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Improving Your Organization and Workflow
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American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590 • Alexandria VA 22314
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Submission Guidelines

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

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

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

An Easy Reference To ATA Member Benefits

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

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29 Sharing Lessons Learned
By John P. Shaklee
Mentors teach the rudiments so court interpreters may help guarantee equal access for all citizens to the legal system.

31 Risk Management for Language Service Providers
By Ralf Lemster
Turning risk taking into a conscious decision is key to being in control of your business.

Attention
Korean Language Translators and Interpreters!
A special interest group has been formed to explore the possibility of establishing a Korean Language Division within the American Translators Association. If you are interested, please subscribe to the discussion 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.

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About Our Authors...

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Beth Nazar is a freelance translator specializing in tourism and hospitality industry translations between English and Spanish. She has been translating for 10 years. She lives in New Orleans, Louisiana, with her husband, two-year-old daughter, and newborn son. Contact: bethnazar@hotmail.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 chair of the Business Practices Education Committee. Contact: dracette@hughes.net.

John P. Shaklee, M.A., works as a freelance court and community interpreter in Northeast Ohio. He is a Tennessee State Certified court interpreter with extensive experience in the legal and medical fields. He serves as the program chair for the Northeast Ohio Translators Association and as a working group member of the Ohio Supreme Court Interpreter Services Program. Contact: jshaklee@neo.rr.com.

Kim Vitray has been the operations manager at McElroy Translation in Austin, Texas, since 1999. She also serves as McElroy’s human resources administrator. She holds a Professional in Human Resources certification from the Society for Human Resource Management. She is the current administrator of ATA’s Translation Company Division. Contact: vitray@mcelroytranslation.com.

Lee Wright has been an ATA member since 1975, and is ATA-certified (Spanish↔English). He served two terms as an ATA director and four years as editor of The ATA Chronicle. After working eight years as the in-house translator for a major international engineering and construction firm, he started freelancing in 1982. From 1990 to 2004, he was an adjunct associate professor of Spanish translation at Kent State University (Institute for Applied Linguistics). He currently teaches online courses in Spanish-to-English legal and technical translation for New York University. Contact: lwright3@gmail.com.
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Recently, I spoke at the first International Congress on Specialized Translation organized by the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires (CTPCBA). It was an excellent conference, both in terms of the educational sessions and the opportunity it provided to meet some very interesting colleagues at the numerous networking events. There were 1,200 attendees from 20 countries. In addition to presenting two educational sessions, I spoke on a panel entitled Perfil y desafíos del traductor financiero: un encuentro entre traductores y usuarios (Profile and Challenges of a Financial Translator: A Gathering of Translators and Users), where I was asked to wear both the hat of an in-house translation manager, the role I played at JP Morgan until 2001, and that of a freelance financial translator, one of my current pursuits.

Although it ruffled more than a few feathers in the audience, the panel gave me the opportunity to once again drive home ATA’s message that professional translators are required to get the job done right and that the most successful translators generally translate only into their native language, translate from a small number of source languages, and specialize in one or very few subject areas. I also stressed the importance of professional development and lifelong learning in the translation business.

The CTPCBA also very graciously arranged a meeting with ATA members and translators and interpreters interested in becoming ATA members. Not to be outdone, the president of the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de Uruguay, Milagros Giacosa de Chapital, who first joined ATA in 1980 after years of affiliation through Washington DC’s Institute of Modern Languages, arranged a meeting for me at the Uruguayan Colegio in Montevideo to meet with local ATA members.

These visits to other associations have several benefits. They boost ATA membership. In addition, each association can build on the other’s experiences. Several ideas for the Buenos Aires conference (and several speakers) were taken from ATA conferences. At the same time, I came away with ideas for our conferences, in addition to having recruited new speakers and encouraged attendance at our upcoming conferences.

Back in the U.S., it was off to Chicago for an ATA Board meeting, which our executive director discusses in his column. It was great to meet with local members and others interested in ATA at the Board reception, including Peter Less, whom many of you heard speak in Toronto and Seattle. We had the opportunity to see several past and present ATA luminaries, including Montserrat Zuckerman, ATA Literary Division assistant administrator and Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters Membership Committee chair; Alicia Marshall, former ATA Spanish Language Division administrator; and John Bukacek, former Japanese Language Division administrator.

Celebrating ATA’s History

Last month I talked about ATA’s History Project. As part of this project, we are gathering photos of ATA’s distant and recent past for display at our 2009 50th Anniversary Conference in New York City. The photos will then be given to the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation to preserve. If you have any photos you can share, particularly from the early days of ATA, but also other interesting photos right up to the present, please e-mail them to mary@atanet.org or send copies by post to ATA Headquarters, Attention: 50th Anniversary, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

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The ATA Board of Directors met August 11-12 in Chicago. Here are some meeting highlights.

Language Technology Division. The Board approved the establishment of the Language Technology Division (LTD). Michael Metzger, who has led the efforts to establish this division, worked with ATA Director Tony Roder and ATA Secretary and Translation and Computers Committee Chair Alan Melby to develop the division’s objectives. According to Tony’s LTD proposal to the Board, the division will provide information for everyone within ATA whose work requires the use of computer technology, independent of language or specialty. More information on this new division will be published in the next issue of The ATA Chronicle. You can also find the division online at www.ata-divisions.org/LTD. To join the division, login to the Members Only section of ATA’s website and update your membership record to include LTD membership.

Chapters Officers and ATA Membership Requirements. The Board approved putting forth a change to the bylaws to ease the membership requirements for chapter elected officials. In making this decision, the Board is recognizing the difficult time chapters have in finding volunteers. 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.

Honors and Awards. The Board approved a proposal to restructure the administration of the honors and awards program. Honors and Awards Committee Chair Marilyn Gaddis Rose and American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) President and ATA Treasurer Peter Krawutschke agreed that the Honors and Awards Committee will continue to oversee the two literary awards—the Lewis Galantière Award and the Ungar German Translation Award—while AFTI will now administer the Alexander Gode Medal and Student Translation awards. Currently, AFTI handles the JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation, the S. Edmund Berger Prize, the Harvie Jordan Scholarship, and the new Alicia Gordon Award for Artistry in Translation. (For more information on ATA’s awards, please visit www.atanet.org/membership/honorsandawards.php.)

Following the Board meeting on Friday, a reception was held with local ATA members and Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters members.

The minutes of the meeting will be posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for November 4-5 in New Orleans, Louisiana. As always, the meeting is open to all members.

ATA Staff Changes
James Padula has joined the ATA Headquarters staff as chapter and division relations manager. James held a similar position with the American Humanist Association. He takes over for Mary David, who moves to the newly created position of member benefits and special activities manager. Mary will be working to enhance ATA member benefits in addition to working on the growing list of activities that do not fit under the domain of other employees, such as overseeing the production of a publication or administration of a survey.

Scam Reminder: Internet Scam Alert
There has been another flurry of Internet scams targeting translators and interpreters. Be vigilant. If the offer sounds too good to be true, it is probably a scam. For more information, please check out the scam alert on ATA’s website: www.atanet.org/ata_activities/internet_scams.php

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The ATA Chronicle | September 2006
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. Ballots will be mailed in late September.

Proposed Bylaws Change

Chapters Officers and ATA Membership Requirements

(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.

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 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.

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ATA 2006 Elections: Candidate Statements

The election this year is to fill three directors’ positions (each a three-year term). The ballots will be mailed in late September.

**Director**
<br>(three-year term)
<br>Claudia Angelelli
claudia.angelelli@sdsu.edu

I have been an active member of ATA for 14 years. I find it a great honor to be endorsed by ATA’s Nominating Committee as a candidate for re-election. I believe it is the marriage of academic theory and professional practice in my background that sets me apart as someone who understands the interplay and necessity of both.

During my first term, I focused on two areas: ATA’s Certification Program and communication with members. Both are important endeavors that require effort and expertise. I spearhead the Accreditation/Certification Task Force and have encouraged communication with members by establishing the “Breakfast with the Board” and “The Board is Listening” events at ATA’s Annual Conference.

I am a translator/interpreter by education and have actively worked in the profession for over 21 years. I hold a Ph.D. from the School of Education at Stanford University (research focus: the role of the interpreter); an M.A. in teaching foreign languages, with graduate certificates in teaching English to speakers of other languages and language program administration (research focus: translation/interpreting pedagogy) from the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS); and a diploma in Spanish-to-English legal translation/comparative law from Buenos Aires, Argentina, with certificates in interpreting into English, French, and Spanish.

I have over 23 years of experience freelancing for private companies and nonprofit organizations in the U.S. and Argentina.

Currently, I am an associate professor at San Diego State University, where we have created an M.A. in translation and interpreting (T&I), and are pursuing the creation of a Ph.D. in translation studies. Previously, I taught at Stanford, MIIS, Catholic University, and the Universidad del Salvador in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

My commitment to the continuing education and professional development of translators and interpreters is evidenced by the fact that I have facilitated workshops and seminars on T&I for ATA, the Northern California Translators Association, the Chicago Area Translators and Interpreters Association (CHICATA), and for companies, universities, and associations in Puerto Rico, Lima, and Buenos Aires.

My current research focuses on the education and testing of bilingual speakers at the higher end of the scale, specifically translators and interpreters. I have developed the first empirically driven language proficiency and interpreter readiness test for The California Endowment and Hablamos Juntos. My publications include Medical Interpreting and Cross-Cultural Communication (Cambridge University Press), Re-visiting the Role of the Interpreter (John Benjamins), and articles on medical interpreting, the pedagogy of T&I, legal T&I, teacher education, and language pedagogy for specific purposes. I am a co-author of the California Healthcare Interpreting Association’s Ethical Principles and Standards of Practice.

If re-elected, I will continue to work to enhance ATA’s Certification Program, improve formal educational opportunities for translators and interpreters, support ongoing efforts to offer professional development seminars, and expand communications with the membership. I believe my expertise will continue to be an asset to ATA in our constant effort to strengthen the Certification Program. I feel that a pairing of both academics and professionals benefits and enriches both groups. Thank you in advance for your support.

**Director**
<br>(three-year term)
<br>Gabe Bokor
gbokor@accurapid.com

Born in Hungary, by age 18 I had lived in four countries; by age 40, in nine, having picked up 10 languages along the way. I earned chemical engineering and MBA degrees in Brazil and held executive positions with three multinationals in Latin America, Sweden, and the U.S. In 1978, I settled with my wife in Poughkeepsie, New York, and established Accurapid Translation Services.

I joined ATA in the same year, and ever since then have been actively involved in the association’s affairs. Long-time ATA members may remember me as the first administrator of ATA’s first division, the Science & Technology Division; as the editor of its Newsletter, which I later upgraded to the Sci-Tech Translation Journal; as a two-term ATA Board member; as chair of the Ethics Committee responsible for the current Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices (“Ethics Code”); and as a founding member and later assistant system operator (sysop) of CompuServe’s Foreign Language and Education Forum (FLEFO). I am ATA-certified in three language combinations (French-to-English; English-to-Portuguese; English-to-Spanish) and have served as an English-to-Portuguese grader for 25 years.
Many of you have worked with me on different ATA committees such as Honors & Awards, Voting Rights, and Certification, or on the Computerized Certification Exam Task Force, which I chaired last year. You have read my articles in The ATA Chronicle and the Sci-Tech Translation Journal on technical and business-related subjects. You have seen my postings in different translators’ mailing lists, and you may be familiar with the free online Translation Journal (http://accurapid.com/journal), which I have been publishing since 1997.

In 2000, ATA recognized my contributions to the profession by awarding me its highest honor, the Gode Medal.

However, I am now asking for your vote not because of what I accomplished in the past, but because of what I can do for the association and its members in the future thanks to my experience, vision, integrity, and dedication to the causes of the working translator.

If elected, I will work hard to help ATA face the challenges to our industry in this era of global competition and technological changes.

I will support measures aimed at strengthening ATA’s Certification Program to make it universally recognized credential of excellence in translation.

I will support translation standards that, rather than promoting the ongoing concentration of power in our industry, will safeguard the individual translator’s interests.

I will support a business-like dialogue between translators and translation buyers, and a greater involvement of ATA in this dialogue, as suggested in my article in the January 2005 issue of The ATA Chronicle.

I will work with my fellow Board members, Headquarters, and the different groups within ATA to provide members with the services and support they want and need. I will listen to your concerns and will be available to discuss any issue of interest to ATA and its members.

I am asking you to let me represent you, the working translator, on the ATA Board in these critical times for our profession.

I thank the members of the Nominating Committee for recommending my candidacy for a second term on the Board of Directors. I am pleased at the prospect of three more years of serving the association in the company of a cadre of remarkably dedicated professionals. Since 2003, it has been a source of great satisfaction to work with my fellow Board members, whose constant purpose is to serve the interests of the association members and to consider their needs and suggestions.

During this term, I have served the association in several ways. As chair of the Ad Hoc Website Content Review Committee, I undertook a comprehensive review of ATA’s website redesign. I will continue to work to strengthen ATA’s all-important online image.

I enthusiastically endorsed our efforts to broaden ATA’s range of public relations, including the opening of divisions to all members and the revision of the Code of Conduct.

I have also worked to enhance ATA’s Certification Program in order to make it the best and to have it recognized as such by standards organizations. In doing so, I have been attentive to your suggestions and desires, such as arranging for the examination to be offered on computer rather than hand-written.

After retiring from a university career, where I combined teaching, research, and administration, I worked as an in-house translator for five years. For the last 15 years, I have been a full-time independent translator and part-time interpreter, often working with agencies. I have also taught at a translation and interpreting institute. Because of this experience, I fully understand the issues that concern freelancers and corporate and institutional members.

Outside of the Board, I have served the profession and the association steadily since 1988, the year I became a founding member of the Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS), which is now an ATA chapter. I served as president of NOTIS twice and retired from its board in 2005 after 17 years. Within ATA, I have been a grader of the English-to-French exam for about 10 years, and now serve as the language chair. I also served on the Certification Committee. In Seattle, my major outreach activity is chairing a committee that awards scholarships to students who study French in France, some of whom are considering translation as a possible career.

While those volunteer activities have been very satisfying, I consider my time on ATA’s Board the most rewarding, and I look forward to continued involvement. The future will assuredly offer us more challenges and opportunities. Personally, I will:

• Support the Board’s efforts to offer ever more valuable services and benefits to all members.

• Explore the possibility of adding
some non-English language pairs to the Certification Program.

- Work toward the public’s recognition of translation and interpretation as true professions requiring special knowledge and often long and intensive academic and practical preparation.

I hope that, by your vote, you will allow me to serve you for another term on the Board. I thank you for your time and support.

Director
(three-year term)
Beth Nazar
bethnazar@hotmail.com

I moved to Argentina after my 1995 graduation from Tufts University. My most exciting work in Argentina was in the production department of the 1998 movie, *Evita*. My tasks included daily translations of all press coverage to be sent to the investors abroad. I also served as sole interpreter in all negotiations with Argentine labor union representatives, federal police, and other entities. My decision to pursue a career as a translator came as I began to realize how essential the translation profession is. After returning to the U.S. in 1999, I received an M.A. in Spanish from the University of New Orleans.

I am a freelancer in New Orleans specializing in tourism and hospitality industry translations. I also teach Spanish to hospitality industry professionals. Last year was a chaotic one, both personally and professionally. With schools, hotels, and tourist venues shut down for months, I lost 100% of my client base for most of 2006, started to ease back into work in early 2006, gave birth to my second child in April, and here I am.

I have worked relentlessly to resuscitate my translating business. ATA members have been extraordinarily generous. I am very grateful to our former president, Scott Brennan, who contacted each ATA member affected by Katrina to see how ATA could help. I felt a great sense of community as other translators contacted me with offers of equipment and referrals. It was certainly a courageous decision last September, so soon after Katrina, and when much of New Orleans was not inhabitable, for ATA to have honored their commitment to hold its conference in New Orleans rather than take the safer alternative of transferring the event to another city. I look forward to welcoming you to New Orleans and have already assisted with some preparations for the conference. It has been a pleasure working with members of the Executive Committee and ATA Headquarters. I have tremendous respect for the invaluable services and support ATA provides. I hope to see the organization continue to thrive and perhaps identify ways to expand ATA’s supportive role in the future.

I am incredibly honored to have been nominated for ATA’s Board. As a relatively new member, since 2002, I would bring to the Board a fresh perspective, creative new insights, and high energy. I am particularly interested in client education/public relations. I am proud of previous ATA initiatives in this area, including the *Translation: getting it right* brochure, and School Outreach Program. Educating the public to improve the image of translators and interpreters as qualified professionals is the best support ATA can provide. I communicate well, demonstrate effective organizational and leadership skills, and am able to meet deadlines consistently. If elected, I will gladly represent the voice of the membership as I work toward these goals. Participation on ATA’s Board would afford me the opportunity to give something back to an organization that has extended so much support to me and to my city during this very difficult time.

First and foremost, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for electing me to the Board three years ago. I can hardly believe time has gone by this fast. When asked if I was going to run again, my first thought was, “Already?” Three years is really not enough time to represent my colleagues and their concerns, listen to them, and do my best to try to solve their problems.

When I addressed you three years ago, I said I would work with the Board to consider other avenues of obtaining continuing education points to maintain certification that were not costly. Board members Boris Silversteyn, Dorothee Racette, and Nick Hartmann submitted a motion to that effect to be accepted or refused by the full Board. I was very much in favor of that motion. It passed and the Continuing Education Requirements Committee has already begun work on this goal.

I told you that I would listen to your concerns, and I have. I was part of an ad hoc committee that analyzed how internal and external communications could be improved. I am always present for the successful “Breakfast with the Board” event, which was started at the Toronto conference. The purpose of having breakfast together is to listen to what you have to say. Like fellow
Board member Claudia Angelelli’s slogan says: “We are listening.” Communication with our members continues to be a major concern with the Board, and we have taken steps to improve it.

We are well on our way toward offering the certification exam on computers at assigned locations. Thanks to the hard work of the Computerized Certification Exam Project Task Force, in cooperation with the Board, we were able to put out a detailed request for proposals to find the provider that fits our needs properly and transparently.

As you can see, this Board works very well together. We have achieved many goals these past few years.

A motion, submitted by me, to research the feasibility and costs of offering entry-level interpreter certification in fields other than legal was adopted this past April. The Board named me chair of the Ad Hoc Committee for Interpreting Certification. I have been in contact with the International Association of Conference Interpreters, the National Council of Interpreters in Health Care, Conference Interpreters, the National Association of Certification. I have been in contact with the Board, and we were able to put out a detailed request for proposals to find the provider that fits our needs properly and transparently.

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One of the main buzzwords at my office these days is “development effectiveness,” which is an economist’s way of asking “What have you done for me lately?” Let me answer that question from an ATA member’s perspective: What have I done for our association lately and why should you vote for me?

I have some 25 years of experience as a translator working from Spanish, French, and Portuguese into English, including several as a freelancer. For the past 18 years, I have been on staff at the Inter-American Development Bank, an international organization based in Washington, DC, as both a translator-reviser and more recently as an English editor. I have also taught translation at the University of Paris in France and at Georgetown University in Washington, DC.

I have attended ATA conferences since 1996 and have given presentations almost every year, mainly on the language of international development and economics. You may have attended one of them or read reports about them in The ATA Chronicle. ATA has given me a sense of pride in the profession, opportunities for professional development and networking, and many lasting friendships.

I have been involved with ATA’s Public Relations Committee since 1999, when Kevin Hendzel and Chris Durban began their groundbreaking events to enhance the image of the profession. My contribution to the committee has mainly been in the form of regular reports to the membership in The ATA Chronicle about our activities. I have also published dozens of other articles in The ATA Chronicle on language, translation, and culture—perhaps you have read some of them as well?

ATA brought me closer to my local association, the National Capital Area Chapter of the ATA (NCATA). I served as chapter vice-president for two years before becoming president last year. At this grassroots level, I have focused on providing our members with opportunities for professional development, business development, networking, and socializing, and on improving chapter communications.

We have revived our chapter newsletter, recruited new board members, and organized events in partnership with other organizations, such as a local university, National Geographic, the Red Cross, ATA, and even the National Zoo (for our annual picnic). As president, I have championed an inclusive approach to our activities, which are open to as many attendees as possible, while providing incentives for chapter membership through discounts.

What I can do for ATA now is to contribute my experience as a chapter leader, committee member, event organizer, writer, and speaker by serving on the Board. What you can do for ATA now is to vote for me so that I can help get useful information to the membership, enhance the image of the profession, promote learning opportunities, and provide practical support to chapters, divisions, and members.
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International Translation Day

By Kirk Anderson

Note: The following originally appeared in the September 2006 issue of Multilinguall (www.multilinguall.com), and is reprinted with permission.

Hallmark has yet to grace International Translation Day with a greeting card, but that will not keep language industry professionals from celebrating. September 30 falls on a Saturday this year, so whether your patron saint of translation is St. Jerome, Xuanzang, or Étienne Dolet, you should have ample opportunity to remember the day and remind others of the importance of translation and interpreting.

For this year’s celebration, the International Federation of Translators (FIT) has chosen the theme “Many Languages—One Profession” in an effort to “draw attention to the professional nature of this occupation.” Since FIT’s establishment in 1953, International Translation Day has been observed on September 30, St. Jerome’s Day. For more information on the FIT theme, see www.fit-it.org/download/jmt-ittd2006.pdf. To learn about the history of International Translation Day, see www.translators.org.za/indexes/english/jerome/ jerome-history.html.

Around the world, in countless languages, linguists will be honoring their professions with conferences and events.

The Swiss Association of Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters is celebrating its 40th anniversary on September 29 and 30 in Berne, Switzerland, with a conference on specialized translation, terminology, and interpreting. For more information, see www.astti.ch/40years/index.html.

The Société Française des Traducteurs (SFT) promises regional events in France. To learn more, check out their main website at www.sft.fr (click on Réunions et rencontres). It is also worth noting that the proceedings of last year’s memorable SFT International Translation Day event, based on the FIT theme “Translators and Human Rights,” are forthcoming in the next issue of the association’s quarterly Traduire. A national celebration is also planned back-to-back with SFT’s annual meeting, to be held the first weekend of December this year.

In the Czech Republic, the Union of Interpreters and Translators (JTP) has scheduled its St. Jerome’s Day festivities for November 3-4, 2006.

“…Celebrate International Translation Day September 30…”

They plan to hold a literary event, lectures, presentations, debates and more, all free to members and non-members alike. For more information, visit www.jtpunion.org.

In Argentina, the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires will continue its tradition of honoring translators reaching the milestones of 25 and 50 years in the profession, and will also be awarding the prestigious Julio Cortázar prizes in literary translation, among other things. Check out their website at www.traductores.org.ar/nuevo/home/micio.

Perhaps the best known Translation Day event of all is the one put on by the Organización Mexicana de Traductores (OMT). The X San Jerónimo conference will be held September 30 to October 1 in Guadalajara. For more information, see www.omt.org.mx.

Long quiet on Translation Day, ATA and some of its chapters and affiliate groups are planning celebrations this year. Watch www.atanet.org/conf/2006 for details on the association’s annual conference, and be sure to click on “Chapters & Groups” for links to chapters, affiliates, and other groups.

Among them, the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA, www.umtia.com) is holding its fifth annual conference on September 30 in Bloomington, Minnesota. The New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association (NMTIA, www.cybermesa.com/~nmtia) promises to continue its tradition of informal social gatherings to celebrate the day. Contact NMTIA President Uwe Schroeter (uweschroeter@comcast.net) if you are planning on spending Translation Day in Albuquerque. And the Colorado Translators Association (CTA, www.cta-web.org) is planning a literary reading, “If you can read this, thank a translator” featuring CTA members reading well-known works of literature in their original languages and in English, to highlight the crucial role translators play in making world literature accessible to English speakers.

Education Opportunities

But there is even more to International Translation Day than conferences, seminars, and awards. With translation and interpreting gaining attention in the mainstream news, there are growing opportunities to raise the profile of our professions, and the more the general public understands and appreciates what we do, the better off translators and interpreters will be.

For over five years, ATA’s Public Relations Committee has been working on a number of fronts to raise the public profile of translators and interpreters, and much of its work is available free of
charge. A visit to ATA’s website (www.atanet.org) suggests a variety of ways for translators around the world to celebrate International Translation Day.

If you want to spend the day educating your clients, see the excellent brochure Translation: getting it right, originally developed by former ATA Public Relations Committee Co-Chair Chris Durban for the U.K.’s Institute of Translation & Interpreting, which is available in a number of languages. For downloadable U.K. English, Czech, French, and German versions, see www.iti.org.uk; for U.S. English, see www.atanet.org/publications/getting_it_right.php; and for Dutch and Catalan versions, see www.vrouwennetwerkvertalersentolken.nl/Pdf/Vertaalwijzer%20definitief.pdf and www.atic.cc. An Italian version will soon be downloadable from the Italian Association of Translators and Interpreters website (www.aiti.org).

To educate the next generation of translators, interpreters, and their clients, ATA has launched a school outreach program, encouraging language professionals to make presentations on the language professions at local schools and universities. Visit www.atanet.org/ata_school for more information and for ready-made presentation materials for all educational levels.

Talking Points

Perhaps the greatest stride ATA has made in raising the profile of translation and interpreting has been in its work with the media. In the words of ATA Public Relations Committee Co-Chair Kevin Hendzel, “If you want more work in this industry, if you want to earn better rates, if you want to have professional recognition, the public must know you exist. They must know you are necessary. They must know you are worth the money you charge. They must know that they are in very deep and serious trouble without you. These are our talking points. This is what we tell the media. Endlessly.” And word has gotten out. For a sample of ATA’s media outreach efforts, see www.atanet.org/pressroom/ata_in_the_news.php

The message is simple: translation and interpreting mistakes can be costly, even disastrous. The bottom line is that you cannot risk getting the translation wrong. It is critical to hire qualified professional translators and interpreters to get the job done right.

And this is just the beginning. To recognize International Translation Day, you can do countless

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"Laissez les bons temps rouler" (let the good times roll) is an often-repeated New Orleans refrain that describes our centuries-old "modus operandi" and acknowledges our French heritage. New Orleanians appreciate our cultural legacy and celebrate it every way we can. As you will soon discover when you attend ATA's Annual Conference, November 1-4, locals have quite a bit to be proud of!

November is an ideal month to visit subtropical New Orleans, with an average temperature of 70 degrees during the day and 50 degrees in the evening. To help you take advantage of the best that New Orleans has to offer during your short stay, the following will highlight activities in or near the French Quarter and within walking distance of the Sheraton Hotel. Of course, for more information on all things New Orleans, visit www.neworleanscvb.com.

The French Quarter

The French Quarter is the historic core of this 300-year-old city, and is what gives New Orleans its distinctive old European charm. The Quarter is so much more than just the renowned nightlife on Bourbon Street. Its 90 city blocks, which can be comfortably navigated on foot in mild November weather, contain approximately 2,700 historic European and Creole style buildings. Jackson Square is the heart of the French Quarter and has always been a public square since the city’s founding in 1718. The St. Louis Cathedral, originally completed in 1729, faces the main square and is flanked by former government buildings, including the Cabildo. Built in 1794 and the site where the Louisiana Purchase was signed in 1803, the Cabildo is now part of the Louisiana State Museum. The Presbytere, located on the right side of the Cathedral, was built in 1724 to house the priests who served the parish. It is also now part of the Louisiana State Museum. Surrounding Jackson Square are the grand Pontalba Apartments, with their delicate wrought iron balconies. Built in the 1850s at a cost of $302,000, they are the oldest apartment buildings in the United States. I suggest that you start off one morning (or end one evening) with café au lait and beignets at Café du Monde, which is located on Decatur Street across from the Cathedral and Jackson Square. They have served coffee and beignets (donuts) since 1862, and are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (www.cafedumonde.com).

IMAX

"Hurricane on the Bayou"

Imagine seeing the initial Katrina devastation footage on the five-and-a-half-story IMAX screen. “Hurricane on the Bayou” (www.hurricaneonthebayou.com) was initially commissioned to be a “Save the Wetlands” project with simulations of what could happen if a major storm hit south Louisiana. One week before Katrina struck, IMAX crews were filming mock rooftop helicopter rescues. A few days after Katrina devastated the area, the same IMAX camera crew returned from Florida to an 80% flooded New Orleans. The crew mounted their cameras on a borrowed Miami Vice helicopter and documented real rescues in the storm’s aftermath. The film’s incredible photography showcases Louisiana’s fragile wetlands as a national treasure and a place of indescribable and haunting beauty. It presents an upbeat story about recovery...
and a call to action to preserve these habitats and save the coastal wetlands as a first line of defense against the awesome power of hurricanes. For tickets: www.auduboninstitute.org/site/PageServer?pagename=IMAX_Films.

Museums

New Orleans’ most prominent heritage attraction is the Louisiana State Museum, a complex of national landmarks housing thousands of artifacts and works of art reflecting Louisiana’s legacy of historic events and cultural diversity. The Museum operates five properties in the French Quarter: the Cabildo, Presbytere, 1850 House, Old U.S. Mint, and Madame John’s Legacy. You may wish to visit the Mardi Gras Museum in the Presbytere (lsm.crt.state.la.us/mgras/mardigras.htm). This wonderful interactive exhibit gives visitors of all ages a good idea of what it is like to be at Mardi Gras and explains the cultural and historical traditions associated with the diverse Mardi Gras celebrations around Louisiana.

There will be two Katrina themed exhibits in the French Quarter during the conference. I invite you to visit at least one in order to gain a better perspective on what the city has endured during the last year.

Cabildo
“After the Storm”
Photography Exhibit
701 Chartres Street
(On the left side of the Cathedral)
(504) 568-6967
http://lsm.crt.state.la.us

This exhibit, presented by National Geographic magazine and the Louisiana State Museum, showcases haunting images by award-winning photojournalist David Burnett, documenting ruined lives and neighborhoods in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Also on display will be evocative images by 15 New Orleans high school students who took part in National Geographic’s Photo Camp 2006, a photography workshop in which students, mentored by a National Geographic photographer, went on assignment to document their communities. The exhibit features poignant images of the Lower 9th Ward and the French Quarter.

Williams Gallery
Historic New Orleans Collection
“City of Hope”
533 Royal Street
Williams Gallery
www.hnoc.org

This exhibit is free and open Tuesday–Saturday (9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m) until November 4. It showcases a range of historic photographs, prints, objects, and interactive presentations tracing New Orleans’ perseverance through 300 years of periodic flooding and natural disasters. Visitors can listen to audio excerpts of oral histories from firemen, policemen, and Coast Guard personnel relating their experiences as first responders who saved lives and property in Katrina’s aftermath. Local broadcast news coverage from the cities where storm victims fled traces the scattering of the people and culture of New Orleans. Photographs portraying the terrible destruction of property provide a comprehensive survey of the post-Katrina landscape. Also on display will be samples of Federal Emergency Management Agency notices, Meals Ready to Eat, and pieces of plywood used to mark search and rescue notations.

Dining

Because excellent restaurants are omnipresent in the French Quarter...
Quarter, I cannot even attempt to give you a comprehensive list. Instead, here is this local’s “top four.”

Palace Café
605 Canal Street
(Across the street from the Sheraton)
(504) 523-1661
www.palacecafe.com
Unabashedly my favorite restaurant. They offer contemporary Creole and Cajun cuisine and use only the best local ingredients. They are famous for their “crabmeat cheesecake with pecan crust.”

The Gumbo Shop
630 Saint Peter Street
(Across the street from the Cathedral)
(504) 525-1486
www.gumboshop.com
I like the Gumbo Shop because it has a complete menu of local food, including a variety of gumbos, jambalaya, alligator, blackened fish, crawfish étouffée, and Shrimp Creole. It is also casual, but not “touristy.”

Central Grocery
923 Decatur Street
(Near Café du Monde)
(504) 523-1620
Nearly 100 years ago, Central Grocery actually invented the (Sicilian) mufleletta sandwich (olive salad, cheese, and deli meats). The mufleletta is a true culinary experience that is right up next to the roast beef po-boy as a signature sandwich of New Orleans. There are no tables, so just grab a seat at the counter or pick up take out.

Acme Oyster House
724 Iberville Street
(504) 522-5973
www.acmeoyster.com
Since 1904, fried, broiled, and boiled seafood platters, as well as delicious bisques, have been Acme’s specialties. This is a casual dining atmosphere.

Traditional New Orleans Fine Dining

The following is a list of old-line, legendary French Quarter fine dining establishments. They have a decidedly French influence and serve local cuisine. The menus include classics like turtle soup (a must!), Shrimp Sardou, Bananas Foster, Crab Claws Provençal, Oysters Rockefeller, and Trout Amandine.

Galatoire’s
209 Bourbon Street
(504) 525-2021
www.galatoires.com
Antoine’s
713 Rue Saint Louis
(504) 581-4422
www.antoines.com
Broussard’s
819 Rue Conti
(504) 581-3866
www.broussards.com
Arnaud’s
813 Bienville Street
(504) 523-5433
www.arnauds.com
Brennan’s
417 Royal Street
(504) 525-9711
www.brennansneworleans.com

Brennan’s created and patented Bananas Foster, so save room for dessert!

New Orleans Nightlife

When the sun sets, New Orleans comes alive with a unique energy that makes nighttime in this city an unforgettable experience. Although I am sure you will all end up there at some point, New Orleans nightlife is not limited to the neon, noise, and revelry of Bourbon Street!

Preservation Hall
726 Saint Peter Street
(504) 522-2841
www.preservationhall.com

While not a bar, this is the place to go to hear a set of traditional jazz music.

Pat O’Brien’s
718 St. Peter Street
(504) 525-4823
www.patobriens.com

A wonderful French Quarter bar located next door to Preservation Hall, with enough ambience for three bars! There is a beautiful brick patio with a fire fountain and a piano bar where friends can gather to sing their favorites. Over 50 years ago, O’Brien’s patented the Hurricane, a fruity rum drink served in a glass modeled after a hurricane lamp.

Continued on p.28
Workplace Fear Factor: Would You Rather Eat Bugs than Do Employee Performance Evaluations?

By Kim Vitray

Disclaimer: This article is intended to provide accurate and authoritative information regarding the subject matter covered. Neither McElroy Translation nor the author are engaged in rendering professional human resources or legal services. If legal or expert human resources assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be sought.

Why do performance evaluations? Because your employees need and deserve to know how they are doing, what is going well, what needs improvement, what you expect, where they can grow, what opportunities are available, and how they can succeed. At least once a year, every employee deserves an investment of your time, effort, and personal attention in the form of an honest and formal evaluation of their performance. Performance evaluations also serve several good purposes. They: 1) provide feedback and counseling; 2) guide the allocation of rewards and opportunities; 3) determine employees’ aspirations and plan training and development; 4) communicate expectations; and 5) foster commitment, good communication, and mutual understanding.

Of course, three prerequisites should be in place before effective performance evaluations can be held. These include: 1) a well-written job description; 2) good training; and 3) an “incident” file. An incident file is where you keep notes, e-mails, and other documentation about an employee’s activities and performance. Throughout the year, every time you provide feedback to an employee, receive a compliment about them, know that they attended training or participated in an event, and so on, just put a note in their incident file. You will then find that their annual performance evaluation practically writes itself. Just pretend that anything you put in an incident file may be read aloud in court one day, and be sure to keep such files for everyone, not just certain staff.

It is important to be timely with performance evaluations—being late signals to employees that they and their performance are not important to you. Recognize that a good performance evaluation takes time, and set aside that time for the task.

“…Recognize that a good performance evaluation takes time, and set aside that time for the task…”

Performance evaluations should always be in writing—there are many forms and templates available in office supply stores and on the Web that you can use as guides, although you should customize them for your environment. The categories I use are Responsibilities, Accomplishments, Job Knowledge/Performance/Productivity, Dependability/Cooperation/Initiative, Work Environment/Safety (this is more or less applicable, depending upon the position), Overall Performance, and Discussion/Action Items. For manager and leader positions, I add these categories: Managerial Skills, Communication Skills, Problem Solving/Conflict Resolution, Administrative Skill, and Time Management.

Ask the employee to prepare a written self-evaluation. Schedule a day for you and the employee to “trade” evaluations with each other, and also schedule a formal sit-down meeting and lunch (your treat!) for the next day. This 24-hour period (do not do it on a Friday) between exchanging evaluations and meeting to discuss them allows you both the opportunity to see where you agree and disagree, how well your discussion and action items match, and anything else that might need addressing.

Here is the cardinal rule for performance evaluations: nothing should be a surprise. If you have done a good job throughout the year as manager, trainer, and coach, then your evaluation and the employee’s will align very well, and the meeting can be a positive and productive discussion about how to move forward, even when there are difficult or negative issues to be resolved.

You might also consider using a 360-degree feedback mechanism. This is where, in addition to your evaluation as “the boss” and the employee’s self-evaluation, the employee’s peers and direct reports (if they have any) are also invited to provide feedback. There are a number of Web-based 360-degree feedback instruments. This year, I am using one called the Leadership Navigator for Corporate Leaders, which is available through the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, www.shrm.org). This particular instrument costs $140 per person being evaluated, is completely administered and taken online with a final compiled report available to you in PDF format, and takes only 15 minutes for a participant to complete. It covers business focus, talent development, inclusiveness, integrity, results orientation, customer focus, team leadership, and communication skills. It also breaks out strengths and development needs and allows participants to provide narrative comments in response to “This person’s most effective behavior or skill at work is…” and “The one area that this person needs to work on is…”

The following are some
common evaluation “errors” to avoid:
- Halo/horn effect: the employee is extremely competent (or low performing) in one area and is therefore rated high (or low) in all categories.
- Recency: the appraiser gives more weight to recent occurrences and discounts earlier performance during the appraisal period.
- Bias: the appraiser’s values, beliefs, and prejudices distort the evaluation.
- Strictness: the appraiser is reluctant to ever give high ratings.
- Leniency: the appraiser is reluctant to ever give low ratings.
- Central tendency: the appraiser rates all employees within a narrow range, regardless of differences in actual performance.
- Contrast: the evaluation is based on how the employee compares to other employees, instead of on objective performance standards.

In your written evaluation, be sure that you can support every comment, both positive and negative, with examples or documentation (this is where your incident file comes in really handy!). Avoid exaggerated, inflammatory, or emotional language; be as accurate and objective as possible. Also be specific and complete. List as many accomplishments as you can; it is a strong, positive statement to the employee when you can remember and list more accomplishments from the past year than they can. Relate your comments as much as possible to the job description; do not compare the employee to other employees. Be honest and direct, yet professional, polite, and constructive in both word choice and tone. Try to balance between positive and negative feedback, and be sure to consider their performance across the whole time period. Focus on their behaviors, which they can change, not their personality, which they cannot.

Give specific examples of both positive and negative behaviors. For example, “Employee X is very considerate and proactive in covering phones and other administrative tasks when needed. Examples include helping me assemble new employee handbooks, handling phones so the receptionist could go home when ill, and helping our bookkeeper with invoice mailings.” Or, “Employee Y experienced a performance slump during the last three months of last year, which was evidenced primarily by reduced ability to keep up with her correspondence and tasks in a timely manner, and more mistakes and oversights and less organization and detail than we were accustomed to seeing in her work.”

Avoid absolute language, such as “always” and “never.” Do not say, “Employee X is always late for his shift” unless that is absolutely true. It is better to say something like “Employee X was late for his shift at least two times per week during the last three months.” And only address performance problems that are patterns, not isolated incidents. Clearly and specifically communicate what the problems are, why they are problems, what behavior or actions you want to be different, and how you want them to be different. Likewise, when praising behavior, clearly state how pleased you were to see it and how much you are looking forward to it continuing and expanding. Sandwich any constructive feedback between praise.

Before the meeting, anticipate and consider in advance all the potential responses or questions the employee might have, and be prepared for them. Set aside plenty of time for the visit and do not allow interruptions. Realize that the employee will be nervous, and take time at the beginning of the meeting to establish rapport and set them at ease.

Be as polite, respectful, and positive as possible, particularly when discussing constructive feedback, even if the employee is not. Be very aware of your body language and tone. Place more emphasis on the future than the past when discussing constructive feedback, and realize that it is human nature for the employee to zero in on the one constructive suggestion you may have made, instead of the many accomplishments you praised. Focus most of the discussion on the action plan.

If the employee brings up an issue or question that is a surprise or you are not prepared to discuss, you can defer, but do not forget or wait too long to address it. Always ask what you can do differently, better, or more of, and do not forget to ask what they need and if they have any questions, concerns, or comments. Actively encourage their input to these questions—it may not be enough to simply ask once. When they do respond, listen without interrupting—no matter what they say! And close by thanking the employee for something—good work, another year
Improving the Organization and Workflow of Your Freelance Business

By Dorothee Racette

“Only he is successful in his business who makes that pursuit which affords him the highest pleasure sustain him.”

Henry David Thoreau

We have all been there: buried in a pile of dictionaries and glossaries, frantically typing to make a deadline, absent-mindedly taking phone messages in between, while reading e-mail messages from a terminology discussion list and deleting spam. Writing invoices? Preparing for taxes? Balancing the checkbook? Filing materials? Updating the financial software? Who has time for that? It will have to wait for a slower day, if that day ever comes. As a consequence, opportunities are being missed because unwritten invoices delay payment and irritate accountants. Because the glossary printout was never filed in the proper folder, you cannot find it the next time you need it. Because the checkbook is not balanced, you end up paying unnecessary bank fees. The list goes on and on. While the Internet has improved our ability to communicate, it has also resulted in a considerable acceleration of our work processes and offers many more disruptions—welcome and unwelcome—to our workflow. As a consequence, new strategies for managing one’s time and workspace have become necessary.

The conventional business management approaches used by large corporations are aimed at helping employees stay organized and improve their work habits, with the ultimate goal of increasing the company’s value and bottom line. As a self-employed freelance translator or interpreter, you can take advantage of the same methodological insights, but with one crucial difference. You alone benefit from the changes you implement, and working in a streamlined environment of your own making is good not only for your profits and productivity, but also for your personal well-being. Many self-employed linguists have extensive training in their language pairs and fields of expertise and will gladly take the time to discuss the finer points of terminological challenges. Yet many of these skilled professionals have never taken a business class and are at a loss when it comes to management issues in their own operations.

“…The very first step to creating an efficiently managed business is to take a good look at your own work environment…”

The “feast or famine” aspect of translation work further complicates the operation of a successful freelance business. This article discusses a number of low-tech strategies to improve the profitability, organization, and sustainability of your freelance business. I have deliberately omitted any discussion of technical tools, such as specific software products, although such products can, of course, be quite helpful for managing a small business. Rather, the article focuses on specific aspects of management, leaving it to the reader to determine the technological level at which such management will occur.

The Sign of a Genius—a Messy Desk?

The very first step to creating an efficiently managed business is to take a good look at your own work environment. Many freelance businesses are run from home, which has many advantages. By the same token, a strict separation of the home environment from the office, no matter how big it may be, is vital. Do not allow other members of the household to invade this space. For your own sanity, you should have a separate phone line and your own computer.

Your work environment should be within easy reach from where you sit, including your books, files, the telephone, and your whiteboard. It may be true that every genius has a cluttered desk, but you are in business and cannot afford one. Organizational experts recommend the “tabula rasa” approach, which involves taking everything off the desk and finding a new location for it. Take a hard look at clutter, souvenirs, cute quotes, etc., and clear a workspace within arm’s reach in a full circle around you. Put your favorite dictionaries right next to you and Invest in a filing cabinet if you do not have enough space for your papers. It is best to give folders a distinctive name (e.g., “Customer XYZ Glossaries for Paper Mill” instead of “Glossaries”).

The interface of personal computers is appropriately called a “desktop.” Your computer is essentially part of your desk, and cluttered data create the same problems as a messy paper pile. Be sure to use appropriately labeled folders in your computer and delete files and messages you do not need. Keep your e-mail inbox as clean as possible; it may be useful to create message rules and customer folders.

Managing Your Time

Once you have optimized your work environment, step back and observe the way you handle your work time. When do you get your best work done? Are you easily interrupted, for example, by a terminology question posted on a...
Kenneth Zeigler recommends planning. Time management trainer cycle needs to be reflected in your early afternoon. This productivity another fairly productive period in the morning, with a definite drop at lunchtime and do their best work in the morning, according to the experts, most people for project work, or are you often pressed to make your deadlines? How do you plan your work time?

It is vital to find a viable and consistent method for scheduling your tasks, preferably in writing. Such a plan should allow plenty of buffer time to avoid stress when the (inevitable) unexpected happens: a “mini” project requires a lot more research than you thought, your dog gets in a fight with a porcupine, you develop a severe headache, or a thunderstorm forces you to shut down your equipment for an hour. According to the experts, most people do their best work in the morning, with a definite drop at lunchtime and another fairly productive period in the early afternoon. This productivity cycle needs to be reflected in your planning. Time management trainer Kenneth Zeigler recommends planning at least one unpleasant or difficult task for your best work time, while easier or more pleasant tasks can be left for the later hours of your workday. To keep your billing up-to-date, for example, set aside 30 minutes to write invoices for the jobs you have delivered. It is best to minimize interruptions during your most productive work hours: reply only to essential e-mail messages and be brief when you answer the phone. Use your “down hours” for appointments.

As another way to minimize disruption, I have found it helpful to simply note on my whiteboard things that pop up (“need a new ink cartridge”), and keep working.

Project Management
A typical translation project comes with a specified deadline, which generally rules out the procrastination that plagues other office workers. You research, translate, proofread, and edit, look the project over “one last time,” and send it back. Then you turn to the next project.

Wait, is that really all? What about documenting the terminology you found, saving the project files in an appropriate folder, implementing the changes you receive from the editor and customer, updating the translation memory file, making a note of the billing date, entering the project in your accounting log, finding answers to research questions, and finally, following up on timely payment?

“...It is vital to find a viable and consistent method for scheduling your tasks, preferably in writing…”

Although it may initially be time-consuming to develop them, standard procedures for these activities can save a lot of trouble down the road. If you are having trouble with a messy accounting system, garbled data, or many unfinished tasks, write yourself a flowchart that shows all the steps you would ideally like to complete in addition to the actual translation work. Encourage yourself to complete the steps you planned before moving on to another project.

Financial Management
The first cardinal rule for small business owners is to keep personal and professional finances strictly separate. Never use your business debit card to get groceries or put stamps bought for the household on business letters. Keeping a separate business account is an absolute necessity for proper financial management. Set aside at least one hour every two weeks to balance your account, pay your bills, and review whether any customer payments are overdue. Most accounting software products let you assign expenses to specific categories, which eases the time burden when preparing your tax return. As a small business owner, you are entitled to write off a number of expenses, but you can avail yourself of this opportunity only if you have taken the time to document and categorize your business expenses over the course of the year. As with all the organizing suggestions discussed in this article, regularly spending small amounts of time on financial management is far more effective than sitting down with 12 bank statements and a box of unsorted receipts at the end of the year.

Planning for Quality
You most likely started your own freelance business because you enjoyed working in translation and interpretation. It takes several years and much sweat equity to make a business successful. Once the hard work of the first couple of years is done, you can rely on an established group of clients and turn your attention to the quality of your life. Are you getting enough exercise and eating right? (Remember, never eat a meal at your computer!) Are you paying enough attention to your family and do you have enough social interaction to offset the lonely hours spent in the office? In addition to the organizing and planning activities that benefit your business and bottom line, be sure to “plan quality” for yourself and your family. That includes saying “No” to projects that will overtax your time, making the most of well-deserved breaks, and consciously switching off your computer—and

Continued on p.33
Glossary Mining, Part III: Digging for Buried Treasure

By Lee Wright

The first two installments of this series primarily dealt with finding monolingual, bilingual, and multilingual glossaries in a wide variety of specialized subject areas, some of them mundane and others more esoteric. Most of these glossaries were easy to locate in the virtual mine of the Internet, but others remained buried in the mountainside. This is because the URLs of the websites where they were found gave no visible clues that the sites contained any kind of glossary or other useful resource (i.e., the address did not contain words like “glossary,” “dictionary,” “lexicon,” or their short forms or equivalents in another language). This final foray into the depths of the glossary mine introduces a number of these hidden treasures.

Chemistry

Although the presence of a glossary may not immediately be apparent from the website’s URL, there might be something in the address that hints at its existence. One such item is the monolingual dictionary at www.webref.org/chemistry/chemistry.htm, where you can look up an English term and display its definition. Actually, this dictionary is just one member of an entire “family” consisting of 20 different dictionaries accessible at the same site, www.webref.org. In addition to chemistry, the subjects covered are acoustics, agriculture, anthropology, archeology, architecture, biology, biotechnology, cancer, chemistry, dance, electronics, environment, fine arts, geology, invertebrates, plants, political science, psychology, and sociology.

Related to chemistry and especially useful for anybody who might need to translate a material safety data sheet (MSDS) from English into another language, the MSDS HyperGlossary can be found at www.ilpi.com/msds/ref/index.html. For each of the several hundred terms listed, the glossary provides the complete definition, additional information about the term, its relevance within an MSDS, as well as links to related terms and other references on the subject.

Coffee

If you like to have a cup of coffee or enjoy quaffing a good brew while you listen to music, you might want to review the Roast and Post Coffee Company’s site at www.realcoffee.co.uk/article.asp?cat=trivia&page=4.

“...One specific kind of online reference work that can be extremely valuable to translators is the thesaurus...”

You can also learn brewing terminology by checking out the Green Flash Brewing Company at www.greenflashbrew.com/brewing101.html.

Computer Terminology (Spanglish)

One particularly amusing yet informative site is a glossary of computer Spanglish at http://maja.dit.upm.es/~aalvarez/pitfalls. Its heading text reads: “Errores habituales de Spanglish de los informáticos ... y también de los no informáticos.” The glossary lists a sizeable number of common English computer terms and their “correct” Spanish equivalents, together with appropriate admonitions against using the “wrong” equivalents. For example: (keep a low) profile = pasar desapercibido (NADA que ver con “perfil bajo”).

Fastener Terminology

Moving on to the nuts and bolts category, the URL of yet another website (www.avdel.textron.com/index.htm?design_tools/glossary.htm) does not show any signs that anything useful is lurking inside it. This site features an excellent English-language glossary of fastener terms. A similar resource can be found at www.avdel.textron.com/index.htm?design_tools/glossary.htm (including some very nice illustrations of the various fasteners, complete with sound effects!).

Fish

Perhaps the next best thing to surfing the Web is to go on a fishing trip. You can find almost anything you could possibly imagine about fish at the marvelously well-organized Search FishBase website at www.fishbase.org/search.php. The information is available in Spanish, Portuguese, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Chinese, Bahasa Malay/Indonesian, Greek, Swedish, Russian, Farsi, Vietnamese, and Thai. Most interesting, however, is the fact that you can search according to 10 categories, including the common name, scientific name, or the complete definitions in the respective language, or by family, country of origin, ecosystem, or topic. You can also consult a section containing information on the ecosystems inhabited by the various fish species (e.g., their feeding habits). There is also another section of full-color biodiversity maps showing the areas where the different specimens can be found. This entire database contains 29,300 species, 218,200 common names, and 42,400 pictures.

Glassmaking Terminology

If you have ever had the opportunity to visit the lovely small city of Corning, New York, you are aware of its major role as a center of the glassmaking industry. The Corning
Museum of Glass offers a wonderful website dealing with all aspects of that industry, including a detailed and illustrated English-language glossary of glass terminology with complete definitions of the terms. Once again, the existence of the glossary itself is not detectable in the URL (www.cmog.org/index.asp?pageid=687). Here, the main list is in English, but you can look up terms in any of nine languages. Their equivalents in the other languages will be displayed, although no definition or other information is provided for any of these terms.

Gold Mining

As long as we are on the subject of mining, you can find a good English-language glossary of gold mining terms at www.goldminershq.com/frame/forms/def1.htm. Here, the only real clue to the possible presence of a glossary appears at the very end of the URL address.

Government Sites

Other buried treasures seem to pop up with special frequency on U.S. government websites, such as the one containing the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Technical Manual. Most of the chapters contain a glossary in an appendix. For example, the one on industrial robotics can be found at www.osha.gov/dts/osta/otm/otm_iv/otm_iv_4.html#app_iv:4_1.

Another government site, www.its.blrdoc.gov/fs-1037, provides the telecommunications terminology in Federal Standard 1037, as originally published in August 1986. However, for more current terminology pertaining to wireless communications (i.e., cell phones), you should check out the glossary on RadioShack’s site, http://support.radio Shack.com/support_tutorials/telephone/cell-11.htm.

Quick Links: Glossaries

| Chemistry | www.webref.org/chemistry/chemistry.htm |
| Coffee | www.realcoffee.co.uk/article.asp?cat=trivia&page=4 |
| www.greenflashbrew.com/brewing101.html |
| Fastener Terminology | www.allmetalcorp.com/htm/pg8_8_00.htm |
| www.avdel.textron.com/index.htm?design_tools/glossary.htm |
| Fish Terminology | www.fishbase.org/search.php |
| Glassmaking Terminology | www.cmog.org/index.asp?pageid=687 |
| Gold Mining Glossary | www.goldminershq.com/frame/forms/def1.htm |
| Hydraulics | www.burkert.es/ESN/201.htm |
| Music | www.canteach.ca/elementary/music7.html |
| Ornithology | www.mumm.ac.be/~serge/birds |
| Plastics | www.petcore.org/content/default.asp?pageid=40 |
| Spanglish Computer Terminology | http://maja.dit.upm.es/~aalvarez/pitfalls |
| Telecommunications | http://support.radioshack.com/support_tutorials/telephone/cell-11.htm |
| Textiles | www.resil.com/a.htm |

Hydraulics

Translators of Spanish documents on fluid power and related subjects can find an excellent monolingual glossary of terms, complete with Spanish definitions and downloadable illustrations (line drawings), at www.burkert.es/ESN/201.htm. The individual entries can be saved as PDF files or printed directly from the site. If you need to have English-language terminology in this subject area, a good place to find it is at http://www.hydraulicspneumatics.com/200/FPE/ReferenceMateri/Article/True/6465/ReferenceMateri. Another hidden treasure trove on this same subject is located at www.tpub.com/content/engine/14105. Although not a glossary, the site contains a complete and profusely illustrated book-length work on fluid power consisting of 11 chapters and 2 appendices (one of which is a glossary).
Industry Glossaries

The URLs for some websites that contain glossaries can be so enigmatic that the casual observer would never expect to find anything there. One of these is the bilingual glossary of automotive terms produced by Industry Canada. Actually, there are two separate monolingual glossaries (French and English), but they are accessible from the same website by clicking on the language name. The URL for the English glossary is http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/inauto-auto.nsf/en/h_am00614e.html, and the link to the French glossary is only slightly different, http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/epic/internet/inauto-auto.nsf/fr/h_am00614f.html.

Music

Music buffs will undoubtedly find this next glossary of music terminology handy. It can be found at www.canteach.ca/elementary/music7.html.

Ornithology

If you would like to find the name for a specific bird in another language, check out www.mumm.ac.be/~serge/birds. (Here again, the URL does not reveal the presence of an excellent glossary.) This site allows you to search through a database of European bird names for the translation in nine languages: Latin (for the scientific name of the species), Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, and Russian. The database currently holds 804 records (species and subspecies).

Plastics

If you want to have terminology in a relatively narrow subject area, such as a specific type of plastic material, then you can get all the terms and other information related to polyethylene terephthalate at www.petcore.org/content/default.asp?pageid=40.

Textiles

Somewhat off the beaten track and of possible interest to any seamstresses out there, you can find a nice English-language glossary of sewing and fabrics terminology at the well-hidden website of Modern Sewing Patterns (http://m-sewing.com/index.php?page=/class-start_page/do-page/sid-69). Also covering the area of textiles is an extensive glossary by Resil Chemicals Pvt. Ltd. at www.resil.com/a.htm.

…The URLs for some websites can be so enigmatic that the casual observer would never expect to find anything useful there…”

Thesaurus

One specific kind of online reference work that can be extremely valuable to translators is the thesaurus, with information for a given search arranged hierarchically by themes and topics according to relevance. The thesaurus is designed to draw distinctions between similar words, thereby helping you choose exactly the right term. Of course, unlike a true glossary, thesaurus entries do not include definitions for terms. The sites I found pertaining to the fields listed below are just a few examples of what can be gained with a bit of careful digging.

Agriculture: The AGROVAC Thesaurus (www.fao.org/aims/ag_intro.htm), provided by the U.S. Food and Agricultural Organization, contains nine separate sites for different languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Portuguese, Czech, Thai, and Japanese). Additional sites are under construction for Lao, Hungarian, Slovak, Korean, and Malay, and the sites for German and Italian, dating from 1992, are being revised. The neat thing about the AGROVAC Thesaurus is that whenever you search for a term in one language, you will also get a listing of the term’s equivalents in the other languages supported by the thesaurus. In addition, you will receive a list of related terms within the thesaurus that have been selected according to a highly refined system of semantic relationships. There is also a complete glossary of English terms specific to agriculture.

Also in the agricultural field is the website for an English-Portuguese glossary of vegetable crop terms (www.sk.com.br/sk-veget.html). Aside from the “veget” part of
Glossary Mining, Part III Continued

this site’s URL, you cannot tell it has anything to do with terminology until you actually display the page.

Astronomy: I am particularly fond of the Astronomy Thesaurus (http://msowww.anu.edu.au/library/thesaurus/spanish), which provides terms in five languages (English, Spanish, French, German, and Italian) and cross-references to related terms in each language that are the most relevant to your search. Of course, there are no definitions, but whenever you look up a term in one language, you can also click on any of the other languages contained in the thesaurus to find its equivalent.

International Organizations: The World Bank provides an entire gamut of different vocabularies at www.multites.com/wb. The United Nations UNESCO thesaurus (http://databases.unesco.org/thesaurus) is also a good source for certain types of terminology in English, French, and Russian, and provides links to official documents containing whatever term was looked up in the thesaurus. Even better is the European Communities EUROVAC Thesaurus, which offers terminology in 21 languages and allows the user to create “custom” bi- or multilingual glossaries for any combination of 4 languages (e.g., Spanish, English, French, and German in that order). These customized glossaries can either be printed and/or saved as an Excel file.

A typical printed glossary runs more than 130 pages. In addition, you can download the thesaurus by subject area and rearrange the order of the results to best suit your needs. The URL for the Spanish-language version of this thesaurus is http://europa.eu/celex/eurovoc/cgi/sga_doc?eurovoc_dif!SERVEUR/menu!prod!MENU&langue=ES. From there you can access any of the other language via a drop-down list.

Digging a Little Deeper

I hope these resources will prove useful to you the next time you need to dig for a little more information.

Workplace Fear Factor Continued from p. 22

of service, extra contributions, loyalty, dependability, and so on.

I hope you will attend my presentation at ATA’s upcoming Annual Conference in New Orleans on this same topic. In addition to presenting the above information, we will go over some specific “difficult” performance evaluation scenarios, and you will have the opportunity to ask about your own.

In closing, I strongly recommend that you join SHRM (www.shrm.org). The membership is only $160 per year, and it will be worth many times more than that to you in terms of job descriptions, articles, policies, forms, and the many other benefits they offer. And always bear in mind one of my favorite quotes by Dale Carnegie: “When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudice and motivated by pride and vanity.” Welcome to human resources!

Note

“Laissez les bons temps rouler” Continued from p. 20

Live it Up!

New Orleans’ unique flavor is the undeniably authentic result of hundreds of years of a slowly evolving, multiethnic culture. Hospitality still thrives here. Savor our cuisine. Explore our cultural traditions, our lush foliage and majestic oaks, our unforgettable indigenous music, and our architectural splendor. Embrace our rich history. Celebrate our ongoing recovery. As a guest of our city, please enjoy our hospitality and accept our gratitude because each of you is an active participant in the rebirth of New Orleans. Laissez les bons temps rouler!
Sharing Lessons Learned

By John P. Shaklee

Who taught me how to serve the burgeoning Hispanic population here in Ohio as a court interpreter? How did I learn to run my freelance business? I am fortunate that mentors, both formal and informal, have been willing to share their experience regarding how to act in the daily drama of the criminal justice system. What follows are just a few of the valuable tips these individuals have shared with me over the years.

Take Every Opportunity to Educate. It is important to establish yourself as a professional from the very beginning. For example, yesterday I met with a novice public defender who had never worked with an interpreter before. I had come prepared with copies of “The Nature of a Judicial Interpreter” by Arlene Kelly (The ATA Chronicle, March 2004, pages 20-24), an article that clearly sets the parameters for the role of an officer of the court. I handed a copy of Arlene’s article to the defense attorney and to the intern who was accompanying her that day. I then asked if I could introduce myself to the defendant and read excerpts from the article. This was an opportunity to inform both the defendant and the counsel about how a professional interpreter performs his or her duties.

Carry the Interpreter’s Oath. You should always arrive on the scene fully prepared. One of my colleagues suggested carrying extra copies of the interpreter’s oath to hand to the judge before the start of the proceeding. She always asks permission first before approaching the bench by saying, “Your Honor, may the interpreter approach?” She then asks, “When would your Honor care to swear in the interpreter?” If the judge does not have an oath on hand, she offers a copy. Here is a sample oath in English and Spanish from yet another colleague:

“Do you solemnly swear or affirm that you will interpret accurately, completely, and impartially from the source language into the target language, using your best skills and judgment in accordance with the standards prescribed by law and the code of ethics for court interpreters; follow all official guidelines established by this court for legal interpreting or translating; and discharge all of the solemn duties and obligations of legal interpretation and translation, so help you God?”

“I swear or affirm solemnly that I will interpret from the source language into the target language, using my best skills and judgment in accordance with the standards prescribed by law and the code of ethics for court interpreting; follow all official guidelines established by this court for legal interpreting or translating; and discharge all of the solemn duties and obligations of legal interpretation and translation, so help you God?”

“¿Jura o declara solemnemente que va a interpretar de forma/manera exacta, completa e imparcial del lenguaje de origen al lenguaje terminal, haciendo uso de sus mejores destrezas y juicio conforme con los estándares prescritos por la ley y el código de ética para intérpretes jurídicos; obedecer todas las pautas/directrices oficiales establecidas por este tribunal para la interpretación o traducción jurídica; y cumplir con todos los deberes y obligaciones solemnes del mismo, lo jura ante Dios?”

I learned that it also might be a good idea to memorize the above just in case you find yourself in a situation where you are not as prepared as you would like. Recently, an attorney, a minor offender, and I were whisked off suddenly from an interview about kidnapping to appear before a harried and hurried judge. In my haste, I left my copies of the interpreter’s oath behind. The judge asked to swear me in, but she did not have a copy of the oath. Did I have one at hand? I quickly wrote out the above oath from memory and she was able to begin the hearing.

Do Not be Afraid to Ask. Trying to figure out where to go and the right person to address questions to can be a daunting experience for the novice interpreter. This situation is made more stressful when the interpreter feels that the information they have been provided with is inadequate. Lucky for me, the woman who spearheaded interpreter training and certification in Ohio was willing to show me the ropes. In situations where more information is needed, she suggests that interpreters present the bailiff with their business card and then ask for the file in order to research last-minute terminology. This same mentor cautioned me to be prepared with pen and paper to jot down dates and names in case the public defender needs to meet with the defendant beforehand. I have also learned to ask the attorney where to stand in the courtroom. After a few appearances, all of these procedures will become automatic and you should feel less stressed.

Be Polite. Remember to always thank the judge at the end of a hearing. Politeness and civility rank high on most judges’ lists.

Learn from Each Other. You should also keep in mind that others, particularly those who are working with an interpreter for the first time, will...
look to you for guidance. The more I mentor and am mentored, the more aware I am of others doing the same. For instance, last week a judge instructed a fledgling attorney to sit in with a bailiff to learn how the bailiff explained release instructions to the defendant. Afterward, the magistrate thanked the callow fellow for his presence and assured him this was part of the learning process. The judge then motioned me to his bench. My first thought was, “What did I do wrong? Was I intrusive? Did I mumble?” Quite the opposite! The judge extended his hand and announced that it was an honor to have me in his court. He then asked if there was anything he needed to do differently so that we could both do our jobs properly. Surprised, I promised to send him pertinent websites about working with interpreters in the courtroom and thanked him again.

General Tips

Not every scene in my business day plays out in the courtroom. For the business side of freelance work, I have had many mentors who are not language professionals. Here are a few tips on taking care of the business side of what you do.

Taking Care of Business.

- Create a filing system that works for you.
- Create a glossary of terms and update it after each job.
- Make sure you get details of the assignment in writing. Create a contract that explains what is expected of you and what you expect of the client. This contract should be signed by both parties.
- Make sure you include a cancellation clause in the contract. This is a tip I learned from a seasoned conference interpreter. As a result, this extremely useful clause appears on every contract I submit before accepting an assignment: “Should the firm request interpreting services and subsequently cancel with less than 24-hours notice by telephone or e-mail, said firm will pay me the two hour minimum of $__.” What a relief to have this clause in my contract. When a client calls to cancel on the day of a lengthy assignment, I send an invoice quoting the cancellation clause, and I always get paid the agreed upon cancellation fee. Clients understand that this is reasonable and do not hesitate to charge for time invested. The client accepted my bid and I stretched from interpreter to project manager.
- Consider using a collections service to settle payment disputes. In the event of nonpayment for services rendered, consider seeking legal advice or the services of a collection agency. One possible resource is the collection/receivables management service offered by Dun & Bradstreet. Contact:
  Mike Horoski
  (800) 333-6497 ext. 823 7226
  (484) 242-7226
  michael.horoski@rmsna.com
- Learn to branch out your services, even if the thought initially makes you feel uncomfortable. Recently, a mentee from ATA’s Mentoring Program encouraged me to expand my horizons beyond interpreting. I had received a call from a local court asking me to translate a summons and complaint into Spanish. As a native speaker of English, I do not translate into my B language, but I wanted to find a way to provide the service that my client needed. I found an ATA-certified English-to-Spanish translator (the above-mentioned ATA mentee) who gave me her bid and recommended that I add a commission fee. I felt uncomfortable with this, but she reminded me that I was serving the client, adding value, and that I should not hesitate to charge for time invested. The client accepted my bid and I stretched from interpreter to project manager.
- Along the same lines as the tip I just gave you, do not accept assignments in new areas without careful consideration. Please be aware of your limits as a professional. Do not accept work for which you feel unqualified. Consider building upon your knowledge base by attending seminars and classes in the areas where you would like to become more accomplished.
- Build a stronger professional network by referring work to other colleagues. Whether you feel uncomfortable accepting a particular assignment or simply have too much work at the moment, referring assignments to other colleagues is a great way to enhance your relationship with others in your field.

Conclusion

Each day I continue to strive to merge unobtrusively into a functioning legal system. With the gentle guidance of many learned mentors, I am doing a better job in helping to level the field so that language is not a barrier.
Risk Management for Language Service Providers

By Ralf Lemster

Note: The information in this article is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA.

Being exposed to risk is virtually unavoidable when doing business. This holds true in particular for any self-employed professional. Risk exposure in itself is not a problem per se, provided that you are aware of the risks your business is subject to and consciously decide which risks to take and which to avoid.

Talking about active risk management strategies in the context of the language service provider (LSP) business is often greeted with a certain element of surprise. (“Risk management—me? Isn’t that just something for big companies?”) Of course, managing a multinational corporation requires a far more complex environment of systems and processes, but the key underlying concepts are very much the same.

Language service providers typically find themselves exposed to three types of risk:

Counterparty or Credit Risk: Usually incurred in the form of non-payment, which can lead to cash flow problems and possibly risks to a business’s reputation;

Operational Risks: Mostly related to faults in processes, human error, but also breaches of confidentiality; and

Foreign Exchange Risks: Given that LSPs can be active on a truly global scale, their cash flow and profitability are affected by exchange rate fluctuations.

Given its significance, this article will primarily focus on counterparty or credit risks. The concepts described below can be applied to operational and foreign exchange risks as well.

Learn to Assess Your Risk
It is amazing, sometimes horrifying, to see the extent to which LSPs are exposed to payment problems. In a business often characterized by intense competition, LSPs are faced with a quandary. They must try to balance their own economic interests with a few clients for business; the problem is that as a self-employed entrepreneur, you have to deal with new customers if you want to grow your business. Furthermore, there is an incentive to approach those who are not being contacted by all your competitors.

So what are the strategies that allow you to approach new customers without putting your business in jeopardy? To help answer this, it is instructive to look at strategies used in financial risk management: specifically, at diversification, and risk quantification.

Diversification
The benefits of diversifying your customer base (in other words, not relying on only a few clients for business) should be rather obvious. Making sure you know who you are dealing with is another apparent no-brainer. Having said this, in the course of helping to moderate the ProZ.com Blue Board, I have seen numerous examples where LSPs shied away from the cost of an international phone call, which could have uncovered that the impressive e-mail and flashy website of their new-found customer were just a disguise for a fraudulent operation. There are numerous online resources where you can crosscheck addresses, phone numbers, and locations (including IP address data) against what your prospective customer says in the.
The workshop is open to English-to-Spanish translators from any country. Qualified participants will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis. Excellent command of both Spanish and English is a requirement. In the course of the workshop, four texts will be translated by the participants, reviewed by Leandro Wolfson, a professional translator from Argentina, and returned to each translator with revisions, annotated comments, and a model translation selected each month from the group. As in previous TIP-Lab workshops, applications for continuing education credit will be submitted to the Judicial Council of California, the Washington State Courts, and ATA. Registration is now open. Space is limited. Interested translators are encouraged to register as soon as possible. For information, contact: TIP-Lab, c/o Alicia Marshall (847) 869-4889 (phone/fax); e-mail: aliciamarshall@comcast.net; or visit www.tip-lab.org.

Think Before You Act

At this point, it is appropriate to add a disclaimer. Of course, the process as described here is not scientific. To come up with really reliable data would require statistical evidence of defaults, etc. But that is not the real problem—most LSPs I have talked to have a pretty good idea of their customers’ credit quality. The problem is that the same LSPs fail to incorporate this knowledge into a conscious decision.

In summary, avoiding risks is impossible. The only way to do so is to withdraw completely from business (some would argue, from life). Being caught unaware is not only dangerous, but can be avoided to a large extent. You will be in a much better position to deal with risks if you have thought about them beforehand.

Risk Management for Language Service Providers Continued

Risk Quantification

When assessing your risk profile and trying to quantify your exposure, you can basically use the techniques, albeit on a much less complex level, applied by major financial institutions. When banks look at their loan portfolios, they use concepts such as probability of default (the likelihood of a given exposure to suffer default) and expected loss (the amount of money lost in the event of default). Transferring these concepts to an LSP’s business, you can quantify the value at risk that is inherent in a potential translation job. Sounds simple? It is. Very often, a simple calculation is enough to support a decision whether or not to go with a particular client (“The job at hand will pay $250 dollars and there is a 60% chance I will not get paid. Therefore, my risk exposure is approximately $150.”). Making yourself aware of how much cash is at stake can make a difference. The concept gets really interesting when you apply it across your current order book. Try to quantify your overall exposure—what does this tell you about the state of your business?

Useful Links

Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org

ProZ.com’s Blue Board
www.proz.com/blueboard

TIP-Lab 15th Distance Spanish Translation/Revision Workshop
January to June 2007

The ATA Chronicle | September 2006
especially your Internet access—when you take time off.

Conclusion

The suggestions in this article are based on years of trying to get more organized. Even with the best intentions, you will occasionally fall behind with organizational tasks. That is fine as long as you catch up again at the first opportunity. The rewards will be immediate: improved management of your accounts receivable ensures timely payment, you will not be working (as many) nights and weekends, and you will not feel embarrassed when a visitor stops by your office.

Note


“Dumpling Stuffed with the Ovary and Digestive Glands of a Crad”

“Sounds like something a 15-year-old biology student thought up to put us off our food,” was one veteran translator’s reaction to the English words gracing a restaurant window in Beijing, sent in by a reader.

Another linguist took a milder view, noting that criticizing any restaurant’s foreign-language signs may be akin to shooting fish (or crad) in a barrel. Good restaurants focus on the food, and silly signs in family-owned operations can be a sign of, well, authenticity.

Yet our investigation into What Went Wrong at this xian chi emporium highlights a number of best-practice tips that businesses in different fields altogether can put to good use.

Always get your translations checked by a native speaker to avoid glaring typos that monolingual or non-native speakers fail to catch (here crad for crab). Signs in a different alphabet are particularly accident-prone, as Heathrow Airport discovered several years ago when it displayed a flawed notice in Hebrew for months. Likewise, the Japanese version of a “Welcome to St. Louis!” sign that hung upside down on the highway leading from that city’s airport to town for over a year. Bad translations are like a bad case of dan-draw: your target audience may not tell you, but they notice.

Keep the purpose and end reader in mind. Chinese-to-English translator Jim Honeychuck summarizes one problem with the dumpling sign as “literal truth in advertising, but with wording completely inappropriate for the purpose.” Ovaries and digestive glands—do diners want this degree of detail? Speaking of which, and as noted in a recent Onionskin, such “detail” served up straight from a bilingual dictionary is often a recipe for disaster. In this case the source is the Shanghai Jiaotong University Press dictionary (which really does say “the ovary and digestive glands of a crab”).

The two characters in the middle of both Chinese phrases represent “crab” and “yellow/brown matter,” we are assured, but as Honeychuck explains, drawing on personal experience in his native Maryland, where crab-pickin’ is a time-honored pursuit, “there’s more yellow/brown stuff in there than ovaries and digestive glands.”

Two professional chefs and a restaurant critic confirm that a more suitable term would be “crab-roe dumplings.”

If a translator leaves out a term, make sure this is a conscious decision, not simply a mad rush to deadline. Scuttling back to the top dumpling specialty, the first two characters are “Nanxiang,” an area of Shanghai and a well-known style of preparing dumplings. “It’s basically like advertising ‘Chicken Kiev’ as just ‘chicken,’” says one of our China experts. The first two characters of the second specialty have also been left out: these delicacies are in fact “shark’s fin and crab-roe dumplings.” Speculation: would Westerners want to avoid the former...or prefer not to know? Seems unlikely—at least, not if they were lured in off the street by the prospect of ovaries and digestive glands.

As this article went to press, China’s Xinhuanet news agency announced a new campaign to correct “Chinglish” bilingual signs as part of its makeover for the 2008 Olympics.
A regulation issued by the Beijing Municipal Tourism Bureau makes “correct English signs [...] one of the most important criteria for unrated hotels to qualify as official accommodation providers” says the press release. This is surely a step in the right direction. Just as there is clearly a ways to go, and not only in the menu category. Some hotels write “scatter” for “evacuate” notes this source.

And the problem extends well beyond accommodation: Zhou Chen, information officer for the Beijing Speaks to the World Committee, says his organization this year issued standards on Chinese-to-English translation for public signs including traffic and road name panels. English-speaking drivers will welcome these; for the time being, signs warning of the hazards of driving on wet roads read “The slippery are very crafty.”

Advertising Best Practice in Translation

“Our senior management takes the English version of our communications extremely seriously,” Frenchman Pierre Benaich told an enthusiastic group of industry professionals at a conference in Paris in July.

As head of investor relations at French advertising giant Publicis Groupe, Mr. Benaich is responsible for ensuring that the company’s message reaches shareholders and potential investors worldwide—but also that the French, U.K., U.S., Swiss, and Japanese members of its top management receive, in their own language, the clear, accurate information they need to make strategic decisions.

Annual revenues of €4.1 billion in 2005 make the company the world’s number 4 player in advertising and marketing services through Publicis itself, subsidiaries Saatchi & Saatchi, Leo Burnett, Bcom3, and other top names. Operations in 104 countries give it true worldwide reach.

The presentation gave participants unique insights into this demanding client’s priorities and procedures, starting with language pairs—primarily English and French, but also Japanese. “It’s not quite a two-language game,” Benaich told his audience, “since we have observed firsthand that Japanese translations can give investors in that country a more positive view of our company.”

Typical stumbling blocks to language transfer are industry-specific jargon, said the French executive. Definitions of core business content cover different ground in French and English, and complications arise from a steady flow of new concepts and theories—“buzz marketing,” for example. Financial terminology is also a challenge, with persistent differences from one company to the next despite new International Financial Reporting Standards for accounting. Complex hybrid securities and financial products complicate matters further.

Translation or Adaptation?

According to Mr. Benaich, Publicis prefers adaptation for annual reports and strategic documents, but—not surprisingly—adopts a more conservative approach for financial statements “where adaptation is simply impossible.” Even in press releases adaptation is kept to a minimum, he said, due to the risk of factual errors or omissions.

He fingered one unexpected growth area: at present, 90% of group employees are non-French as are 64% of executive committee members. With a full 95% of investor relations input arriving at headquarters in English, the challenge for Publicis, as for other French global companies, is increasingly to get top quality translation into French, in particular for press releases and the annual report. “This represents a real opportunity for translators,” he told his audience, “since in our experience the supply of truly skilled providers is very limited.” Experiences with translation agencies had proved disappointing, he said, and the group’s preference is definitely for specialized individual suppliers.

Perhaps most encouraging for translators in the audience were this savvy client’s reflections on how his company might work more effectively with professional linguists. “We should do more to share glossaries of our favorite vocabulary, including ‘words we like/don’t like,’ but also glossaries of industry jargon and company-specific financial terms,” he noted.

In addition, client companies like his should spend more time briefing their translators and coordinating the work of all of the suppliers involved in each assignment—copywriters, translators, and in-house experts.

What does he appreciate most in his preferred freelance suppliers? Speed of execution, flexibility and specialization—including translators’ ability to recognize their own limits and bring in specialists from other areas as needed.

With thanks to Roger Fletcher, Nick Fone, Jim Honeychuck, Ros Schwartz, and Rupert Swyer.
Dear Business Smarts,

I am writing to get your advice about an unusual situation. A direct client, for whom I translate regularly, recently asked me to do a difficult technical translation into Spanish. I was not sure I would be up to the task because technical translation is not my field of expertise. But since I know the company’s product line quite well, I asked permission to have a more experienced colleague do the translation, while I would provide proofreading services to make sure the correct terminology was used. My contact person at the company readily agreed and I gave the project to a well-respected colleague, who often responds to questions in Spanish online forums and has a good résumé. To my astonishment, I found a number of strange errors in the final product and it took me three times longer to edit and proofread the document than I had expected. When questioned, the colleague cheerfully let me know that she dictates all her work using speech recognition software, since it allows her to “get more done.” I did not want to kick up a fuss, and ended up redoing the project on my own. I felt resentful and angry. What should I have done?

New Mexico

Dear New Mexico,

Quite a few translators use speech recognition software, which allows the text to be “dictated” into the computer using a microphone, eliminating a lot of typing. The programs can be trained to understand certain words and expressions based on samples spoken by the user. The text that results from voice-input sessions is far from finished, however. On the contrary, it has to be edited very carefully to eliminate small errors and correct the punctuation. For example, a speech recognition program may interpret the word “together” as “to get there,” which would completely distort all meaning. Apparently, such programs can be used with great success for documents that often contain the same phrases, but the error rate can be so high that some translation agencies have expressly banned dictating. Your colleague was not wrong to save time with speech recognition software, but it was inappropriate for her to send you the unfinished copy of a translation that had specifically been outsourced because it required her expertise, and to assume you would do all the polishing and editing. She was quite obviously taking advantage of you, and “got more done” because you did half her work.

The best approach might have been to send your corrections back to the colleague to let her know the amount of editing you had to do. It may also be useful for you to reassess your own skills. What made you think you could not do this particular project yourself, even though you understood the product and knew the client well, and were able to edit the final product with authority? With a little research and a few deep breaths, you may find that “insourcing” is the best solution.

Business Smarts:
Outsourcing

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

October 21, 2006
Atlanta Association of Interpreters & Translators
Workshop on Translation Memory Tools
(DéjàVu, SDL TRADOS, SDLX, Star Transit, etc.)
Atlanta, Georgia

How do you choose the right translation memory program?
What are translation memories? Who should buy them?
What should you look for? How much should you spend?

Fee: AAIT members: $80; Nonmembers: $100; Students: $60

For additional information please contact Rosa Burkard at rosaburkard@earthlink.net.
Success by Association!

Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network

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. The following 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.

The Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network (MiTiN) was started as an informal network in 1991 by local Michigan translators and interpreters. The association officially adopted its current name in 1995. MiTiN now has over 140 members representing over 34 languages. Our members are translators, interpreters, agencies, educators, and others interested in the translation and interpretation profession. We are an active organization located in the center of the automotive industry and Midwest manufacturing belt, and many members have particular expertise in these areas as well as in other technical and nontechnical fields. MiTiN became an ATA chapter in 2004.

Goals
• To promote the continuing education and development of interpreters and translators.
• To promote networking among interpreters and translators, including interaction and support of similar organizations.
• To operate a referral service through the publication of a membership directory, with an online version available to the public.
• To promote and publicize professional standards and practices.
• To promote and support the general development of cross-cultural communication skills.

Benefits
• The MiTiN Newsletter (published monthly).
• Monthly meetings.
• Informative events and networking opportunities.
• Annual membership directory. This directory puts end-users directly in contact with language specialists. The directory is free and there is no referral fee. The directory is also published online at www.mitinweb.org/directory.cfm.

Membership
• Professional ($40): Professional members may vote, attend all meetings and functions, and hold any office or position in MiTiN.
• Corporate/institutional ($50): The head of the company or language department, or his/her designee, may vote, attend all meetings and functions, and hold any office or position in MiTiN.

Please note that all applications are subject to approval by MiTiN’s board of directors, and timely payment of annual dues is required for continuing membership. Annual dues for the following year are payable each December 1. Members are not invoiced for annual dues, so please mark your calendar. For complete membership information, including an application, go to www.mitinweb.org/membership.cfm.

Quick Facts
• Acronym: MiTiN
• Established: 1991
• Mission: To serve members through education, networking, and promotion of the translation and interpretation professions.
• Area Served: Michigan
• Newsletter: The MiTiN Newsletter
• Website: www.mitinweb.org
• Phone: (248) 344-0909
• Fax: (248) 344-0092
• E-mail: info@mitinweb.org
• Mailing Address: MiTiN
  P.O. Box 852
  Novi, MI 48376-0852

International Translation Day Continued from p. 17

things: write a letter to the editor of your local paper; request that International Translation Day be proclaimed by your local, state, or federal government; throw a party; hold a parade; or—why not?—print up some greeting cards of your own.
Dictionary Reviews  Compiled by Boris Silversteyn

Silversteyn is chair of the ATA Dictionary Review Committee.

Diccionario Bilingüe de Economía y Empresa (English-Spanish/Spanish-English)

Author: José M. Lozano Irueste
Publisher: Ediciones Pirámide, S.A., Madrid
Publication date: 2005
Price: $149.95 from InTrans Book Service

Available from: InTrans Book Service
http://intransbooks.com

Reviewed by: Marian S. Greenfield

lookup in this dictionary is sometimes convenient, with terms aligned under a single headword, except with some baffling unrelated entries thrown in, as noted below. When terms are not the first word in a phrase, they are listed in a long paragraph. This is especially annoying for entries like the preposition “of,” which really does not belong in the dictionary. How the phrases it is used in were chosen (14 pages worth) is beyond my comprehension, and I cannot imagine such a laundry list being useful. I think some of these terms are made up, such as “act of pais,” translated as Acto extrajudicial. It seems this should have been “act in pais,” which I admit to never having seen before. There are only two and a half pages of phrases with “in,” and “act in pais” is not one of them. “Changes in taxes” is included, but I never thought of that as a standard phrase to look up in a dictionary.

The Diccionario Bilingüe de Economía y Empresa includes lots of abbreviations and acronyms, although the expansions are not always accurate and the treatment is not consistent. Generally, there is an expansion and a translation, sometimes just one or the other. The expansion for “AID” was given in the into-Spanish section as the obviously incorrect “Agency International for Development,” although the Spanish Agencia para el desarrollo internacional is correct. In the Spanish-to-English section, the acronym is not listed, but the Spanish is listed as Agencia Internacional de Desarrollo and the correct English, “Agency for International Development” (AID), is given. Some of the abbreviations also seem to be strange filler, for example, “RP” expanded as “right platen” with no Spanish translation. This seems a bit odd in an economics and business dictionary, if it exists at all as a common abbreviation. The same can be said for “UT,” expanded as “upper tractor” without a translation. Meanwhile, there is no entry for common financial abbreviations or acronyms such as APY (Annual Percentage Yield), p.a. (per annum), or VAR (Value at Risk).

I also came across some entries that do not make much sense to me:

inside Interior. Dentro. Person inside the territory: Residente. Foreign resident’s account: Cuenta de un residente extranjero....

i. broker. Corredor oficial.

i. director. Accionista importante que participa en la dirección de la empresa [EE.UU]. (In most definitions I have seen, this is an employee of the company, generally an executive, who has been elected to the board.)

i. trading. [Bolsa]. Tráfico de iniciados. Transacciones internas: uso de información privilegiada versus “insider dealing.” (I would expect to see “insider trading” in Spanish; something like “negociación con información privilegiada.”)

insider Persona informada.

i. dealing. [Bolsa]. Operaciones hechas por alguien que forma parte de la organización bursátil. Transacciones internas versus “insider training.” (Note the typo “training.” Again, I would expect to see something like “negociación con información privilegiada” in Spanish.)

i. information. Información interior (de una empresa). (I would expect the more common translation “información privilegiada.”)

i. trading. Información privilegiada. (Of course, this is insider information and says nothing about trading.)

Under diferencia:

d. en. Inadequate in.

Under ganar:

g. un pleito. To recover.

In the English-to-Spanish section, the term “frame agreement” should be “framework agreement,” but it is correctly translated as contrato marco. Contrato marco is not included in the Spanish-to-English section. Also, the baffling entry outsourcing follows “outsourcing” and is translated as “gestión por personas ajenas a la empresa.”

There are many filler words: digital, directory, farmer, farmers, fuente, hike, hill, mankind, married, sandy,
while, whilst, acrónimo, bidón, caza, celda, decubrimiento, encontrar, hambre, meditar, and pronto.

Information on parts of speech is provided, although no contextual information is given. There are no graphics or appendices, only a bibliography, with most sources dating back to the 1960s and 1970s, with the most recent being a couple from 1992.

Of the following expected terms—arm’s length, Chinese wall, default interest, foreign exchange risk, gilt-edged, income bracket, interim dividend, market maker, pari passu, performance indicators, preferred stock, repo, retire debt, settlement, spin-off, take or pay (contract), takeover bid, tax write-off, trader, white knight, caja chica, capital (de) riesgo, captación de fondos, exigible, flujo de caja, pliego de condiciones, plusvalía, producto interno/interior bruto—which were all found in other banking and business dictionaries, only “takeover bid” was not found in the Diccionario Bilingüe de Economía y Empresa, although the translation for “spin-off” is given as “Cambio de acciones. Transferencia de activo.” The options in the Ariel dictionary include “Transferencia de activo.” However, it also includes “excisión,” which is more accurate than “Cambio de acciones.” The translation for pliego de condiciones is given by Lozano Irueste as “Specifiction. Articles and conditions.” Ariel defines it as “bidding specifications, invitation to bid, articles and conditions, specifications.”

The other banking and business dictionaries consulted for this review are: Gil Esteban’s Diccionario bancario español-inglés, LID’s Diccionario empresarial Stanford, McGraw-Hill/Interamericana de España, S.A.’s Diccionario de términos financieros y de inversión, and Ariel’s Diccionario de términos económicos, financieros y comerciales.

In conclusion, I would say that because of the annoying laundry lists of terms and the inaccuracies, the Diccionario Bilingüe de Economía y Empresa is not among the dictionaries I would usually reach for on my bookshelf.

**Marian S. Greenfield** serves as ATA president. She also chairs the association’s Professional Development Committee. She is the owner of msgreenfield Translations. Formerly the manager of Translation Services at JP Morgan, she translated in New York’s Financial District for 20 years. She is now a full-time translation industry consultant and freelancer, translating financial documents from Spanish, Portuguese, and French into English. She is also an adjunct associate professor of translation at New York University and an adjunct instructor of translation at The University of Chicago. Contact: president@atanet.org.

**Multicultural Spanish Dictionary**

**Editors:** Agustín Martínez and Morry Sofer  
**Publisher:** Schreiber Publishing  
**Publication date:** 2006 (second revised edition)  
**ISBN:** 1-88756-345-8  
**Price:** $24.95 (paperback)  
**Available from:** www.schreiberpublishing.com  
**Number of pages:** 281

About 1,000 entries in the English-to-Spanish section (87 pages); about 3,000 in the Spanish-to-English section (97 pages)

**Type of work:** Bilingual, bi-directional dictionary of Spanish regionalisms

**Number of contributors by country (22):**  
Argentina (1); Bolivia (1); Chile (1); Colombia (2); Costa Rica (2); Cuba (1); Dominican Republic (1); Ecuador (1); Guatemala (1); Mexico (1); Nicaragua (1); Panama (1); Paraguay (2); Peru (1); Puerto Rico (2); Spain (1); Uruguay (1); Venezuela (1)

**Appendices:**  
Thematically arranged

**Quality of binding:** Excellent

**Quality of paper and print:** Good

**Typeface and legibility:** Good

**Format:** Considerable disparity in macro- and micro-structure between sections

**Grammatical information:** Parts of speech

**Reviewed by:** Verónica Albin

On the back cover of the Multicultural Spanish Dictionary (MSD2), the editors state: “This dictionary tells you what all the others don’t.” I must disagree with this, since there are many dialectical dictionaries in print that do the job well. On my shelves I have at least three dozen volumes devoted to Spanish regionalisms, five of which are for Mexico alone: McKenna’s bilingual Dictionary of Mexicanisms; Moreno de Alba’s La lengua española en México; Cabrera’s Diccionario de aztequismos; Rodríguez’s 2000 y pico...
mexicanismos muy chidos; and the Colegio de México’s Diccionario básico del español de México. There are also Andre Moskowitz’s superb compilations of Spanish lexical dialectology that have been published in ATA’s Annual Conference Proceedings over the years.

In June 1999, the late Alicia Gordon reviewed the first edition of the MSD (MSD1) for Intercambios, the newsletter of ATA’s Spanish Language Division. Gordon wrote: “The editor seems to have approached this as an anecdotal exercise rather than as a serious research tool, and that’s fine and good, but it brings the book down to the level of a mini tour guide.”

I was hoping for the MSD2 to be clean and lean, but it is as poorly researched and executed as the first attempt. If the MSD1 can be characterized, in the words of ATA Past President Tom West (who graciously allowed me to use his name) in his review of January 31, 2000 on Amazon.com, as “a wonderful idea gone badly awry,” the second edition can be best described as embarrassingly unimproved.

Even though the editors increased the number of contributors from various countries from 18 in the MSD1 to 22 in the MSD2, there are still no contributors for some countries, including El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, or the U.S. Furthermore, countries like Paraguay, with a population of roughly 6.5 million, have two contributors while countries like Mexico (107 million) have one. Although Gordon pointed out that the editors of the MSD1 had failed to include Spanish variants for the U.S., her recommendation to include these went unheeded in the MSD2.

My major complaint about the MSD2 is its lack of scholarliness. Asking a friend, or 22 of them, to say “flock” in their respective idiolects is no longer enough. Modern lexicography cannot afford to ignore the Internet, corpora, and scholarly work on the subject. Among the readily available research tools for compiling dialectical dictionaries, we find the Varilex project (http://gamp.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~ueda/varilex) and the geoinónimos section on the Signum page (www.lenguaje.com/herramientas/varilex/varilex.asp). Excellent dictionaries of Spanish variants are also available at www3.unileon.es/dp/dfh/jmr and www3.unileon.es/dp/dfh/jmr/dicci/0000.htm, and many other sites offer glossaries for every Spanish-speaking country.

For research with concordancers, we have the extraordinary Corpus del español at www.corpusdelespanol.org (Mark Davies, Brigham Young University) and the CREA and CORDE at www.rae.es, and numerous important scholarly publications. There is simply no excuse for not consulting these and other printed sources and doing the readings on current research.

The editors, it seems, forgot that words hunt in packs: the meaning of a given word depends on the words around it. One of the main flaws of the MSD2 is that the contributors were not given context and the editors did not think their questions through. For example, in the entry for the noun flock, the editors were clearly thinking of sheep when they rendered its translation as rebaño, yet some of the contributors were thinking of birds, thus rendering it bandada. Interestingly, neither editors nor contributors thought of stuffing (borra), or realized that flock could have a religious connotation (feligreses) or that it could simply be referring to people (tropel).

I cannot help but think that those involved in the compilation of the MSD2 did not look at the language critically.

In his review of the MSD1, West noticed an interesting comprehension problem that remains unsolved in the MSD2:

“Take the word ‘vest,’ for example. All of the informants but one understood ‘vest’ to mean ‘an article of clothing that men wear in a three-piece suit,’ which is what it means in American English, and translated it as ‘chaleco.’ The Argentine informant, on the other hand, understood it to mean ‘undershirt,’ which is what it means in British English, where our ‘vest’ is called a ‘waistcoat.’ Accordingly, she translated it as ‘camiseta, musculosa.’ The Multicultural Spanish Dictionary implies that ‘vest’ in the American sense is ‘chaleco’ everywhere but in Argentina.”

Sometimes incorrect renderings were not the result of confusing British and American English, but happened because some of the contributors simply did not understand English. For example: Jet lag was understood by the Mexican contributor as sentirse mal por la altura (feel sick because of the altitude); walrus was rendered as foca marina (sea seal) by the contributor from the Dominican Republic, who also rendered wake as funeral; and Swiss roll was rendered as rosca (ring cake) and bollo de pan (bread roll) by Uruguay and Venezuela, respectively. Incidentally, the Mexican term for Swiss roll, niño envuelto, was not included.

Moreover, there are spelling and
labeling mistakes in the English entries provided by the editors. The entry car jack [sic] is a good example. The editors, wanting the term for the crime (one word), gave the spelling for the tool (car jack, two words) and incorrectly labeled it “(v pr)” —the term should have been spelled car-jacking and labeled “(n).” Most of the answers they listed for the verb are far from satisfactory: asaltar con violencia (to hold-up with violence), raptar (kidnap), etc.

There is also a problem with the Spanish definitions of what the editors consider to be the “standard translation” of an English term. Squash, for example, was translated using the Mexican (Nahua) word chilacayote, which, unlike its cousin, chocolate, has never traveled abroad. In addition, chilacayote is a hyponym of calabaza (i.e., it is a type of squash). In fact, hyponyms and hypernyms are often confused in the MSD2.

Furthermore, these “standard translations” are unreliable for other reasons. The English reporter, for example, was rendered by the editors as locutor (announcer)—these are two very different professions. Also, the “standard translation” for acróbata as acróbata is also misleading. If I were asked to back-translate acróbata, I would, without a doubt, think of gifted athletes and render it as acrobat. Stuntman would not have crossed my mind.

Register is not indicated in the MSD2. In the entry for nostril, for example, the editors offer (again) a colloquial term, ventanilla, as the “standard translation”; Chile offered the anatomical, high register term narina; Nicaragua, the next notch down (fosanasal) [sic]; and the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Mexico offered extremely low register terms—hoyo de la nariz (hole of the nose), roto de la nariz (crack of the nose), and poro de la nariz (pore of the nose), respectively.

Cant is not flagged, either. Just looking at the letter “C” in the Spanish-to-English section, camote, cachucha, chaqueta, and concha are not marked as having a sexual connotation. And the Mexican innocuous term cajeta, which is downright dangerous in Argentina, is not included in this lexicon.

So what is included? The editors tell us in the introduction that whenever a term remains invariant across nations—the example they offer is manzana—that term was left out. In spite of the editorial statement, the MSD2 contains not only manzana (the editors may wish to look at page 215 and delete the second entry: apple [n] manzana), but dozens of manzana-like terms. In Part III (Subject Areas), there are 10 such terms on the first page alone. As a result, the harvest from the MSD2 should yield quite a few gallons of cider.

When Alicia Gordon reviewed the MSD1, she said: “For a book like this to make sense, it needs to go the extra mile, aiming precisely for being comprehensive, and indicating nuances in meaning, accepted and unaccepted usage, slang, and colloquialisms. Otherwise, we’re best off if we try to stick to as neutral a form of Spanish as possible [...], or to pull out another resource if we need to look up the local name for some nuts and bolts.”

Tom West also wrote in his Amazon.com review: “In short, this book is far too shoddily compiled to be of much use to anyone.”

Unfortunately, their comments hold true for the MSD2.

Links to MSD2 Reviews
Alicia Gordon:

Tom West:
www.amazon.com/gp/product/1887563458/sr=82/qid=1153266478/ref=sr_1_2/102-7638707-8234508?ie=UTF8

Verónica Albin is a freelance medical translator and senior lecturer in Spanish and translation at the Center for the Study of Languages at Rice University in Houston, Texas, where she teaches translation, cross-cultural communication, and medical Spanish. She is an ATA-certified (English→Spanish) translator. Contact: valbin@rice.edu.

The Translation Inquirer  
By John Decker

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

All right, here is the perfect light-hearted anecdote to Nicholas Ostler’s heavyweight Empires of the Word, which I praised so highly in previous issues of this column. The catalogue that included The Meaning of Tingo: And Other Extraordinary Words from Around the World by Adam Jacot de Boinod just arrived today, the very day when this column needs to be compiled. What this 209-page tome offers, according to its advertising paragraph, is “a collection of words that have no English equivalents, offers numerous multicultural insights and perspectives—and lots of laughs.” Is there anyone out there who is familiar with this work? “Tingo,” by the way, is Pascuense for “to borrow things from a friend’s house, one by one, until there is nothing left.”

[Abbreviations used with this column: Da-Danish; E-English; F-French; G-German; I-Italian; Po-Polish; R-Russian; Sb-Serbian; Sp-Spanish]

New Queries

(E-F 9-06/1) Here is a query in the form of a sentence looking for its native land. La Rochefoucauld made a statement that emerged into English as, “To eat is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art.” But what, asks a Lantra-l user, is the original French?

(E-Sb 9-06/2) Injection pump throttle control, an automotive term for a throttle-set motor, proved difficult for a ProZ member. Can anyone supply the Serbian for this?

(G-Da 9-06/3) The problem was providing correct Danish for “Geberzylinder,” an automotive term that stumped a ProZer. The English meaning of master cylinder is readily available, but how about Danish?

(G-E 9-06/4) The word in bold print, perhaps referring to something like an employee group, stumped a Lantra-l user. Here is the sentence with the troubling word: “Zum Abrechnungskreis wird die Gehaltsabrechnung verwaltet.” Was his guess about this a correct one?

(I-E 9-06/5) “Oltre” is a term in the world of art history and criticism that a ProZ member could not manage to “re-create” in English. It has to do with the capacity to go “oltre” (i.e., something that does not only represent what you see in the picture, but a whole world beyond it. It is a bit like looking at a painting of an old boot and thinking about the harsh world of work, etc.). Anyone want to try it?

(I-E 9-06/6) “Lenza da fermo e da traino” comes from the world of sport fishing, as this ProZer explained, but her search for good English for this phrase was at a standstill as of the writing of this column. Can anyone help?

(R-G 9-06/7) When this ProZ user encountered πιντι κλειστή, derojnujujujuu s hvoyňų porto derevja, she wondered whether it might refer to a genuine wood laminate, being a product that is to be exported from Russia into Germany. No further context was available. Who can help with the German? English is also acceptable.

(Sp-E 9-06/8) This query is about a perplexing item found in a résumé from Peru. The problem pair of words are in bold print: “Suministro en Media Tensión 10 KV, para las Estaciones de Bombeo M1, M2 y Pozo Percolado para los AA.HH Manantay, Iván Sikic y El Triunfo. Pucallpa.”

Replies to Old Queries

(E-Sp 6-06/4) (grub screw): Anne Hartzenbusch says that thanks to her invaluable Illustrated Technical Dictionary in Six Languages, Vol. I-The Elements of Machinery and the Tools Most Frequently Used in Metal and Wood Working (McGraw Publishing, 1906), she can assert that it is a headless screw, known in Spanish as a “tornillo prisionero.”

(G-E 6-06/7) (Rechtsgängige Gleichschlag-Drahtseile): This, says Zippy, is right long lay wire rope. The inimitable Z names Marks’ Standard Handbook for Mechanical Engineers as his source for this.

(Po-E 6-06/9) (nadmiernego rozpuszczania anod): For the entire phrase, Malgorzata Marjanska-Fish suggests: The surplus of NaOH increases the conductivity of the bath, cathode polarization and therefore improves the macro throwing power of the bath. On the other hand, a too high concentration of NaOH leads to excessive anodic stripping and deposition of qualitatively worse zinc coatings.

Continued on p.45
Humor and Translation  By Mark Herman

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@earthlink.net or via snail mail to Mark Herman, 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.

A Really Bad Review

In the February 13, 2006 issue of the Nation, Roberto González Echevarría reviewed the 496-page Rubén Darío: Selected Writings (Penguin, 2005), translated by Andrew Hurley, Greg Simon, and Steven F. White, and edited and with an introduction by Ilan Stavans.

Rubén Darío (1867-1916) was born in Nicaragua, and, according to Echevarría, “ushered Spanish language poetry into the modern era,” “led [a] … profound poetic [revolution] in Spanish,” but remains “all but unknown” in English-speaking countries.

Echevarría’s review of the book is so scathing as to be almost funny:

Darío’s circulation and reputation in English will not be helped by the publication of this carelessly conceived and executed anthology of his prose and verse. The selection of the poetry is particularly poor, leaving out some of Darío’s most important poems….. [The anthology] includes few of his long poems in their entirety and organizes the collection in a manner that is more confusing than enlightening…. The subdivisions draw their heading from the lines of a poem whose translation is particularly appalling. Greg Simon and Steven White’s poetry translations are not only awkward; they make basic errors that are beyond the usual disputes about word choice. [One English line,] “Each leaf on the trees sings with its own goal” … not only completely misses the rhythm [of the original Spanish]; worse, it hardly conveys what the Spanish [“cada hoja de cada árbol canta un propio cantar”] says, which is more like “On every tree each leaf sings its own song.” …

…Contrary to Stavans’s assertion … that this anthology is “the most ambitious attempt ever to make the Nicaraguan poet comfortable in English,” there are others that are better, one as recent as 2004….

Stavans’s introduction lacks scholarly credibility or academic reliability. It is riddled with clichés …, lacks a single new idea worth considering and does no justice to the considerable body of Darío criticism. Like the translations, it contains elementary mistakes, some laughable…. Stavans even writes that Darío’s “health deteriorated rapidly in the years following World War I,” when the poet had been dead for two years at war’s end in 1918. His health could hardly have gotten worse.

Echevarría’s a Sterling Professor of Hispanic and Comparative Literature at Yale University, and Stavans is a professor of Latin American and Latino culture at Amherst College. Is this review just part of an academic feud between two rival professors of Spanish? Not having read the book, I can offer no independent judgment of the merits of either the book or the review. But, as has been remarked in this column and many places elsewhere, translation has a bad reputation which this review, especially if it is deserved, will help reinforce. Advertisers will still proclaim they do not want translations, the Dramatists’ Guild will still not accept “mere” translators as members (though they welcome “adapters”), and anything good in a translated work will continue to be credited solely to the original author, while anything bad will be blamed on the translator. Publishers will continue to be reluctant to publish translations because “they do not sell,” even if, as is often the case, most of the fault—for bad books or commercially unsuccessful good books—lies with the publishers themselves.

It is time for organizations such as ATA and the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) to have, alongside their awards programs, reviews of works in translation in their publications. ALTA has already started to do this. For the most egregious cases, such as translations so riddled with typographical errors as to be unreadable, translations that omit large chunks of the original without informing the reader, or terrible translations that continue to be reprinted, sometimes for more than a century, simply because publishers can use them for free, I suggest highly publicized halls of shame.
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The ATA Chronicle | September 2006

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The Translation Inquirer Continued from p. 42

(Sp-E 6-06/11) (quintados): Cristina Villanueva says the word is “quintales,” a weight equal to 100 pounds. There is also a “metric quintal,” equal to 100 kilos, but this one is not used in Peru. The standard bag of cement in Peru weighs 46 kilos, or about 100 pounds, so it is the recording referring to 50 bags of cement (100 pounds each). Native Quechua speakers tend to soften the end of the word, so it is easy to confuse “quintales” with “quintados,” “quintavos,” or “quinchavos.” Anne Hartzenbusch, Janet Maney Quiroz, Andrew Hurley, and Graciela Daichman agree that the transcriber-translator could have misheard the word, and that it might be “quintales” as explained above.

That is the entirety of the column for now. On this extremely hot day, the Internet is not behaving as it should, and I wonder whether the heat is the cause of the intermittent losses of connection that prevents me from adding any more queries that may pop up. In any case, it is better to have a slightly shorter column than, as in July, have none at all. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

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47th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association
New Orleans, Louisiana • November 1-4, 2006

For information about advertising and exhibiting opportunities, please contact Matt Hicks, McNeill Group Inc.; mhicks@mcneill-group.com (215) 321-9662, ext. 19; Fax: (215) 321-9636.
### Upcoming Events

**September 30, 2006**  
Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association  
5th Annual Conference  
Bloomington, Minnesota  
www.umtia.com

**October 18-21, 2006**  
American Literary Translators Association  
29th Annual Conference  
Bellevue, Washington  
www.literarytranslators.org

**November 1-4, 2006**  
American Translators Association  
47th Annual Conference  
New Orleans, Louisiana  

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

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### ATA Member News

**Welocalize, Inc. Completes Merger With M² Enterprises**

ATA corporate member Welocalize, a provider of software localization and testing services, and M² Enterprises, a 27-year provider of multimedia and publishing translation services, have merged their operations. The M² Enterprises operations team will move from its Montgomery Village, Maryland, office to the Welocalize headquarters in Frederick, Maryland.

**Eriksen Translations Receives Prize in Women Presidents’ Educational Organization Challenge**

ATA corporate member Eriksen Translations, headed by Vigdis Eriksen, was awarded second prize in the Inaugural Done Deals Challenge at the Women Presidents’ Educational Organization (WPEO) Breakthrough Breakfast. The prizes are handed out to those New York-area companies who have reported the greatest number of deals completed in the last year with corporate members and other certified women’s business enterprises.
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47th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association

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**Total Registration Fees** $______

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