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Seven Ways to Improve Marketing and Other Copy
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We Want You!

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

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Our Authors | June 2007

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Jiri Stejskal is currently serving as ATA president-elect and conference organizer. He also serves as the treasurer of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation and chairs the International Federation of Translators Status Committee. He has a Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literatures and an executive MBA in general business. An active translator, he joined ATA in 1991 and founded a translation company, CETRA, Inc. (formerly Central European Translations, Inc.) in 1997. In addition to his duties as a translator, company owner, and volunteer for translator and interpreter organizations, he teaches graduate language courses at the University of Pennsylvania. Contact: jiri@cetra.com.

Danny Verbov is a copywriter and specialist in marketing translations. He has been a graphic artist at an ad agency and a marketing coordinator for an international magazine, and he has fundraising and sales experience. He is fascinated by the relationship between words and human psychology, and is studying copywriting with the American Writers and Artists Institute. He regularly uses copywriting principles in his translations and other writing, and has a lot of fun with them, too. Contact: dverbov@netvision.net.il.

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 → English legal and technical translation for New York University. Contact: lwright3@gmail.com.

ATA Conferences and Professional Development Seminars

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Many of ATA’s announcements and special offers are now sent to members by e-mail. E-mail you will receive from ATA includes:

- Information about seminars, conferences, and regional group meetings
- Association and division news updates
- Membership renewal reminders
- Notices of certification exams, division newsletters

Don’t miss out! Keep your ATA contact information current. You can make updates online at www.atanet.org/MembersOnly, or you can send your information to mis@atanet.org with your ATA membership number in the subject line.

ATA does not sell or rent the e-mail addresses of its members.
The ATA Board of Directors met May 11-12 in Alexandria, Virginia. Here are some highlights from the meeting.

**ATA Elections:** The Board discussed the nominating process for officers and directors. Among the concerns has been requiring the Nominating Committee that already has a strong candidate for an officer position to come up with another candidate—an individual who in all likelihood has no chance of getting elected. In addition, we have seen other associations moving in this direction, particularly as it is getting more difficult than ever to find members willing to serve and commit as much of their time as the officer positions require.

The Board passed a motion instructing the Nominating Committee that it is generally preferable to have one highly qualified candidate for the officer positions. However, if the Nominating Committee feels that it has two very strong candidates for an officer position, it may put forth both candidates. Active members may also petition to be placed on the slate. There was no change in the instructions regarding elections for directors, which usually have two candidates for each of the three directors’ positions. (The ATA Board consists of four officers—president, president-elect, secretary, and treasurer—and nine directors. The officers serve two-year terms. The president-elect, after serving two years, moves up to serve as president. The directors serve three-year terms.)

**Support of Translators and Interpreters in Iraq:** The Board approved a motion to express public support for protecting and aiding threatened translators and interpreters in Iraq. The Public Relations Committee is leading this effort and is monitoring various pieces of legislation in Congress. A message on this matter from ATA President Marian S. Greenfield will be e-mailed to all members. This initiative is seen as both a humanitarian effort and a show of public support for fellow translators and interpreters.

**2007-2008 Budget:** The Board approved a working budget for July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. The proposed $2.7-million dollar budget will be finalized at the July Board meeting.

**Ad Hoc Code Review Committee:** Former ATA Director Jean Leblon was approved as the co-chair of the Ad Hoc Code Review Committee. Courtney Searls-Ridge is the other co-chair. This committee is updating and revising the ATA Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices policy. (To see the current policy, please go to www.atanet.org/membership/code_of_professional_conduct.php.)

**Medical Division:** The Board approved the appointment of Mary Esther Diaz as acting administrator of the Medical Division until the division election in November 2007. Esther agreed to serve after Patricia Yacovone resigned. Thanks to both Esther and Patricia for their work with ATA’s third largest division (behind the Spanish Language Division and the Interpreters Division).

**Dispute Resolution Study:** The Board approved a motion that the Business Practices Education Committee study the need for, desirability, and feasibility of offering a formal process to assist members with the resolution of business disputes.

The minutes of the meeting will be posted in the Members Only section of ATA’s website (www.atanet.org/membersonly). Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for July 21-22 in San Diego, California. As always, the meeting is open to all members.

---

**Terry Hanlen Honored for 10 Years of Service**

RESOLUTION

Whereas, Terry Hanlen has served 10 years with the American Translators Association as of April 21, 2007; and

Whereas, Terry’s efforts in serving as the Deputy Executive Director and Certification Program Manager have contributed to ATA’s success and growth;

Therefore, be it resolved that the American Translators Association thanks and honors Terry Hanlen.

The Board of Directors of the American Translators Association, May 11, 2007
An Ounce of Prevention

Thank you very much for ATA Executive Director Walter Bacak’s February column, “New Internet Scam Targets Translators,” and please thank Lisa Siegel-Cruz for sharing her experience. We were very lucky to have read your article, because the same incident happened to us.

I had been e-mailing a client, who said his name was Garcia Antonio, back and forth for about four months after we had done a translation for him. I received numerous e-mails from the client telling us that he was sending a cashier’s check. The check was for more than what was owed, so the client requested that we deposit the check, take out our fee, and mail a check with the difference back to him. It turns out the difference was significant, $3,000.

The billing address given to us was in France, but the check came via DHL from an address in Kansas City, Missouri. The cashier’s check was from American Savings Bank in Honolulu, Hawaii, and was signed by a third person. We were able to confirm with the bank that the check was fraudulent.

So, I would like to thank you again for sharing this information with us!

Daniela Sassman
Branch Manager
Skrivanek Translation Services

ATA Translation Company Division
8th Annual Conference

Deep in the Heart of Translation Trends

July 26-29, 2007
Hyatt Regency
San Antonio, Texas

Highlights:
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• Plenty of time and opportunity for networking, networking, and more networking!
• Optional Friday or Saturday evening activity exploring the sounds and flavors of San Antonio (www.sanantoniocvb.com)
• Sunday morning buffet breakfast

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

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ATA at the Meeting of the Joint National Committee for Languages

By Jiri Stejskal

Every spring, the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS) organize a collaborative event for language organizations. This year, the JNCL-NCLIS Legislative Day and Delegate Assembly were held May 3-5 in Washington, DC, which I attended as the ATA representative to JNCL.

JNCL provides a forum for cooperation and discussion among language professionals representing more than 60 organizations and encompassing major areas of the language profession: language training and pedagogy; research; linguistics; and translation and interpretation. NCLIS is affiliated with JNCL and serves as a lobbying organization engaging in public advocacy on behalf of languages and international education. The joint mission statement of the two organizations states that all Americans must have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language.

The joint mission statement of the two organizations states that all Americans must have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language.

Of the two Pennsylvania senators (Pennsylvania being my home state) to discuss the importance of languages in general and the critical role of translators and interpreters in particular. Here are some of the topics discussed:

• A pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages in the U.S. threatens the country’s security as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace and to produce an informed citizenry.

• According to the 2000 census, only 9% of Americans can speak a second language, whereas over 50% of Europeans speak one or more foreign languages.

• According to an American Council on Education poll, 79% of the American people agree that students should have a study abroad experience, but only 1% of U.S. students actually do study abroad.

Zeroing in on the field of translation and interpretation, the message to the senators, crafted by ATA’s Public Relations Committee, was that translation and interpreting mistakes can be costly, or even disastrous. You cannot risk getting it wrong. You need a qualified, professional translator or interpreter to get it right.

Judging from my own visits and from the reports of other delegates who visited their respective senators and representatives, the attitude toward language learning has changed dramatically for the better over the past few years, and a number of bills have been drafted concerning foreign languages and international education. Two new bills are also being introduced regarding the plight of translators and interpreters working in war zones—stay tuned!

For More Information

Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies
www.languagepolicy.org
One day, a young mouse was puttering around in his hole when he smelt some cheese. As he was about to rush out and grab it, he stopped, remembering his father’s advice to always listen before going for the gorgonzola. So he listened. And he heard a faint “Meow, Meow.” Our young hero patted himself on the back (as mice do) for remembering his father’s advice. The next day he spotted the cheese, stopped to listen, and this time heard, “Woof, Woof!” Assuming that the dog had chased the cat away, he rushed out to grab the cheese. However, as he did so, the cat pounced and gobbled him up, saying (with her mouth full), “I’m glad I took my father’s advice and learned a second language.”

As you will soon discover, our cat used an important copywriting principle to get her message across. This article is a heavily squeezed, less humorous version of a lecture I presented at the 2007 Israel Translators Association Conference. I will briefly share some copywriting principles you can use to improve not only your marketing and advertising translations, but your regular translations and other writing, too.
Translation Versus Copywriting

Broadly speaking, translation is faithfully reproducing the source document into the target language. It is a reflection of what the author wants to say.

Copywriting has been pithily defined as “salesmanship in print.” It usually expresses a marketing or advertising message aimed at producing a certain result (e.g., increased sales and requests for more information). Copywriters write anything from e-mails to brochures, e-zines, web pages, direct mailers, white papers, film scripts, and book covers.

In contrast to translation, copywriting should be a reflection of what the reader wants to hear, and not necessarily what the author wants to say.

Understanding Your Market

Johannes Tan, an English→Indonesian translator and cross-cultural analyst, says: “...translators must recognize varied and diversified characteristics of the target audience... This premise even applies for ‘non-marketing’ translations...” But he cautions, “…fine-tune the translation to satisfy market realities, but don’t go overboard by ‘doctoring’ it. Translation is not copywriting and your accountability as a translator comes first.”

In our deadline-driven world, it is not always easy to make time to understand our readers. In this article, I humbly offer you some basic copywriting principles you can effectively slip into your marketing translations while preserving your accountability as a translator.

Let me first outline two “copywriting commandments” you would do well to bear in mind before starting to work.

Copywriting Commandment #1: Know Thy Reader

The secret of writing strong, compelling copy is to care about the reader. Therefore, we should discover as much as we can about him or her. Picture the person you are writing to, and remember: we are always writing to just one person. Your article, brochure, or web page is being read by one breathing human being. Always have that “end-user” in mind as you struggle with the text.

But, asks William Zinsser in On Writing Well:

“Who is this elusive creature, the reader? He is a person with an attention span of about 20 seconds. He is assailed on every side by forces competing for his time: by newspapers and magazines, by television and radio, by his stereo and videocassettes, by his wife and children and pets, by his house and his yard and all the gadgets that he has bought to keep them spruced up, and by that most potent of competitors, sleep. The man snoozing in his chair with an unfinished magazine open on his lap is a man who was being given too much unnecessary trouble by the writer [or the translator].”

Copywriting Commandment #2: Know Thy Product

Knowing and understanding the product well, and, even better, believing in it, will help you write more convincingly and passionately. This is also true when you write for nonprofits or services. You will know what problems they solve, what their benefits are, and what makes them stand out against the competition.

Back in 1919, Schlitz beer approached advertising genius Claude Hopkins. Their beer sales were in 15th place. Hopkins toured the brewery and came up with an ad campaign. His ads described “crystal clear water from a special artesian well,” and told of the one “mother” yeast cell that produced all the yeast for fermenting the beer. Schlitz was the result of over “1,500 experiments and produced a very distinct fresh,
crisp taste.” He told of how the bottles were “sterilized 12 times to ensure purity, so that nothing would interfere with the clean taste of the beer.”

The Schlitz people hated Hopkin’s campaign. They told him, “All beer is made the same way.” Hopkins calmly assured them people would be fascinated with the behind-the-scenes look, and that no other beer maker had ever told the story. Six months later, Schlitz beer was the number one selling beer in America.

The more we research and reveal about the target market and the product, the better and more market-oriented our translations are likely to be. And that means a more professional and tailored solution for our clients.

Once the cat understands the relationship between the mouse and the cheese, she can use her power of language to achieve the desired result!

**Seven Ways To Better Marketing**

Okay, let’s go! Here are seven ways to improve your marketing (and other) translations:

1. **Write to Your Aunt Jenny**
   
   Aunt Jenny (like billions of other human beings) enjoys reading clear, simple, easy-to-understand writing. So, write the way you talk. Your work should not sound like a translation. After all, you are talking to a real person. And if you must choose between writing naturally and being grammatically correct, write naturally! Whenever you can address the reader directly, do so. Remember, you are speaking to your Aunt Jenny. “Your sparkling floor will be the envy of your neighbors,” not “Our widget cleaner implements the most advanced hygiene technology since Mr. Clean.”

2. **Write to Express, Not to Impress**
   
   A common misconception is that copywriters just write TV and print ads. In our marketing translations, we are not aiming to win creativity awards or impress. We want to convey a defined message about the product or service to provoke a defined response. So, Professional Practice #2 is to use shorter and simpler words. We are looking for clarity of expression rather than ingenuity of impression.

   As James Michener advises us in *The World Is My Home: A Memoir*: “The writer’s challenge is not to use big words, but to accomplish extraordinary things through ordinary words.” Express one idea in one sentence. Clarity is always more important than literary merit. We would be wise to follow the example of American Airlines and the guidelines on their complimentary peanuts: “Open bag, eat nuts.”

3. **Short and Sweet**
   
   We should be aiming to fit our short words into short sentences and short paragraphs. Rudolf Flesch, best known for his books *Why Johnny Can’t Read: And What You Can Do About It* and *The Art of Plain Talk*, says the best average sentence length for business writing is 14-16 words. He adds that 20-25 words is borderline, but anything above that becomes unreadable.6

   In our marketing translations, our primary aim is clarity, and our sentences should be even shorter, between 6-16 words. Here is an example of what is currently working in copywriting. This is part of an email from personal development coach Mike Litman:

   “You have so much potential. Your birthright is for you to discover and

   **Knowing and understanding the product well, and, even better, believing in it, will help you write more convincingly and passionately.**

   live your life assignment.

   You have a strength. A skill. A solution to someone’s problem that you can share and create incredible wealth.

   What are you passionate about?

   What do you enjoy doing?

   Find where you’re celebrated. Discover your strengths. Ignite your spirit.

   Inspire yourself. Inspire others.

   Get off the sidelines. Get in the game.”

4. **Action-Packed Active Service**
   
   The general purpose of writing marketing copy is to convince Aunt Jenny to buy a product or an idea, donate money or time, or vote for something. The best persuasive writing tends to be conversational,
The more we research and reveal about the target market and the product, the better and more market-oriented our translations are likely to be.

and that means writing in the active voice.

Four Easy Ways to Banish Passive Voice

• Use “You”: Instead of “a good hotel is to be found,” say “you will find a good hotel.”

• Make sure the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed in the verb: “When deadlines are met by translators” becomes “When translators meet deadlines.”

• Drop part of the verb: “The school was opened 10 years ago” becomes “the school opened.”

• Use another verb: “Our conversation will be kept confidential” becomes “Our conversation will remain confidential.”

After activating our translation, it is a good idea to add more action by reviving our verbs. First, do away with as many forms of “to be” as you can (is, are, was, were, and am). When you trim “to be” from your writing—you obviously cannot eliminate it entirely—you immediately make your sentences more active and arouse your reader’s imagination.

Use verbs that describe an action and offer a visual image. Remember, we are looking to stimulate emotion and get Aunt Jenny wriggling with excitement in her armchair. Your client wants the reader to take action! “The pain was there in her knees every day” becomes “The pain seared through her knees every day.” You have not changed the meaning. You have just brought it alive!

And always use present tense where possible. Present tense outsells future tense because the present is now, and your reader wants benefits NOW.

5. Avoid Jargon, Clichés, and, Please—No Nonsense!

Bob Bly has two simple rules for using jargon:

• Do not use a technical term unless 95% or more of your readers will understand it. If your client insists you use jargon that is unfamiliar to your readers, be sure to explain these terms in your copy.

• Do not use a technical term unless it precisely communicates your meaning.

Concerning clichés, George Orwell’s advice from 1946 is still worth following: “Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.”

Yes, there is a fine line between speaking in the vernacular and not using clichés, but the idea is not to overdo it!

You can make your writing much stronger simply by eliminating unnecessary words. If eliminating the word does not change the meaning, take it out. Here are two classic offenders:

• Instead of “He said THAT policosanol is...” say “He said policosanol is...”

• Instead of “The report OF hers is on your desk,” say “Her report is on your desk.”

And three more serial killers in this category are superfluous, superlatives, and nonsensical words. “Very unique” is redundant. Something is either unique or it is not. And a “full mile” is no longer than a mile. As for a nonsensical word such as “nice,” “exclusive,” “awesome,” “incredible,” etc., avoid these “filler” words that do not really say anything—or that mean something to one person and something else to another. As Zinsser puts it, “One man’s romantic sunrise is another man’s hangover.” Marketing copy is full of these words: pretty, lovely, state-of-the-art, upscale, idyllic, cutting-edge, beautiful, etc.

You are a professional translator. You own a thesaurus. Do not use words like these!

6. A Word is Worth a Thousand Pictures

It is our job to be sensitive to words.

In the three examples below, consider the connotations for the reader:

• Collie versus Dog (specific picture versus general)

• Seminar versus Workshop (workshop sounds like work!)

• Problem versus Challenge (what would you rather have?)
And an ad saying “How to Repair Cars—Quickly, Easily, and Right” was very successful. But “How to Fix Cars—Quickly, Easily, and Right” resulted in a greater response. Does fix not sound easier than repair? Words create different images of value in consumers’ minds. It is usually too late to change the names of the products you work with, but you can still choose the language you use when describing those products and services.

Here are three examples of selecting higher-value words when communicating with your reader. See if you can understand why.

- “More Economical” is better than “Cheaper”
- “Can…As Early As” is better than “Can’t…Until”
- “Investment” is better than “Price”

Avoid starting a sentence with “There is” or “There are.” For example, instead of saying: “There are five distinct benefits to using our product,” say “Our product offers you five distinct benefits.” Once again, we are talking to Aunt Jenny.

And here is another example of how one small word change can make all the difference: “A percentage of the profits will be donated to U.S. charities,” or “A percentage of all profits will be donated to U.S. charities.” Now which sounds like more will be going to charity?

7. Be Specific

Instead of saying 50% of all people in this country have a split personality, say “Five out of every 10 Americans are schizophrenic.”

“If those who have studied the art of writing are in accord on any one point, it is this: the surest way to arouse and hold the attention of the reader is by being specific, definite, and concrete. The greatest writers—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare—are effective largely because they deal in particulars and report the details that matter.”

The general tendency is for organizations to talk about their needs or ideologies, and to bore the reader with dry and general statistics. The same is often true for product brochures. When we translate such a document literally, Aunt Jenny will be nodding off after the first line. When we use specific examples, she is stirred, hopefully to action. It is also much more credible when you can say “last winter your generosity bought heaters for 1,573 pensioners in Illinois,” instead of “We help hundreds of old people throughout the States.”

In conclusion, ask your clients for as much detailed information as possible about what you are translating: who the target market is, what their product/service does for the customer, and what they want your translation to achieve.

One More Tip for Reading This Far (or, the Cat’s Meow)

And one bonus copywriting tip you can use for your translations when appropriate. Try using a human interest or personal story in your opening. If Aunt Jenny is not attracted straight
away, she will just throw your hard work into the trash can. Remember, did my cat and mouse story not hook you into reading this article?

Notes
6. This is just an example of one of the daily e-mails Mike Litman sends to his subscribers at www.mikelitman.com

Attention Exhibitors

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For additional information, please contact Matt Hicks, McNeill Group Inc.; mhicks@mcneill-group.com; (215) 321-9662, ext. 19; Fax: (215) 321-9636.
The following frequently asked questions regarding telephone interpreting in health care settings may be helpful for interpreters, language service companies, and health care providers who wish to learn more about telephone interpreting, as well as its potential benefits and limitations in health care scenarios. Electronic copies of this guide for educational purposes may be downloaded at no charge from www.atanet.org/chronicle/feature_articles_monthly_archive.php, or by e-mailing the author at natalyekelly@yahoo.com.

What is telephone interpreting?
Telephone interpreting is provided when an interpreter, who is usually based in a remote location, provides interpretation via telephone for two individuals who do not speak the same language. Most often, telephone interpreting is performed in the consecutive mode. This means that the interpreter listens to each utterance first and then proceeds to render it into the other language, as opposed to speaking and listening simultaneously.

Who performs telephone interpreting in health care settings?
In the U.S., the majority of telephone interpreting is performed by for-profit companies that are external to health care organizations. However, many large health care providers have interpreting services departments with staff interpreters who also perform telephone interpreting. In some countries, telephone interpreting is provided as a free service by the government.

Telephone interpreting should not be used in most mental health settings. The presence of telephone equipment could itself present a hazard, since it could be used as a weapon.

1. When mental health services are being provided: Telephone interpreting should not be used in most mental health settings. The presence of telephone equipment could itself present a hazard, since it could be used as a weapon. In addition, with certain mental health conditions, telephone interpreting might confuse the patient.

2. When serving patients who are hard of hearing: Some patients who are hard of hearing and/or elderly may rely more on lip reading than they realize. In these instances, it is preferable to have a face-to-face interpreter.

3. When communicating with children: Children often have difficulties communicating over the telephone. Therefore, when a provider is communicating directly with a child, it is usually preferable to have a face-to-face interpreter.
the provider is communicating with an adult about the child, however, telephone interpreting can normally be used.

4. When providing patient education with visual components: Often, for sessions in which the provider is giving instructions to the patient (e.g., wound care, blood sugar testing), teaching aids or equipment is used. When this occurs, it is usually preferable to have a face-to-face interpreter, since an over-the-telephone interpreter will not be able to see what is being demonstrated. However, if all of the patient’s instructions will be provided verbally, with no equipment demonstrations or visual aids, telephone interpreting may be an acceptable alternative.

5. When there are multiple individuals present with limited English proficiency: Telephone interpreting is best suited to conversations between a provider and one patient only. Telephone interpreting is not ideal when the provider is speaking to multiple patients at the same time (e.g., health education classes) or when multiple individuals are present (e.g., the patient and several family members).

When is telephone interpreting preferable to face-to-face interpreting?
Telephone interpreting is preferable to face-to-face interpreting in the following health care situations:

1. When both parties (patient and provider) are already communicating via telephone. Face-to-face interpreting is not a practical option when the primary interaction is taking place via telephone, so telephone interpreting is advisable in these cases. With the rise of telemedicine and a variety of services being provided over the telephone, these situations are increasingly common. For example, when patients call appointment lines, triage lines, nurse advice lines, and other numbers for service over the telephone, telephone interpreting is the best option.

2. When trained interpreters are not available in person. When it comes to choosing among the patient’s family member, friend, an untrained bilingual staff member, or a telephone interpreting service, it is usually preferable to choose the interpreting service. This assumes, of course, that the telephone interpreting service being used has professional, trained interpreters. Most health care organizations ensure this through the process of procuring a service provider. You also may ask the individual telephone interpreter what kind of training he or she has received, and what professional standards of practice he or she observes.

3. When it is preferable not to have another party in the room. Depending on cultural, religious, and individual preferences, some patients may prefer not to have another person physically present in the room, especially when discussing sexual health issues. Some patients may fear judgment from another member of their culture, a member of the opposite gender, or speaker of their language. Conversely, however, some patients may have a greater sense of trust when an interpreter is present in person. Patient preferences may vary even among groups of speakers of the same language. Each circumstance is different, but it is worth considering that the anonymity of a telephone interpreter can be an advantage at times, especially where modesty might be a consideration.

What type of equipment should be used for telephone interpreting?
A speakerphone is often less than ideal, as it can reduce audibility for all parties and pick up unwanted background noise that can interfere with the interpreter’s ability to hear both speakers properly. Telephones with two receivers, commonly known as “dual receiver telephones” or “dual handset telephones,” can be rented or purchased from providers. These devices can enhance audibility and improve the quality of the communication. Another option, if allowed by the facility, is to use cordless telephones with two handsets. Most handsets have the option to connect a headset, allowing both the patient and the provider to move around freely without being restricted by telephone cords. It is important to sterilize the equipment before and/or after each use. Disposable mouthpiece and earpiece covers may also be advisable.

A large amount of nonverbal information can be perceived through tone of voice, inflection, breathing patterns, hesitations, and other auditory input.
Telephone Interpreting in Health Care Settings: Some Commonly Asked Questions Continued

Is it true that telephone interpreters cannot perceive any nonverbal cues?

No. A large amount of nonverbal information can be perceived through tone of voice, inflection, breathing patterns, hesitations, and other auditory input. Interpreters who work via telephone should be trained specifically in listening skills that enable them to perceive and process this type of nonverbal information better. Interpreters working via telephone cannot perceive information that is transmitted visually, such as gestures and facial expressions.

How necessary is the visual aspect of interpreting?

It depends greatly on the context and the circumstance. For some settings, such as one where patient education is being provided, an interpreter might benefit from seeing the process that is being described in order to interpret accurately. Also, if an interpreter has not been trained in telephone interpreting and is accustomed to interpreting in face-to-face settings, he or she may feel at a disadvantage when visual elements are removed. To ensure quality, what matters most is that the interpreter is competent in the type of interpreting being performed, be it face-to-face or telephonic, and that he or she follows professional standards of practice.

How can I ensure that confidentiality and privacy of health information are maintained when using telephone interpreters?

Professional interpreters should always be guided by a code of ethics and standards of practice. Many providers of telephone interpreting endorse the National Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice issued by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care. Confidentiality is an important aspect of both documents. In addition, many companies have internal guidelines and policies, as well as confidentiality agreements that are signed by all interpreters. When a health care organization contracts with a telephone interpreting provider, these issues are usually addressed contractually to ensure that privacy is maintained.

How should medical records be documented when telephone interpreters are used?

For most telephone interpreting companies, the single most important item to note when tracking a call is the time at which the call took place. Therefore, it can be useful for providers to note the start time of a call with an interpreter, as well as the end time of the call. In addition, the provider should note the identification number of the interpreter, if applicable, and the name of the interpreter. Some companies do not allow the interpreters to provide their last names. If this is the case, the first name and the identification number are sufficient to track the call if a need ever arises. Aside from noting when the call took place and the interpreter’s identifying information, if more than one telephone interpreting provider is used in your facility, it may be helpful to note the name of the company as well.

Can a telephone interpreter help me convey written information (patient education materials, consent forms, prescriptions, etc.)?

Telephone interpreters can provide limited “auditory translation” by listening to the health care provider read information aloud from a written source document, and then rendering it into another language. However, this is not advisable for a variety of reasons. Any legal document, such as a consent form, should be made available in a language the patient can understand, if possible, in writing, as should patient education materials. It is preferable to translate such materials in advance. Doing so will also provide significant cost savings to organizations in the long run, especially when compared to the cost of paying for telephone interpreters to produce this same information verbally, to multiple patients, over time. In some cases, it is not possible to translate information in advance. For example, when a provider writes a prescription, there may be no choice but to have the telephone interpreter explain to the provider how to write those words so that the patient will understand them.

What about video interpreting? Does it have the potential to replace telephone interpreting and on-site interpreting completely?

Video interpreting combines some benefits of both on-site and telephone interpreting. High-quality video interpreting equipment can be cost-prohibitive, but as the costs associated with the technological requirements decrease, video interpreting is becoming a viable option in some cases. Still, there are certain settings for which having an on-site interpreter is usually preferred. In some situations, such as when dealing with a person with a terminal illness or mental health issue, there is no replacement for having another human being present. Likewise, there will continue to be situations in which telephone or audio-only interpreting is preferable, especially in situations where modesty and/or anonymity are important. As technology becomes more accessible and economical, it is likely that there will simply be audio and video streams when calls are placed over the Internet. If a patient prefers not to be seen, or if only the audio portion is required, it would be easy to choose to have either
or both options available using Internet telephony. Also, both providers and interpreters will require extra training in video interpretation techniques and equipment use in order to provide a high-quality service.

### Resources

#### Training

**Online Training for Doctors on Working with Interpreters**

This web-based program, developed by Cindy Roat and Dr. Elizabeth Jacobs, confers up to 2.5 continuing medical education credits through Rush Medical College. It uses video and case studies to train doctors on: how to work with professional interpreters; how to guide an untrained interpreter; how to work with a telephonic interpreter; how to work with interpreters in mental health settings; and how to start to develop a language access program internal to a hospital or clinic. For more information, contact Bob Amend at (520) 722-1970 or bamend@md-inc.com.

#### Books

www.multilingual-matters.com

This publication includes a “Client Considerations” section with detailed advice, as well as a mnemonic with 20 guidelines for working effectively with telephone interpreters. The publication also includes model standards of practice for telephone interpreting in health care, along with practice scenarios. A free electronic sample chapter may be requested at the above link.

#### Web Resources

**The Art of Working with Interpreters: A Manual for Health Care Professionals.**  
www.acebo.com/papers/art intrp.htm

This article by Holly Mikkelson provides helpful information on working with health care interpreters in various settings. It is available for download at the above link.

Moreno, Aura, and Lilian Ramsey.  
“Telephonic Interpreting in Health Care: Answers to a Few Questions.”  
*Interpreters Voice* (Fall 2006)  
www.ata-divisions.org/ID

This article from the newsletter of ATA’s Interpreters Division includes several questions about telephone interpreting that are answered by professional health care interpreters.

**Getting the Most from Language Interpreters**  
www.aafp.org/fpm/20040600/37gett.html

This article by Emily Hemdon and Linda Joyce from Family Practice Management includes a small section with guidelines for working with telephone interpreters. It is available for download at the above link.

#### Other Resources

The majority of telephone interpreting providers offer free client training materials (in print and electronic formats), web tutorials, newsletters, training sessions, and/or multimedia presentations.

### Where can I learn more about telephone interpreting in health care settings?

There are not many resources devoted specifically to telephone interpreting in health care settings. However, the resource list provided in the box on this page can be helpful for those interested in obtaining additional information, guidance, and practice.
Interpreting in Domestic Violence Service Settings

By Jennifer J. Polzin

What is domestic violence?
Generally speaking, domestic violence (also referred to as domestic abuse, family violence, intimate partner violence, or battering) is any behavior that results in the mistreatment of another person in an intimate or family relationship. Domestic violence affects women, children, and men at every stage of life and across all lines of race, culture, income, education, religion, and socioeconomic status. It also happens in same sex relationships too, as well as in rural areas, cities, and suburbs. More in-depth information about the issue of domestic violence can be found at www.tubmanfamilyalliance.org.

Abuse can be physical, sexual, mental, emotional, financial, or spiritual. The Power and Control Wheel, available on the website of the National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence (www.ncdsv.org), is an educational tool developed by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Project. The diagram illustrates many forms of abuse within a relationship, and is used by many service providers. It is a particularly helpful tool in understanding the overall pattern of abusive and violent behaviors that are used by a batterer to establish and maintain control over his or her partner.

Additional Considerations for Immigrant and Refugee Battered Women
We know that women are victims of domestic violence throughout the world, not just in the U.S. As a result, the Power and Control Wheel has been modified to address the specific threats immigrant and refugee battered women face, both in their home countries and here in the U.S. As stated by Bri Chomilo in the introduction to the adapted Immigrant & Refugee Power and Control Wheel, available on the website of the Minnesota Center Against Violence and Abuse (www.mincava.umn.edu):

“Immigrant and refugee women know that in their countries of origin, women have been tortured with sexual abuse by the army/rebels, kidnapped into prostitution, forced into marriages, killed in honor killings, used for sexual slavery, stoned to death, and often experienced other gender related abuses. There is a male tendency in some parts of the world to devalue women and view them as property. This has led to the creation of cruel practices against women, including femicide, infanticide, rape, battery, torture, widow burning, veiling, foot binding, witch burning, chastity belts, clitoridectomies, and infibulations. These examples of violence are
real threats that immigrant and refugee women face if forced to return home.

“In addition to these threats, immigrant and refugee battered women in the U.S. have many difficulties accessing legal and social services in a country which is not their own. They face cultural differences and barriers, which abusers may use to their advantage. Immigrant and refugee battered women are an underrepresented population because many of the incidents are undocumented. The women believe they have no rights, no way out, and no help.”

Non-governmental organizations and nonprofit organizations have been working to address this issue. For example, in Minnesota, the Immigrant and Refugee Battered Women’s Task Force, a grassroots network of battered women’s advocates and service providers, works cooperatively to increase awareness about the special needs of refugee and immigrant battered women, and to improve the skills of people and organizations who work with them. In addition to providing an annual training institute for professionals, the Task Force is currently exploring ways to expand the capacity of service providers to utilize better the services of interpreters and translators.

**Ethics and Standards**

There is no standard code of ethics for interpreters specific to the field of domestic violence, aside from those that apply in the court system or in some health care settings. Affidavits of translation convey credibility, but are not required in every domestic violence service setting. However, the general principles and professional standards for qualified interpreters and translators are absolutely crucial and should consistently be upheld while working in all domestic violence service settings, even those which may appear to be casual or social in nature.

Confidentiality can literally be a matter of life and death for victims of domestic violence, especially in remote communities. The advocate should ask the interpreter whether or not he or she knows the victim, the perpetrator, or the children. The advocate should also ask the client or victim whether or not they know the interpreter. Even if the interpreter is not asked, the interpreter should disclose any familiarity and potential conflicts of interest. Depending upon the situation, the victim and advocate may ask the interpreter to continue, or may dismiss the individual and secure a different interpreter.

Being accurate and complete in providing a word for word translation is imperative. In order to get help, victims (the majority of whom are female) usually have to describe their experiences and share very intimate information when filing a report or during an initial intake meeting. This usually includes details about the physical or sexual assault that may feel shameful to discuss—even though the abuse is not the victim’s fault—especially in front of a male interpreter. These details have important implications for a court case, and could affect the other types of services to which the victim is entitled. For example, substituting the word *chest* for *breast* in describing the assault, even if motivated by respect for the victim’s modesty, conveys a very different meaning and could lead to a much different outcome.

Maintaining professional distance means setting aside what you believe or want for the client or family. This can be especially difficult when dealing with such emotional and life-altering situations.

**Roles**

While there is an ongoing difference of opinion in the interpreting field over whether or not interpreters should be advocates, I believe the work of Cindy Roat, an expert in the field of health care interpreting, can be applied equally well to most domestic violence service settings. On the Resources for Cross Cultural Health Care website (www.diversityrx.org), Roat states that interpreters should strive to be the least intrusive, and makes the following recommendations:

- Adopt the role of **conduit** as your default role, unless you perceive a clear potential for misunderstanding.
- Take the role of **clarifier** when you believe it is necessary to...
facilitate understanding.

- Take the role of a culture broker when cultural differences are leading to misunderstanding on the part of either the service provider or the client.

- Act in the role of advocate only when the client’s needs are not being met due to a systemic barrier, such as the complexity of the health care system or racism.

As pertains to the last bullet, I would add that in such cases, the interpreter should enlist the help of the domestic violence service provider to address the issue or barrier. Domestic violence advocates have received comprehensive training, and, as a general rule, it is their role—rather than the interpreter’s—to provide support and services.

Just like in the court setting, advocates want to provide services in someone’s first language through trained and qualified interpreters in shelter and community settings. However, they often face geographic, time, or resource challenges that are further compounded by the unscheduled nature of crisis work. Therefore, the short glossary of terms provided here includes the most basic terms commonly used in shelter and other community contexts to supplement the glossary, a resource list has also been provided. Although some of the information referred to is specific to my home state of Minnesota, the information contained on these sites is important to all interpreters who work in this area.

**Glossary of Basic Terms**

**Abuser:** A person who has committed an act of domestic violence; sometimes also called perpetrator, batterer, or offender. In settings such as batterer intervention programs or anger management groups, the term client may be used to describe the recipient of those services.

**Advocate:** A volunteer or paid staff person whose job it is to support the victim, help identify options and resources, explain processes, and/or speak on the victim’s behalf. The advocate may work in different settings, such as a shelter, hospital, or court, but is not an attorney or mental health therapist. Some, but not all, advocates are survivors of domestic violence themselves. The word advocate is also used as a verb meaning to speak on others’ behalf in order to get their needs met, to persuade, or to cause change.

**Confidentiality:** Ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access. Some types of communication between a person and certain professionals are “privileged” and may not be discussed or divulged to third parties. While advocates are currently not legally bound or protected by exactly the same rules as attorneys, advocates are called to act with the highest regard for the safety and privacy of those they serve, and are bound by the policies of their workplaces. For example, advocates do not divulge the identity of victims staying at shelter programs, and generally share information with other advocates on a need-to-know basis, and with the client’s knowledge and consent.

**Control:** The ability to block or limit influence. In the context of domestic violence, control is most often used to describe the abuser’s manipulation of the victim.

**Crisis Line:** Sometimes called a help line, this is a no-cost service provided via telephone offering support, information, and referral. Domestic violence crisis line services are provided by staff or volunteers who are specifically trained in domestic violence issues and who are knowledgeable about other community resources. Crisis lines operate 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. Calls are confidential with some exceptions required by law.

**Domestic Violence:** Any behavior that results in the mistreatment of another person in an intimate or family relationship. Also called domestic abuse, family violence, domestic assault, or intimate partner violence (sometimes shortened to DV by service providers in conversation with one another).
Order for Protection: A civil court order that limits the contact an offender can have with a victim of domestic violence for the victim’s and his or her children’s safety. This is referred to as a restraining order in many states.

Power: The ability to influence. While power can be used in both positive and negative ways, in the context of domestic violence, power is most often used to describe coercive behavior on the part of the abuser, or to describe the victim reclaiming their autonomy.

Safety Plan: Identifies specific strategies and resources to help individuals try to protect themselves before, during, or after a dangerous situation. Safety plans are customized to an individual’s or family’s situation, and usually address things like securing documents and other necessary items, building support systems, and identifying places to go in a time of crisis.

Shelter: This is a safe place to live for a short period of time, usually during a crisis. There are different types, including homeless shelters and battered women’s (or domestic violence) shelters. Victims can stay at a battered women’s shelter with their children at no cost while they make decisions about their future. Each shelter operates a little differently, but shares the goals of safety and support. Women who stay at the shelter are often called residents, regardless of their immigration status or previous address.

Support Group: Domestic violence support groups offer a means of sharing a confidential conversation with, and receiving emotional support from, others who have been in abusive relationships. Such groups are usually facilitated by trained staff or volunteers, and are often centered around some educational content or theme.

Survivor: This term is often used when referring to a victim who has healed and become strong again.

Victim: A person who has been harmed by abuse or been the target of a crime. In the domestic violence field, many use the term battered woman because the majority of adult victims are female. The term victim is used more broadly and can include men of any sexual orientation and children as well as women. Some service providers use the term client; others are opposed to that term.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA): A law passed by U.S. Congress in 1994 and amended in 2005. This legislation strengthens law enforcement’s response to domestic violence, strengthens services to victims, promotes education about domestic violence, and provides immigration relief to immigrant victims of domestic violence. VAWA also permits immigrant victims to self-petition for immigration status (without the support of their spouses, which is usually required) and cancellation of removal (deportation). VAWA also provides that domestic violence offenses and violations of protective orders are deportable offenses.

Maintaining professional distance means setting aside what you believe or want for the client or family.

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Resources

National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence
The Power and Control Wheel
www.ncdsv.org/images/PowerControlwheel
NOSHADING.pdf

National Center for State Courts
www.ncsconline.org/wc/CourTopics/
ResourceGuide.asp?topic=CtInte
Contains information on state codes of responsibility for interpreters in legal settings.

National Domestic Violence Hotline
(800) 799-SAFE (7233)

Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights
www.mnadvocates.org
An organization dedicated to the promotion and protection of internationally recognized human rights. Minnesota Advocates’ 2004 report, entitled The Government’s Response to Domestic Violence Against Refugee and Immigrant Women in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Area: A Human Rights Report, is available on their website. This report highlights many of the innovative programs and legislative initiatives that advance the safety of battered refugee and immigrant women in the community and the prosecution of their abusers. The report finds that battered refugee and immigrant women in the Twin Cities area face serious obstacles in accessing protection from domestic violence and government services, and in pursuing accountability for their abusers. These obstacles include: language barriers and inadequate access to interpretation services; barriers from within immigrant communities that impede government effectiveness; fear of government institutions and immigration authorities; inadequate funding of necessary services and programs; and other obstacles in the law or implementation of the law. The report also includes an analysis of the government’s compliance with their obligation to protect the human rights, safety, and security of refugee and immigrant women who are victims of violence.

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW)
www.mcbw.org
The statewide membership organization of programs for battered women and their children. MCBW’s mission is to: provide a voice for battered women and member programs; challenge systems and institutions so they respond more effectively to the needs of battered women and their children; promote social change; and support, educate, and connect member programs.

Minnesota Center Against Domestic Violence and Abuse
The Immigrant and Refugee Power and Control Wheel
www.mincava.umn.edu/documents/
immigrantwheel/immigrantwheel.html

Resources for Cross Cultural Health Care
www.diversityrx.org

Tubman Family Alliance
www.tubmanfamilyalliance.org
Tubman offers a full range of violence prevention and intervention services in Hennepin, Washington, and suburban Ramsey Counties in Minnesota. Tubman works with victims, people who have been abusive, witnesses, and concerned community members. Tubman’s website also includes information about the issue of domestic violence—including the cycle of violence, safety planning, the effects of violence on children, how relationships tend to change over time, what you can do to develop healthy dynamics in a relationship—and how you can get help for yourself, or help someone you care about.

Violence Against Women Act
www.usdoj.gov/ovw/regulations.htm

Minnesota Domestic Violence Crisis Line
(866) 223-1111
The following originally appeared in the April 2007 issue of the TCD News, the newsletter of ATA’s Translation Company Division.

There is a well-known phenomenon in project management circles having to do with so-called “safety time.” “Safety time” is the amount by which we all pad our task completion estimates to account for the reality of uncertainty. Uncertainty can come in the form of unexpected difficulties, interruptions, last-minute “minor” changes, etc. Of course, we should expect that sometimes this uncertainty would work in our favor, as well; a task would be unexpectedly easy, or we would breeze through an entire morning of uninterrupted productivity. And that is where the phenomenon I am referring to comes into play. It is often expressed as follows: Delays in one task are always passed along to the next task in the chain, but time saved in a single task is almost always lost.

Why does this so often hold? One reason, of course, is that when everyone is tightly scheduled, it may not be possible for the next person to start his or her task early, but this does not adequately explain the situation. Boiling down a lot of research, we end up right where we probably should have started in the first place…human nature. How does this work? Let’s look at the typical sequence of events:

• I am asked for a time estimate to complete a task. If I have an appropriate amount of experience, I will have a pretty good idea of the kinds of challenges the task may present and the range of potential task durations I might expect. But that is not the end of my estimating process.

• I also need to take into account my other workload, the likelihood that I will be unexpectedly easy, or we would breeze through an entire morning of uninterrupted productivity. And that is where the phenomenon I am referring to comes into play. It is often expressed as follows: Delays in one task are always passed along to the next task in the chain, but time saved in a single task is almost always lost.

• What is the penalty (in terms of customer disappointment or manager disapproval) if I am late? Again, experience tells me that it is better to “under promise and over deliver”…and please do not get me started on that overused cliché! This leads to a final estimate that we probably have an 80% or better chance of achieving.

• So why don’t we finish early most of the time? Precisely because we know that we have built in “safety time.” Someone interrupts with a business problem? Glad to help! I’ve got time. Someone drops by to share pictures of their granddaughter? No problem! I’ve got time. A new message pops up in my e-mail inbox? Plenty of time to knock out a quick reply. After all, this task isn’t due until 4:00 p.m. And sure enough, a burst of energy beginning at 3:40 and we finish right on time. Unless, of course, that unexpected difficulty shows up at 3:45.

This behavior pattern is so common that it has received its own
name in the literature: Student Syndrome. Student Syndrome is the practice of pacing ourselves so that we finish our “assignments” right on time (but never early). We probably all recognize ourselves in this description as it applies to the student years, but are we as aware of our current tendency to pace ourselves as we should be? Probably not. Thankfully, though, there are some approaches to counteracting Student Syndrome that can help.

First, as individuals we should have the discipline to set aggressive targets for ourselves and then strive to hit them. These targets should be realistic, but optimistic with respect to uncertainties. The idea is that if we fall a little short of an aggressive target, that may be much better than achieving a target set with too much built-in safety time.

Second, as an organization we should support aggressive targets. There should still be accountability around missed targets, but like the “degree of difficulty” component of diving or gymnastics scoring systems, we should reward staff members who consistently strive for high goals.

And lastly, those with responsibility for setting customer expectations—project managers, sales staff, etc.—should continue to make use of safety time! By factoring safety time out of the individual tasks and aggregating it into a “buffer,” we accomplish two things:

- We reduce the overall estimated length of the chain of tasks, because it is reasonable to believe that some of the uncertainties will cancel each other out.
- We protect the end customer from the impact of a delayed task, because we have a single project-level buffer to absorb those delays.

This approach to project management and productivity optimization is part of a way of looking at business processes called “Theory of Constraints.” For those with more interest, you might want to look at this website: www.dbrmfg.co.nz. For all of us, though, we might work at “redeeming the time” by finishing early whenever possible, rather than being satisfied with meeting a generous deadline.

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**ATA Member Benefits**

For a complete list of benefits and more information, log onto www.atanet.org.

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Dun & Bradstreet
Mike Horoski
(800) 333-6497 ext. 823 7226
(484) 242-7226
michael.horoski@rmsna.com
www.rmsna.com

**Credit Card Acceptance Program**

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NOVA Information Systems
Reference Code: HICB
(888) 545-2207 • (770) 649-5700

**MasterCard**

MBNA America
Reference Code: IFKV
(800) 847-7378 • (902) 457-2165

**Life and Disability Insurance**

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www.mutualofomaha.com

**Overnight Delivery/Express Package Service**

United Parcel Service (UPS)
Reference Code: C0000700415
(800) 325-7000
www.ups.com

**Professional Liability Insurance**

Hays Affinity Solutions (HAYS)
(866) 310-4297 • (202) 263-4016
pjones@hayscompanies.com
http://ata.haysaffinity.com

**ATA**
The following presents a basic introduction to computer-aided translation (CAT) tools for the uninitiated. If you do not yet use any tool (i.e., if you use just Microsoft Office, Open Office, or an equivalent), if you bought a tool, tried it once, and gave up, or if you have only one tool and are not aware of the many different tools available, this article is for you.

Types of CAT Tools and What They Do

CAT tools include:

1. Translation environment tools (translation memory or corpus-based);
2. Terminology database tools;
3. Corpus tools; and
4. Any other tools that help translators in some way.

When most people think of CAT tools, they think exclusively of translation environment tools like Déjà Vu X and SDL Trados. First, these are not the only tools out there. Second, this kind of tool might not be the best option for you or the type of work you do.

Translation Environment Tools

Translation environment tools have many features in common.

1. They require the source text to be in electronic format.
2. They automatically search prior translations performed in the tool for matches for entire segments.
3. They allow you to select a word, or group of words, in the source text and search for prior translations performed in the tool.
4. They contain a built-in or compatible terminology tool that will search the terminology database you create for the words in the source text.
5. They allow you to align source and target texts produced outside the tool, so that these translations will be treated as if you had translated the texts within the tool.

Now let’s look at each feature above. The first is the most important.

Environment tools automatically search prior translations for matches for entire segments. Most companies selling tools of this type try to convince you that, “you will never have to translate the same sentence twice.” However, how often do we really see the same sentence twice? If you work with texts that do tend to come back to you with small changes (quarterly financial reports, clinical trial...
When most people think of CAT tools, they think exclusively of translation environment tools, but these are not the only tools out there.

Environment (and corpus) tools allow you to select a word or group of words in the source text and search for prior translations performed in the tool. This feature is useful even for less repetitive texts. If you translate creative texts or texts from the humanities, you will rarely see repeated sentences. If you click on “Context search” in Wordfast, “Concordance” in SDL Trados, or “Scan” in Deja Vu X, the program will look for prior occurrences of the selected word(s) in all prior translations done within that tool. That way, if you find a great solution while translating a text today, you will be able to find the same solution again two years from now by using the tool to search through all prior translations. Figure 2 on page 31 shows the result of a scan performed in Déjà Vu X. Unfortunately, no tool underlines the translation as I have done in the figure.

Most environment (and corpus) tools contain a built-in or compatible stand-alone terminology tool, and will search the terminology database for the words in the source text. Unfortunately, many tool owners do not use this feature as much as they could because terms must be entered one by one (whereas translation memories are built up automatically if one uses the tool to translate), so entering terms is often not as convenient as it could be. (I will discuss and compare different terminology tools in a future article.) Some stand-alone terminology tools may be very useful for translators of certain types of material and for interpreters as well. If you currently use MS Word or Excel to maintain terminology lists, you might...
want to consider upgrading to a terminology tool like LogiTerm.

Environment (and corpus) tools allow you to align source and target texts done outside the tool. This is done with an alignment tool or feature (some vendors provide this tool with the environment tool, while some sell it as a separate tool). Note that some tools, such as LogiTerm, have sophisticated algorithms that automatically align source and target texts with no work on your part. Other tools, such as SDL Trados and Déjà Vu X, use segment markers like periods to align text, and manual adjustments are almost always necessary.

Corpus Tools
The third type of tool mentioned is the corpus tool. Two examples are LogiTerm and MultiTrans. A corpus (plural: corpora) is a collection of texts in electronic format. A translation memory is a kind of “parallel” corpus containing source text segments and their translations. What is the difference between a translation memory tool and a corpus-based tool? If you work with source texts that are NOT in electronic format, but know you have seen a word or expression before, you may want to look the expression up in your previous translations. I have tried to do this in both Déjà Vu X and in SDL Trados, and the results were not pretty. Translation memory tools were simply not designed to do this. Corpus-based tools, such as LogiTerm and MultiTrans, however, were designed to do this, and do it remarkably well. For searching monolingual corpus files (sort of like a Google search of just the files you have placed in a specific directory on your PC), several free tools are available, like AntConc and TextSTAT.

More to Come
Next month, I will address how to get started if you have never used a CAT tool and list the questions you should ask yourself about your work, your translation processes, and what you need out of your tools. If you have a specific question about tools, or would like to suggest a tool for review in a future article, please contact me at articles@justright.com.br.
This latest trip down the glossary mine shaft provides a compendium of various Internet resources dealing with scientific subjects. Because the sciences cover a lot of ground, I only have room this month to address topics from anthropology to chemistry. The focus is on terminology and reference materials for the “pure” sciences, as opposed to the “applied” sciences, such as mechanical engineering or metallurgical processes. The list begins with several resources of a general nature and continues in alphabetical order by subject. Once again, most of these items involve English and Spanish, but there is one German into English glossary of biology terms, as well as several multilingual glossaries.

**GENERAL SCIENCE (ENGLISH)**

101 Science.com
www.101science.com/Terminology.htm
This site provides links to numerous glossaries on a variety of scientific subjects.

Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics
http://jilawww.colorado.edu/research/glossary/glossary_a.html

The Joint Institute for Laboratory Astrophysics (JILA) is one of the leading physical-science research institutes in the U.S. Its faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral research associates explore some of today’s most challenging and fundamental scientific questions. JILA is jointly operated by the University of Colorado and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

PCS Edventures, Inc.

VisionLearning
www.visionlearning.com/library/glossary.php
VisionLearning is an innovative educational resource designed for students, teachers, parents, and anyone interested in learning. The website features a free bilingual library of succinct learning modules that integrate text, multimedia, and other resources. Support for VisionLearning is provided by The National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education.

**GENERAL SCIENCE (SPANISH)**

Ciencias de la Tierra y del Medio Ambiente
www.esi.unav.es/asignaturas/ecologia/Hipertexto/00General/Glosario.html
This site emphasizes ecological terms.

Glosario PRL
www.jmcprl.net/GLOSARIO/G-A.htm

Novedades Científicas
www.novaciencia.com

Sólo Ciencia
www.solociencia.com/index.htm

**ANTHROPOLOGY (ENGLISH)**

Department of Anthropology
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Alabama
www.as.ua.edu/ant/glossary.htm
This glossary contains nearly 2,300 unique terms and 2,800 entries covering terms used in biological, cultural, and linguistic anthropology and archaeology. There is a special emphasis on terms from kinship, biological anthropology, and medical anthropology.
Glossary of Anthropology Terms
www.anthro.wayne.edu/ant2100/glossary.htm
This site includes both cultural and physical anthropology, as well as an archaeology glossary.

Infoplease Encyclopedia
www.infoplease.com/encyclopedia/1anthro.html

Oregon State University
http://oregonstate.edu/cla/anthropology/resources/glossary.php

WebRef.org
www.webref.org/anthropology/anthropology.htm

ANTHROPOLOGY
(SPANISH)
Concha Doncel online
www.conchadoncel.com/antscglosario.htm

Universidad de Navarra
Asignatura: Introducción a la Antropología
www.unav.es/educacion/introantropotema1/pagina_2.html

ASTRONOMY AND COSMOLOGY
(ENGLISH)
Absolute Astronomy.com
www.absoluteastronomy.com
This is a guide to astronomical bodies of all kinds.

Amazing Science
http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/glossary
The site provides very detailed definitions.

Astronomical Society of the Pacific
www.astronomical.org/education/publications/tnl/14/14.html

The focus is on terminology and reference materials for the “pure” sciences, as opposed to the “applied” sciences, such as mechanical engineering or metallurgical processes.

Astronomy 124
University of Virginia
http://astsun.astro.virginia.edu/~jh8h/astr124/glossary.html

CalSpace
http://earthguide.ucsd.edu/virtualmuseum/Glossary_Astro/gloss_a-f.shtml

Canadian Space Agency
Astronomy Glossary
www.ioncmaste.ca/homepage/resources/web_resources/CSA_Astro/files/content/html/information/astro_glossary.html

Cosmic Evolution Terminology
Tufts University
www.tufts.edu/as/wright_center/cosmic_evolution/docs/fr_3/fr_3_gloss.html

Interactions.org
www.interactions.org/cms/?pid=1003020
This site contains an exhaustive three-part glossary of astrophysics terms.

Kid’s Cosmos
Glossary of Astronomy and Scientific Terms
www.kidscosmos.org/kid-stuff/glossary.html
This site is designed for the younger set, but it is very useful nevertheless. It also includes information about the metric system and scientific notation, plus a section on universal time.

University of Oregon
http://abyss.uoregon.edu/~js/glossary/glossary.html
The site includes outstanding graphics, many taken from the Encyclopaedia Britannica.

ASTRONOMY AND COSMOLOGY
(SPANISH)
AstroCosmos
www.astrocosmo.cl/glosario/glosar.htm
The site contains excellent Spanish definitions.

AstroMía
www.astromia.com/glosario/index.htm
This is probably one of the best sites for Spanish terms. The site also includes numerous articles on astronomical subjects that are profusely illustrated.

Astronomía
www.austrinus.com/00/diccionario.html
This site is excruciatingly slow, but very good.

Espacio Profundo
www.espacioprodund.com.ar/diccionario/Glosario_de_Astronomía/letra/A.html
There are lots of useful cross-references on this site.

Glosario astronómico
www21.brinkster.com/infospace/glosario.asp
La Web de la Asociación Larense de Astronomía
www.tayabeixo.org/glosario/letra_a.htm
The definitions on this site are very detailed.

Vistas del Sistema Solar
www.solarviews.com/span/homepage.htm
This site contains a multimedia presentation on the solar system and beyond.

BIOLOGY AND BOTANY (ENGLISH)
Biology-Online.org (two links)
www.biology-online.org/dictionary.asp
www.biology-online.org/d/a.htm

Cell Biology
http://biology.about.com/od/biologydictionary/a/cellbiogloss.htm

Dyer Laboratories, Inc.
www.dyerlabs.com/glossary/microbiology/1a.html
This site contains German into English terminology.

Everything Bio
Life Science Glossary
www.everythingbio.com/glos/index.php
The glossary on this site contains almost 4,000 entries.

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Corporate Document Repository Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering
www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X3910E/X3910E04.htm#TopOfPage
You can download a 260-page PDF version of the glossary from this site.

Glossary of Forestry Terms
www.ncforest.org/docs/Glossary/term.htm

Glossary of Genetic Terms
www.ggc.org/glossary.htm

Life Science Dictionary
http://biotech.icmb.utexas.edu/search/dict-search.html
This site covers virtually all of the life sciences, with over 8,000 terms, in addition to a compendium of chemical acronyms, plus links to other useful sites.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology Open Courseware
http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/index.htm
This site offers free and open educational resources for educators and students around the world. Browse the links for an array of excellent hypertextbooks on various subjects, including general biology and biological engineering.

McGraw-Hill Online Learning Center
Microbiology
http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072320419/student_view0/glossary_a-f.html

Molecular Biology Glossary
http://seqcore.brcf.med.umich.edu/doc/edu/dnapr/mbglossary/mbgloss.html

Plants, Animals, and the Environment Virtual Glossary
www.mhhe.com/biosc/pae/glossarya.html

Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
Plant Anatomy and Glossary
http://dallas.tamu.edu/weeds/anat.html
Do not be misled by the URL. This is an excellent resource for plant anatomy terms, complete with illustrations.

Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
This glossary is a complement to the previous site, with excellent definitions.

University of Sydney
Fungal Biology: Mycology Glossary

Webref.org
www.webref.org/biology/biology.htm

BIOLOGY AND BOTANY (SPANISH)
Biblioteca Dominico-Virtual
www.bibliotecavirtual.com.do/Biologia/IndiceBiologia.htm
This is a general guide to numerous biological topics.

Curso de Biología Vegetal
http://nicol.fcien.edu.uy/atlas/glos98.htm
This is a good site for terms on plant biology.

Fisiología Vegetal
www.ugr.es/~fisiofar/glosario/marcoletraglosario.htm

Glosario Biotecnológico
www.explora.cl/otros/biote/glosario.html

Glosario Botánico
www.arbolesornamentales.com/glosario.htm

Glosario de Botánica
www.arbolesornamentales.com/glosario.htm
Glossary of Technical Terms in Plant Pathology
www.plantpath.cornell.edu/glossary/Glossary.htm

Illustrated Glossary of Plant Pathology
www.apsnet.org/education/illustratedglossary/default.htm

Monsanto Agricultura
www.monsanto.es/biotecnologia/glosario.html
This is a glossary of biotechnology terms.

Universidad de Extremadura
Lecciones Hipertextuales de Botánica
www.biologie.uni-hamburg.de/b-online/ibc99/botanica/botanica/prese-tl.htm
This site contains a botanical hypertextbook from the Universidad de Extremadura with animated illustrations.

BIOLOGY AND BOTANY (MULTILINGUAL)
Multilingual Multiscript Plant Name Database
www.plantnames.unimelb.edu.au/Sorting/Frontpage.html
This site lists plant names and features less common languages, such as Thai.

CHEMISTRY (ENGLISH)
About: Chemistry
http://chemistry.about.com/library/blazlist1.htm
This is an excellent basic term list with some good links to other information.

ChemCool Chemistry Dictionary
www.chemicool.com/dictionary.html

Chemistry Dictionary
http://home.nas.net/~dbc/cic_hamilton/dictionary/a.html

Chemistry-Dictionary.com
www.chemistry-dictionary.com
This site is designed primarily for students.

Eric Weinstein’s World of Chemistry Glossary
http://scienceworld.wolfram.com/chemistry/letters

Faculty of Chemistry and Technology
www.kff-split.hr/periodni/en/abc/index.html
This site also includes a downloadable (PDF) full-color Periodic Table of the Elements.

Glossary of Chemical Terminology
www.cem.msu.edu/~cem181h/glossary.html
This site claims to be a “living glossary”; however, its last update was made in 1998.

Great Big Chemistry Dictionary
http://misterguch.brinkster.net/bigdictionary.html

Inorganic Chemistry
http://library.thinkquest.org/10429/high/nomen/nomenbody.htm

Organic Chemistry Help
www.chemhelper.com/glossary.html

Petrik Library
This site is one of the best for English organic chemistry terms.

ThinkQuest CHEMystery Glossary
http://library.thinkquest.org/3659/reference/glossary.html

Virtual Textbook of Organic Chemistry
www.cem.msu.edu/~reusch/VirtTxtJml/intro1.htm#contnt

CHEMISTRY (SPANISH)
Curso Hipertextual Etano la Química del Carbono
www.geocities.com/jojoel99/qorganica.html
This is a Spanish hypertextbook for organic chemistry.

Dicionario de términos de química
www.gestialba.com/public/quimica/quinicaesta01.htm
This site contains general chemistry terms with good Spanish definitions.

Dicionario Inglés-Español de Ciencias de Laboratorio Clínico
www.leeds.ac.uk/ifcc/PD/dict/spandict.html
This is an extensive English-to-Spanish glossary of clinical chemistry terminology with excellent supporting documentation. Versions in TXT, DOC, and WPD can be downloaded.

Glosario de Química
www.edu futuro.com/edacacion.php?c=3328
A printable version of this glossary is available at www.edu futuro.com/imprime.php?c=3328&.

Introducción a la Química Orgánica
www.telecable.es/personales/albatros1/quimica/index.html
This is an excellent online resource for organic chemistry.

Spanish Guide to the Periodic Table of the Elements
www.lenntech.com/espanol/tabla-periodica.htm
Glossary Mining: Science Continued

**CHEMISTRY (MULTILINGUAL)**

Chemistry Translated  
www.woc.science.ru.nl/translation  
This is a five-language glossary of organic chemistry terms (English, Dutch, German, French, and Italian).

**CLASS ISN’T OVER YET!**  
Can’t get enough of the sciences? Well, you are in luck. Tune in next month, when I tackle the rest of the spectrum, from geology to zoology. See you then!

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### Third Annual School Outreach Contest

Join ATA’s School Outreach movement and start educating clients one classroom at a time. It’s easy • It’s fun • It’s free • and ... it could win you free registration to ATA’s 48th Annual Conference in San Francisco, California (October 31–November 3, 2007).

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

Submission deadline: July 23, 2007

The best photograph wins free registration to ATA’s 48th Annual Conference in San Francisco, California (October 31–November 3, 2007)! The winner will be contacted no later than August 20, 2007. You may submit multiple entries, and any member of ATA or of any ATA-affiliated organization is eligible to enter.

Any questions? Contact: Lillian Clementi, lillian@lingualegal.com.

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August 2–4, 2007  
Nebraska Association for Translators and Interpreters  
8th Annual Regional Conference  
Bellevue, Nebraska  
www.natifhq.org
Understanding the world and its many languages is what helps NSA solve the Nation’s most difficult challenges.

As a Language Analyst with NSA, your language proficiency and the understanding of nuance, context, cultural overtones, and dialect will have a global impact in providing the fullest and most accurate intelligence to U.S. policymakers, military commanders, and Intelligence Community members.

If you’re ready for the responsibility, join NSA, and secure tomorrow today.

NSA has a critical need for individuals with the following language capabilities:

- Arabic
- Chinese
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- Korean

For a complete list of languages or to apply online, visit our Web site.

www.NSA.gov/Careers
In the present context of global competition and web auctioning of translation work, small business owners often hesitate to increase their prices for fear of negative consequences. Appropriate pricing is nevertheless an ongoing part of business management, and requires active steps.

Dear Business Smarts:

With everything getting more expensive all the time, I am wondering why my own income from translating and interpreting is not going up accordingly. Over the past year, my insurance, utility, and telephone bills have all increased, not to mention the price of gas. With all the expenses I have, I am beginning to wonder if this is still worth it.

Dear Worth It:

Although official inflation figures continue to be optimistically vague about higher living expenses, it is pretty obvious to any consumer that prices have risen considerably in the past few years. Do not forget, however, that every price increase is the result of a cost calculation and an active business decision. Since you are a businessperson yourself, you cannot expect the profits from your translation and interpreting work to rise automatically: you need to take active steps to make it happen.

Start with a financial assessment of your situation over the last five years, based on tax returns, bank statements, invoice statistics, or any other information you have compiled. Look at your income situation and figure out whether you are covering your expenses with plenty to save for retirement and unexpected events. Then consult your old invoices to see how long your existing rates have been in place. If you feel your pricing is no longer adequate, determine how much more you could reasonably earn with an approximately equal workload.

This financial review may also help you evaluate the other side of the profit picture: how your money is currently being spent. Potential cost savings may come from negotiating a better insurance deal or from changing service providers for utilities, Internet, or telephone. Do not hesitate to shop around in order to maximize what your money can buy. As an example, with the increasing ease of e-mailing documents of all sorts, is it still necessary to have a separate fax line?

Next, carefully review your strengths and areas of specialization. Would it be worthwhile to specialize further in a certain field? Do you have particular clients who frequently send you certain document types that are your strength, such as contracts, patient letters, or patents? Think also about the most enjoyable projects you have done in the past 12 months, as well as jobs you wish you had never accepted. Lastly, make a list of the advantages you can offer in comparison with your competitors. These might include years of experience, special training, certifications, and in-depth knowledge of specific industries.

As a courtesy to your regular clients, give them plenty of notice before you actually implement a rate increase. Send a brief, friendly letter or e-mail in which you politely announce your new pricing structure, including an effective date. Thank your clients for their loyalty and continued business, and reiterate your areas of linguistic and subject-related expertise. Not every customer will be ready to make the jump to higher prices, and you may see a temporary drop in business volume as a consequence of taking this step. At the same time, openings in your calendar present an opportunity to attract new clients and accept more projects in your selected area of specialization. Since translation agencies are under a lot of price pressure from their corporate clients and may not be willing to accommodate your price increase, you might also consider exploring opportunities to work for direct clients, and concentrating your marketing efforts on a particular industry or area of specialty.

Comments?

ATA members can discuss business issues online at the following Yahoo! group:
http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/ata_business_practices. You will need to register with Yahoo! (at no charge) if you have not already done so, and provide your full name and ATA member number in order to join the group.
The Onionskin

Chris Durban
chrisdurban@noos.fr

Translation—Literally a Matter of Life and Death?

Health care interpreters in hospital admissions’ offices and emergency rooms—not to mention the doctors, nurses, and patients they serve—are aware that obtaining accurate information on client symptoms and history can make all the difference.

A case in France underscores the importance of translation in health care delivery at all levels, even as it raises issues of compliance with the law and, yes, liability.

In February this year, the Inspection Générale des Affaires Sociales (IGAS), the French authority charged with oversight of public health and safety issues, published a scathing report on critical dysfunctions at the Centre Hospitalier Jean Monnet near Epinal in eastern France.

From May 2004 to August 2005, 23 men suffering from prostate cancer were given serious overdoses of radiation during treatment at the hospital. To date, four have died, three as a direct result of the overdoses, say the experts. Subsequent reports suggest that dozens of other patients—including at least one woman suffering from breast cancer—were also affected. The woman died as a result, according to reports on French television.

The Buck Stops...

Conditions at the hospital were far from ideal, as emerges clearly from the IGAS report. This cites a host of problems, including botched training for radiologists and technicians, an absence of quality control, and a jaw-dropping failure to inform patients who had received too much radiation that they might have reason to worry. But the report also identifies a language issue linked to a new procedure and the software program used for radiation therapy.

The software in the hot seat is CadPlan™, produced and sold by Varian. A computerized three-dimensional treatment planning system for cancer therapy, it defines the doses used in radiation therapy, and has now been superseded by Eclipse™, say company representatives.

Unfortunately, the version of the program delivered and installed in the hospital at Epinal was in English only, and there was no French user manual.

This alone contravenes French law—more specifically, Article 9 of the 1994 “Loi Toubon” legislation, which was supplemented in March 1996 by a ministerial circular specifying that documents containing information needed for employees to execute their job properly must be available in French. The circular cites safety issues and refers specifically to user manuals.

A call to the hospital confirmed that its administrators had been unaware of the language requirement when they acquired the software. At least one appeared to have been lulled into a sense of security by the presence of a “bilingual” staff member on the radiation unit’s team. “Language was not the real issue,” he told us, insisting that poor software design was the culprit. “It was easy to get confused by the boxes to tick.”

Many professional translators and other observers disagree, for a number of reasons.

For starters, “bilingual” is a notoriously slippery concept, with claims often inversely proportional to actual fluency. In some cases, less-than-bilingual employees are pressured to stretch their skills past the limit. In Epinal, training errors cited by the government report were a further complication. Finally, navigating through documents in a language one does not fully understand—the case for all non-“bilinguals” at Epinal—can lead users to neglect or misunderstand essential points.

Reduce the Risk

A French official in Paris told the Onionskin that the Loi Toubon “is there to ensure that employees can do their job properly and safely,” which sounds reasonable. Whether or not this was the case at Epinal, he said, laws requiring information to be available in the local language are also a safety net that protects the public from people who have not understood a text in a foreign language, and—just as important—from people who may not realize they have not understood.

True, the IGAS report highlights a host of other problems at the hospital, but at the very least, documentation in French explaining the proper use of medical software might have encouraged technicians to react more quickly, said this official. Overdoses went on for over a year.

Varian’s European spokesman Neil Madle challenges the language issue. “In the past, customers have chosen to waive the requirement for native language software in order to gain the medical advantages that were not otherwise available to them and their patients,” he said, which to the perhaps naive Onionskin sounds like ignorance of French law.

But Mr. Madle has other arguments as well: “Medical physicians are often trained in English and consequently prefer using software tools in that language, even when the software is available in their own language.” Statistics, please. In the meantime—and even assuming that the MDs in Epinal had indeed trained in English, which the hospital could not confirm—our understanding is that the software was used by personnel other than physicians.

Finally, says the Varian spokes-person, “The French government thoroughly investigated the Epinal incident and ultimately concluded that it resulted from a failure to take
required quality assurance steps before delivering treatment. The government did not trace the error to any issues with software.” This is an interesting take that simply does not jibe with the IGAS report.

Something tells us this one is not going to go away, and we will be tracking developments.

In an odd coincidence, Varian’s French office is in the same industrial park as that of GE Healthcare, formerly General Electric Medical Systems (GEMS). In 2005, GEMS was taken to court by unions for failing to translate in-company documentation into French. Union representatives cited 58 documents, which they claimed were related to workplace safety; the judge agreed and imposed a fine of €16 million (58 x €200,000), giving the company six months to mend its ways. The penalty was reduced to €580,000 on appeal.

But today, a GEMS representative assured us, “we are in full compliance with the law; all of our documentation is translated.” Likewise, Eclipse is available in French, says Neil Madle—which means that Varian, too, is now in compliance.

Yet the tragedy at Epinal is a timely reminder that health care providers and companies in the industry have a vested interest in not only respecting the law, but also reducing risk by taking all measures—including proper translation—to ensure that their products are not misused.

With thanks to Bob Blake, Neil Inglis, Dominique Jonkers, Kay McBurney, Nick Rosenthal, and Alexandra Russell-Bitting.
Psychologist Abraham Maslow once said that, “if you only have a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.” Though this quote has been used frequently in all kinds of contexts, I love it because it is so applicable to us and the way we use a computer.

I still remember back in the dark ages when I was using WordPerfect on a DOS system. I was truly confounded as to why there needed to be so many different computer applications when it seemed you could do everything with your word processor. Now you might think my perspective was just a little simple-minded (and I won’t argue!), but I am hazarding a guess that many of us have not moved very far from that same concept. Yes, we know that we need an Internet browser and an e-mail client and, maybe, Excel for accounting, but many of us think that otherwise we are just fine with the capabilities offered by MS Windows and MS Word. And that is no surprise. After all, both Windows (on a file management level) and Word (on a file level) pretend to do (almost) everything. You want to zip a file, burn a CD, search for some content, rename a file, or backup your computer? Windows can do that for you! You need to count words, sort a text, edit an HTML file, or extract keywords from a text? Word can do all that and much more for you! The problem is that any of these things can be done better by applications that are specialized in doing those functions.

You can always hammer a screw into a wall, but it is better for the wall, the screw, and the picture you are going to hang if you drill a hole, insert a screw anchor, and use a screwdriver. In fact—and this is what Maslow was referring to—you cannot even decorate your house with only a hammer because you cannot begin to envision all of the amazing things you can do with the right tools.

Now imagine your computer as the house you need to decorate (or, in this case, to make more functional). Just as in the “real tool world,” there are thousands of tools that are good for specific things and are much better than the proverbial hammer (i.e., Word and/or Windows). But unlike the increasingly expensive world of physical tools, the majority of our tools come in the category of freeware and do not cost anything! And as a rule of thumb, the more specific a problem is, the more likely it is that you will find some freeware that can help you solve it. Even if it is not freeware, it may be inexpensive shareware, donationware, or (here is a cool new term) postcardware.

The only challenge that is left for you is to go out and find your (software) tools and then learn how to use them appropriately.

Well, there is one more challenge. Just like your physical toolbox, it is helpful when your software toolbox (i.e., your computer) contains tools that make sense to your specific needs and that are located where you can find them again. (Yes, I admit to NEVER finding the right screwdriver when I need to!)

The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost also publishes a free technical newsletter for translators (www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit).
**ATA Certification Exam Information**

**Upcoming Exams**

**Arizona**
- Phoenix
- September 30, 2007
- Registration Deadline: September 14, 2007

**Colorado**
- Denver
- September 22, 2007
- Registration Deadline: September 7, 2007

**California**
- San Diego
- September 8, 2007
- Registration Deadline: August 24, 2007

**Georgia**
- Atlanta
- August 11, 2007
- Registration Deadline: July 27, 2007

**Michigan**
- Novi
- August 4, 2007
- Registration Deadline: July 20, 2007

**Tennessee**
- Nashville
- September 16, 2007
- Registration Deadline: August 31, 2007

**Texas**
- Houston
- August 11, 2007
- Registration Deadline: July 27, 2007

**Wisconsin**
- Milwaukee
- September 29, 2007
- Registration Deadline: September 14, 2007

**Ecuador**
- Quito
- September 8, 2007
- Registration Deadline: August 24, 2007

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

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Send your news to Jeff Sanfacon at jeff@atanet.org or American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314.

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**Member News**

- **Melly Bartholomew** was the recipient of the 2006 Charles M. Stern Autonomous Award, presented by the board of directors of the *New York Circle of Translators* (www.nycTRANSLATORS.org).


- **Marian Schwartz**’s translation from the Russian of Ruben Gallego’s *White on Black*, published in paperback in January by Harcourt/Harvest, received the Texas Institute of Letters Soeurrette Diehl Fraser Award for Best Translation of a Book for 2006.

- **Laura A. Wideburg** published her first full book-length translation of Inger Frimansson’s *Good Night, My Darling* (Pleasure Boat Studios, 2007). Inger Frimansson is a well-known crime author in Sweden and has over 20 books to her name, but this is her first work available in English.
Scam Alert Websites

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

www.tuesdayswithmantu.com
Contains information on Rich Siegel’s book, Tuesdays With Mantu: My Adventures With a Nigerian Con Artist.

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

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Upcoming Events

July 12–15, 2007
International Association of Forensic Linguists
8th Biennial Conference on Forensic
Linguistics/Language & Law
Seattle, Washington
www.iafl.org

July 26–29, 2007
ATA Translation Company Division
8th Annual Conference
San Antonio, Texas
www.ata-divisions.org/TCD

August 2–4, 2007
Nebraska Association for Translators
and Interpreters
8th Annual Regional Conference
Bellevue, Nebraska
www.natihq.org

September 29-30, 2007
Atlanta Association of Interpreters and
Translators
1st Annual Conference
“Language and Terminology”
Atlanta, Georgia
www.aait.org

October 11-13, 2007
American Medical Writers Association
67th Annual Conference
“A Legacy of Leadership”
Atlanta, Georgia
www.amwa.org

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

November 7–11, 2007
American Literary Translators Association
30th Anniversary Conference
“Celebrating the Past, Imagining the Future”
Richardson, Texas
www.literarytranslators.org

November 15–18, 2007
American Council on the
Teaching of Foreign Languages
41st Annual Convention & Exposition
“Bridging Cultures Through Languages”
San Antonio, Texas
www.actfl.org

November 24–26, 2007
Organización Mexicana de Traductores
Capítulo Occidente
11th International Translation
& Interpretation Congress
“San Jerónimo 2007”
Guadalajara, Mexico
www.omt.org.mx/general.htm

November 24–26, 2007
FIT Regional Centre Latin America
2nd Meeting of the FIT Regional
Centre Latin America
Guadalajara, Mexico
www.omt.org.mx/general.htm

December 27–30, 2007
Modern Language Association
123rd Annual Convention
Chicago, Illinois
www.mla.org/convention

August 4–7, 2008
International Federation of Translators
18th FIT World Congress
Shanghai, China
www.fit-ift.org

Is your ATA e-mail stuck in cyberspace?

To help make sure you receive important ATA announcements and special offers by e-mail:

• Add the following address to your e-mail address book and, if available, your
“safe list”: ata-hq@atanet.org.

• Check your “junk mail” or “spam” folder often to make sure none of ATA’s e-mail
messages have accidentally ended up there.

• Use the Members Only area of ATA’s website to keep your contact information
updated.

ATA does not sell or rent the e-mail addresses of its members.
ANTIDOTE RX

Publisher:
Druide Informatique, Inc.

Publication date:
2006

ISBNs:
2-922010-09-0
978-2-922010-09-1

Price:
€119.00

Available from:
www.druide.com
(This site will give you a list of vendors in France,
Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, and on the Internet.)

Reviewed by:
Françoise Herrmann

ANTIDOTE RX is an electronic prescription against the many poisons of artful composition and stylistic elegance that invoke the Celtic wisdom of a Druid reborn in the electronic age of computational Wizardry. This program will protect you against such poisons as drab verbs, weak or fuzzy meanings, and the misuse or excessive use of certain forms that can make or break your French texts. ANTIDOTE RX is also an electronic prescription with a twist—RX stands for Révolution dix [Revolution ten], corresponding to the tenth anniversary of Druide Informatique, founded in 1996.

INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

ANTIDOTE RX runs with both MACs and PCs (including Linux).

For PCs
• Pentium II (Pentium III recommended)
• 128 MB of RAM (256 MB recommended)
• 130 MB of hard disk space (400 MB during installation)
• Windows XP/2000/2003
• CD-ROM drive.

For Macs
• MAC OS X (Panther or Tiger)
• PowerPC or Intel
• 128 MB of RAM (256 MB recommended)
• 130 MB of hard disk space
• CD-ROM drive.

ANTIDOTE RX is installed with a French Installation Wizard, which will prompt you, when it is done, to unlock the security feature with your serial number. Remember to follow this procedure, or you will only be able to use the program for a 30-day trial. Activating the security feature is also your ticket to free technical help until 2009. Once the security feature is activated, you will need to contact Druide Informatique if you change your computer or reinstall your hard drive.

During the installation process you will also be prompted to enter information into the linguistic settings, including: region (Belgium, France, Canada); whether you use traditional or modified spelling; an indication of your level of writing proficiency; and whether ANTIDOTE RX is to be used by a woman, a man, or both. All of this information is designed to personalize the text checking functions.

Once installed, the powerful text checker and style guides, together with the program’s 10 dictionaries, appear consistently as a three-button toolbar (see Figure 1 on page 46) on almost all of your applications (for example, Word, Outlook, Outlook Express, PowerPoint, Excel, InDesign, Illustrator, WordPerfect, Internet Explorer, Hotmail/Yahoo! Mail, Lotus Notes, Eudora, FireFox, WordPad, GroupWise, Lotus Notes, and many more specific to MAC OS and Linux). It is with these three easy-to-use buttons (and their drop-down menus) that you will activate all or specific functions of ANTIDOTE RX. You can also access ANTIDOTE RX from the Programs menu, from the Tools menu in MS Word, by using the ANTIDOTE RX vial icon next to the clock on the Windows toolbar, or with a right click on any highlighted word.

FEATURES

User Manual

Consistent with the organizing metaphor of Druids and magical potions, the 120-page user manual, including a fairly extensive bibliography and an index, is called Posologie (posology). It will supply you with all you need to know about Le remède à tous vos mots (the remedy for all your words). You will also be able to
read in more detail about all the features that are only addressed briefly, or omitted, in this review.

**Mega-Tools**

*ANTIDOTE RX* offers three mega-tools for writing:

1. An advanced text checker that includes enhanced spelling, grammatical, and typographical checking, as well as filters for the revision and computational analysis of your text.

2. Ten dictionaries (definitions, phrases, synonyms, antonyms, concordances, conjugations, word families, analogies, citations, and anagrams) that open on a single screen for any given word you highlight.

3. A series of references, called *Guides*, to the pitfalls of the French language.

Each of these mega-tools casts multiple, or prismatic, views on your text, and together they will assist you to get rid of surface errors and to change or polish the text in deeper and more unexpected ways.

**Text Checker**

The *ANTIDOTE RX* text checker captures your text in an interactive window where errors are marked and explained in mouseover boxes (see Figure 2). In reference to what a bundled spell checker does for spelling, capital letters, punctuation, and various grammatical errors, you will find that *ANTIDOTE RX* supplies a far more heightened and diversified sensitivity to those traditional spell checking functions, including more detailed alerts to questionable uses, misuses, or preferred stylistic forms, and the ability to interact with the checker for more explanations and options. For example, you will be alerted, with an explanation, to all the extra spaces in your text and to whether these are just typos or incorrectly used spaces, such as those spacing errors that may occur between quantities and units of measurement or currency. Similarly, since the *ANTIDOTE RX* text checker relies on the rules contained in all of the *Guides* to the pitfalls of the French language (575 articles!), as well as on the information contained in the program’s 10 dictionaries, the text checker’s sensitivity to language use is far more sophisticated. As a result, you are alerted to imperfect usage, such as regionalisms, false cognates, borrowings, anomalies, or levels of language. For example, I was alerted to the questionable use of the expression *Suite à* (Following [our conversation]…) at the beginning of a sentence—which differed from the preferred use of *Pour faire suite à*… or *En référence à*… (In reference to…)—among several additional suggestions and references to sources.

Advanced syntactic checking, however, is only one of the functions of the *ANTIDOTE RX* text checker. In the text checker window, you will also be able to obtain a detailed evaluation of your performance, on a five-point scale from Novice to Druid, and a computational analysis of your text that would make your WordCount function blush! The computational analysis includes a rainbow-colored pinwheel with a breakdown per parts of speech, and counts that include words per phrase, phrases per paragraph, and characters per word, in addition to traditional WordCount functions.

**Figure 1: The ANTIDOTE RX toolbar: Checker, Dictionaries, and Guides**

![ANTIDOTE RX toolbar: Checker, Dictionaries, and Guides](image1)

**Figure 2: The ANTIDOTE RX text checker window**

![ ANTIDOTE RX text checker window](image2)
Revision Tool

In addition to text checking interactions, there is an extensive Revision tool, which will help you make decisions about your text based on a series of filters. There are a total of 32 filters that may be applied to your text. Among these filters you will find Repetitions, which highlights repeated words and recommends that you verify whether the repetitions are warranted in terms of marking emphasis or precision, or whether they are overused (in which case, you would then find alternatives in the synonyms dictionary). You will also find a Charnières (links) filter, which highlights all of the links coordinating the ideas of your text, and recommends that you verify the logical relationship that is invoked each time. My favorite filter, however, is a stylistic one called Verbes ternes (dull/drab verbs), which highlights all those multipurpose verbs, such as to have, to be, to do, or to get, and recommends that you find richer or more precise verbs or expressions to make your text more elegant and exciting.

Inspection Tool

The Inspection tool supplies you with computational feedback on the parts of speech in your text. This, in combination with the other tools available in the ANTIDOTE RX text checking mode, will enable you to explore your text from many unsuspected perspectives, each of which you can further adjust for more sensitivity depending, for example, on your own proficiency and level of tolerance in reference to a norm. (There are 20 pages dedicated to the settings of the text checker in the Posologie!) Dictionary Window

The Dictionary window (see Figure 3) opens 10 dictionaries simultaneously on a single screen each time you highlight a word. It may be used in the pop-up mode during the composing process, for example, as you search for another word that is more precise or verify the conjugation of a verb. You may also use the Dictionary window in conjunction with the text checker for text revision. Having all of these dictionaries open at the same time, along with the ability to scroll through them on a single screen, saves you a significant amount of time in the already lightning fast electronic mode.

ANTIDOTE RX also supplies you with a much prized concordance dictionary, enabling you to find the most statistically significant context of a word. For example, say you want to find a verb other than envoyer (to send) that co-occurs specifically with courrier (mail). The concordances returned include expédier, addresser, and dépêcher (expedite, address, and dispatch), one of which you may use in your text with a single click on the Remplacer (Replace) button in the Dictionary window.

Guides Tool

The Guides tool may become your new source of grammatical information, style manual, or crash course in linguistics. It is packed with easy to access information on every aspect of the French language, including some fascinating articles about contemporary French language usage and regional variations in the section called Points de langue (Language points). For example, in the article Pause chocolat (Chocolate breaks), you will discover the differences between tablette and barre (bars and slabs), and baton, bille, and carré (squares, beads, and sticks). Also, in the article Histoire d’@ (History of @), you will discover the...
medieval and Iberian origins of this character, which is called *arroba* in French.

**Overall Evaluation**

ANTIDOTE RX’s advanced prisms for spelling, punctuation, and syntax, as well as those referring to pragmatics, semantics, style, or logic, such as repetitions, the degree of positive or negative emphasis, the use of drab or inexpressive verbs, or the logical articulations between ideas, will guide you through previously uncharted territory in your text. This remedy, however, is not without unintended side effects. Translators will need to determine those revisions and stylistic suggestions that do not compromise the faithfulness or accuracy of their translations. In the process of using ANTIDOTE RX, secondary effects will also include an increased awareness of language uses. Thus, for translators with a pre-existing inclination for languages, this is a must-have tool that will supply advanced assistance for correction and revision, and, by the same token, send your awareness of language uses to new and greater heights. Get it and enjoy! You will only regret that there is no ANTIDOTE RX for English and all your other languages.

Françoise Herrmann is a freelance translator and interpreter for French and English (sometimes Spanish) based in San Francisco, California. She occasionally teaches scientific translation at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Contact: fherrmann@igc.org or www.fhphd.org.

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**Dictionary Reviews Continued**

**New Certified Members**

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

- **English into Chinese**
  - Lily Chen
  - Arcadia, CA

- **English into Spanish**
  - Paola C. Gazzaneo
  - Montevideo, Uruguay

- **Arabic into English**
  - Aline A. Blumetti
  - San Clemente, CA

**Active Membership Review**

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

- **Active**
  - Fadel K. Jabr
  - Dearborn, MI

  - Iolanta I. Paneva
  - Toronto, Ontario, Canada

  - Noemie I. Parrat
  - Tallahassee, FL

  - Paloma García Romero
  - Apple Valley, MN

  - Anna Y. Sarzynski
  - Owings Mills, MD

  - Josefina Vidal
  - Santa Monica, CA

- **Corresponding**
  - Michael C. Ferreira
  - Long Beach, CA

**Translation: Getting it Right**

“By applying even half the tips in this guide, you will improve your chances of getting a translation that works.”

*Translation: Getting it Right* is an ATA client education booklet available in print and online. ATA members can order up to 100 copies at no cost. To download a PDF copy of this booklet, visit [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org).
The Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association (IITA), an ATA affiliate group, is a nonprofit organization. Incorporated in 2004, IITA has the following mission:

- To promote the recognition of the translation and interpretation professions in Iowa.
- To promote the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of Iowa’s translators and interpreters.
- To formulate and maintain standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence.
- To stimulate and support the training of Iowa’s translators and interpreters.
- To represent actively the professional interests of Iowa’s translators and interpreters to actual and potential users of translation and interpretation services.
- To promote professional and social relations among IITA members.

In addition to its affiliation with ATA, IITA is an organizational member of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Benefits and Activities

**Conference:** IITA conferences feature a combination of plenary and regular sessions, along with exhibitors. IITA’s third annual conference, being held this month in Des Moines, Iowa, features keynote speaker ATA President Marian S. Greenfield. In addition, IITA is hosting an ATA certification exam.

**IITA Directory of Translators and Interpreters:** Lists the current names and contact information for IITA members.

**IITA Yahoo! discussion Group/List-server:** Open to all members, this group provides a way for members to share and receive information about upcoming events, post questions about terminology, protocol, and other areas of the profession. All members with current e-mail addresses will receive an e-mail invitation to join soon.

**Newsletter:** *IITA Links* is the association’s new online publication. Please contact amy@focuspe.com to submit an article or to share an idea for what you would like to see covered.

**Website:** In addition to membership and general information, IITA’s website (www.iitanet.org) contains a calendar of events (conferences, training, testing, meetings); an online membership directory; and frequently asked questions. A members only section is under development that will include: IITA’s membership directory; IITA’s articles of incorporation and bylaws; nominations procedures; annual conference meeting minutes; and board minutes.

**Quick Facts**

- **Acronym:** (IITA)
- **Established:** 2004
- **Area Served:** Iowa
- **Website:** www.iitanet.org
- **Contact:**
  - P.O. Box 12031
  - Des Moines, IA 50312
  - Tel: (515) 865-3873
  - (515) 255-5327 (President)
  - (515) 278-5841 (Secretary)
  - (515) 237-3917 (Treasurer)

**TIP-Lab 16th Distance Spanish Translation/Revision Workshop**

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ATA chapters, affiliates, and local groups serve translators and interpreters in specific geographic areas. They provide industry information, networking opportunities, and support services to members at the local level and act as liaisons with the national association. This column is designed to serve as a quick resource highlighting the valuable contributions these organizations are making to the Association and the profession as a whole.
Of late, I have edited a lot of work by other translators. Editing means paying attention to, among other things, punctuation. If the various forms of punctuation could have personal slogans, the one for the trendy slash would be a brazen, “I’ll never tell!” Slashes can indicate two opposites or contrasting options (go/no go), synonyms (toilets/rest rooms), or similar items within a general category where perhaps, a generation ago, an ampersand could have been used (amusement park rides/gaming tables). Slashes result from laziness or a writer’s desire to appear ever-so-trendy. Readers must apply the mental effort to decipher how the items separated by a slash are linked. In recent editing, this editor eliminated 99% of all slashes, judging that they hindered communication. Not to worry: another similar project is coming soon, with the signal-to-slash ratio probably even lower this time. My delete button is ready, waiting, and eager.

New Queries

(E-G 6-07/1) Clear working days, as a term in a contract, is anything but clear. The context phrase that made a ProZer unhappy was: but in any case no less than five (5) clear working days before the 15th day of each month. Does this refer to weather?

(E-G 6-07/2) A winding-down session is a clear concept in English when referring to the end of an exercise period, but, as a member of ProZ pointed out, “wie sag ich’s meinem Kinde?” The child must have a ready way in German to know what this refers to, and we can help.

(E-H 6-07/3) Here is some bad geeky stuff, and the translator deserves credit for appealing for help with the Hungarian for only two words, pin page. The entire sentence reads: There are only MJPG and YUY2 of Color format on Option/Video Capture pin page of the image software AmCap. The Translation Inquirer does not seriously expect any answers for this, so prove him wrong!

(E-I 6-07/4) Here is some more geekiness, as presented by a member of ProZ. The information technology phrase in English was “Wpar %s is not checkpointable,” and if this bold-print bit of terminology is common in the world of software, then I am profoundly ignorant. What does it refer to?

(E-Sp 6-07/5) Academic writing in English often uses the word construction in a way that can be confusing, as in the case of this ProZer who was trying to produce decent Spanish from this phrase: But if the concept of heresy was no longer tenable in the public sphere, the rationale behind it was still there: the construction of religious identity, fear of the other, and maintaining boundaries…. What, the ProZ user asks, do you make of construction followed by three or more elements?

(F-G [E] 6-07/6) In an ordinary stamp beneath a notarized certificate of purchase there appeared, with nothing else, the words “droits de timbre sur état.” A ProZer wants to know if anyone has a clue about the final two words.

(G-E 6-07/7) A ProZ correspondent had trouble with the abbreviation OwiG in a context of legal misdemeanors. The context sentence included, “Gesetz über Ordnungswidrigkeiten, OwiG”). Who can help with this?

(G-E 6-07/8) A ProZer stumbled over “Schnüffelloch” in the following robotics context: “Eine aus G 89 13 278 bekannte Gebarmatur für eine hydraulische Bremse oder Kupplung enthält einen verstellbaren Anschlag für den Kolben, mit dem der Abstand zwischen Dichtkante und Schnüffelloch und damit der Leerweg einstellbar ist.” Any ideas?

(I-Sp [E] 6-07/9) In engineering mechanics, “lubrorefrigerante” puzzled a ProZer trying to go from Italian into Spanish. The overall context quoted was too long, but here is part of it: “Non è necessario l’utilizzo di olio intero (anche se è comunque possibile). L’impiego di acqua emulsionata (con olio solitamente dal 3% al 10%) comporta un sensibile risparmio economico nell’acquisto del lubrorefrigerante….”

(Po-E 6-07/10) The medical term “przewodnie w jamah opuchlowych,” referring to the lungs, caused difficulties for a member of ProZ. Is anyone willing to try?
(R-D [E] 6-07/11) I am glad to see Russian back in this column after a few months’ absence. We need good Dutch for this fairly clear agricultural term, namely what is in bold print in the following quote: "внешняя вог- карантинная продукция" (внешняя вог- карантинный материал). People taller than average can take advantage of the stylish, but not too practical, roofline, which loses a lot of space on the inside. His offering: "People taller than average can take little advantage of the stylish, but not so practical, roofline, which loses a lot more than usual in height while reaching to the back, which certainly cuts down valuable headroom in the rear. Peter Christensen’s rendering: "Tall passengers will be less than delighted with the car’s sexy, swept-back roofline that leaves them little headroom in the back."

(G-Po [E] 3-07/6) (freihändiges Sprechen): Nina Sattler-Hovdar calls it "hands-free communication" in English, noting that the people in the kitchen can communicate with the waiters, and vice versa, without having to keep pressing buttons. (Check page 49 of the March issue for the full context.)

(1-F [E] 3-07/7) (corrispettivo): Very rarely do we get a response of this kind. Elizabeth Hill reports that the word can be left untranslated. Indeed, to read well in the target language, it should be left out along with its prepositions. According to Elizabeth, it is just a bit of clutter that characterizes Italian legalese. If only Italian suffered from such clutter! But Carl Stoll wants a real equivalent for this, and offers payment consideration, in the sense of quid pro quo.

(N-G 3-07/8) (som-bygget dokumentasjon): For Peter Christensen, there was no doubt that this Norwegian term had been borrowed. Looking up as-built documentation on Google, he found lots of hits. The German equivalent was Bestandsdokumentation, a term that registered 27,000 hits, so it is a safe translation, along with Baubesandsdokumentation. Nina Sattler-Hovdar agrees with Peter about the English, but offers additional choices in German: Bestandspläne, Bestandszeichnungen.

(Pt-E 2-07/9) (elucubrações): Edmea McCarty simply calls these laborious studies.

(Replies to Old Queries) (Sp-E 6-07/12) An abbreviation, “c.s.p.”, made life difficult for a ProZ denizen trying to produce English from a text coming from Bogotá. The abbreviation comes at the end of this short message: “galeria café libro qué Bohemia! c.s.p.” Can anything be made of this?

(Replies to Old Queries) (Sp-E 6-07/13) This query comes from the world of pop culture. Below the name of a musical group on an advertisement were the words “Soca y Fusión.” What do they mean?

(Sp-E 2-07/10) (Campana con interceptor de contratiraje): Luis Zepeda says this should be "chimney with down draft interceptor," and recommends www.volko.com/lyemance.html as a reference on this with photographs. Thanks!

(Sp-E 3-07/10) (gastos necesarios para su radicación): This, says Graciela Daichman, probably refers to the permanent “residence” of an imported vehicle in the country. In Argentina, radicarse, from the Latin radix, means to establish roots. Sandra Bravo defines them as expenses you need to pay for customs clearance and/or registration, in the case of an imported product. Carl Stoll offers procedure of registering a vehicle.

This last column was quite full, and there are many people to thank. We have a good organization. When trouble came for this column last year due to a lack of responses, it was during the summer months. Keep them coming during the dog days!!

This column is solely intended as a means of facilitating a general discussion regarding terminology choices. For feedback regarding pressing terminology questions, please try one of these online forums: Lantra-L (www.geocities.com/athens/7110/lantra.htm), ProZ.com (www.proz.com), or Translators Café (http://translatorscafe.com).

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

A translator reads the original very closely, and in so doing may find humorous nuances overlooked not only by previous translators, but also by those reading the text in its original language. This has been discussed before in these pages, in the columns on the *Iliad*—“The Classics” (October 1997) and “Irony in the *Iliad*” (August 2003)—and the column on the ancient Roman poet Sextus Propertius—“Prejudice” (July 2005). Bringing this humor to light is not always appreciated. Ezra Pound was excoriated by traditional critics for finding humor in Propertius, as are many who defy received opinion about a “classic.”

But great writers often mix comedy and tragedy. How else can they mirror life?

Consider Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* [The Nibelung’s Ring], discussed on several previous occasions in this column. This 15-hour-long, 4-opera epic ends with the gods and their world going up in flames. Can a catastrophe of such biblical proportions include humor? Of course!

In the *Ring*, Loge is both a person and the all-consuming fire itself. He is an invention of Wagner, probably a combination of the Norse trickster, liar, and shape-shifter Loki and the Norse fire-giant Logi. (Note that one of Loki’s main shape-shifting forms is a salmon, and his name is etymologically related to “lox.”) Loge’s humor often consists of his deflation of the gods’ pretentions.

For example, Valhalla is Wotan’s mighty castle in the air (literally), built by giants and approachable only via a rainbow bridge over the Rhine. In Valhalla’s halls, Wotan will revel with slain heroes; from Valhalla’s exalted heights, Wotan shall rule the entire world. But in Loge’s estimation, Valhalla is merely a newly built family home that he (Loge) has just inspected, found to meet building code requirements, and is happy to present with a verbal certificate of occupancy:


[Donner and Froh [Wotan’s brothers-in-law] are thinking of a cozy home, if they would woo mates, they must be glad of a house. A proud hall, a strong castle, was accordingly Wotan’s desire. House and yard, hall and castle, the happy fortress now stands solidly built. I tested the splendid masonry myself, I scrupulously inspected to check if all was firm; I found Fasolt and Fafner [the two giants who built Valhalla] trustworthy; no stone totters on its support.]

The singable translation by Ronnie Apter and me, which the performer can inject with more or less irony as he wishes, runs:

Donner and Froh are thinking of settling down. Now that they’ve got a house, they must be glad. A stately home, a sturdy hall, wasn’t that your desire? House and hall, fort and court are solidly built; your stronghold stands secure. I tested everything myself: each door and gate, pillar and post. Fasolt and Fafner worked very well: the castle will not fall.

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

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