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Reaching Out in Nebraska
Successful Intercultural Communication
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The ATA Chronicle enthusiastically encourages members and nonmembers to submit articles of interest. 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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Doris Y. Kadish is a distinguished research professor of French and women’s studies at the University of Georgia. She has published numerous books and articles focusing on slavery and abolition, especially as it affected women, including Translating Slavery (Kant State University Press, 1994, revised edition 2009) and Slavery in the Caribbean Francophone World (University of Georgia Press, 2000). She has translated the play In the Time of the Revolution, by the Guadeloupean writer Maryse Condé (Callaloo, 2002), and short stories by Martinican author Suzanne Dracius. Her co-edited translation of Sarah, by the 19th-century poet and novelist Marceline Desbordes-Valmore, is forthcoming in the Modern Language Association’s Texts and Translation series. Contact: dkadish@uga.edu.

Norman R. Shapiro is a professor of romance languages and literatures at Wesleyan University, where he teaches courses in French theater, poetry, Black Francophone literature, and literary translation. He is the recipient of ATA’s 2008 Lewis Galantière Award for his translation of Jean de La Fontaine’s The Complete Fables of Jean de La Fontaine (University of Illinois Press, 2007). His many published works include Four Farces, by Georges Feydeau; The Comedy of Eros: Medieval French Guides to the Art of Love; works of Charles Baudelaire in Selected Poems from Les Fleurs du mal; and One Hundred and One Poems of Paul Verlaine (recipient of the Modern Language Association’s Scaglione Award in 2000). He received a BA, MA, and PhD from Harvard University and, as a Fulbright scholar, the Diplôme de Langue et Lettres Françaises from the Université d’Aix-Marseille. He is a member of the Academy of American Poets. Contact: nshapiro@wesleyan.edu.

Translation: Getting it Right

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

Translation: Getting it Right is an ATA client education booklet available in print and online. ATA members can order up to 100 copies at no cost. To download a PDF copy of this booklet, visit www.atanet.org.
Thanks to all conference attendees who, despite the unfavorable economic climate, decided to make an investment in their careers and to come to the world’s premier event in the translation and interpreting industry. A collegial atmosphere and pink flamingos strategically placed around the conference grounds marked ATA’s 49th Annual Conference, November 5-8. Nearly 1,300 attendees from more than 30 countries gathered in Orlando, Florida, to network and participate in pre-conference workshops and more than 150 educational sessions. The mayor of Orange County/Orlando sent his greetings and proclaimed the week of the conference to be Translators and Interpreters Week.

Thanks to President-elect and Conference Organizer Nick Hartmann, who did a great job pulling everything together. The initially dreaded pink flamingo theme eventually grew on him, and he could be seen carrying a small, fluffy toy version of the bird around the conference as he checked to see that everything was running smoothly. Thanks also to Teresa Kelly, who once again shone in her role as ATA’s meeting planner and administrative coordinator, and to the entire ATA staff under the able direction of Executive Director Walter Bacak.

Thanks to all the presenters, without whom there could be no conference, and to all the distinguished speakers invited by the division administrators. Thanks to our special guests: Dr. Erik Camayd-Freixas, professor of Latin American literature and director of the Translation and Interpretation Program at Florida International University, who made international headlines with his essay “Interpreting After the Largest ICE Raid in U.S. History: A Personal Account”; Donald Barabé, vice-president of operations at the Canadian Government Translation Bureau; Stephen Sekel, director of the documentation division of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management at United Nations Headquarters in New York; and Marie King, who is the special projects coordinator for Orange County/Orlando.

Thanks to all ATA divisions, who play a crucial role in speaker selection and evaluation and who form the backbone of our association. Thanks also to all ATA committees for their contributions. Thanks to Jim Lochrie, the parliamentarian, and our volunteer tellers for ensuring an orderly election. Thanks to Gio Lester and the local volunteers who made all attendees feel welcome. Thanks to all sponsors and exhibitors. Thanks to Derek Platts for the great videos of the conference, Jeff Sanfacon for the photos, and Mary David for putting the photoblog together. Thanks to Rosalie Wells for coordinating the Network Nibble. Thanks to Alzi Platts for coordinating the conference dance, to Rob Croese for pulling off another great Round Robin Tennis Tournament, to Stephanie Tramdack Cash for the morning Stretch, Move, & Breathe sessions, and to Art Moore, from the local National Scrabble Association Club, for organizing the Scrabble Social.

Thanks to all the candidates who ran for the director positions. This year the Board said goodbye to Jacki Noh and Liliana Valenzuela. We will miss Jacki’s frugal ways and Liliana’s literary talents, and we wish both of them the best of luck. The Board welcomed Naomi Sutcliffe de Moraes and Lois Feuerle as new directors, and welcomed back Boris Silversteyn and Lilian Novas Van Vranken as returning directors. Thanks to David Rumsey, Izumi Suzuki, and Milly Suazo-Martinez for their willingness to run for the Board and to stick their necks out to contribute to the Association.

And, finally, thanks to William Shakespeare for providing the inspiration for this column.

From the President  
Jiri Stejskal  
President@atanet.org  

I Can No Other Answer Make But Thanks  

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Thank you to all of our sponsors and exhibitors!

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The Board of Directors of the American Translators Association (ATA) met November 8-9, 2008 in conjunction with ATA’s 49th Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida. Here are some highlights from the meeting.

**Welcome New Directors:** ATA President Jiri Stejskal welcomed new directors Lois Feuerle and Naomi Sutcliffe de Moraes and returning directors Lilian Novas Van Vranken and Boris Silversteyn.

**Divisions:** There was much discussion about divisions, particularly communications with their respective members. The Board consensus was clear that current policies regarding divisions and their administration need to be reviewed. The Board will devote a portion of its upcoming Annual Planning Day, as well as time at the next two or three Board meetings, to discuss possible changes. Divisions have been the “home” for many members within the larger ATA organizational structure, which currently tops 10,600 members. Now, however, the growth of ATA’s 15 divisions themselves is a challenge. For example, the three largest divisions are hardly club-like in terms of their sheer number of members—the Spanish Language Division has 4,500 members; the Interpreters Division has over 3,400 members; and the Medical Division has over 2,800 members. There will continue to be much discussion concerning ATA’s divisions. Watch *The ATA Chronicle* and the website for further developments.

**Gode Medal:** The Board named Dr. Peter Krawutschke the recipient of the 2008 Alexander Gode Medal. The Gode Medal, ATA’s most prestigious award, is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translation and interpreting professions. Peter, who is currently serving as ATA treasurer, has done much for the profession, and his contributions have reached well beyond his ATA activities. (Please look for more on this selection in the January issue.)

**National Coalition on Health Care Interpreter Certification:** The Board approved a $1,000 contribution to the National Coalition on Health Care Interpreter Certification (NCC) to help support the organization’s efforts. NCC is in the early stages of developing standards for health care interpreters. ATA is a member of NCC. While several ATA members are involved in this effort, Virginia Perez-Santalla represents ATA. For more information, please contact Virginia at virginiasps@gmail.com.

**Translation Company Division:** The Board approved the appointment of Rina Ne’eman as acting administrator and Grant Hamilton as acting assistant administrator of the Translation Company Division for the 2008-2010 term.

The minutes of the meeting will be posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. Past meeting minutes are also posted on the website. The next Board meeting is tentatively set for late January/early February in Miami, Florida. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

**Scam Alert:** Please be vigilant. New scam e-mail messages are targeting translators. If the job is too good to be true, it probably is. If you have any questions, please contact me at walter@atanet.org, and be sure to visit http://fraud.org/tips/internet/fakecheck.htm and www.fraud.org/internet/intinfo.htm.

**2009 ATA Membership Renewal:** It is time to renew your ATA membership. Thank you for being a part of ATA in 2008. I look forward to you renewing for 2009 as ATA celebrates its 50th anniversary. Please see the renewal application on page 45 of this issue, or you may renew online at www.atanet.org/membership/renew.php.

Happy Holidays!
Report of the Inspector of Elections

Election of Directors
Three-Year Term
Three to Elect

Number of votes cast: 436

Boris Silversteyn
(Received: 253 * Elected)

Lois Feuerle
(Received: 243 * Elected)

Naomi J. Sutcliffe de Moraes
(Received: 228 * Elected)

David Rumsey (Received: 225)
Izumi Suzuki (Received: 163)
Milly Suazo-Martinez (Received: 103)

Lillian Clementi (Received: 2)
Amanda Ennis (Received: 1)
Madeline N. Rios (Received: 1)
Clarissa Surek-Clark (Received: 1)
J. Henry Phillips (Received: 1)

Illegal Ballots: 0

Election of Directors
One-Year Term
One to Elect

Number of votes cast: 391

Lilian Novas Van Vranken
(Received: 384 * Elected)

Lydia Stone (Received: 2)
Steven Mines (Received: 1)
Clarissa Surek-Clark (Received: 1)
Margaret L. Lofgren (Received: 1)
Lois Feuerle (Received: 1)
Esther Diaz (Received: 1)

Illegal Ballots: 0

Bylaw Amendment Results

(See www.atanet.org/membership/bylaws.php for the complete information on the proposed bylaw amendments.)

Category 1 (Adopted)
359 For
5 Against

Category 2 (Adopted)
360 For
4 Against

Category 3 (Adopted)
358 For
6 Against

Category 4 (Adopted)
356 For
8 Against

Category 5 (Adopted)
318 For
39 Against

Certified by:
Jim Lochrie
Inspector of Elections
November 6, 2008
The following letter was written in response to a recent article in The Washington Post concerning the ban imposed by the U.S. military prohibiting Iraqi interpreters from wearing ski masks to conceal their identity.

The article can be found online at www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/11/16/AR2008111602040.html?sub=AR.

ATA President Jiri Stejskal has also circulated the letter to the member organizations of the International Federation of Translators.

Robert M. Gates
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1000

November 20, 2008

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing on behalf of the more than 10,000 members of the American Translators Association – the largest and oldest organization for translators and interpreters in the United States – to express our dismay at recent reports that the US Army is prohibiting Iraqi interpreters from wearing ski masks to protect their identities while working with our troops. While the costs of this policy are clear, the Army seems unable to articulate any benefit from it.

Lieutenant Colonel Steve Stover’s statement that “professional units don’t conceal their identity by wearing masks” is simply not supported by the facts. Elite forces in France and the United Kingdom routinely wear ski masks to protect their identities, and the faces of our own troops in Iraq are often obscured by sunglasses and bandannas used to keep out dust.

Interpreters are among the US government’s most valuable employees in Iraq. Their language skills and cultural knowledge have enabled American forces to work with local populations, making Iraq safer for both US personnel and innocent civilians. The counterinsurgency effort now underway in Iraq is a battle for hearts and minds: it cannot be won without effective communication, and effective communication is impossible without interpreters. Their critical role in Iraq’s recovery is precisely why more than 300 of them have been killed since 2003. Putting Iraqi interpreters at greater risk will surely lead to more deaths and more resignations, reducing the number of available interpreters and increasing the dangers faced by US troops.

Even if it is true, as Lieutenant Colonel Stover says, that the US is not suffering any shortage of interpreters, it is callous and ultimately self-defeating to ignore the real threat to these vital employees. They have saved innumerable American and Iraqi lives: why can’t they be allowed to save their own lives – and the lives of their families – by protecting their identities?

If there is any benefit from this policy, we urge you to articulate it clearly so that all sides can work together to find a compromise that meets the Army’s operational objectives without endangering its Iraqi partners. If not, we urge you to recognize the indispensable role played by interpreters in the Iraq recovery effort and reverse this policy as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jiri Stejskal
President, American Translators Association
After reading Jamie Lucero’s very informative article, “PDF Files and Translation” (August issue, pages 16-20), I decided to add a few comments of my own, especially since I regularly have to deal with PDF files both in my translation-related research and in my teaching.

First of all, many of the PDF files that I have downloaded from the Web contain graphics of one kind or another, such as line drawings, photos, and other images. I have found that it is often (but not always) possible to copy those graphics from the PDF file into a Word file. If you encounter a PDF file with graphics, it is easy to check whether they can be copied. Just left-click on the image. If the image is highlighted after doing so, this probably indicates that it can be copied, but if nothing happens, that means the image cannot be copied. If you right-click on that image while it is highlighted and the one-line prompt “Copy Image” pops up on top of the image, you can transfer the image to the Windows clipboard by clicking on the prompt line or by pressing Ctrl-C. You can then paste it into a word processing document in the usual manner (Ctrl-V or any of the standard alternative methods).

In many cases, the image transferred into the word processing document will not be the same size as it was in the PDF file, but you can easily change its size. To do this, left-click on the image, then right-click to display a list of options, one of which is usually “Format Picture” or something similar. Click on this option to display the corresponding pop-up window and click on the “Size” tab to display yet another window where you can play around with the image’s height and width until it meets your needs. For example, Figure 1 shows two images that I copied from a PDF document describing how to use a lathe. Their original size was about 5 1/4” x 2 3/4”, but I reduced it to just 2” x 1”.

Occasionally, I have found that, even if you can copy an image from a PDF file, it does not reproduce correctly in the word processing document. Sometimes the image is rotated 90 degrees, is upside down, or even comes out as a mirror image. At other times, the image may be distorted because the size is larger or smaller than what it was in the PDF file, but this can be easily fixed in the manner described above.

As Jamie pointed out in his article, it is also frequently possible to copy plain text from a PDF file simply by highlighting it and using the standard Windows copy-and-paste procedure. In most cases, this process necessitates playing around with the format after the text has been copied, but it is still probably faster than retyping the text. It may be necessary to insert special characters (e.g. bullets) that do not copy from the PDF, or to adjust other aspects of the file, such as the font and/or the point size. And, of course, it is also essential to do a thorough spell-check because sometimes things get lost or otherwise garbled in the transfer process. About the only time you cannot copy and paste text from a PDF file is when the file is made up entirely of graphics characters, which normally happens when the PDF file is produced by scanning the original document instead of creating it with one of the normal conversion procedures.

As far as PDF-to-Word conversion is concerned, my personal preference is the third program mentioned in Jamie’s article, PDF Converter, from a company called Nuance (www.nuance.com/pdfconverter). I am currently using PDF Converter 5, and find it quite satisfactory. As a general rule, the program can handle any PDF file that does not consist entirely of graphics, and it is relatively fast. For example, it can convert a 15-page PDF file to Word in just a few minutes, and the product rarely needs any adjustments, at least when the original language is English. In contrast, the manual procedure described in Jamie’s article (copying the file to the clipboard) works fine, but the result needs a great deal of time-consuming clean-up work.

In addition, I have a nice Word-to-PDF program that I acquired some time ago from Nuance (www.nuance.com/pdfconverter). When installed, this inexpensive program ($50) becomes a Word
plug-in, so converting a Word file to PDF format is just a matter of a few mouse clicks. The same company also makes products for converting other file formats to PDF (e.g., PowerPoint, Excel, Publisher).

Finally, another little program called PDF Password Remover, available from www.verypdf.com/pwddemover for $30, comes in handy whenever a PDF file is password protected. PDF Password Remover can be used to decrypt protected Adobe Acrobat PDF files that have an “owner” password set (but it will not unlock PDF files that have a “user” password). The owner password prevents the file’s contents from being edited (changed, printed, copied into the Clipboard), or annotations and form fields from being added/changed. Decryption is done instantly. A decrypted file can be opened in any PDF viewer (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Reader) without any restrictions, that is, with edit/copy/print functions enabled. All versions of Adobe Acrobat (including 7.x, which features 128-bit encryption) are supported.

Lee Wright
Kent, Ohio

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The following is based on the author’s talk, “Reaching Out to Languages Other Than Spanish [LOTS],” which she presented at the ninth annual regional conference of the Nebraska Association of Translators and Interpreters (NATI, www.natihq.org). This year’s conference brought to light the growing foreign language presence in Nebraska and the needs and problems facing those who work in the translation and interpreting industry.

When one thinks of an area that has a great need for wider foreign language access, Nebraska hardly comes to mind. If asked what the most-spoken and most-needed languages in Nebraska might be, the average Nebraskan would reply “Spanish, maybe German, maybe Somali.” The typical Nebraskan does not think much about the pressing need for adequate language access in daily life, or the fact that getting medical care, taking care of banking, and finding employment, and such mundane things as taking a bus, buying groceries, and getting a car repaired are almost impossible without speaking English.

Although the Midwest would not seem to be a place where services for languages other than Spanish (LOTS) are in high demand, this is not true. As of 2004, the population of Nebraska included about 84,000 foreign-born residents (4.8% of the population).1 Lancaster County (the county in which Nebraska’s capital, Lincoln, is located) ranks 14th nationally in per capita refugee resettlement. It is estimated that in Lincoln alone, there are

Reaching Out to LOTS in Nebraska
By Marsha Conroy

The need for highly skilled interpreters and translators will only continue to increase as Nebraska’s international population grows.
about 50 different languages spoken.

The Nebraska Legal Diversity website states that over 3,000 immigrants are resettled into Nebraska yearly. Nebraska has the largest Sudanese population in the U.S., with about half of all Sudanese immigrants living in the state. In fact, the largest Sudanese community in the country is located in South Omaha, Douglas County. Additionally, the Asian community has mushroomed in the past 10 years by 83.3%. All of these communities have specific language needs that must be met somehow.

The most requested languages in Nebraska may come as a surprise. When contacted about the language needs they encounter the most frequently after Spanish, Nebraska service providers such as public schools, medical and health care providers, judicial and police systems, and social services all responded with their top three: Nuer, Somali, and Arabic. Vietnamese and Karen (Burmese) were very much in demand. They also stated that Chinese, Korean, Russian, Dinka, Swahili, Thai, French, Filipino, Tagalog, Juba Arabic, and Bosnian were needed regularly.

Recruiting LOTS Service Providers

The first hurdle to clear in reaching out to LOTS service providers is recognizing that there is a critical need for their languages. Nobody can deny that it is crucial to have adequate language access for the Spanish-speaking segment of the population. However, it is becoming very clear that other language groups are growing rapidly in the Midwest, and their language needs are just as important as any other language. The need for highly skilled interpreters and translators will only continue to increase as Nebraska’s international population grows.

It is sometimes difficult to convince people who have LOTS capabilities that their language is needed and that they should consider using their expertise in some capacity. While it is true that the language provider needs proper training and education in order to render competent service, sometimes simply finding an individual willing to step forward and become an interpreter or translator for their language is the hardest part. It is not unusual to find people who shyly admit that they speak Croatian, or Swahili, or Nahuatl, and then state that they are forgetting it because they do not use it.

Many LOTS speakers, especially speakers of obscure languages, are not aware of the multitude of ways they can participate in language service provision. The tendency is to believe mistakenly that in order to use one’s language skills, one must live in or very near a large metropolitan center and find a job within a large company or agency, or that one must be able to travel frequently. With Internet and cell phone access available virtually everywhere, almost anyone can participate in the translation and interpreting industry, and in a variety of ways. Seasoned LOTS service providers should be on the lookout for promising LOTS speakers and encourage them to consider becoming a part of the language service industry.

Areas of Concern

One frustration LOTS speakers have voiced is not knowing how to get their name and service out before the public. It is not uncommon to hear how LOTS service providers “just fall into” the business, perhaps through church work or informal social work. As they improve and learn more, they become aware of other opportunities, but they do not know how to expand into other areas of service. Newcomers to the translation and interpreting industry must not underestimate the importance of networking at every possible opportunity. Word-of-mouth references from satisfied clients are extremely valuable, but should not be depended upon exclusively for new clients and jobs. Purchase good-quality business cards and hand them out to new and established contacts. Develop the habit of obtaining contact information from every new contact, especially people already involved in the industry, and learn to follow up with them regularly. Attending conferences, joining professional associations such as ATA or local Chambers of Commerce, and utilizing Internet marketing are some of the more cost-effective ways to find potential clients.

Finding training is another area of concern—many potential providers of LOTS services are not aware that such things exist. While an individual might be knowledgeable and fairly skilled, it is important to know and follow standard protocol and procedures. More and more agencies and their clients are demanding professional credentials from their language service providers. Workshops and conferences are
important ways to receive general training and skills practice.

Finally, many LOTS service providers find it difficult to convey to the public that their skills and expertise are valuable and should be compensated accordingly. Foreign language speakers state that they are frequently asked to provide on-the-spot translations as part of their daily work, without being allowed sufficient time to do a competent job and without being paid for the work. They add that the “quick little translations” become increasingly complex and lengthy and that once it is known that they are able to translate, they are expected to translate because “nobody else can do it.” Various suggestions on ways to handle requests such as this were discussed during the presentation.

Many of the LOTS service providers work in the legal, law enforcement, or medical interpreting fields and are interested in exploring other means of involvement in their LOTS community. Telephonic interpreting, voice-over and narration work, technical manual writing, conference interpreting, interpreting and translating for social services, educational systems, family planning centers, and religious organizations are just a few of the suggested possibilities for LOTS service providers.

Wrap-up
The need for qualified, trained, highly skilled LOTS service providers is growing as never before. There are almost endless opportunities for the LOTS speaker to provide a valuable service and enjoy a highly satisfying and stimulating career by entering the translation and interpreting industry.

Notes
1. Nebraska Demographics, www.nebraska.net/demographics.
2. Nebraska Legal Diversity, www.nelegaldiversity.org. (Click on “Living in Nebraska.”)
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WHERE INTELLIGENCE GOES TO WORK®
While traveling in Nepal for a year, I spent many hours in tea shops talking to tourists passing through town.

“What do you think of Nepal?” I asked.

Their answers rarely strayed from one of two responses.

“Nepal is a poor country full of people who want to rip you off,” said one camp.

“Nepal is a spiritual country where the people are very much in touch with nature,” said the other camp.

Both answers bothered me. Although the second response was certainly kinder than the first, neither was complex enough to capture the spirit and richness of Nepali culture. This constrained perception of the cultures around us is something that is not limited to tourists. Inattentiveness to the complexity of culture is one of the main impediments to successful intercultural communication, and no culture is exempt.

By all appearances, we are living in a shrinking world, one where an explosion of wealth, technology, and
change has us all scrambling to keep up. Emerging economies like India and China have taken the world stage. We now have the ability to purchase products and services and chat with colleagues from anywhere in the world, all from our computers. Does this increase in global communication mean that we understand each other any better? Are we really becoming more alike? Just like the tourists in Nepal, a strong need exists to examine culture more deeply and the role it plays in our daily lives. Nowadays, our personal and professional growth depends upon our ability to live comfortably in a “connected” world.

Research indicates that national culture still plays a significant role in the workplace. A study by Accenture in 2006 concluded that cross-cultural communication would continue to present the main challenge for global organizations wishing to reach their full potential. Another study by the founder of Let’s Bridge IT, a company specializing in offshore consulting, found that unresolved cultural issues can add up to 30% to initial project costs. Christoph Boehm, chief executive office of TransCrit Offshore IT-Consulting, called cultural differences “the highest risk factor of offshore information technology delivery.”

Even if you do not conduct business internationally, the changing demographics of the U.S. are putting everyone in touch with cultural differences. Culture influences do matter, so what should we do? How can we communicate successfully with people who have such varied backgrounds and experience? Although there are no magical answers, the five keys to intercultural communication presented here will help you navigate more effectively in a complex global environment.

Key #1: Strike a Balance Between Commonality and Difference

Today, navigating cultural differences can be confusing, in part because they are not as visible as they used to be. You might interact with people in another country who seem “just like me.” For example, many of my colleagues in India dress in Western clothing, listen to iPods, follow modern and innovative business practices, and speak fluent English. Working with them over time, however, I have discovered that they still operate by core Indian values, eat traditional foods at home and at work, and view life through an Indian perspective.

The key to successful intercultural communication is to strike a balance between focusing on commonality and focusing on difference. Contrary to popular belief, an overemphasis on commonality can contribute to just as many issues as overemphasizing what is different between ourselves and the rest of the world. When we view commonality as the best way to get along with people and accomplish goals, we may project similarities onto our colleagues or clients that are not there. As a result, we might experience conflict with them when differences do arise, or we may not meet their needs. Similarly, when we overemphasize differences, we create defensiveness, an “us versus them” mentality, and we miss opportunities to learn from viewpoints outside our own sphere. Just as the tourists’ answers to my questions about Nepal indicated an overly simplified cultural mindset, failing to understand the intricacies of cultural influence can lead to ineffectiveness in our dealings with the international community. If we each make room for both differences and commonalities and have an understanding of how culture shapes actions, we will have more conscious and effective conversations with our colleagues from around the world as well as here at home.

Key #2: Find Variety Within Variety

With the global economy in full swing, mobility is at an all-time high. People from the rural areas of China are flooding into the cities to look for opportunities, students from India are studying in London, and American workers are seeking jobs in India. Today in the U.S., you are more likely than ever to encounter many nationalities. This variety offers both challenges and a wider array of ideas and solutions.

The key to successful intercultural communication here is to look for variety within variety. For example, imagine you are a U.S. citizen working with a group of people from Mexico. Variety inherently exists because there are two cultures present. Consider, however, the
following questions:

- What part of Mexico or the U.S.
  are your colleagues from?
- What languages do they speak?
- What is their experience in your
  industry?
- What kinds of business practices
  have they experienced?
- What did they do before working
  with you?
- What are their cultural views and
  practices regarding gender and
  age?
- What are their core cultural
  values?
- Where have they traveled or lived?

The list goes on. Learning about
culture-general patterns is helpful,
because in spite of the rapid changes
in the world, cultural traditions
remain strong. To be effective we
must also seek the variety within
those cultures and leverage any differ-
ences to accomplish our communica-
tion objectives.

For example, when I last visited
Chennai, India, I met with the senior
vice-president of a software company
for an interview. We talked about cul-
tural differences, and I asked him
how much he thought Indian culture
had changed. His response was not
what I expected.

“I don’t think the cultural differ-
ences are that significant anymore,”
he said. “We’re all data driven now,
and we’re all aiming for the same
results, especially in business.” I then
asked him about his background. He
had been born in India, educated in
the U.K., and had worked in the U.S.
As soon as I walked out of his office
into the employees’ cubicles, I saw
that cultural differences were alive
and well. The staff members had
never been outside of India, came
from small to mid-sized towns, and
had little exposure to Western busi-
ness practices. They were shy and
spoke little to me.

To be effective in communicating
with the people from that company,
we would need to examine the variety
of backgrounds and be willing to shift
our style accordingly to accommodate
the differences between us.

Key #3: Adapt to Different
Cultural Rules

We use the word “culture” fre-
quently in the workplace, but how do
we define it? There are protocols and
etiquette for every culture, such as
whether you bow or shake hands, but
we could memorize a book of these
details and still experience intercul-
tural challenges. Beneath the surface
of etiquette lies another layer of cul-
ture, the values by which people of a
particular culture orient their lives.

For example, when I was in India
earlier this year, I visited a friend
named Narayan who lives in
Bangalore. He told me that his father
once asked him to deliver a package
to a man named Suresh, whom
Narayan had never met. Narayan set
out, found the neighborhood and the
house, and rang the bell. A man
answered and invited him in. They
had tea together and snacks were
served. Narayan was there for 45 min-
utes before his host finally asked him
what had brought him in. Narayan
replied that he was there to deliver the
package from his father. “What
package?” the man replied.

Even though Narayan had gone to
the wrong house (Suresh actually
lived two doors down) and was a
stranger to his host, he had been
offered hospitality as if he were a
member of the family. This type of
interaction is common in India,
because Indian culture is oriented
more toward the collective. In the
U.S., we sway more toward individu-
alism, and chances are if the same
interaction had occurred in this
country, Narayan would have been
sent on his way the moment the home-
owner discovered the visitor had the
incorrect address.

Neither scenario is better or worse,
but a difference does exist. It just empha-
sizes the point that if we are to commu-
nicate successfully across cultures, we
must learn to adapt to other cultural
rules. This does not mean that we need
to change or abandon our own values,
but that we must become adept at
shifting our framework, seeing things
through another’s eyes, and coming up
with creative ways to solve intercultural
challenges. Without knowledge of the
deeper layers of culture, we run the risk
of not meeting our goals, or missing out
on useful resources in the workplace.

**Key #4: Widen Our Communication Repertoire**

Everyone has a preferred method of
communication. For example, when a
project does not go as planned at work,
two different communication styles
might emerge. A person with a more
explicit style might go to the boss and
say, “This deadline will not be met. The
timing is just too tight, and we do not
have the resources to complete every-
thing by the date you expected. We need
two more weeks.” A person with a more
implicit style might go to the boss and
say, “We need more time to complete this
task.” To strengthen communication,
understanding needs to go beyond the
surface layer to these deeper levels.

*Want to Know More?*

**Recommended Websites**

- Atlanta World Trade Center—International Events
  [www.wtcatlanta.com](http://www.wtcatlanta.com)
- Books on Culture and Diversity Intercultural Press
  [www.interculturalpress.com](http://www.interculturalpress.com)
- Cross-cultural Compare and Contrast
  [www.geert-hofstede.com](http://www.geert-hofstede.com)
- Etiquette Around the World
  [www.ediplomat.com/np/cultural_etiquette/cultural_etiquette.htm](http://www.ediplomat.com/np/cultural_etiquette/cultural_etiquette.htm)
- Society of Intercultural Education, Training, and Research
  [www.sietarusa.org](http://www.sietarusa.org)

**Recommended Reading**

go to the same boss and say, “Boy, we are sure busy over in Quality Assurance. The guys are working Saturdays to meet the deadline.”

In the second scenario, if the employee and the boss have two different communication styles, the boss might think everything is fine. The boss would empathize that the staff is working hard, but would never dream that the employee was actually saying he could not meet the deadline. What happens when the deadline is not met? People are blamed, the product is not shipped, and chaos ensues.

Did the person in the second scenario cause the problem by not being more explicit about the possibility of an unmet deadline? Did the boss cause the problem by not picking up on his employee’s cues? Answering these questions does not solve the problem, and saying one way of relaying the message is better than the other forces us into an “either/or” framework of communication.

The most effective way to navigate different communication styles is to widen our communication repertoire. For example, if all you have in your toolbox is a hammer, then everything starts to look like a nail. If you have several tools, however, you will be able to participate deftly in a variety of intercultural situations. We can learn to listen more carefully for subtle cues, to read body language, pay attention to tone, be more specific with our instructions, appreciate how other cultures communicate, and adapt our style to facilitate the goal at hand.

**Key #5: Adopt a “Both/And” Mentality for Success**

Working across cultures brings challenges and sometimes frustration to our work environment, but we are rewarded for our efforts through the richness of differences. In today’s marketplace, the best framework by which to operate is one of “both/and” rather than “either/or.” When two cultures work together, the question often arises, “Who should adapt to whom?” There is a saying in Japanese that loosely translates to “incorrect question.” Perhaps a more effective set of questions would be:

- How should we adapt to each other?
- How can we leverage our differences to meet our common goals?
- What creative solutions can we offer to the organization? What challenges might we face as a multicultural workforce?”

When we move beyond the “either/or” mentality to one that encompasses “both/and,” we enter into endless possibilities for enriching relationships across cultures.

For example, imagine that a manager says to me, “Should I make my employees from Korea learn to speak English while they are working here, or is that culturally insensitive?” That type of question forces an “A or B” answer instead of a creative solution. Why not offer the Korean employees English lessons as part of their training, but also have them teach the English-speaking staff some phrases in Korean? Perhaps the Koreans could take English lessons and then practice their English by teaching the rest of the staff about Korean culture. The solutions are endless if we ask the right questions and stay open to all possibilities.

**Thinking Outside the Cultural Box**

Working across cultures continues to present challenges, in spite of all the technology that allows us to connect to the rest of the world. Through widening our communication repertoire, adapting to various cultural rules, and thinking creatively, we can meet any challenge and enrich ourselves in the process.

**Notes**

2. The study was presented in January 2008 at the conference for the Society of Intercultural Education, Training, and Research. The study was conducted by Melanie Martinelli, the founder of Let’s Bridge IT.
Visit ATA’s School Outreach Resource Center at www.atanet.org/careers/school_outreach.php. Click on Presentation Resource Materials and choose the age level you like the best. Download a presentation, or use the resources on the School Outreach website to round out your own material.

Make a presentation on translation and/or interpreting careers at a school or university anywhere in the world between August 18, 2008 and July 20, 2009.

Get someone to take a picture of you in the classroom. For tips on getting a winning shot, visit the School Outreach Photo Gallery on ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/ata_school/photo_gallery.php.

Send your picture electronically to pr@atanet.org using the subject line “School Outreach Contest,” or mail your entry to ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include: your name and contact information; the date of your presentation; the school’s name and location; and a brief description of the class. You may submit multiple entries.

The deadline for submissions is midnight on July 20, 2009. The winner will be contacted no later than August 17, 2009. You must be a member of ATA or an ATA-affiliated organization to enter.
The following originally appeared on the blog of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (www.aatia.net).

**According to** Ezra Pound: “The sum of human wisdom is not contained in any one language, and no single language is capable of expressing all forms and degrees of human comprehension.” Succinctly put, and right on the money.

As a translator, I work with language all the time: with verbs and clauses, colloquialisms, turns of phrase and figures of speech, with the refined communication of the highly educated, the unadorned expression of regional speech, and everything in between. Translators work with language and between languages, and strive to communicate meaning.

When I start work on an entirely new project, I am fluent in the language of the text, but perhaps not familiar with the particular subject matter, context, or jargon. As I look at certain incomprehensible terminology (especially those impenetrable acronyms!), I am staring into the unknown.

Earlier this year, I was involved in the annual Young Writers’ Workshop at Travis Heights Elementary in Austin, Texas. In the always-delightful company of my colleague, literary translator Liliana Valenzuela, I spent the morning talking to bilingual kids about writing. We asked them to try writing a song lyric or a poem, in English or Spanish, inspired by the idea that communication can be accomplished through a wide variety of words and phrases. “Good morning, Mom,” for example, is just one of many ways in which to transmit a greeting to a parent at the breakfast table. We could say, “Whazz shakin’, Momma?” and still get the point across.

When we suggested to the kids that their generation was actually expanding the boundaries of language and creating a new variation of English and Spanish through their extensive use of texting and e-mail, we were rewarded with poems like this one:

```
C U later
que te vaya well
ah nos vemos
and BBL
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The second and third lines say: “I wish you well / see ya around.” The first line, “(see you) later” was not much of a challenge, but BBL? No clue. I suddenly felt that old familiar feeling and realized that I was staring into the unknown. So, we shifted into research mode, and asked our students to educate us about their new language, which consists, to a remarkable degree, of abbreviations and acronyms like BBL, which means “bye bye luv” or “be back later.” (Of course!)

The concept is simple. Those of us who have fumbled with a tiny keypad on a handheld electronic device fully understand the desirability of a system that abbreviates the number of symbols.
we must type. Younger, more skilled keypad operators, who are texting each other at speeds I can only imagine, also need a streamlined, stripped down language that allows them to type at the speed of conversation.

The idea is hardly new, since we have been saying things like “AKA” to express “also known as” for years. FYI, we’ve had RSVP, L&M, DNA, FBI, and lots of other BS besides, OK? Acronyms, those lethal landmines in the lexical landscape that can make even seasoned interpreters weep, have been around for a long time. We now know that they were simply early examples of what today we call text lingo, or textlish, depending on whom you ask.

Most people have probably received an e-mail in which a humorous anecdote ends with “LOL,” and we have learned that it means “laugh out loud,” which is simply a cute alternative to the more traditional, “hahaha.” Some of us regularly use “BTW” in an e-mail when we mean “by the way.” Another familiar one is “OMG”—frequently expressed con brio: “OMG!!!”—which, of course, means “Oh my God.” This one has a vaguely sophomoric ring to it, but then text lingo is mainly a reflection of adolescent life, so that should come as no surprise.

We should not assume that this is just another passing kid’s fad, because it is not. Like rock and roll, I think that texting will be with us for generations to come and will, over time, have a significant impact on language and communication. Those kids at the Young Writers’ Workshop will be my age in a few years’ time, and by then they will have been using an evolving version of this acronymic, abbreviated language for their entire lives. By then there will probably be libraries full of poems and novels and essays on obscure subjects, all written in acronyms (LOL!). People will speak acronymish (with a lower-case “a”) and there will be lectures and operas and plays, all using an avant-garde liter-}

erary style to capture the timeless beauty of the classics: “2B or nt 2B, thts th Q.” Literary criticism will enter its golden age as the interpretation of a text becomes increasingly subjective, and editors will occasionally text-message writers to say that “My acronym is bign yrs.” The Internet is already offering dictionaries and glossaries of all kinds to those who Google “texting dictionary” or something along those lines. The list of acronyms and abbreviations obviously gets longer every day as new ideas and situations are condensed and distilled down to the fewest number of symbols, then expressed as a new “word” in a text message.

Am I ready to call these creations “words?” Not exactly, but I suppose I will be, sooner or later (perhaps we could call them “wrds”). In the meantime, I am going to start learning more of them, and not just because I may be called upon to translate them one of these days. The fact is that some of these acronyms already fit very easily into my normal discourse: how much easier and quicker to type “AFAIR” instead of the now unacceptably long “as far as I recall.” Not to mention TTYL, MYOB, or 2G2BT! And my personal favorite: BFFL (“best friends for life”). Wait a minute, surely that deserves to be a wrd?

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**Related Links**

**for the Linguistically Curious**

- List of Chat Acronyms & Text Message Shorthand
  
  [www.netlingo.com/emailsh.cfm](http://www.netlingo.com/emailsh.cfm)

- Text Lingo
  
  [www.txt2flrt.com/content/lingo.aspx](http://www.txt2flrt.com/content/lingo.aspx)

- Lingo2Word
  
  [www.lingo2word.com/lists/txtmsg_listA.html](http://www.lingo2word.com/lists/txtmsg_listA.html)
In 1994, Doris Kadish co-edited *Translating Slavery: Gender and Race in French Women’s Writing, 1783-1823* (Kent State University Press, 1994), a collaborative project by women translators providing translations of abolitionist women writers reflecting on their roles as white or black women. At the time, she was at Kent State University, working with Françoise Massardier-Kenney, her co-editor, in the university’s translation studies program. After completing *Translating Slavery*, she continued to publish extensively in the emerging field of French slavery studies.

In 2004, the journal *Nineteenth Century French Studies* asked Kadish to review Norman Shapiro’s translation of two five-act plays by the nineteenth-century African American writer Victor Séjour: *The Fortune Teller (La Tireuse de cartes)* and *The Jew of Seville (Diégarias)*, the latter being written in verse. Shapiro is a professor of French at Wesleyan University and a writer in residence at Adams House, Harvard University. In the 1970s, when his *Négritude: Black French Poets from Africa and the Caribbean* came out, Shapiro had already been translating and teaching the literature of the Négritude writers. Kadish was greatly impressed with Shapiro’s talents as a translator, especially of nineteenth-century poetic and theatrical works, as demonstrated in his published editions of Juan Victor Séjour Marcou et Ferrand. She decided to contact him about translating other works, notably the considerable amount of abolitionist writing she had collected and studied. This material included Charles de Rémusat’s *L’Habitation de Saint-Domingue (The Saint-Domingue Plantation)*, which is discussed in this interview.

Thus began a collaboration that reached fruition this year with the publication of Rémusat’s *L’Habitation de Saint-Domingue*, with Kadish’s introduction and annotations, as well as the two-volume re-edited and expanded version of *Translating Slavery*, which includes Shapiro’s translations. Because reflecting about the process of translation was an integral part of the project of *Translating Slavery*, Shapiro and Kadish decided to share the following dialogue concerning their experiences working together over the past five years.

I try to let the reader lose as little as possible.

DK: Has your previous translating experience informed your treatment of the material you translated for *Translating Slavery*?

NS: Everything one translates “informs” what one does later. In poetry, the more you deal with formal verse, the more you develop a “feel” for its demands and how to fulfill them. The essential, of course, is to develop a technique for addressing the problems posed by rhyme and meter. For works intended for the theater, the more one translates, the more one develops a sense of stagecraft, especially of keeping the text actable—something all too many translators of theatrical works seem to forget in their dogged determination to render perfect, antiseptic equivalents. They forget that words have to fit comfortably into the actors’ mouths. Above all, you have to preserve, in the dialogue, the general tone of the period being translated. Anachronisms, backward or forward looking, stick out like a sore thumb, except in an out-and-out adaptation.
**DK:** Could you give examples of nuances regarding gender that you grappled with in translating the poetry and plays included in *Translating Slavery*?

**NS:** There are several compelling female characters in these texts, in both the poetry and the plays. Besides the ubiquitous, iconic Ourika, who finds herself in both genres, there are the women, both white and black, in *L’Habitation de Saint-Domingue*, each with her own defined personality. For instance, there is the sensitively romantic Célestine, intelligent and well-lettered, but not overly “liberated,” and Madame de Valombre, devoted mother and dutiful wife, who is a little naïve and not quite sure about what she is doing in the tropics so far from Parisian society, and forever fanning herself and keeping up appearances. Then there are several black women in the drama, the “whitest” among them being Marie-Louise, Célestine’s long-time nurse-maid. It was essential to differentiate, as Rémusat does, between one of those black women—the strong-willed and admirable Badia (“Hélène”), a main character—and the others of the group, who serve as secondary, “atmospheric” characters—Venus, Hermione, and Clotilde. It was even necessary to keep the latter somewhat nuanced amongst themselves.

**DK:** Regarding poetry or rhymed verse in the theater, is it fair to say that you find it “tonally unfaithful?”

**NS:** I have nothing against free verse in the theater, though in English it is not particularly common. But in translating a verse play, I would never take the easy way out and render it in English free verse, or even blank verse. I find verse generally easier to work with, and it is not because I think in iambics! It is just that the underlying metrical grid gives the dialogue a substance and a form lacking in the amorphous, total freedom of prose.

**DK:** You have said that you take certain liberties to tighten up a play dramatically. Could you explain?

**NS:** Basically, there are two extreme philosophies one can adopt when translating a play. You can opt to follow the author as closely as possible and produce an “archival” document that says in English what is said in the original. With some authors, no “tightening up” is necessary. You just have to follow the text. Let me say, parenthetically, that this does not mean being slavishly literal and translating word for word, à la typical computer translations or those wonderful instructions included with electronic products. Take a famous line in Jean Racine’s *Phèdre*, for example:

*C’est Vénus tout entière à sa proie attachée!*

A practitioner of the “I-have-a-dictionary-so-I-am-a-translator” school might turn the French alexandrines into iambic pentameter and come up with something literal, like:

It is all Venus, to her prey attached!

LITERAL, and even metrical, but poetic? Even so, one can still espouse the philosophy of archival fidelity with taste.

One can hew close to the original and still translate quite acceptably. Perhaps something like:

Venus it is, entire, clutching her prey!

On the other hand, there is the opposite extreme—the philosophy that, as a translator, one has carte blanche, no holds barred, to commit whatever mayhem one chooses in order to leave a personal mark. What results is an adaptation rather than a true translation, not that there is anything “wrong” in that, unless it becomes a hodgepodge of styles and lexicons. It is just that the reader or spectator should know what he or she is getting.

I try to follow the dictates of good taste—at least my understanding of it. If I were to translate Racine, for example, I would be very sparing in my liberties. In Racine’s case, none would be necessary, since no “tightening up” would be required. I would never presume to “tighten up” the work of a sacrosanct playwright, any more than I would dream of “improving” on a poet, for example, Charles Baudelaire. Perhaps I might perform a very minor “adjustment” here or there to clarify an obscure detail or two, but sparingly. But more is often needed in comedy—sometimes even quite a bit more—for example, when the playwright would no longer make my audiences or my readers laugh without my modest intervention. After all, it is with them, my audiences, here and now, that I have to be concerned, and to...
whom I have an obligation no less than to the author.

**DK:** How important to you is the presence or absence of stage directions in translating nineteenth-century plays?

**NS:** Are stage directions necessary? Is it enough, in choreographing a ballet, to indicate a *pas de deux* without specifying where on stage it is to take place, or with what nuances of gesture and expression? As I said before, theater is words and action, action among things as well as people, and words exchanged against a backdrop of objects, actions, and interactions.

The French romantics appreciated this. They were not so prejudiced in favor of the strictly literary component that they neglected the visual, the spatial. This is perhaps thanks, to some extent, to the French philosopher and writer Denis Diderot, for whom facial expression was so paramount in showing emotions. Such direction was necessary, not only for the spectator actually sitting in the theater, but also for the “armchair spectator” for whom Alfred Louis Charles de Musset-Pathay wrote his romantic proverbs. Or the reader of, say, *Ruy Blas*, the vast drama by Victor Hugo, whose imagination could encompass the most complicated and exotic sets called for in the text.

Compare *Ruy Blas* or any of Hugo’s romantic dramas to Racine, for example. The latter is satisfied with a column or two and characters in togas. Even in a play like *Bérénice*, in which Rome is a virtual character in the action, there is nothing externally, visually Roman called for in the text. Compare this, again, to Hugo’s ultra-specific demands in *Ruy Blas*. These are details that not only establish the local color, but that also propel the action.

As a translator of theatrical works, I cut my teeth on comedy, specifically, on farce, and more specifically, on Georges Feydeau. Precise stage directions, and lots of them, were part of my theatrical upbringing. Clearly, such theater needs stage directions. Often scenic ones dealing with the set’s physical demands and intricacies of plot, but also emotional, “characterizational,” situational directions that tell the actor how to stand, where to look, how to react to this or that, what gesture to use, and in what tone of voice to speak in. So, are stage directions all that important? Certainly, for those directions that are an integral part of the plot—those that tell us, for example, in the Rémusat play, that César Julien lays his gun against a tree (the gun that, conveniently, will later be picked up by Léon to shoot Timur.) Also necessary are those directions that help avoid confusion—those that tell us where so-and-so exits, so that, when he or she returns later, the audience does not have to wonder how he or she got there. As for those directions that tell the actor what to think, how to look, what to feel, etc...well, ideally, they should not be necessary. But I bend over backward to include them, assuming that “more is better.” In the best of all theatrical worlds, such directions can always be ignored.

**DK:** How do you justify translating works such as long abolitionist poems that may not always meet your standards of aesthetically elevated poetry?

**NS:** To answer I would probably have to say why I translate in the first place. For money? Ha! For fame and prestige? Double-ha! Even now, most translators, however well respected by “the happy few,” tend to remain invis-

It is not always possible to maintain every nuance of tone between two languages.

**NS:** Did any of them change the world? Did any of them play a part in finally bringing down the institution of slavery in the French colonies? Those colonies where, in fact, far more Africans were enslaved to toil in the sugar cane fields than were their kin in the cotton fields of the American south.

Are the works that we presented here “important?” Yes, but reactively and interactively, not proactively. I doubt that they had much direct influence in ending the slave trade, but they were certainly symptomatic of its inevitable demise. A demise that, encouraged by Enlightenment thinkers, religious humanists, and revolutionary idealists, was destined to take place in the historic scheme of things. Perhaps a few works—like Claire de Duras’s far-reaching *Ourika* texts—may have helped a little to prepare the social terrain for the change, but probably not as much as *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which is another example of a reactive rather than a proactive work.

**DK:** How do you justify translating works such as long abolitionist poems that may not always meet your standards of aesthetically elevated poetry?
ible to the general public and the world at large. As I have said, those who have not tried their hand at translation think it is easy. Because the more successful a translation, the easier and more convincingly it reads, the easier it looks. The less it calls attention to itself with awkward, contorted syntax, or inappropriate tone, and the more transparent it is, like an unblemished pane of glass, the more the translator fades into the background.

Do I translate because of some missionary zeal to bring worthwhile literary art before a wider public, or, as in the particular case of Translating Slavery, to help bring to light forgotten works of social and historic importance? To bring works of moral value to the reader? It would be nice to have such a noble motivation.

Why do I translate? Frankly, for myself. For the satisfaction of meeting the challenge. Because that is what all translation is, a challenge. It is like climbing the proverbial mountain “because it is there,” if you will pardon the cliché. The satisfaction is in the ascent. Negotiating the crags and crevasses, and the pitfalls. Reaching the summit is important, but would it be more satisfying if there were a ready-made trail and a mule to take us up? I doubt it. The accomplishment is in the doing. If others admire the feat, tant mieux. It is only human to find satisfaction in that approval as well.

Not only are there many ways up each mountain, but there are also many mountains. Far more than merely “the greats,” and that very profusion of what you call “less aesthetically elevated poetry” constitutes a challenge in its own right. There are many “elevations” that we can climb if we choose. Works that, by their very less than distinguished artistry, throw down the gauntlet. For myself, I have to admit that I take a certain pleasure in confronting such works. Works that ambitious, sincere, little-known authors spent weeks, months, maybe years proudly constructing. Works that eventually saw the light of publication between two covers, brought their “fifteen minutes of glory” to their poets or playwrights, and then sank back into virtual obscurity, where they have remained until they were rescued from their past. As I say, there is an undeniable satisfaction in translating such escapees from oblivion, of collaborating with their authors over decades and decades of silence, and treating their works almost as our own personal property, because no one else had ever ventured to bring them back to life. And all the better if I can find in them the humanitarian message that spoke, at least briefly, to their own generation and that I can help make speak a little to ours.

I would not presume to hope that I have “improved on” these works or given them more literary value than they have. I have tried to approach them on their own terms. After all, not every mountain is in the Himalayas. Modest hills and hillocks can present their challenges, too. And trudging through their underbrush to the top, sometimes laboriously, is also fulfilling, even if the view is not very majestic once we get there.

The trick is to maintain the author’s tone—of which meter and rhyme are parts—and to do so, precisely, without causing the reader to lose the meaning and the poem’s important rhetorical devices.

DK: Whom do you picture as the ideal or typical reader of your translations and how do you want him or her to read them?

NS: I would like for the readers to weigh that message and judge the poets’ and playwrights’ means of expressing it convincingly, and, of course, my own means of following in that effort. Here again challenge rears its head. If I, hopefully, have met the challenge of translating, have the authors themselves met the challenge of convincing? I think the “ideal or typical reader,” as you say, is one who is already predisposed to accepting the validity and the vigor of that anti-racist message, and one who needs no convincing that slavery was an abomination, whoever its many culprits were, and that it continues to be so even to this day. No generation has had a monopoly on barbarism, or—thankfully—on those who would fight against it.

As for how I would like these translations to be read, I would hope that they will be read aloud, as all literature should be, ideally—the poems, at least. I also hope that they will be read by those sensitive to the flexibility of formal rhymed verse, in which the underlying metrical constraints exist, but must not straitjacket the meaning into nursery-rhyme singsong. Unfortunately, not everyone knows how to read a
poem effectively, whether a masterpiece or merely a neatly contrived workaday opus. As for the plays, even when not actually read aloud, I hope that they will be read dramatically in one’s head in order to bring out their undeniable strengths.

**DK:** What do you believe is gained or lost for the readers of your translations who are monolingual or only have access to the translation?

**NS:** I try, of course, to let them lose as little as possible. I do not think they lose very much at all in the plays—certainly none of the plot—and I hope, none of the characterizations, which, as I have said, I even tend to “flesh out” a little here and there. As you know, I keep the essentials of all the dialogues: the tones, the asides, the atmosphere they create, the perspective they give us on the characters, and the situations in which they find themselves. I try, too, by “tightening up” the stage directions, as we have said, to let the reader visualize the action without losing any of its dramatic effect. If anything, I think I emphasize the characterizations a little more than the author does. In the Rémusat, for example, things like César Julien’s pride at being a mulatto, or Monsieur de Tendale’s pompous elegance, or Timur’s conflicted heroism.

More is bound to be lost in the poetry by the very nature of the genre. It is not always possible to maintain every nuance of tone between two languages. The challenge is to try to compensate, and to craft a convincing and faithful whole even where the individual parts vary. The trick is to maintain the author’s tone—of which meter and rhyme are parts—and to do so, precisely, without causing the reader to lose the meaning and the poem’s important rhetorical devices. Without being cynical, I could suggest that those who champion the other point of view, those who find theoretical reasons for pooh-poohing rhymed and metered translations, are the ones who either have not bothered to try, or who have found that they cannot do it well.

**DK:** You and I have communicated innumerable times about these translations. Could you summarize what either of us might have learned from the other or how our viewpoints may have differed?

**NS:** I cannot speak for you or imagine what you may have learned from me, except that I am a stickler for stage directions, and that I thrive on the challenge of translation. Even the translation of works of dubious “aesthetic elevation,” as you put it. For me, though I have been working in the field of Black French literature for some time, and though many of the works were known to me at least perfunctorily, I certainly know them now a lot better. It is a truism that there is nothing like teaching a work to help you know it. Well, the same can be said of translating it. And these works, strictly literary qualities aside, are well worth knowing. All of them, as part of the vigorous French abolitionist movement, are welcome revelations of France’s “other side of the medal,” a counterpoise to her involvement in la traite, the slave trade.

You have expanded my horizon, and for that I thank you.

**Notes**

1. Négritude is a literary and political movement developed in the 1930s by a group that included the future Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor, Martinican poet

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**Further Reading**

- Books on French Slavery
  [www.uga.edu/slavery/texts/other_works.htm](http://www.uga.edu/slavery/texts/other_works.htm)

- Harvard University Department of Romance Languages and Literatures
  [www.fas.harvard.edu/~rll/resources/french/journals.html](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~rll/resources/french/journals.html)


- Nineteenth Century French Studies Association
  [www.ncfs-assn.org](http://www.ncfs-assn.org)

- Nineteenth Century French Studies (Journal)
  [www.unl.edu/ncfs/editorial_board.html](http://www.unl.edu/ncfs/editorial_board.html)

- Slavery in the British and French Caribbean
Aimé Césaire, and the Guianan Léon Damas. The Négritude writers found solidarity in a common black identity as a rejection of French colonial racism. They believed that the shared black heritage of members of the African diaspora was the best tool in fighting against French political and intellectual hegemony and domination.


3. A more extended version of this interview appears in *Translating Slavery: Gender and Race in French Abolitionist Writing, 1780-1830* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, forthcoming 2009).

Assistant Professor of Spanish

Applicants must have a PhD in Translation Studies (Translation Informatics) or Spanish Linguistics, with English to Spanish translation specialty in non-literary translation (legal, science/technology, or medical domain) at time of hire. Areas of scholarly and teaching competency should include at least one of the following: corpus linguistics, document engineering, computational lexicography/terminology, and markup languages and metadata as they relate to multilingual issues. Experience in project management and potential to attract extramural funding is desired.

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Upcoming Events

December 27-30, 2008
American Association of Teachers of Slavic & Eastern European Languages Annual Conference
San Francisco, CA
www.aatseel.org/program

December 27-30, 2008
Modern Language Association 124th Annual Convention
San Francisco, CA
www.mla.org

February 18-21, 2009
National Association for Bilingual Education 38th Annual Conference
Austin, TX
www.nabe.org/conference.html

February 23-25, 2009
Israel Translators Association ITA Conference 2009
Haifa, Israel
www.ita.org.il

March 13-15, 2009
Mid-America Chapter of ATA 2009 Symposium
Overland Park, KS
www.ata-micata.org

March 20-21, 2009
California Healthcare Interpreting Association 9th Annual Education Conference
Palo Alto, CA
http://chiaonline.org

May 3-6, 2009
Society for Technical Communication 56th Annual Conference: Technical Communication Summit
Atlanta, GA
http://conference.stc.org

May 13-16, 2009
Association of Language Companies 7th Annual Conference
Austin, TX
www.alcus.org

May 15-17, 2009
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators 30th Annual Conference
Scottsdale, AZ
www.najit.org

July 6-9, 2009
International Association of Forensic Linguists 9th Biennial Conference on Forensic Linguistics/Language and Law
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
www.iafl.org

October 27-November 1, 2009
American Literary Translators Association 2009 ALTA Conference
Pasadena, CA
www.utdallas.edu/alta

October 28-31, 2009
American Translators Association ATA 50th Annual Conference
New York City, NY
www.atanet.org

November 20-22, 2009
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention and World Languages Expo
San Diego, CA
www.actfl.org

December 27-30, 2009
Modern Language Association 125th Annual Convention
Philadelphia, PA
www.mla.org
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*A propos*  
[www.ata-divisions.org/FLD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/FLD)

**German Language Division**  
*interaktiv*  
[www.ata-divisions.org/GLD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/GLD)

**Korean Language Division**  
*Hangul Herald*  
[www.ata-divisions.org/KLD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/KLD)

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*Language Tech News*  
[www.ata-divisions.org/LTD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/LTD)

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Division membership is included in your ATA annual dues. Visit [www.atanet.org/divisions/division_admin.php](http://www.atanet.org/divisions/division_admin.php) to join any or all ATA divisions without additional fees.
Networking is an essential marketing tool for small business owners, but it requires some strategic planning to ensure a useful yield of referrals. Online tools are of increasing importance for networking efforts, and allow translators in remote locations to market their skills.

Dear Business Smarts,

I have a question about networking, which is frequently recommended for freelancers, but rarely explained in practical terms. I recently attended a networking session organized by my local chamber of commerce. Everyone in attendance seemed to own a real estate business or a car dealership, and I barely talked to anyone about translation. Since I live in a fairly small town and have young children, traveling to chapter events or conferences in big cities is not an option for me at this time. Do you have any ideas?

Stuck in a Small Town

Dear Small Town,

Unless you have lots of free time that you enjoy spending at business gatherings with a glass of wine in your hand, it is important to develop a strategy for your networking efforts. The entire purpose of networking is to get name recognition that is associated with an accurate perception of your skill or business activity. (“Oh, that’s Sue. She translates financial texts from French into English. I heard she is really good.”). In the Internet age, you do not have to be physically present in order to network effectively, since there are now many forums and listservs where translators discuss various aspects of the profession. For example, ATA member Corinne McKay writes a blog on translation issues that contains many helpful suggestions (http://thoughtsontranslation.com). You will find a wide choice of language-specific forums, tool discussions, and lists that focus on specific fields. For optimal name recognition, make sure your e-mail contributions have a proper signature and are written in a factual and professional tone. You can quickly establish a good reputation by providing thoughtful answers to your colleagues’ questions, especially when you stick to your field of expertise and back up your comments with specific sources. Keep in mind that there are many silent readers of lists, who may not participate in the discussion every day but are aware of your contributions, and are therefore part of your networking efforts. To find listservs and forums that may be of interest to you, visit ATA’s divisions page at www.atanet.org/divisions/division_admin.php.

Websites dedicated to business networking are a fairly recent invention, but are rapidly increasing in popularity. Their purpose is to maintain and grow a list of business contacts, complete with your comments and recommendations. Social networking sites dedicated to business include Xing.com, LinkedIn.com, and CareerBuilder.com, while ProZ.com maintains forums that are dedicated to translators.

In the interest of good workflow management, it is probably best to limit your online networking efforts to certain times of the day. An occasional thoughtful posting will do more for your reputation than a large number of hasty comments, which may create the impression that you have too much time on your hands.

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 to The ATA Chronicle—BPEC Q&A, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314 USA; Fax: +1-703-683-6122; E-mail: businesspractices@atanet.org. Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.
At this point, it is anybody’s bet what the economy will look like by the time this column is published, but as I write, the Dow Jones is somewhere in the 8000s and economically things are looking rather dire. Who knows—maybe you will be looking at this in a few weeks and thinking back on those golden days when the Dow Jones was still above the 5000 mark. Or maybe you will already have shrugged it off as one of those temporary economic glitches, and you will not have much time to read this because times will be so busy again. Be that as it may, times like these when our national or global economy is struggling can feel threatening to translators, or they can be viewed as real opportunities.

It is certainly an opportunity to teach our clients that right now is precisely not the time to cut the translation budget. In fact, just the opposite is true.

But since marketing is not my expertise, I would like to talk about another opportunity. Why don’t we use the slow times to teach ourselves the things that in normal times we just do not have time for? Why not take inventory of our computing environment, reevaluate what is helpful and what is not, and then go out on a discovery hunt to track down the tools that will help us gain the edge we have always wanted and that we will need once times get busy again.

The thing about tools is that they can be a real blessing, but they can also be a curse if they are not handled well. So (you know what is coming), this might be the perfect time to remind ourselves to invest the time to learn the tools that will make us more efficient translators.

Most of you have heard about the 5% or 10% percent rule with Microsoft Word. Researchers tell us that this is as much as the normal user ever uses, while the remaining 90% or 95% stays untouched. (In fact, the most-often-used command, Paste, accounts for 31% of all command usage!) Now that is okay for Word because it truly is one of those tools that is made for anyone and everyone, and if you do not know how to do a mail merge or draw an organizational chart, who cares (unless you need to do a mail merge or draw a chart).

But I would argue that it is a little bit different with translation environment tools (TEnTs). These are tools that were not just made for anyone and everyone; they were made specifically for us. While it is likely that we will never use all the features that Wordfast, Déjà Vu, or MemoQ offers (and you may replace these product names with any of the other dozen-plus tools out there), it behooves us to know that these functions are there, and it would be even better if we could see them in action at least once.

I have often talked to people who complain that it is relatively easy to get a first introduction into a TEnT, but it is not easy to get to the meat of the matter. This criticism is partly justified, but it is also true that while literally every user will have to know the basic steps to get started, the usage then varies greatly and it is just much harder to cover all the many specialized aspects of the tools (and there are many of these—I do not call them “translation environment tools” for nothing!). And aren’t forays into the feature jungle of our tools what times like these can be used for? Some of the tools come with relatively good documentation and others are admittedly less well endowed; however, there is no function that cannot be explored with either the help of the documentation and/or the typically very supportive user groups that you can find at groups.yahoo.com.

Here is one way of beginning to get to know your tool. Usually these tools have one or two many-tabbed dialog boxes, often called something like “Options,” “Preferences,” or “Settings.” This is what I like to call the command center—it is usually here where the majority of settings for the tool are defined. While it might feel a little dry to click yourself through these options, do you by any chance remember how dry it felt to learn the grammar and long list of terms for a foreign language? And see where that has gotten you! Why don’t you use the same kind of spirit with your computer?

If you have never taken the plunge to purchase one of these tools, now is the time. Maybe you had a chance to talk to some of the vendors at the recent ATA Annual Conference in Orlando, or you showed up at the Tool Forum there and have a pretty good idea which tool would fit you. Otherwise, go to the websites of the various tool vendors, or maybe more effectively to the user groups mentioned above or to a site like translators.org, where you can compare tools in a one-to-one fashion.

When all is said and done, let us hope that there will not be too much time left for improving our skills—and that we will have ample time to use and hone those skills again on the job, in the trenches, where the real work is being done.

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

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

• Jackie Metivier, past president of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters and president of Bilingual Communications, Inc. in Cary, North Carolina, was featured on North Carolina Public Radio’s “The Story” on September 12, 2008. The interview focused on the challenges of being a bilingual communicator. To listen to the interview, visit http://tinyurl.com/6k43gw.


• McElroy Translation of Austin, Texas, recently celebrated its 40th anniversary.

• The following ATA chapters celebrated anniversaries in 2008: The Northern California Translators Association (30 years); and The Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (20 years).

• ATA’s Translation Company Division celebrated its 10th anniversary.

ALTA Translation Award Honors Pulitzer-Winning Poet

Pulitzer-winning poet and translator Richard Wilbur received the 2008 National Translation Award from the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) during the group’s annual conference, October 16, 2008, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Each year, the National Translation Award honors the translator whose work has made the most valuable contribution to literary translation during the previous year. Wilbur was honored for his translation of French dramatist Pierre Corneille’s The Theatre of Illusion.

Richard Wilbur is a Pulitzer Prize winner for his books of poetry New and Collected Poems (1988) and Things of This World (1956). He is the former president and chancellor of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and has won the National Book Award, the PEN Translation Prize, and two Bollingen Prizes. He was U.S. Poet Laureate from 1987 to 1988. He is also a chancellor emeritus of the Academy of American Poets.

For more information on ALTA, visit www.literarytranslators.org.
ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

California
San Francisco
January 17, 2009
Registration Deadline: January 2, 2009

San Diego
March 21, 2009
Registration Deadline: March 6, 2009

Massachusetts
Somerville
May 31, 2009
Registration Deadline: May 15, 2009

Argentina
Buenos Aires
March 14, 2009
Registration Deadline: February 27, 2009

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 +1-703-683-6100. 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.

New Certified Members

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

English into Russian
Irina P. Van Dusen
Washington, DC

English into Polish
Genowefa J. Legowski
Laramie, WY

French into English
Marian Comenetz
Belmont, MA

Polish into English
Colleen A. Sunderland
Bordentown, NJ

Spanish into English
Jesus Rivera
Sherman Oaks, CA

English into Spanish
Lina M. Escovar
Strasbourg, France

French into Polish
Keith E. Sanders
Montreal, Canada

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Chris Hoble
Miami, FL

Linda A. Marianiello
Forest Park, IL

Corresponding

Grant Hamilton
Quebec, Canada

Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

New Continuing Education Processing Fee

As of January 1, 2009, certified members will be assessed a $30 processing fee when they submit a completed Continuing Education (CE) Record. The fee will help defray the cost of managing the program. Some of the costs of administering the continuing education program include compiling and sending the initial notification to certified members whose three-year reporting period is approaching. The completed submissions for CE points are then reviewed for thoroughness and accuracy with appropriate follow up of incomplete or inaccurate submissions. Plus, audits seeking supporting documentation are also conducted on some submissions.

For complete information on ATA’s Continuing Education Requirements, please visit www.atanet.org/certification/aboutcont_overview.php.
The Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association (NITA) was officially founded in 2008. NITA’s broadly defined goal is to advance and to elevate the quality and availability of language services in Nevada. Members work together toward providing accessible, accountable, and high-quality language services throughout their community.

Goals and Plans
- Advocacy for the profession.
- Political action for legislation about requirements and certification.
- Affiliation with regional, national, and international sister organizations.

Benefits
- Professional development.
- Member directory (available to the public).
- Access to NITA’s Listserv online discussion group.
- Unique, personal nitaonline.org e-mail address.
- Announcements and newsletters.
- Voting rights in board elections.
- Leadership opportunity to serve as a committee or board member.
- Opportunity to attend NITA’s annual membership meeting.
- Participation in all networking activities, job fairs, and discussion groups.

Activities
Monthly board meetings are held in Reno. In addition, NITA offers meetings with professional development opportunities that are open to all members. At the next member meeting on December 3, 2008, Inés Swaney will be presenting a workshop on court interpreting.

Additional Information
For complete information on what NITA has to offer, please visit its website at www.nitaonline.org.

ATA’s chapters and its affiliates, along with other groups, serve translators and interpreters, providing them with industry information, networking opportunities, and support services. This column is designed to serve as a quick resource highlighting the valuable contributions these organizations are making to the profession.
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Although impressive looking, *The Encyclopedia of Computer and Internet Terms* falls short of fulfilling its implied goal of providing a comprehensive source of English computer and Internet terms, translated and explained in Arabic. Still, with over 1,200 pages, the author is to be commended for the effort, because even with its shortcomings, this is still a valuable addition to the corpus of available technical English-into-Arabic dictionaries and information tools.

**Content**

On the positive side, I note the easy to follow layout and organization, the clear and legible font, along with the sheer volume of terms the encyclopedia covers. Each term is translated and explained as expected, but where this work distinguishes itself is in its attempt to provide historical and/or contextual information about the term and its usage.

**Appendices:** There are about 30 pages of appendices providing information on character sets, programming languages, Intel processors, Windows versions, and more. There is also a 13-page Arabic alphabetical index of terms, which can be very useful when translating from Arabic.

**Illustrations:** There are hundreds of illustrations and other graphical items, including logos and tables. In a large book such as this, however, you can go for several pages without any illustrations. Most will find the number of illustrations used to be appropriate, but those who are visual learners may feel the need for more.

**Coverage:** The terms in this encyclopedia run the spectrum, from hardware to software, from computer business terms to those relevant to the average user, and from the very technical to the simple usage.

**Diacritical Marks:** In a work such as this, technical terms not in common usage in Arabic must include the phonetic spelling to indicate the approximate pronunciation. This poses a problem, as each language has speech sounds that the other’s alphabet does not represent, and there is no consistent standard for transliterating English words into Arabic. For example, the English phonemes (meaningful speech sounds) /p/ and /l/ do not exist in Arabic. Rather than use the equivalent of the letters “b” and “f” as some Arab authors do, Hammad has chosen the more accurate method of using ba’ and fa’ with three dots. This may turn traditionalists in some Arab regions off, but this and the generous use of diacritical marks make it easier for readers to pronounce transliterated terms.

**Term Searches**

The first thing I looked up when I received the book was the Internet chat term IMAO, which I had never been able to figure out, although I do have to admit that I never searched for it either. I was so disappointed when I found LOL and IMO but not IMAO, which turns out to be “in my arrogant opinion.”

There are literally hundreds of thousands of Internet pages written in Arabic today, so while authors have the right to choose what they deem to be the best translation of a particular term, it is important to consider usage as a factor in that choice. For example, the word “link” in English is translated as رابط in Arabic. But the most common translation of “link” on the Internet is actually رابط with over 10 million occurrences as opposed to less than four million for رابط. Despite this, رابط did not even make it as an alternate translation of “link.”
Under the word “router,” which has become more commonly known and used by the average computer user because of the increased popularity of home networks, you find a description which says that a router is “usually a dedicated computer in a communication network” (translated from Arabic). While this may have been true a few years ago, I do not think it is accurate in a book published in 2008, especially when there are hundreds of thousands of private users just like me staring at the wireless network router sitting on their desks. Speaking of wireless network routers, the explanation given for router did not mention the fact that there are wireless network routers, which is the way most casual computer users have come to know routers.

Being out of touch with the times shows up again under the explanation of the term “mouse,” which mentions only the bus, regular, and serial mouse as the three types available. I also found it strange that Universal Serial Bus (USB), which is the most common way to connect a mouse to a PC today, was not mentioned by name.

**Overall Evaluation**

It is common for native speakers of Arabic to use English words when speaking or writing computer and technology terms. Many of those English words have made their way into spoken Arabic as standard terms, such as “net,” “printout,” and “memory.” Whenever the issue is discussed in the media, the main complaint of those who defend the usage of English technical terms, especially younger people, is that Arabic technical terms are often cumbersome to say, convoluted (or seem to be), inconsistent among the sub-fields of technology (computers, communication, etc.), and, most importantly, not standardized.

What struck me about this work is that it addresses all those issues through a uniform, consistent, logical, and easy to follow presentation of computer and Internet terms. The fact that this encyclopedia exists as a reference is a huge step toward the standardization and mainstreaming of those terms. Once you get accustomed to its terminology, it begins to make sense, which is something I never thought I would say about computer terms in Arabic. This alone is why I believe it is a major contribution to the translation field. Overall, The Encyclopedia of Computer and Internet Terms would be an excellent addition to a translator’s library.

Louay Abdulla is the Arabic language specialist with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and a freelance translator. He also teaches translation courses at New York University, as well as Arabic courses at Hudson Valley Community College in New York. Contact: louay62@gmail.com.

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No need for any of us in our profession to panic, but there soon may be much less to laugh over when reading machine-translated texts. As I am writing this, a fresh headline is reporting that cognition technologies will soon begin to license programs to software creators that “understand” words based on tenses and sentence context. What backs up this effort is a vastly expanded stored English vocabulary, containing ten times the number of words found in the brain of a typical U.S. college graduate. The overall name for this new computer ability is semantic technology, and there are perhaps half a dozen competitors developing cognition technologies. The computer will finally understand that there is quite a close connection between the words shrub and tree, something that the average native English-speaking eight-year-old can perceive. We shall see where this leads!

New Queries

(E-Pt [E] 11-08/1) How wood is used in civil engineering structures is addressed in this ProZ request for good Portuguese regarding “grade 1 SPF”. As always, it is helpful to quote the full sentence: “Planks should be made of #1 grade SPF (spruce-pine-fir).”

(E-R 11-08/2) Apparently it was easy to be blind-sided by “a blinded investigator” when trying to produce good Russian from these medical sentences: “Two more additional full-face treatments were then performed to both sides of the face, 3 weeks apart. A blinded investigator was used to evaluate the global photodamage, fine roughness and sallowness during the study.” In producing a proper translation, it will be important to know in what sense the investigator was blinded.

(F-Po [E] 11-08/3) In the field of power generation, what is to be made of l’objectif de CA et de Résultat in this sentence: En XYZ la situation économique est difficile ce qui conduit à un très gros retard sur l’objectif de CA et de Résultat?

(G-E 11-08/4) This ProZer has run into Vorlauf numerous times in the field of injection molding in the auto industry, and wants a definitive English equivalent. In contexts like Vorlauf-menge für Verlagerungszeitraum fertigen, what is being talked about is a large quantity of items to be manufactured to serve as a supply during relocation of the production facility. Can anyone ultimately nail this down?

(G-R [E] 11-08/5) The subject of this query is fiber-optical sensor cables, and what made the ProZ member stumble was Die optischen Kupplungen für die EX-Schutzbüchse an der Geräterückseite des OTS-EX. Here is a major chunk of context material for this: Die EX-Schutzbüchse des Sensorkabels EX-Protection muss immer mit dem OTS-Controller verbunden sein, bevor die Messfaser mit dem Controller verbunden wird. Die optischen Kupplungen für die EX-Schutzbüchse an der Geräterückseite des OTS-EX dürfen niemals mit einer separaten optischen Schleife überbrückt werden, mit Ausnahme der Funktionsprüfung der EX-Schutzausbildung.

(Gr-E 11-08/6) There is no context for this query, except that it comes from the field of sociology and ethics. With that said, and with the awareness that Greek is very rare in this column, we toss out Το αντικείμενο της δουλείας μου with the hope that someone out there will be able to handle it.

(I-E 11-08/7) Providing some very succinct context for this electrical engineering query, a ProZ user asked about pila stilo, calling it a kind of pile. What is it, and what is the English?

(I-E 11-08/8) The words in bold print are the problem in this sentence about eyewear: In tutto, 186 modelli attraverso 61 stili, di cui 28 da sole e 44 da vista, per la collezione dedicata alla primavera-estate 2009, che risulta così rinnovata per quasi la metà delle proposte rispetto alla stagione precedente. What is it all about?

( Pt-E 11-08/9) Just one word, arrolamento, made a ProZ user pause in the following commercial text: A penhora, o arresto, o arrolamento e demais actos ou providências sobre créditos garantidos por penhor ou consignação de rendimento são registrados por averbamento às inscrições. Give it a try if you can.

(R-E 11-08/10) Here is a pharmaceuticals query from ProZ. A user wanted to know the meaning of микрокапел.
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In the phrase "для микрокапел, бього промывания носа" presumably we are discussing "микрокапшц" here. Anyone want to take it from that point?

(A-E 11-08/11) A member of ProZ stumbled over the phrase adoctrinnamiento del MGM in an aircraft repair authorization document. Here is the entire sentence: El taller de Compania XXX deberá pasar el adoctrinnamiento del MGM de Compania YYYY. Any ideas?

(A-E 11-08/12) Omitte manifestar que ella realiza una actividad remunerada y obitne ingresos did not make things easy for a ProZer working on a legal document. Overall, what was being said was that, La parte actora pretende que toda alimentaria recaiga a cargo del suscrito y omitte manifestar que ella realiza una actividad remunerada y obitne ingresos. Evidently the sentence begins with relatively easy material until the word y.

Replies to Old Queries

(E-Pt 8-08/2) (untabulate): The manual quoted in this query, says Barbara Jungwirth, sounds as if a programmer with a native language other than English attempted to write the instructions for this software. Many graphs are based on data in table format. The process of extracting the table data from a given graph might be called "to tabulate" (i.e., to turn into a table) by a non-native English speaker. Untabulate, then, would logically be the reverse, to turn the table data into a graph. Jungwirth proposes re-wording the English version of this instruction as follows: "To create a graph: 1) Select the Graph button on the bottom toolbar..." After that, the Portuguese should be easy, says the Translation Inquirer.

(F-E 8-08/4) (grignier en saucisson): Marie Stouffer says that grigine = fente de pain, and grignier translates as "docking" ("slashing"), defined on a bread-making website as slitting a loaf into one-fourth inch to one-half inch cuts for the purpose of guiding the bloom of the loaf so that it swells where the baker wants it to, and for decorative purposes. En saucisson means that the cuts are made on the bias.

(G-D 8-08/5) (Schleuderwalze): Dick Lodge discovered from the European Union terminology database that the Dutch for this is kaliberwals. I will not write out the entire website address for the base he found, but it starts with http://iate.europa.eu. Paul Hopper used the 1952 Wolters German-to-Dutch dictionary and found slinger for the German verb schleudern and wals, rol, cylinder for Walze. Elsewhere he found walsrol. During an online search, Paul got five hits for slingerrol. Therefore, the latter has his vote.

(G-R [E] 8-08/7) (An der Schweißnaht darf kein Einbrand entstehen): Paul Hopper recommends the Dlhuby Dictionary for Marine Technology, German-English (Schiffstechnisches Wörterbuch) to find "penetration" for Einbrand. Attempting the Russian, Paul came up with two equivalents, пронап and пронывание for "penetration." Paul’s father’s supervisor recommended the Dluhy Dictionary for welding matters, and Paul was impressed with it. This is a good reference for technical words, generally because a ship is a kind of microcosm.

(I-E 8-08/8) (Drama concentrare in due atti): Google searches do yield entries for "concert drama," says David Goldman. He suggests "two-act concert drama" or "concert drama in two acts." Peter Christensen says that the word “solo” in this query means that a performance of one man or one woman was implied. It could also mean a play with a series of solo performances. This is the meaning concertante assumes in a sinfonia concertante.

(R-E 8-08/9) (выйхатся в дикое поле): Last month, David Goldman provided a translation of the entire sentence, found on pages 44-45 of the August issue, but he would like to suggest an alternative to the verb вьхатся “The Antelope-Gnu car veered into the field.” “Veered” is free of the connotations of animals struggling to break away from their confinement, whereas last month’s “break loose” is not.

Alex Lukoff says that вьхатся в дикое поле is a loaded term, having been used in ancient Russia to describe the territories located in the southern part of Russia approximately between the Don and Dniester rivers. It was spontaneously acclimated by Russian peasants who fought there with the Tatars and Turks. In the context of the query, Alex suggests something like “dashed into No-Man’s Land” (toward the barrel with jet fuel), or something similar. Alex’s extra information can definitely lead to a better English equivalent.

(Sp-E 8-08/10) (quiebras de la seguridad ambiental): For the entire sentence, found on page 45 of the August issue, David Goldman suggests: “We are aware that how we respond to the breakdown of environmental security will not only affect the peace and security of our country or region, but also of the whole planet.” John Chellino offers: “We are aware that how we respond to environmental protection issues will affect...”

Continued on page 44
In *homophonic* translations, discussed in the June 2005 and February 2007 columns, the goal is to mimic the sounds of the original words, rather than their meanings. Peter Christensen suggested this follow-up column about *Mots d’Heures: Gousses, Rames*, which not only homophonically translates children’s rhymes into nonsensical French, but then back translates the homophonic translations into hilarious English and/or gives ridiculous explanations for them.

The book is purportedly based on an anonymous manuscript, first in the possession of one François Charles Fernand d’Antin, and then inherited by Luis d’Antin Van Rooten, who “edited and annotated” it. It was published in 1967 by Grossman in hardback, and then reprinted poorly in paperback by Penguin in 1980. The “editor,” Luis d’Antin Van Rooten (1906-1973), was an architect, artist, and designer. He served as a military radio announcer during World War II, broadcasting in Italian, Spanish, and French.

After the war, he became a character actor, usually the villain with a foreign accent, appearing in many movies and television shows. And, on the side, he wrote books like *Mots d’Heures: Gousses, Rames*.

*Mots d’Heures* forty verses start with “Un petit d’un petit,” a quasi-homophonic translation of “Humpty Dumpty,” which Van Rooten explains in a footnote as “The inevitable result of a child marriage.” And so it goes till the final “Noyé, l’ami, dans tout sa lippe” (“Now I lay me down to sleep”) or, as Van Rooten translates the French: “Scornful of life, the friend was drowned.”

Having worked with Ronnie Apter on a book about the southern French troubadour Bernart de Ventadorn, I especially like the verse beginning, “Et qui rit des curés d’Oc?” This line is footnoted by Van Rooten:

> Oc (or Languedoc), ancient region of France, with its capital at Toulouse. Its monks and curates were, it seems a singularly humble and holy group. This little poem is a graceful tribute to their virtues.

> “Languedoc,” of course, actually means the place (southern France) where the word for “yes” is “oc” rather than “oui.”

Here are two more first lines (and their footnotes), which may require a little thought to determine their origins:

> Amboise élite gueule, chic à d’élite écœuré-le

> (The poet reveals his feelings quite clearly anent the élite.)

> Loup si l’eau quête

> (“If a wolf seeks water.” This verse is obviously a collection of evil omens, in this case portending drought.)

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