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The Journey from Translator to Interpreter
Federal Procurement and Translator Performance
Maximizing Visibility for Multilingual Websites
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American Translators Association  
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Tel: (703) 683-6100 • Fax: (703) 683-6122  
E-mail: Chronicle@atanet.org • Website: www.atanet.org
We Want You!

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

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Keiran Dunne is an associate professor of French at Kent State University, where he teaches graduate courses in localization and language project management. He has extensive experience as an English→French localization subcontractor for Fortune 500 companies and other corporate clients, and draws upon this experience in his courses at Kent State. He is the editor of the recently published Perspectives in Localization, Volume XIII of the ATA Scholarly Monograph Series. His current projects include an edited volume on project management in the language industry and a textbook on the translation of digital content. Contact: kdunne@kent.edu.

Huiping Iler is the owner of Wintranslation.com, a professional translation company in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, established in 1998. She has just released a 16-page white paper on search engine marketing for multilingual websites, which can be downloaded free of charge at www.wintranslation.com. Contact: transition@wintranslation.com.

Roger Kapur has been a translator for more than 10 years, working from Portuguese into English in the areas of legal, financial, and medical translations. Before working as a freelance translator, he pursued a career in investment banking. He has been a member of ATA since 2000. Contact: roger.kapur@terra.com.br.

Brenda Sprague is the director of the U.S. State Department’s Office of Language Services. She is a member of the Senior Executive Service, and has worked as an administrative professional at the Department of State for 34 years. Contact: spraguebs@state.gov.

Clarissa Surek-Clark is an ATA-certified English→Portuguese translator. She has resumed her translating and interpreting activities in the U.S. after spending several years in South Africa researching the pidgin Fanakalo. Her life and academic experience in South and North America and Africa has provided her with a wealth of resources on how to establish oneself in the industry. She is the administrator of ATA’s Portuguese Language Division. Contact: clarissa@portugueselinguist.com.

Sabine Werther is a recent graduate of the Institut für Fremdsprachen und Auslandskunde in Erlangen, Germany, and is a state-certified English→German translator. She recently completed a seven-month internship at German Language Services in Seattle, Washington, and has returned to Germany to work as an in-house translator. Contact: werthersbine@web.de.

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Comprehensive Legal Glossaries in 11 Languages
www.sccourt.com/geninfo/legal_glossaries/legal_glossaries.asp
Arabic, Armenian (Western), Hmong, Mien, Mong, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Urdu, and Vietnamese. Hindi and Mandarin (Traditional Chinese) translations available in the near future. Comments: jeanielhome@sactocapital.org.

Translation Bureau of the Government of Canada
The Pavel Terminology Tutorial
English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese
www.translationbureau.gc.ca/pavel_e.htm
Contains roughly 300 pages of text designed to teach the fundamental principles of terminology research. Over 75 interactive exercises with answers and explanations, in addition to over 25 charts and explanatory graphic elements. Includes a glossary of the terms used in terminology, an extensive bibliography, and a list of websites.
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WHERE INTELLIGENCE GOES TO WORK
In mid-March, ATA was one of the sponsors of the second Translation Summit organized by Brigham Young University. The idea behind the Summit, supported by the Salt Lake City branch of the World Trade Centers Association and by the office of the Governor of Utah, was to bring translators, government representatives, educators, and corporate executives together to discuss how to better serve the increase in demand for translation services. At this year’s Summit, which drew over 180 attendees, I represented ATA on a panel entitled “Getting It Right.” I impressed upon the dozens of key government and corporate language services buyers in the audience ATA’s message that translation and interpretation mistakes can be costly, and even deadly, that buyers cannot risk getting the translation wrong, and that they need to have qualified translators and interpreters to get the job done right.

One particularly interesting development was the participation of Stephen Sekel, who heads Translation Services at the United Nations. In conversing with Stephen, he indicated that he was looking forward to the UN Translation Services getting more involved in the translation and interpreting community, and hopefully to have their staff be more of a presence at translation and interpreting events, including ATA conferences.

As I write this, I am on a plane home from the 21st birthday conference of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting in London, England. There were nearly 200 attendees, with a considerable contingent of folks from across Europe, of which several were ATA members. Among the sessions I found most interesting was a presentation by Bill Maslen entitled “The Place of Translation in the Food Chain.” Bill’s message was basically a version of the ATA message that I have been delivering to translators throughout the U.S. and abroad—the importance of specialization, translating into your native language, continuing education/professional development, and charging your clients accordingly. Needless to say, I was smiling broadly and nodding in the audience behind Chris Durban, a member of ATA’s Public Relations Committee who works hard at selling that message whenever she is given a platform. It was encouraging to see that the message was extremely well-received, as it generally has been whenever I have delivered it.

One more way we have been working to spread the ATA message—at home and abroad—is by developing the “PR Roadshow.” The DVD is still in production, along with a multimedia version of Translation: Getting It Right. But as you will read elsewhere in this issue (see page 10), the Roadshow has already been presented in Israel and Indonesia, and is scheduled for several venues in the U.S. and abroad, including ATA’s Translation Company Division annual conference (July 26-29 in San Antonio, Texas) and at ATA’s 48th Annual Conference in San Francisco, October 31–November 3.
Revisiting the Website and The ATA Chronicle

One year after The ATA Chronicle and the website debuted new looks, the results are in. The ATA Chronicle and the website are attracting more attention than ever.

The ATA Chronicle redesign included moving to four-color throughout, adding more graphic elements, and updating the look. While the positive feedback from members is one measure of success, the other is the increase in advertising. Display advertising in The ATA Chronicle is up more than 35% on the year compared to 2006.

For your information, The ATA Chronicle advertising is sold by Matthew Hicks of the McNeill Group in suburban Philadelphia. We have worked with McNeill for over five years. (McNeill also handles our conference advertising, exhibit, and sponsorship sales.)

As for the website, www.atanet.org, we updated the look, made the link to the online services directories more prominent, and restructured the site navigation. Nevertheless, work on the site is ongoing. We are always looking for ways to add valuable content and resources, such as our current efforts toward adding a Job Board, and to incorporate member feedback.

Aside from revenue, there is some discussion as to quantifying a successful site. For example, an article I recently read on this topic suggested that the average time spent on the site should be the key measurement. For ATA, we look at the number of visits and the number of unique visitors. For 2006, we had over 500,000 visits from over 258,000 distinct Internet addresses (also known as unique visitors). The visits were up nearly 25% over 2005. Furthermore, the year-to-date 2007 figures indicate an even larger increase over 2006.

Finally, we are focusing on site optimization so that ATA appears higher on the various web search engine results, such as on Yahoo! and Google. So, what this means to you is that ATA’s website can be found faster and continues to be seen as the resource to find professional translators and interpreters and language services companies.

As always, please pass along any comments or suggestions you may have to improve The ATA Chronicle and/or the website.

A Look at the Online Services Directories—Update

The ATA online Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services for individuals and the Directory of Language Services Companies continue to be widely used by translation and interpreting services purchasers. Listings in these online directories are only available to ATA members. As of mid-April, the individual directory featured 5,873 profiles. The company directory had 406 profiles.

Be sure to keep your listings up to date. To update or add your listing, please go to www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/update_profile.php.

Here are the statistics for the second half of 2006:

Top 10 language combinations from most queried to least for individuals

1. English into Spanish (1)
2. Spanish into English (2)
3. English into French (3)
4. English into Chinese (5)
5. English into Japanese (4)
6. English into German (10)
7. French into English (6)
8. Japanese into English (7)
9. Chinese into English (8)
10. English into German (10)

Top 10 areas of specialization from most queried to least for individuals

1. Medicine (General) (1)
2. Law (General) (2)
3. Pharmaceuticals (4)
4. Business (General) (3)
5. Engineering (General) (5)
6. Patents, Trademarks, Copyrights (9)
7. Industry & Technology (General) (8)
8. Health Care (-)
9. Software Localization (10)
10. Economics & Finance (6)

Dropped from the top 10: Computers (General) (7)

Top 10 areas of specialization from most queried to least for companies

1. Medicine (General) (1)
2. Law (General) (3)
3. Business (General) (2)
4. Health Care (5)
5. Education (7)
6. Computers (General) (10)
7. Arts & Humanities (General) (4)
8. Immigration (-)
9. Industry & Technology (General) (-)
10. Engineering (General) (-)

Dropped from the top 10: Software Localization (6), Pharmaceuticals (8), and Economics & Finance (9).
ATA has taken a bold step toward promoting the translation and interpreting professions worldwide.

If we specialize, translate into our native language, and charge accordingly, we can all harness the global marketplace to find the best clients.

The “PR Roadshow” is designed to present ATA’s public relations strategy to a broad range of groups in the U.S. and abroad—and invite them to join us by launching initiatives of their own.

Win-Win Strategy
The brainchild of ATA PR Committee member Rina Ne’eman, the Roadshow briefly highlights the origin, mission, and message of ATA’s PR movement, showing how outreach to media, business, and schools can raise the profile of the translation and interpreting professions. Just as important, the presentation includes concrete tips to empower any group—or any individual—to put PR principles to work to educate clients, grow their own business, and better their bottom line. It is a win-win approach that benefits both the broader profession and its individual members.

“The response to the Roadshow was exciting,” Ne’eman notes. “The multimedia aspects were an eye-opener for many participants, who never envisaged seeing translators and interpreters featured in leading news venues like CNN, ABC, and National Public Radio. Showing actual television coverage of ATA spokespeople underscores our message that we are critical to national security, public health, and international business.”

Promoting the Profession Within the Profession
Although most of ATA’s PR effort is directed outward, there are good reasons for promoting the profession within the profession:

- To invite other associations and their members to join us in fighting the downside of globalization by raising the profile of the profession through their own PR initiatives. All of us benefit when clients understand and appreciate what we do, and start looking for quality and value instead of the lowest bidder.
To empower translators and interpreters around the world by encouraging them to value their own work and showing them how to use the principles of public relations to improve their status and better their bottom line. As ATA President Marian S. Greenfield notes, “If we specialize, translate into our native language, and charge accordingly, we can all harness the global marketplace to find the best clients.” Once again, however, the shift from price to value is crucial. “We should avoid selling on price and stick to quality,” says Greenfield. “We need to focus on what our services are worth.”

Successful Debut

Ne’eman premiered the Roadshow in early February at the Israel Translators Association conference, where it received an enthusiastic welcome. In April, ATA President-Elect Jiri Stejskal presented the Roadshow at the FIT Asian Forum in Bogor, Indonesia. Later this year, ATA President Marian S. Greenfield will share the Roadshow podium with Ne’eman at the annual conference of the Association of Language Companies in Providence, Rhode Island, in June and at the annual conference of ATA’s Translation Company Division in San Antonio, Texas, in July. Several international venues are pending, and ATA members can look forward to seeing the Roadshow at ATA’s Annual Conference in San Francisco, October 31-November 3.

Raising Awareness

By making our clients, our colleagues—and even our competitors—aware of the vital role that translators and interpreters play in the global economy, ATA is raising the status of our profession and, with it, our prospects and earnings. This is a direct benefit to our members and to the industry as a whole.

The new PR Roadshow is designed to present ATA’s public relations strategy to a broad range of groups in the U.S. and abroad—and invite them to join us by launching initiatives of their own.
Media outlets continue to report on the difficulties encountered by public and private sector organizations in obtaining the foreign language support services they need in the era of globalization. In September 2003, *The ATA Chronicle* invited me to provide readers with a guide for navigating the federal marketplace. In the past four years this marketplace has grown ever larger and more dynamic, so now is a good time to revisit this topic.

**The Procurement Challenge**

The three basic principles for navigating the federal procurement process successfully—research, acceptability, and performance reliability—are unchanged. The potential vendor must still focus on research to ascertain what products and services federal agencies need and seek. Proposals must address the requirements as they are presented in the procurement solicitation. And, most importantly, vendors must deliver high-quality products and services on time and within budget.

The federal procurement process has grown more sophisticated in its search for translation and interpretation (T&I). Many of the procurements that were contracted under emergency conditions in the early days of the global war on terror were unsuccessful. Oftentimes this failure was a result of errors by the federal clients, including unreasonable requests, poorly drafted requirements, and impossible timelines. At other times, vendors promised more than they could deliver, and, as a result, did not provide requesting agencies with the services they required. Contracting officers and program managers struggled to develop performance standards and evaluative measures that would ensure that requestors received what they needed.

Contracting professionals, budget officers, and, indeed, all bureaucrats are always seeking ways to quantify their requirements. This is a fairly straightforward process when purchasing tires for a truck or toner for copy machines. Quantifying requirements in the service arena, however, is far more difficult, especially when seeking to provide interpreters to accompany combat troops into hostile areas. The problems encountered by the unwary contracting officer are best illustrated by a procurement solicitation I reviewed that described a native speaker as “an individual who was born in or near the place where a language is spoken.” In desperation, procurement officials have turned to the one quantifiable language measure they can find—the Federal Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale.

**Interagency Language Roundtable**

The ILR scale is a set of descrip-
Many of the procurements that were contracted under emergency conditions in the early days of the global war on terror were unsuccessful.

The ATA Chronicle  ■  May 2007

The ILR scale has almost no utility as a measure of T&I ability. First, it was designed to measure ability to communicate in a foreign language and presumes native fluency in English. Second, a native English speaker’s ability to communicate in a foreign language does not measure the ability to effectively render a message between two languages—the elementary task of interpreting and translating. Accordingly, the T&I Subcommittee of the ILR undertook to develop a scale that applies to these skills.

This has proven to be a daunting task. The ILR has adopted a scale for translation and proposed another for interpretation. Both scales are posted on the ILR website, and the organization welcomes comments from interested parties. The U.S. State Department’s Office of Language Services (LS) has solicited comments from T&I professionals in foreign governments, international organizations, and academia. In general, these professionals applaud the U.S. government’s interest in promoting quality control for these disciplines. However, they also highlight the complexities involved in measuring T&I performance through a simplified scale when factors such as setting, subject matter expertise, and prior experience are key determinants. In addition, the use of the five-tier language proficiency scale as a model can result in confusion for individuals who do not realize that even the most elementary T&I tasks require language proficiency at a Level 3 or higher. Another concern is that the ILR has not designed an evaluative instrument to verify an individual’s rating on the T&I scales.

Potential Recruitment Tool

Whatever reservations T&I professionals may have about these scales, it is likely that they will be eagerly adopted by procurement officials and even personnel specialists. These officials now have at their disposal a tool that permits them to quantify the complexity of the T&I task at hand. Accordingly, the potential federal contractor (or job applicant) will be forced to become familiar with the scale and adapt his or her proposal documentation (or résumé) to reflect the abilities needed to perform the work.

LS played a key role in the drafting of both scales, and voted for the final adoption of the translation scale in June 2006. Since that time, we have made ample use of the ILR translation scale to justify quality control at all performance levels. Because our mandate is to support the translation needs of the White House and State Department in the conduct of foreign policy, our translators must be able to work at the highest performance level. Nevertheless, as the ILR document reaffirms, quality control remains crucial at all levels, and reference to the scale has helped LS convince clients that even when translators are superstars, a review is the hallmark of a professional job.

The ILR scale has also helped LS as it actively recruits new translators. Most of them will join our corps of over 1,000 contractors. Some, however, may land staff positions. As LS recruits for today’s contractor requirements and engages in succession planning for employees, the ILR translation scale has been helpful in that it reaffirms the importance of non-linguistic factors in the translation process—namely, the translator’s familiarity with subject matter, conversancy with the sociocultural aspects of both languages, and analytical and research skills, such as the use of translation tools and online glossaries. Accordingly, applicants for the LS translation test who lack this familiarity and the necessary skills are cautioned to acquire more experience before testing, which is especially important since re-testing is seldom an option. A translator

Many of the procurements that were contracted under emergency conditions in the early days of the global war on terror were unsuccessful.
Federal Procurement and Translator Performance: Keeping Our Eye on the Five
Continued

whose experience is limited to literary translation or software localization is unlikely to fare well on an LS translation test. Mentored exposure to other genres of translation, such as those typically found in LS work, is crucial. Likewise, seasoned translators without Internet research skills may also face difficulties in completing LS assignments successfully.

Other agencies will adapt these performance scales to address their particular program requirements. Over the past six months, we have challenged our federal colleagues to keep our collective “eye on the five.” This means remembering that even though Level-3 translators are producing a “professional” translation that only “rarely obscure[s] meaning,” they are not capable of completing sophisticated and sensitive assignments associated with Level 5 assignments. The requirements for a particular task should, therefore, include a serious consideration of the impact of a less than “flawless” translation. Trade-offs between cost and quality may be a more complicated matter than determining the lowest price offer.

More Work Ahead

The groundwork has been laid for federal managers to identify those skills that are the hallmark of high-quality professional interpretation and translation, and to incorporate those standards in their procurement solicitations. It is the responsibility of potential vendors to draw upon these same standards in developing proposals for consideration by procurement activities—and in delivering an excellent finished product. Working together, project managers, procurement officials, interpreters, and translators can ensure that the American taxpayer receives the “best value” in foreign language support.

Notes
1. The Federal Acquisition Regulations defines performance reliability as a function of past performance and experience.
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Make plans now for two days of in-depth, high-quality sessions presented by experts in their fields. This seminar is targeted at experienced translators and interpreters, who are seeking advanced-level continuing education.

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Saturday, June 16  ATA will provide a full-day training seminar, including a continental breakfast, a Job Marketplace, and a Networking Session.

Sunday, June 17  CTA will provide a half day of sessions on tool-related topics.

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To learn more about the ATA/CTA Translation Tools Seminar, visit www.atanet.org/pd/tools or contact ATA at (703) 683-6100 or ata@atanet.org

Hotel Information
The Grand Hyatt Denver is located at 1750 Welton Street, Denver, CO 80202, with immediate access to the vibrant downtown area. A block of rooms has been reserved at $129 single/double a night, plus tax. To take advantage of this special rate, make your reservations by May 15. Call the Grand Hyatt at (303) 295-1234 and be sure to ask for the ATA rate.

Cancellation Policy
Cancellations received in writing by June 8, 2007 are eligible for a refund. Refunds will not be honored after June 8. A $25 administrative fee will be applied to all refunds.

3 Ways to Register
- Register online at www.atanet.org/pd/tools/register
- Fax registration form to (703) 683-6122
- Mail registration form to ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590 Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Don’t Forget
- Include payment with your form
- Make your hotel reservations
- Tell a friend about this event
If your website is your résumé, the links to your site are your references. You can easily modify or manipulate the information on your résumé, but it is much harder to do the same to your references. Links are external votes of confidence cast on your site, and it says a great deal about your site’s content and its quality. This is why search engines place such importance on links. The quality, quantity, and relevance of links pointing to your site largely determine your rankings. So, if you are a savvy online marketer and want to achieve optimal visibility for your international language sites, attracting links to your site is vital.

Types of Links to Get

Simply put, strive for links from high-traffic, high-quality sites that are relevant to your industry. Get as many as you can. Think about the references example again. If you are looking for a job, what references work the best? The endorsement of a personal friend, or of a well-respected authority from your professional field? Links from highly respected “authority” sites are harder to obtain, but much more valuable. Here is another example. If you are looking for a good restaurant while visiting New York City, whose recommendation would you trust more: the hot dog vendor you ask on the street, or a food critic from The New York Times?

When identifying the quality of links to your site, a good criterion to use is whether the link can send you a volume of quality traffic. Ideally, you want links from the following:

- **Sites with high traffic:** The link is less valuable if the sites linking to your site have very low traffic.
- **Sites that are highly relevant to your target audience:** For an e-commerce site for a digital camera, you want links from camera review sites, photography magazines, photo software sites, and so on. You get the idea.
- **Sites with fewer outbound links:** The more outbound links there are, the less effective they are for your site. Do not get lost in a list with hundreds of other links. Look for a page that has the fewest outbound links possible.

How Link Text Works

The words used as link text (sometimes referred to as “anchor text”) play a critical role in search engine rankings. Some search experts call it “link reputation.” There is a saying: “you are who people say you are.” In a way, your website is what other sites say it is. For a search engine like Google, which places high value on link reputation, it is important to work your keyword phrases into the link text. The following example shows poorly written link text:

For more information on website translation, click here.

The next sentence is much better:

For more information, click website translation.

How To Get Links

If links are so important, what are the best ways of getting them?

**Have killer content:** If the quality of your content is very high, people will link to it voluntarily, without you asking. Killer content means having high quality information on your website that brings people back time and
time again because they find what they need, when they need it.

**Provide a useful tool for free:** The link check tool on marketleap.com attracts a lot of links because the tool is useful and free. Think of something useful for your industry and give it away for free. This is a great way to attract links.

**Submit your site to directories:** Directories provide valuable one-way links to your site. Such one-way links are often considered more valuable than reciprocal links, which are those that require you to link back. A link from a highly respected directory like Yahoo! carries quite a bit of weight when it comes to rankings.
Maximizing Visibility for Multilingual Websites Continued

Use your existing networks: Do not forget that your suppliers, customers, and business partners are great sources for links.

Exchange links: You may want to consider exchanging links with complementary websites.

Buy links: Some respected, high-traffic sites sell links at a cost. You may have to experiment to see which ones bring you a good return on your investment.

Training Your Translation Team

A solid search engine marketing strategy takes a great deal of human and financial resources to implement. The last thing you want is to see all that work undone in your international markets.

Your translation team has the ability to take your state-of-the-art search marketing campaign back to the Dark Ages. Unless you educate your translation team about why it is important to be search engine friendly and how to achieve that goal, you may be in for an unpleasant surprise. Some of the common problems that occur when an English site is translated into other languages include:

• Obscure albeit technically accurate keywords are used, which greatly reduces the chances of your website being found.
• Keywords are missing from all the strategic places, such as title tags and meta description tags.
• Language tags and encodings are improperly used, and, as a result, text does not display properly.
• Meta tags and Alt tags are not always translated.
• Translators compose for flow and tone only, without taking search engines into consideration.

To avoid such pitfalls:

• Involve your translation vendor when planning keywords for your language sites.
• Develop a glossary that is strictly enforced throughout the translation process so that translators do not sway from researched, pre-approved search phrases.
• Provide an orientation session for the translation team on search engine friendly writing and strategic keyword placement.
• Conduct search engine quality assurance after translation is complete to check the completeness of translation, the proper encoding of the pages, and optimal placement of keywords.

Conclusion

Having killer content on your website and not optimizing the site for searches is like having an award-winning movie that no one ever sees. Just as movie producers promote their movie to ensure a successful run, so must you invest in optimizing your website for searching. Just as a movie must be subtitled or dubbed for international markets, so multilingual websites must provide ways for search engines in the target languages and countries/regions to access the site. Optimizing websites for search engines requires research in all the markets you are trying to reach, as well as training for the web team and translation team to ensure that they understand how search marketing works. The most effective search optimization effort uses terms that the customers use and builds links among other sites on the web. By implementing best practices in search optimization in English, and by carrying those best practices through all the language variants for your site, you can ensure that you reach all your customers worldwide.

Having killer content on your website and not optimizing the site for searches is like having an award-winning movie that no one ever sees.

June 16–17, 2007
ATA Translation Tools Seminar
Denver, Colorado
www.atanet.org/pd/tools

Compare tools for terminology maintenance, localization, project management, and much more. Two days of in-depth, high-quality sessions presented by experts in their fields.
Early on in my career as a translator, I noticed that the vast majority of my more seasoned colleagues either belonged to the translator camp or to the interpreter camp, but rarely to both. When the subject of their career choices came up, they would explain that they enjoyed (or were constrained by) their home office too much to consider interpreting, or were too extroverted to be confined behind the computer screen as a translator.

Regardless of my initial indecision as to which mode would better suit my talents and lifestyle as a long-term career strategy, for years I stuck to translation. The rationale was simple. In order to make a living with my particular target language, Brazilian Portuguese (at the time, considered exotic in the industry), I needed clients from near and far.

Another “old wives” tale that my well-meaning colleagues used to mention to me was the fact that those interpreting seldom manage to stay in the industry through middle age. This was evidenced by the fact that many of these experienced professionals had fully pursued other professional endeavors before embarking on a second or a third career as translators or interpreters.

My journey as a language practitioner has taken me from being a translator to being both a translator and an interpreter, and if I had to do it all over again, I would not have it any other way. This article includes some of the strategies I successfully employed to build such a career.

**Formal Training**

Nothing beats receiving formal training. In my case, enrolling in a university course for Portuguese interpreters was out of the question unless I relocated back to Brazil and spent four years in school. My high proficiency in “portuñol” (a mix of Portuguese and Spanish) was...
not sufficient enough to place me into a formal interpreting course in Spanish, such as is available at many schools in the U.S. However, I was able to absorb a lot of information available to interpreters-in-training with my passive knowledge of Spanish.

If your language combination is one for which little or no materials or formal training exist, consider attending a general course on interpreting or a program taught in a language that closely resembles your target language, or in which you have passive knowledge. This could serve as a stepping stone for you to develop confidence and proficiency as an interpreter.

Comfort Level

It was not until roughly three years after launching myself in the profession that I felt sufficiently at ease with my specialized subjects as a translator and ready to try my hand at a few short, low-stress escort and consecutive interpreting assignments. At that point, I was confident with the jargon employed in these topics and rarely had to consult a dictionary to check for terminology.

I would say that a good readiness test would be to sight-translate the documents you receive to translate. Do not forget to time yourself, and be fair in your self-assessment.

Public Voice

As translators, we hide behind our computers and speak to clients over the phone or via e-mail when discussing projects. As an interpreter, an entirely different set of skills has to be developed. First, a budding interpreter has to find a public voice (a stark contrast with the anonymity that befalls the translator). Try speaking in public as much as you can—at community meetings, church, service clubs—so you are comfortable addressing an audience, although you may suffer considerably less stage fright when you are inside a booth for a simultaneous interpreting assignment! Be critical of and honest to yourself about your speaking manner. When developing a speaking style, it might help to start off by modeling your delivery after famous news and public figures in your target language. This can be tricky for those translators who did not reach adulthood in their country of origin, or who learned their target language when they were already in the U.S., or who speak a non-prestigious dialect of their target language. An additional issue that pertains to simultaneous interpreting is that the interpreter may need to use his or her source language to ask questions, so make sure your level of speaking proficiency in your non-native language is adequate.

Practice

When I was ready to take the plunge and start self-teaching, a kind colleague offered me recordings of court hearings that I listened to and interpreted at my own pace. Nowadays, one is lucky to find this type of material available for sale in the exhibition halls at professional conferences. One technique that helped me was to record myself interpreting, which is a good way to check your accuracy and speed. When I became more confident in my interpreting skills, I started interpreting the news on television—it was fast-paced and the wealth of subjects provided a good challenge.

Live Practice

If you have time, attend real-life situations in which you would like to interpret, such as court hearings, city council and school board meetings, or even academic lectures, political rallies, or sports events. Start interpreting to yourself and see how well you can follow the speaker. In these instances, take note of your position in relationship to the speaker(s), and how the aid of auditory equipment would allow for better hearing. You will be at a great advantage if you can lip-read.

Assignments of Limited Scope

Once you feel ready to market your services as an interpreter, accept assignments that are restrictive in their subject matter so that you feel confident in your ability and can do a good job. I had a lot of experience with service clubs during my teenage years, so I did fabulously well in initial interpreting assignments that involved accompanying monolingual international service club directors to their organization’s board meetings. Capitalize on topics that are already familiar to you. Telephonic interpreters are often selected on the basis of their general interpreting proficiency. Once they are accepted for the job, they receive calls that are restrictive in the subject matter they cover, such as insurance, credit card, and travel and emergency services.
Over the course of my career, there have been many advantages to being both a translator and an interpreter. For example, interpreting has sharpened my skills as a translator because I am often able to meet speakers of my target language who are experts in their fields and who are able to clarify a term or introduce a new piece of jargon that was previously unknown to me. Besides never being bored and becoming a more versatile language practitioner, at different times in my life I have focused more on either mode of employment. During long summers while in graduate school, I could accept simultaneous interpreting assignments all over the country, whereas I was able to work as a translator at home when my children were young. On an extended stay in Southern Africa, I often interpreted to an audience of Angolans and Mozambicans (for whom Brazilian dialects carry a relatively high prestige), but could not translate since the regional norm there is Continental Portuguese.

Most of all, though, being both a translator and an interpreter allows for variety in the set of skills that one can use. This has made me a more well-rounded and mature professional.

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Diversify Yourself

Over the course of my career, there have been many advantages to being both a translator and an interpreter. For example, interpreting has sharpened my skills as a translator because I am often able to meet speakers of my target language who are experts in their fields and who are able to clarify a term or introduce a new piece of jargon that was previously unknown to me. Besides never being bored and becoming a more versatile language practitioner, at different times in my life I have focused more on either mode of employment. During long summers while in graduate school, I could accept simultaneous interpreting assignments all over the country, whereas I was able to work as a translator at home when my children were young. On an extended stay in Southern Africa, I often interpreted to an audience of Angolans and Mozambicans (for whom Brazilian dialects carry a relatively high prestige), but could not translate since the regional norm there is Continental Portuguese.

Most of all, though, being both a translator and an interpreter allows for variety in the set of skills that one can use. This has made me a more well-rounded and mature professional.

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Stepping Stones to an Interpreting Career

- Consider attending a general course on interpreting or a program taught in a language that closely resembles your target language, or in which you have passive knowledge. This will enable you to develop confidence and proficiency as an interpreter.
- Sight-translate the documents you receive to translate. Do not forget to time yourself, and be fair in your self-assessment.
- Find a public voice. Try speaking in public as much as you can.
- Be critical of and honest to yourself about your speaking manner.
- Make sure your level of speaking proficiency in your non-native language is adequate.
- Record yourself interpreting. This is a good way to check your accuracy and speed.
- Attend real-life situations in which you would like to interpret, such as court hearings, city council, and school board meetings.
- Learn to lip-read.
- Start off by accepting assignments that are restrictive in their subject matter so that you feel confident in your ability and can do a good job.
“Security was a hot topic five years ago, but it’s even hotter now. And that’s because of two scary givens that ought to make everyone nervous: 1) more and better technology has made companies, government, and the average person more vulnerable than ever; and 2) the bad guys are more sophisticated and smarter than they were a decade ago.”

Bob Weinstein

Phishing: How to Avoid Being Reeled in

By Keiran Dunne

Continuing the series on cyber security that began in the April 2007 issue of The ATA Chronicle, this article will focus on the risks posed by phishing. Although the precise origins of the term are unclear, ‘phishing’ is a play on the verb fishing. In fishing, one uses some form of bait in the hope of tempting fish to bite. If and when a fish finds the bait alluring enough to swallow, it is hooked and reeled in. Phishing operates on the same principles. However, the “bait” consists of deceptive e-mail messages designed to trick users into supplying confidential information such as online banking credentials, account numbers, or other sensitive information.

Ignorance of the threats posed by phishing has a steep price indeed, as those who fall for the bait and reveal sensitive personal data to phishers are at high risk of credit card fraud, damaged credit history, and identity theft. Repairing damage to credit history and/or recovering from identity theft can take months or even years. This article will thus explain some of the techniques used in phishing e-mails, and will provide some practical strategies to help translators recognize these deceptive messages for what they are and avoid being “reeled in” by phishers.

Phishing and Its Lures: Spoofed E-Mail

Phishing is based on the principles of social engineering, whereby infor-
Information hunters “deceive a trusted user into revealing information, or trick an unsuspecting mark into providing [them] with access [to a machine, network, or account].” The motivation to phish is primarily financial, as phishers can either sell the stolen information or use it to commit fraud. It is thus not surprising that the financial services sector accounted for 84% of the brands that were phished during the second half of 2006. The phisher begins by crafting an e-mail “lure” that masquerades as a legitimate communication from a well-known financial services organization, such as a bank. The message may give every appearance of being an authentic e-mail from the bank, and may include items such as the bank’s official logo, trademarks, copyright notices, links to pages on the bank’s actual website, and more. The phisher may send out thousands or even millions of copies of the message in the hope that a few will find their way into the e-mail inboxes of legitimate account holders and trick them into believing that the message has in fact been sent by the bank. Alternatively, the phisher may conduct preliminary research to determine with which bank(s) a given victim does business, and then send the victim fake e-mail that appears to be from those institution(s). This targeted variant of phishing is sometimes referred to as “spear phishing.”

Whether the phisher takes a scattershot or targeted approach, the phishing e-mail message will typically advise users that there is a problem with their account and that they must reset their password or verify the security of their account information immediately in order to avoid problems, which may include a frozen account or blocked access. In the typical scenario, the e-mail will invite users to click on a hyperlink to “verify” their information. Clicking on the link causes a special dedicated page to load on which users are asked to “confirm” sensitive confidential information that may include some or all of the following: first and last names; address; date of birth; social security number; account number; user ID; password; PIN; mother’s maiden name (a security challenge question commonly used by banks to identify customers); and security code (the three-digit number stamped in the signature panel of credit cards used by merchants to confirm that the person conducting an online or phone transaction actually possesses the card). In this scenario, the webpage via which unsuspecting users “update” their confidential information is in fact a cleverly disguised trap designed to steal their information.

The Better the “Lure,” the Higher the Risk of Being “Hooked”

In some cases, an examination of the URL (address of the website) to which the e-mail hypertext link points will reveal the attempted trickery. For example, let us assume for the purposes of our discussion that we have received an e-mail that appears to be from “Trustworthy Bank.” If the message asks us to “verify our information” and supplies a link that does not point to the TrustworthyBank.com website, but rather to a different domain, such as bankphishers.com, then we can be pretty sure that the e-mail is illegitimate. The screenshot shown in Figure 1 shows a phishing e-mail received by the author on March 18, 2007.

Although the above e-mail appears at first glance to have been sent by Western Union, a close look at the hypertext link in the message reveals that the link does not point to the westernunion.com website, but rather to the amareviewteam.us website (which is not affiliated with Western Union, according to whois.nic.us domain registry data as of March 19, 2007).

Not all phishing attempts are as obvious as the above example. Instead of displaying the URL in the body of the e-mail message, where users might scrutinize it and notice that it points to a third-party site, many phishers take the deception a step further by “hiding” the fake URL behind hyperlink text that appears to be legitimate. For example, let us imagine that we have received an e-mail claiming to be from “Trustworthy Bank” that includes a hypertext link. Let us further imagine that the link text does not display a URL, but rather an invitation to the user to “click here to update your...”
information on the Trustworthy Bank.com website.” In this case, if we wish to find out what webpage the link points to, we can hover our mouse over the link and note the URL that displays in the status bar (in the lower left-hand corner of the browser) to see if it appears to be legitimate. The screenshot in Figure 2 shows a phishing e-mail received by the author on March 14, 2007.

At first glance, the link in the above message appears to point to the following URL:

https://www1.rbcroyalbank.ca/RBCUPDATE:XSDFV3GHI

In fact, if we hover our mouse over this link and examine the address that displays in the status bar, we will see that the link in fact points to a different URL altogether, as shown in Figure 3 on page 25.

Since the marijuanaforthemasses.com website is presumably not affiliated with the Royal Bank of Canada, the user is well advised to delete this message.

The Royal Bank of Canada phish below is a bit more sophisticated than the Western Union phish shown in the first example, since it integrates the actual Royal Bank of Canada Global Private Banking logo. Some phishers craft highly realistic messages that include authentic graphics and links to legitimate sites. For example, consider the phishing e-mail received by the author on 14 March 2007 shown in the screenshot in Figure 4 on page 25.

The message contains three hyperlink links. The link in the lower left-hand corner of the message (“Equal Housing Lender”) points to a legitimate page on the bank’s actual website (see Figure 5, page 26).

However, the “Sign In” and “Sign In to Online Banking” links point to a third-party site that is presumably not affiliated with the bank (see Figure 6 on page 26).

A close look at the URL to which the sign-in links point reveals that although it does contain a reference to “bankofamerica.com,” it does not direct the user to a page on the Bank of America website, but rather to a page on the spiderjapan.com website. In order to determine the name of the website to which a link points, one simply needs to read from “http://” or “https://” until one reaches the first top-level domain (TLD) designator (.com,.net,.org,.biz,.edu, etc.; TLDs may also be country-specific, for

Figure 2

![Image of phishing email from Royal Bank of Canada]
example, .de, .fr, and .jp). Because the URL in the sign-in link in Figure 6 on page 26 points to a page on the spiderjapan.com website, users would be ill advised to accept the message’s invitation to “click on [the link] to continue to the verification process and ensure [their] account security.” Although alert users might suspect that the e-mail is fake due to the relatively poor quality of the linguistic content, the quality of the graphic design—which includes official corporate and Olympic team sponsor logos—underscores the increasing sophistication and realism of phishing attempts.

In any event, examining URLs is not a foolproof strategy for identifying phishing messages. Some phishers create websites whose domain names are nearly identical to those of legitimate institutions, but which include subtle typos that may easily escape the user’s notice. The phishing e-mail shown in Figure 7 on page 27, which was sent to the author on March 19, 2007, contains a particularly insidious example of this type of deception: the reader will need sharp eyesight indeed to note that what appears to be a “w” in the first letter of “westernunion” in the link is in fact a pair of lower-case v’s.

The image in Figure 8 on page 27 provides an enlarged view of the URL in question. The deception perpetrated by this URL would escape all but the most rigorous scrutiny. Therein lies a problem: how many readers of e-mail pay sufficient attention to spelling in URLs to notice such a deception? How many readers of e-mail pay any attention at all to URLs?

As if the above forms of trickery were not bad enough, some phishing e-mails include JavaScript commands to spoof the URL that displays in the browser’s status bar when the user hovers his or her mouse over a hypertext link. In this way, the status bar will indicate that the URL points to TrustworthyBank.com, whereas

**Figure 3**

![Image](https://example.com/image1.jpg)

After completing this process, you will be informed that your account has been updated Canada homepage.

Thank you for choosing Royal Bank of Canada as your Financial Institution.

When you use Royal Bank of Canada or Royal Bank of Canada Business Online, 100% for any funds improperly removed from your Royal Bank of Canada accounts, your responsibility, described below.

© 1999 - 2006 Royal Bank of Canada. All rights reserved.

**Figure 4**

![Image](https://example.com/image2.jpg)

Online Banking

Online Banking Alert

Your Online Banking Account has been Blocked

Because of unusual number of invalid login attempts on your account, we had to believe that their might be some security problem on your account. So we have decided to put an extra verification process to ensure your identity and your account security. Please click on sign in to Online Banking to continue to the verification process and ensure your account security. It is all about your security. Thank you, and visit the customer service section.

Bank of America, N.A. Member FDIC. Equal Housing Lender © 2007 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.
in fact it actually points to, say, bankphishers.com. Likewise, phishers can exploit browser vulnerabilities to load content from one webpage while displaying the address of another. To see how this works in practice, simply follow these steps:

1. Open Internet Explorer
2. Go to the Slashdot website: http://www.slashdot.org
3. Type the following into your browser:
   javascript:document.write("<iframe src='http://www.google.com' width='100%' height='100%'></iframe>);
4. Press enter. You will now see the Google home page in your browser, even though you are still logged on to the slashdot.org website.

Clicking on a hypertext link in a phishing e-mail to see which page loads is not an advisable URL identification strategy, since the link and/or page may have been crafted to spoof or cloak the URL. (Alternatively, the page may have been crafted to plant a virus on your computer, which is another good reason not to click on links in unsolicited e-mail messages.)

**Why Am I Being Targeted?**

Many phishing messages are sent out as spam. Since it is both inexpensive and easy for phishers to send millions of messages at a time, perpetrators can make money even if only a tiny percentage of users click on a link in a spoofed e-mail. Phishers also identify specific targets on social networking sites. The amount and quality of information that users disclose about themselves on social networking sites makes such sites particularly attractive pools within which to phish. Indeed, a social network phishing attack experiment conducted at Indiana University in April 2005 demonstrated a whopping “success” rate of 72%. Finally, phishing threats are not confined to e-mail; instant messaging (IM) is a major phishing vector as well.

**From Cause to Effect**

Research suggests that a considerable percentage of users have fallen victim to phishing attacks. An April 2004 Gartner study found that 19% of the survey participants (nearly 11 million U.S. adult Internet users) had clicked on a link in a phishing e-mail, and that 3% (approximately 1.78 million U.S. adult Internet users) had provided financial or personal information to phishers. These statistics confirm and reinforce the results of a U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) survey conducted in March and April 2003:

- 1.5% of survey participants reported that in the previous year they had discovered that their personal information had been misused to open new credit accounts, take out new loans, or engage in other types of fraud.
- 2.4% of survey participants reported misuse of their information in the previous year that was limited to the misuse of one or more of their existing credit cards
or credit card account numbers.

- A total of 4.6% of survey participants indicated that they had discovered they were victims of ID theft in the previous year.

The Underground Economy

In recognition of the fact that the purchase and sale of stolen personal data is fueling the emergence of an underground Internet economy, the eleventh volume of the Symantec Internet Security Threat Report, published in March 2007, includes a new item in its assessment, namely underground economy servers, which are "used by criminals and criminal organizations to sell stolen information, typically for subsequent use in identity theft." During the second half of 2006, Symantec tracked the types of information that were exchanged via underground economy servers, and found that such information included "full identities, which typically involve government-issued identification numbers (such as social security numbers), bank account information (including passwords), personal information (such as date of birth), as well as identity verification information (such as a person's mother's maiden name)."

Perhaps even more disturbing than the types of information that are being exchanged on underground economy servers are the shockingly low advertised prices of such information. The aforementioned Symantec report notes that during the second half of 2006, U.S.-based credit cards with verification data were advertised at prices ranging from $1-$6 each, and complete identities (including U.S. bank account, credit card number, date of birth, and government-issued identity number) were advertised at a very modest $14-$18 each. The fact that these advertised underground prices are so low suggests that confidential personal information is both plentiful and easily obtained. The throwaway value of so-called confidential information should serve as a universal wake-up call about the importance of cyber security and of protecting confidential data.

From Detection to Prevention

Given the magnitude of the problem and the criticality of our confidential data, we must take all possible measures to protect ourselves from phishing e-mails and the people who send them. The most obvious strategy is to simply eliminate the phishing messages.

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Figure 7

PayPal <service@paypal-security.com>

Dear PayPal Member,

We are currently performing regular maintenance of our security measures. Your account has been randomly selected for this maintenance, and you will now be taken through a series of identity verification pages.

If you do not perform this identity verification process in the next 24 hours, your account will be suspended.

Protecting the security of your PayPal account is our primary concern, and we apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.


----

Thank you for using PayPal.
PayPal Customer Service

Figure 8

Phishing: How to Avoid Being Reeled in Continued

Unfortunately, as with spam, we cannot prevent unscrupulous individuals from sending us phishing e-mails. However, by following a few simple rules, we can virtually eliminate our risk of being reeled in by a phisher. Building on the recommended best practices discussed in the first article in this series (see “Spam—It Isn’t Just for Breakfast Any More,” in the April 2007 issue of The ATA Chronicle), the following strategies are suggested:

1. Be wary of generic account-related e-mails. As a general rule, legitimate e-mail messages sent by companies to their customers usually contain one or more pieces of personal information. For example, some companies address customers using their first and/or last names; others include partial account numbers (i.e., “accounts ending in XXXX”). By way of contrast, phishing messages generally do not contain personal information (the aforementioned “spear phishing” attacks being a notable exception). Therefore, if you receive an e-mail that contains no personal information, or which uses an impersonal greeting (such as “Dear PayPal Member” as in the screenshot in Figure 7), you should treat it with suspicion. Note, however, that the presence of personal information is not a guarantee of authenticity.

2. Do not click on links in unsolicited e-mail messages. If you receive an e-mail from a company with which you do business informing you that there is a security problem with your account and/or advising you that you need to “verify” your account information, contact the supposed sender company directly by phone to confirm that there is in fact a legitimate problem. Alternatively, open your web browser and type a trusted address for the company’s website (or select a legitimate, trusted address that you have previously bookmarked). Under no circumstances should you attempt to log on to a company’s site using a link provided in an e-mail message.

3. Do not provide confidential information that is requested via e-mail—ever. This advice should apply to any inquiry, whether by e-mail, fax, phone, SMS (text message), or any other medium. As a general rule, you should never share your user ID, password, credit card number, social security number, or other sensitive information with others unless: a) it is you who initiates the conversation; and b) you are certain that the person with whom you are speaking is an authorized representative of the company or organization, and that she or he requires the information for a legitimate purpose.

4. Beef up your security. Use a personal firewall in conjunction with a security software suite that offers anti-virus, anti-spam, anti-spyware, and anti-phishing features. Keep your operating system fully patched. Only conduct online financial transactions via secure web pages that use encryption. To tell if a page is secure, first verify that the URL begins with “https” instead of “http.” Then look for a closed padlock icon in the status bar of your browser (in the lower left corner of your screen). Click on the padlock to display the security certificate issued to the site. The name of the organization to which the security certificate has been issued should match the name of the site to which you are connected.

5. If you suspect fraud, err on the side of caution and act quickly. If you suspect that one or more of your accounts may have been compromised or that your identity may have been stolen, you should immediately log on to the Federal Trade Commission’s identity theft website, which contains instructions for filing complaints with the FTC and law enforcement as well as a list of steps that you can take to limit the damage.13

Conclusion
Phishing is a deceptive practice whereby criminals attempt to trick unsuspecting victims into revealing sensitive confidential information, which the perpetrators can then sell or use for fraudulent purposes. The scope and sophistication of phishing attacks have increased dramatically over the past several years, and this trend shows no sign

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The throwaway value of so-called confidential information should serve as a universal wake-up call about the importance of cyber security and of protecting confidential data.
of reversing itself. Our personal data is highly valuable, and we must treat it as such. A simple yet foolproof way to protect private information is to never respond to e-mail requests for such data, regardless of how realistic or seemingly plausible those requests may be.

Notes

2. According to Wikipedia, the substitution of the letters “ph” for “f” may reflect the influence of either phreaking or leetspeak; however, “[t]he popular theory that it is a portmanteau of password harvesting is an example of folk etymology.” From “Phishing.” Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phishing (March 19, 2007).


5. As of March 2007, this vulnerability does not appear to affect Firefox. However, Firefox exhibits other vulnerabilities. See Keizer, Gregg. “Firefox, IE7 Open to URL Spoof.” Computerworld (February 27, 2007). www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9011939&intsrc=hm_list


10. Symantec, 30.


12. Symantec, 32.


Stop-Phishing.com (The Anti-Phishing Group at Indiana University, 2007). www.indiana.edu/~phishing


Additional Reading


Stop-Phishing.com (The Anti-Phishing Group at Indiana University, 2007). www.indiana.edu/~phishing

The Translation of Brazilian Court Names

By Roger Kapur

I have found that there are few standard translations for Brazilian court names. Google searches will give you many possibilities for English translations of the names of Brazilian courts, and bilingual legal dictionaries often suggest highly literal translations that are neither easy to understand nor do they sound natural to the ear of the native English speaker. This article addresses the issue of finding a comprehensive solution to rendering English translations of the names of Brazilian courts by using analogies or similarities between the court systems of the U.S. and the Federal Republic of Brazil.

A Short Comparison of the U.S. and Brazilian Court Systems

At first sight, this task could seem daunting, as the legal systems of the U.S. and Brazil appear to have little in common. Brazilian courts, and bilingual legal dictionaries often suggest highly literal translations that are neither easy to understand nor do they sound natural to the ear of the native English speaker. This article addresses the issue of finding a comprehensive solution to rendering English translations of the names of Brazilian courts by using analogies or similarities between the court systems of the U.S. and the Federal Republic of Brazil.

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At first sight, a comparison of the two legal systems could seem daunting, as the legal systems of the U.S. and Brazil appear to have little in common.

Brazilian courts, and bilingual legal dictionaries often suggest highly literal translations that are neither easy to understand nor do they sound natural to the ear of the native English speaker. This article addresses the issue of finding a comprehensive solution to rendering English translations of the names of Brazilian courts by using analogies or similarities between the court systems of the U.S. and the Federal Republic of Brazil.

A Short Comparison of the U.S. and Brazilian Court Systems

At first sight, this task could seem daunting, as the legal systems of the U.S. and Brazil appear to have little in common. The U.S. legal system is based on common law, or “judge-made-law,” where judges have the authority and duty to decide what the law is when there is no other authoritative statement of the law. This system relies largely on the principle of stare decisis (precedent), and judgments are based on previous rulings made in similar cases to the one under consideration. Once an appellate court has decided what the law is, that precedent tends to bind future decisions of the same appellate court, and binds all lower courts reviewed by that appellate court, when the facts of the case are similar, until there is another authoritative statement of the law (e.g., by a legislature or higher court). America’s legal system was originally inherited from British law, and has evolved in America to suit the needs of the citizens of its 50 states and territories.

Brazil, on the other hand, has a civil law system that owes more to the Roman-Germanic legal tradition based largely on statute. Brazil’s legal system is itself inherited from Portuguese civil law, reflecting Brazil’s early status as a Portuguese colony.

One can find similarities between the two court systems, probably due to the fact that both countries are federal republics. For example, both countries have local and state courts and a system of federal courts. In both countries, courts can be differentiated from one another in terms of either tier, function, or both. Also, the courts of both countries tend to have fairly distinct jurisdiction (more so than in England, for example).

Of course, differences between the two systems do exist. For example, the Brazilian court system tends to have fewer tiers than in the U.S., but a greater number of specialized courts. Thus, the Brazilian system tends to have fewer steps on its pyramid, but they are often wider,
containing a larger number of different types of courts.

Names of Major Brazilian Courts and Analogies to the U.S. Court System

Local and State Courts: Trial courts (courts of first instance, where most civil or criminal proceedings begin) in Brazil are known as *tribunais de comarca*. They are divided into judicial districts that cover one or more cities. As trial courts are on the first rung on the Brazilian court ladder, they are similar to local (non-federal) district courts in the U.S. They could be translated as “the Court of the nth judicial district of the city of [name of Brazilian city],” where “n” is the number of the judicial district. Note that the word court is preferable here to the more literal “tribunal.” Outside of Brazil, “tribunals” are administrative courts of limited jurisdiction, so they are not very similar to *comarcas*.

Brazil’s local or municipal courts tend to have limited jurisdiction. They are usually very specialized, such as tax courts. Brazilian states do not have intermediate appellate courts (appeals from the *comarcas* normally go directly to the state supreme court).

State supreme courts usually have names like *Tribunal de Justiça do Estado de [name of Brazilian state]*, or are known more simply as the *tribunal estadual*. You will also recognize this type of court because it is where the *desembargadores*, or appeal court judges, sit in panels (multiple judges on the bench). The *Presidente* is in fact a presiding judge, who is sometimes a different person from the *Relator* (reporting judge). The name of such a court could be translated as “The Supreme Court of the State of [name of Brazilian state],” or more simply as “[Name of Brazilian state] State Supreme Court.” Note that it is best to avoid the word “Justice” in the name of this type of court in order to avoid connoting a human rights court, such as the European Court of Justice.

The Federal Courts (First Level): Federal courts are divided into an essentially three-tier system in Brazil. The first level of federal courts is grouped into *varas*, which are similar to the “circuits” of the U.S. federal system. A typical title of such a court would be *nº Vara Federal de [name of court location]*, where “nº” is the number of the circuit and the superscript “a” adjacent to the number shows that it is an ordinal. This could be translated as the “nº federal circuit court of [name of court location]” or alternatively as the “nº Brazilian District Court of the [name of court location] District.”

The Higher Courts: Appeals from the *varas* normally go to the *Superior Tribunal de Justiça* (commonly abbreviated STJ). This is the second highest court in Brazil and receives appeals (individually called *recurso especial*) from the *varas*. Strictly speaking, it can only decide upon potentially incorrect or inconsistent interpretations of Brazilian federal law by the lower courts, but not on matters of fact. It is similar in tier and function to the U.S. Courts of Appeals. A suitable translation could be “The Brazilian Court of Appeals.”

Parallel courts, such as the *Tribunal Superior de Trabalho*, *Tribunal Superior Eleitoral*, and the *Tribunal Superior Militar* also exist. As their names suggest, they deal with more specialized matters, and can be translated as “The Brazilian Labor High Court,” “The Brazilian Electoral High Court,” and “The Brazilian Military High Court,” respectively. The term “superior” in the translation of any of these courts is undesirable as it connotes the intermediate state appellate courts of the U.S., which, as mentioned above, have no analogy in Brazil.

The highest court in Brazil is the *Supremo Tribunal Federal* (commonly abbreviated STF). It is Brazil’s constitutional court (adjudicating on the decisions of other courts that potentially offend the Brazilian constitution). Its main business is to receive appeals (individually called *recurso extraordinário*) from the STJ, although it can be a court of first instance in a few isolated matters, such as petitions for *habeas corpus* and receiving letters rogatory from other countries. Not surprisingly, the name of this court is often translated as the “The Brazilian Supreme Court.”

Judges in the higher courts also sit in panels. *Ministros* are in fact judges. The higher courts have a *Presidente* and *Vice-Presidente*, who are analogous to the “Chief Justice” and “Deputy Chief Justice” of the U.S. Supreme Court and the “Chief Judge” and “Deputy Chief Judge” of the
The Translation of Brazilian Court Names Continued

U.S. Courts of Appeals. Therefore, one could use these titles for the top judges of the STF and STJ, respectively.

Find an Analogy

Any attempt to standardize the translation of Brazilian court names may at first sight appear daunting given the plethora of translations found on Google, the often over-literal translations suggested by bilingual dictionaries, or the varying opinions of bilingual lawyers on this subject. When in uncharted territory, I feel that the approach that is simplest, most logical, and easiest to understand is to find analogies in the country of the target language and use these to derive translation terms for the source language. Fortunately, many analogies do exist between the courts of Brazil and the U.S., and this makes such a task considerably less onerous than it might at first appear to be.

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ATA Translation Company Division
8th Annual Conference

Deep in the Heart of Translation Trends

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

Highlights:

- Thursday evening reception and banquet
- Two days (Friday and Saturday) of informative educational sessions tailored to the needs and concerns of translation company owners and managers
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As an intern at a Seattle-based company specializing in German↔English translation, I had an opportunity to conduct some informal research on translation expansion (the increase in the word count inherent to translation from German into English) and what is commonly referred to as the “reduction factor” (the percentage by which a translation can be reduced in the normal editing process). This article presents statistics gathered in this research and analyzes the potential impact on translation companies and freelance translators working with this language combination.

It is important to emphasize that the results of this particular analysis apply only to the German into English language combination. The “inflation” of word count is characteristic of translation from German into English (and presumably also into Romance languages). The “expansion factor” does not occur when translating from Romance languages into English. What does occur when translating from, say, French or Italian into English, however, is a deflation of the word count and usually the overall file size. That being said, it is hoped that this informal analysis will prove informative for those working in other language combinations.

**Findings**

Research statistics were compiled from approximately 100 translation projects from German into English of high-level prose for a large nonprofit organization in Germany. Topics included education, civics, politics, philanthropy, and corporate social responsibility. The documents were all intended for publication, and required high register, idiomatic language flow, and readability. Since these documents were written for an educated audience, they presented many difficult translation challenges.

We gathered the following figures for each individual project:
German into English Expansion and Reduction Factors Continued

• Word count for the source text;
• Word count for the translation as delivered to our company by an experienced freelance translator; and
• Final word count (after editing for style, checking for accuracy, and proofreading a final copy).

Editor’s Reduction Factor

Our study shows that good editing reduces the word count of a German into English target text by an average of 2%. However, if the translator’s expansion factor is very high to begin with (30% or more), the editing necessary to make the text smooth and idiomatic might result in a reduction of almost 15%. Here is a short sample text to illustrate the reduction that can take place during the editing process:

Source Text = 50 Words
Parallel dazu werden im Sinne einer Reformwerkstatt konkrete Modellprojekte umgesetzt, etwa zum europäischen Performancevergleich und zur Zertifizierung der ärztlichen Versorgung. Ziel ist es, erfolgreiche Modelle aus dem Ausland nach Deutschland zu transferieren, Transparenz und Qualität in der Versorgung zu erhöhen sowie die deutsche Versorgungslage vergleichbar und Defizite analysierbar zu machen.

Translator’s Version = 69 Words
(38% Expansion)
At the same time, concrete model projects are going be executed that are somewhat along the lines of a “reform workshop.” For example, they might involve work on European performance comparison and for the certification of medical care. Our goal is to transfer successful foreign models into Germany, to increase transparency and quality in health care, and to make the German health sector comparable and its deficits more analyzable.

Edited Version = 60 Words
(20% Final Expansion with an 18% Reduction Factor)
As a reform workshop, the Foundation is, at the same time, planning to execute specific pilot projects on, for example, European performance comparisons and on certifying healthcare. Our goal is to adopt successful foreign models in Germany, to increase the transparency and quality of healthcare, and to make it possible to compare the German health sector and analyze its deficits.

Reducing the word count while improving the quality of a translation would no longer have a negative impact on profit.

We then calculated percentages for the translator’s expansion factor (subtracting the source text word count from the target text word count, and dividing the result by the source text word count), the expansion factor of the final version as delivered to the end client, and the reduction factor (subtracting the final expansion factor from the translator’s expansion factor).

Translator’s Expansion Factor

Translators handed in translations with expansion factors ranging anywhere from 3% to 36%. The average expansion was 15%, which seems to be pretty standard for translation from German into English. This was significant because we had long suspected a correlation between good translation and a low expansion factor (the lower the expansion factor, the higher the quality of the translation), and this study seems to have confirmed our theory. Although we never felt that translators were “padding” their translations, we suspected that some of them were not taking the time to polish their work.
spends more time, and makes less profit on poor translations.

Of course a reduction factor of 11 percentage points is extreme, and definitely a peak value. But even the average reduction factor of 2% adds up, and it represents a considerably lower profit margin over the long run.

This information would support the argument that, at least for the German into English language combination, it makes more sense to base fees on the source text word count than on the target text word count. By doing so, a translation company’s profit margins would no longer be affected by high expansion factors. Reducing the word count while improving the quality of a translation would no longer have a negative impact on profit. As a result, translation companies would no longer be penalized for editing down while upping the quality.

If a translation company decides to restructure its fee schedule to charge by the word count of the source text, it would naturally have to adjust its per word fee accordingly. Given that our research found that the average expansion factor is 15%, this would mean adding 15% to the target-text-based fee when establishing the new source-text-based fee. Translators’ fees would, of course, also be raised 15% per word.

Translation companies would no longer be penalized for editing down while upping the quality.

Impact on Translators

Paying attention to expansion factors can function as a means of quality control for freelance translators. If your expansion factor for a specific German into English project greatly exceeds 15% of the source text, this could be an indication that the translation is not as well written as it should be and that more self-editing is necessary.

Given that most freelance translators in the U.S. who translate from German into English currently charge by the word count of the target text, decreasing their final word count by polishing the text means spending more time on a text, but charging less in the end. So why, we might ask, would they want to do this? One reason would be to stay competitive. Obviously, if high expansion factors are an indicator of lower quality, and if translation companies have a lower profit margin when they pay for translations with a high expansion factor, then quality-oriented translation companies will not want to work with translators who have consistently high expansion factors.

Conclusion

A shift to fee structures based on source text word counts is just good business. Due to the fact that thorough editing reduces word counts, the practice of charging based on target text word counts penalizes translators and companies who take the extra time to polish their work. Basing rates on the source text encourages practices that focus on high quality in the final text delivered to the client. In addition, such structures would eliminate much of the ambiguity involved in quoting prices to prospective clients when bidding on large projects. A close look at word counts and expansion and reduction factors can be the impetus for changes that benefit both providers and users of translation services.

ATA Scholarly Monograph Series Vol. XIII Perspectives on Localization

Edited by Keiran J. Dunne

Published in recognition of the growing importance of localization.

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This month’s column is condensed from an exchange of e-mails on a subject that makes every freelancer’s blood run cold: an unexpected complaint about poor quality.

Dear Business Smarts:

I recently delivered a translation to a new client who, in turn, was acting as intermediary for her own ultimate client. The subject area was familiar, I applied all my usual quality control procedures, and I had no doubts about the quality of my work. This morning, to my horror, I received an e-mail from the intermediary saying that, according to her client, “the quality of your translation was extremely poor. Our client, who is a lawyer, is very dissatisfied. I will need a strong argument from you to defend your translation.” I immediately consulted my e-mail records to make sure I had not sent the wrong text, and checked the translation itself for obvious errors; everything looked fine. I have been working in this field for a number of years and thought I was consistently providing excellent work. What should I do now?

Aghast in San Diego

Dear Aghast:

The first thing to do is not to panic. Because you are convinced of the quality of your work, you can confidently address the situation. Contact your intermediary or the ultimate client if that is possible, and ask to be told the exact nature of the problem. Explain that you work very hard to deliver outstanding work, and politely request specific instances of dissatisfaction. If the issue is merely a misunderstanding—a house style or particular set of terminology that you were unaware of, or inappropriate formatting—it can easily be remedied. Refrain from offering a rebate right away, particularly if no one has asked for it.

Update 1 (a week later):

I contacted my intermediary, but she could provide no details. She has sent several messages to her own client asking for details about his dissatisfaction, but has heard nothing. She says she has even sent me a check in fullpayment for the translation, although she has not received payment from her own client.

Update 2 (two months later):

Having heard nothing from my intermediary or from the ultimate client, with whom I had requested direct contact in order to discuss the translation, I received the following message today: “I have good news! The client finally agreed that the translation from German into English was acceptable, and sent me a check in full payment for your translation assignment.”

What a relief! But what exactly was going on here?

Dear Aghast:

Incidents like this happen just often enough that translators and interpreters need to be on their guard. Unsubstantiated objections to the “quality” of a translation frequently arise from some error or misunderstanding on the part of the client, who then attempts to deflect blame onto the translator. The tip-off in this case is that the ultimate client never responded to repeated requests for details, and in the end had to admit that the “poor quality” was okay after all. If you had not defended yourself, and had negotiated a reduced payment or some other form of compensation for the “problem,” you would have been the loser. As it happened, you had enough confidence in your own abilities and performance to demand proof of your alleged shortcomings, and finally prevailed when those shortcomings turned out not to exist. The unwavering support of the agency in this case backed you up considerably.

The lesson to be learned here is that in order to assert yourself, you must first acquire confidence. The hard work you put into developing expertise in your language combination and subject fields will pay off when your capabilities are challenged. The key to confronting this type of situation is to remain professional at all times.

 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 information in this column was compiled by members of ATA’s Business Practices Education Committee for the benefit of ATA members. This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors. Send your questions about the business of translation and interpretation to the ATA Chronicle—BPEC Q&A: 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314; Fax: (703) 683-6122; E-mail: businesspractices@atanet.org. Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.
With an eye on the sixth
Rugby World Cup tournament—most of which will be played in France this year—a dynamic chamber of commerce and municipal authorities from two mid-sized towns in Britain and France joined forces in 2006 to produce a unique bilingual ode to the sport’s founder, William Webb Ellis.

Movers and shakers behind the document, a cleverly folded color brochure in French and English, include an energetic translator whose company is a member of the Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce. Elected director of the Chamber by the Rugby Committee in July 2004, Gisèle Pellegrini, a member of the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), immediately set about investigating ways of promoting tourism.

Illustrious names linked to Rugby include that of William Webb Ellis, an athletic youngster who attended Rugby School, where he was credited with “inventing rugby” by grabbing the ball and running away with it. First written down in 1845, these rules now form the basis of a game played in 90-odd countries.

Further research revealed that Webb Ellis was buried in Menton in southern France. Herself a native of that region, Pellegrini leveraged the coincidence with a quick trip to the French city, where she visited Webb Ellis’s tomb and learned that both a street and the local rugby club carried his name. Surely there was some mileage to be gained by linking up the two towns, she mused. The challenge was all the more timely in that 2006 would be the 200th anniversary of Webb Ellis’s birth, and the 2007 Rugby World Cup tournament would be played primarily in France.

Others agreed and the ball was soon rolling: rugby and other associations were enthusiastic, and the Economic Development unit of Rugby Borough Council lent its support. Writing got underway, with ITI member Nathalie Clergues brought in for the French version. French Rugby Federation and International Rugby Board (IRB) logos were added. The IRB also contributed a photo of the Webb Ellis Trophy presented to World Cup winners.

To keep abreast of terminology, the team subscribed to the French Rugby Federation magazine, where an article described plans for a special “rugby train” that would travel through France from May to October 2006 to promote the tournament. And another opportunity knocked: at the train’s August 17 stop in Menton, Councillor Tina Avis, mayor of the town of Rugby, was on hand to celebrate, with Gisèle Pellegrini serving as interpreter and coordinator. And the train pulled out of the Menton station with 2,500 copies of the brochure on board for distribution at future stops.

Rugby’s Economic Development Manager Michael Lenihan picks up the story: “In December 2006, 55 rugby players and 15 Rotary Club sponsors from Menton came to our city to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Webb Ellis’s birth with two matches on the Close, the playing field in front of the school.”

It was an emotional affair, he told the Onionskin, with both players and fans acutely aware of the historical significance of the games—this was the actual site where a sport followed by millions had originated.

The matches were followed by a dinner for 150, including representatives of the IRB, the Rugby Football Union, and Rugby School itself. Once again, Ms. Pellegrini interpreted.

“For some time we had been looking at how we might cement our relationship with French partners,” says Lenihan, who describes the brochure project as a catalyst. He views the Rugby-Menton link as a promising direct connection for a town with a strategic location near rail, motorway, and airports. For the language services community, too, the project illustrates the advantages of taking a proactive approach and bringing together dynamic partners across borders—win-win, both on and off the playing field.

With thanks to Bob Blake, Sylvie Roder, and Elke Ronan.

The Onionskin is a client education column launched by the ITI Bulletin (a publication of the U.K.’s Institute of Translation and Interpreting) in 1996. Comments and leads for future columns are very welcome; please include full contact details. Contact: chrisdurban@noos.fr or fax +33 1 43 87 70 45.

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At this point in my life, I think I am a pretty good driver. I must admit that I have received my share of speeding tickets here in the U.S., and to my continued surprise, trying to speak to the officer with a thick German accent has never really helped. However, I am glad—my wife would use the word “lucky”—to say that so far I am accident-free. I am not sure why my wife is so negative about my driving, because she was not even with me during one of my most embarrassing driving experiences.

Not long after I received my driver’s license, I rented a car with a manual transmission while I was on a business trip. I love driving with a stick shift, but the problem with this car was that I did not know how to put it into reverse. I did not realize until much later that you had to pull up a little lock-out ring right under the shift knob to switch into reverse. Being a guy did not help. I did not even consider asking anyone for help or clarification. So, believe it or not, I drove that car for two days in heavy city traffic without ever shifting into reverse (no parallel parking for me, baby!).

As ridiculous as my experience sounds, this is exactly what many of us do with our translation environment (TE) tools (formerly known as computer-assisted translation, or CAT tools). We use the translation memory component brilliantly because it is easy and does not require much intervention on our side. But the finer, more intricate part of those TE tools—the terminology component—is typically left by the wayside. Just like pulling the lock-out ring in my embarrassing car episode, we have to do something manually by actually selecting the terms and sending them to our termbase. Just as I am now embarrassed of my (former!) driving shortcomings, you should feel equally embarrassed if you do not make the effort to discover the many benefits of a fine-tuned termbase.

Let’s not even go into the many qualities that make a termbase so powerful, such as consistency, increased translation speed, and quality assurance, to mention just a few. Instead, consider this: How often do you have a match for a whole segment (translation unit) from your translation memory? If your text is repetitive you may have five or six matches throughout a document, but usually it is not even that many. How often are terms or expressions repeated within a text—20, 50, 100 times? And while you could use the so-called concordance function that many tools offer to search for that term in the translation memory database, you would still be manually pulling up the “lock-out ring” 50 times rather than just once. With a souped-up termbase, that tedious process takes care of itself.

I have been talking about terminology management in my newsletter recently, and I have received some very interesting responses from readers. One of these respondents claimed that while terminology management may be good for languages with little flexion, it can be a nightmare for languages with a lot of flexion (think Slavic languages) or agglutinative languages (such as Turkish or Finnish). True, we do have to adjust our strategies to the languages that we translate, such as sending not just the infinitive or nominative forms to the terminology database, but also various inflected forms. But this is only feasible if the tools we use make that process as painless as possible, and make the entering of term pairs into termbases truly a one-click affair. Some tools already offer this, while others are still a bit challenged in this aspect. Another challenge for the tool makers is to strengthen their fuzzy (or even morphological) search features of their terminology component.

Another reader’s response was related to text types. He pointed out that for some text types, such as technical, legal, or medical, terminological consistency is a necessity. For other types of texts, such as literary, journalistic, or marketing, the use of classic TE tools becomes unnecessary or even burdensome. I completely agree. I also think that the “techies” within the translation community probably need to communicate more clearly. When we are talking about the benefits of translation technology, we should make sure to specifically differentiate between the more literary genres and others.

Still, for most translation professionals in most languages with most TE tools, the terminology component remains a sorely underused mechanism. I am pleased to say that I now regularly throw my hot 1991 Lincoln Continental into reverse at will. Can you say the same of your terminology usage?
Over the weekend of April 13–15, 40 Certification Program language chairs, workgroup representatives, Certification Committee members, and local graders came together in Alexandria, Virginia. The Certification Program sponsors this activity every spring as an opportunity for policy development, grader training, and face-to-face discussions about changes in an ever-evolving program. These individuals meet twice a year: approximately 70% of the graders come to ATA’s Annual Conference and attend grader training sessions there, and the spring language chair meeting follows in April or May. We try to organize the spring meeting to coincide with the ATA Board meeting, but in some years, like this one, we cannot coordinate dates between the two groups. This year, instead of a joint meeting, ATA President Marian S. Greenfield attended our Friday night and Saturday meetings as a special guest.

Sessions went from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and again on Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Topics ranged from discussions of specific grading issues and translation instructions on passages to the addition of a new interactive online discussion and training site for ATA graders. The training site will allow us to reach graders who are not able to attend ATA’s Annual Conference, and will serve to keep all program participants updated on grading issues and policy and procedure changes.

The Certification Committee manages to meet twice at the Annual Conference and before and after the language chair meeting. This is a time for different committee task forces to report on their individual projects. At the April meeting, we had a report from the task force reviewing the current process for establishing new language combinations and dealing with the issues of sustainability in older language combinations.

There was a report from the task force working on the development of a new grading rubric to be used across language combinations. And we heard from the passage selection task force, which works to maintain consistency in choosing passages with the appropriate style and length, a similar difficulty level, and with appropriate challenges across language combinations.

The April meeting challenged us all as bad storms swept across the U.S., canceling and rerouting flights. But all invited graders arrived and were able to make it out of Washington, DC, in spite of high winds here and flooding farther up the East Coast. The meeting symbolized the spirit of professionalism and dedication that graders demonstrate daily to ATA’s Certification Program.

What Happens Behind the Scenes

ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

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September 30, 2007
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Registration Deadline: September 7, 2007

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Registration Deadline: July 27, 2007

Indiana
Indianapolis
June 16, 2007
Registration Deadline: June 1, 2007

Iowa
Des Moines
July 1, 2007
Registration Deadline: June 15, 2007

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

New Mexico
Albuqueque
July 14, 2007
Registration Deadline: June 29, 2007

Ohio
Cincinnati
August 18, 2007
Registration Deadline: July 24, 2007

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

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

Brazil
São Paulo
June 16, 2007
Registration Deadline: June 1, 2007

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

Argentina
Buenos Aires
July 7, 2007
Registration Deadline: June 22, 2007
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.

DOVR

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 Certification Exam Information
Continued

Exam Information

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• Mary Gawlicki, president of Corporate Translations, Inc., was recently chosen as one of the Hartford Business Journal’s “8 Remarkable Women in Business in 2007.” Corporate Translations, Inc., also announced the expansion of its offices in Hartford, Connecticut, and Chicago, Illinois.

• Eriksen Translations has been included on three annual lists compiled by DiversityBusiness.com that showcase “the growing power of minority- and women-owned businesses in the American marketplace”: Top 100 Woman-Owned Businesses; Top 100 Diversity-Owned Businesses; and Top 100 Small Businesses in New York State.

• Mark Lancaster, chief executive officer of SDL International, was named “Technology CEO of the Year” at the U.K. Technology Innovation and Growth 2007 Awards in March.

• The Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association has changed its name to the International Medical Interpreters Association. See www.mmia.org for more information.

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**Member News**

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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**Upcoming Events**

- **June 16–17, 2007**
  ATA Translation Tools Seminar
  Denver, Colorado
  www.atanet.org/pd/tools

- **June 22–24, 2007**
  Japanese Association of Translators
  18th Annual International Japanese English Translation Conference
  Bath, England
  http://ijet.jat.org/ijet-18

- **July 12–15, 2007**
  International Association of Forensic Linguists
  8th Biennial Conference on Forensic Linguistics/Language & Law
  Seattle, Washington
  www.ialfl.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 & Interpreters
  8th Annual Regional Conference
  Bellevue, Nebraska
  www.natihq.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 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
Korean Business Dictionary

Editors:
Morry Sofer (General Editor)
Peter Yoon (Korean Editor)

Publisher:
Schreiber Publishing
schreiberlanguage.com

Publication date:
2006

Number of pages and entries:
174 pages (approximately 5,200 entries)

ISBN:
0-88400-320-5

Price:
Schreiber: $24.95
Amazon.com: $18.96 (new); $12.84 (used)

Available from:
amazon.com
allbookstores.com
bestprices.com
schreiberlanguage.com

Reviewed by:
Chol W. Kim

I suppose nobody opens this type of publication for fun. A simple paperback, the Korean Business Dictionary is strictly a utilitarian reference for business professionals and translators. Although the typeface and legibility are good and the paper quality is fine, other than a brief one-page introduction, the dictionary does not have any table of contents, appendices, footnotes, tables, or illustrations. In other words, it is strictly no frills. Alas, the overall quality falls far too short to be called professional. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the Korean Business Dictionary will not have a place on a professional translator’s bookshelf.

More Glossary Than Dictionary

Although the title proclaims it to be a dictionary, the Korean Business Dictionary is really a simple glossary of business terms. To be called a dictionary, a reference of this sort must provide some explanation or definition and at least pay a passing nod to the etymology of the entry word or term listed, but the Korean Business Dictionary does not even attempt to make any such effort. It simply lists an English term and then an equivalent Korean term. In its kindest mode, it provides the context of the term within parentheses in italic—for example, “keyboard (computer),” although, in this case, one is hard pressed to imagine any other context for this particular word in a business glossary, unless one is perhaps a musician.

Lack of Annotation

The complete lack of annotation is especially disconcerting in view of the following quotation from the introduction: “Many of the English business terms in this dictionary are very American-specific. As such, they do not always have equivalent terms in Korean and, therefore, are explained in some detail.” What explanation in what detail? There is none.

Format of Entries

Another peculiarity of the Korean Business Dictionary one needs to become accustomed to is that an English word is listed first, with the equivalent Korean word listed on the line below, rather than side by side in the customary two-column format. It is somewhat confusing at first because the Korean Business Dictionary does use a two-column format, just not to separate languages.

Lack of Korean into English Entries

One serious shortcoming I have found is the lack of Korean into English entries. In other words, this is a one-way glossary of “from English into Korean” only. Considering this is a “one to one” glossary, it is hard to imagine why the Korean into English part is missing. After all, we are living in the computer age, are we not? It would have been rather a simple matter of sorting the list by Korean, which should have been easy enough. Surely the authors would not expect professional translators and businessmen to do one-way translations and/or transactions only.

Terminology

Although there are relatively few typos (both English and Korean) throughout this work, which is a credit to the typesetter and proofreaders, there are still some mistakes. I suppose this is the result of having separate proofreaders for English and Korean. One example is “pecuniary,” which is translated into Korean as (precedence of money) instead of (of money), although both words are valid in
There are, however, some words that are not quite correctly translated into Korean, including:

“Baud rate (computer)” is translated as 데이터 처리 속도 (data processing speed). It should be translated as 데이터 전송 속도 (data transmitting speed).

“Landscape (computer)” is translated as 가로 방향 (lengthwise), which is the opposite of the correct term, 가로 방향 (width). Again, this seems to indicate the use of a separate Korean proofreader who only checked the validity of the Korean words.

“Consideration” is translated as 고려 사항 (items to be considered), which is not wrong, but somewhat odd in a business glossary. It should have been translated as 대가 (price or payment).

It should be noted that the Korean Business Dictionary does list some obscure words that could make a translator sweat, such as “Boulewarism,” with the correct translation albeit without context. It would have been kinder if the authors had deigned to specify that this is a word used only in a labor negotiations context.

**Overall Evaluation**

With all the nitpickings aside, the content of the Korean Business Dictionary does reflect honest efforts of, surely, a working translator who did his best with limited, as it were, resources in a rapidly changing field. To a translator or an interpreter who, at times, would kill for a specialty reference book, the Korean Business Dictionary can be a real savior.

As one of the first of its kind published in this country, the Korean Business Dictionary should have a significant impact within the rather small community of Korean→English translators and interpreters. The glaring paucity of reference books has been a long-standing bane in this community. Even with all its quirks and shortcomings, the Korean Business Dictionary can serve as a basis for overcoming such obstacles.

Overall, I would rate the Korean Business Dictionary as a good reference. As the introduction states, “at least it is a start.” One hopes that the Korean Business Dictionary will be revised soon with Korean into English entries and, hopefully at a minimum, some annotations, if not etymologies, so that it can rightfully claim its title as a dictionary.

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**New Certified Members**

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

- **English into Polish**
  - Katarzyna Jankowski
  - Villa Park, IL

- **French into English**
  - Jessica S. Brumley
  - Denver, CO

- **German into English**
  - Barbara Bubel
  - Las Cruces, NM

- **Spanish into English**
  - Lee F. Wilson
  - Round Rock, TX

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**Active Membership Review**

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

- **Active**
  - Mahmoud Dabbagh
  - Rochester, NY
I reviewed the Russian version of this dictionary for the October 2006 issue of The ATA Chronicle. There are several differences and similarities between these two dictionaries. The most notable difference is the addition of an into-English section. Like the Russian dictionary, this one also provides terms in the computer field, and they are specifically marked as such. It also claims to bring users a sorely needed modern business dictionary in order to address the rapidly changing financial world of the 21st century.

Its focus is on American business concepts, and the introduction notes that where Italian terms are not generally available for the American English term in question, a full explanation in Italian is given (e.g., modified union shop, fill or kill order, orange goods). Also, because of the more complete English into Italian entries, the dictionary seems to be mainly suited for native Italian translators. Its intended scope is to cover “many areas of business,” including banking, insurance (although neither “deductible” nor its Italian equivalent franchigia assicurativa is included), real estate, export-import (although there is no listing for “trade finance,” and “export” has one Italian entry and “import” has two), stock market, etc. The introduction also includes a healthy disclaimer to “not look upon all the Italian terms herein included as cast in stone.”

Content

This dictionary presents terms in a single column in alphabetical order with headwords in bold followed on the next line by the translated equivalents. Related collocations are separated into separate terms. Thus, there are individual entries for “legal entity,” “legal investment,” “legal list,” “legal monopoly,” etc.

A little extra editing would have prevented such errors as using plural Italian equivalents for some entries (monetary item [partite monetarie, articoli monetari]; monetary reserve [riserve monetarie] and singular terms for others (monetary standard [sistema monetario]). This inconsistency also occurs on the Italian into English side.

Very little context information is given other than to separate nouns from verbs. Thus, the term “credit” in English is followed by credito, accredito, accreditamento, and the verb entries are dar credito, prestare fede, accreditare, bonificare, registrare in avere, mettere nell’attivo. My standard Italian business dictionary is Livio Codeluppi’s Dizionario di Economia Banca & Borsa. Although not perfect, it is quite complete, and as a comparison, the English term “credit” covers nearly three full pages with large numbers of contextual clues (e.g., accredito [amount credited]; saldo creditori [credit balance]; avere [creditor side]; fido, finanziamento, prestito [loan, line of credit]). Another example of this is the English word “release,” which is followed without contextual clues by rilascio, liberazione, scarico, svincolo, and rinuncia, but contextual clues are given for abbandono (di un diritto), rimissione (di debiti, tasse, etc.). “Interest” is followed by vastly different meanings of this word in Italian with no context-specific information or examples (e.g., interesse, utile, provento, remunerazione, partecipazione, etc.)

I checked several Italian definitions for those English terms that generally do not have exact Italian equivalents (e.g., featherbedding, factoring, leveraged buyout). These seem to be complete and accurate, and are certainly helpful for the Italian-speaking user.

Since I spend most of my day translating Italian financial docu-
ments, I thought I would check some of the key terms that I encounter. I first looked on the English into Italian side, since that is the dictionary’s stronger section. Much to my surprise, there is no listing for “receivables” or “payables.” “Intangible assets” is listed, but the most common equivalent (immobilizzazioni immateriali) is not. Instead, it shows beni immateriali, attività invisibili (!), attivo intangibile (avviamento, brevetti, etc.). There is no entry for “equity investment,” but under “equity” is the Italian equivalent (partecipazione) used for this concept. I am pleased to see the widely used equivalent for “prepaid expense” (risconto attivo) and “accrued liabilities” (ratei passivi).

Unfortunately, the dictionary falls into an obvious false cognate trap by listing the equivalent for “balance sheet” as bilancio annuale, bilancio d’esercizio, and also stato patrimoniale e conto profitti e perdite; rendiconto annuale. The most widely used term for “balance sheet” is stato patrimoniale (alone, without the addition of conto profitti e perdite, which is an Italianized version of “profit and loss account”), while the equivalents given in Italian really correspond to the broader concept of “financial statements.” The dictionary’s listing for “financial statements” is also not entirely correct. It includes bilancio e conto economico, bilancio e allegati, rendiconto annuale e stato finanziario. The term bilancio alone (without conto economico, or “income statement” in English) is typically used for this concept.

Since this dictionary purports to give us modern terminology for today’s financial world, I checked several obvious entries (credit default swap, interest rate swap, derivative, securitization), but none of these were listed. I was also surprised to see no entries for the International Accounting Standard terms that are now so prevalent in European financial analysis (impairment loss, fair value, disposal groups held for sale, etc.).

A good deal of financial slang is included (e.g., crown jewels, huckster, Dutch auction, kiting, goldbrick), and the Italian equivalents for many of these are also listed in the Italian into English section, even though it is unlikely that a term such as gioelli della corona (the Italian for “crown jewels”) would appear in an Italian document. In fact, gioelli della corona is listed as the first entry under the letter “I” on the Italian into English side, since the entry erroneously includes the plural article “i”.

I also took a look at the Italian into English side in greater detail. The simple yet widely used word credito has a single equivalent: “credit.” The Codeluppi dictionary I mentioned earlier has two full pages on this entry. To be fair, Sofer’s dictionary does include separate entries for credito a rata costante, credito al consumatore, credito commerciale, and credito d’imposta. It lists only one entry for immobilizzazione: capital assets. This term, in combinations such as immobilizzazioni immateriali, immobilizzazioni materiali, immobilizzazioni finanziarie, and others, is the backbone of the non-current asset section of the balance sheet.

There is a long list of entries for various combinations of the word titolo (security). Unfortunately, they are separated into two distinct categories, those starting with the plural term (titoli), such as titoli azionari privilegiati, titoli difensivi, etc., followed several terms later by those starting with the singular term (titolo), such as titolo a breve termine, titolo al portatore, and titolo di debito.

**Overall Evaluation**

Due to its rather limited, and at times inaccurate, content, this dictionary should at best be seen as a supplement to more standard, comprehensive financial dictionaries, such as Codeluppi or the excellent Garzanti Business English Dictionary, which is regularly updated (last update was in 2005) and also includes lengthy explanations of American and English financial terms that do not have a good Italian equivalent, and definitions of those terms in Italian that do not have a good English equivalent. In addition, Codeluppi and Garzanti are available on CD-ROM. In today’s fast-paced environment, taking the time to leaf through a paper dictionary is quickly becoming a luxury of the past, and is only worth it if the dictionary is truly an excellent reference.

One of this dictionary’s greatest advantages is its low price and wide availability in the U.S. Thus, for those translators who have a passing curiosity in the financial world, but do not want to take the time or invest the funds in one of the standard Italian financial dictionaries, the Italian Business Dictionary may be a good alternative.
The Northeast Ohio Translators Association (NOTA) was founded in 1977, established itself as a nonprofit corporation in Ohio in 1978, and became an ATA chapter in 1979. NOTA membership is open to anyone working in the translation or interpretation industry.

NOTA promotes professional development and competence through workshops, seminars, and its newsletter. NOTA also assists area businesses, industry, and institutions in locating competent translators and interpreters. Members maintain a support network for mutual assistance and cooperation, terminology exchange, and continued professional development in Northeast Ohio and western Pennsylvania.

Benefits and Activities
Professional Development: NOTA's close relationship with Kent State University's Institute for Applied Linguistics allows the association to offer its members access to some of the finest translation resources and seminars in the country. The association also hosts an annual meeting.

E-mail Notifications: Members receive periodic announcements via e-mail from NOTA's executive committee regarding upcoming events.

Quick Facts
- Acronym: NOTA
- Established: 1977
- ATA Chapter Since: 1979
- Area Served: Ohio and western Pennsylvania
- Website: www.notatranslators.org

Newsletter: NOTA Bene is published quarterly. The newsletter is also available online.

Membership Directory: Published annually, the directory lists all individual and corporate members. It is distributed free of charge to all members, as well as to local libraries, government agencies, hospitals, law firms, and businesses.

Members-only Listserver: Circulates news regarding translation and interpreting.

Certification Opportunities: NOTA sponsors an ATA certification exam each year for its members as well as other translators in the region who are interested in demonstrating their translation competence.

Online Translator/Interpreter Database Search: Search for members’ contact information by language combination, first/last name, or company name.

Website: NOTA's website contains: general information on the association and how to become a member; the association's bylaws; a searchable member database; the latest version of NOTA Bene in PDF format; tips for clients; links to professional and terminology resources; and event listings.

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.

Translation: Getting it Right

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

*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).
There might have been a fourth consecutive review of a movie having to do with our profession for you in this column (assuming you like that sort of writing) if the Translation Inquirer had any taste for violent movies. But he does not, so The Interpreter, with Sean Penn and Nicole Kidman, released in April 2005, will not be reviewed or described here. I have not seen it.

Interpreters, I think, lead more interesting professional lives than translators, but the overwrought, “shoot ‘em up, blow ‘em up” world of the Hollywood crime movie has little to offer this columnist, even if it features an interpreter or two. I associate all that I know of this particular genre with a brief celluloid sequence I may have seen somewhere. In the scene, a muscular man immaculately dressed in a black three-piece suit flips head over heels while crashing through a glass door, lands flat on his expensive Italian shoes, and uses both hands (what a sissy!) to shoot a pistol and hit the bad guy exactly where he wants him to be hit. Oh, yes, and not a hair on the guy’s head is out of place as this is happening.

New Queries

(E-F 5-07/1) It seems that the following phrase deals with the trendiness of clothing fashions: Washed canvas is a more worn-in fabric than the traditional work cotton duck material. The words in bold print puzzled a gentleman on Lantra-L. Please help him with the French.

(E-G 5-07/2) In the ever-expanding, ever-refining world of finance, specifically online securities trading, what is cross-product margining, and how can it be rendered into German? Here is a bit of a hint: [name of platform supplier] is a multi-product trading platform which supports cross-product margining for any margin-based investments made in the different products supported. Yikes! What is being discussed here?

(E-I 5-07/3) Good Italian is needed for the medical term crossing needle, and the following pair of context sentences ought to clarify it quite a bit: A new application is to guide the creation of an anastomosis between the coronary artery and vein, where alignment of the crossing needle is crucial.... Detection of the ultrasound beam by the "venous" catheter confirms alignment and a nitinol crossing needle makes a channel from artery to vein. What is it?

(F-E 5-07/4) A Lantra-L user was translating a book about the changes over the centuries in the experience of reading, beginning with papyrus and now with hypertext. The phrase “composition foisonnante” is understandable to her, but rendering it into English is a problem. Example: “L’hypertexte devra doc soigner sa maquette afin de créer l’équivalent typographique d’une composition foisonnante.” What about this?

(F-E 5-07/5) The key trouble word here is “remplissage,” and it appears in a summary of an annual report where “banc” refers to “banc d’essais” (test beds) as being the main activity of the company: “Le chiffre d’affaires 2005 est important compte tenu d’un remplissage élevé des bancs sur l’exercice (> 90%), lié à un fort niveau de demande dans le domaine des essais et à une bonne diversification des clients.” Try figuring it out if you can.

(G-E 5-07/6) The context in which “Beanspruchungen” is used is in the following sentence left a Lantra-L user wondering: “Während des Transports soll die Verpackung verhindern, dass die Ware übermäßigen Beanspruchungen ausgesetzt wird.” What fits best in English?

(G-E 5-07/7) One architectural detail that gave pause to a Lantra-L denizen was “Treppenaue” (literally the eye of a stairwell), describing the location of the elevator shaft with stairs winding around it in corkscrew fashion. Is there a specific term in English for this configuration?

(G-E 5-07/8) The difference between a “Kraftfahrzeugbrief” and a “Fahrzeugbrief” caused grief for a Lantra-L member, who was busy translating a description of a vehicle in which these two documents have different numbers, but refer somehow to the same vehicle.

(I-E 5-07/9) In a context of “smaltimento idrocarburi fluidi di un relitto,” a ProZ member asks about the term “locale pompe,” as found in: “…rimozione degli idrocarburi ‘migranti’ presenti nel locale pompe contro il cielo della coperta (deck) e contro il cielo del copertino superiore.”
Evidently the context is architecture and building structures, not contracts as was stated, for this query in ProZ: “wypusty wewnętrzne,” as in “rury wewnętrzne, parapety, kolumny, słupy, wypusty wewnętrzne,” i inne tego typu elementy—będą stanowiły podstawę do pomniejszania powierzchni lokalu.” Is that helpful enough to ensure a solution?

All I have is an English or German?

Here, from ProZ, is a English or German?

enough to get someone started on the contracts as was stated, for this query in ProZ: “wypusty wewnętrzne,” as in “rury wewnętrzne, parapety, kolumny, słupy, wypusty wewnętrzne,” i inne tego typu elementy—będą stanowiły podstawę do pomniejszania powierzchni lokalu.” Is that helpful enough to ensure a solution?

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Thanks to all of you for your contributions. It is the Translation Inquirer’s fault, not yours, that we are already four days into the month, and he really should have submitted this by the first.

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

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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.
Because the Bible is the most translated work in Western culture, it is only natural that there have been many references to biblical translations in these pages, including two entire columns: “God’s Secretaries” in July 2004, and “It Ain’t Necessarily So” in March 2005. A recent book, Translation—Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader, edited by Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinsson (Oxford University Press, 2006), hereinafter called W&E, includes much material on biblical translation (and, of course, also much material about other translations) and gives me an excuse to revisit the subject. All subsequent page references in this column are to W&E.

Obviously, no one today can read the Bible except in a translation of one sort or another. Even native speakers of modern Greek and Hebrew require at least partial translations because the modern languages are not the same as the ancient ones. However, some biblical words are untranslatable because their definitions are unknown. And even clearly defined words create passages with ambiguous meanings when used poetically or metaphorically. Therefore, the concept of “inerrancy” is simply not relevant for a biblical translation.

Consider, appropriately enough for this journal, the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), of which several translations, together with the original, are included in W&E. Further consider the question of where the people who attempted to build the tower came from. Note that this is not a matter that usually provokes heated arguments, and is therefore presumably more amenable to rational discussion than, say, the question of creation.

The Bible says the people migrated to the Plains of Shinar. The Hebrew word literally means, according to W&E, “(from) eastward” (9). Those parentheses around “from” are crucial: nobody knows where the people actually came from. In the Septuagint, the translation of the Old Testament into Greek made in c.285 BCE (10, 13), and in the Latin Vulgate (113), and in the King James Bible (119), they are said to have come from the east. But in Martin Luther’s German translation, they moved “gen Morgen” [toward morning, i.e., to the east] (66-67), as they did in the 1995 English translation by Everett Fox (568). And in The Good News Bible: Today’s English Version, published in 1976, the people, perhaps anticipating their descendants in Exodus, simply “wandered about in the East” (351).

The Septuagint itself, the first biblical translation to achieve canonical status, arouses few passions today, though it certainly did in the past. The editors of W&E claim that it was “intended primarily for Jews who had migrated to Egypt and other Greek-speaking lands” (23). But much more likely is the explanation of Stavros Deligiorgis (11), who believes the prime motivating force to be the chief librarian’s desire to make the Library at Alexandria complete. The Jews themselves did not need a translation; in subsequent diasporas, religious Jews were able to read and understand the Old Testament in the original despite their living in a non-Hebrew environment for almost two thousand years. This “understanding,” of course, excludes problematic words and passages, which resulted in arguments and commentaries many times longer than the Bible itself.

Whatever the original motivation for the Septuagint, canonical status required that it be produced not merely by human translators, but by the will of God. And so arose the myth, popularized by Philo of Alexandria (fl. 20-40 CE), that 70 (or 72) translators all working in isolation wrote identical Greek texts (23-24). With such a miraculous creation, the Septuagint could itself be deemed the word of God, and as good as or even superior to the original Scriptures. Though the myth of the 70 identical translations persists among some to this day, Eusebius Hieronymus, also known as St. Jerome (348?-420 CE), knew it to be spurious, and translated from the original Hebrew when he made his great translation into Latin, the Vulgate of 391-415 CE (28). This procedure upset Aurelius Augustinus, also known as St. Augustine (354-430 CE), who, not knowing of the canonical status that the Vulgate itself would achieve, urged Jerome to limit himself to a retranslation of the Septuagint, despite the fact that the Septuagint omits many passages present in the original.
Hebrew (32). Augustine believed that only by using a universally accepted “original” could Jerome produce a universally accepted translation (31-33).

The argument between “translate only from the original” and “take previous familiar translations into account” continues to this day. Much as I admire the Homeric translations of Robert Fagles, I hate his “translation” of the name of the Greek goddess Κιρκή [Kirke] into Circe, the name most familiar to English speakers.

Notes
1. A minister in my area would argue that, far from having discredited inerrancy for biblical translations, and therefore for any practical version of the Bible, I have proven what he has long preached—that the King James Bible is the only acceptable English version, and that anyone who reads anything else is going to Hell.

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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