertise, or experience). The fact that most translations are charged for by some variation on the idea of keystrokes is purely a convenience, since quantifying the work in other ways can be contentious and might meet with client resistance. I would suggest that charging by the hour (as lawyers and repair shops do) is far more logical, with the relevant hourly rate reflecting on the one hand the translator’s professional expertise, and on the other the supply versus demand relationship in that particular market.

However, as long as we know how many words we can translate per hour on average, it is possible to convert this to a rate per word (and the rate can even vary by the type of text being translated). If the text is provided as hard copy, numbers need to be keyed, and the time and effort should be paid for by the client.

Numbers Cannot Simply Be Glossed Over

Associated with the above is the fact that numbers cannot simply be glossed over as “not needing to be translated.” Numbers are culture-sensitive and must be written correctly within the context of the document. For example, when translating from German into English, I have to be aware of the fact that in the former there is a space between a number and its percentage sign; in the latter there is none. In German, commas are used for decimals and periods are used to separate digits into groups of three; the reverse is true in English. Localizing the text in accordance with these rules is part of a translator’s job and is dependent upon the translator having the appropriate knowledge and spending the necessary time on this task. Although it can be semi-automated by means of a discrete search-and-replace software function, automating this task completely is fraught with dangers and is likely to generate errors. And, of course, why should the translator not be compensated for knowing when to apply which automated function?

Incidentally, there is no need for macros, either during the above task or when using abbreviations to act as placeholders for long and frequently occurring words (see “The Ease of AutoCorrect,” Letters to the Editor, The ATA Chronicle, August 2006). I step manually through search-and-replace to substitute periods for commas in long chunks of financial reports. Similarly, I type “eee” if I know that the word “electromagnetic” will occur hundreds of times in a technical text, and replace it globally or discretely before spell-checking the document.

John Kinory MITI
Steeple Aston, England

Revisiting Word Counts

Now, more than ever, our children need to learn another language. So they can communicate, understand others and compete in a global environment. For the sake of our kids, it’s time to speak up for language education. Visit our website at www.discoverlanguages.org and get involved.

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Korean Language Division
Established

ATA is proud to announce the establishment of its newest division, the Korean Language Division. Please visit www.ata-divisions.org/KLD for more information. Also, be sure to subscribe to the discussion listserve 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.
For owners of non-incorporated small businesses, and especially sole proprietors, the end of the year is actually the perfect time to think about taxes. Not only does an hour of income assessment let you know how well you did in the past year, there is also some time left to plan before the 2006 tax year comes to a close.

Getting Your Income Figures Together

Ideally, you have been tracking your income with some kind of accounting software product. It is essential to account for your business and private expenses separately and to keep them in different computer files if using the same program to ensure that expense categories do not get mixed up. Many accounting software programs have classification functions that show you precisely how much money came in and how much was spent in which categories. These expense categories will come in handy when it comes to filling out your Schedule C to account for small business income.

Take a look at your income for the year and compare it with previous years. Are you in the same range? Why or why not? Is there anything that needs to change in the coming year?

If you do not currently use any software product for accounting, now is the perfect time to get one and install it in order to keep better track of your expenses in the New Year right from the start on January 1. You do not have to spend a lot.

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.
**Quick Tips**

- Review last year’s return and compare it to this year’s figures, and make sure you check the Schedule C figures for deductible expenses.
- Remember, your home office is deductible.
- Buy office supplies in late December, as this is the time office supply stores have sales.
- Use accounting software to keep track of your income.
- Keep business and personal expenses separate.
- Set aside tax-deferred savings for retirement.
- Set financial goals for the coming year.

---

**Look at Last Year’s Tax Return**

Regardless of whether you had your tax return prepared by a specialist or did it yourself, pull out a copy of last year’s return and compare it to this year’s figures. In particular, check the Schedule C figures for deductible expenses for such items as telephone, bank fees, travel expenses, repairs, and office equipment.

Based on the categorized expense information from your software program, you can determine whether this year’s business expenditures were roughly similar. Large discrepancies are a red flag for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), so it is in your best interest to keep your income situation comparable from year to year. If you pay quarterly taxes, add up what you have paid to date to anticipate the last installment in January.

**December is the Perfect Time for Office Purchases**

Late December is the time to stock up on office supplies such as paper, blank CDs, and other office equipment in order to include these expenses in your taxes. If your New Year’s resolution is to keep a tidier office, you may want to look for color-coded file folders, a filing cabinet, or a shredder. Home office equipment such as computers typically goes on sale right after Christmas. If you enjoy doing things at the last minute, you may want to buy that new computer or printer you have always wanted while everyone else is returning those unwanted holiday gift sweaters at the mall.

Dictionaries and translation/interpreting-specific software products also are deductible as business expenses.

**Taking a Deduction for the Business Use of Your Home**

If you are working from home, you can claim a tax deduction for the business use of your home on IRS Form 8829. According to the IRS, “expenses that you may be able to deduct for business use of the home may include the business portion of real estate taxes, mortgage interest, rent, utilities, insurance, depreciation, painting, and repairs (www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=108138,00.html).”

To take this deduction, you will need to calculate which percentage of the home is dedicated to your business. Accordingly, your end-of-year tax preparation consists of measuring the square footage of your office space and figuring out which percentage of the house it represents.

Consult your private accounting system for expenses associated with your home, including electricity bills, fuel oil delivery bills, home insurance invoices, lawn care service, house cleaning, and window washing. If you do not have a system in place to keep track of these expenses in an organized way, make it a New Year’s resolution to institute a better system.

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**Large discrepancies are a red flag for the Internal Revenue Service, so it is in your best interest to keep your income situation comparable from year to year.**
claiming these deductions for lack of accurate data is a direct loss for your business.

Working Outside Your Home

Some of the complexity of taking a home office deduction can be avoided by renting an outside office. This eliminates the need to calculate the percentage of floor space dedicated to business use, account for the business portion of household expenditures, and it might also help you avoid attracting unwelcome attention from the IRS.

Instead, you simply record all the expenses associated with your outside office (rent, utilities, furniture, supplies, equipment, even moving costs) and log them on your Schedule C.

There are other advantages and disadvantages to working outside the home. If you can develop the self-discipline to work in a concentrated way during normal business hours, an outside office lets you literally lock the door on your working life and go home every evening. That home can now function solely as a place for you and your family to live, rather than having to accommodate a freelancer’s office needs. If you live near a downtown area, you may enjoy participating in the buzz of city life every day, and lunch can become an opportunity to explore rather than just raid the refrigerator. An obvious drawback is the need to get from home to office and back again. Commuting expenses are not tax-deductible, and the whole idea may seem less appealing when there is a foot of snow on the ground.

Retirement Planning

Recent tax legislation has made it easier for small business owners to set aside tax-deferred savings for retirement. You will have until April 15, 2007 to make a payment into your retirement account and apply it retroactively to the 2006 tax year. Saving for retirement not only makes a lot of sense in light of the uncertain future of Social Security, but also lets you save a considerable amount of money in taxes. However, the best intentions to put retirement money aside can be ruined if you have not saved any money to actually put in the account. Again, December is the perfect time to take stock and designate specific funds. Look at your accounts receivable situation. How much money is likely to come in from completed assignments in the coming months? You may want to earmark some of the larger payments specifically for your retirement.

Setting Goals for the Coming Year

In reviewing the past year financially, you can also come to a few general conclusions about your business. Is it worth it? Is your effort paying off? Assuming you worked full-time as a self-employed translator or interpreter, what is your annual income from translation or interpreting? What is the best way to increase your income? Where would you like to be financially in five or ten years? Are your long-term savings goals, for example, for college or retirement, realistic? Or, can you afford to take more time off to stop and smell the roses?

Whatever the case may be, starting the year with a clear picture of your financial and tax situation has so many rewards that you may find yourself making stocktaking a year-end tradition.

Further Information

Internal Revenue Service
Topics for Small Business/Self-Employed

U.S. Small Business Administration
www.sba.gov

Financial and Tax Software

Quicken (for both PC and Mac)  www.quicken.com
QuickBooks (for both PC and Mac)  www.quickbooks.intuit.com
TurboTax (PC)  www.intuit.com
MacInTax (Mac)
Vendor management is one of the key aspects of managing a successful translation company today. Very few translation companies have in-house translators or interpreters, and if they do they are often senior staff members working in quality assurance or project management roles.

In light of the absence of reliable in-house staff, it is critical for translation companies to develop and maintain a series of win-win relationships with successful vendors. This has always been the case for less common and exotic languages—hands up anyone who has ever had an in-house Maori translator—but is now even true for common language combinations such as Spanish, Chinese, and Russian.

In addition to translation vendors, translation companies may also need other professionals such as interpreters, voice talent, localizers, localization engineers, typesetters, editors, and proofreaders. Some translation companies even hire vendors for project management and sales activities, although this is much less common.

By successfully leveraging the talent of an extensive and varied pool of vendors, a translation company with only a few staff members can offer its clients a wide range of services in dozens of languages. Why give business away by saying that your company “doesn’t do that language” when you could invest time and energy in finding, qualifying, and maintaining a network of vendors to provide these services?

Hiring Vendors
Regardless of the size of your operation, whether you are an independent freelancer or a large translation company, hiring other professionals to do work you cannot manage (because of the subject matter, volume, deadline, or language combination) is not a small step to make. It implies important risks and responsibilities, both ethical and financial. For instance, if your client pays you late or not at all, you still have to pay your vendors on time. It is your reputation that is at stake, and nothing is harder to repair in this business than a tarnished track record with vendors.

Another factor to take into consideration before stumbling into hiring others to do work for you is how you will go about the crucial task of qualifying and checking the background of all your vendors. Think of the hoops your clients have made you jump through over the years, such as requiring you to take paid or unpaid translation tests, asking for references, work samples, proof of certification, and having you fill out forms. You must apply the same rigorous evaluation process when qualifying your new vendor. Be as hard on prospective vendors as your clients are on you. Simply having a favorable gut-feeling or liking the vendor is not good enough. A long-term friendship is definitely not a good way to

An Overview of Vendor Management Today
By Charles Campbell
An Overview of Vendor Management Today Continued

qualify a vendor: great friends often turn out to be disappointing in business. Blindly “farming out” work without checking your vendor’s qualifications and processes may possibly bring short-term gain, but will in no way ensure that your customers come back for more time after time.

What do Vendor Managers Say?

There are many ways of finding qualified professionals, such as consulting or even maintaining a vendor database, but all require vigilance to ensure that you are able to match up the right talent for the job. Ed Zad, vendor manager for the Americas of Lionbridge, has likened vendor databases to the Zagat Survey, a U.S.-based quality rating guide for restaurants, hotels, travel, and other services. Zad explains that such databases must be “cleaned, maintained, and updated,” and that you must, “know what’s on the menu.” These are wise words from someone who networks with over 10,000 vendors worldwide.

Zad also recommends that you “use your best resources to help find new resources, and ask them who they like to work with.” These resources must be checked and qualified, however, just like all other new vendors. An informal friendly recommendation is not an appropriate replacement for a solid vendor selection and qualification process.

Many companies do not have full-time vendor or resource managers. If your company is unable to have a full-time vendor manager, then a part-time vendor manager is certainly the next best option. A second option is for project managers to also take care of vendor management. Given the stress level of many project managers in this industry, this may not be the best option and may result in your company getting less than its money’s worth from its vendor database. Vendor management is definitely not something the president or chief executive officer of a company should be deeply involved in, as other more strategic matters take higher priority for them.

Regardless of whether there is a full-time person to handle this task or not, it is important to make sure some time is devoted to monitor your vendor network. Even if you feel you already have enough qualified vendors, do not stop looking out for new resources. You will be sitting on a vendor time bomb if you do. Vendors go offline, they go bankrupt, they die, they change professions, they move away, and they change their rates. Be prepared! Ongoing maintenance of your database and testing/selection of new vendors is a must.

Keep Your Ears to the Ground

It is important to know what your vendors say about your company among their peers. To get a good idea of what the mood is out there, read the ProZ Blue Boards, an online forum where translators rate companies based on whether or not they would like to work for them again (www.proz.com/blueboard). Factors taken into consideration include prompt payment, clear communication, and friendly project managers.

After perusing comments on ProZ, one of the things you will learn is that, from a vendor’s point of view, payment issues are clearly the most common gripe with companies today. Sadly, many translation companies, including some industry leaders, put vendors under unnecessary financial strain. Companies who respond to vendor queries with answers such as “that project manager is no longer with the company,” “our client hasn’t paid us yet,” or “your translation was substandard” are simply not providing acceptable justifications for late payment or nonpayment to translators. Happily, you will also read about many translation companies that process their payments to vendors in a very tidy fashion, which is an excellent indicator of the overall management of these organizations.

The Blue Boards also provide companies with the opportunity to answer any negative comments with their own feedback on the vendor’s performance, attitude, and other factors that impact a working relationship. I regularly check the Blue Boards, both to verify the likelihood of a new prospect being a potential “trouble maker” (late payer, nonpayer, insolvent, etc.) and to gauge the
A good Blue Board rating is a clear sign that vendor management is on the right track at that company. A poor Blue Board rating is a warning to possible future vendors and clients alike that something is definitely going wrong at a company on a managerial level.

Some vendor and project managers have expressed resentment against the Blue Board system, hinting that there should be a “black list” where companies could tell all about their worst vendor nightmares. No such list exists to my knowledge. This is fortunate, in my opinion, since companies do not need a forum to whine about their worst vendors. They can take alternative measures such as providing additional training and/or instruction, negotiating a reduced fee for a job “gone wrong,” or even simply not working with a vendor again.

Holes in Vendor Management

Training vendors is currently one of the biggest issues in vendor management in the U.S. Many translation companies are afraid to organize training events for freelance vendors, worried that state labor departments will force them to hire the vendors as permanent employees. Vendors, meanwhile, have to make difficult choices about what to spend their dollars on in terms of training opportunities, computer-assisted translation tools, certification, and conferences.

In terms of value, I think ATA’s Annual Conference is a good “shopping opportunity” for everyone involved. Vendors will have the chance to meet colleagues, gain insights from a wide range of educational sessions, and also encounter potential buyers of their services. One of the reasons vendors and managers attend this conference is to “window shop,” filling their ATA tote bags with business cards, résumés, and brochures. There is nothing like face-to-face personal contact to brighten a vendor-buyer relationship. Often project managers who may have appeared distant, frosty, or demanding on the phone turn out to be real sweethearts in person. A good talk over a cup of coffee or a brief lunch meeting with a vendor will serve as an excellent ice-breaking opportunity for managers.

Watch the buzz at the 2007 ATA Annual Conference in San Francisco, California, October 31-November 3. You will see vendors and buyers huddled together chatting animatedly about painful security checks at airports, delayed flights, the weather, families, friends, children, and maybe, just maybe, about rates, deadlines, subject matters, and volumes.

It’s All About Relationships

Once you sort out all the details, establish a relationship with a vendor or a buyer based on consistent quality and compliance with the guidelines for each project. It is also important to make an effort to meet with your vendors personally on a semi-regular basis, since this will make it so much easier to resolve any issues that do pop up.

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Useful Links

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Better Business Bureau</th>
<th>ProZ.com’s Blue Board</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.bbb.org">www.bbb.org</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.proz.com/blueboard">www.proz.com/blueboard</a></td>
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Thirty years ago I brought a battered woman and her young daughter to my home after interpreting for her at a local emergency room. The woman’s husband had hit her in the face and all over her body. This was not the woman’s first visit to the emergency room with similar injuries inflicted by her husband. Despite the circumstances, the husband, who had lived in the U.S. longer than his wife and spoke English very well, was in the emergency room waiting to interpret for his battered wife.

Luckily, the providers in the emergency room called for a staff interpreter and asked the husband to wait outside. In private, the woman told us that her husband beat her when she refused to have sex with him. She was now ready to move out of this relationship and was taking her young daughter with her.

As an interpreter, I helped the providers make calls to shelters for battered women. Unfortunately, all the shelters were full. A staff member at one shelter told me that they would no longer accept Portuguese women due to a prior incident when a Portuguese client got lonely and called her husband, divulging the shelter’s address. This put the other residents in danger because the shelter had promised a secret and safe location.

I was young, new in this country, and horrified that even the organizations I trusted were treating our patients as second-class citizens. I was very supportive of women’s rights and felt a strong urge to save this woman from her monster of a husband. For this reason, I became what I now call a “band-aid” interpreter.

The woman and her daughter moved in with me, a decision approved by her providers, who had in some ways indirectly encouraged me to “take care of my own.” Everything was fine until the night the woman’s husband followed me home and threatened to hurt us all. It was then that I realized I had put both myself and the patient at greater risk than when we were at the hospital.

I had put a temporary fix on a problem I felt no one could solve. Because the patient was a Portuguese speaker, a compatriot, and a woman, I wanted to rescue her. This incident occurred over 25 years ago, and at that time professional boundaries for providers, teachers, clinicians, and interpreters were not as clear as they are now. The lines were blurred and often crossed by even the most caring professionals. Although my actions at the time represent an extreme example of “band-aid” interpreting, how many of you have not felt a certain amount of outrage when you sensed a patient’s basic rights were being denied?

“Fixing” Things Does Not Make Them Better

I believe there are moments when every interpreter will feel the urge to “fix” an unfair situation. For instance, a few years ago at a conference, a well-respected interpreter told a story that I
now summarize for you. A young pregnant Latina underwent her first gynecological exam and was apparently nervous about having a provider see and touch her private parts. The provider made some comments to the effect that he was surprised at her shyness during the exam, especially since she had not been shy about getting pregnant. The interpreter felt that the provider was out of line and did not interpret these comments to the patient. The interpreter felt that if the patient were to understand the provider’s comments, she would be offended and would likely not return for prenatal care. Thus, the interpreter concluded her story with the following observation: sometimes an interpreter needs to step out of the conduit role and be a filter and advocate for the sake of the patient.

I can empathize with this interpreter. We had both felt the urge to provide an immediate “fix” to what we saw as a problem no one else could handle, but did our actions carry a long-term benefit? Did the battered women’s shelter change its policy toward Portuguese women? Did the medical provider ever learn that his personal views toward teenage mothers and Latinas were not welcome in the exam room?

In this article, I intend to provide my fellow interpreters with a set of tools for positive change. The article outlines the first three steps an interpreter should take before making the decision to become a patient advocate in the triadic encounter. These are:

1. Focus on the inner and outer circles of your professional identity.
2. Understand the role of the provider.
3. Apply the “Six Ws” as a guide when stepping outside the conduit role, (see page 23).

The Inner and Outer Circles of Your Professional Identity

All of an individual’s decisions relate to his or her inner and outer circles. Your inner circle consists of what you expect from yourself, whereas your outer circle is based on your perception of what others expect from you. As a professional interpreter, you need to understand both of these circles and how they relate to each other.

Most of us became medical interpreters because we share a strong belief in providing equal healthcare access to non-English-speaking and limited-English-proficient (LEP) patients. Our profession is not always held in high regard by the outer circles, as reflected in many comments made by providers (“I don’t need you.” “These people are a burden to the system!” “Why don’t they learn English?”). Thus, we are interpreters, not because we are supported by the outer circles, but because we feel a strong push from our inner circles to do what we think is right.

The interpreters in the two cases just mentioned felt the need to take protective action in favor of their patients. Their inner circles, or self-expectations, were based on values such as respect and the desire to come to the defense of persons perceived as powerless. But as much as our inner circles speak to us, are they in harmony with our outer circles? In other words, are we acting according to what is expected of a professional interpreter? Do we abide by professional standards of practice? Do patients really want us to intervene?

Keeping Your Balance

Our lives as professional interpreters are a balancing act. Because our profession is in its infancy, the outer circles often determine the qualifications of an interpreter based on the outcome of the triadic interview. Interpreters feel this pressure and it moves them to act as “band-aids” in the interaction or else as “hunters of metacommunication.” There also exists among some medical providers a phenomenon of “medical laziness,” in which the provider steps aside from his or her role and allows the interpreter to assume it, as in the case mentioned below.

At a party, I listened to a social worker as she described a “great session” with an interpreter for a local managed care company:

“I just had a great session with an interpreter. She was so caring, so connected. She knew exactly what to do, and she talked this Haitian family into joining the hospice program…”

“I first tried to explain to the family about our services, but the interpreter knew right away that they would not get it. So they went...”
into another room and the interpreter talked and talked to them. I could have never done it by myself!"

I reflected on the social worker’s story and then asked her if the results were not what she had expected. I also asked the social worker if she would have had such a high opinion if the interpreter had not intervened for her and simply interpreted. The social worker replied that she understood my point, but that there had been such a racial and cultural disconnect between her and the Haitian family that the interpreter’s actions were necessary. I then asked if she had ever perceived a disconnect with other patients or families. She answered that she had on a few occasions. When I inquired as to what steps she had taken in those cases to bridge the divide, she replied, “Different things, but at least I could speak their language.” It is interesting that this social worker did not try those same “things” in the presence of the interpreter!

Later, I learned of a similar case in which the interpreter had opted to refrain from “fixing” and stuck to being a conduit. After two hours of an intense session with a hospice nurse and an interpreter, an Italian-speaking family decided not to accept the hospice program. Some time later, the hospice supervisor called our interpreter agency to complain that the interpreter had appeared disheveled, had smelled of urine, and that the session had not gone well.

“Not gone well?” I said.

“Yes, the interpreter was not advocating for the nurse.”

“I’m sorry, but the interpreter is not supposed to be a treatment advo-
cate. The interpreter is a conduit!”

I will never know for a fact if the interpreter smelled like urine, but I can tell you that this accusation left the interpreter shaken and traumatized. She felt attacked as a professional and as a person. After much investigation, however, it became clear that it was not the quality of the interpretation that bothered the provider. Rather, it was the fact that the interpreter would not consent to persuade the family to accept the recommended treatment option. There was clearly an “anger” emanating from the provider, as expressed by the hospice supervisor, which stemmed from the outcome of the session. In the absence of an outlet for expression, our interpreter became a target.

Understanding the Role of the Provider

Interpreters need to trust that most medical professionals have received at least a basic training in communication skills. According to J. R. Curtis¹ and the LEARN model, there are five actions a provider may take when listening to a patient:

1. **Listen** with sympathy and understanding to the patient’s perception of the problem.
2. **Explain** your perception of the problem.
3. **Acknowledge** and discuss the differences and similarities.
5. **Negotiate** treatment.

Even with this model, Howard Stein² acknowledges that providers and patients (and in our case, interpreters) develop conscious and unconscious feelings toward each other. The term transference refers to unconscious feelings of the patient toward the provider. Countertransferences are the unconscious feelings of the provider toward the patient. Stein writes that the dynamic of conflict is likely a result of projective identification, or externalization by relocating an unconscious feeling that may cause

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**Remember:**

- Good interpreting is not only based on accuracy, but on how the interpreter manages the dynamics of the triadic encounter.
- In almost any interaction, there will be some type of conflict.
- For any resolution, all sides need to be heard and understood and find common ground.
- When tempted to intervene and “fix” a dynamic, the interpreter should first question the short-term and long-term impact of this action.
pain when re-experienced. People often rid themselves of this pain by attaching it to another person. The following hypothetical situation provides a good example of transference, countertransference, and projective identification.

A patient goes into shock and dies. Soon after, another diabetic patient arrives in the emergency room with elevated blood sugar. The provider angrily tells the patient, “You need to do what I say or next time you’ll leave the hospital in a hearse (projective identification)!” The interpreter senses the provider’s aggression and, not knowing the provider’s past experience, rebutts with frustration (transference) by saying, “Doctor, as a professional, you should know that in this patient’s culture it is common to seek folk treatments!”

A similar interaction might happen with any patient who does not follow the provider’s recommendations, not just LEP speakers. With any communication there is always a potential for conflict. Conflict can create a feeling of isolation if not processed at the right time, but it can also create a world of opportunities for professional and personal growth. In our hypothetical case, the provider was not a good listener. She may have felt unimportant, or perhaps she cared so much for the patient and was pained to see her fade into death. Out of an unconscious fear of losing another patient, this provider resorted to a defense mechanism and fought back with the hope of avoiding another loss.

What was lacking in our provider (and in our interpreter) was an appropriate response to conflict. Both jumped to an analysis of what they perceived as the problem without first consulting the other parties to the interaction.

The Circle Chart

Roger Fisher and William Ury developed the Circle Chart to outline a respectful process for conflict resolution. According to this process, one must identify concrete examples of the perceived wrong. Together, both parties should go over a list of the problems. Once this is done they enter a second stage where analysis or diagnosis of the issues may be offered. The third stage is the approach, where they begin to work on strategies for resolution. This is done on an intellectual level. As a result of this thinking, the fourth step, action ideas, takes place. In the action idea phase, both parties take actual steps toward dealing with the problem.

The Circle Chart steps are crucial to our work as interpreters. The process led me to reassess my prior actions as a “band-aid.” Before opening the band-aid box, become a consultant and coach to the provider. Remember: a coach does not tell the provider what to do, but rather enhances the patient-provider relationship by adding background information on specific cultural challenges, thus promoting a healthy provider-patient dialogue.

The Six Ws

Working with human beings is not all black and white, and there are those moments when an interpreter may feel that he or she is crossing a boundary. It is what you do before and after your intervention that makes you a professional. When making your decision regarding when and how to intervene in a session, consider the Six Ws, a tool I developed for medical interpreters.

1. Who owns the information?
2. Whose job it is to share the information?
3. With whom can I share it?
4. Who is going to be affected by my actions?
5. What does the law say?
6. Would a professional interpreter association support my action?
3. With whom can I share it?

4. Who is going to be affected by my actions?

5. What does the law say?

6. Would a professional interpreter association support my action?

Respecting Boundaries

In summary, good interpreting is not only based on accuracy, but on how the interpreter manages the dynamics of the triadic encounter. In almost any interaction, there will be some type of conflict. With any conflict resolution process, all sides need to be heard and understood and find common ground. The band-aid interpreter acts on the basis of personal assumptions, and neither the provider nor the patient is consulted regarding the nature or resolution of the program. When tempted to intervene and “fix” a dynamic, the interpreter should first question the short-term and long-term impact of this action. Ask yourself, “Is this about a need to satisfy my inner and outer circles, or is this about the patient and provider?”

Intervening in a triadic encounter for the sake of respect is risky. According to William Isaacs4, “respect means honoring boundaries.” It also means that “when you respect someone, you do not intrude or you do not withhold yourself or distance yourself from them.” A band-aid may be good for immediate relief and can temporarily protect the patient from germs or infection, but eventually it will fall off. When it does, the damaged skin will still be there. Looking back at our cases of band-aid interventions, was the wound ever healed?

It is not easy to resist the urge to intervene when interpreting during an uncomfortable situation in a triadic encounter with a provider and patient. However, this does not mean that you cannot take steps for positive change. As an interpreter, you may use the post-session time and supervision meetings to share concerns and promote a healthy dialogue that will lead to more permanent changes.

Often, it is the work behind the scenes of a triadic encounter that results in resolution. According to Kenneth Cloke and Joan Goldsmith5, true resolution “requires a shift in how we think about conflict and behave in its presence…. We reach resolution when we do not run away from confrontation and no longer see people with whom we disagree as enemies.”

Notes


Additional Reading

Getting What You Want: How to Reach Agreement and Resolve Conflict Every Time

By Kare Anderson (New York: Plume, 1993).

Maybe YOU should make a presentation at ATA’s 48th Annual Conference. See page 43 for more information.
The interpreter arrives in court equipped with the trial information, dictionaries, pens, note pads, and a host of other essential items for the trial. Even though the interpreter is well prepared for the task at hand, the fact remains that she will be interpreting the entire proceeding without backup assistance. The court officials and parties involved in the case have overlooked the absence of a second interpreter because they believe that a single interpreter should be more than capable of undertaking this trial with minimum breaks. Does this scenario sound familiar?

The Need to Impress
Many interpreters believe that they have to impress those they work with in order to gain respect. They will accept assignments that are entirely too complex in terminology or skill level, or agree to continue interpreting when they clearly know they need to rest. It is this constant need to impress that can cause a great deal of problems in our profession. As professional interpreters, it is imperative for us to understand and accept that we are not superheroes within the language industry.

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The Team Concept
Team Interpreting (TI) is defined as the use of more than one interpreter to provide communication effectively to and from all participants. When TI is used correctly, it prevents the premature exhaustion of the working interpreter, allowing for a seamless flow of the interpreting task through minimal interruptions. The TI approach is ideal for tasks lasting more than two to three hours that will be conducted primarily in the simultaneous mode.

There are several things needed for the TI concept to work. Promoting the use of TI is one of the hardest things an interpreter will have to learn to do. Helping court officials understand the need for more than one interpreter without sounding like a complainer can be quite an undertaking. Many judges will cite monetary constraints as their number one enemy and others will express their lack of familiarity with interpreters coming in from different districts. After all, the interpreter just has to talk—how tiring can that really be?

The first time I had the opportunity to work within a team format was about a year ago. The defendant’s speech pattern was very difficult to understand and the interpreter assigned to the case knew that concentrating on that fact alone would be exhausting, so they had requested the assistance of another interpreter. This relatively straightforward request turned out to be the most difficult obstacle in the entire trial. The court wanted to know why they should grant permission for the use of two interpreters when in the past one had been sufficient. Why now? Why this case? What had changed?

We Are Only Human: Mental Fatigue
Studies have shown that significant errors in meaning occur after 30-45 minutes on task in simultaneous interpretation. According to one report studying the effects of interpreter fatigue: “the interpreters appeared to be unaware of this decline in quality, as most of them continued on task for another 30 minutes…considering that each meaning error, no matter how minor, does distort the message, a considerable increase in the number of meaning errors after 30 minutes on task does represent a significant decline in output quality.”

Interpreter fatigue is the most critical element for court officials to understand, because once they are aware that errors are taking place, they may be more inclined to ask for more than one interpreter. Interpreters can process up to 22 cognitive skills while doing...
their job. Whether it is in the simultaneous or consecutive modes, the brain will tire after constant use without proper rest. The court should understand that interpreters do not simply utter words. They must comprehend complete thoughts and ideas, correctly restructure sentences, identify ambiguities, decipher speech patterns, take notes, preserve register, and block out background noise. Interpreters must be familiar with legal terminology, street jargon, idioms, and metaphors, and be able to retrieve that information from the brain archives almost immediately. It is very unrealistic to assume that all of this can be accomplished without mental fatigue setting in.

Adopting a Team Spirit

Familiarity is what makes a great interpreting team. In order to work well with others, you must...well, work well with others.

In my opinion, one of the biggest issues facing interpreters right now is that they lack a sense of camaraderie at times. In certain sectors, interpreters compete fiercely against each other. There are individuals who are so afraid of losing work to other colleagues that they accept assignments that border on insanity. They embark on three to four day trials with minimal breaks and no additional help. They accept depositions that last six to seven hours, again without any additional help. The superhero complex I mentioned before sets in front of the assignment train and attempt to stop it all by themselves. Why are some of us so afraid to ask for assistance?

Making the Team

The first step in putting an interpreting team together is identifying who will be on that team. Familiarize yourself with other interpreters in your area. Court administrators should have lists of certified and qualified interpreters within the district. Making time to actually see these interpreters working is very important. There is a saying in the military, “You are only as strong as your weakest link.” Knowing the attributes, strengths, weaknesses, and style of your team member is paramount. The reason you work with other interpreters is to aid each other. If one team member is carrying all the weight, the point of TI is moot and the stress level for that interpreter has been doubled. The following are some questions to ask yourself:

- How many interpreters do you know?
- How many interpreters have you worked with?
- How many interpreters possess your interpreting style, techniques, etc.?
- How many interpreters would you recommend to others?
- How many interpreters do you feel comfortable working with?
- How many interpreters feel comfortable working with you?

Answering these questions will aid you in choosing potential interpreting partners. Once you have picked your team, here are a few suggestions you can follow:

- Agree on time breaks.
- Agree on signals.
- Agree on terminology.
- Agree on possible discrepancies and how to handle them.
- Agree on equipment.
- Work together for the experience (even if not compensated).

The more you work together, the better your team will be. One of the assets of TI is that it allows the interpreting assignment to run with minimal interruptions. Signals should be practiced among team members prior to using them in court. Visual signals such as cue cards, hand gestures, or colored cards can be used. It is crucial for the team to practice as much as they can outside the work environment. This will allow members to hone their skills and master the fluidity needed for the team to be successful. Other areas to be addressed include common court terminology, which should be discussed and compiled into a user-friendly folder. Dictionaries should be perused and marked for easy access or research. The team should obtain as much information as possible on the assignment prior to the work date. This will be important for the team in terms of being prepared to handle areas of concern or confusion. In case of discrepancies with words or terminology, the team must remember to address these issues outside of the courtroom. It would be a grave mistake to argue with other team members in a courtroom full of jurors and court officers. TI works wonderfully when approached correctly. Professionalism is the key to success in this concept.

Promoting the use of TI is one of the hardest things an interpreter will have to learn to do.
If They Say “No”

As mentioned earlier, one of the hardest obstacles you may encounter is convincing your district that TI may be needed for a specific case. You may encounter several rejections before your idea is received, so do not give up. One approach is to ask the court if they are willing to do half-day TI sessions. If this idea is met with resistance then broach the subject concerning “breaks.” You can stress to the court that you will need to take a break about every 30 minutes. You also need to point out that the key for a “break” to work is to allow the interpreter downtime. These breaks should not be used for attorneys to discuss additional information with their clients or to have the interpreter read information or answer questions.

Ideally, the interpreter should be allowed to disappear for at least 15 minutes to have some time to rest away from the courtroom.

If you are confident in your delivery and have done research on TI, you will be able to present a very clear and convincing argument to your district. It may take you a few tries, but with perseverance you may finally win your district over and they may be willing to see if TI really works. Once the opportunity presents itself, all of the details involving TI should already be worked out. The team concept works, but like anything that is done haphazardly, if not practiced it will fail. You may only be given one opportunity to prove yourself; do not wait until then to find out if you can do it or not. Practice and be prepared whether it is in or out of the courtroom. Get together with your team member(s), rehearse, and brainstorm. Network with other interpreters in your area and try to get others to participate in TI. Make it a point to work with other interpreters for both the experience and the exposure to other judges and districts. It will take time, but it will be worth the wait in the long run.

Notes

Political jargon tends to reflect common wisdom and frequently involves humor and a great dose of ingenuity. Perhaps this is because political jargon is created in an attempt to cope with aspects of reality we find unpalatable or even distressing. Political cartoonists and commentators are sometimes the source of such jargon, but in other cases, its anonymous creators simply belong to the rank and file of the people. However, whenever these words or expressions persist, one may surmise that they serve a social communication purpose.

Many of the terms and expressions listed below have been circulating in the Argentine political arena for some time. They are commonly used and understood by a wide number of people, and can even be found in the written press. Some of them are closely linked to current political events while others have evolved according to changing circumstances. Whether they will stay with us or not, only time will tell.

Ñoqui (from the Italian gnocchi): This tasty pasta dish has long been a favorite of Argentines since it was introduced by Italian immigrants in the late 19th century. There is an Argentine tradition that says gnocchi should be eaten on the 29th of every month, and that the diner will have good luck if a small-denomination bill is tucked under the plate. However, the term has now acquired an added meaning. In Argentine politics, it is used to refer to somebody who has a public sector job, but who only turns up (if ever) to collect their salary at the end of the month. Appointed as a result of political patronage, ñoquis normally keep only part of the nominal value of their salary, delivering the rest to their “patron.”

Esmerilar (literally, to grind, for example, glass): To chip away at political opponents in order to undermine them, for example, by means of covert press campaigns.

Embarrar la cancha (literally, to make the field muddy): In every language, many sports metaphors have become part of everyday speech. In Argentina, most of these metaphors can be traced to soccer. For example, in political jargon, embarrar la cancha means to obscure an issue or delay an unfavorable event by playing up other issues in order to divert people’s attention.

Marroquinero/marroquería política (literally, leather goods manufacturer or store): This expression was coined recently, supposedly by writer Jorge Asís, and has gained immediate acceptance. It refers to the practice of systematic opposition (for example, in the Argentine Congress) to obtain money in exchange for political support. It also covers the practice of buying political opponents by providing them with public funds that they can use to their personal or political advantage, for example, to build public works in their district. The term emerged as an allusion to the money-packed briefcases circulating in the Argentine Senate that were allegedly given out in exchange for voting for a specific draft law (a case dating back to the year 2000 that is now before the courts).

Valijero (literally, porter): A person who, on behalf of a political leader or sector, collects and carries money originating from bribes or embezzlement of public funds.

Pingüino (literally, penguin): A supporter of Argentine President Nestor Kirchner. Kirchner is a native of one of Argentina’s southernmost provinces, Santa Cruz (part of Patagonia, a region where penguins are abundant). After Kirchner took office in May 2003, he began being depicted as a penguin by popular political cartoonist Nik. The term has spawned derivatives such as pingüinismo.

Borocotizar (to co-opt an opposition politician): This term is derived from Borocotó, a nickname given to a politician who was elected to the Argentine Congress on the ballot of one party and almost immediately announced that he was switching to another (President Kirchner’s). The term has also given rise to a noun (borocotización), which is being used in nonpolitical fields. For example, to football coaches and players, borocotización means being deviously enticed away by a rival club.
**Cristino**: Somebody who supports the presidential candidacy of First Lady Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner. A senator, it is rumored she would run if her husband decides not to seek re-election in 2007. The term is also used as a proper noun (los Cristinos).

**Escrache (from Buenos Aires slang or lunfardo)**: Whereas originally it meant a mug shot, the derived verb went on to mean “putting somebody in evidence” or “catching red-handed.” In political terms, to stage an escrache currently involves holding a protest or demonstration against somebody (usually a human rights violator involved in the 1970s repression) in front of their house to let neighbors know who they share their daily life with. It is also used as a verb: escrachar.

**Primerear (from primero, i.e. first)**: To “steal a march,” or to gain the upper hand by coming out with a proposal or idea before your opponents.

**Ningunear (from ningún/ninguno, i.e. none/no one)**: To deliberately and blatantly ignore a political opponent’s actions or statements with the purpose of making them appear irrelevant.

**Judicializar (to bring before the courts)**: Politically, the term is equivalent to the strategy of delaying a decision by referring things to a committee. In this case, it means avoiding a political decision by taking a matter to the courts, in the knowledge that it will take a long time to be sorted out.

**La hiper**: A reference to the hyperinflation that afflicted Argentina in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

**Abrazo solidario (literally, solidarity embrace)**: A form of protest designed to defend an institution that is...
felt to be under attack. It consists of calling on people to convene at an emblematic building, for example, the Ministry of Education, to defend public schools.

Soltarle la mano (literally, to let go of somebody’s hand): When one-time allies of a politician who becomes embroiled in some sort of scandal abandon him.

Despegarse (literally, to “unstuck” or “become unglued”): Said of a politician who makes efforts to distance him/herself from an erstwhile ally who is perceived to have become less than an asset.

Quedar abrochado—quedar pegado (literally, “to become stapled” or “stuck”): This refers to a politician or government official who is thought to be responsible for a damaging event, despite (often frantic) efforts to disassociate themselves from the incident.

Tragar un sapo (literally, “to swallow a toad”): This means bearing the unsavory costs of some tough political decisions or unfavorable turn of events.

Cajonear (literally, “putting in a drawer”): The practice of absconding an issue or a request so that it is never dealt with.

Cuatro de Copas (literally, “four of goblets”): The lowest card in the least powerful suit in a hand of Truco, a popular Argentine and Uruguayan game played with Spanish cards. In political terms, it means somebody with little political power.

Acostar (literally, “to put to bed”): To make a person the object of an action that is greatly damaging from a political point of view.

Diego (from Buenos Aires slang or lunfardo): This term has a phonetic resemblance to the word “diez” (ten) and carries a reference to the first name of famous Number 10 soccer player Diego Armando Maradona. It means a percentage to be collected for doing somebody a favor.

Espada (literally, “sword”): A political operator.

As a living reflection of reality, language is constantly evolving thanks to popular creativity, which uses current developments in any field to coin new and ingenious ways of describing things. I will end this update with one last, brand-new expression.

Plutonizar: This is a verb derived from the name of erstwhile planet Pluto, which was demoted to a “subplanet” by an astronomers’ conference just a few days before this article was written. In political terms, it means to strip somebody of their rank or political power.
Upcoming Events

February 6-8, 2007
Israel Translators Association
Fifth International Conference
Haifa, Israel
www.ita.org.il

March 8-10, 2007
Transadaptation, Technology, and Nomadism
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
http://etfran.concordia.ca/conf07

April 6-15, 2007
Critical Link 5
“Quality in Interpreting:
A Shared Responsibility”
Sydney, Australia
www.criticallink2007.com

April 21-22, 2007
Institute of Translation and Interpreting
21st Birthday International Conference
London, England
www.iti.org.uk

May 4-6, 2007
ATA Energy & Oil Conference
Houston, Texas
www.atanet.org

May 13-16, 2007
Society for Technical Communication
54th Annual Conference
Minneapolis, Minnesota
www.stc.org/cfp/cfp_GeneralInfo.asp

May 18-20, 2007
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
28th Annual Conference
Portland, Oregon
www.najit.org

May 31-June 3, 2007
ATA Medical Division
First Mid-Year Conference
Cleveland, Ohio
www.ata-divisions.org/MD

July 28-29, 2007
INTERPRETA 2007
Buenos Aires, Argentina
www.interpreta2007.org

October 31-November 3, 2007
American Translators Association
48th Annual Conference
San Francisco, California
www.atanet.org

August 1-7, 2008
International Federation of Translators
XVIII World Congress
Shanghai, China
www.fit-ift.org

Scam Alert Websites

www.OnGuardOnline.gov
The Federal Trade Commission’s educational site about cross-border online fraud, offering information on common scams and tips on how to avoid them.

www.tuesdayswithmantu.com
Contains information on Rich Siegel’s book, Tuesdays With Mantu: My Adventures With a Nigerian Con Artist.
ATA's Medical Interpreting Seminar took place at the Hilton President in the heart of downtown Kansas City, Missouri, on August 26, 2006. The seminar attracted a diverse number of ATA members in the medical field from around the country.

After a few words of welcome from Rosalie Wells, seminar organizer and a member of ATA’s Professional Development Committee, and Teresa Kelly, ATA Headquarters meeting planner, it was time for the first of three informative sessions.

**The limited-English-proficient (LEP) patient:** The LEP patient is often from a culture with a more individual and/or family-oriented approach toward healthcare. In such cultures decisions are made as a family, which explains why many patients are accompanied by relatives when they visit the doctor. The patient sometimes has non-Western values and different religious beliefs that could impact their compliance with the recommended treatment.

**The provider/clinician:** The provider/clinician places greater value on medical treatment oriented toward Western testing procedures and pharmaceuticals. The provider’s focus is on finding and treating the disease. The provider is guided by standards established by the American Medical Association and by other rules and regulations set by the hospital administration, the medical code of ethics, and insurance guidelines.

The presentation included a role-play exercise and group discussion in order for participants to gain a deeper understanding of each of the parties involved in an interpreting session in a healthcare setting. Participants also received valuable tips on developing clearer communication in a triadic encounter.

**Stress Management for Medical Interpreters**

Given some of the traumatic experiences that interpreters may endure when working in mental health settings, the second presentation of the day, also led by Janet Erickson-Johnson, addressed the issue of interpreter stress and how to deal with it. Participants were introduced to the different resources that interpreters have at their disposal to help them with work-related stress. Some specific resources and means of stress reduction were reviewed, such as Language Line Services’ own peer support program/stress debriefing training. An opportunity was also provided to discuss different mental health situations in small groups in order to come to a consensus about how best to handle specific challenges.

The presentation began with a general overview of stress. Erickson-Johnson explained that stress is a physiological reaction that can be either negative or positive. There are many misconceptions about what stress is all about: that you are weak, that it is all in your head, or that everyone suffers from stress in the same way. Stress can be caused by conflict, boredom, feelings of being...
overwhelmed, or just telling yourself you are “stressed-out.” Stress can improve your performance in some cases, but it can also impair it. Whether it is good or bad, stress always takes a toll on you.

According to Erickson-Johnson, stress can be manifested in four ways:

**Physical:** Experiencing chills, fatigue, fainting, chest pain, high blood pressure, and, the most common symptom, headaches.

**Cognitive:** Experiencing feelings of confusion, having nightmares, becoming suspicious of others, or blaming others, and short-term memory loss.

**Emotional:** Experiencing fears, depression, anger, or denial.

**Behavioral:** Experiencing withdrawal, antisocial behavior, changes in speech, and problems with alcohol and appetite.

Stress of any type can affect how the medical interpreter carries out his or her role. Erickson-Johnson discussed examples of different situations that impact an interpreter’s performance in the medical setting (long hours, the unpredictable behavior of patients, physical risk to the interpreter in the emergency room, panic situations during 911 calls). To cope with such situations, Erickson-Johnson recommended that interpreters develop peer support groups. It is also important for interpreters to know their limitations. Seminar attendees left this session with some very practical tips on how to deal with varying levels of stress, including accepting one’s limitations and making time for activities that relax and diversify life.

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**From Medical to Mental Health: Adjusting Techniques**

Cynthia Roat concluded the day with a workshop designed to teach interpreters how to adapt their techniques to the constantly changing environment in which many of them work. Roat is a consultant and trainer on issues related to language access in healthcare. Certified by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services for medical and social service interpreting, she has been a medical interpreter since 1992. She is the principal developer of function, resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and the ability to adapt to change and to cope with adversity specific to the individual’s culture.” She then went on to discuss the two most common roles interpreters find themselves in and the responsibilities each requires.

**Medical Interpreting:** Roat explained that the role of an interpreter during a medical encounter is to communicate so the result leads to a diagnosis and plan of treatment. The most impor-

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**The patient sometimes has non-Western values and different religious beliefs that could impact their compliance with the recommended treatment.**

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**Bridging the Gap,** a medical interpreter training program. Roat helped found the Society of Medical Interpreters in Seattle and is chair of the advisory committee of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care.

Participants learned the difference between interpreting in a medical setting versus a mental health setting, and how to adjust their interpreting approach accordingly. Topics also included an introduction to what mental health practitioners are looking and listening for, and an overview of specialized vocabulary.

Roat got attendees involved by asking them to define mental health. The spirited discussion that followed brought forth a variety of definitions, after which Roat summed up with her own: “Mental health is the state of successful performance of mental

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**Mental Health Interpreting:** In mental health interpreting, the role of the interpreter is to communicate so the result leads to a diagnosis. In this case, the most important aspect in the encounter is what is said and how it is said. Depending on the goal of the session, the communication may be collaborative or adversarial. In this situation, it is important for the interpreter to learn about what a mental health provider is looking and listening for. Roat explained that providers normally take note of the following when assessing a patient: visual cues, appearance, and motor behavior; the person’s sense of time and place; mood; and speech
and thought process, including rate of speech, word usage, substitution, fragmentation, forms of linkage, and stringing unrelated words together.

Roat explained that learning to adjust your interpreting approach to accommodate changing circumstances takes time and practice. Participants left the session armed with plenty of tips for improving their performance. Roat’s session proved to be a highly beneficial conclusion to this seminar of subjects focused on building the abilities of the medical interpreter.

ATA Seminars are not Just About Attending Lectures
As an added bonus, after the final presentation participants had the opportunity to attend a networking session, where they could meet company owners, seasoned professionals, and newcomers in a relaxed atmosphere. In addition, there was a job marketplace, where attendees could display their résumés, brochures, and business cards, or post job openings available at their respective companies. ATA also held a certification exam for qualified candidates on Sunday.

Overall Assessment
This was a full day of in-depth, advanced-level sessions presented by experts in their field. Participants definitely came away with a deeper understanding of what it takes to function successfully as an interpreter in both the medical and mental health settings. The speakers were highly experienced and did a superb job imparting their enthusiasm for the profession to seminar attendees, making the day a very rewarding experience for everyone.

ATA Language Technology Division Established

ATA has a new division!
ATA’s Language Technology Division (LTD) was officially established at the recent ATA Board of Directors meeting in Chicago. The LTD will serve as the meeting point for those interested in technologies and techniques used in translation, interpretation, and related industries.

The division is now inviting all ATA members to join, to subscribe to and participate in its forum, and to contribute to the website content. To find out more about this newly established division, please visit www.ata-divisions.org/LTD.
New Certified Members

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

- **English into French**
  - Dounia Loudiyi
  - Bethesda, MD
  - Catherine Parker
  - Los Angeles, CA

- **English into Portuguese**
  - Luciana Caspisani
  - São Paulo, Brazil

- **English into Spanish**
  - Maria A. Litwin
  - McKinney, TX
  - Louay M. Abdulla
  - Guilderland, NY

- **German into English**
  - Michael Schubert
  - Vallejo, CA

- **Arabic into English**
  - Louay M. Abdulla
  - Guilderland, NY

- **Spanish into English**
  - Iris M. Mielonen
  - Austin, TX
  - Juan Vaquer, Jr.
  - Phoenix, AZ

- **Croatian into English**
  - Catherine R. Taylor-Skarica
  - Pacifica, CA

- **Russian into English**
  - Michael C. Gerrity
  - Garden City, SC

ATA Ethics Course

All certified members are required to earn one CE point by completing an ethics course during their first reporting period.

For details, go to:
www.atanet.org/certification/online_ethics_overview.php

Active Membership Review

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

- Steven S. Bammel
  - Irving, TX

- Teresa E. Fernandez
  - Surfside, FL

- Kipyo A. Han
  - Denver, CO

- Jisu Kim
  - Staten Island, NY

- Susan Y. Kim
  - Harbor City, CA

- Yoyo Yong B. Kim
  - Chicago, IL

- Nicole A. Lee
  - Valencia, CA

- Lorena P. Martin
  - Corpus Christi, TX

- Peter B. Yoon
  - Oakland, NJ
This journal’s generally helpful Business Smarts column recently suggested that a nervous correspondent use the “inevitable mid-summer lull” to tidy up office clutter, bone up on new technology, tend the garden, and spend time with friends.

Do we live on the same planet?

August: Time to Build Your Business

Translators breaking into the market should know that there is scarcely a better time to start building a clientele than August—yes, August—for the simple reason that many professionals are away (tradition, school holidays, a perceived summer lull...).

These days, the wheels of commerce turn year-round, and while urgent jobs requiring an expert translator’s input may be (slightly) less frequent from August 1 to 31, qualified suppliers, too, will be a lot less thick on the ground.

But to cash in on this bonanza, planning is essential. Start positioning yourself in the spring at the latest, networking through your regional group or national events and e-lists to announce your availability. Less brash and perhaps more effective given translators’ innate conservatism, consider offering proofreading and other services or even a free (short) internship to established translators to get the flow flowing and register your face, name, skills, and general efficiency as a potential summer backup. Remember that freelance language service providers are often loners, many a bit insecure in business matters; they may prefer a serious newbie to a potential heavy duty competitor for their summer stand-in. And experienced translators still at the workplace in August will have plenty on their plates anyway.

Veteran translators, too, can make good use of the special conditions in the summer months to raise their prices. Marketing 101 tells us that there is no better time to up fees than when demand outstrips supply—the case for texts that need translating in August for a September product launch, for example. For once, clients’ poor planning can actually improve your quality of life, providing you put your money where your mouth is. Apply price hikes when a make-or-break text hits your desk in August, rather than simply complain about the ungodly hours to colleagues, spouse, and the family dog as you may do in other months. (With luck the experience will fortify your resolve to raise prices for unsocial hours the rest of the year, too.)

August: Time to Promote the Profession

Summer is the silly season for regional, national, and international media, who embrace news lite, presumably for consumption by beery vacationers—but no doubt also as filler while their own heavyweights are on holiday. This is excellent news for language and translation issues.

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Financial Times, p. 8 (European edition), August 29, 2006 — Neil Inglis’s sandwich method at work

“Let the (translation) buyer beware”

Sir,

Paragraph 1:
As Jon Alterman points out [“A propaganda war that can be lost in translation,” August 22], language is a powerful weapon in the war on terror. And unscrupulous translators—many of them amateurs with an axe to grind—can distort issues by tweaking or even bulldozing meaning. Selective quotes, slanted interpretations: who is to know?

Paragraph 2:
But readers of this newspaper should be aware that many business buyers of translation are equally at risk, though their battlefields are less bloody. The reason is simple: 9 times out of 10, translation users simply cannot judge what is delivered to them. They are not fluent in Spanish, Swedish, or Swahili—which is why they turn to a translator in the first place. And if they get it wrong, they often do not know until it is too late. One of my own clients, a senior French banker, once sent a CV stressing his “passionate temper” to contacts in the City. What he meant was his tempérament passionné, a.k.a. personal commitment and conviction. (He did not get the job.)

Paragraph 3:
Lessons for translation buyers? Find the right professional translator for the job and put the power of language on your side. Unlike the propagandists Alterman cites, professionals will not work for free, but their code of ethics and commitment to their craft are priceless.

Yours sincerely,
Christine Durban
75008 Paris, France

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The Onionskin    Chris Durban
chrisdurban@noos.fr

“The Hottest Month of the Year

August: The Hottest Month of the Year

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Not to imply that translation is in any way light, but that language, unlike industrial fluids, is inherently interesting to the general public, and the types of mistakes addressed in obscure, er, specialized columns like The Onionskin hit the headlines far more easily when there is less pressure from “serious” news.

Take the bilingual English/Welsh sign displayed in Glamorgan that was flagged by local journalists in mid-August this year. A fine example: “Cyclists dismount” was machine-translated by a clueless but well-meaning underling in the consortium responsible for building the Cardiff Sports Village as Llid y bledren dymchwelyd or “Bladder inflammation upset,” probably due to a confusion between cyclists and cystitis. Within hours the story had worked its way up to the BBC and out to wire services planet-wide—a priceless client education opportunity for translators who took the time to craft witty, upbeat letters to the editor or op-ed pieces. Ditto a fluffy ode to machine translation by none other than The Economist.

To ensure your missive makes it into print, adopt Neil Inglis’s sandwich method:

1. A first paragraph praising the journalist for her insights (or at the very least for raising the issue in the first place).
2. A second paragraph sticking the knife in (correcting errors or expanding on partial information, with an anecdote if possible).
3. A third paragraph with an uplifting message or tip to close. Above all, keep it short and focused: screeds over 300 words are canned immediately at most publications.

See the box on page 36 for an example of how the above method fits together.

As we head into autumn, August may seem only a pale memory. Never fear; the suggestions in this column can be easily recycled whenever market conditions lead a large part of the workforce to roll down the shades and close up shop.

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The Onionskin is a client education column launched by the ITI Bulletin (a publication of the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting) in 1996. Comments and leads for future columns are very welcome; please include full contact details. Contact: chrisdurban@noos.fr or fax +33 1 43 87 70 45.
The Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI) is the local chapter of ATA representing North and South Carolina. Membership is open to anyone interested in translation or interpretation who supports the aims of the association. CATI currently has close to 200 individual members who speak over 30 languages.

**Goals**

- To promote the recognition of translating and interpreting as professions, and to defend and support the interests and concerns of professional translators and interpreters.
- To encourage high-quality service and ethical business practice among members.
- To disseminate information to the public about translating and interpreting.
- To facilitate mutual assistance among translators and interpreters, and to provide a medium for collaboration with persons in allied professions.

**Activities**

CATI offers workshops, seminars, a conference, and social events to provide members professional development opportunities and contact with a wider circle of colleagues. Networking is an important benefit of participation. ATA continuing education points are offered at most workshops, seminars, and conferences to ATA-certified translators.

CATI’s board of directors meets four times a year, with the most recent meeting on November 11 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The website and weekly e-mails sent by CATI’s administrator keep members informed of new employment and referral opportunities, seminars, conferences, and publications.

**Publications**

- **CATI Quarterly:** Focuses on translation and interpretation in the Carolinas and beyond, with in-depth articles and features.
- **The CATI Translation Services Directory:** A directory of members (both individual and corporate) that is published in the spring and sold to various institutions, including libraries, government agencies, law firms, hospitals, and international businesses. Individual members receive one copy and corporate and institutional members receive two free copies.

**Quick Facts**

- **Acronym:** CATI
- **Established:** 1985
- **Area Served:** North Carolina and South Carolina
- **Website:** www.catiweb.org
- **E-mail:** catiadmin@catiweb.org
- **Phone:** (919) 577-0840
- **Mailing Address:** Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters
  c/o Monique Glass
  215 Old Town Way
  Simpsonville, SC 29681
  treasurer@catiweb.org

**Website**

- **www.catiweb.org**
- **Database:** Contains member listings by specialization. Searches can be conducted by language, specialization, telephone number, city, zip code, state, and/or name.
- **Members Only Page:** Contains job bank information and other information pertinent to translators and interpreters.
- **Sponsorship Program:** Offers vendors of translation-related products and services an opportunity to support translators/interpreters and the translation profession in the Carolinas. CATI offers sponsorship at three levels: gold, silver, and bronze.
- **Events Calendar:** Lists events and news items pertinent to professionals.

ATA chapters, affiliates, and local groups serve translators and interpreters in specific geographic areas. They provide industry information, networking opportunities, and support services to members at the local level and act as liaisons with the national association. This column is designed to serve as a quick resource highlighting the valuable contributions these organizations are making to the association and the profession as a whole.
This month’s column addresses the issue of repeat business from a group of steady clients, which is the goal of many freelance business operators. Newcomers who do not hear back from a client after submitting a job often worry that something went wrong. While a lack of communication may have nothing to do with the quality of the translator’s work, it is still worth taking the time to investigate.

Dear Business Smarts:

I have a question I have been hesitant to bring up in other online discussion forums. How important is it to have repeat business from the same clients? I work in a major language pair, but do not seem to get much repeat business. I started my own freelance business in 2003. I followed the marketing advice from our local Small Business Administration office, along with marketing ideas I read online. I am a member of many online translation job forums and frequently apply for offers. However, many clients only send one or two jobs and then fall silent, which forces me to return to my marketing efforts. How can I find out why I am not getting more business from past clients?

Always-new clients in Colorado

Dear Always:

A steady flow of interesting repeat business from a fixed group of friendly and well-paying clients is every freelancer’s dream and aspiration. That dream may take a while to come true, however, so do not despair. If most of your current clients send only a few jobs, start by taking a good look at your customers. Where did you make initial contact? Were the negotiations based on price or on quality? Did the clients provide you with any feedback after you delivered a job? Identify a handful of clients with whom you would like to establish a long-term relationship, and contact them regularly with a short, friendly message saying that you are available for new assignments. You may also want to consider sending out a (brief!) “feedback form” to solicit opinions about your work from these clients. Another approach may be to request permission to list the client as a reference on your résumé.

The responses to these efforts can tell you a lot. If you hear nothing back, you may need to reconsider your marketing efforts entirely and focus on companies that value their freelancers enough to at least stay in touch. Advertisers looking only for the lowest price on online auction sites frequently lack an appreciation for the kind of skills involved in translation, and will never develop into steady clients.

Instead, you may need to look for serious job advertisements in other venues. Reinforce your networking efforts by attending local translator meetings and events, and keep your résumé updated to send out whenever a promising opportunity arises.

Next, carefully evaluate how you go about processing an assignment. Do you tend to ask a lot of questions by e-mail or telephone? Project managers are frequently under time pressure and prefer that you deal with self-explanatory questions yourself. Have you been careful to comply with all written instructions, and especially to use reference materials and formats supplied by the client? Did you deliver your assignments with time to spare, or at the last minute? Do you have the necessary experience in a field of specialization to avoid basic errors? Do you back up your terminology choices with thorough research? Take stock of your reference materials. Even in the age of Google, a good translator must have a solid library of dictionaries on hand to verify terminology. Keep in mind that mailing lists and forums are no substitute for doing your own research and establishing your own expertise, especially since agency owners and project managers also read such lists. Obvious novices who expect other list

The information in this column was compiled by members of ATA’s Business Practices Education Committee for the benefit of ATA members. This column 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 or its Board of Directors. Send your questions about the business of translation and interpretation to The 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.
or forum participants to solve all of their terminological problems are revealing more than they may realize.

Share your work with a colleague you trust, and ask for honest feedback. Does he or she think your work is appropriate and professional? What kinds of improvements does the colleague suggest?

Lastly, remember that clients have to deal with ups and downs in the flow of their own incoming work. Maybe they have not called for a while because nothing in your subject area and language combination has come in. But whatever the reason, communication is—as always—essential. Never be afraid to maintain contact with the people who depend on your expertise.

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**Energy + Oil Conference**

*May 4-6, 2007*

Houston, Texas

www.atanet.org

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Interested candidates please send your resume to resumes@idemtranslations.com.
The subtitle of the Arabic Business Dictionary is “American and Arabic Business Terminology for the Internet Age.” The cover mentions that it contains Arabic translations of American business terms, including “business terms for banking, accounting, insurance, real estate, import-export, taxes, business law, computers, and more.”

The dictionary is readable, with a clear typeface in both English and Arabic. Most of its approximately 5,000 entries have a single phrase with no explanation serving as a definition. There are no illustrations, charts, or tables, and no grammatical or pronunciation information is given.

Abbreviations are alphabetized according to the term’s spelled out meaning. Thus, IRA was listed parenthetically under “Individual.” The use of abbreviations is not always consistent or accurate. For example, “last in, last out” is abbreviated LIPO (sic), which is translated as (Whoever enters last, exits last).

Usefulness of Content

The dictionary’s usefulness is limited because the majority of the entries can be found in a standard English→Arabic general dictionary, such as Al-Mawrid. In addition, there are multiple entries for phrases built on a single word, as in the following two examples.

The entry “industrial” is followed by:

industrial advertising: إعلان صناعي
industrial consumer: مستهلك صناعي
industrial engineer: مهندس صناعي
industrial goods: السلع الصناعية
industrial park: مجمع صناعي
industrial production: إنتاج صناعي
industrial property: ملكية صناعية
industrial psychology: علم النفس الصناعي
industrial relations: التفاوض الصناعي
industrial revolution: الثورة الصناعية
industrial union: اتحاد صناعي

The entry “economic” is followed by:

economic analysis: تحليل الاقتصادي
economic base: قاعدة الاقتصادية
economic depreciation: خسارة التدابير الاقتصادية
economic freedom: الحرية الاقتصادية
economic growth: النمو الاقتصادي
economic growth rate: معدل التوسع الاقتصادي
economic indicators: المؤشرات الاقتصادية
economic life: الحياة الاقتصادية
economic loss: خسارة تدابير
economic rent: (sic)
economic sanctions: عقوبات مالية
economic system: النظام الاقتصادي
economic value: القيمة الاقتصادية

Each of these entries uses the same word for industrial/economic as the original entry. Again, these entries could easily be found in a standard English→Arabic general dictionary, especially since the nouns given in Arabic are all common nouns.

Errors

There were several mistakes I noted while glancing through this dictionary:

• “Chief executive officer” (the abbreviation is not given) is translated as (general manager). The more common translation is المدير العام.
• “Change of beneficiary provision”
is translated as (change of the beneficiary’s provision) instead of تغيير شرط المستفيد.

- “Metropolitan area” is translated as مدينة رئيسية (the capital) and مدينة رئيسية (the major city).
- “Corporation” is translated as شركة (company), مؤسسة (foundation), شركة (legal person), and شركة (general board). This is normally translated as شركة مساهمة.
- “Clause” is translated throughout the dictionary as شرط (condition) rather than, say, شرط or شرط.

In addition, a number of other terms have translations that the average reader may not understand. I also find some entries puzzling. For example, I am not sure what “fascism,” “house,” “treason,” “hush money,” and “kudos” are doing in a business dictionary.

Some entries are not specific enough. For instance, for “mortgage,” the translation given is رهن which can mean pawning, pledging, a security deposit, or a mortgage. No mention is made of the fact that this term is commonly used in real estate.

This dictionary is also missing a number of basic business terms that should be in a dictionary of this type, among them: coverage, joint tenant, intellectual property, cash accounting, money order, checking account, stagflation, NAFTA, DJIA, Fortune 500, NASDAQ, yearly renewable, and Roth. The absence of these terms is even more noticeable, given that the dictionary claims to focus on American business terms (see the back cover and the introduction).

**Overall Evaluation**

Based on the errors and uncertain accuracy of the terms I did check, I would not recommend this dictionary. The vast majority of terms it contains could easily be found using a standard English→Arabic general dictionary. The inaccuracies and questionable renderings resulted in a dictionary that is of marginal value at best.

Jeff Hayes, an English→Arabic translator, is president of Hayes Consulting & Translation Corporation. He serves as the deputy chairman of ATA’s Arabic/English certification (grading) workgroup. After over 20 years working in the Middle East, he now lives in Colorado. Contact: arabictranslation@adelphia.net.

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The first edition of the

People’s Medical Publishing House’s
Hàn Yìng Yì Xué Dà Cí Diǎn
(汉英医学大词典) Chinese-English Medical Dictionary was published in 1987. This popular reference was reprinted several times, but by 2000, advances in the medical field over the intervening years necessitated a new edition, so a committee was established to compile the Chinese-English Medical Dictionary, Second Edition (hereafter Second Edition). When the Second Edition was published in 2004, it included almost 200,000 entries compiled by specialists from 60 health and health-related disciplines, an increase of about 30% over the first edition’s 140,000 entries.1 As an additional bonus, the Second Edition, which focuses primarily on Western medicine in the main body, has a separate traditional Chinese medicine (TMC) section with 11,000 entries.

Coverage

By any estimation, 200,000 entries makes for quite a large dictionary. For instance, The ABC Chinese-English Dictionary, which is about the same size at 196,000 entries, is considered to be one of the larger general-purpose Chinese→English dictionaries. Other popular dictionaries, such as the Concise English-Chinese Chinese-English Dictionary, often have fewer than 30,000 entries. Major Western medical references that were used to compile the Second Edition, such as Dorland’s Illustrated Medical Dictionary and Stedman’s Medical Dictionary, have 125,000 entries and 107,000 entries, respectively. The Second Edition may have inflated its numbers slightly with entries such as mù biāo tǐng zhòng (目标肿瘤) “target audience” (p. 853) and rěn zhì tái pàn (人质谈判) “hostage negotiations” (p. 1042), which are not specialized medical terminology per se, but it is still the largest and most comprehensive Chinese→English medical dictionary I have seen.

The Second Edition covers much of the specialized terminology I encounter during medical translations, and if I cannot find it here, I often cannot find it in any of my other dictionaries. During a recent anesthesia-related translation, I found jiǔ sōng chì (肌肉弛 ) “muscle relaxation” (p. 537), yáng huà yè dàn (氧化亚氮) “nitrous oxide” (p. 1504), shǔ tǔ (树枝) “dendrite” (p. 1188), tài chú (突触) “synapse” (p. 1272), and fēn tài nǐ (芬太尼) “fentanyl” (p. 344). While the dictionary provides fairly good coverage of drug names, there are sometimes problems. For example, the Second Edition has an entry for lì pāi tōng (利培酮) “risperidone” (p. 743), a less common transliteration, but no entry for lì pēi tōng (利培酮), the preferred transliteration.2 There are also some misspellings, such as jīng shēn xīn fèn lì fèn yìng (精神分裂性反应) “schizophrenic reaction (sic)” (p. 640), but the editing is still superior to many other mainland dictionaries I have used.

Potential Disadvantages

The Second Edition still double sorts entries alphabetically by head character, just like the Concise English-Chinese Chinese-English Dictionary. This means that you need to know the pinyin pronunciation of each character in a compound before you can look a word up. For example, chāo qì liàng (潮气量) “tidal volume” is found on page 130, whereas chāo qǐn fèn lí (超亲分离) “transgressive segregation” is found on page 127. This is because the parent entry chāo (超) and all its subentries are listed before the parent entry chāo (潮) and its subentries. In a single sort dictionary, such as the ABC Chinese-English...
Dictionary, which is the first Chinese→English dictionary to sort entries alphabetically by the comprehensive pinyin spellings, cháoqìliǎng would follow cháoqīnfēn. The single sort alphabetical method is much more intuitive for native speakers of English, but, unfortunately, has yet to catch on in China.

Perhaps most problematic for non-native speakers of Chinese is the lack of pinyin spellings for subentries. The first edition’s pinyin readings were deleted to conserve space, and the Second Edition, despite a 30% increase in content, is still approximately the same physical size as the first edition. It is also pertinent to mention here that, no doubt in further efforts to conserve space, entries are limited to translations and provide no explanations of meanings, usage, or even part of speech. This dictionary is Chinese→English only and has no English index.

Overall Evaluation
I have not actually seen the paperback edition, but my experience with Chinese references is that the larger the text, the easier it is to read. As a rule, I recommend the edition with the largest text possible regardless of slight differences in price. Please also note the substantial differences in prices in China and on Amazon.com. The cost of shipping books from China is high, so expect a substantial mark-up if purchasing outside Mainland China or Hong Kong (it is available at the Hong Kong branch of the Xinhua Bookstore, www.xinhuabookstore.com, for about the same price as in Mainland China).

Many Chinese→English medical translators need look no further than the Second Edition, so, despite the above caveats, and in due consideration of the lack of a comparable competitor, I heartily recommend it.

Notes

Rob Albon has specialized in medical translation since 1991. His experiences include animal research and human clinical trials, human and veterinary medicine, medical devices and package inserts, bottling and pallet loading, pharmaceutical company financial reports, adverse event reports, and copyright infringement. He works in the Japanese→English, Chinese (simplified and traditional)→English, French→English, and Haitian Creole→English language pairs. He is a repeat presenter at both ATA and the International Japanese/English Translation (IJET) annual conferences, and publishes frequently in *The ATA Chronicle* and *Language*. Contact information: rob@albon.us.
New Queries

(E-Cr 11-06/1) I hate to start the queries with something as arcane as this, but a ProZ member wanted to know how to render the term dry-pendant sprinkler head into Croatian. Here is where it came from: Use of male threaded products with special features, such as probes, dry-pendant sprinkler heads, etc., must be checked for suitability with the XY piping product being installed. Relatively few of those who read this are qualified to answer, so if you are among them, do not be shy!

(E-Po 11-06/2) A chemical spill kit seems like a useful enough item, and a habitual user of ProZ wanted to know how this might sound in Polish.

(E-Pt 11-06/3) Power line noise sounds like a term describing an electrical transmission, but in the text that puzzled a ProZ member it referred to medical matters: Power line noise is a typical artifact problem in ECG monitoring. What on earth could this be, and what is the best Portuguese rendering of the term?

(F-E 11-06/4) A user of Lantra-l wondered what category of profession “donneurs d’ouvrage” applied to. And, of course, we need good English to round out the query.

(F-E 11-06/5) “Appartement à une chambre” is not satisfying for this Lantra-l user as French for one-bedroom suite, because it does not have enough of a hotel-specific sound. What might be better?

(Fi-Sw [-E] 11-06/6) A Lantra-l user describes the following two Finnish queries as being “fun.” The first one involves the unknown word (6.a) “hilipatapartio.” The context sentence for this is: “paras keino näiden torjuntaan on varmana näkyvä vartiopa liikkeen aukioloaikana. Ei mikään hilipatapartio joka tulee paikalle napista tai soittamalla.” The second puzzling pair of words is (6.b) “kuutamo ale,” found in “Kovat myyntipäivät ovat myös vilkkaata näpistyksille, kuutamo ale, isot kampanjat.” Could these be a combination “kuutamoale,” a sale that takes place at night? Swedish was wanted, but English will be gladly accepted for these two queries.

(G-E 11-06/7) In the following long sentence, the words in bold caused a Lantra-l user to be at a bit of a loss: “Den Maßnahmen würden nur dann asymirelevante Bedeutung zukommen, wenn der Kampf in einer Weise geführt würde, die auf die physische Vernichtung von auf der Gegenseite stehenden oder ihr zugerechneten und nach asylrelevblichen Merkmalen bestimmten Personen gerichtet wäre…. What about the two related words?

(G-I [-E] 11-06/8) This abbreviation is a real pain, coming at the end of a patent-related sentence: “Die geltend gemachte 1,6-fache Verfahrensgebühr war auf eine 1,1-fache Verfahrensgebühr gem. VV RVG Nr. 3201 zu kürzen.” What does the acronym stand for and what might the Italian for it be?

(I-E 11-06/9) Lorraine Axelson encountered “conto scalare” in a banking context specifically regarding accounts involved in the scam known as kiting. She cannot find an English equivalent and suspects that none exists. Can anyone with knowledge of Italian banking help?

(Sp-E 11-06/10) A ProZ denizen found “decoración firme” to be a pottery classification for material found in Puebla. The term is part of a list that includes what turns out to be matte and lacquer in English. If this is still not enough context
Replies to Old Queries

(E-Sp 5-06/6) (effective breaths): So far, Selma Benjamin is the only one who offered an answer to this medical query. Her suggestions: "respiración útil" or "respiración a fondo."

(E-Sp 6-06/4) (grub screw): Clayton Causey goes with "el tornillo pri-
sonero" or "la punta con filete." Both of these terms, he says, describe a small headless screw such as the type typically used to attach a handle to a spindle, among other uses.

(G-E 5-06/7) (aktivierbare Eigenleis-
tungen): Andreas Fischer did his home-
work on this one. The *Eichborn* transla-
tion is *capitalized items*, and this seems appropriate. The item is part of the income statement as defined by section 275 of the HGB, the German Commercial Code. But Andreas points out that "aktivierbar" is not exactly the same thing as "aktiviert." It means *capitalizable* rather than *capitalized.* This refers to the fact that some costs for pro-
duction or manufacture must not be
activated on the balance sheet for
German law. Example: interdiction to
include production costs to develop
software as a balance sheet item. For
other "self-produced" balance sheet
terms, there is a choice, and this is how
"aktivierbar" may become "aktivierte
Eigenleistung." So far, the German law
does not seem to be very logical,
minute you would expect "aktivierte
Eigenleistung" on the balance sheet, but
it appears as a separate item on the
income statement only.

(G-E 8-06/4) (herüberlaufen): Selma
Benjamin suggests *constant foot
traffic* for this.

(G-E 9-06/4) (Abrechnungskreis): Ursula Baker found two entries for this
word in the SAP-Wörterbuch: *allocation
and payroll sub-unit.* To judge by
the context sentence on page 42 of the
September issue of *The ATA Chronicle,* it is more likely to be the latter. Of course,
this means the matter is still open.

(I-E 8-06/5) (immobile sociale): This,
asserts Berto Berti, is the building a
company uses for its headquarters,
which is usually owned by the company,
feature, a *bay or inlet,* but he feels it
could not refer to any kind of work the
company might do. Perhaps it would be
best, in translation, to conserve the
name as is in the source language.

(Gr-E 6-06/11) (quintados): This is,
according to Clayton Causey, 50
hundred-pounders of cement (50 hundred-
pound containers of cement). Used in
an arbitrary way, the "-ados" ending
may substantiate the suspicion of the
ProZ correspondant that the speaker is
a non-native Spanish speaker. The
term may also refer to a container that
would hold a "quintal" of cement.

On this International Translators’
Day, September 30, there seems no
certain way to spend at least part of the
day than to prepare this column, which
will come into the hands of so many
translators and interpreters. If you
assisted in what is presented above,
pay yourself on the back.

This column is solely intended as a means of facilitating
a general discussion regarding terminology choices. For feedback regarding pressing terminology questions,
please try one of these online forums: Lantra-L
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the first of each month to be included in the next issue.
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gratefully acknowledged.

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What we learn in elementary school—that there are long and short vowels, hard and soft consonants, and “i before e except after c”—does not even begin to explain the intricacies of English orthography. So, here and now, for the first time ever, for the benefit of native English speakers and English-as-a-second-languagers alike, I, whose total hatred of prescriptive rules makes me eminently qualified, shall explicate the stuff that English spelling is made of.

1) Rugged individualists: These are the letters that stand alone. Tough and muscular, their sound is loud and clear. Letters like the a’s in “about,” “pal,” and “car,” the g’s in “gem” and “get,” the i’s in “wind” and “wind.” I salute them. Enough said.

2) Letters that need help and the letters that help them: Alas, even among the above hardy examples, only the i in “wind” fully manifests its i-ness. Many letters, especially vowels, need helper letters to fully realize their true natures. Helper letters for a, among others, are the popular silent e (“pale”), and also i (“pail”), and, of course, l (“Ralph Vaughan Williams”). Helper letters for i, among others, are again e (“tie”) and the teutonic combination gh (“nigh”). Helper letters can be distal (“fate”) or proximate (“maelstrom”). Note that helpers should never be pitied, for, self-sacrificing as they are, they in turn may become helpees (“lead” and “dial”). (For the sake of completeness, I must here mention combinations like an, though modesty would normally forbid it. Fortunately, English is not one of those unblushing languages frequently employing obscenities like an, where the letters, intimate beyond proximate, are locked together in unseemly embrace! Such combinations are perverted, as can be seen from words like “caecum,” in which helper and helpee are reversed. (“Caecum” is an [expletive deleted] backwards word if ever there was one.)

3) Equal partners: Sometimes two letters unite to form a single sound, harmonizing in an ideal blend with neither partner prevailing. But such a partnership is realized only infrequently, and then perhaps only with h (“church” and “shore”). But beware of words of bad character, like “character.” Scholars have long debated whether the guilty party is the c, which overpowers and mutes its mate, or the h, which, never belonging to the word in the first place, insidiously occupies it as a silent spy (see evil letters below).

4) Schizophrenic letters: Oh, poor diseased distressed creatures! Breathes there a one with soul so dead who does not pity the ew that thinks it is a u (“few”), the o that thinks it is an i (“women”), the gh and ph that think they are f’s. I cannot go on. It is too painful!

5) Indifferent letters: Some letters simply do not matter. Do you really care whether it is “effect” or “affect?” Does anyone?

6) Evil letters: These are of three kinds, each more evil than the next.
a) Redundancies: Consider “freeze.” Either the second e alone or the third e alone would suffice to manifest the e-ness of the first e (as in “meet” or “mete”). But no, in a shameless display of featherbedding, both are included. Other make-work words requiring immediate labor renegotiation are almost every word with both a c and a k, such as “trick,” and words with doubled letters such as “mitt,” “mutt,” and “jazz.”

b) Silent letters: No, I do not mean letters that help manifest the essence of other letters, such as the so-called silent e. I mean letters that are silent because they do no work at all, lazy good-for-nothings that just lie there, taking up ink and space. Letters like the b in “debt,” the m in “mnemonic,” and the t in “mortgage.” Or, perhaps, as was suggested above for the h in “character,” they are spies, lurking silently and up to who knows what!

c) Truly evil letters: These are of two kinds, and so evil that perhaps those of fragile temperament had best not continue reading this column.

i) Letters that do something wrong: As discussed above, both e and i can serve to help a manifest its a-ness. But there are renegade e’s and i’s that do something else. Consider “façade” and “plaid.” Shocking! (I, of course, do not include the i of “said” in the category of evil letters. The ai combination in this case is schizophrenic and therefore more to be pitied than censured.)

ii) Letters that really do something wrong: In this most despicable category belongs the evil twin of justly praised rugged individualist a (see #1 above). Evil a deceptively distracts the reader or writer by pretending that it will manifest the e-ness of an e. Then, when least expected, it strikes in the most sinister way by doing absolutely nothing. What treachery! What dread! Instead of beloved “read,” we see “read!”

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@ansinternet.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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