In this issue:
Relationship-Building with Direct Clients
The Role of Interpreters During Disasters
ATA Translation Tools Seminar

With this issue:
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**Send a Complimentary Copy**

If you enjoyed reading this issue of *The ATA Chronicle* and think a colleague or organization would enjoy it too, we’ll send a free copy.

Simply e-mail the recipient’s name and address to Maggie Rowe at ATA Headquarters—maggie@atanet.org—and she will send the magazine with a note indicating that the copy is being sent with your compliments.

Help spread the word about ATA!
In today’s uncertain economic times, it is more important than ever to reach out to clients, both existing and potential ones. But how? Most translators are linguists, not sales people or marketing experts. Enter ATA’s Client Outreach Kit. This kit, developed jointly by Lillian Clementi, Chris Durban, and Dorothee Racette, will provide you with the tools you need.

Addressing client outreach is the next logical step after our successful media outreach campaign. As you know, in recent years ATA has appeared regularly not only in local media, but also on national television and in major newspapers in the U.S. and abroad, in an ongoing drive to raise awareness of the translation and interpreting professions. Our message—you have to hire a professional to get it right—is being consistently delivered to millions of viewers and readers. Now you can build on the success of these media efforts by using the new client outreach materials to tailor ATA's broader message to your specific clientele, with immediate and tangible results for your practice.

The centerpiece of ATA’s Client Outreach Kit is a customizable PowerPoint presentation that you can use when addressing potential customers. Building on our media talking points and backed up by ATA’s popular booklet Getting It Right, the new Client Outreach Kit highlights the risks of not working with professional translators or interpreters and explains the benefits of communicating with people in their own language.

The initial draft was presented at last year’s conference in Orlando, and the response was very positive. The current version includes the following four tips to help your clients get their translation done right:

1. Plan ahead.
2. Hire a professional.
3. Spend wisely and be realistic about your budget.
4. Listen to your translator.

The message is loud and clear: “With a professional translator, you are not just buying words. You are harnessing expertise—the power of language—to get your text right the first time around…freeing you to focus on your business.”

This presentation, with notes and tips for presenters, will be available free of charge to all ATA members. You will be able to put your name on it and adapt it to your particular audience—be it a local chamber of commerce event, brown bag lunch at a law firm, or any other opportunity you might have to show your wares. But wait, there’s more! The kit also includes tips on developing and delivering a so-called “elevator speech” (a quick overview of your services), effective public speaking, and handling questions. Not to mention how to get invited to speak at events in the first place.

Details on ATA’s Client Outreach Kit will be available on ATA’s website by August. You can also attend a 90-minute client outreach session at ATA’s 50th Annual Conference, October 28-31, in New York City. The session will cover key supporting skills and help you develop effective presentation habits, building on the introduction to the Client Outreach PowerPoint at last year’s conference. Stay tuned for yet another excellent membership benefit.
"Too much of a good thing...

One of the many good things about every ATA conference is its educational program.

It is also very likely that attendance at the New York conference will set a new record. In this case, too, quantity creates quality: everyone who attends a conference not only brings desires and aspirations, but also has something distinctive and helpful to share. Combine that professional and personal variety with our characteristic love of talk and collegiality, and the result is a fluid, informal educational experience every bit as enriching as the more structured program of presentations. Every person who joins this grand conversation makes it more valuable for the entire group, and the sheer number of attendees this year should make for an extraordinary event.

Lastly, this conference will take place within a cultural and social matrix like no other. New York offers too much of almost every good thing a city can offer: art, music of every genre and category, bookstores for every subject, restaurants for every taste, shopping for every budget, and the pervasive buzz of a city that for centuries has been a magnet for immigrants from all over the world. Wherever you stand in New York—in Times Square, in the great hall of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on the steps of Lincoln Center, in Battery Park looking out at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island—you are at the center of something. This unique place will, for a few days, serve as a fitting stage and vessel for our own unique mix of languages and cultures and backgrounds. Be sure to come and share the experience.
Who knows what products and services you need to do your job? Your peers. This line of thinking, along with ongoing efforts to enhance the value of your ATA membership, led to the creation of ATA’s Member-Provider Program.

ATA has long-standing relationships with nonmember vendors who offer products and services, such as credit cards, express delivery services, and banking services, across a spectrum of professions. While these services are valuable, they are not specific to the translation and interpreting professions. In response, ATA has established the Member-Provider Program to create an avenue for Association members to offer products and services to other Association members at special ATA rates and preferred terms of use.

Some program highlights:

- Vendor must be an ATA member.
- Products and services offered must be related to the practice of translation and interpreting.
- Translation, interpreting, editing, and other similar services cannot be offered through this program.
- Member-provided products and services are not sponsored, endorsed, or guaranteed by ATA.
- Vendor must ensure either:
  a) discounts;
  b) favorable conditions of sale; or
  c) favorable conditions of use.
  These must be equal to or of greater value than those offered to nonmembers.
- These agreements are non-exclusive—meaning more than one vendor may offer the same or a similar product or service.
- This is a members-only program.

Remember, the program has to pertain to the translation and interpreting professions. So, dictionary and software providers would most likely be approved while, for example, multi-level marketing programs for cosmetics or household products would not be approved.

To be considered for the Member-Provider Program, you must submit a completed application and provide information about your program or service, including the proposed discount or preferred terms of use—free upgrade, extended warranty, etc.—for ATA members. The participating vendors and their products/services will be featured on the website and in The ATA Chronicle.

For more information and to apply, please check out www.atanet.org/member_provider or contact ATA Member Services and Project Development Manager Mary David, mary@atanet.org.

ATA 50th Annual Conference Update

The ATA 50th Annual Conference Preliminary Program was mailed with this issue. The program provides an overview of the plans for what is sure to be a memorable event as ATA marks its 50th anniversary. Register today for ATA’s 50th Annual Conference at the Marriott Marquis, New York, New York, October 28-31, 2009. You can register online or by completing the registration form included in the program.

Please be sure to check ATA’s website for the most up-to-date conference information: www.atanet.org/conf/2009.

In addition to registering for the conference, please be sure to make your hotel reservation. The rooms at the Marriott Marquis are going fast. To reserve your room, please call the Marriott Marquis (+1-800-843-4898) and be sure to ask for the ATA room rate.

Visit www.atanet.org
Term-Mining Patents

I enjoyed reading Bruce Popp’s article, “Using Patents to Find the Terminology You Need,” in the May 2009 issue. As Dr. Popp says, many patent office sites can be mined for terminology. In the case of the United States Patent and Trademark Office website, patents issued since the start of the computer era can be copied into Word or other documents and processed.

This thought made me revisit a long-cherished dream of mine—to write a Word macro or other procedure that would:

1. sort an entire legacy document, such as a U.S. patent, alphabetically, and
2. delete all words shorter than, say, five characters in length (to get rid of words such as “and” and “the”). The result would be something like a text-related glossary. Has anyone attempted this, I wonder?

If successful, such a macro might be useful for biochemical patent terminology, for example; less so for mechanical patents, in which we find many short words such as “leg” and “arm.” Nonetheless, I would give, if not an arm and a leg, profuse thanks for such a program.

Isabel A. Leonard
Patent Translator
Watertown, MA

Hello, Isabel:

I am fairly certain one could write some kind of macro that would do this or similar tasks (though I think you would be better off avoiding Word and choosing instead an advanced text editor like UltraEdit). However, there are already applications that do very similar things—and maybe even in a superior way.

There are essentially two kinds of programs. The first are called concordancers (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concordancer for a list of some of these tools). These build monolingual lists of terms that are contained in your file.

The second kind are multilingual text-mining applications. These programs offer the possibility of building up terminology databases or glossaries by taking existing pairs of source and target documents or bilingual translation memories, analyzing them, and presenting you with a proposed translated terminology list. Examples in this category include SDL’s MultiTerm Extract or Terminotix’s SynchroTerm. Other TEEnTs (translation environment tools), such as Similis or Déjà Vu, also offer text-mining as a feature rather than a standalone product (in the former, only for European languages, and in the latter, only as a monolingual concordance).

Many of these applications allow you to “black-list” certain terms—sort of what you describe with your filtering procedure, only in this case not on the basis of the length of a term, but on a specific term or phrase—thus giving you a much more accurate way of excluding words such as “and” and “the.”

Hope this helps.

Jost Zetzsche
Winchester Bay, OR
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- **Wordfast Pro**, our game-changing standalone TM application

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**WHY ATTEND AN ATA EVENT?**

**Because** it is a unique opportunity to receive in-depth, high-quality information presented by experts in their field. Still not convinced? Here’s what some of your colleagues are saying about events they have attended:

“Really, really interesting in an exploratory, enthusiastic way. Tons of great resources.”

“It was very encouraging to learn about real issues blocking a growing business. Very real solutions.”

“I had no idea the extent to which computer-assisted translation tools could assist translators.”
As linguists, we excel in our understanding of the humanities and have in-depth knowledge of translation, both in theory and in practical application. However, what many of us have not thought about too much is how to build relationships with repeat customers, especially direct clients. It is quite resource-intensive to build and nurture these relationships, but they are worth the effort, both financially and from a professional satisfaction standpoint. This article will address ways to build relationships and secure repeat business with existing direct customers.

The Power of Relationships

While business school certainly does not provide a road map for starting your own small enterprise, I learned how to develop a marketing plan and to think very strategically about a business’s growth. Colleagues frequently ask me about the most important lesson I learned in business school. For the marketing side of our small businesses, I would say that the most relevant lesson is to know that your long-term success largely depends on the strength of the relationships you form with repeat customers.

Repeat customers are the clients every small business should strive for, as they will eliminate costs for new
Building relationships with repeat customers should be an integral part of any translation professional’s marketing strategy.

Learn from the pros. For example, Target’s competitive advantage is the fact that they are hip and edgy and are good corporate citizens, donating significant amounts to charity each month. Another example is the Swedish carmaker Volvo. Volvo’s competitive advantage has always been safety, and their brand has become synonymous with high-end cars that consistently score very high on all consumer safety tests.

Find out how you can add value to a customer’s supply chain. As a supplier, you already add value to the customer’s business processes by providing linguistic services. However, to really impress clients, think of your value beyond mere translating. Businesses that enjoy stellar successes frequently do this, and you should do the same. Spend some time thinking about what specific additional benefits you can offer to customers. For example, for one of our customers, we know that we are the last link in a long chain of employees who work on printed materials before they go to press. Translation is the very last step, and we frequently find errors in the source text, which we gently but explicitly point out to the client. Thus, we save them money and ensure the quality of their source-language printed materials, even though it is not technically our job.

Build Relationships with Customers
If you think of yourself as a customer.

Think of yourself as a customer. Now that you are thinking of yourself as a business, put yourself in the customers’ shoes. If you were them, what would you want? This is an essential question that you must ask yourself frequently. Your goal is to make things easy for your customer and to build a solid working relationship. If you do not know what the customer wants, ask. A Post-it on my desk reminds me to think of myself as a customer, and every time a potential client calls or e-mails me for a quote, I ask myself: “If I were the person on the other side of the transaction, what would I want?” Seeing any business transaction from your customers’ point of view is a powerful tool.

Competitive Edge
It is important to find your competitive advantage. What are you really good at? What are you better at than your colleagues?

Tell your potential customers what you excel at or what makes your translation services unique and desirable. This is your competitive advantage. Many translators posting their services on large translation websites say “fast, reliable, good.” These really are not selling points, but only the bare minimum of what every purchaser of translation services should expect. If your customer sees 20 postings with these three adjectives, how will they choose? You guessed it—probably randomly. So what points will help you sell your services? Examples of competitive advantages include 24-hour service, working as a translation and editing team, and offering translation services on holidays.

Adjusting Your Mindset
Stop thinking of yourself as “just” a freelance linguist and start thinking of yourself as a business (whether you are incorporated or not). This mindset will help you manage your activities in a more strategic way.

You are selling your services; therefore, you are a business. Start behaving like one! A one-person business operated out of a spare room is just as legitimate as a Fortune 100 company. Most of your transactions will likely be on the so-called B2B (business-to-business) level, and you are an equal partner in these transactions. Give yourself a pat on the back—welcome to being an entrepreneur! If you need any help with incorporating (which has considerable tax benefits) or anything else, try using the free services offered by the Small Business Administration’s SCORE division, where retired executives can help you with everything from creating a business plan to seeking loans. (See the links provided on page 15 for more information.)

Think of yourself as a customer. Now that you are thinking of yourself as a business, put yourself in the customers’ shoes. If you were them, what would you want? This is an essential question that you must ask yourself frequently. Your goal is to make things easy for your customer and to build a solid working relationship. If you do not know what the customer wants, ask. A Post-it on my desk reminds me to think of myself as a customer, and every time a potential client calls or e-mails me for a quote, I ask myself: “If I were the person on the other side of the transaction, what would I want?” Seeing any business transaction from your customers’ point of view is a powerful tool.

Building relationships with repeat customers should be an integral part of any translation professional’s marketing strategy.
business, you might surely realize that turning in a great product is not enough. Here are some more tips on how to enhance your client’s experience.

**Follow up with a customer within a few days of turning in a project to see if he or she has any additional questions or if there is anything else you can do.** It is surprising how many contractors do not follow up on their work. Your clients will be delighted that you checked to see if there were any problems integrating your work into the final product, whatever it may be. Offer your assistance if there are any issues.

**If you know your customer is under time pressure, you could also deliver large projects in smaller batches, thus making the end processing easier on the customer.** This might not be that convenient for you, because in latter stages of the project and upon final revision you might change some terminology, but think of yourself as a customer.

**Check in with your favorite clients at the beginning of the month, asking them about the status of their projects so you might reserve adequate time for them.** This is not only a very proactive way to handle your business, but it also potentially gives you more control over your project flow.

**Become a customer “concierge.”** Keep information about your contact persons handy (e.g., is someone getting married or having a baby?). Just like any good hotel knows its customers’ preferences for breakfast, pillows, and even entertainment, you need to learn enough about your customers to show them you care about them on a personal level. Consider sending holiday cards, baby shower gifts, or chocolates for a major holiday. We keep notes on our customers’ preferences in a simple Excel spreadsheet.

**Go the extra mile.** Turn in a project early if you can. Volunteer to help your client find services you do not provide (other languages, specializations). Offer analysis and suggestions upon customer request. Be generous with your knowledge, even if you are not getting paid for it directly. Sometimes you have to give first.

**Reap the rewards.** Once you have built those relationships, your customers will be less sensitive to price. Customers want to receive good value for their money, and hopefully you will be such an integral part of their international strategy that someone who could offer services for slightly less will not be a feasible option for your client. In addition, customers also go through a cost-benefit analysis: if they are happy with your services, it is infinitely less expensive for them to rely on your services again instead of searching for another vendor.

### Building a Brand

You will not be able to get repeat customers if they cannot remember your name or are unable to find you. Ideally, you want to be the first name that comes to mind when decision-makers are ready to hire a freelance translator. You can achieve this by building a brand and by making continuous contact. Here is your to-do list:

**Create a website and use an associated e-mail address.** With Google Sites, you can build your own template-based site and host it for $10 per year. (It may not be top-of-the-line, but it will establish your online presence.) Choose a memorable business name and URL address that is easy to remember and non-generic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Points to Nurturing Client Relationships</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You are selling your services. Therefore, you are a business. Behave like one.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Think of yourself as a customer. If you were a customer, what would you want?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Find your competitive advantage.</td>
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<td>4. Develop good marketing materials.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Look at the time you invest in client acquisition as a long-term investment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Go the extra mile for your clients. How can you add value to their businesses?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Allocate your time wisely.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Stop thinking of yourself as “just” a freelance linguist and start thinking of yourself as a business (whether you are incorporated or not).

Get a logo. This does not have to be fancy or expensive—it could just be your initials. Have a Photoshop-savvy friend draw it or barter for the service with a graphic design student at the local community college.

Put the logo everywhere. Once you have a logo, make sure that it appears on your business cards, letterhead, quotes, invoices, and anything else you send. Reinforcing it is key.

Maintain continuous and meaningful contact with clients. This will be good for your relationship building, and it will also remind your customers once again who you are (and they will see your nice logo on your letterhead and return address label). A quick thank-you note (e-mail is fine) saying that you have received payment is also a good idea. For example, we routinely thank our best customers for their speedy processing of our invoices.

Develop a simple public relations campaign. Public relations is a time-consuming project, but the more you get your name out in the community, the more visible you are, thus increasing the chances of customers either remembering who you are (“Wasn’t she just in the business weekly this morning?”) or wanting to work with you based on the positive coverage you have received. Here are a few more ways to get your name out there:

- Pitch an article about your small business to your local paper.
- Ask your university alumni magazine to profile you.
- Write letters to the editor if you read an article about our profession and have an insightful comment to make.

The New Networking

We have all been to many networking meetings, traditionally hosted by chambers of commerce and other professional organizations in the community. While those are certainly interesting events, they might not always yield new and meaningful contacts. The problem is one of supply and demand—there are too many sellers and not enough buyers. You might end up with a stack of business cards from fellow professionals who have no intention of buying your services, as their goal was simply to get their business card into your hand. Consider changing the way you think about networking.

As a small business owner, you have to integrate your networking into your everyday life. I simply talk about what I do when asked at any event I attend, and very frequently, someone will tell me about someone who is looking for a translator. This just happened at a baby shower last week—who knew? I did not go to the baby shower with the intention of doing business, but many times life and business overlap. Be ready for it! As a business owner, you are never really off the clock.

Time is What You Make of It

As a business that is providing a service, your only resource is your time. Use it wisely. Be sure to think about how and where you want to spend it. If you do that, you are on your way to thinking of yourself as a business owner and maximizing your time and your effort!

Useful Links

- **Google Sites**
  (Includes custom e-mail, such as office@spanishwizards.com.)

- **VistaPrint**
  www.vistaprint.com
  (Buy the premium business cards)

- **Small Business Administration SCORE**
  www.score.org/index.html
Whenever I speak to groups of translators, I often ask how many in the room started out planning to work in translation or interpreting. Very few hands go up. Most respond that they were guided into the field by an admired mentor, or that they stumbled upon it as part of some other training, schooling, or work. Still others say they “fell into it” on the road to something else, and enjoyed it so much that they just stayed. In short, they were influenced or inspired as students or beginners by more experienced individuals.

Thanks to the efforts of associations like ATA and its divisions, chapters, and affiliates, more and more school- and college-age students are being exposed to translation and interpreting as potential careers. The incredible shrinking planet we live on has also increased awareness of our professions. Professional associations offer an excellent platform from which to share knowledge about the field with potential future colleagues.

My local ATA chapter—the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI)—has been working to increase student membership. As part of this drive, CATI has implemented a number of initiatives, including student membership scholarships, an informal mentoring program, and reduced fees to CATI events. CATI also held a series of panel discussions for student and new members to help them better understand what a professional association can do for them—and what they can do for it.

Belonging to any professional association offers benefits to student members. These benefits can be broken down into tangibles and intangibles. Some are quite obvious, others less so. Let us look at the tangible benefits first.

**Tangible Benefits**

**Face-to-Face Networking with Active Professionals:** Just as it is important for professionals to network with prospective clients and fellow professionals, students must have an opportunity to engage with active translators and interpreters so they can...
learn more about the field. While there may be some occasions for this in academic settings (particularly in some of the university-level translation programs that are springing up), students in traditional language-learning curricula may have few options for meeting people active in translation and interpreting.

Professional associations, particularly local chapters, offer opportunities for this type of networking. Workshops and conferences are usually offered at reduced rates for student members, and most chapters will have free social events as well.

Current Information on Work and Training Events: The operative word here is “information.” Student members should not be competing with professionals for work assignments, and most are aware that they lack the qualifications to accept such assignments. However, there is valuable knowledge to be gained from the broadcast information that most associations send out to their members, including job listings, volunteer and shadowing opportunities, and entry-level training workshops.

Publishing: Most associations have newsletters or other publications. These publications are always seeking locally-produced content, and students can provide a unique perspective to readers who have been engaged day-to-day on the professional side for a long time. Moreover, getting those first publication credits can be a valuable addition to a résumé, and can help newcomers start honing their communication skills. Another possibility is for student members to propose that their association add a “student’s corner” to the newsletter dedicated exclusively to student member contributions.

Volunteering: Volunteering is an excellent way for student members to contribute to their association. Most professional associations are hungry for volunteers, and extra hands and minds are invaluable when organizing events and activities. In return, helping out with the association can raise a student member’s profile above the crowd. An association board member is likely to find it far easier to write a letter of recommendation for a student member who frequently volunteers than for someone who does not otherwise stand out. CATI offers student membership discounts for student volunteers. Other associations may offer similar options.

Other Association-based Programs and Initiatives: CATI has initiated an informal mentoring program called “Learning the Ropes,” in which experienced members make themselves available to student and new members who may have general questions about the profession and related topics. Other associations may have their own initiatives. Such programs offer an excellent opportunity for students to pick the brains of veterans, and for veterans to give something back in the form of knowledge and advice.

Intangible Benefits

In addition to the benefits above, there is a host of intangible ways membership in a professional association can benefit student members.

Résumé-building: When it comes to considering whether to make the dues investment, it is tempting to think only in terms of whether it will pay off in additional work. In other words, if I pay dues of X, will it be returned to me in X dollars of profit as a direct result of my listing in the association’s directory? While this is something that can be measured directly, it is important to remember that there are related benefits that are often indirect and intangible.

As an employer of translation and interpreting professionals, I see many résumés in the course of a week. One of the things I look for is whether a job seeker is serious enough about his or her profession to belong to one or more professional associations. Someone who is giving back to the profession and interacting with other professionals is more likely to be up to date on the latest trends and tools in use. From the student member’s perspective, membership can be a great icebreaker with a prospective employer and a positive addition to a résumé during those first post-college job interviews.

Connectedness: Translation and interpreting are skill-based professions that are dominated by individual freelancers and small businesses. Most of
us do our work in relative isolation, communicating with colleagues via e-mail and during the occasional workshop or conference. Contact between students and professionals in work settings is even rarer. Association socials and other events can help students forge connections with other members.

The demand for internships in the translation and interpreting field far outstrips availability. The number of translation agencies that have the resources and time to devote to an intern is limited. Association events can be a good place to seek out possible internship opportunities and create that face-to-face impression that can make all the difference.

Learning What You Don’t Know

As the famous quote goes: “A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.” Many inexperienced language learners are unaware of the level of skill required to translate or interpret properly. I speak to and correspond with many students in their first or second year of language study who start out convinced that they will be qualified to interpret at a high level within a year or so.

At events and activities, student members have a chance to see and hear professionals talk about what their work entails. They learn about ethical dilemmas, client engagement, work habits, professional behavior, specializations, skill sets, and much more. All of this acts to dispel the all-too-prevalent notion that “anyone with two languages can do it,” and impresses upon newcomers to the field that translation and interpreting are skills and an art that take time and effort to develop and refine.

In addition, networking with other members can result in valuable information on career opportunities that had perhaps not occurred to a student previously. The range of experience in any group of language professionals is likely to be great, and student members can quiz veterans about how their language skills may help them with a potential career in health care, international business, negotiation, foreign service, or law, for example. I often ask students to imagine a scenario where they are competing for, say, a nursing position. Their qualifications are the same as those of their competitors, except that they are fluent in both Spanish and English and their competitors are monolingual. Who is most likely to be hired?

Students Have Much to Offer

While students can certainly benefit in many ways from membership in a professional association, the arrangement is a win for the association as well. As mentioned above, student members can add a unique perspective to discussions within an association, and the organization benefits from the energy and volunteerism they bring to the table. While there is much to be gained from belonging, there is also a lot to give. And give and take is what associations are all about.

Student members can take what they learn back to their classmates and instructors. They can also bring within an association. This is not to be underestimated, particularly in today’s economic climate where we are all being forced to confront a changing business landscape.

Most professional associations offer reduced rates to attract student members. This is because they understand the values and benefits of having student members. It is up to student members to take advantage of all that these associations have to offer.

Belonging to a professional association is a bit like the old saying that happiness is like a butterfly: chase it and it eludes you, go about your business and it will sit on your shoulder. The benefits I have described here are real, but individuals who join an association expecting good fortune to start flowing their way instantly are missing the point. As with any organization, you get back what you put in. Simply joining and expecting the benefits to fall from the sky is asking for disappointment. If you join, roll up your sleeves, jump in, and get involved. I guarantee that before long that butterfly will be there on your shoulder.

Student members can add a unique perspective to discussions within an association, and the organization benefits from the energy and volunteerism they bring to the table.
Interpreters provide a vital lifeline, facilitating communication in times of need. The complexities of language and cultural differences pose serious barriers for emergency relief personnel in assisting limited-English-proficient (LEP) individuals. The inability to communicate adds to the stress of disaster survivors and puts them at a higher risk for experiencing emotional trauma. Interpreters can help ease survivors’ sense of vulnerability and enable the response team to assess the situation and provide appropriate services more efficiently. Although rewarding, interpreters thinking of volunteering for disaster relief work need to understand what is involved. This article presents an overview of what interpreters can expect when working in traumatic situations, including symptoms of stress and coping strategies.

**Intense Working Environment**

Volunteers primarily assist individuals and families during an emergency by providing services in the community. This means that interpreters will most likely be assisting mental health professionals during crisis counseling. Disaster crisis counseling is a specialized service involving rapid assignment and temporary deployment of staff who must meet multiple demands and work in marginal conditions and in unfamiliar settings such as shelters, recovery service centers, and mass care facilities. These settings are often crowded, chaotic, and subject to constant change, especially in the first few days following the event. There may be long lines and wait times to receive services such as federal aid or food or clothing vouchers. Resources such as electricity, cell phones, faxes, computers, and copy machines may not be working or in limited supply. Maneuvering around the scene might also be difficult due to the presence of police or security checkpoints, as was the case at 9/11 sites. Due to the unpredictability of the environment, interpreters are likely to encounter individuals who are in a high state of anxiety as they try to return their lives to some state of normalcy.

In addition to helping ensure accurate verbal communication...
between survivors and the support staff from local and government agencies providing aid, volunteer interpreters might be called upon to translate written documents such as aid relief forms, brochures, and other basic documents, or to interpret information over the phone. If the need arises, they should also be prepared to help out in other, non-language capacities, such as serving food, clearing rubble, and accompanying emergency personnel on house checks. This type of work requires both emotional and physical stamina.

**Working Dynamics**

In a disaster situation, there are many limitations that are not present in a controlled clinical environment such as a doctor’s or psychologist’s office, making things much more challenging for both the mental health professional and the interpreter. For example, in a clinical setting, it is much easier for the interpreter and the mental health professional to take the time to discuss the objectives of the session. Topics might include the client’s background, symptoms, the range of treatment options and services, and any paperwork or tricky legal issues that might need to be addressed. When working in a disaster zone, however, such a consultation might not be possible. It is not uncommon for the interpreter and mental health professional to be thrown together with very little time to prepare before interviewing an individual.

It is necessary for interpreters to be conversant with how sudden trauma affects people so that they can adapt their approach accordingly. Unlike in a clinical setting, where an individual usually chooses to seek treatment for a condition, disaster survivors may not even realize they are in need of treatment. They may not understand their own symptoms or that the disaster may be aggravating already existing physical or emotional conditions. Even if there are no signs of physical injury, there is still an emotional toll. Survivors may be in shock or denial. They may put their emotional needs secondary as they struggle to secure the basic necessities for themselves and their families. In many cases, survivors’ primary goal is to get their lives back in order, which includes filing the necessary paperwork to receive the aid they need to accomplish this goal. Even if survivors are bilingual, their English skills may break down due to stress and anxiety.

The interpreter may be invaluable in providing insight to help promote better rapport and to reduce stress during the information gathering process. The interpreter may be the only person with an understanding of an individual’s or group’s cultural, religious, and socioeconomic background. Sharing cultural-specific information with the mental health professional may prove crucial in terms of being able to provide the most appropriate treatment. Misunderstandings can lead to intense distrust and alienation, which can be dangerous for the individual and the community. For this reason, it would be helpful for the mental health professional and the interpreter to take a few moments before talking to the individual to address the following areas:

- What are the goals of the interview/interaction (e.g., provide information on available services, assess the extent of emotional trauma)?
- If the individual was recommended for counseling by another member of the response team, are there any specific symptoms or concerns that were noted?
- Are there any issues that might be adding to the stress of the situation (e.g., political, racial, personal)?

These general questions can be applied to most cases, and they provide a simple structure for getting the most out of the interview (an important point, considering that time is critical).

**Understanding the Stages of Recovery**

Several factors determine the extent to which interpreters will be affected by the events unfolding around them. Perhaps one of the biggest factors is timing. There are
emotional phases and activities associated with each point in a disaster recovery effort. An interpreter arriving at the scene within the first few days after a disaster is likely to encounter a different scenario than the interpreter arriving several weeks after the event. The interpreter who understands the emotional and physical stress he or she is likely to encounter at the various stages of recovery will be better prepared for the rigors of working with individuals who may be overwrought and have many physical and emotional needs.

**Heroic Phase:** This phase typically occurs in the early days of the recovery effort, when the community is working long hours to make sure everyone is safe and to overcome the grave challenges the situation presents. As survivors struggle to begin recovery and rebuild their lives, the immediate priorities at this stage are to take care of survivors’ basic needs, such as gaining access to water, food, shelter, medical care, and security. Emergency responders are also dealing with those who may be experiencing shock, confusion, and anxiety, and with survivors who are distraught over missing loved ones. For example, after Hurricane Katrina, many evacuees’ cell phones did not work, causing anxiety over not knowing the whereabouts of family and friends, or even if they were alive.

**Honeymoon Phase:** This period can last up to six months after the heroic phase. There is generally still a great deal of chaos, but this is also when many resources are being sent to the disaster site to help those in need. This outpouring of assistance can help to create the illusion that the healing process will be quick. There might also be a sense of denial in the community over just how much aid is needed.

**Disillusionment Phase:** This phase can begin at any time when it becomes clear that either the resources are not forthcoming, not sufficient, or that the disaster’s impact was greater than initially thought. In this phase, survivors and responders may feel stress and frustration over community politics and governmental policies and procedures, disappointment that there may not be enough resources to restore lives to their original status quickly, or be overwhelmed by the fact that their lives will be forever changed by the event. Survivors are involved in assessing damage, cleaning up their homes, finding out what kinds of financial assistance they can secure, and grieving the loss of their pre-disaster lives. At this post-disaster stage, there may be more frustration and anger expressed alongside of sadness and grieving. If interpreters are working with an agency, the agency and all of its workers may be seen as sources of bureaucratic inefficiency, as uncaring, or even worse, as discriminatory. Interpreters need to understand that the emotion directed toward them is not personal, but an outgrowth of survivors’ emotions related to the disaster.

**Tips for Recognizing and Dealing With Stress**

Those who work as part of a recovery team need to realize that everyone is vulnerable to the psychological impact of a disaster. Even very experienced disaster responders can be traumatized. Interpreters’ expectations and experience, their physical and emotional health, their personal issues, and the amount of support available at the disaster site can mediate the degree to which they are impacted by the experience.

There are multiple stressors that frequently affect disaster responders. For instance, if this is a mass casualty event, emergency personnel will have to contend with especially traumatic scenes, such as relatives identifying the remains of loved ones or friends. Passing makeshift memorials covered with pictures of the missing or dead might become a daily occurrence. Other stress factors include:

- Working long hours with little rest between shifts.
- Working in an environment that is constantly changing. This can cause responders to feel a lack of closure, especially if they see the individuals they are trying to help only once.
- Separation from family and social support networks.
- Inability to share experiences or depth of feelings with loved ones.
- Interpersonal and culturally-based conflict among team mem-
bers who are forced into prolonged closeness and interdependence.

Continuous exposure to survivors’ traumatic stories and emotional distress can also lead to vicarious trauma. Vicarious trauma is a negatively changed sense of self that develops from close and prolonged work with traumatized individuals. This experience may result in a set of symptoms and reactions for the professional that parallel Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Signs of this can include fatigue and other physical ailments, distress, reliving the negative memories of interactions, and an altered world view.3

In some instances, responders may have lost loved ones or have significant losses of property, which will most likely affect their attitude and put them at even greater risk for over-identifying with the individuals they have been assigned to help. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy among rescue personnel, particularly when there may be limited resources to deal with the issues. Responders may think there is little they can do to help survivors, other than to listen to their suffering.

Vicarious trauma can eventually lead to burnout. Being aligned too strongly with the survivors can alienate members of the relief team, which can significantly impact an individual’s ability to feel comfortable seeking needed support. For this reason, it is important to be mindful of symptoms and reactions that can lead to burnout and long-term psychological issues, including exhaustion, irritability, cynicism, detachment, physical complaints, minimization and denial of feelings, confusion, and forgetfulness.

### Online Resources

**National Mental Health Information Center**
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/EmergencyServices

**American Psychological Association**
Managing Traumatic Stress:
Tips for Recovering from Disasters and Other Traumatic Events
http://apahelpcenter.org/articles/article.php?id=22

**Headington Institute**
Continuing Education Series
www.headington-institute.org

**U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs**
www.va.gov

**Publications on Mental Health & Disaster Issues for Responders**
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/disasterrelief/first.aspx

**Red Cross**
www.redcross.org

**Federal Emergency Management Agency**
Online Training for Volunteers
www.fema.gov/prepared/train.shtm

### Resilience and Managing Stress

Interpreters need to assess their own physical and emotional vulnerabilities carefully prior to accepting this type of assignment. For instance, an interpreter may want to reconsider volunteering if he or she is recovering from an illness or surgery. Similarly, if the interpreter has gone through an emotionally challenging life event, this is probably not the best time to volunteer, especially given the demands and the need to be
emotionally resilient.

Resilience has been found to be extremely helpful in coping with the vicissitudes of a disaster situation. The Headington Institute, a nonprofit public charity organization providing psychological and spiritual support for humanitarian aid and disaster relief personnel worldwide, has found a number of attitudes and behaviors that are highly correlated with resiliency. A positive outlook can help relief workers cope with the trials and tribulations presented by their working environment. Here are a few of the behaviors interpreters should cultivate:

- Have a strong sense of purpose.
- Have a tolerance for ambiguity.
- Set realistic goals for what can be accomplished.
- Have the ability to accept and learn from failure.
- Maintain a sense of control.
- Have confidence in one’s ability to deal with challenges.
- Be flexible.
- Be perceptive.
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Have a tolerance of differences.
- Have the ability to handle negative feelings.

Interpreters need to take control of their well-being while on assignment. Despite a heavy workload, it is imperative to maintain some semblance of a normal routine. Maintaining good eating and sleeping habits, exercising, not drinking heavily, and taking breaks during the day are very important for good physical and emotional stability. Other self-care suggestions include keeping a journal to record experiences and developing a support network to avoid isolation. Also, if there is a mental health professional onsite to assist responders, interpreters are urged to take advantage of this opportunity. Talking to a mental health professional about feelings of distress or other emotions is a way to help defuse emotions and gain new perspective. Recognizing how our thoughts feed directly into our reactions is perhaps the most fundamental of all stress management strategies. Any recommendations for reducing stress should be followed.

Helping Yourself While Helping Others

Working as a volunteer interpreter can have many rewards. It can create a sense of courage, community, and accomplishment, and be an opportunity to learn through collaboration, to solve problems creatively, and develop self-esteem. However, with rewards can come some personal costs that result from living and working in the midst of disastrous, violent situations and facing challenges that often seem overwhelming. By understanding this unique working environment, the challenges it presents, and the psychological impact it may have, the interpreter will be better prepared to become an integral part of the disaster responder team.

Notes


Members of the Northern California Translators Association (NCTA) have frequently requested information on computer-assisted translation tools and other productivity tools for translators, so NCTA’s board of directors thought this would be a good topic combination for an ATA seminar. The board suspected that ATA would have a pool of highly qualified presenters to offer, and they were right.

On March 14, 2009, nearly a hundred translators attended the seminar, which began with a continental breakfast and then quickly switched to even tastier tidbits, technologically-speaking.

Productivity Tools for the Professional Translator

The abstract for the morning session, led by Rosalie Wells, ambitiously stated:

“Professional translators should have a set of resources and tools that enable them to work more efficiently and produce better quality work. These tools can be divided into several categories: communication tools, organization tools, estimating tools, productivity tools, research tools, maintenance tools, administrative tools, backup tools, and security tools. Attendees will learn: how to prepare, evaluate, and convert different types of documents for translation; how to be mechanically more efficient during translation; what to save, delete, or archive and how to organize it all; how to become a proficient researcher; and how to bill the client.”
That is a lot to discuss in only three hours. While some topics, such as the business savvy part, got a bit less emphasis, others were covered at maybe too basic a level, such as those relating to e-mail. Rosalie did a good job of trying to keep a balance between the basic and more advanced information, but this is difficult with an audience of such diverse levels of knowledge. This is a common problem with these types of presentations, and we all just need to remember this when writing and reading presentation abstracts.

Rosalie stressed that as translators we need to be more tech savvy, not only to be able to work more efficiently, but also to be able to educate our clients. We also need to take care of our health. (If you ruin your back, hands, and eyes with ergonomically poor equipment and work habits, there is not much that productivity tools can do for you.) Also, with all the emphasis on high-tech solutions, it is easy to forget some low-tech ones, such as typing speed, that can increase your productivity considerably. However, if the Mavis Beacon typing tutorial is not sexy enough for you, try a voice recognition software tool, such as Dragon Naturally Speaking. If you need a non-English language version of the program, you might be able to get it cheaper from the country of that language instead of buying it from the American distributor, as was suggested by someone in the audience.

I have never been a big fan of the AutoText feature in Word, although this is mainly because I cannot remember my AutoText entries. In my translation work for Trados, I use MultiTerm pretty much for the same purpose. However, Rosalie shared a simple little trick to make the AutoText feature much easier to use regardless of whether you are using the Word feature or a separate auto-text utility, such as Robotype, which Rosalie called one of her favorite utilities. If you define the AutoText entries using the source language word/abbreviation, then you do not need to remember the target word. Just type the source word (or the Autotext abbreviation you have defined for it), and you get the full-length target word automatically inserted into your text. I still like my MultiTerm method because it is completely automatic, but Rosalie’s trick definitely makes it easier to use AutoText features.

Computer-Assisted Translation Tools

The abstract for the afternoon session, led by Dierk Seeburg, stated:

“This presentation complements the first part of this seminar by focusing on computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. You will learn about the different tool categories, their distinguishing features, and what sets them apart in their respective functional area. You will be introduced to a plethora of tools, including project management packages, terminology-related tools, word counters, localization applications, machine translation programs, and integrated translation environments. Whether your environment requires terminology management, quality assurance, file conversion, or integration with content management systems, this presentation will show you how to select the right tool for the job.”

I heard from several colleagues before the seminar that one of the main things they wanted to learn from this presentation was which CAT tool to buy. I assured them that is exactly what Dierk would be discussing. After the presentation, some of these people were happy and told me that they got the information they were looking for, and others were less happy and said that they were even more confused. What happened?

Dierk’s approach was to give us as much information as possible so that we could make a very educated decision on the most suitable tool. He even introduced the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis and some other decision-making models to help us in the process. In addition to all the background information on tools, file formats, and the translation technology in general, Dierk briefly introduced us to about 30 different CAT tools and explained some of the main differences/similarities among some of these programs just to give us an overview of the available options and the issues involved. During Dierk’s presentation, I realized how lucky I am to already have my CAT tool(s) of choice. The idea of having to choose among the many programs avail-
able today reminds me of a scene from the movie *Moscow on the Hudson* (1984), where Vladimir (Robin Williams) goes to an American supermarket for the first time and wants to buy coffee. The seemingly endless options of various types of coffee drive him to the brink of a nervous breakdown, and he crumples to the floor and yells “I just want COFFEE!” I could already see some of my colleagues on all fours screaming “I just want a CAT tool!” This made me think of a better way to help translators enter the world of CAT tools and make that important decision. I think Dierk did the best that one person can do in three hours for an audience of this size. However, my advice to all those who are still confused, unsure, or starting to feel

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### Useful Links to Translation Tools

**E-fax**  
Internet Faxing Online  
www.internetfaxingonline.com/which_internet_fax.htm

**File Renaming**  
BrotherSoft International  
www.brothersoft.com

**RenameWiz**  
www.renamewiz.com

**Revision Asset Management Systems**  
www.revision.com

**RN 1-4a Rename**  
www.1-4a.com/rename

**FTP Clients**  
Comparison of FTP Client Software  

**File Transfer Planet**  
www.ftpplanet.com/ftpresources/basics.htm

**Online Backup**  
Carbonite  
www.carbonite.com

**IBackup**  
www.ibbackup.com

**Iomega Portable Hard Drive**  
www.iomega.com

**Mozy**  
www.mozy.com

**Norton Online Backup**  
www.backup.com

**Searching Your Computer**  
Copernic Inc.  
www.copernic.com

**Google Desktop**  
(choose your language)  
Mac:  
http://desktop.google.com/mac  
Windows:  
http://desktop.google.com/index.html?ignua=1

**Document Types**  
www.file-extensions.org/search

**Sending Large Files**  
YouSendIt  
www.yousendit.com

**Voice Recognition**  
Dragon Naturally Speaking  
www.nuance.com/naturallyspeaking/products/default.asp

**Word Counts**  
AnyCount  
www.anycount.com

**Ginstrom IT Solutions**  
http://ginstrom.com/CountAnything/

**Global Rendering**  
www.globalrendering.com/download.html

**Surefire Software**  
www.surefiresoftware.com/totalassistant
like Vladimir is to come to the next ATA conference. That is probably the best place in the world to do comparison shopping among different CAT tools. Do your homework before the conference by talking to your clients and colleagues, and by checking what type of CAT tool training/workshops your local ATA chapter can offer. You might also want to visit the Translators Training website at www.TranslatorsTraining.com for some good comparison information. Then go to the conference and put the tools and tool vendors to the test. However, remember that there are no perfect CAT tools, but most of them will indeed make your translation work much more efficient.

Don’t Miss

September 12, 2009
Midwest Association of Translators & Interpreters Annual Conference
Indianapolis, IN
www.matiata.org

September 12-13, 2009
Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators Annual Conference
Nashville, TN
www.tapit.org

October 3-4, 2009
Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators 3rd Annual Conference
Atlanta, GA
http://aait.org/3rdAnnualConf_oct2009.htm

October 9-11, 2009
California Federation of Interpreters 7th Annual Continuing Education Conference
San Francisco, CA
www.calinterpreters.org

For More Information

Rosalie Wells
www.translationconsulting.com

Dierk Seeburg
http://icotext.wordpress.com/events

Jost Zetzsche’s Translator’s Toolbox
www.internationalwriters.com/toolbox

ATA Language Technology Division
www.ata-divisions.org/LTD

Ron Tischler
Ron has written an excellent review of this seminar.

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In these days of international mass transportation and communication, the need for rendering thought from one language into another increases rapidly. To handle the interchange at the mass level, thoughts have been reduced to the simple formulas of the lowest common denominator. The language of transportation, for example, leans heavily on signs which need no translation.

Without the aid of signs, some multilingual problems would be unmanageable indeed. “Fasten seat belts” cannot be posted in all traveler languages, in each airplane, but the conspicuous position and distinct flashing of the message may make translation superfluous.

But this mass internationalization of travel, entertainment, products, and technology demands a higher development of the art of translation than would have been adequate in the past. The thoughts and actions of people far removed from each other in space and time become important elements of our everyday lives. To communicate meaningfully across space, time, and custom, we rely on translators as our intermediaries. Let us not underestimate their task!

Translation requires much more than proficiency in two or more languages. It is an illusion to postulate that translation can be perfected to an absolute optimum by methodology alone. No single standard of translation can satisfy the wide range of requirements. In certain “purely technical” literature, it may be acceptable to correctly translate stated observations and events without concern about the author’s choice of words and tone of presentation. Even in science and technology, there are few absolute facts to write about. The overwhelming majority of technical reporting, oral or written, deals with opinions and fact-finding influenced by the way the data was collected. The nuances of supposition, approximation, and interpretation are reflected in the language used. In English, the addition of the single word “about” significantly alters the firmness of a statement. In some other languages, a similar intent might cause the author to use several sentences, thus deviously qualifying an earlier statement given as fact.

If much technical writing requires the translator’s empathy to get the real flavor of the story, this is even more pronounced in most other writing. For fiction and poetry, the translator becomes the dynamic operator of a complex system, in which the two languages are transmission channels at the system’s input and output, respectively. Not only must the translator act as a high-fidelity modulator between input and output. He must also sense the peculiarities of the author’s background, intellectual approach, style, and intensity of expression, and he must reflect these characteristics by making appropriate choices in the language of the translation. Probably no two authors in the same language can be treated quite alike into another language. Ideally, the translator should perhaps take on the author’s personality, and in this condition emerge in the thought world of the other language.

Some of the highest challenges to the translator’s empathy are found in the most humble environment. [...] Idiomatic expressions are difficult to translate, but it is precisely this idiomatic flavor which makes them interesting. The factual content of the message may be exceedingly trivial, but the way it is made may be very significant for the understanding of the people and the situation involved.

If translators will rise to the occasion, our shrinking world can use the utmost of their skill and ingenuity. By advancing international understanding, translators will have a much greater role to play than is generally recognized. They are the catalysts of our one-world concept.
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Business Smarts

The March Business Smarts addressed the question of what to do in response to a demand to reduce prices. Gordon Lemke of ITW Interpreting Services sent the following response:

Dear Business Smarts,

Regarding the March Business Smarts, “Getting What You Are Worth,” I would like to offer another perspective. I own and operate a telephone interpreting agency and received a letter similar to the one mentioned in the column. Our largest client asked for a 15% reduction in fees beginning in January of this year. Also, unbeknownst to us, in January this same client began to process its Spanish-speaking calls in-house. Our Spanish business, once the core of our business, has declined 57% in the first three months of 2009.

In order for me to keep seven employees and 120 interpreters working, I had to ask for a reduction in what I pay our interpreters. Are our interpreters now worth less? No, but the market has definitely shifted.

I would offer the following advice for interpreters or translators who are asked to review their fees.

1. Know the going rate for your services. As an agency, we try to track the market to stay competitive. We look at such sources as our county court system and what rates they pay interpreters.

2. Look at the uniqueness of your language. For example, look at how many Cambodian interpreters are listed in ATA’s online directories. A Cambodian interpreter can demand more than a Spanish interpreter.

3. Evaluate the relationship with your agency. Does it pay on time? Do you frequently have billing disputes? Our agency consistently pays interpreters on the first and 15th of each month, regardless if the client has paid us. Are you willing to risk nonpayment by a client?

4. Make an effort to visit your agency and meet the manager and owner. Our agency utilizes the skills of over 120 different interpreters. Being able to place a face with a voice on the telephone is very helpful in building a partnership with your agency.

The biggest negative I see to interpreters is the Internet. It does not take much to conduct an Internet search and discover others who will offer your same services at a lower cost. The challenge to an agency like mine is to focus on quality when searching for interpreters and to balance that with the cost.

Gordon Lemke
ITW Interpreting Services
Monrovia, CA

Dear Mr. Lemke,

Thank you for sharing your perspective on this matter. There is no denying that adaptation to new circumstances is an ongoing process for businesses of every size, especially in the current economic situation. Just as you had to respond to your client’s demand for reduced prices and were forced to make the resulting decisions, independent contractors must constantly adjust to the realities of the market.

When a client is no longer willing to pay fees that were previously acceptable, interpreters are not suddenly worth less, as you correctly state. However, they may have to devise new strategies to maintain their level of income and expand their business options. While it is impossible for a Spanish interpreter to suddenly turn herself into a Cambodian interpreter, she would be well advised to specialize in less common fields, improve her qualifications, and broaden her client base.

“Another option for Spanish interpreters is to perfect their skills so they can take the federal court interpreters exam and get certified,” advises Virginia Perez-Santalla, a Spanish translator and interpreter with many years of experience in the industry. “This allows them to quote federal rates when clients call. The federal certification upholds high qualification standards, which an interpreter can mention in response to requests for discounted prices.”

The ATA Chronicle
July 2009
Translation Tests Versus Translation Samples
(Posted March 14, 2009 on Riccardo Schiaffino’s About Translation, http://aboutranslation.blogspot.com.)

Translators often complain about translation tests, and ask why, instead, they could not just send out samples of their translations, perhaps one for each language combination, or one for each field in which they specialize.

There may be various reasons a translation company may prefer a translation test to a translation sample:

1. Often the purpose of the test is not only to evaluate the quality of the translation, but also to see how well the translator follows the instructions given with the test. For example, when I worked in the translation department of a major software company, we used tests to assess candidates for staff translator positions. The tests were short portions of longer documents (about 250 words to translate in a 750-word document), with clear instructions about what to translate and not translate, what to do in case of doubt, and so on. We rejected many candidates because they did not read the instructions. If I am looking for a technical translator and know that each project will come with detailed instructions, I want to screen out the translators who skip the instructions just because a translator has some sample translations.

2. A test translation lets the translation company see how each candidate solved specific translation problems, and to compare the quality of two or more different translations of the same source text. This is not possible with translation samples.

3. A translation sample lets translators present their best work. This is fine for them, but less useful for the company. A test shows you how you tackle the type of work the translation company would send you.

4. The quality control process adopted by the translation company may require a test. For example, most ISO-certified companies follow elaborate quality control procedures throughout the translation process, including the selection of freelancers. If this is so, they are not going to change their process just because a translator has some sample translations.

5. When you have to evaluate many candidates, the process goes faster when each test translates the same original, rather than having to shift gears every time and look at a different translation of a different original. A well-designed test represents a considerable investment of time for the translation company or translation department, including:
   - The time spent selecting the texts to be translated.
   - The time spent designing the test—choosing which parts of the text to translate, perhaps adding translation problems to see how they would be solved by the candidates, writing and reviewing the instructions for the test, and sending out the tests.
   - The time devoted to a first screening of all the tests received to see which can be dismissed.
   - The time spent assessing the tests.

Bear in mind that a well-designed test is not assessed by one person only. At the software company I mentioned before, two translators assessed each test, but when the two evaluations differed, a third evaluator also took part.

These are the main reasons a translation test may be more useful than sample translations. Of course, this applies only to tests that are well designed and well administered. Tests that are not well planned are a waste of time for all.

Related Blogs and Links

- Myths and Legends about Translation Tests
- Project Management Hut
  www.pmhut.com
- Thoughts on Translation
  www.thoughtsontranslation.com

(Note: This is intended for informational purposes only, not as an endorsement of an individual or company.)
Google went down for a few hours last week, and I am ashamed to say I caught myself feeling paralyzed. Rather than shrugging it off and using another search engine (believe it or not, they do exist!), I spent the next hour or so marking passages in the text I was translating as “to be verified” so I could work on the marked passages once Google was up and running again. Not until much later did I realize my tunnel vision and turn to one of the competing search engines instead.

It is scary how thoughtlessly and thoroughly we have come to rely on something that is so relatively new in our lives! (I will not even go into our reliance on the Internet itself!)

I was not the only one who went into a tailspin when Google went down. This was demonstrated by the appearance of hundreds of news articles later in the day (which, by the way, I found on Google News).

For better or worse, the fact is that we do seem to be wedded to Google, so I thought you might appreciate some Google-specific search tips.

Most everyone knows how to use quotation marks to find “that specific expression,” the + sign to force the search engine to include a specific word or expression in the search, or the - sign to specifically exclude sites that contain the succeeding word or expression. Here are some additional tricks (see www.google.com/help/features.html):

- If you would like to look only at Web pages containing the words “Chinese translation,” type: intitle:“chinese translation”.
- If you are interested in all Web pages that have the word “translation” in their URL (website address), type: inurl:translation.
- If you want to look only in the body text of websites (rather than the URL or the title), for instance, to find where your own Web page is quoted, type: intext:www.<the name of your website>.com.
- Unless you have one favorite online dictionary you always go to when you need a definition, you can also type: define:“translation memory”.

If those tricks did not really impress you, the next ones will:

- If you want to look only on one specific site for a term or a phrase, you can type: site:www.translatorscafe.com “translation memory”.
- Or, even better, if you would like to find something only on sites with a certain top domain, such as .de, .jp, or .museum, you can type: site:jp “translation memory”.
- And typing -site:com “translation memory” finds all sites that list content that do not end with .com.
- Oh, and then you can combine all these search masks, so that typing site:jp and filetype:pdf “translation memory” will tell Google to look for PDF files that mention translation memory within the top domain .jp.

A search engine is indeed a powerful tool. How about agreeing on a compromise. Let’s all decide to use tools like Google for all their glory and power, while at the same time keeping our minds open to other— and at some point even better—techniques and tools.

I just wanted to add that Google has released its Google Translator Toolkit (translate.google.com/toolkit). An article about this can be found at translationjournal.net/journal/49google.htm, and I will be reporting on it in the next few editions of this column as well.
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Call for Proposals
American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association
Fifth Biennial Conference
The Sociological Turn in Translation and Interpreting Studies

April 22-24, 2010
New York University
New York, NY

1. Presentations on all aspects of translation and interpreting studies are welcome.
2. Submit proposals (200-300 words) for individual papers as an MS Word attachment.
3. Include your contact information in the body of the e-mail, not in the file. Name your file with the first three letters of your paper title.

Papers will be divided into sections on translation/interpreting theory, research, pedagogy, and technology. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length, followed by discussion. There will be sessions on Friday morning, Friday afternoon, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon.

Deadline: October 15, 2009. Send your proposals to Claudia Angelelli, chair of ATISA’s Scientific Committee, at claudia.angelelli@sdsu.edu.

For more information, visit www.scps.nyu.edu/translationconf2010, or e-mail your questions to translationconf2010@nyu.edu.

www.scps.nyu.edu/translationconf2010
• **Francesca Caviglioni**, co-author of the fourth edition of *Lexique Risque* (Editions L’Argus de L’Assurance, 2008), announced that the book has been awarded the Mots d’Or de la Francophonie from the Association pour Promouvoir le Français des Affaires, sponsored by the French Ministry of Finance and the Société Française des Traducteurs.

• **Diane Goullard Parlante** received her master’s degree in French literature from Arizona State University (ASU) in Tempe, Arizona. She also received the Judith J. Radke Translation Award for academic achievement from ASU’s School of International Letters and Cultures.

• **Liliana Valenzuela** received four first prizes for poetry from the Austin Poetry Society. The poems and respective awards presented for each were: *Por el camino andamos* (Border/Lines Award); “She Should’ve Been a Nun” (Change Award); *Sirena Cósmica/Cosmic Siren*, translated from the Spanish by **Angela McEwan** (Mary Oliver Award); and *son cubano* (Spoken Word Poetry Award).
New Certified Members

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

**English into French**
- Louis Fortier
  Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada

**English into Russian**
- Aleksey A. Chervinskiy
  Fort Worth, TX
- Karl Marx
  Thornhill, Ontario, Canada
- Almira S. Safarov-Downey
  Seattle, WA

**English into Spanish**
- Laura C. Bissio
  Montevideo, Uruguay
- Gabriela M. Fernández
  Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Nadia Bondarczuk
  Buenos Aires, Argentina

**English into Ukrainian**
- Viktor B. Payuk
  River Grove, IL

**Russian into English**
- Shelley A. Fairweather-Vega
  Portland, OR

**French into English**
- Isabelle M. Berquin
  Winston-Salem, NC
- Andrew D. Levine
  Brooklyn, NY

**Active and Corresponding Membership Review**

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

**Active**
- Sarah E. Anderson
  Eastpointe, MI
- Farah Arjang-Yezvaei
  Marina, CA
- Mariam Massarat-Foudeh
  Los Altos, CA
- Issis Richter
  Jacksonville, FL
- Elena Sheverdinova
  Weston, FL
- Veronica I. Szabo
  Houston, TX

**Corresponding**
- Emily S. Tell
  Brooklyn, NY
- Jorge R. P. Rodrigues
  São Paulo, Brazil
- Rebecca L. Rubenstein
  Ventura, CA

ATA Certification Exam Information

**Upcoming Exams**

**California**
- San Francisco
  September 26, 2009
  Registration Deadline: September 16, 2009

**Georgia**
- Atlanta
  August 29, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 14, 2009

**Florida**
- Miami
  August 22, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 7, 2009

**Minnesota**
- Minneapolis
  September 12, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 28, 2009

**New York**
- New York City
  September 12, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 28, 2009

**Tennessee**
- Nashville
  September 13, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 28, 2009

**Georgia**
- Atlanta
  August 29, 2009
  Registration Deadline: August 14, 2009

**New York**
- New York City
  October 31, 2009
  Registration Deadline: October 16, 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.
## Upcoming Events

### September 12, 2009
Midwest Association of Translators & Interpreters Annual Conference Indianapolis, IN [www.matiata.org](http://www.matiata.org)

### September 12-13, 2009
Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators Annual Conference Nashville, TN [www.tapit.org](http://www.tapit.org)

### October 3-4, 2009

### October 8-10, 2009
Asociación ibérica de estudios de traducción e interpretación 4th Congress Vigo 2009 Borderline Translation Vigo, Spain [http://webs.uvigo.es/aietivigoinfo](http://webs.uvigo.es/aietivigoinfo)

### October 9-11, 2009
California Federation of Interpreters 7th Annual Continuing Education Conference San Francisco, CA [www.calinterpreters.org](http://www.calinterpreters.org)

### October 9-11, 2009
International Medical Interpreters Association Annual Conference Boston, MA [www.imiaweb.org](http://www.imiaweb.org)

### October 28-31, 2009

### November 9-13, 2009
Nevada Interpreters & Translators Association Connecting Worlds: Training for Health Care Interpreters Reno, NV [www.nitaonline.org](http://www.nitaonline.org)

### November 11-14, 2009
American Literary Translators Association Annual Conference Pasadena, CA [www.utdallas.edu/alta](http://www.utdallas.edu/alta)

### January 30, 2010
Miami Dade College Translation and Interpretation Program 5th Immigration Terminology Conference [www.mdc.edu/iac/_asp_root/forms/esl/register](http://www.mdc.edu/iac/_asp_root/forms/esl/register)

### April 22-24, 2010

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- Interpreters Division
  Interpreters Voice
  www.ata-divisions.org/ID
- Korean Language Division
  Hangul Herald
  www.ata-divisions.org/KLD
- Language Technology Division
  Language Tech News
  www.ata-divisions.org/LTD
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  Source
  www.ata-divisions.org/LD
- Medical Division
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  PLData
  www.ata-divisions.org/PLD
- Slavic Languages Division
  SlavFile
  www.ata-divisions.org/SLD
- Spanish Language Division
  Intercambios
  www.ata-divisions.org/SPD

Division membership is included in your ATA annual dues. Visit www.atanet.org/divisions/division_admin.php to join any or all ATA divisions without additional fees.
The International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) is committed to the advancement of professional medical interpreters as the best practice to equitable language access to health care for linguistically diverse patients. Founded in 1986, IMIA has over 1,500 members worldwide. Membership is open to all those interested in medical interpreting and language access.

Activities
• Works with universities, foundations, government agencies, and other organizations in such matters as best practices, training, and continuing education in medical interpreting.
• Offers a medical interpreter certification program.
• Provides technical assistance for the establishment of language access departments in medical institutions.
• Promotes and participates in research regarding cross-cultural communication in health care settings.
• Publishes monthly industry news brief, bulletins, notices, guides, and other publications.

Quick Facts
• Established: 1986
• Website: www.imiaweb.org
• Phone: (617) 638-1798
• Fax: (866) 406-4742
• E-mail: imiaweb@gmail.com
• Address: International Medical Interpreters Association 800 Washington Street Box 271 Boston, MA 02111-1845
• Maintains membership in professional organizations in related fields.
• Undertakes client education initiatives, such as provider orientation on language access and working with interpreters.
• Holds periodic meetings, including an annual conference (next conference: October 9-11, 2009, Cambridge, Massachusetts).

Benefits
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• Complimentary copy of Medical Interpreting Standards of Practice.
• E-mail notifications of job and training opportunities.
• Discount to annual conference.
• Participation in client education initiatives.
• Monthly international news bulletin and website updates.
• Annual job fair.

Additional Information
For complete information on what IMIA has to offer, please visit www.imiaweb.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.

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.
The Russian Standard Dictionary consists of two parts. The Russian-English dictionary is preceded by a list of geographic names and followed by a “Russian Cuisine and Menu Terms” section. At the end of the English-Russian dictionary there is an “Index of Geographical Names” followed by two appendices: Russian-English and English-Russian business terms.

According to the authors, the Russian-English dictionary “can be used by those who speak fluent Russian and by those who have just acquainted themselves with the Russian alphabet.” They go on to state that it “will be of interest and value to students of Russian, tourists, visitors to conferences, business men [more on typos later], and others who may simply want to understand Russian menus, theatre programmes, street – signs, notices, etc.” The English-Russian dictionary is “intended for those who do not have sufficient mastery of Russian.”

**Organization**

Each page is arranged in two columns. Parts of speech are indicated for all headwords. The symbols use the same font as the target terms they precede; this can confuse a novice. For instance, the English for *ctvm* appears as “num. seven.”

The first and the last entry are shown at the top of each column. This is very helpful for look-up, and a feature I have not seen in other dictionaries.

Another feature that distinguishes this dictionary is that “[e]very Russian word and sentence has been transliterated into English,” and “the pronunciation of Russian words is shown in Russian transliteration.” The back cover states that “[t]he easy-to-use phonetic system allows Russian speakers to pronounce words in American English.” However, for quite a few words, such as ask, basket, hot, job, command, doctor, dollar, laugh, master, past, rascal, top, vast, etc., the pronunciation shown is British.

**How Good is the Dictionary?**

When evaluating dictionaries, I use several litmus tests. For a dictionary to be a trusted and reliable tool, it must: provide accurate translations; list the most commonly used target terms, and, when more than one target term is given, explain the usage of non-synonymous terms; avoid ambiguities; use up-to-date terminology; and last but not least, and an obvious requirement, there should be no typos. Here is what I found.

**Accuracy:** Here are a few examples of mistranslations (more on the use of dashes later): бригадир – brigadier; училлище – college; cream-cheese – сливочное сыр; disposable – может быть использованным; fatality – несчастный случай (granted, смерть is also listed—as a “number two” option); ghostly – прозрачный (instead of призрачный).

**Multiple Target Terms:** Table 1 on page 42 shows examples of what is listed and what is not.

When several target terms are provided, their usage is not always explained. Table 2 on page 42 shows a few examples when an explanation might be helpful to language “newcomers.”

**Ambiguity:** There are two “sources” of ambiguity in this dictionary. A number of compound terms that in American spelling appear either as one word (e.g., bodyguard, infrared, plenipotentiary, subsection) or two (cream cheese, door curtain, drinking water, price list, tennis player), appear with a dash in the dictionary. Some compound terms have a “genuine” dash in the dictionary.
The dictionary is a 2005 “seventh printing” (the copyright is 1993) that on the title page simultaneously claims to be a “revised edition.” Regardless of the revisions that may have actually been made, a number of things that should have been revised were not. For example, Украина is still the Ukraine, although the article was officially dropped years ago. There has been no Czechoslovakia in Europe and no ACCP in the FSU for more than a decade, but they are still present in the dictionary. Interestingly, Slovakia is not listed. Also, why keep Gosplan, GPU, and the like in a revised dictionary?

“Up-to-dateness”: The dictionary is a 2005 “seventh printing” (the copyright is 1993) that on the title page simultaneously claims to be a “revised edition.” Regardless of the revisions that may have actually been made, a number of things that should have been revised were not. For example, (e.g., forward-looking), and some are just single-word terms (e.g., aerodrome). There is also liberal use of hyphenation. As a result, it might not always be easy for the dictionary’s intended audience to tell whether a hyphen is solely a hyphen breaking down a one-word term, or a dash connecting two parts of a compound term. Examples: aero-drome, broad-cast, north-east, lightning-conductor, printing-house.

“Typos: On this count, the dictionary also fails. Proofreading, if any, was nothing but sloppy. Here are a few randomly pulled examples: affirmativel, appeal, autono mous, be fore, business men, isfast, liagt (instead of light), meanwhile, spinel, wrap (instead of wrap), znale, neznamyj, orginё, you know. Чехо-Словакия, and the funniest of all, он, она, они Е.

Table 1: Multiple Target Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Term</th>
<th>Target Term</th>
<th>Listed</th>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>игула</td>
<td>plug</td>
<td>bushes; sleeve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>бензин</td>
<td>petrol</td>
<td>gasoline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>допуск</td>
<td>admittance</td>
<td>tolerance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>клиент</td>
<td>client</td>
<td>customer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>магазин</td>
<td>shop</td>
<td>store</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>окончание</td>
<td>termination</td>
<td>end; graduation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>парикмахер</td>
<td>hairdresser</td>
<td>barber</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>пол</td>
<td>sex</td>
<td>gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>скорость</td>
<td>speed</td>
<td>velocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>труба</td>
<td>chimney; trumpet</td>
<td>pipe; tube</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>худеть</td>
<td>grow thin</td>
<td>lose weight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>шестерня</td>
<td>cogwheel</td>
<td>gear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>franchise</td>
<td>право участия в выборах</td>
<td>франшиза</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insecure</td>
<td>небезопасный</td>
<td>неуверенный в себе</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notebook</td>
<td>записная книжка</td>
<td>ноутбук</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>printer</td>
<td>печатник</td>
<td>принтер</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Helpful Explanations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>комбинация</th>
<th>combination; slip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>вол</td>
<td>floor; sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>раздумывать</td>
<td>ponder; change one’s mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>семя</td>
<td>seed; semen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>шайка</td>
<td>gang; tub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>язык</td>
<td>tongue; language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>band</td>
<td>оркестр; бана; лента</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>интерес</td>
<td>интерес; процент</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>масса</td>
<td>масса; масса; процент</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speculation</td>
<td>размышлять; сектурировать</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Evaluation

This dictionary contains a number of other shortcomings, but I think what has been said here is sufficient to conclude that it has no place in a professional translator’s library. However, for someone solely intent on brushing up on their knowledge of Russian cuisine and menu terms, $1.30-1.89 (plus shipping) may not be too high a price to pay.

I am grateful to Lynn Visson for her valuable advice.

Notes

1. The dictionaries use British spelling.

2. For some reason, most compound terms are “dashed.”

Boris Silversteyn is a member of ATA’s Board of Directors and a past chair of ATA’s Dictionary Review Committee. He is a Russian and Ukrainian translator and interpreter specializing in science and technology, finance, business, law, and environment. He is an ATA-certified English Russian translator, and is a grader for ATA’s English Russian and English Ukrainian certification exams. Contact: bsilversteyn@comcast.net.
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New Queries

(E-B 7-09.1) Bone fractures in an English text are referred to as “open reamed,” “closed reamed,” and “open unreamed.” What has been going on with these fractures, and how do you render them in Bulgarian?

(E-D 7-09.2) This query sounds like it comes from an inventory of car parts. The tricky term here is “foundation brakes,” which comes from the following list: “foundation brakes,” “drum brakes,” “drums,” “disk brakes,” “rotors,” and “calipers.” With only that as context, can an accurate Dutch equivalent be found?

(E-H 7-09.3) The following appears in a marketing context, but it sounds as if protecting copyrights and trademarks is involved, so the context might be of a legal nature. The quote is “he works with enforcement authorities on brand integrity matters.” What is being written about here, and how might it sound in Hungarian?

(G-F [E] 7-09.4) Stark im Zeichen stehen is the troublesome part of this marketing sentence for which French is wanted. The entire sentence: Das Baugeschehen stand stark im Zeichen des aufstrebenden Tourismus. Indeed, what is this all about? English will be accepted.

(E-Sw 7-09.5) In a text dealing with glue and thickening agents, the term “one-part formulations” proved troublesome to a colleague working into Swedish: “XXX are advanced, one-part formulations that require no mixing or special application tools.” What are they?

(I-F [E] 7-09.6) Here, from the fine arts, is a text containing the puzzling term al rifiorire: Un vero monumento al rifiorire dell’officina di ispirazione antica, in cui la sapienza intellettuale e quella manuale, il sapere e il saper fare si fondono per farsi testimonianza concreta del celebre motto michelangiolicesco “la man che ubbidisce all’intelletto.” French and English are needed for this, please.

(I-Ro [E] 7-09.7) It is contract language, and the last two words pose a problem: la assemblea ordinaria procede alla nomina del presidente del collegio sindacale. Give it a try in English or Romanian if you can!

(Lv-E 7-09.8) Welcome aboard Latvian, which appears in this column for the first time on my watch! It is a medical query, and the problem term is jodofīla flora. The translator provided this explanation: Tālkoju laboratoriskas izmeklēšanas rezultātus un nevaru atrast pieiemērotu tulojumu šīm terminām.

(Sb-E 7-09.9) There is not much context for this query, as it is legal and contractual, but there is no way the Translation Inquirer is going to pass up his first chance for a query in Serbian: Ugovor o kupovini I prodaji bankovnih obveznica.

(Sp-I [E] 7-09.10) Puente doble is the stumper in this medical text: La interpretación que hicimos en ese grupo de cuatro médicos era que aunque si hubo unos resultados extraordinarios, el hecho que le hicieran un puente doble, era una forma de ayudarlo a mejorar, que al realizarle ese puente mejoró su circulación general, aunque no las arterias pequeñas, y el resultado fue bueno y por eso el hombre mejoró. We will take English for this.

Responses to Old Queries

(E-Gr 3-09.2) (respite options): Alexis Takvorian reports that a lot of the caregiving terms from the English
do not have an “easy” equivalent in Greek. This is because so many of the caregiving options available in the U.S. do not exist in Greece, where the families are still the primary caregivers of people with special needs, from kids to the elderly. This is changing rapidly, but they are still way behind in specialized terminology. Here are three ways to translate “respite options”: Επιλογές σανάπαυλας (more like “break options”); Επιλογές ανακωφιστής (more like “relief options”); and Επιλογές στήριξης (more like “support options”). Alexis’s suggestion in this case is to render the term as “options for finding temporary care” using the term Επιλογές εξασφάλισης προσωρινής ήρα νος.

(E-Po 5-09.1) (reflux line for a condensate): Piotr Graff likes linia zrzucaćowa for this. Expanding on that, he says his solution is based on the meaning of zrzuć to vomit, regurgitate), which involves the physiological concept of reflux. In addition, an autoclave is used for medical equipment, so we have come full circle.

(E-Sp 5-09.2) (walk in a heel-to-toe fashion): Elena Contreras-Chacel says that as used in kinesiology, this is caminar de la manera talón-punta or modo de caminar talón-punta, depending upon the context. A more extensive definition was found by D. Vilma Vosskaemper in Dorland Diccionario Enciclopédico Ilustrado de Medicina: marcha normal, no patológica, en la que el primer contacto con el suelo lo hago el talón y el último lo hacen los dedos. The Spanish phrase is given as marcha de talón y dedos. Caminar con los pies alineados might be an approximation, says Gonzalo Ordóñez, who points out that this is a useful term in areas other than kinesiology, including checking for driving under the influence.

(F-R [E] 5-09.3) (Loi informatique et Libertés): Article I of this law, according to Elena Contreras-Chacel, states: L’informatique doit être au service de chaque citoyen. Son développement doit s’opérer dans le cadre de la coopération internationale. Elle ne doit porter atteinte ni à l’identité humaine, ni aux droits de l’homme, ni à la vie privée, ni aux libertés individuelles ou publiques. So, in English, it would be the “Computer Science and Liberties Law,” and in Russian, Закон Информатики и свободы. Cheryl Fain consulted the official website of the French Data Protection Authority, and found that the words of the query are translated as “Data Protection Act.” For an unofficial translation into English of the act, she advises us to go to www.cnil.fr/index.php?id=4.

(G-E 5-09.5) (Dongle): This, according to Roger Volk, Chiara di Benedetto Brown, and John Cantrell, is a small piece of hardware that connects to a computer, and may be portable like a USB flashdrive. It is now widely used to refer to a broadband wireless adapter. Earlier, the word was used evidently as a verb (to authenticate a piece of software). Chiara, John, and Roger all found this on Wikipedia.

(G-E 5-09.6) (revisionssicher): Eric Wilson used Google to find that revisionssicherheit means “revision secure electronic archiving.” John Cantrell would translate the entire phrase as “documented in a read-only [or write-protected] form.”

(G-Sp [E] 5-09.4) (Einzeltypisierung): Using an Austrian website referring to automotive exhaust systems, Eric Wilson discovered that this means “individual typing.”

(I-G [E] 1-09.10) (premio di proroga): Claudio Cambon did much work on this to just let pass the context paragraph he found, which sheds light on the matter: Non potranno essere rilasciate ulteriori garanzie a quelle ditte in via Angelo inviate con lettera raccomandata – non abbiano pagato il premio di proroga relativo a precedenti garanzie non svincolate o che non abbiano procurato ancora la liberazione di garanzie relative ai contratti scaduti. His suggested translation of this will appear next month.

(Pl-E 5-09.7) (titulares): For Elena Contreras-Chacel, it is “appointed companies.” She thinks the text refers to companies that are entitled to do the job, that is, professional companies. With several available meanings to this word, says Gabe Bokor, it is difficult to tell which one fits in this sentence. It is probably “owners” (of the utility?), but more context is needed. Gabe has never seen titular used for a holding company. Gonzalo Ordóñez sees a need for a comma rather than a period in the original context sentence given on page 41 of the May 2009 issue. He translates it here as “the legally assigned entities.” In Brazil, these are the federal or state governments for the water services.

(Sp-E 11-08.12) (Omite manifestar que ella realiza una actividad remunerada y obtiene ingresos) See page 43 of the November/December 2008 issue for the full paragraph. Leonor Giudici says that there is no doubt that this sentence belongs to a divorce agreement of some kind, and that it means that the mother works and gets a salary. The sentence connected
by means of the conjunction “y” is redundant, since actividad remunerada implies being paid. The idea is that “X has failed to mention that Y has a job, and therefore a salary.” Sabine Michael: “The plaintiff requests that all spousal maintenance be the responsibility of the undersigned, but fails to mention that she is gainfully employed and receives an income.” Janis Palma: “fails to state that she is gainfully employed and has a source of income.” There is still more to this, but I will save it for a future issue. Just be patient.

(Sp-E 2-09.10) (estando pendiente de tramitar el título correspondiente): Shel Shafer suggests “The processing of the respective diploma is pending.” He assumes that the document acknowledges the student’s completion of the academic work, and that the diploma is forthcoming. Milena Waldron explains that the reason for the diploma still being “on hold” was that the calligrapher who wrote them was too old, and he was the only person authorized to write in the names, albeit in beautiful ink gothic calligraphy. It happened to her; but she admits there could be other reasons. Mercedes Guidici points out that the use of the gerund in this clause is incorrect, and there are a couple of misspellings. The problem with the translation, however, is that different countries have different school systems, and the names attached to the different educational stages may vary. The translation has to suit the target audience’s educational system. Sharlee Merner Bradley agrees with Mercedes about the differing national school systems, but says that acceptable English would be “the diploma for the degree is in the process of being issued.”

(Sp-E 5-09.8) (asamblea, consejo): The former is “assembly” and the latter “council,” says Elena Contreras-Chacel. To apply the contrast to an entity closer to home, Elena notes that the University of California has an assembly and an academic council. Gonzalo Ordóñez says that asamblea is a plurality of members, and is a big governing body representing faculty, administration, and students, while consejo is a restricted body, equivalent to the board of trustees in the U.S.

Nicely done, I say to all of you who responded to previous months’ queries! Thank you.

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

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

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Sometimes it is a small world, and that is the point of LinkedIn.
This column is based on various Internet postings, including those of The New York Times and the BBC.

In July 1969, test episodes of the children’s program Sesame Street were seen on a Philadelphia educational station. The first nationally televised episode ran in November of that year. Vila Sesamo aired in Brazil in 1972; Sesamstrasse in Germany in 1973; 1, rue Sesame in France in 1978; Улица Сезам in Russia in 1999; Rechov Sumsim / Shara’a Simsim in Israel and Palestine in 1998; and Takalani Sesame in South Africa in 2000. Children in more than 120 countries now see the show.

But non-American versions of the show are not just the American versions dubbed into another language. Instead, special content is created to suit the needs and governmental requirements of each locality. Palestinian and Israeli muppets can be friends on Israeli and Palestinian television, but Serbian and Albanian muppets are not allowed the same privilege on Kosovo television.

The Russian version took five years and $6 million to develop. During that time, armed gunmen drove the production company from its Moscow work space and nationalist politicians demanded to know why Russia needed television shows from America for its children to watch. Wasn’t American culture already well represented on Russian television with popular shows like Dynasty, Baywatch, and Beverly Hills 90210? But, in the 1990s, Russia, despite its tradition of animation and theater for children, had only one educational television show for the preschool set. Many educators thought it would be a good idea to prepare children for the joy of learning, but also knew that after seven decades of totalitarian rule followed by several years of economic and political uncertainty and a plummeting birthrate, it would be difficult. Obedience, solemnity, and duty seemed to be all that Russian children knew. Children who were asked to audition for the show largely sat back in their chairs and sang sad songs. And, before they could cheer up toddlers, the producers had to cheer up the writers, some of whom wanted to use the word депрессия (depression) to teach children how to use the letter А (D). But Улица Сезам finally went on the air. As in many non-American versions of the show, most of the familiar characters were replaced. For obvious reasons, Oscar the Grouch was out, but even Big Bird was replaced by an awkward and adorable doglike character named Зелибоба, who lives in the hollow of a gigantic oak tree.

It was not too long before American diplomats realized that Sesame Street is great propaganda for fostering good will toward the U.S. throughout the world. Of course, such propaganda works only if it is unplanned and coincidental, not if the show is obviously brought to you by the letters U, S, and A.

The propaganda value of the show was undoubtedly diminished when American psychological operations officers, intent on encouraging Iraqi prisoners to submit to questioning, subjected the prisoners to repeated playings, at ear-splitting volume, of the show’s theme music. The U.S. Army, by the way, is one of the financial supporters of the Children’s Television Workshop, which produces the show.

Other U.S. agencies also support the show. The Agency for International Development is sponsoring the production of Sesame Street for viewers in Bangladesh to “promote greater understanding of American morality and culture” among that nation’s considerable Muslim population.

Charlotte Beers, Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy, warned a Senate committee that the “people we need to talk to do not even know the basics about us. They are taught to distrust our every motive. Such distortions, married to a lack of knowledge, is a deadly cocktail. Engaging and teaching common values are preventive medicine.” Fortunately, there is “an army willing to be signed up to engage the world on behalf of the United States,” an army led by Bert, Ernie, and, Russian fear of gloominess notwithstanding, Oscar the Grouch. Beers said that in Egypt, “The children are glued to the set. They are learning English, they are learning about American values.”

One such value is sexual equality. The Egyptian version of the show, with the agreement of the Cairo government, has a puppet named Khokha (Peach) who wants to be an astronaut or doctor.

Some show segments promote capitalism. On American television, Merrill Lynch has sponsored Elmo’s explanation of business to preschoolers, and, even on Russian television, there is a story line about a lemonade stand, showing that it is possible to “make a profit and be a nice person.”

But some American values are not welcomed everywhere. In South Africa, where there is a huge AIDS problem, the show introduced an HIV-positive puppet named Kami. There was no problem in South Africa itself; Kami was a big hit on Takalani Sesame. But a group of American Republican politicians were moved to issue a letter demanding that such an outrageous character never appear in the United States.

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