In this issue:
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12 How Do You Do That?  
By Ewandro Magalhães  
(Translated from the original Portuguese by Barry Slaughter Olsen)  
Explore some counterintuitive processes that make simultaneous interpreting possible and learn the answer to a question that has puzzled interpreters for ages—but the answer may surprise you.

15 Translating Informed Consent: Methodological and Ethical Issues  
By Eric S. Bullington  
Informed consent is a critical ethical component of modern research involving human subjects. Accordingly, the translation of informed consent forms is critical to valid and ethical cross-cultural and cross-linguistic research studies.

21 A Closer Look at the Cosmetics Industry and the Role of Marketing Translation  
By Agnes Meilhac  
The language of cosmetics is a blend of technology and creativity. Translators working with marketing copy for cosmetic products are challenged continually to draw on their creative resources and knowledge.

26 Project Manager: The Maestro of Every Translation Project  
By George Rimalower  
Much like an orchestra conductor, a project manager must carefully guide the finest professionals in their craft to create a finished product that will be enthusiastically received by its audience.

Columns and Departments

6 Our Authors  
7 From the President  
8 From the President-Elect  
9 From the Executive Director  
30 The Entrepreneurial Linguist  
32 Blog Trekker  
34 GeekSpeak  
36 Member News  
37 Certification Exam Information  
38 New Certified Members and Active Member Review  
38 Success by Association  
39 Upcoming Events  
40 Dictionary Review  
42 The Translation Inquirer  
44 Humor and Translation  
46 Directory of Language Services
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The ATA Chronicle  ■  April 2010
Who do we want to be when we grow up? Should translators and interpreters aspire to the position of doctors and lawyers, or maybe plumbers? Physicians and attorneys enjoy lots of lobbying power, a high level of respect, and very good earning power. Plumbers may be a notch lower on the prestige scale, but anyone who has paid for an emergency toilet repair knows that they make pretty good money, too. But are they really who we want to resemble?

In pursuits such as medicine and law—and, yes, plumbing—acquisition of a large and codified body of knowledge is a prerequisite for entering the profession. Everyone who completes that uniform education can be assumed to possess the same standard capabilities. This common “basic training” then serves as a foundation for future specialization and for the development of individual skills, but those who are just starting out tend to display more similarities than differences.

We translators and interpreters, conversely, resemble one another not because we all went through the same curriculum, but because we all possess a particular talent: we have the same wiring, the same “ear.” Beyond that shared ability, we may differ quite radically with regard to the languages we know and the subject areas with which we are familiar. We may end up applying our talents to almost every field of human endeavor—law, medicine, technology, literature, finance, and business, to name only some of the broadest categories. As a result, we each offer a very distinct palette of abilities and services that no one else can match exactly. As compared with other professionals, we are far more diversified: each of us develops a specialty, and a potential clientele, that becomes literally unique. We make no claim to breadth (“any language, any subject”), and instead offer depth (Jane Doe translates only financial material from Korean, and makes a good living at it). That specialization gives rise to a feature of our line of work that surprises and delights almost everyone who encounters a group of translators and interpreters for the first time: we love to share what we know. Specialization turns competitors into colleagues.

One of ATA’s purposes is to nurture our diversity while unifying us as practitioners of a subtle and demanding art. Although our language- and subject-based divisions, for example, give a particular group of specialists a sense of solidarity and cohesion, we are all also members of a single association: we may be different, but we are not separate. Despite the present economic gloom, ATA’s membership roster continues to grow precisely because we offer something for everyone, and because our differences make it easy for us to help and support one another. That sounds like a good role model for all of us.

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Role Models

Our differences make it easy for us to help and support one another.
From the President-Elect
Dorothee Racette
dracette@hughes.net

The Power of Networking

When you look back on your most rewarding and interesting assignments of the past years, you may discover that they have one thing in common: they came to you by word of mouth or direct referral, and may never have been advertised in any public forum. In spite of electronic databases and directories, word-of-mouth referrals remain one of the most powerful factors for getting new business and advancing your career. That is the reason networking—meeting face-to-face with colleagues and recruiters—is of such importance.

We have made networking a special planning priority for this year’s ATA Annual Conference in Denver (October 27-30, 2010). Listed here you will find some of the many networking opportunities you will have as a conference attendee.

Networking with your peers: The conference is an ideal place to connect a face with a name you may have seen online many times, or to introduce yourself to colleagues working in the same language combination. In addition to receptions, there will also be ample time between sessions to chat in the hallways, catch up with old friends, and hand out your business card to new contacts.

Networking within divisions: As a new feature this year, the divisions will hold a free Open House to allow division members to gather in an informal setting and explore what each group has to offer. Whether you belong to one or more divisions and make active contributions, or whether you are curious about what divisions do, this event is for you!

Networking with recruiters: As always, the Job Marketplace will have tables available to display your résumés and cards. Many exhibitors specifically choose to have a booth at the conference so they can meet new linguists and recruit translator and interpreter talent.

Networking with your clients while you are away from your desk: Many attendees at last year’s conference in New York commented on the need to have a free Internet connection in their hotel room so they could continue their regular business activities. As a result of our negotiations with the hotel, conference attendees staying at the Hyatt Regency will have complimentary wired Internet access in their sleeping rooms.

The conference hotel in Denver is an ideal fit for our group. Denver is a young, cosmopolitan city with a welcoming atmosphere. The Hyatt Regency hotel on 15th Street is relatively new and features spacious meeting facilities in a great setting. The hotel is just a block away from the 16th Street pedestrian mall, which offers a wide variety of eateries and shops and is well-connected to the public transit system.

Many thanks to everyone who submitted a proposal for this year’s conference program. In the coming months, the team of reviewers will prioritize the sessions and work to build a balanced program that offers something for everybody.


“After I attended my first conference, I was quite upset with myself for not doing it sooner. I would have become a better translator as well as gained more clients (and more money) earlier than I did.”

ATA member Ted Wozniak
ATA Business Practices Discussion List, February 14, 2010
ATA Membership Works for You

ATA membership works in a number of ways, but there are two direct ways that it puts money in your pocket: ATA’s online directories and ATA’s Member-Provider Program.

Find a Translator or Interpreter: ATA’s online Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services and Directory of Language Services Companies are two of the most visited pages on ATA’s website. Potential purchasers of translation and interpreting services access these directories to find the right translators and interpreters for their jobs.

For 2009, ATA’s website (www.atanet.org) recorded:

- 3,591,537 page views
- 535,822 visits
- 294,105 unique visitors

You can see the website draws a crowd. We also know that visitors to the website follow through on their searches. Over 60% of the members say they have gotten a job from their online listings. Remember, while the directories are open and the searches are free, only ATA members may be listed. The Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services is for ATA individual members (no student members are allowed). The Directory of Language Services Companies is for corporate members only.

If you do not have your profile included in the directories, please do so at: www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/update_profile.php. In addition, if it has been a while since you updated your profile or tried some changes to increase your chances of being selected, you can do so at the same link. You may also want to consider incorporating some of the top search fields, as listed in the box below.

ATA Member-Provider Program: As for ATA’s Member-Provider Program, there are some new offerings to help you

Continued on p. 14
In Memoriam
Thomas Wilds
1925-2008

(Special thanks to Nina Wilds and the ARMA International Educational Foundation for providing information for this tribute.)


Thomas was born in Detroit, Michigan, on September 19, 1925. He attended the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where he earned a BA in Oriental languages. His primary working language was Japanese, but he also studied Chinese and Russian. In 1950, he received two master's degrees from the University of Michigan in Far Eastern studies and history. In 1955-1956, Thomas took courses in records management and archival science at American University, later enrolling in the Graduate School of Business at New York University, where he studied marketing, accounting, and management. He would later work as an adjunct professor of management at the Management Institute, New York University.

Thomas served in the U.S. Army during World War II, from January 1944 to July 1947, earning the rank of first lieutenant. As a Japanese linguist, he was stationed for a year in Tokyo, then spent six months in Seoul, Korea, as a translations and intelligence officer. During the Korean War, he was a captain in the Military Intelligence Reserve. From 1950 to 1954, Thomas was employed as a civilian military historian in the Office of the Chief of Military History for the U.S. Army in Washington, DC, where he researched captured Japanese documents and helped write the Army's official history of the war with Japan.

Thomas worked as a records analyst for the Maryland State Hall of Records in Annapolis, where he organized a records retention and management system and administered the state's microfilming program. He then joined Union Carbide Corporation in New York in 1956, where he worked as an internal management consultant responsible for the corporation’s records retention program.

In 1958, Thomas founded Asia Translations, Inc., which specialized in technical translations and abstracting, mainly of Russian, mainland Chinese, and Japanese scientific literature and patents. In 1969, he founded Thomas Wilds Associates, Inc., a management consultant firm. In this context, he served some of North America's largest corporations and patent law firms as a translator, expert witness, and consultant.

Thomas was both a certified management consultant (Institute of Management Consultants) and a certified records manager (Institute of Certified Records Managers). He was very active in the Metropolitan New York and Connecticut Chapters of the ARMA International Educational Foundation, a funding resource for research and scholarship in the field of records and information management. He served as president of the Association of Records Executives and Administrators, as a director of the Society of American Archivists, and as president of the International Records Management Council.

Thomas is survived by his wife, Tatiana Wilds (who worked as a Russian-English technical translator from the 1960s to the 1990s); a daughter, Nina Wilds; and his two grandsons, Ben and Eric Roth, all residents of Massachusetts.
ATA’s Member-Provider Program

Professional translators and interpreters need uncommon answers to common business problems. Some ATA members found their own answers by developing products and services specific to the translation industry. Now, through ATA's Member-Provider Program, these members are making their products and services available to ATA colleagues at a discount.

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The conference opens with an address in a foreign language. The speaker launches headlong into a highly complex subject at breakneck speed, in language that is replete with terms whose spelling I can only guess, most encoded in an alphabet soup of acronyms. To make matters worse, he insists on cracking jokes as culturally-specific as they are untranslatable.

Settled into my booth at the back of the room, I diligently repeat every word, every idea, in my own language. I simply cannot stop moving my mouth. My head is adorned with a pair of headphones and a microphone that make me look like a pop star. Isolated from the audience by a glass partition, I am often the target of the occasional fleeting glance from spectators who cannot help but turn around.

The speech ends, and a lively question-and-answer session ensues, forcing me to interpret the audience’s questions into a foreign language and the speaker’s answers back into Portuguese. Fifteen minutes later, the linguistic shootout is suspended for a merciful coffee break.

I breathe a sigh of relief as I set down my headphones. I slip out of the booth and an enormous sense of freedom washes over me. Still somewhat dazed and without a clear recollection of the past 30 minutes, I weave my way through the crowd that has inundated the lobby. By the buffet table, a woman approaches me. She has a headset in her hands and probably a still vivid memory of my voice.

Interpreting is about making decisions, and good decision-making depends not on the volume of data available, but rather on our ability to extract the most meaning from the thinnest slices of reality.
in her ears. I anticipate a complaint and scan her face for any sign of dissatisfaction. But to my surprise she congratulates me on the clarity of my interpreting and then follows up with a question that has been nagging her since the beginning of the conference: “How do you do that?”

The Storytelling Problem

In his thought-provoking book, Blink, Malcolm Gladwell talks about what he calls the storytelling problem. He says human beings “are a bit too quick to come up with explanations for things we really don’t have an explanation for.” We are uncomfortable with not being able to find rational explanations for what we do or feel. We are left with a disturbing sense of uselessness, the impression that things happen by chance, that our performance is the result of random variables beyond our control. Unable to deduce logical conclusions from evidence, we feel frustrated. And to escape that frustration, we tell a story. We devise our own hypothesis and arbitrarily accept it as fact, soon clinging to that “fact” as a way of giving meaning to what we do. We are not trying to conceal anything, nor are we pathological liars. It is simply part of being human.

For years, Andre Agassi, one of the greatest tennis players of all time, credited the success of his forehand technique to an almost imperceptible turn of his wrist when hitting the ball. Precise digitized imaging, however, shows something else entirely. His wrist only begins to turn long after he hits the ball. Despite the evidence, it would be hard to convince him otherwise. He feels that way. Yet, he is wrong. The wrist rotation is simply the story he tells himself.

Like tennis, much remains to be explained concerning simultaneous interpreting. We do not know for sure which neurological phenomena make it possible for the brain to coordinate so many processes at once. It is as if the brain splits but at the same time remains more connected than ever. And if it does actually split, it certainly does not just split in two, but rather into multiple parallel brains that work on thousands of concurrent tasks that we are hardly conscious of or not conscious of at all.

Gladwell sheds new light on this phenomenon, exposing an adaptive unconscious that reasons at high speed while relying on minimum information. The adaptive unconscious is what allows us to make these snap decisions. It operates according to a mechanism of its own, invisible to that part of our brain that wants explanations for everything. But it works behind a locked door. It is fickle and reserved. It does not take kindly to invasions of its privacy, nor does it offer up its secrets freely. It works best when left alone. It cannot be drowned out by rational analysis, and it does not like being asked “why?”

Interpreting is about making decisions, and good decision-making depends not on the volume of data available, but rather on our ability to extract the most meaning from the thinnest slices of reality. Always in a race against time, interpreters live under pressure and cannot always afford the luxury of collecting large amounts of information. They have to do more with less. They must edit, limit the number of options available, and forgo lengthy word-choice processes. They have to be economical and objective. They have to be frugal. The adaptive unconscious allows them to do just that.

Matters that involve what we would call insight follow a different set of rules. In these cases, thinking—that is, conscious thinking in a traditional sense—usually bogs us down. A classical guitarist is capable of executing from memory complex pieces learned through systematic practice. Yet, after a long period of inactivity he will have a difficult time remembering a solo in its entirety. The first chords will come with ease, but at any moment his fingers may get lost, and the rest of the piece just will not be there. When that happens, reproducing the melody in one’s head or analytically studying the fretboard does little to bring back the lost notes. The solution musicians have discovered is to repeat the section they can remember over and over while deliberately trying to ignore the music. When they stop consciously trying to remember, as they relax and focus their attention elsewhere without thinking or wondering why, the music returns. The hand comes alive and it is the fingers that do the remembering. But in order for that to happen, the rational mind must be turned off. The door has to be shut. The brain must be locked out.

Even so, a word of caution is in order. Our unconscious mind may be autonomous and have a life of its own, but it does not always get it
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Thank you for being an ATA member.

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From the Executive Director  Continued from p. 9

right. It requires the cognitive environment previously created by our conscious effort. It relies on previously directed effort, systematic training, specific preparation, and accumulated experience. Left to its own devices, without the counterpoint of reason and traditional knowledge, our unconscious tends toward more immediate stereotypes. It opens the door to our preconceptions, which quietly begin to dictate our decisions and preferences based on false premises, leading us to decisions that we ourselves do not understand. Left alone, our intuition also fails us.

Interpreters often receive information from sources they are unable to identify. There are things they remember through conscious memorization and analogy. Other pieces of information come from a different kind of memory, where the mere sound of a word in a foreign language seems to unleash inferences that automatically lead to its equivalent in the other language. Sometimes a nod of their booth mate’s head or an almost imperceptible expression of the eye is all it takes to save them and bring just the right phrase to the fore. A casual reading of the program of a professional conference, minutes before it begins, or a careless stroll through the exhibit hall, can be the perfect complement to hours of preparation the night before. In a sense, by need as well as intention, interpreters learn partly by osmosis, extracting as much as they can from broken conversations and texts, in a hodgepodge of random elements that surprisingly come together during the ensuing conference.

The Answer

As it turns out, our intuitive mind extends beyond our brain and at times even does without it. Our unconscious perceives and processes many signals that our rational mind cannot. It reaches under the surface and breaks down a complex picture into minimum units of meaning, the thinnest slices of the whole, getting as close as possible to the basics, to the DNA, if you will, of a situation. And it brings us information coded in almost instinctive impulses to act.

In the interpreting booth, this process can take various forms: an unusual sense of comfort with a speech or a speaker, an almost telepathic rapport with your colleague in the booth, that wonderful feeling of being able to read the mind of another person, at times even guessing what she has to say. This is when we are able to shake off the literalness of a speech and reconstruct ideas with our own vocabulary, expressing them as we normally would. This is when we are really interpreting, spontaneously and accurately, thanks to our surprisingly complete—and again inexplicable—understanding of a subject previously inaccessible to the uninitiated.

We have this ability to read body language, to derive solid inferences out of thin air, to discern intuitively the intention behind a speech, to finish a sentence based on the feeling it inspires than on the words used to phrase it. We just have to think without thinking, balancing between the rational mind and that mysterious part of us that can make the impossible seem surprisingly trivial. We have the ability. We can do it. But what can we say about how it is done?

According to Joshua Aronson, one of the researchers quoted in Blink, “people are ignorant of the things that affect their actions, yet they rarely feel ignorant.” I could not agree more. Ultimately, how is it that we interpreters are able to do what we do? Over the years I have gathered many clues, some of which I tried to hint at here. But perhaps all I have done amounts to little more than storytelling.

In an effort to answer the question posed by that kind woman during the coffee break we shared so long ago, I have tried a number of keys to unlock the door. Despite my best efforts, it is still closed. All that is left is for me to accept Aronson’s counsel and admit that the most honest answer I have to her question still is simply “I don’t know.”

Notes

The concept of informed consent has played an important role in the modern world of research and medical care ever since the horrors of Nazi experiments on captive "patients" during World War II and the Tuskegee syphilis study conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service from the 1930s until 1972. In the intervening years, most medical and public health bodies have made a concerted effort to avoid these types of ethical violations by creating laws and regulatory bodies to shield research subjects from abuse. From the outset, informed consent has been a fundamental component of this movement to protect human subjects.

What is Informed Consent?

While the definitions for this concept can run paragraphs, even pages, a succinct description of informed consent is the agreement granted by a patient or subject to undergo a medical or surgical treatment or to participate in an experiment after the individual fully understands the risks and benefits involved. Informed consent differs from simple consent, which occurs when a patient agrees, verbally or by action, to undergo a procedure or treatment. Researchers secure and document informed consent with the informed consent form (ICF). Although the content of ICFs can vary considerably, most consent forms used in biomedical research follow a standard format that features the following elements:

- Title
- Purpose and background
- Procedures
- Risks and discomforts
- Benefits
- Alternatives to participation
- Confidentiality
- Cost of study
- Emergency treatment and compensation for injury
- Compensation
- New findings
- Withdrawal
- Questions
- Consent

These sections are typically included to comply with the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46.116, which governs the protection of human research subjects, including the mechanism of informed consent. The website of the National Institutes of Health Office of Human Subjects Research features comprehensive guidelines on writing informed consent documents.

The translation of ICFs may seem like a straightforward activity to non-translators. However, even if we

Translating Informed Consent: Methodological and Ethical Issues

By Eric S. Bullington
confine our discussion to the translation of consent forms used in clinical research, we still encounter many different situations that require informed consent, each one calling for a different methodological approach to the translation of the accompanying ICF. Since a description of all these scenarios is beyond the scope of this article, we will focus on the ethical issues and methodological challenges encountered during a forward translation of ICFs for domestic use. Prior to delving into specific examples, it would be helpful to review certain general translation methodologies that are applicable to any type of ICF.

Methodology

Although some research has been conducted on the translation of ICFs, very little information is available concerning the specific methodologies, approaches, or processes followed by translators as they carry informed consent information across linguistic and cultural boundaries. However, a large body of peer-reviewed research does exist on the linguistic validation of health-related questionnaires and other instruments, much of which deals with the translation of questionnaires for cross-cultural research. There is reason to believe that the research done on these study instruments and its accompanying methodologies can be applied to the translation of ICFs, namely:

- In both cases, the population in question is composed of research subjects.
- It is critical for subjects to understand everything written in both research instruments and consent forms, although the reasons for this differ (research validity in the former versus legality and ethics in the latter).

Very little information is available concerning the specific methodologies, approaches, or processes followed by translators as they carry informed consent information across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

- There is often significant overlap between the concepts contained in research instruments and ICFs, since whatever topic is under study will be described and/or discussed in both documents.
- The World Health Organization Ethics Review Committee uses the same guidelines to evaluate both study instruments and informed consent forms.4

As a result of these similarities, one possible methodological approach to the translation of informed consent draws heavily upon research done in the field of linguistic validation of health-related questionnaires. Frequently described in this research is a translation methodology that emphasizes multiple types of equivalences between the source and target texts: linguistic, functional, and cultural.

First and foremost, a translator’s most obvious task when translating ICFs is to establish linguistic equivalence between the source document and the translation they are creating. Linguistic equivalence is something all translators deal with on a daily basis when ensuring that the words of the target language match those in the source language, that the syntax in the target text equals that of the source text, and so forth. However, it is important to realize that linguistic equivalence alone is not sufficient for a valid translation of informed consent. The problem with linguistic equivalence in isolation is that even if the words in the source and target ICFs are the same, certain differences between the texts may lie hidden, which could result in the research subject reaching a different interpretation of their consent than the one intended by the study investigators. Accordingly, as when translating any other research instrument, functional equivalence and cultural equivalence should also be considered when translating informed consent information into other languages.5

Functional equivalence refers to the translation method whereby a translator attempts to convey the intent of the writer in the source language, rather than strictly expressing the form of the target language. This meaning-based approach is particularly important in the translation of ICFs into languages that have no exact equivalents for commonly used research concepts, such as “consent,” “confidentiality,” or even “research” itself. For example, in their article on cross-cultural informed consent in a study involving the Navajo, Melvina McCabe and her colleagues describe how the most direct way to translate “research” in Navajo carried the implicit understanding that “investigators could take information for their own personal or professional gain,
Avoid Rejection: Tips to Follow When Preparing a Translation for Internal Review Boards

Many internal review boards (IRBs) have their own guidelines concerning translations, but here are some common pitfalls to watch for that could lead to an IRB rejecting the translation:

- Many IRBs require that there be no affiliation between the individual performing the back translation and the research team. Therefore, a translation agency must ensure that the back translator has no existing affiliation with the research team (unless this has been cleared by the client).

- Many informed consent forms (ICFs) feature lists of items where the order is significant. Be sure to retain the order of the items listed in the translation.

- Translators must make sure to have an updated CV or résumé to submit to the client or agency. The client or agency is usually required to submit this information to the IRB along with the translation. Agencies need to be sure that they have all their translators’ qualifications on file, including CVs and résumés.

- Translators should reflect carefully before agreeing to translate ICFs for studies outside their area(s) of expertise. Even though most of the text in ICFs is standard and repetitive, the “purpose and background” and “procedures” sections will describe the therapy under research in detail, so translators need to be comfortable with the terminology and concepts used in that therapeutic area.

- Be sure to duplicate the approximate reading level of the original consent form in the translation. The general rule of thumb followed by the National Institutes of Health calls for consent documents to be written so that they are “understandable to people who have not graduated from high school,” even though some IRBs specify reading grade levels ranging from sixth to eighth grade.

- Finally, take care to maintain the register of the source text in the translation. Be aware that cognate words between languages may not share the same register. For example, many words of Latin origin may sound like “medicalese” to English-speakers, while their cognates in the Romance languages may have a much lower register.

Cultural equivalence deals with how the members of a given linguistic or cultural group view or interpret the implicit meaning of a concept. For example, if one population views the concept of confidentiality as being a positive attribute, and another population interprets confidentiality as being something shameful or bad, then the translator must find a way to overcome the lack of cultural equivalence implicit between the two concepts of confidentiality by using words that convey the appropriate emotions.

**Scenario: Translating ICFs for Domestic Research**

Conducting a clinical trial in a multiethnic and multilingual society is frequently a challenge, and research carried out in the U.S. is no exception. Per U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations and U.S. Food and Drug Administration codes, most hospital and industry internal review boards (IRBs) prohibit the exclusion of non-English-speaking subjects from research studies, except in those rare cases when there is a valid scientific reason for doing so. This makes sense from an ethical perspective, since failing to offer access to a potentially therapeutic intervention to a specific population is clearly discriminatory. Such an approach is also a poor execution of scientific method, since the exclusion of a given population could pose a threat to the study’s external validity (generalizability). Unfortunately for researchers, enrolling non-
English-speaking (NES) and limited-English speaking (LES) subjects in a study can be problematic, especially since federal regulations also require that informed consent information be presented “in language understandable to the subject” and documented in writing. Accordingly, large-scale clinical research in the U.S. frequently requires the translation of any ICFs associated with that research into one or more languages, although there are certain cases when a shortcut called the short form ICF may be used, as discussed in the next section.

Short Form Consent Documents
If an occasional need exists to enroll subjects who speak less-common languages and whose linguistic requirements cannot be anticipated, most IRBs allow a written short form version of the informed consent form to be used to obtain consent in combination with the written IRB-approved English version of the ICF. In this case, the short form ICF, which includes the basic elements of the full ICF, is translated into the language in question. Whenever a LES or NES subject fluent in that language is recruited into the study, the study interpreter must orally translate the entire IRB-approved English version of the consent form to the subject “in a language understandable to him/her.” The subject must then be given a copy of the previously translated short form consent document to read. Many of the larger university IRBs have drafted short form consent templates and translated them into multiple languages. These excellent resources can be found by entering “short form,” “informed consent,” and the name of the target language into an Internet search engine.

Consent versus Assent
Another important factor to keep in mind is that in order for an individual to give consent, he or she must have the legal capacity to do so (i.e., must be a competent adult; the legal guardian or representative of an incompetent adult; an emancipated, married, or mature minor; a parent or legal guardian of a child; or an individual obligated by the courts). Individuals who have the cognitive capacity to provide informed consent but are not legally old enough to do so are said to be able to provide “assent.” IRBs may require researchers to obtain assent from children ages 5-15 years old (or older, depending on the state) before enrolling them in a research study. When translating such assent forms into another language, the translator should be particularly aware of the register and reading level of the source document and strive to replicate them in the translation.

A translator’s most obvious task when translating informed consent forms is to establish linguistic equivalence between the source document and the translation they are creating.

What Does All This Mean for the Translator?
First, it means that the translation must be approved by an IRB at some point, either directly or indirectly. Since English is invariably the language used by IRBs in the U.S., and since most members of IRBs can only directly evaluate ICFs submitted to them in English, the forward translator’s work can only be evaluated through what is called a back translation. In this process, a forward translation is passed on to a second translator, who translates the form into the other direction, resulting in a back translation. A back translation is essentially done so that individuals who do not speak the target language, such as members of an IRB, can assess the validity of the translation. If you are responsible for the back translation from another language into English, an IRB will evaluate your work directly. However, if you are responsible for the forward translation to be used among NES and LES study subjects directly, the IRB can only evaluate your translation indirectly, through the back translation.

If you are the forward translator, this means that you are effectively translating for two audiences, the first and most important being the study subjects who will use the ICF. But you are also creating a translation that will be read and translated back into English by a second translator. A good translator will want to produce a translation that will be understood properly by the subject, but also one that can be rendered back into English in such a way that the IRB will approve the translation. Translating for these two different target audiences can sometimes result in signifi-
cant tension in the translation process, since the literal translation is not always the one that best captures the meaning of the source text, as discussed earlier in the methodologies section. (See also “Avoid Rejection: Tips to Follow When Preparing a Translation for Internal Review Boards” in the box on page 17.)

Additionally, keep in mind that before any translator lays eyes on an ICF, the English-language document has already been meticulously examined and approved by an IRB. Accordingly, the work of both forward and back translators is surrounded by ethics committees on either side of the translation process, which means that there is a very limited role for creativity from either translator. As a result of both of these issues, most translation agencies and direct clients will request a more literal back translation whenever there is any doubt.

Because of this and other issues requiring a high degree of professional judgment, it is critical for research teams to use experienced professional translators and translation agencies, preferably ones with expertise in the subject under study. These translators and agencies will be able to call upon their skill and experience in order to find the appropriate middle ground between a literal translation and one that is readily understood by research subjects. This same dictum applies to other informed consent scenarios not reviewed here, such as the translation of ICFs for use in overseas research as well as the back translation of ICFs used overseas. Regardless of the scenario, it is critical to recognize the influence of translation upon the informed consent process, and to choose translation suppliers accordingly. As Temple and Young write in regard to the validity of the final outcomes of research: “The translator always makes her mark on the research, whether this is acknowledged or not....” As in most human endeavors, the quality of a translated ICF depends on the background and skill of the individual performing the task. Accordingly, this is an excellent opportunity for a careful, well-prepared professional translator to shine.

Notes


What can be said about translating marketing copy for cosmetics companies? Anyone will agree that the cosmetics industry has generated an important sub-field of technical translation with a language all its own. It would not be an understatement to say that this is a very interesting field, though some might not consider it as challenging as, say, financial or legal translation. Even so, translators venturing into this field will face a variety of challenges sure to make their work an intellectually stimulating and rewarding experience.

From Past to Present

Cosmetics have been around for a long time, the notion of beauty enhancement having taken shape with the earliest civilizations. In the Western world, the advent of cosmetics came about in the Middle Ages, but the scientific manufacturing of perfumes and beauty aids did not begin until the Industrial Age, toward the end of the 1800s. The industry became truly established in the 20th century, and has experienced an impressive upsurge in growth within the past two decades.

Today, the three most significant factors defining the cosmetics industry are its level of globalization and the importance of exports, dependence on research and development and innovation, and heavy use of advertising. Each of these characteristics has a significant impact on translators specializing in this area.

It is the translator’s job to help sell cosmetic products across international boundaries and cultural barriers. To translate creative marketing documents that convey finely honed scientific messages, the translator continually wears two hats, combining leading-edge research and marketing tools to recreate a specific parlance. The language of cosmetics is the industry-specific jargon used to define and sell products to consumers. It is shaped by the very elements that characterize this booming multi-billion dollar market, one of the few sectors in the global industry...
landscape with steady growth rates, at least until the current downturn. Like many consumer products, cosmetics have undergone an important phase of globalization, transitioning from a market in which many small businesses sold products domestically to one consisting of “global brands” marketed worldwide by a small number of large international corporations. Geared toward exports, the industry’s marketing strategies are hence heavily dependent on multicultural communication, and translation is an inherent part of the process.

From Competition to Innovation The cosmetics industry exists in a fiercely competitive environment, in which the top 10 multinationals controlling over half of the market are continually challenged by smaller companies sprouting all over the globe. Large and small companies alike spare no effort to roll out new products consistently based on new expertise and new science. Research and development and technological innovation are the driving forces behind sales.

Innovation in the field of beauty has delivered such products as waterproof mascara, anti-dandruff shampoos, light-reflecting pigments that conceal under-eye shadows, and sun care creams that protect skin against harmful ultraviolet rays. But most markets are now saturated, especially in North America and Europe, where consumers are inundated with a plethora of products based on very similar concepts. So the marketers’ ultimate goal today is to make cosmetic products unique and distinct, advertising adds the element of glamour and sophistication that helps drive the scientific message home. The cosmetics industry is notoriously ranked as one of the highest ad spenders. Perfume and cosmetics companies spend an average of 19.2% of their net sales on advertising. By comparison, the ad/sales ratios for pharmaceutical companies and wireless communications providers are 4.2% and 3.1%, respectively.

Innovation in Language The combination of science and advertising in the marketing mix to sell beauty products results in an interesting linguistic phenomenon that places dual demands on the translator. The combination of science and advertising in the marketing mix to sell beauty products results in an interesting linguistic phenomenon that places dual demands on the translator. The language of cosmetics is a blend of technology and creativity. It is replete with linguistic structures that include borrowings from science as well as the use of neologisms, creative compounds, buzzwords, and catchphrases that are typically found in advertising and glamour industries. Used to outline carefully the product’s defining “universe,” the language becomes an inherent part of its essence and outer package. It must be precisely worded to appeal to a predefined target population of consumers and also represent accurately the brand’s image. Ultimately, product language breaks down and simplifies scientific data in order to make it not only attractive but also comprehensible.

The “Gimmicks” Loanwords The most striking aspect of cosmetic copy is the large number of loanwords from science. Twenty-five years ago, the average consumer had never heard of *exfoliation*, *dehydration*, or *keratinization*, at least not in the context of beauty. But cosmetics manufacturers have sought the endorsement of the medical profession for decades. Medically inspired products appear more “serious” and “safe” to a certain category of consumers. Today, techno talk—including *cell regeneration*, *immune protection*, *collagen depletion*, stem cells, growth factor, free radicals, anti-oxidants, DNA, and coenzymes—is readily accepted by savvy, well-versed cosmetics buyers used to being exposed to increasingly more sophisticated claims.
otics) in terms such as biomolecular eye serum, microtechnology bio active foundation, pro-collagen cream, microsmoothing face serum, and a bio-stimulating night cream with microlift.3

**Coining New Terminology**

New word formations are a natural consequence of innovation. Scientific discoveries require the coining of new terms to describe them just as technological breakthroughs in all other industries spawn new vocabulary in a similar way. In many ways, exploring the world of cosmetics is not any different from making the journey from phonograph records to cassette tapes, to CDs, and now to MP3s.

One former cosmetic neologism we may not recognize given its widespread use is moisturizer. More recent coinages include crepiness, Botox-like, cosmeceuticals, nanoparticulate, and skin restorer. And how about crow’s feet wrinkles, worry lines, laugh lines, marionette lines, and oral commissures? These are all terms formed specifically to denote types of lines and wrinkles for use in cosmetic surgery and beauty care lingo. As cosmetic science explored the mechanism of skin aging in greater detail, the language of cosmetics was similarly enriched with extrinsic/intrinsic aging, photoaging, premature aging, chronological aging, biological aging, genetic aging, and even myo-aging (a customized term invented by L’Oreal for the launch of its Myokine line of skin care).

**Creative Compounding**

Creative compounding is another form of new word formation that is highly prevalent in the language of cosmetics, particularly in the form of adjectives. Examples of compounded words forming new meanings include skin-tensing, body-enhancing, figure-slimming, lipids-replenishing, radiance-boosting, pore-clarifying, and acne-prone. Most of these adjectives turn out to be verbal adjectives. In fact, as a general rule, verbs and verbal...
adjectives are extensively used in cosmetic copy to help underline product activity and results. Consumers do not buy so much the product as the benefits and results it can provide, and verbs are all about action. Consequently, all types of written and oral communication about cosmetic products are packed with verbs.

**A Closer Look at the Cosmetics Industry and the Role of Marketing Translation Continued**

The language of cosmetics is the industry-specific jargon used to define and sell products to consumers.

A lot of these verbs follow an “up” and “down” movement, whereby one group is intended to express the idea of reducing the damage to the skin (e.g., wrinkles, sagging, puffiness, or more underlying collagen depletion) and the other the notion of improving the skin’s natural capital (e.g., youthfulness, elasticity, firmness). So, on the one hand, we will see such terms as eliminate, reduce, diminish, minimize, remove, reverse, correct, soften, relax, and, on the other, we will see boost, enhance, stimulate, invigorate, optimize, energize, and brighten. In short, a product is defined by how it can eliminate the negative and enhance the positive.

In English, verbs with the prefix re-, meaning repetition or modification with intention to produce a better result, are one of the sub-groups of verbs often used in cosmetics: rebuild the cutaneous barrier; restore elasticity; restructure cellular cement; replenish moisture reserves; renew the skin’s youthfulness; rejuvenate, reactivate the night-time repair process; retexturize, refinish, and refine the skin’s surface; regenerate damaged cells; rebalance the skin’s deep hydration; and redesign facial contours. These verbs are important because they refer to making improvements, and that is exactly what cosmetic products are selling.

**Catchphrases and Buzzwords**

Catchphrases and buzzwords are also used to construct sales pitches carefully. They follow market trends and reflect continually changing consumer demands. For example, peace and relaxation are at the forefront of consumer concerns today, paving the way for buzzwords such as renewal, refreshing, nourishing, invigorating, effortless, rejuvenating, youth-enhancing, and replenishing. Buzzwords used to present products as glamorous high-end status items include premium, prestige, luxury, chic, opulent, premiere, and exclusive. Products backed by science will be described with such terms as revolutionary, innovative, breakthrough, high-performance, technologically advanced, potent, patented, and dramatic/spectacular results.

**In Conclusion: A Two-Step Approach**

Of course, none of the terms discussed here are used randomly. They are part of a carefully constructed, finely-tuned message intended to “translate” technological expertise to make it more consumer friendly. And herein lies one of the interesting aspects of translating cosmetic copy. The process of translation takes place on two levels. First, the core science is reworded by marketers into a language that can be understood by an average consumer (this could be referred to as intralingual translation). Later, in a second phase, the translator steps in to perform an interlingual act of translation aimed at a culturally separate population. This two-tiered translation process, however, implies quite clearly that the translator be knowledgeable about scientific ramifications and nuances at each level of communication. In addition, translators in this field must call on creative resources to comply with the purpose of the message they are translating. This will ultimately sell the product.

**Notes**


Sometimes it is a small world, and that is the point of LinkedIn.

E-Networking with ATA

The ATA group on LinkedIn provides an ideal starting point for online networking. It also offers you contacts for individuals outside ATA who are connected to your fellow ATA members. Joining the ATA group on LinkedIn is a fast track to building your e-network.

What is LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a free e-networking service that helps you create an online community of links to new contacts, prospective clients, and great jobs. Through a LinkedIn network you can discover inside connections and reach the clients you need to meet through referrals from people you already know and trust. Your professional relationships are key to building your business.

How Does It Work?

Begin by inviting colleagues and clients to join LinkedIn and connect to your network. Next, add to your community by searching LinkedIn for professional contacts you already know and inviting them to connect to you. Then, post a profile summarizing your professional accomplishments, associations to which you belong, schools you have attended, and places you have worked so that former business associates, co-workers, and classmates can find you and connect. Each connection expands your network. The result? Your network now consists of your connections, your connections’ connections, and the people they know, linking you to thousands of qualified professionals.

Jump Start Your Networking with ATA

Take advantage of your ATA membership. Joining LinkedIn through ATA gives you an instant community with opportunities to grow your network quickly. Don’t wait—get your online networking underway! To join, just visit www.atanet.org/linkedin.php.
A translation project’s life begins when it is assigned to a project manager. A project manager is much like an orchestra conductor. Just as a conductor must communicate the notes, music, and tempo of any given musical piece effectively to orchestra members, project managers must do the same with their team members. And just as an orchestra will not perform at its best if its conductor lacks the competence and ability to express passion and enthusiasm for a piece, a translation project team will fail without a competent project manager to guide the process.

Project managers run the show. They must interact with clients, linguists, vendors, sales staff, and an assortment of consultants—the professionals they retain to create a great project. The desired result is a first-rate product. Taking the conductor analogy one step further, there are many ways to play a Beethoven symphony. The conductor must be able to express to the musicians the desired outcome, or the concert patrons (in our case, translation clients) will leave disappointed.

What Makes a Good Project Manager?

Ideally, project managers should be college-educated with degrees in languages, linguistics, or project management. Project managers should be bilingual because multilingual individuals typically possess sensitivity to language issues that others may not. Excellent written and oral skills and flexibility are crucial. Even so-called “easy” projects inevitably take 90-degree turns, so successful project managers cannot crack under the pressure of unrealistic expectations and ultra-tight deadlines. They should be team players, willing to work with the
It is up to the project manager to know the capabilities and capacity of each potential member, and to make selections based on what is best for the project.

The Big Picture

The project manager’s ability to pick the right team members, understand client needs, create realistic deadlines, and price a job correctly is imperative to the success of a project. Often, the project manager has tools available to help standardize both the process and the interactions of team members. However, a clear and complete understanding of the underlying course of action is essential to the success of the translation. The following provides an overview of some of the key responsibilities a project manager can expect to undertake, along with some of the skills necessary for success.

Creating a Cost Estimate

Project managers prepare for a project by talking to the client, assembling the proper team members, and creating a budget. First, however, they must prepare an accurate price quote. This includes analyzing the source document for content, volume, and the intended target audience. End product and deadline requirements are also taken into consideration. A properly prepared estimate means costs are commensurate with billings. It is crucial that the analysis of the project be accurate. Therefore, it is not unusual for a project manager to

Points to Remember for Project Managers

- Project managers have to have excellent written and oral skills.
- Project managers must be flexible.
- Project managers need to be team players, willing to work with the client, staff, and colleagues.
- Project managers need to be up to date on the latest translation trends, software packages, and programs.
- Project managers need to know the capabilities and capacity of each potential member of a translation project team, and to make selections based on what is best for the project.
- Project managers must communicate regularly to provide excellent client service.
- Project managers have to respond with conviction when a client makes requests that may compromise the integrity of the translated document.
- Project managers should conduct an internal post-project analysis to find out what went right and wrong in order to improve internal processes and prepare for future requests.
spend days working on a proposal and estimate. Many translation companies, especially in their early years, have underestimated a project’s scope and paid the financial price, so allowing sufficient time to review all the elements of a project is essential.

**Building the Project Team**

Once a client agrees to the terms of a project, the project manager selects members for the project team. Whatever subjects a project involves, a skilled project manager builds a team that meets the unique needs of the specific project.

On a recent translation project for the financial industry, for example, a translation provider was tasked to translate documents containing a multitude of technical terms and concepts related to finance. It was critical for the concepts to be communicated clearly so the client would not be exposed to potential litigation. However, the source document (English) was not only being used to educate consumers, but to attract new clients. Thus, the translation company used two sets of linguists. The first team of translators was experienced in marketing, while the second team had expertise in finance. After the first team completed its translation, the second team reviewed it to ensure that the document represented the financial ideas presented by the client clearly and accurately.

It is up to the project manager to know the capabilities and capacity of each potential team member, and to make selections based on what is best for the project. In-demand translators and linguists often carry full workloads. Therefore, the project manager must determine if the demands of other projects a translator is working on could mean that the individual could miss deadlines or cause the end product to suffer. A project manager’s task is to identify the best translators, editors, consultants, terminologists, designers, and proofreaders for each project, so it is imperative for potential team members to be up front about their turnaround abilities, technology expertise, and current and future workloads.

Translations need to preserve the integrity of date representations, measurements, acronyms, currency, and file naming conventions. While team members are accountable for these kinds of project elements, ultimately, final responsibility falls on the shoulders of the project manager. Project managers must grasp the big picture while attending to the tiniest detail, simultaneously keeping clients happy and the personalities of team members in sync.

**Managing the Project**

Well organized project managers are able literally to switch gears and languages at the drop of a hat. Translations into just one target language can easily require the coordination of five or six team members for shorter projects, and many more players for lengthier ones. When projects require translation into multiple languages, the team could mushroom into 50 or more members. Add in coordinating a focus group, and the numbers swell even more. Much of the success of a project can be attributed to the project manager’s sound coordination efforts, regardless of the project’s size.

Focus groups and project testing are often required to make sure that the register, terminology, and cultural content of the translated material is appropriate for the target audience. For example, a translation geared to a group of doctors at a medical conference will be different than one targeting a prison population. While the subject matter may be similar for both groups, the translation will differ.

**Communicating with Clients**

Ongoing communication is key to providing excellent client service. Clients who have positive experiences with a project manager will request the same manager when a new project arises. With languages, clients put their trust in the project manager to deliver a product that conveys the messages needed in a manner the end user understands.

**Educating Clients**

Client types run the gamut from those who are thoroughly familiar with how the translation process works to complete novices to the translation world. This is why the project manager must gauge the level of client knowledge and communicate project status based on the client’s
familiarity with translation. The project manager is the single point of contact for the client, although occasionally the project manager will ask team members to participate in client meetings to share their expertise. Clients appreciate project managers who have the expertise to anticipate potential challenges and the ability to solve problems immediately as they arise before the client points them out. These actions go a long way toward winning a client’s long-term trust.

It is also up to project managers to address questions about the accuracy of the finished product when issues are raised at the client’s end. Project managers have to respond with conviction when a client makes requests that may compromise the integrity of the translated document. While it is always important to keep the client happy, it is equally important to keep the client “safe.” It requires the skills of an articulate project manager to explain to a client why certain terms, expressions, or styles will not work on a specific project.

While it is always important to keep the client happy, it is equally important to keep the client “safe.”

Working With Upper Management

Upper management must provide the project manager with the resources to complete the project successfully, including support staff and technology. Positive reinforcement is also important, which comes in many forms. Formal and informal training on management techniques, new technology, and regulations affecting translation should be offered so project managers remain on top of their game, as well as the latest industry trends. The language services provider should standardize processes as much as possible to maximize the time a project manager spends managing the project. The standardization of tasks aids in quality control.

A project manager must work in a supportive environment and always be encouraged to ask for guidance or assistance when an issue arises. Project managers should feel that the work they do is appreciated. Most importantly, upper management should empower project managers to get the job completed and not undercut their authority. Management should give recognition for good work and troubleshoot with a project manager if a job can be performed better. After a project is finished, feedback is important, not only from the client but also from team members. For example, an internal post-project analysis to find out what went right and wrong is essential in order to improve internal processes and prepare for future requests.

The Unsung Hero

A project well done, just as an orchestra piece well played, will deserve the accolades it receives. Moreover, the project manager should be in the forefront to take a well-earned bow.

Related Links

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www.lisa.org

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Project Management Source
www.projectmanagementsource.com

Society for Technical Communication
www.stc.org
Do we really need more sports analogies? Enough with hitting it out of the ballpark, throwing a Hail Mary pass, being out in left field, getting a hole-in-one, and moving on to the major leagues. I am a bit tired of the tendency to pepper business speech with sports analogies, but I could not resist writing about tennis and translation.

The idea for this column came to me after one of the interviews I gave earlier this year. It included a question that I had not thought about for some time. The interviewer made a connection between my brief background in competitive tennis and my translation career, and asked me what I had learned from my life in sports and how I applied that to my business. I was a top-ranked junior player while growing up in Mexico City, and dabbed in professional tour tournaments while in high school. I quickly realized I was not nearly good enough to make a decent living playing professional tennis, and took a full scholarship to play NCAA Division I tennis. The interviewer then asked me if I was afraid of giving away all my “secrets” by writing columns, writing a book, and giving advice on a blog. That is something I had never thought about. I am delighted to share what I know with anyone who is interested and who finds it valuable, and I am constantly learning from others (teamwork!). After I reflected on this, I realized that just like in competitive sports, there are no secrets to being successful in our business or any business. No secrets: just hard work.

If I had a magic recipe for being successful in both sports and the translation business, I would gladly share it with my colleagues, as I want all of us to be successful. However, while there are plenty of tips, tricks, and best practices to share, there are no secrets. After 20 years of playing tennis and 12 years in the translation world, I have discovered quite a few similarities. We all need to work hard to achieve our goals, whatever they might be. For me, that is working with direct clients who pay my rates, appreciate my work, and with whom I have long-term collaborative working relationships. Putting in the work to get there is tough, and not everyone with the same goal is willing to do it. Did I enjoy spending five hours, six days a week, working out in sweaty clothes for the better part of 10 years? I did not enjoy it all the time, but I knew I had to do it to have a shot at achieving my goals. Analogous to that: is it always rewarding to spend hundreds of hours on new client acquisition, marketing strategy, and networking? It is time-consuming and sometimes frustrating. More than anything, it is a challenge that comes with no guaranteed rewards. Just like tennis, simply because you want it and put in the hard work does not mean you will reach your goals. Whatever your goal is—and this is a very individual decision—realize that it most likely will not come easily, but that just like in sports, (almost) anything is possible.

Luckily for those of us who want to grow our businesses and acquire more direct clients, the talent element that is necessary to succeed in sports is negligible. While talent is important in tennis, think about the great Austrian tennis players, the late Horst Skoff and Thomas Muster. Skoff, who was a very likeable guy, arguably had more talent than Muster. On the other hand, Muster, who was not known for making friends, worked infinitely harder and rose to be number one in the tennis world. While certain character traits come in handy in the business world, most of us already have those: perseverance and professionalism. Hence, it really is a mostly equal playing field for all of us.

Let’s look at the tennis-translation similarities in—you guessed it—tennis terms:

**Serve:** Analogous to finding new clients. It is the first step; the way to start business or to get new business. You know where to find it: by marketing yourself, by networking, by getting out in the community, by having a good online presence, by integrating work into your life and life into your work. You never know where your next customer might come from. It is painful, and it is hard, and you might have to change your grip, your swing, or the way your feet are positioned. You might even have to

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**Yahoo! Business Discussion Group**

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

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This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors. Ideas and questions should be directed to judy.jenner@entrepreneuriallinguist.com.
learn how to do a better ball toss. You might have to get out of your comfort zone and do some ridiculous-looking serving drills against the fence. The serve is the one shot you have total control over, so make the most of it.

**Backhand:** If you are like the majority of players, this might be your weaker shot, analogous to your translation or business Achilles heel. For me, that is negotiation, which is something I need to work on continuously. Not surprisingly, I have gotten better. The “secret”: You will need to hit thousands upon thousands of backhands to get better. There are no shortcuts, no magic potions, and no supplements that will make you significantly better, and you will not need those gadgets to stabilize your wrist that they sell on the Tennis Channel (I just saved you $20). You will not be able to avoid hitting thousands of balls.

**Forehand:** If you are a baseline player, which most of us are, this will be the basis of your game. You will cover a lot of ground, you will run a lot, and it is the bread and butter of your game. If all else fails, I can still hit cross-court forehands somewhat close to the baseline all afternoon. In my business, this is analogous to your default area of specialization; something you are really good at, that you do frequently, and that you really enjoy. You keep it fresh, interesting, consistent, and good by fine-tuning it. How about shortening your swing or strengthening your legs in the gym to make your forehand more explosive?

**Footwork and speed:** This is analogous to, well, the speed with which you can translate or run your business in general. Let’s think about it as general efficiency. You should not just work harder, you should also work smarter. I do not have to run 500 lines (an infamous tennis drill) if I run 50 lines at maximum effort. Getting better at running a business more efficiently and effectively requires innovation, open-mindedness, research, adopting new technologies, repetition, and a lot of discipline. I did not wake up one day doing 400-meter sprints in less time than it takes me to log into my wireless Internet. It takes hard work and is a continuous process, and we can all do it. In your translation practice, consider making investments in your efficiency, including translation memory tools, new software tools, upgrading your computer, and moving from paper dictionaries to CD-ROMs.

**Your opponent:** Here tennis differs a bit from business, because you can indeed control your opponent to a certain degree. After all, he or she responds to the balls you hit and vice versa (savvy tennis player readers: we will exclude serves from this). In business, there is relatively little you can do to influence what your opponent, or your competition, does. I prefer to think of them as my colleagues. What you can do is form great relationships, create wonderful teams, ask for honest feedback, and enter into synergistic relationships with fellow professionals in your industry. We are all stronger together, and there is enough work for all of us. At the end of the day, I would rather win the sportswoman award than the under 35 trophy. At all times, be sure you can look your opponent in the eye and shake her hand.

**The tournament:** Unless you play sports at the professional level, tournaments are organized mainly by nonprofit organizations and volunteers. Yes, I am making an analogy to the invaluable translator and interpreting associations, which all need volunteers and board members. Think of the conferences and workshops that your professional development depends on, which take place on the regional, national, and international level. Without volunteers, there would be no conferences. Could you imagine a translation world without ATA conferences? Neither can I. Or could you imagine our profession without local associations of any kind? You get the idea: being a volunteer is a lot of hard work (and infinitely more pleasant than being a volunteer at a junior tennis tournament), but we need them. Consider making a substantial investment in our profession by doing volunteer work.

**The grip:** Einstein is not the only one who knew that you cannot do the same thing over and over and expect different results. Tennis players know that, too. Changing things is difficult, but if the status quo is not working, you need to make an adjustment. Unfortunately, things will get worse before they get better. For instance, you cannot have a great serve with a forehand grip because you cannot get any spin on the ball. If you want to improve your serve, you will have to move to another grip, which will be painful, but will pay off in the long run if you persevere.

**Love:** In tennis, we use “love” when we could just say “zero” in scoring. However, let’s think of love as the original noun that comes to mind, not the tennis term. Love, or respect, or esteem, is something we should all have for the game (the business) and for each other. With that, dear esteemed colleagues, happy playing, working, and improving! Game, set, and match for entrepreneurial linguists.
A few years ago, I was exhibiting at a trade show where there were other translation companies exhibiting their businesses. A gentleman came to my booth to ask me what I was selling. I started my selling conversation by sharing with him my well-prepared elevator speech and telling him of the excellent quality and state-of-the-art technology we offered that would allow him to get cost-effective translations. When I was about to ask him how my company could meet his company’s needs, he abruptly stopped me and asked, “What do you do differently from other translation companies?” That question took me by surprise, and I stumbled with my words while giving him an answer.

I did not get that gentleman as a client, but what a good lesson I learned that day. It was definitely a wake-up call for me. I came back from that trade show thinking, what do I really do differently from my competitors? How could I compete with all those other providers that offer the same old “quality” translation services? How could I stand out from the crowd? What was my unique selling proposition?

A unique selling proposition is key in your business. If you do not know what makes you unique, you will be competing primarily on price. If you work so hard, why should price be the only decision factor? We all want to be compensated for our work. So, if you do not want to compete on price, it is critical that you unearth that very special characteristic that will make your clients decide to work with you as opposed to your competitors.

Here are some tips that will help you to define what sets you apart.

Make a list of your credibility features. What you offer in terms of an added advantage in your positioning in the marketplace has to do with your credibility features. Perhaps you created a program or a system that nobody else has. Perhaps you have received special awards or mentions related to your offering. Perhaps you use a piece of technology that is revolutionary in your industry. Maybe you are a member of a board of directors of some organization. Think about all those things that not everybody in your industry has the privilege of bragging about. These are what make you unique.

Learn your unique way of doing business. As human beings, we are all different. Not even a set of identical twins is the same. There are lots of people out there doing the same thing that you do, so dig into identifying your unique way, your own personality, your style, those extra touches you add to your offering, and those different ideas you created on how to provide your services to increase your clients’ benefits.

Communicate your uniqueness clearly. Create a clear statement about your unique features that you can use everywhere and all the time, and use it consistently throughout your marketing material. Become an expert on communicating to the world what you do so differently from your competitors. That statement does not have to be long. The more precise it is, the better.

Do not be shy when someone asks you what makes you so different from those that do the same thing. It is perfectly fine to brag about your specialty. Remember, what is important is to stand out from the crowd.

You will not stand out if you hide behind your shyness or keep your areas of specialization to yourself.

Focus on the benefits, not so much on the process. We love what we do, right? But the fact that we love our offering does not mean everybody has to know all the different steps we follow to produce our wonderful product or deliver our service. Clients want to know what we are going to do for them. They have pains and our job is to provide the “cure.” We are their problem solver. Tell the world how they will benefit from working with us.

You are the problem solver. Confidence creates trust. When you walk around the world sharing with everybody your unique selling proposition, it is important for you to be totally convinced that you can help your clients with your services. Otherwise, they will not see you as a problem solver. Your clients are going to pay you to fix their problems. You need to be 100% sure that you have the capabilities, knowledge, experience, and that special touch that will make a client a client for life.

Remember, developing your unique selling proposition will help you to differentiate your business from your competitors. Your current and potential clients will notice the difference and be willing to establish a long-term business relationship with you. In addition, when you are clear on what your unique selling proposition is, your team will have a clear understanding on how they need to deliver your business services. Last but not least, your unique selling proposition is not about you. It is how your unique features will help solve your clients’ problems.

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Choose the age level you like the best and download a presentation, or use the resources on the School Outreach page to round out your own material.

Speak on translation and/or interpreting careers at a school or university anywhere in the world between August 1, 2009 and July 19, 2010.

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

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

The deadline for submissions is midnight on July 19, 2010.

The winner will be contacted no later than August 16, 2010. You must be a member of ATA or an ATA-affiliated organization to enter.
Oh, it was such a pleasure recently to reconnect with my good old friend Samuel Isaac Joseph Schereschewsky. Now, he was not a friend because he was particularly pleasant man; in fact, he wasn’t. Nor were we friends because he was particularly good with people; he also really wasn’t. In fact, he was so notoriously bad with people that in his 40-plus years as a missionary in 19th-century China, he “converted” only “one family and a lad,” at the same time suffering a continual turnover of co-workers who typically could not stand to be with the man for more than a few weeks. (Ironically, his general inability to connect with people did not prevent him from setting out to walk (!) the 1,500 miles from Beijing to Shanghai when he heard that an unmarried female missionary was to arrive on a boat from the U.S. Apparently, no other transportation was available to him because of the severe winter weather. Though they had never met before, he welcomed her boat in Shanghai, and in no time they were married.)

Clearly, given our life spans in different centuries, we never met personally. So how did we become friends? Here are some snippets from his life that might help to explain my fondness for him.

Schereschewsky was born in a Jewish community in Lithuania in 1831 and, as a gifted student, enrolled in a rabbinical school early on to become a rabbi. As a young man, however, he converted to Christianity, which he pursued in formal studies in Germany and later in the U.S. He left the U.S. for China in 1859, and shortly afterward started what he would continue in some way or another to the day he died in 1906: the translation of the Bible into various forms of Chinese. In 1877, in an apparent effort by his denomination to remove him from direct ministry, he was promoted to the Episcopal bishopric. However, this new post proved too stressful for him, and four years later he suffered a breakdown (some say it was a stroke, while others claim it was Parkinson’s) that left him paralyzed for the rest of his life. And thus began the most remarkable chapter of his remarkable life. He spent the remainder of his life pecking with his one remaining moveable finger on a manual typewriter to finish two complete translations of the Bible, one into Mandarin and one into a lower form of classical Chinese. (If you are wondering, he typed on an English typewriter and had his Romanized version rendered into characters by a Chinese co-worker.)

I first “met” Schereschewsky when I wrote a thesis on Chinese Bible translation 15 years ago, and I reconnected with him on a recent trip to Israel to speak to the Israeli Translators Association. I had a feeling before my trip that St. Jerome would not be a good “translation hero” in Israel (I learned only later how bad he really would have been!), so I revived my friendship with Schereschewsky to introduce him to my Israeli colleagues.

“Translation hero?” I have used this column previously to warn repeatedly against getting stuck in the past and failing to recognize that today’s translation requirements are very, very different from those of St. Jerome and, yes, of Schereschewsky as well. But as I was working for a client this week whose translators work on an online-based system with a strong machine translation component and rather rudimentary terminology management and translation memory components, my mind kept returning to Schereschewsky and his plight and passion. And I wished myself back with both feet on the ground—or, in his case, in a wheelchair—rather than with my head in the digital cloud.

If I were not a proponent of translation technology, I would not be writing this column. But I also think that we need to be cautious about how fast we rush into adopting new technologies.
Yes, it sounds great to work in systems that are completely online-based. But is our infrastructure quite ready for it yet? (Note that I am writing this from the Oregon coast, where I have a very limited choice of Internet service providers, with one or the other being down fairly regularly.) And while it is true that all too often we are not masters of our own personal computers, the frustration of having an online server go down that contains the translation asset and all other materials would be so much greater. In this case, we really would not be able to do anything about it, and there really would not be a backup. (At least when we are working on our own system and do not have a backup, we can blame it on our own stupidity!).

And then there is the aspect of machine translation. The majority of translation environment tools (TEnTs) now offer direct integration with Google Translate and/or other generic machine translation engines, including tools like OmegaT, an open-source tool built for and by its users. How helpful are these machine translation tools for our work? Could they possibly be more distracting than helpful? They admittedly are always optional, but I wonder whether the energy invested in providing these capabilities would not be better invested in improving proven technologies, such as translation memory and terminology management.

Aren’t you glad you do not have to work like Schereschewsky? I am, but I also admire his passion, his persistence, and his reminder that tools are good only if they actually allow us to keep our feet on the ground without our heads stuck in the (digital) clouds just because they are there.
• **CETRA, Inc.**, of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, was one of 75 U.S. businesses to receive the 2010 Blue Ribbon Small Business Award. This is the second time in a row the company has won the award. For more information: www.uschambersummit.com/award.

• **Eurasia Translations, Inc.**, of Encino, California, has been awarded ISO 9001:2008 Certification by Global Certification-USA, LLC.

• **Jonathan Hine**’s translation of Leonardo Maugeri’s *Beyond the Age of Oil: The Myths, Realities and Future of Fossil Fuels and Their Alternatives* has been published by Praeger Publishers.

• **Judy Jenner** was named one of 17 “Women to Watch 2010” by In Business Las Vegas. In addition to running Twin Translations with her twin sister, Judy is the vice-president of the Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association.

• **Cecilia Lawinski** served as the official interpreter for Lech Wałęsa, Poland’s president from 1990-1995. A trade union and human rights activist and co-founder of Solidarity, the Soviet bloc’s first independent trade union, Wałęsa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983. Cecilia interpreted from Polish into English and Spanish during interviews Wałęsa granted to the Hispanic press in Miami, including Radio Marti and Channel 41.

• **Sandro Tomasi**’s *An English-Spanish Dictionary of Criminal Law and Procedure* (BilingualLaw Dictionary. com) was featured as the March 2010 “Book of the Month” by InTrans Book Service.

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**In Memoriam**

Laurel Ann Wagers, managing editor of *MultiLingual*, died February 13, 2010, at Life Care of Coeur d’Alene, Idaho. She was 61.

Laurel was born September 12, 1948, in Spokane, Washington, the daughter of Joseph and Margery Pratt. As a child, she lived in Alaska and Sandpoint, Idaho, where she graduated from Sandpoint High School in 1964. She received a degree in journalism from Michigan State University, where she also studied French.

Laurel returned to Sandpoint in the mid-1970s, where she worked for the *Bonner County Daily Bee* and the Sandpoint Library. She joined the staff of MultiLingual Computing, Inc. in 1998.

Laurel was one of three women who spearheaded the drive to restore the historic Panida Theater in downtown Sandpoint, and later served on the theater’s board of directors. She also served on the board of the East Bonner County Library. Laurel was a published author and accomplished actress, appearing in many productions at the Unicorn Theatre. In addition, she was a musical accompanist for several area churches. She also loved drawing and painting.

She is survived by her son, Lee (Stephanie) Wagers, of Eugene, Oregon; three grandchildren, Aidan, Morgan, and Paige; her mother, Margery Pratt; and by two brothers, Greg (Kim) Pratt, of Spokane, Washington, and Mark (Sherri) Pratt, of Anchorage, Alaska. She was preceded in death by her father, Joseph Pratt.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Panida Theater (www.panida.org); Friends of East Bonner County Library (www.ebcl.lib.id.us/ebcl/FOL_Newsletter.htm); or Angels Over Sandpoint (angelsover sandpoint.org).
ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

California
San Diego
September 11, 2010
Registration Deadline:
August 27, 2010

Georgia
Alpharetta
August 28, 2010
Registration Deadline:
August 13, 2010

Massachusetts
Somerville
May 23, 2010
Registration Deadline:
May 7, 2010

Michigan
Novi
August 14, 2010
Registration Deadline:
July 30, 2010

Ohio
Bellefontaine
May 22, 2010
Registration Deadline:
May 7, 2010

Texas
Austin
June 12, 2010
Registration Deadline:
May 28, 2010

Washington, DC
Washington
July 25, 2010
Registration Deadline:
July 9, 2010

Wisconsin
Milwaukee
September 12, 2010
Registration Deadline:
August 27, 2010

All candidates applying for ATA certification must provide proof that they meet the certification program eligibility requirements. Please direct all inquiries regarding general certification information to ATA Headquarters at +1-703-683-6100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from ATA’s website or from Headquarters.

New Certified Members

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

Arabic into English
Christina M. Schoeb
Arlington, VA

English into Japanese
Noriko Endriga
Providence, RI

English into German
Gunda Ohrogge
Hamburg, Germany

English into Spanish
Mabel Lima
Laurel, MD

Linda C. Schmidt
Bethesda, MD

Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

Judith Goergert
Kirchberg, Germany

Seung-won Goh
Rockville, MD

Judy A. Jenner
Las Vegas, NV

Eugenia Persov
Brooklyn, NY

Rashid S. Hasan
Dwarka, New Delhi, India

Rebecca L. Rubenstein
Ventura, CA

Delavar G. Shenas
Bellevue, WA

Robert Tamez
San Antonio, TX

Terese M. Whitty
Park City, UT

Peggy F. Wright
Elgin, TX
Established in 2001, the Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters (CAPI) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the professional needs of interpreters and to promoting the recognition of all facets of interpreting in the community. Membership is open to anyone.

**Mission**
- To provide and promote training for interpreters.
- To support standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence.
- To promote communication with interpreters about professional issues.
- To act as a resource on interpreting for persons in allied professions and related organizations.
- To promote collegial relations among its members.

**Activities**
- Searchable online membership directory.
- Discounted educational workshops.
- *Captions* (quarterly online newsletter).
- E-mail notifications of announcements.
- Two general meetings and social events per year.

**Quick Facts**
- Established: 2001
- Website: www.coloradointerpreters.org
- E-mail: tmosado@coloradointerpreters.org
- Address: Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters
  PO Box 40664
  Denver, CO 80204

**Additional Information**
For complete information, please visit www.coloradointerpreters.org.
## Upcoming Events

### May 10-12, 2010
Globalization & Localization Association
GALA 2010: The Global Community, Capturing Customers Worldwide
Prague, Czech Republic
www.gala-global.org/conference

### May 14-16, 2010
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
31st Annual Conference
Orlando, Florida
www.najit.org

### May 19-22, 2010
Association of Language Companies
Annual Conference
Miami, Florida
www.alcus.org/education/conference.cfm

### May 21-22, 2010
Mid-America Chapter of ATA
MICATA Symposium
Overland Park, Kansas

### May 22, 2010
New England Translators Association
14th Annual Conference
Boston, Massachusetts
www.netaweb.org

### June 11-12, 2010
Medical Interpreter Network of Georgia
3rd Annual Southeast Regional Medical Interpreters Conference
Charleston, South Carolina
www.mingweb.org

### June 16-20, 2010
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
Region V Conference
Salt Lake City, Utah
www.utrid.org/regionv

### June 17, 2010
First North American Summit on Interpreting
Washington, DC
http://interpretamerica.net

### August 5-7, 2010
Nebraska Association of Translators and Interpreters
11th Annual Regional Conference
Lincoln, Nebraska
www.natihq.org

### August 13-14, 2010
Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators
4th Annual TAHIT Symposium on Language Access
Houston, Texas
www.tahit.us

### September 3-5, 2010
International Medical Interpreters Association
Annual Conference
Boston, Massachusetts
www.imiaweb.org

### September 10-13, 2010
Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators
Annual Conference
Nashville, Tennessee
www.tapit.org

### September 11, 2010
Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters
7th Annual Conference
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.matiata.org

### September 25, 2010
Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association
Annual Conference
St. Paul, Minnesota
www.umtwio.org

### October 20-24, 2010
American Literary Translators Association
Annual Conference
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
www.utdallas.edu/alta

### October 27-30, 2010
ATA 51st Annual Conference
Denver, Colorado
www.atanet.org/conf/2010

### November 6-8, 2010
Sixth FIT Asian Translators’ Forum
“Translation and Intercultural Communication”
Macau, China
www.umac.mo/fsh/de/atif

### November 11-13, 2010
American Medical Writers Association
70th Annual Conference
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.amwa.org

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Visit the ATA Calendar Online
www.atanet.org/calendar/
for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.
The fourth edition of the *Macquarie Australian Encyclopedic Dictionary* is an impressive book. It is a robustly bound, hardcover volume, and the paper quality is quite good. It contains 1,472 pages, with over 55,000 headwords and 12,000 definitions covering English as it is used in Australia. Weighing in at more than five pounds, it is also a brick on any translator’s desk, and thus not easily transportable. However, in an age where we all probably spend too much time looking at a computer screen and searching through online dictionaries, having an old-fashioned paper dictionary in hand feels nice. It also allows you to read some of the very interesting articles and sections of the dictionary, which you would probably not read if you were just looking up a term online.

**General Content**

The dictionary contains a wonderfully written foreword by Jana Wendt, who was a well-known television journalist in Australia. This is followed by an interesting article on the development of Australian English, covering its origins as the language of British sailors, marines, and convicts, characterized by a style of English similar to that spoken in the southeastern region of England. However, as with any language, Australian English evolves continually, with words like “kangaroo,” “boomerang,” and “dingo” being added through the influence of the indigenous Aboriginal people, words like *latte*, *falafel*, and *sushi* through various waves of immigrants, and “cookies,” “fries,” and the collective “guys” coming from the U.S. From being a language that was looked down upon even by the Australian media in the 1940s and 1950s, Australian English has come into its own, and dictionaries like the *Macquarie Australian Encyclopedic Dictionary* are making Australians feel like they have their own standard of English that is not governed by U.K. or U.S. usage. Australians are now more relaxed about their own particular style of English, and this dictionary presents a wonderful account of just what that style of English is.

The dictionary’s appendices are filled with guidelines on grammar and punctuation, foreign words and phrases, signs and symbols, weights and measures. Also included at the back are the somewhat doubtfully useful pages listing past prime ministers of Australia and the mottos for Australian states, territories, and capital cities. I found out that the motto for my hometown of Sydney is “I take but I surrender,” and the motto for New South Wales is *Orta recens quam pura nites* (“Newly risen, how brightly you shine.”). I am not sure how these two mottos relate to Sydney and New South Wales, but they are interesting.

**Convenience of Look-up**

The dictionary’s introductory section contains the explanatory notes, abbreviations, and structure of entries, all of which can be referenced quickly when looking up a term. All entries are organized conveniently, with bolded headwords followed by information about spelling, pronunciation, meanings, and etymologies. There are also bolded run-on headwords, that is, derivatives of the headword, at the end of each entry. Everything is presented in a two-column format with illustrative phrases in italics and etymology in brackets.

**Grammatical Information and Pronunciation**

The 24-page grammar guide in the
appendices is organized alphabetically with concise definitions and many illustrative phrases. Since formal written English shows very little variation around the world, it could be argued that the grammatical rules represented in the *Macquarie Australian Encyclopedic Dictionary* apply to the vast majority of English-speaking countries. For a native English speaker, the grammatical guide is excellent as a quick reference, and provides the student of English with a nice compact list of rules to remember.

Another helpful feature is the usage notes at the end of some words. The dictionary is not intended to be a style guide, but does provide guidance on the use of some words. Since Australian English generally follows the U.K. English spelling conventions, such as theatre, honour, and colour, one would naturally assume that a word like “program” would be spelled “programme.” The usage note for this particular term tells you that until recently, the U.K. spelling was used for everything except when referring to computers. However, the U.S. spelling is now accepted as the correct form in all cases. This is handy information to know.

Also, at the bottom of each page is a small list with examples of how a particular sound is pronounced in Australian English. So, if you are looking up the word “warm,” transcribed as “wɔrm” in Australian English, you can quickly look at the bottom of the page to see that the “ɔ” should sound like the “o” in “port,” which is very handy information indeed.

### Contextual and Encyclopedic Information

In addition to the headwords, the dictionary contains a wide range of international and Australian encyclopedic notes giving summaries about such things as people, places, and events. What I found most interesting here is the information on the languages and cultures of the Aboriginal people. For example, entries like the one about the Wiradjuri, the largest Aboriginal group in inland New South Wales, provide fascinating information about the meaning and origin of Australian English words like *billabong* and *woonera*. There are also entries about more contemporary and famous Australians like Paul Hogan and Nicole Kidman, famous places like Uluru, or curiously sounding places like Ulladulla or Woy Woy.

Another amusing and interesting feature of this dictionary is the many examples of regionalisms and slang from around Australia. Terms like *rego* (car registration) and *garbo* (garbage collector) are very useful to know about when talking to your mechanic or your neighbor, and referring to outback Australia as “out in Woop Woop” definitely makes you sound like you are from Down Under.

### Overall Evaluation

Even though the relevance of a behemoth of a book like this is questionable in an age where we all increasingly use the Internet, the dictionary does have its merits. If you take your time to appreciate the interesting extra information provided in the articles at the beginning and the appendices at the back, you will really begin to appreciate a dictionary like the *Macquarie Australian Encyclopedic Dictionary*. It is a truly excellent account of the style of English spoken on the biggest and most sparsely populated desert island in the world. In the past, the inhabitants have been made to feel that their English was second-class to that of the mother country, England. However, this dictionary is tangible proof of the opposite, and Australians today can feel very proud of their language. Jana Wendt puts it eloquently: “In the case of the *Macquarie Australian Encyclopedic Dictionary*, a bridge is built between our need for a record of the constantly expanding scope of modern communication and the essential knowledge required as we, who continue to forge a culture in the Antipodes, forage through the information forest of the twenty-first century.” Overall, I would say that this is an excellent dictionary.
The Translation Inquirer

John Decker

jdecker@uplink.net

As I complete 17 years of being the office manager, cheerleader, scribe, and bouncer for this column, I see that we as a professional organization still have not completed the work of telling the world about our high levels of skill in what we do. Bill Sammons of ESPN made this comment in an article entitled “Tiger Still Playing by His Own Rules” on February 19, 2010. Embedded in his espn.com article were words that stung me personally: “He [Woods] talked about needing more treatment, and about ‘the importance of looking at my spiritual life and keeping in balance with my professional life.’ (This sounded like it was written through one of those Russian-to-English translators).” Ugh!

New Queries

(Da-E 4-10.1) It has been a while since an acronym problem appeared in this venue, but the Danish KOM-mode is just that. Here is how it appears: I umiddelbart forlængelse af fejffindingen foretages en vurdering af, om reklamationen igangsætter indkaldelse til KOM-mode samt tilbagekaldelse af yderligere produkter. What is it?

(D-G [E] 4-10.2) From a petition of appeal in Dutch, the term vertoogt met eerbied was troublesome. It is the introductory formulation of the document, followed by the names of the plaintiff and defendant involved in the appeal, then the body of the petition. What might this be?

(E-A 4-10.3) Immunoblot is a medical test procedure, but how can it be expressed in Arabic?

(E-F 4-10.4) Advertising is the context for this query about translating “geo-targeted” into French: “Show your advertisement to local customers… The geo-targeted ad service means that potential customers in your area will see your advertisement.” The basic idea is clear enough, but what about the French?

(E-I 4-10.5) Here is a query that defines itself. The words in bold proved to be the most irritating: “Hex casing insulators are manufactured from high-density polyethylene. They are connected to each other by means of galvanized carbon steel bolts and nuts supplied along with the casing insulator elements.” Please provide good Italian for this concept.

(F-E 4-10.6) In an article about pre-teen cosmetics, adonaissantes was the problem word, appearing with “preadolescents” and “tweens.” It will take more than the usual amount of context in the following to produce an informed translation: Une catégorie de préadolescents et surtout de préadolescents particulièrement visée par les marques est celle des tweens (contraction de teenagers et between) ou encore « adonaissantes » qui caractérise des enfants branches, très sensibles à la mode, notamment à celle véhiculée par leurs stars préférées Robert Pattinson, Ugly Betty, Christa Theret. Is there a word for adonaissantes?

(R-E 4-10.7) How do you express ухаживать поэтапно in good, but ironic, English? This very interesting literary query goes like this: Ухаживать за своими избранныками он предпочитал поэтапно. Считал, что тормозить не стоит. Начинал с провожания до метро и цветочков. Сначала крошечный букетик, затем три

Abbreviations

used with this column

A-Arabic
Do-Danish
D-Dutch
E-English
(E)-English was not involved in the initial query but is acceptable as an answer
(I)-Italian
Po-Polish
R-Russian
Sb-Serbian
S-Slovenian
Sp-Spanish
Sw-Swedish
What kind of substance is samkross? This construction-related translation included this context sentence: Spontväggarna förenas med dragtag och utrymmet fylls med samkross.

Replies to Old Queries

**E-D 2-10.1** (Don’t count your chickens before they hatch): Dick Lodge conducted a Google search and found Je moet de huid niet verkopen voordat de beer geschoten is (“You mustn’t sell the hide before the bear has been shot.”)

**E-R 2-10.8** (visit flow chart): Vadim Khazin prefers Расписание (схема, график) визитов пациентов for this.

**F-Po [E] 2-10.5** (valeur témoin): Catherine Dorian-Conner explains it this way: when conducting a toxicology study, there are two groups, the control group and those treated. The control group is given the vehicle and the treated groups receive the drug at various doses. For all groups, data are collected at the beginning of the study prior to treatment, at different times during the study and at its conclusion. Once the study is completed, the toxicologist will analyze the data and compare the results obtained in terms of 1) treated versus control groups, and 2) control and treated groups versus data obtained prior to treatment. Then they talk about the toxic or beneficial effects compared to a) control data and b) pre-test data.

The same comparison applies when conducting studies with cell cultures. In the case of the query from the February issue, what is measured is the decrease in corneal cell growth compared to what is observed in the control group. Therefore, unless pre-test measurements are mentioned in the text to be translated, Catherine would translate valeur témoin as “control value.”

After that, says the Translation Inquirer, providing the Polish should be a snap.

**Sb-G [E] 2-10.9** (ujdurma): This means “dirty trick” (perhaps Betrug?), according to Wayles Browne. His translation of the whole sentence is: “It wasn’t very important to them whether these new members were sincere or whether their joining the party was just a dirty trick by the national enemy.” Boy, does that have a Darkness at Noon sound to it!

Thanks to the quartet of responders, but an octet would have been better. Did any of the new queries catch your eye? I want to hear—and here you can visualize the famous bearded Uncle Sam poster with his index finger pointed at the viewer—from YOU!

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821. 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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In the September 2009 column, I wrote that, in the very first paragraph of the very first chapter of Cervantes’ Don Quijote, the title character is described as un hidalgo de los de lanza en astillero, adarga antigua, rocín flaco y galgo corredor, and that the final phrase is usually translated into English as “a skinny old horse and a racing greyhound,” or other words to that effect. However, according to an essay in Spanish by Peruvian writer Gregorio Martínez, translated into English and submitted to me by Franco Gamero, the lack of an indefinite article, un before galgo, turns galgo corredor into another adjective modifying rocín, reducing the number of animals to one. That is, there is no greyhound, only a horse as skinny as a greyhound.

I invited comments and eight readers responded soon enough to be included in this column. One, James Kirchner, did not write about Don Quijote, the lack of an indefinite article, un before other nouns. All except Gardner point out that Don Quijote was a big fan of hunting…[R]abbits and jackrabbits were a constant prey in this region [La Mancha] even today, and therefore greyhound[s] were a must if you were into hunting.”

Binder further states, “The galgo español is a separate breed of dog native to the Iberian peninsula…used in hunting rabbits in the 16th and 17th centuries. [It was widely crossbred with English greyhounds in the early 20th century.]” Binder states, “The galgo español is a separate breed of dog native to the Iberian peninsula…used in hunting rabbits in the 16th and 17th centuries. (It was widely crossbred with English greyhounds in the early 20th century.)”

Binder notes, “It is clearly mentioned that Don Quijote was a big fan of hunting…[R]abbits and jackrabbits are among the most abundant prey in this region [La Mancha] even today, and therefore greyhound[s] were a must if you were into hunting.” Binder further states, “It is also possible that Don Quijote took part in greyhound races with jackrabbits, a practice well documented back to the times of the Roman empire, so the translation of galgo corredor as ‘greyhound for racing’ could make sense.”

Of the six respondents who disagree with Martínez, Muñoz still believes that Don Quijote does not actually own a dog, and Saari believes the question to be irrelevant. According to Muñoz, without the un the sentence becomes a “boilerplate” characterization of the knight with a dog that Don Quijote wants to be, not of the knight without a dog that the Don actually is, and it is necessary to insert un and recast the sentence with somewhat different grammar to state that the Don indeed owns a dog. Saari takes a somewhat similar though not identical view, stating that the question of the dog is irrelevant because Cervantes is telling us what Don Quijote could have been, not what he is, and so it does not matter whether there is actually a dog or not.

Of the four respondents who claim that the Don does own a dog, two, Hunt and Gardner, point out (as does Saari) that the un missing before galgo is also missing before other nouns. All except Gardner point out that, while dogs are not further mentioned in the novel, hunting is. Hunt states, “The galgo español is a separate breed of dog native to the Iberian peninsula…used in hunting rabbits in the 16th and 17th centuries. (It was widely crossbred with English greyhounds in the early 20th century.)”

Binder states, “It is clearly mentioned that Don Quijote was a big fan of hunting…[R]abbits and jackrabbits are among the most abundant prey in this region [La Mancha] even today, and therefore greyhound[s] were a must if you were into hunting.” Binder further states, “It is also possible that Don Quijote took part in greyhound races with jackrabbits, a practice well documented back to the times of the Roman empire, so the translation of galgo corredor as ‘greyhound for racing’ could make sense.”

Sleator states, “In the 1944 edition of Don Quijote by Martín de Riquer, [it says that] when Don Quijote was idle,…he started reading libros de caballería with so much gusto that he neglected the administration of his lands and HIS HUNTING. I can’t imagine an hidalgo of those days going hunting without a hound.”

Several other interesting comments were made by the responders. Ballesteros suggests that those who wish to read the novel in the original Spanish obtain the Edición del IV centenario published by the Real Academia Española, which includes a glossary of words used by Cervantes. Ballesteros and other responders also agree with Franco Gamero that the names of the novel’s characters have resonances with their physical characteristics, some of which were mentioned in the original September 2009 column. Sleator notes “that quijote is the part of [a suit of] armor that covers the thigh.” Saari also notes that quijote is related to “thigh,” and thereby to Catalan cuixot and the French cuisse, but can also be construed as a slang euphemism for the rear end. Therefore Don Quijote can be translated into modern slang as “Butthead.”

Hunt, in agreement with Saari, explains that “While Hidalgo means noble, in Spanish literature it has frequently been used to denote nobility of limited means—the poor cousins.”

Gardner, whose PhD dissertation was on Friedrich J. Bertuch’s 1775 translation of Don Quijote into German, states that of six early translations into German, three directly from Spanish (including Bertuch’s) and three from earlier French transla-
tions, all stipulated that the Don indeed owned a dog.

Muñoz compares the literature that addled Don Quijote’s wits to the tools with which translators work: “Don Quijote…seduces the reader not because of the pitiful equipment with which he searches for adventure, but because what he does have is that inner strength, that presence of mind and moral rectitude with which every human being is endowed at the beginning, but loses through contact with translation memories, partially translated word counts, and endless updates for systems that do not work in the first place.”

Finally, both Saari and Binder explain why the problematic meanings of *Don Quijote* will not be solved any time soon. According to Saari, “Cervantes’ prose juggles with the expectations, perspectives, perceptions, delusions, prejudices, hopes, and disappointments of Cervantes himself, his readers, society, leading players, secondary characters, and onlookers. Everything is could, would, should, must, might, or may be, and there’s hardly anything in the book that simply is.” And Binder simply states, “Each and every line of *El Quijote* has been the matter of heated…debates for over four centuries.”

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