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Translating Video Games
Translating *Barefoot Gen*
Program Highlights

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

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Looking for continuing education events in your area?
Check out ATA’s online event calendar at www.atanet.org/calendar.
Take Advantage of ATA’s Member-Provider Program

Who knows what products and services you need to do your job? Your peers. ATA’s Member-Provider Program gives members the opportunity to offer their products and services to other ATA members.

Here are a few highlights:

- The program will showcase only those products and services developed by ATA members that are specific to the practice of translation and interpreting.

- Member-vendors will guarantee discounts or other favorable conditions of use to ATA members. Member providers include:
  - The Tool Kit
  - Payment Practices
  - Translate Write
  - The Translator’s Tool Box
  - Getting Started as a Freelance Translator

To learn how the program will work for you, please visit www.atanet.org/member_provider or contact ATA Member Benefits and Project Development Manager Mary David, mary@atanet.org.
Bob Donaldson is the founder of Carson Strategy Group, providing language technology consulting and project management training focused on localization. He also serves as the chief technology strategist for Text & Farm, and is responsible for all aspects of language technology planning, evaluation, and implementation. Previously, he served three years as vice-president of strategy for McElroy Translation. He has over 25 years of experience in creative technology application, including executive management positions in a number of software companies. He has also served as a Russian linguist in the army, putting to use his educational background in Slavic linguistics. Contact: bob@carsonstrategy.com.

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Alan Gleason was born in the U.S. but spent his childhood in Japan. He has been translating professionally from Japanese into English since 1980. His first experience as a translator was with the manga Hadashi no Gen (Barefoot Gen) as part of a volunteer project that continues to this day. He lives in Tokyo, where he edits and translates websites, books, articles, and academic papers on language, the arts, and environmental science. Contact: gleason@well.com.

Nora Stevens Heath is a full-time freelance translator. Though she does translate in other fields, she has had a hand in the production aspect of over 100 video games since 2002. She has bachelor’s degrees in Japanese and linguistics from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Contact: translation@fumizuki.com.

If you enjoyed reading this issue of The ATA Chronicle and think a colleague or organization would enjoy it too, we’ll send a free copy. Simply e-mail the recipient’s name and address to Maggie Rowe at ATA Headquarters—maggie@atanet.org—and she will send the magazine with a note indicating that the copy is being sent with your compliments.

Help spread the word about ATA!
The essence of ATA is, and always has been, its members. When the Association was founded over 50 years ago, at first everything that it did was done by the original small group of people who established it. Some of those members were willing to perform various tasks on behalf of the others, and some of them in turn also agreed to serve in the official “leadership” capacities stipulated by the bylaws that they themselves had created. At that time, what distinguished a “leader” from any other member was simply a willingness to serve, to take on an unpaid responsibility that would benefit the other members of the Association.

That distinction is just as simple today. ATA has of course changed in many ways over the past half century: with over 11,000 members, we are one of the world’s largest associations of translators and interpreters; we organize an Annual Conference that draws thousands of presenters and attendees from all over the U.S. and from dozens of other countries; and our certification credential is highly sought. One thing remains the same, however: our leaders are still just members who have decided that they want to serve their fellow ATA members.

Service is the essence of leadership, and ATA members serve their fellow members in many different ways: committees move the Association and the profession forward by defining standards and procedures; division administrators provide targeted information and guidance to almost 20 special interest groups; and hundreds of other members contribute to The ATA Chronicle and to division newsletters. The officers and directors who sit up on the podium at annual meetings are different only because they are willing to spend even more time and take on more responsibilities—soliciting and weighing member input, developing policy, making collective decisions, strategizing, and trying to steer ATA into an even brighter future. But no contribution, from any member of this Association, is unimportant. Everyone who posts a useful answer or comment on a mailing list, helps a less-experienced colleague make connections at the Annual Conference, or talks to the local chamber of commerce about the vital international role of translators and interpreters is doing a good and valuable service and becoming a leader.

Volunteer service is an experience that leaves you both unchanged (since you are always just a member like everyone else) and permanently greater than you were before (because you gave of yourself to a very special group of your fellow human beings). Since “leadership” is just another way to define service, becoming a leader is as easy as deciding that you want to do something for someone else.
Tips for First-Time Conference Attendees

Will 2010 be your first year attending ATA’s Annual Conference? If so, here are some pointers to make your first conference experience so successful and positive that you will want to return again and again:

**Identify Yourself:** On the conference registration form, look for a checkbox labeled “This will be my first time attending an ATA Annual Conference.” Attendees who check this box will receive a special ribbon in their registration packet to identify them throughout the conference; this will make networking easier and help start conversations. Be sure to display the ribbon on your attendee badge.

**Attend the “Orientation for First-Time Conference Attendees”:** If you have never been to an ATA conference before, make it a point to attend this session. Not only will you receive practical advice on how to make the most of the many program offerings, but you will also make your first contacts with other colleagues who may have many of the same questions as you. Don’t be shy, and ask as many questions as you can!

**Prepare in Advance:** There are a number of things you can do to prepare for success before you even arrive in Denver this fall. Attractive business cards can be designed without major expenditure using templates and materials available online and at office supply stores. Be sure to bring a good supply of up-to-date business cards that include all your contact information, prominently featuring your e-mail address and telephone numbers. If you have not already done so, also prepare a concise, single-page version of your résumé that you can hand to recruiters or place on the table at the Job Marketplace. It is quite reasonable to bring at least 50 copies, particularly if you work in one of the major language pairs such as English into Spanish. “Don’t forget to state your language pair at the top of the résumé,” advises Jill Sommer, a seasoned translator who regularly presents at the orientation session.

**Read the Preliminary Conference Program:** The preliminary conference program that accompanied the July issue of *The ATA Chronicle* contains a wealth of information about the different sessions and their level of difficulty. The brief session descriptions will help you build a preliminary schedule of the sessions you do not want to miss. If you no longer have the printed schedule, you can also find the same information online. The conference features a number of networking opportunities (marked as “Connect” in the program) that are open to all attendees. ATA’s divisions, which represent specific languages and areas of interest, will hold an Open House this year to introduce their various offerings, and the Speed Networking Event offers a new approach to networking. So fill your pockets with your newly printed business cards and plunge in! You will find the crowd at the conference friendly and easygoing and eager to help, and the event so full of useful hands-on information that you may have to come back next year for more...

**Attend the “Orientation for First-Time Conference Attendees.”**
The ATA Chronicle  August 2010

ATA’s Board of Directors met July 17-18, 2010 in San Francisco, California. Here are the highlights from the meeting.

**Final 2010-2011 Budget:** The Board approved the July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011 final budget, which is over $2.8-million. ATA Treasurer Gabe Bokor will provide an overview of the budget in the September issue of The ATA Chronicle.

**Divisions:** The Board continued discussions on the future of ATA divisions. ATA’s divisions—currently 16 of them—have long been recognized as the “home” for members within the larger ATA structure. All the Board members agree about the importance of ATA’s special interest groups, yet there were many points of view on how best to institute changes to maintain these “homes.” The discussions focused on communications (the need to adapt communications with the technology available while recognizing legal and branding issues) and governance (specifically elections and how divisions are run). These discussions are ongoing and will be on the agenda for the next few Board meetings.

**ATA Honorary Membership:** The Board named Celia Bohannon an ATA Honorary Member. The distinction was made in recognition of Celia’s 25+ years of dedication to strengthening and enhancing ATA’s Certification Program. She is currently the program trainer and a grader. She has also served as deputy chair of the Certification Committee. Congratulations to Celia on this well-deserved honor!

The minutes of the meeting will be posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for October 30-31, 2010 in conjunction with ATA’s 51st Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

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**NEW! Introducing ATA Webinars**

Attend an ATA educational seminar without leaving home. ATA is launching a series of webinars—online seminars with audio and synchronized PowerPoint presentations—this September.

These hour-long webinars are an inexpensive way to learn from some of the best in the profession on everything from running your business to learning about what tools are best for you to managing your finances. If you are unable to attend, the webinars will be recorded and available on-demand at your convenience.

The first webinar will be presented September 23, 2010. Join us at Noon ET when Judy Jenner will present “The Entrepreneurial Linguist: Lessons from Business School.”

To register and for more information, please check out www.atanet.org/webinars.

See page 45 for a complete schedule.
The International Federation of Translators (FIT) organized the first official celebration of International Translation Day in 1991, when Professor Gonie Bang and FIT’s Public Relations Committee called for member associations to use the day to raise the profile of the profession. Their aim was to remind users of language services of the important work performed by translators and interpreters. In the same spirit, the theme for International Translation Day 2010 is “Translation Quality for a Variety of Voices.” On September 30, FIT urges language services providers to promote the profession by reaching out to fellow colleagues, other language-related associations, and clients.

For more information, see www.fit-ift.org/download/en/pr-itd-2010.pdf

The International Federation of Translators is the world federation of professional associations, bringing together translators, interpreters, and terminologists. It has 107 members in over 60 countries and represents more than 80,000 professionals. Please visit www.fit-ift.org.
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.

Translate Write. A one-on-one consultation is an opportunity to ask questions and get constructive feedback on your business plan, marketing efforts, project management—any aspect of your freelancing career. Consultations are offered by the hour. **ATA member discount: 1½ hour consultation for the price of 1 hour.**

Payment Practices. Turn to this site to find “reliability to pay on time” ratings for more than 6,500 language services companies—real information reported by real-world freelancers just like you. **ATA member discount: 25% off subscription and free 7-day trial.**

Getting Started as a Freelance Translator. This 12-week online course is designed to teach beginners how to find and keep translation clients, pursue translator certification, establish translation rates, market their services, and more. **ATA member discount: $50 off course tuition.**

The Translator’s Tool Box. Now in its eighth edition, this downloadable e-book covers terminology tools, freeware and shareware, computer-assisted translation tools, translation memory management, and more. Author and translator Jost Zetzsche is a well-known expert in translation technology. **ATA member discount: 40% off download price.**

The Tool Kit. This bi-weekly e-newsletter offers tips and tricks to help you keep up to date and get more out of your computer. If you are a translator looking for ways to work faster and earn more, this is the one newsletter you have to have. **ATA member discount: 33% off premium subscription.**

This is an ATA members-only program. To take advantage of these member-provider discounts, go to [www.atanet.org/member_provider](http://www.atanet.org/member_provider) and login. If you are interested in becoming an ATA member-provider, visit [www.atanet.org/member_provider/overview.php](http://www.atanet.org/member_provider/overview.php).
Elsewhere Translation Company recently decided to upgrade their technology infrastructure. They started by looking at their internal needs and external opportunities, developed a high-level requirements document, evaluated candidate vendors, and ultimately selected a package that fit both their budget and their needs. The future looked bright as they installed the new software on their servers, went through some preliminary training, and prepared for a new era in translation productivity.

That was six weeks ago. Today Elsewhere is beset by frazzled users, an overworked implementation staff, and unmet expectations on every side. Sound familiar? In an effort to figure out what went wrong (and perhaps more importantly, how your small company can avoid the mistakes made at Elsewhere), let’s start by looking at why they chose to go down this path in the first place.

The Case for Integration

The translation and localization business provides many opportunities for technological integration. These opportunities exist on both the client side and the vendor side, but the power of a partnership can serve as a benefit multiplier when client and vendor integrate processes and systems across company boundaries.

On the client side, many content management systems (CMS) provide some integrated tools for managing translation productivity. For example, the CMS may support rules about when to translate new material and
into which languages. As these systems are integrated with a translation memory system, the process of leveraging a new translation request and preparing a set of files to transfer to the vendor can also be streamlined. These tasks are both time-consuming and error-prone, so the return on this kind of technology investment is pretty obvious.

On the vendor side, the challenges of tracking hundreds of files from dozens of clients through the various stages of a typical translation project can be daunting. Add to this the complexities introduced by last-minute changes, internal quality assurance steps, client review cycles, and a dizzying number of standalone software tools, and the need for integration is obvious.

2 + 2 = 5

The client-vendor partnership unlocks potential beyond what can be achieved by either party alone. All integration efforts require some sort of partnership, but the greater the scope of the integration efforts, the more important the partnership becomes. The benefits, however, become even more pronounced as the scope widens. The technology available today makes it possible for a translation request to be generated and authorized within a client-side CMS. The CMS then kicks off an entire string of automated steps that extracts the text to be translated, delivers it to the designated translation vendor, automatically applies translation memory leverage, creates the project within the vendor’s translation management system, and assigns the translation task to a qualified individual translator. When the translation and any vendor quality assurance processes are complete, the translated file can be returned to the client where it is automatically placed back into the CMS and associated with the original source text. (Table 1 summarizes the tangible benefits to be gained through software integration.)

With this kind of promise, it is no wonder that Elsewhere decided to go forward with their technology integration project! So what went wrong?

Seven Things “They” Never Tell You

Every situation is different, but there are several aspects of the way technology, especially language technology, is sold that can easily lead to unmet expectations.

1. The Demo Problem: Have you ever noticed how easy things look in a software demo? Remember that the salesperson has probably given that demo dozens of times. All the data fit the story and the story is not designed to raise any questions about the complexity of set-up activities. Mitigation ideas:

- Force the salesperson to discuss the overall philosophy of the product;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improves content reuse.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduces turnaround time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduces translation costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improves consistency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automates repetitive tasks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduces “special case” processing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintains control of language assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protects freedom of vendor choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on value, not volume.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automates the entire workflow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optimizes the entire workflow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Summary of Software Integration Benefits
What Technology Companies Won’t Tell You: The Truth Behind Integration Continued

ask questions that reveal hidden assumptions about how users work.

- Force the salesperson to demonstrate set-up activities. These can include data entry (customers, vendors, price lists, etc.), but also system configuration or “rules” that tailor the product to your situation.

- Schedule a “dummy” pilot before the “live” pilot. The point of a “live” pilot is to gain insight into how a well-configured system will support your actual workflow and workload. The point of a “dummy” pilot is to validate your assumptions about what constitutes a “well-configured system.”

- Make sure your entire organization plans adequately for the set-up activities.

2. The Standard Problem: Whenever concerns about integration and interoperability are raised, the topic of support for “industry standards” is sure to follow. The problem is that very often the “standards” are not standard. By definition, standards such as XLIFF, TMX, etc., represent a consensus view of how to support standard functionality. However, tool vendors are continually striving to provide features that raise them above their competition. This often results in custom “extensions” to the standards. This has implications both internally (as you integrate multiple tools) and externally (as you seek to automate data exchange with your clients and vendors). Mitigation ideas:

- Make sure you get detailed documentation of the standards as supported in the package under consideration.

- Test interoperability during the “dummy” pilot.

- Find reference accounts with similar needs.

3. The Open Problem: Another approach to addressing integration concerns is to tout the “open API” (application program interface). An API is an interface implemented by a software program that facilitates interaction with other software, similar to the way the user interface facilitates interaction between humans and computers. An API is implemented by applications, libraries, and operating systems to determine their vocabularies and calling conventions and is used to access their services. It may include specifications for routines, data structures, object classes, and protocols used to communicate between the consumer and the implementer of the API. With a complete, well-documented API, you can write custom code to integrate with existing software. The real problem, though, is that while vendors may advertise an API, they may not have anticipated your needs. Furthermore, unless it is well documented and there is a commitment to long-term support, there can be significant “cost of ownership” problems in the future. Mitigation ideas:

- Force the salesperson to answer “what if” questions about the specific kinds of functionality you want to integrate.

- Insist on full API documentation before the sale as well as a commitment from the vendor to support the API in the future.

- Find reference accounts that have used APIs.

4. The Process Problem: This problem is a two-edged sword. The vendor often suffers from the “what you ought to want” version of this problem. In other words, the vendor has done an excellent job of automating a set of processes, but unless you share the vendor’s assumptions, those processes may not fit your needs. On the other hand, the operations team often suffers from the “that’s not how we do it” version of the problem. This involves a stubborn clinging to processes that are no longer needed in the new environment enabled by the technology. Mitigation ideas:

- Get buy-in for change from key operations staff; do not try to automate obsolete processes.

- Force the salesperson to answer “what if” questions that reveal underlying assumptions about the process, and make sure you share those assumptions.

5. The Planning Problem: Also known as the “Ready, Fire, Aim!” problem, this involves getting the implementation steps out of order, in particular the “aiming” (or “planning”) step. The challenges of initial implementation and system configuration are seldom discussed in the sales presentation. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the buyer to “count the costs,” including data migration, master data set-up, process documentation, workflow templates, project manager training, and vendor training.

6. The Timing Problem: This is another problem with two sides, though the vendor will always be eager to sell “now.” On the one hand, it is never a “good time” to make tech-
nology changes. Things are always busy and there are always new technological advances soon to be released. On the other hand, it is always a “good time”; there is no time like the present to begin to streamline your operation and to begin to reap the rewards of better integration. As you struggle with this dilemma, consider the following:

• Focus on the long-term “big picture.” Where do you want your business to be in three to five years?

• Focus on incremental progress. Where can I get a near-term return on a relatively small investment?

7. The Excuse Problem: This is a problem that cannot really be blamed on the vendor. Are you suffering from analysis paralysis? Or maybe you are having a crisis of confidence due to your company’s lack of internal technical expertise? Or maybe all the other things the vendor does not tell you are affecting your ability to decide and act. As the old saying goes, not to decide is to decide. Mitigation ideas:

• Get over it. Do not allow anything to become an excuse for inaction.

• Get help. There are plenty of other companies that are willing to share their experiences and a number of qualified consultants who can help you make the right decisions.

• Get moving.

Inspiration

Whether you think you can, or think you cannot, you are probably right. Do not allow the fear of following in Elsewhere’s footsteps prevent you from setting out on your own technology journey. The benefits of integration are there for those who pursue them.

ATA-Sponsored Business Service

Organization of American States Staff Federal Credit Union

Individual ATA members can now join the OAS Staff Federal Credit Union and benefit from a wide range of banking services, typically with lower fees and better interest rates.

Services Include:

• Interest-bearing checking accounts
• More than 25,000 worldwide surcharge-free ATMs
• Discounted wire transfer fees
• Auto, mortgage, and personal loans
• Home equity line of credit
• Free identity theft protection
• Bilingual customer service

To learn more about this ATA membership benefit, go to www.atanet.org/membership/contactus_oas.php.
Game publishers in Japan and Europe are smart to seek English translations for their titles, given that U.S. gamers account for about half of the video game market worldwide. Games produced by Japanese publishers are either translated into English in-house or by freelance translators, usually via third-party agencies. These English versions are translated again for the European market. (More European-language translators work from English than from Japanese.)

Most of the Japanese-English translations I have worked on have been paid for on a per-source-character basis, although some projects come with flat rates. Direct translation for publishers is often done under the auspices of a contract specifying a regular monthly stipend for the duration of the project. Many translations are done in Excel spreadsheets, a format that may not be the most translator-friendly, but one that seems to work well when it comes time for the developers to insert the translated text back into the game’s program code.

Video game translation brings with it some challenges not seen in other fields, the most infamous being line-length limitations.

Even the more challenging projects can be easier to swallow when one remembers that whatever comes down the pike next is likely to be an entirely different kettle of fish. The downside of all the variety is that the jargon the translator learns and uses in one game may never be used again, leaving it to take up precious real estate in the translator’s brain. (Two examples of specialized glossaries I have had to consult over the years can be found in the Related Links section on page 18.)

The Proverbial Box of Chocolates

It sounds like a concise enough field—video games—but in fact it is a particularly broad subject. Games run the gamut from virtual yoga lessons to yakuza blood feuds to gardening simulations. Each new game project that comes in for translation may very well deal with an unfamiliar subject. The Internet provides access to a wealth of specialized information on any number of topics, so with enough research the game translator will be prepared to take on just about any job.

It can be a lot of fun working in a specialty with such a rich variety of subspecialties. There is a certain amount of anticipation and curiosity about what the next game will bring.
produce an outline of their latest idea and pitch it to publishers, usually in the form of a PowerPoint presentation. Once their game has been picked up and is in the process of being fleshed out, further presentations follow with more details, including how the game should be programmed and when to launch the title to maximize its market impact. Translators are often asked to work on these planning documents, presumably to keep an English-speaking executive in the loop or to help an American counterpart decide whether a game would be worth its production costs.

Character dialogue makes up the bulk of game translation work, especially as games have moved away from the mute simplicity of Pong and Space Invaders toward more complex story-driven titles like the popular Final Fantasy series. Some games, like those in the Yakuza series, retain the original voice acting and therefore require English subtitles.

Translating game dialogue is similar to translating dialogue in literature. The characters are often just as richly drawn as in a novel, with specific personality traits that must be communicated effectively and kept consistent throughout the title—and even throughout a series, if the game spawns any sequels. Licensed characters, such as the Final Fantasy and Disney cast that appear in the Kingdom Hearts series, must remain true to their established personae. This presents special challenges for the translators. For example, in Japanese, speech is often marked for age, gender, social standing, geographical region, and several other constructs. The ideal translation would successfully convey these and still be understood by the target audience.

Songs with lyrics have been making increasingly frequent appearances in video games. When serving as an integral part of the story and gameplay, as with the two Disney songs and three original tunes that make up the Atlantica rhythm mini game stage in Kingdom Hearts II, it is essential that the translated lyrics be rewritten to fit the song’s rhythm and meter, maintaining their “singability.” When a song is used merely as window-dressing, though, a quick subtitled gloss of the lyrics will usually suffice.

Developers can include “stage directions” to help with translation. In the case of Time Hollow for the Nintendo DS, these were provided in lieu of graphical context, and included information about how the characters were positioned onscreen, what objects were visible, and occasionally what circumstances would trigger a particular scenario. Although gamers would never see them, these sidebar comments were rendered into English for the benefit of European translators.

Then there is the on-screen text, including the explanatory blurbs, item names, map locations, details of hard-won battle techniques, and other assorted text, without which the average gamer would be scratching his or her head. All this must be translated, as must any text that appears as part of the game’s graphics (such as in the “lives remaining” display at the top of a standard side-scrolling platform game).

Context is king, and in video game translation, the context is also almost entirely visual.

...Out

Once all the text in the game software has been translated, it is time to look beyond its borders to any supporting text. For example, the instruction booklet or manual is another indispensable source of practical information included with every game that needs to be translated for each market. The game packaging features a description of the title as well as some catchy blurbs that are meant to entice gamers to pick up a copy, which requires the translator to draw upon any advertising or marketing know-how he or she may have acquired over the years. The same is true for the official websites and industry trade show pamphlets that can also be a part of translating a given game.

Challenges

Video game translation brings with it some challenges not seen in other fields, the most infamous being line-length limitations. Hardware and programming constraints mean there is only so much text that can fit into an on-screen dialogue box at a time, so translators must make certain the final version of each line is no longer than in the source language. A line that exceeds the dialogue box’s character capacity will literally run into off-screen oblivion.

For example, when working from Japanese into English, the translated line length is usually twice that of the original. This gives the translator a fair amount of wiggle room for...
most dialogue, especially considering that it is often possible to fit an extra line or two into a dialogue box without crashing the software. The much more tightly constrained graphical text is not so forgiving, however, and while both “up” and “down” can be expressed in a single Japanese character, it is more of a challenge shaving the English words down to two letters without reducing them to gobbledygook. That is when it is best to leave a note for the client strongly suggesting they retool the graphic to accommodate the English.

Context is king, and in video game translation, the context is also almost entirely visual. If the client does not provide a copy of the game (and they usually do not) or production notes (also rare), it can be difficult to work out exactly who is speaking to whom or how a character is gesturing. These moments also call for the translator’s best guess and a note for the client.

A combination of the industry’s recent meteoric rise in popularity, the ubiquity of the Internet, text and dialogue that are more central to a game experience, and a more discerning gaming audience means that translation mistakes that may once have gone unnoticed or laughed off can now become infamous overnight. A good translator will keep this in mind as he or she works to produce an absolutely pristine piece of work. One rarely sees epic goofs like “All your base are belong to us” from Sega’s Zero Wing these days. This is partially due to two factors: 1) game translation is now being done by in-house or third-party specialists in the field, and 2) the specter of an extremely judgmental Internet fan-base is looming larger than ever.

Dealing with Wordplay

Finally, as in any creative work, successfully translating puns and wordplay—or at least replacing them with a localized equivalent—is key to any high-quality video game translation. True, in many instances gamers will not realize what they are missing, but isn’t it also true that translators are, according to ATA’s Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices, honor-bound to “translate the original message faithfully,” even when the original message contains difficult-to-translate humor or highly language-specific puns?

One example that comes to mind is from Sega’s Zero Wing these days. The seemingly random bait-and-switch the peddler pulls here makes much more sense in the original Japanese, where the item offered for sale is a kane no naru ki. The many homophones in Japanese mean these four words could be read both as “money-bearing tree” and “bell-ringing tree,” especially since kane (“bell” or “money”) is not written in the more transparent Chinese-derived kanji script. Japanese-speaking players taking the peddler up on his offer will
presumably realize that their interpretation of *kane no naru ki* only has a 50% chance of being the correct one. Not so in the English, where the wordplay is lost and the player is left feeling swindled by an arbitrary decision. A more astute translator would have lingered longer over this portion of the script, possibly opting for something like “cha-ching tree” to convey both the idea of incoming cash flow and the tinkling of bells in the breeze.

Is it a game breaker? No, but again, it is touches like these that help ensure the end audience gets as much out of the final product as possible, and that is something translators should strive for no matter what their specialty.

**Notes**

1. “All your base are belong to us” (often shortened to “All Your Base,” “AYBABTU,” or simply “AYB”) is a broken English phrase that was central to an Internet phenomenon, or meme, in 2000-2002. The phrase came about as the result of the spread of a Flash animation that depicted the slogan. The text is taken from the opening cutscene of the 1991 European Sega Mega Drive version of the video game *Zero Wing* by Toaplan, which was poorly translated from Japanese.

Successfully translating puns and wordplay—or at least replacing them with a localized equivalent—is key to any high-quality video game translation.

**ata**

Video games are no longer just for youngsters or even males. The Entertainment Software Association industry group reports that the average age of the American gamer has risen to 35, and that nearly twice as many women 18 and older play video games than do boys 17 and younger. This shift in demographics brings with it a demand for more sophisticated games and more intricate stories that will need hard work from dedicated translators if the games are ever going to be appreciated by a global audience. The industry shows no sign of slowing down, and with any luck there will be talented game translators prepared to meet the increased demand with all the finesse these titles require—and deserve.

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Japanese comics, or manga, are a global pop-culture phenomenon today, and their translations into English occupy a significant niche in the comics publishing industry in the U.S. The word manga (“funny pictures”) refers to any sort of printed cartoon, but outside Japan the term has come to be associated with the remarkable range of subject matter and styles, from the cute to the grotesque, that Japanese comics offer.

Manga have been a cash cow for the Japanese publishing industry since the end of World War II. Until the late 1970s, however, the only examples of Japanese cartooning to gain mass exposure in the English world were animated works like Astro Boy, which appeared on American television in the 1960s.

Although I grew up in Japan, I paid little attention to manga when I was young, preferring to read American imports like Superman or Donald Duck. It was not until I returned to Japan in my early twenties that I began reading Japanese comics in earnest. Even so, the popular manga I perused on trains or in coffee shops were no preparation for my first encounter with Hadashi no Gen, a horrific, yet very humanistic epic about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima as seen through the eyes of a six-year-old boy who lived to tell the tale.

Unwitting Pioneers

I became involved in the translation and editing of Gen by sheer chance when I visited a hippie commune (this was 1977) near my Tokyo apartment and found a roomful of young Japanese and Americans furiously cutting, pasting, and lettering English cartoon dialogue balloons onto the pages of a manga I had never seen before. The images seemed to consist of the most graphic and awful scenes imaginable of some sort of holocaust. The people I met at the commune turned out to be members of Project Gen, and they were working on an English translation of Hadashi no Gen. They were busy preparing a pamphlet introducing the climactic sequence of the first volume of the series: the explosion of the atomic bomb over Hiroshima and its immediate aftermath. I was quickly “volunteered” as a native-English proofreader, and so began an involvement that continues to this day.

We did not know it at the time, but when we printed the first volume of Barefoot Gen in 1978 and shipped it in boxes to a sympathetic nonprofit group in New York, Project Gen became the world’s first publisher and distributor of manga in translation.
This was long before the surge of overseas interest in manga that occurred a few years later. Since we were unwitting pioneers in the field, our translation and production techniques were developed entirely by trial and error. The following sections will describe some of the challenges we faced in translating this work.

**Pinning the Dialogue**

Author Keiji Nakazawa was a survivor of the atomic bombing who, like his young protagonist, Gen Nakaoka, lost most of his family in the ensuing firestorm. He grew up in postwar Hiroshima and eventually became a professional cartoonist. Modeling Gen after himself, Nakazawa created a plain-spoken narrative based on his own experiences and those of people he knew.

Nakazawa brought the characters in *Gen* to life with lively, realistic argot, be it the pun-riddled Hiroshima dialect of local kids, the street slang of low-echelon hoodlums, or the jingoistic rhetoric of wartime politicians. By the time I became involved with Project Gen, a tone for the English dialogue had already been set by some very good writers among the American volunteers, though it could veer a bit toward the slangy. In Volume One, for example, the atomic blast sends a concrete wall toppling onto Gen, knocking him out but saving his life. When Gen regains consciousness, his first words in our earliest translation are rendered:

"Wow! What's with this wall?"

Though we toned down such Americanisms in later editions, we tried to keep Nakazawa's breezy idiomatic style intact, using plenty of "gotta's" and "gonna's."

The Hiroshima dialect of his characters, which Nakazawa had already diluted a bit for a nationwide readership, was less of a challenge to translate than the songs, nonsense rhymes, dirty limericks, and puns that pop up throughout the story. Like kids everywhere, Gen and his friends delight in singing their own parodies of everything from popular love songs to crowd-rousing war ballads. Translating these songs inevitably forced us to make a choice between adhering faithfully to the original, which could produce rather clunky-sounding lyrics, or creating a looser version that might even rhyme in English and reflect the mood of the original but would ultimately sacrifice its Japanese flavor. In Volume Two, for example, Gen hitches a ride on a fishing boat and sings a ditty that we rendered like this in our first edition:

"Oh, I'm from Matsubara where the waves break on the sand
I'll spend my life a-sailing, I'll sail the world so grand"

However, after being informed by our Japanese colleagues that *matsubara* was not a place name, but a descriptive term for a seaside pine grove, we ended up with the more literal but less bouncy:

"Oh, we're children of the waves, born by the tide
In the piney woods down by the seaside"

Another dilemma was how profane to make Gen and his friends. In the original, they are pretty darned foul-mouthed, to a degree that might shock some American readers, especially considering that *Gen* was originally serialized in a popular manga weekly for boys in grade school. For example, the Japanese equivalent of "eat shit" appears frequently. After a bit of soul-searching, though admittedly not much, we decided early on to permit the occasional "shit" or "damn" but nothing more risqué. There are still occasional protests over the language in *Gen* from concerned parents in the U.S.

**Sound Effects**

One of the biggest hurdles in translating manga into English is figuring out how to deal with the sound effects displayed in the cartoons. The Japanese language lends itself well to onomatopoeia, and cartoonists avail themselves of a vast and expressive range of sounds—the ZAA ZAA of a downpour, the BYUU BYUU of a whistling wind—as well as a unique class of "effects" that do not represent sounds at all but moods or feelings. Manga abound with such words as the NIYARI of a sinister leer, the GIRA! of a blazing summer sun, and the SHIIIN of utter silence. While English’s relatively paltry palette of onomatopoeia may serve in a pinch when translating actual sounds, the non-sound effects are pretty much a lost cause. Often, manga translators have no choice but to delete them completely. Even certain “real” sounds are problematic: the MIIN MIIN MIIN of summer cicadas, familiar to every Japanese and used frequently by Nakazawa to evoke...
a sultry August day in Hiroshima, met the translators’ chopping block because we thought a disembodied BUZZ BUZZ BUZZ would only puzzle English readers. (See Figure 1 on page 22 for an example of numerous sound effects appearing on one manga page.)

Design Challenges

More than the words, however, it is the pictures that make manga translation a unique challenge, posing problems that one does not encounter with text-only literature. To begin with, there is the fact that Japanese reads from right to left. Hence entire books, as well as the frames on a given manga page, are read from right to left, top to bottom, as are the dialogue balloons within a single frame. If there is a question-and-answer exchange between two characters, the question will appear on the right and the answer on the left. To compound the problem, the Japanese text in manga dialogue balloons is printed vertically, so the balloons themselves often have to be redrawn to fit horizontal English text. (See Figure 2 for an example.)

These design issues were not something that the first Project Gen volunteers gave any thought to when they decided to translate Gen. New and unforeseen problems seemed to crop up daily. Without any manga translation precedent to follow, we had to improvise as we went along. And in those pre-computer days, everything had to be done by hand. We made enlarged photocopies...

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Figure 2
An original page from Hadashi no Gen and the earliest English translation, produced by Project Gen in 1978.
of the original pages, cut out all the frames, rearranged them in left-to-right sequence, and then scrutinized each frame for extra trouble-shooting. Some pictures merely entailed whiting out the Japanese dialogue and lettering the English translation into the same space. Others required redrawing the dialogue balloons to fit the English or reordering a question-and-answer sequence. In extreme cases we would have to “flop” the entire frame, using the photostat process (an early version of photocopying) to produce a reverse image of the original. (Figure 2 on page 23 shows a page from the original and our earliest English translation.)

Flopping presented its own problems, since reversing the image would make the characters left-handed. (Early readers of manga in translation may have wondered if all Japanese were left-handed.) Indeed, the question of whether to flop or not to flop has been a perennial issue throughout the brief history of manga translation. It also epitomizes the technical and cultural evolution of the process. When Project Gen started out in 1977, it took us about a year of weekend cut-paste-and-letter sessions by half a dozen volunteers to produce each volume. By the time we published Volume Four in the U.S. in 1994, manga translation was a viable commercial enterprise and certain production procedures had become standard. One of these was to flop the entire work from the outset. Though this met with some protest from the cartoonists, who did not like to see their work in mirror-image, left-handed characters did not really seem to bother English readers, and the auto-flopping made translated manga much quicker and cheaper to publish.

In the meantime, Keiji Nakazawa continued to serialize the Gen saga, eventually filling 10 book-length volumes. The original Project Gen had gone on hiatus after translating the first four. But in the early 2000s, a new group of volunteers, also named Project Gen, was formed with the aim of translating the remaining six volumes and revising the first four. Advances in personal computer technology now meant that all the image flopping, dialogue balloon redrawing, and lettering work could be Photoshopped on a computer, and the page images could be transmitted via the Internet. This sped the production process up considerably. Once the second edition of Project Gen got rolling in 2005, we were able to produce two new volumes a year, finishing the tenth and final English volume in 2009. (All 10 volumes of Barefoot Gen can be ordered from the American publisher, Last Gasp, at www.lastgasp.com.)

A Growing Audience
To date, Barefoot Gen has been translated, in whole or in part, into 22 languages worldwide. Because of its subject matter and the fact that it is a volunteer project, the Gen series stands a bit removed from the manga translation industry in general, which has undergone a number of booms and busts in recent years. Currently, sales of manga translations in the U.S. are down, but so are manga sales in Japan. No doubt the growth of the Internet, the reading habits of today’s youth, and the global recession are all factors. Yet there is no disputing that a manga fan base has taken root outside Japan. As time passes and this readership has continued to grow and become more familiar with the conventions of this genre, its demands on translators and publishers have evolved in some interesting ways. First and foremost is a demand for “authenticity,” by which is meant fidelity to the original manga. As we know, a truly faithful reproduction of the original work is a practical impossibility in text translation of any sort. Concerning manga artwork, however, publishers have found it expedient to accommodate the “purist” streak in overseas manga readers as much as possible, because it means less alteration of the graphics. Hence we now see the “flopping” issue come full circle, with American fans in particular demanding that their translated manga appear in the original right-to-left sequence. Impressively, these readers seem quite willing to train themselves to read right to left, counterintuitive though it would seem. They also like to see the original hand-drawn onomatopoeia kept intact on the page, since they regard the lettering as part of the original artwork.

If the manga translation business
survives its current woes, it may prove to be the bellwether of a new wrinkle in the globalization of popular culture, exemplified by young American readers who are perfectly happy to read their translations of Japanese manga in the traditional right-to-left order that Japanese readers do.

Related Links

- Last Gasp
  www.lastgasp.com
- Project Gen
  http://homepage2.nifty.com/hadashinogen/genen1.html
- Kyoto International Manga Museum
  www.kyotomm.jp/english

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“On the day of the earthquake, I was sitting in my living room watching a CNN report. They were pulling little girls out of the rubble. They were screaming in Creole and no one could understand what they were saying…I realized there was going to be an upcoming need [for linguists].”

That is how Nicholas Ferreira, a translator in Toronto, explains why he started the Facebook page “Together We Can Find 100,000 Translators and Linguists.” To Ferreira, starting the page was the one small thing he could do right away that might help the victims so many thousands of miles away.

Ferreira was not alone. While much of the world fixated on disaster recovery, those of us in the language industry were all too aware that rescue and recovery would be impossible without good multilingual communication. While there have been massive disasters with international relief needs before, Haiti brought the translation and interpreting community together like never before.

Language Industry Comes Together for Haiti and the Future

By Alexandra Farkas

Those of us in the language industry were all too aware that rescue and recovery would be impossible without good multilingual communication.

Scrambling for Linguists

When the U.S. assigned the USNS Comfort, the Navy’s massive hospital ship, to Haiti, it left with several native Haitian military personnel. However, everyone aboard was aware that there were not enough bilingual people to handle the anticipated demand, and the bilinguals among the team were not trained interpreters. In desperate need of linguists as it shipped out of Baltimore, the International Red Cross recruited anyone who was bilingual English and Haitian Creole and willing to be on the ship for 30 days. Once the team
arrived, it quickly became apparent that many of the 34 volunteers were not adequately prepared for the task before them.

According to Izabel Arocha, of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), the Red Cross and the people aboard the USNS Comfort “learned the hard way.” Arocha explained that “[many of] their volunteers weren’t up on the proper medical terminology and couldn’t handle interpreting at a professional pace. Also, the sight of blood and medical situations can be difficult for untrained people.” In addition, the emotional strain of not being able to leave the ship for the entire assignment period was more than many of these volunteers could take.

It is not that international relief organizations are unaware of the linguistic issues they face on the ground, but their energy is, and should be, focused on the logistics of getting resources where they need to be as quickly as possible. Coordinating volunteers and matching projects with the appropriate linguists is always a challenge, but in this case, the relief organizations were completely overwhelmed with the outpouring of support for Haiti and were desperate for help. To complicate matters, Haitian Creole is a language that not many non-Haitians speak fluently.

Bring in the Professionals

In 1993, Lori Thicke, of Lexcelera (then Eurotexte), founded Translators Without Borders in an effort to organize volunteer translators interested in working with nonprofit organizations dedicated to humanitarian aid. Likewise, ATA and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) have a memorandum of understanding with the American Red Cross and provide translation and interpreting assistance when called upon during local and international disasters. These organizations are used to getting requests for assistance when there is a need. However, the flood of volunteers for the disaster in Haiti was unparalleled.

When the earthquake hit, organizations with which Thicke regularly works, like Doctors Without Borders, Action Against Hunger, and Handicap International, had projects in Haiti and turned to her for additional support. “The scale was hugely different,” she said, “translators were moved and I was getting a thousand applications a week.”

Doug Greene, senior vice-president of business development at Houston-based Translation Source, is a longtime translation professional, but the conversations he was having with colleagues following the earthquake were about what the industry could do more broadly to help. “This was an opportunity to put our best foot forward,” he said. “The language industry needs to have a cohesive response working with government and nonprofits to help in these situations.”

Greene launched Interpreters and Translators for Haiti (IT4H) on Twitter and Facebook as a way to allow people to follow information as it was released. At the same time, he and Thicke, along with Arocha from IMIA, Ferreiera in Toronto, and several others began regular conference calls to debrief on requests for language services and to discuss who could best respond and how to handle the many volunteers most effectively.

Also participating on the calls was Jeff Allen of software developer SAP, who previously worked at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) leading a team that created a fully functional speech-to-speech Haitian Creole system. Following the earthquake, Allen contacted researchers at CMU’s Language Technologies Institute of the School of Computer Science to see if together they could revive his project and use the data assembled with today’s machine translation technologies. His hope was that the work he had done over a decade ago could be used in the rescue and relief efforts. Because of his experience, he was also eager to share his knowledge about language issues and resource coordination.

So Many Volunteers, So Little Time

The response from linguists around the globe was overwhelming, and while calls to action like Ferreira’s Facebook page were immensely successful, deciding how best to deploy people willing to help was an immense challenge. Vetting and
testing linguists was a bottleneck in the process, but an important step to make sure that resources were allocated correctly.

While the language industry is awash in project management software options, there are far fewer solutions for resource management, particularly when it comes to testing and vetting linguists. Isabel Framer, co-chair of NAJIT’s Advocacy Committee, worked together with volunteer Cynthia Roat, a board member of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care, to review and qualify translators and interpreters. Other organizations decided that the number of potential volunteers with whom they were dealing was too large, and that this could be a moment both to deal with the crisis at hand and to organize the process to make it easier in the future.

The linguist portal ProZ aided Translators Without Borders by creating a job board section to notify linguists of open projects. ProZ also worked with Thicke to come up with an effective application and testing platform (www.proz.com/?sp=twb) that allowed her to gather information about potential linguists, find out what they were willing to offer, and make sure that they had the skills required through testing. These innovative tools allowed Thicke to handle more requests with less administrative work.

IMIA took a combined approach. Early on, the decision was made to choose a few organizations and create partnerships with them. Among those organizations were FreshMinistries, the Center for International Disaster Information, and the Miami Red Cross, which was tasked with coordinating ongoing interpreter recruitment for the USNS Comfort. Additionally, IMIA committed to using its website to post information and opportunities for medical linguists, directing volunteers to those organizations that needed help. For some requests, such as when the Japanese Red Cross contacted IMIA for interpreters for its mission to Haiti, IMIA used the resources it had available. However, the association’s pool of linguists was growing exponentially and it needed a way to identify individuals who could do pro bono work for this and other disasters. Thus was born IMIA’s Disaster Relief Language Services Database. IMIA collected all the questions that were asked by various government agencies and nongovernment organizations about individual linguists, such as their citizenship, country of origin, willingness to travel and/or need for a stipend, disaster training, etc., and created an extensive application on its website (www.imiaweb.org/basic/disaster-relief.asp). Interpreters can go to the website and complete the application so IMIA will have a list of linguists available the next time there is an emergency.

**Breaking Down Boundaries to Get Things Done**

For translation companies and tool providers who regularly work in Haitian Creole the earthquake was an opportunity to use their resources and expertise to help in a meaningful way. Jeff Allen’s efforts to put together a deployable database of Haitian Creole and English terminology were assisted by Eriksen Translations Inc., which translated 1,600 medical treatment and triage terms pro bono. Holding several contracts with the City and State of New York and having worked with the Miami-Dade County Department of Health, Eriksen had the resources and experience managing Haitian Creole public health projects to get high-quality translations of the terminology turned around quickly. The terms were used immediately by Doctors Without Borders, and within days were a part of both Microsoft Bing Translator and Google Translate’s English-Haitian Creole tools.

Translators Without Borders received help not only from ProZ, but also from SDL, which provided evaluators to review linguist tests, and Rubric, which provided additional project management support. Translators Without Borders’ partnership with Rubric had already been established, but Rubric was willing to step up its efforts significantly.

Working far from Haiti, translation solution providers of all sorts put their best foot forward. Collaborative translation workspace developer Lingotek offered free use of its translation environment for relief projects. Transparent Language Inc., a provider of language learning software, dug immediately into its resources to find ways to improve its already existing tools.
Haitian Creole offerings. Through a content sharing agreement the company has with Voxtec International, Transparent improved its existing medical and relief terminology and translated a list of 62 common medical questions and statements from the British Red Cross that it had used for other projects. The federal government is one of Transparent’s biggest customers, so it broadened its license across all government agencies and the military to allow unlimited access to its applications.

Though over-the-phone interpreting was not ideal for many of the language needs during the relief effort, interpreting companies like Language Line Services and Pacific Interpreters offered free services for Haitian Creole to those affected by the disaster. Together it was an impressive show of talent, expertise, and generosity that helped save lives and get Haitians the help and support they needed.

Moving Forward Together

While the rescue effort is over, relief projects continue to work hard to help rebuild Haiti. Of course, there will be other disasters. “Haiti got us started,” Arocha explained. While so much of the work different organizations do is usually isolated from others, the coordinated effort of nonprofits, individuals, and commercial companies allowed rescue organizations to receive the language services they needed quickly and effectively.

Future emergencies will be well served by the databases Translators Without Borders and IMIA now have and the dialogue that was created among the many people and organizations in the midst of this crisis. The details of how to get the services required to those who need it most are complex, but with the use of social media, existing and developing technologies, and the generous spirit of capable people in every aspect of the translation and interpreting community we are better prepared to help than ever before.

In addition, there is a wonderful byproduct for the language services industry. The work that was done and the experts involved helped to raise awareness of the real value of professional translators and interpreters. Standing side by side with doctors, nurses, engineers, and emergency relief professionals, translators and interpreters are lending their expertise in a way that no one else can.

Related Links

- Action Against Hunger
  www.ochonagainsthunger.org
- American Translators Association/American Red Cross Partnership for Preparedness
  www.atanet.org/red_cross
- Center for International Disaster Information
  www.cidi.org
- Doctors Without Borders
  www.doctorswithoutborders.org
- Handicap International
  www.handicap-international.us
- International Medical Interpreters Association Disaster Relief
  Language Services Database
  www.imiaweb.org/basic/disaster-relief.asp
- Interpreters and Translators for Haiti
  www.facebook.com/pages/Interpreters-and-Translators-for-Haiti/251290554759
- National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
  www.najit.org
- National Council on Interpreting in Health Care
  www.ncihc.org
- Together We Can Find 100,000 Translators and Linguists
  www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=245649094887
- Translators Without Borders
  http://tsf.eurowtexe.fr
As small business owners, we need to work constantly to expand our business and grow our circle of business contacts and acquaintances. Web 2.0 and modern computing have made the online portion of this very easy—no more lost business cards, no more forgotten names or faces, thanks to frequently updated websites and current pictures. While this is a wonderful development for those of us—most of us—who have trouble remembering names and faces, the question remains: how do you remember people’s names and faces at in-person networking events? You do not want to be the person who gets introduced to someone three or four times before you remember his or her name. This is embarrassing, especially if the other person does know who you are. It makes you seem a bit unprofessional and uncaring. This forgetfulness is certainly never intentional, but you are doing yourself and your business a disservice by not trying to improve your memory skills. Making contacts, remembering who those contacts are, and recognizing them the next time around is essential.

Personally, I am good at remembering names, but I put a lot of work into it. While I understand that others might have difficulty with this, there are certain instances when not remembering names or faces is simply unacceptable.

The good news is that you can improve your memory, and you do not need the mental processing power of a supercomputer to do so. Listed below are a few tricks and tips that should help you remember names and gain confidence.

• Try to find out a thing or two about each person you meet. The more you can associate with a person, the better. This can be difficult if you shake the hands of five people and do not have the chance to talk to anyone, but try and memorize one or two details. For instance: Erik is tall, wears glasses, and is wearing a University of California, Los Angeles sweater. Or: Vera has a really chic haircut, a firm handshake, and is drinking a martini.

• If you have the opportunity, try to exchange a few sentences with each person. The more information you share, the more likely you will be to remember the person. For instance: Erik graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles the same year your best friend did, loves baba ganoush, and just returned from a trip to India. Chances are you will remember some of these details when you see Erik again.

• As soon as you are introduced, repeat the person’s name to yourself and then try to use it in actual conversation: “Are you enjoying the event, Isabel? I think the cheese spread is pretty great.” (Feel free to come up with better ideas here). If you say the name you just heard frequently, you are more likely to remember it.

• Ask for a business card. If you cannot quite catch the name when it is spoken, have a quick look at the card. This also comes in handy for names that are unusual or difficult to pronounce. Do not be afraid to ask the person to tell you again how to pronounce his or her name. It is better than mispronouncing it in conversation.

• Whenever you leave an event or meeting, take a few minutes to jot down notes about people on the back of their business cards. This can include any kind of information that will help you remember the person. For instance, how he or she knows you, what he or she was wearing, what you have in common, what you spoke about, the person’s physical appearance, and anything else you deem relevant.

Hopefully, after working on your skills, you will not have that dreaded I-don’t-remember-her-name-and-she-is-walking-toward-me feeling anymore (or at least less frequently).
Customer Silence Can Be More Dangerous than Complaints

If a translation receives a lot of negative feedback, the company that published it may wish for silence. However, sometimes a reaction of silence can mislead a company into complacency and a false sense of security.

A real-life exchange that illustrates the danger of silence recently happened between a website marketing manager and one of his colleagues. The website marketing manager was confronted with the fact that his current website translation was terrible. Multilingual customers were lucky if they even found it because of some common errors committed in the display of the website language selector and global gateway.

The manager dismissed the significance of the issues saying, “I don’t see a problem. Many of our customers know a little bit of English so they get by just fine with the English version anyways. Besides, no customers have ever complained that they could not find the translation they needed. And, until now, no one has ever complained about the translation being bad.”

His colleague responded with an incredulous laugh, “Of course no potential customers will ever take the time to tell us they can’t read our translations! They will simply move on to our competitors’ websites where they can actually find what they need in their language!”

Another e-learning localization blooper also illustrated how such silence can be costly. AlertDriving (Sonic e-Learning, Inc.) expanded into over 20 countries in two years before realizing its product contained serious localization flaws. How could that happen? AlertDriving’s chief executive officer, Gerry Martin, told The Wall Street Journal it took years to realize that foreign clients were unsatisfied because “in some cultures, like Japan, criticism is considered disrespectful.”

The root cause of this problem may be that “we don’t know what we don’t know.” At least when a customer complains it is easy to know what to fix. So keeping informed of best practices is a good start to preventing and/or correcting potential problems. Then, when potential problems are identified, we must not be complacent and automatically use customer silence to justify the status quo—especially if that silence also reflects the sound of potential customers going to a competitor.

Blog Trekker


Publications from the Localization Industry Standards Association

Journal of Internationalization and Localization
The Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA) has published the inaugural issue of the Journal of Internationalization and Localization (JIAL), a new academic journal dedicated to providing research into the business and technical aspects of globalization. The journal is available free of charge as a PDF file from www.lessius.eu/jial, and may be ordered in hard copy.

Globalization Insider Online Archives
The archives of Globalization Insider, LISA’s newsletter, are now open to the public without restriction. The archives contain 19 years’ worth of articles on all aspects of globalization and localization. The archives can be accessed at www.localization.org.
In 1611, King James I unveiled an English Bible translated by a royal commission. For the longest time this version had no official “name” since it was the only one that was authorized and in wide use within English-speaking Protestant Christianity. Not until the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century did two “names” for this translation emerge into common use: the King James Bible and the Authorised Version. The need for a name for the Bible arose because of new efforts to revise the translation that would take some “modern” scholarship into consideration and make the language a little less archaic.

In 1885, the fruit of those labors resulted in the Revised Version of the Bible (though the Americans were unhappy with this version and published the American Standard Version in 1901). The name of the 1885 version of the Bible still seemed to make sense since it simply described the function of the translation in relation to the original Authorised Version.

But since Protestant Christendom was by no means unified in accepting the fact that the Authorised Version was to be supplanted by its revisions, the need for distinctive names became ever more important. The next large revision effort resulted in the Revised Standard Version of 1952, which was considered too “liberal” by some, it has been discontinued to make a place for the New International Version that will make its debut in 2011.

Since there was no truly conservative translation in the Bible translation mainstream in the late 1990s and early 2000s—except for the American Standard Version’s revised New American Standard Bible of 1971, which is not only conservative but also archaic—the English Standard Version was released in 2001.

Confused by all the “News,” “Reviseds,” and “Standards?” Believe me, I could have quoted many more exotic extremes from the dozens of English Bible translations during the past 200 years.

The point I am trying to make is that the story of Bible translation names has been somewhat of a farce. New? When and in comparison to what? Today’s? As opposed to what? Yesterday’s? Fortunately, rather than continuing that silly tradition, the newer translations, at least in this particular line of translations, are now being named in a more basic and forthright manner: English Standard Version and (to some degree) New International Version of a certain publication year.

I believe this is something from which we can learn.

During the Internet boom of the 1990s, at a time when new technologies and new language for these technologies were being developed and invented at a hitherto unknown pace, the movers and shakers of the translation industry did not want to be left behind.

Language itself was being revamped and “translation” no longer seemed adequate, so new terms were coined—localization, globalization, and internationalization. And because that was not complicated enough, the “acronyms” l10n, g13n, and i18n—or the latest guilt-ridden term, GILT (Globalization, Internationalization, Localization, Translation)—made this into a real “lingo.” Ironically, language services providers themselves did not, and still do not, truly understand what these terms mean. This is partly because there are competing meanings from other subject areas and partly because these terms—especially localization—
seem to suggest a meaning that simply implies making something locally acceptable.

Times have changed again. Now we do not just want to look technical; we want to look “aware” (whatever that means). In response, a new term has been coined: transcreation. Transcreation is supposed to be the “process by which new content is developed or adapted for a given target audience instead of merely translating existing material” (according to a definition from Common Sense Advisory).

I understand that a translator of marketing copy will spend more effort tailoring text to a target audience than a technical or medical translator, but does that warrant a new term? Is it not just a matter of degree rather than of principle?

I completely embrace the term “translation” and am proud to say that I am a “translator.” Do I also translate software and even help to adjust the software so that it runs in a different operating system? Sure, just as I sometimes translate marketing copy and massage the text so that it has a similar effect on readers in a new culture even if it uses very different words and concepts. “Translation” is a powerful term with a proud history and tradition, and, in my opinion, we are not well served by splitting it up into many sub-components that often have very shady differentiators.

I do think that we would be wise to invest our energies into clearing up the differences between translation and interpreting, something that is unfortunately perceived as one and the same by the general media and the public. We do know that these are widely different activities, though—one requires a visual memory and a love for perfection and the other requires an oral memory and spontaneity. Neither is superior to the other, but it is up to us to teach others that they are different.

Otherwise, let’s embrace who we are. Translation is and was “the same yesterday and today and forever”—beautiful, complex, and manifold—and there is no reason to make it artificially more so.

www.courtinfo.ca.gov/interpreters

See what’s new in California court interpreting

ADMINS TRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

COURT INTERPRETERS PROGRAM
• **LTC** has launched a new website at [www.ltcinnovates.com](http://www.ltcinnovates.com).

• **Richard E. McDorman** has published a four-part essay series through Amazon Digital Services. Available for viewing on Amazon’s Kindle Digital Reader, the essays explore a variety of areas in the humanities (history, philosophy, and law) and social sciences (linguistics, archaeology, and political science).

During the past year, this essay series has attracted a wide audience, with all four essays appearing on Amazon’s bestsellers list in at least one category.

• **Marianne Reiner’s** English-French translation of David Grann’s *Trial by Fire* will be published in September by Editions Allia in France.

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### In Memoriam

**Maria Cristina Navia**  || September 13, 1957–June 4, 2010

Maria Cristina Navia died on June 4, 2010. She had been an ATA member since 2000.

Maria was a freelance translator with a great love of languages. She received a bilingual (English-Spanish) elementary education, studied French literature and translation in France, and received her BA in languages from San José State University. She received her court interpreting certificate from California State University, Northridge. She also studied German in Vienna, Austria, where she worked as an assistant manager at the United Nations.

Besides translating, Maria taught Spanish in Colombia and the Netherlands, and founded NAVAZA Translations in California. She provided workshops for translators and interpreters at the University of California, San Diego-extension. In 2009, she volunteered with the American Red Cross of Ventura County.

In addition to ATA, she was a member of the Netherlands Society of Interpreters and Translators, the Northern California Translators Association, and the Association of Translators and Interpreters in the San Diego Area.

Maria’s family and friends will miss her professionalism, dedication, energy, vision, willingness to help, and, above all, her love.

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[www.star-group.net](http://www.star-group.net)  || **MindReader**  

*The delta principle in technical authoring*
## ATA Certification Exam Information

### Upcoming Exams

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

- San Francisco
  - September 26, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: September 10, 2010

**Colorado**
- Denver
  - 2 Sittings
    - October 30, 2010
    - Registration Deadline: October 15, 2010

**New Mexico**
- Albuquerque
  - September 25, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: September 10, 2010

**Nevada**
- Las Vegas
  - September 10, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: August 27, 2010

**Tennessee**
- Nashville
  - September 12, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: August 27, 2010

**Texas**
- Houston
  - September 25, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: September 10, 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

**English into Dutch**
- Dennis Seine
  - Portland, ME

**English into Spanish**
- Maria L. Abal
  - South Miami, FL

- Beatriz Dávila Cornejo
  - San Francisco, CA

- Alexandra Monroy
  - Bogota, Colombia

**Arabic into English**
- Rafael G. Otero
  - Arecibo, Puerto Rico

- Sandra E. Stanley
  - Hudsonville, MI

- Claudia Tebey
  - Monterey, CA

**Russian into English**
- Deborah L. Hunter
  - Columbus, OH

**Spanish into English**
- Jean M. Trujillo
  - Lawrence, KS

- Maria G. Gatti
  - Caracas, Venezuela

- Anne E. Goff
  - Sacramento, CA

- Antonio E. Guerra
  - Elkins Park, PA

- Maria E. Weir
  - Gladwyne, PA

- Faiza A. Sultan
  - Kent, WA

- Bill J. Kim
  - Los Angeles, CA

- Rina Ne’eman
  - East Brunswick, NJ

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### Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

**Maria G. Gatti**
- Caracas, Venezuela

**Anne E. Goff**
- Sacramento, CA

**Antonio E. Guerra**
- Elkins Park, PA

**Bill J. Kim**
- Los Angeles, CA

**Rina Ne’eman**
- East Brunswick, NJ

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**New Certified Members**

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

- **English into Dutch**
  - Dennis Seine
    - Portland, ME

- **English into Spanish**
  - Maria L. Abal
    - South Miami, FL

  - Beatriz Dávila Cornejo
    - San Francisco, CA

  - Alexandra Monroy
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  - Rafael G. Otero
    - Arecibo, Puerto Rico

  - Sandra E. Stanley
    - Hudsonville, MI

  - Claudia Tebey
    - Monterey, CA

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The ATA Chronicle  August 2010

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The Argentina Association of Conference Interpreters (ADICA) was founded in 1979. Its key objective is to represent professional simultaneous and consecutive interpreters in Argentina. To be admitted into the association, potential members must have a degree in interpreting or provide proof of professional interpreting experience. Currently, ADICA represents more than 60 local interpreters, including all members of the International Association of Conference Interpreters living in Argentina.

**Mission**

- To encourage members’ professional performance.
- To uphold a code of ethics as a means of promoting the integrity of members and the profession.
- To promote the use of International Organization for Standardization standards.
- To encourage professional development through continuing education.
- To educate the general public about the value of professional interpreting services. To this end, ADICA’s website offers a section that explains the duties of both consecutive and simultaneous interpreters and gives advice on how to hire an interpreter. The site also contains a searchable membership directory and various articles on the profession written by members.

**Additional Information**

For complete information, please visit www.adica.org.ar.

**Quick Facts**

- Website: www.adica.org.ar
- E-mail: info@adica.org.ar

ATA’s chapters and its affiliates, along with other groups, serve translators and interpreters, providing them with industry information, networking opportunities, and support services. This column is designed to serve as a quick resource highlighting the valuable contributions these organizations are making to the profession.
### Upcoming Events

#### 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 18-19, 2010
Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association
Workshop: Trados Studio 2009
Irving, Texas
www.dfw-mita.com

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

#### September 25-26, 2010
Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators
4th Annual Conference
“Toward Excellence in Multilingual Communication”
Atlanta, Georgia
www.aait.org

#### September 30, 2010
International Translation Day
“Translation Quality for a Variety of Voices”

#### September 30-October 2, 2010
International Association of Translators and Editors in Medicine & Allied Sciences (TREMÉ DICA)
6th Scientific and Professional Symposium
New York, New York
www.tremedica.org

#### October 2, 2010
Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network
Regional Conference on Legal, Medical, Community Interpreting
Novi, Michigan
www.mitinweb.org

#### October 2, 2010
Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association
Workshop: The Entrepreneurial Linguist
Irving, Texas
www.dfw-mita.com

#### October 2, 2010
Northern California Translators Association
CAT Tools Workshop
San Francisco, CA
www.ncta.org

#### October 8-10, 2010
California Federation of Interpreters
8th Annual Continuing Education Conference
Santa Monica, California
www.calinterpreters.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

#### October 31-November 5, 2010
Association for Machine Translation in the Americas
9th Biennial Conference
“Machine Translation in the Production Pipeline”
Denver, Colorado
http://amta2010.amtaweb.org/

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

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

#### November 15-19, 2010
Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association
Connecting Worlds: Training for Health Care Interpreters
Las Vegas, Nevada
www.nitaonline.org

#### November 19-21, 2010
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Annual Convention and World Languages Expo
Boston, Massachusetts
www.actfl.org

Visit the ATA Calendar Online
www.atanet.org/calendar/
for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.
For years, Isa Mara Lando’s Vocabulando has been one of the most useful references for both experienced and beginning Brazilian Portuguese translators. Originally published in 1999 with a very small circulation of only 50 copies, this work in progress has developed gradually to incorporate new versions designed for different users and purposes. An enlarged and improved version containing over 2,000 terms (50% more than the original) was published in 2006. Lando’s Vocabulando blends the extensive research, insight, and copious notes of an experienced professional translator, reviewer, and English as a second language teacher who has worked at several renowned institutions in Brazil.

In Vocabulando, Lando uses her vast teaching experience to explore the contrastive linguistics of Brazilian Portuguese and English, comparing the two languages and offering detailed explanations of the nuances found in each. (This practice-oriented linguistic exercise is one that deserves more attention from translators.) In addition, Lando also provides insight on how the translation market works in Brazil.

The 2006 Vocabulando has since been complemented by the Vocabulando Workbook, a course book of translation exercises published in 2008, and by the 2009 release of the Mini Vocabulando, a compact edition with selected content from the 2006 dictionary. These two recent publications contain interesting solutions aimed at those studying translation or those thinking about entering the business.

Lando follows a didactic approach in her Vocabulando Workbook, focusing on the difficulties of transposing meaning and cultural-specific terminology from one language to another. Studying and researching are never enough in translation and supporting material is a must, making the Vocabulando Workbook a valuable contribution.

Far from being just a shorter or even truncated version of the larger 2006 Vocabulando, Lando’s Mini Vocabulando does the job of the original dictionary, addressing language difficulties in English and Portuguese. This edition has many advantages, including its compact size, the list of all entries in the beginning that serves as a reference index (something the 2006 edition does not include), and the many useful suggestions it contains. Mini Vocabulando is designed with the same approach and care as the other volumes in the series. It contains 500 words that are useful for reading and English translation, with plenty of clear examples to enrich vocabulary and speech, including equivalent terms in Portuguese.

Another useful feature is that Lando alerts the reader to potential false cognates that can lead to confusion and error. For example, the term “failure” can be translated as falha (the most common rendition), but also as falta, não fazer, fracasso, derrota, insucesso, malogro, or pane, depending on the context. (I would also add não cumprimento, meaning noncompliance of something.) The word “officer” can mean oficial de polícia or guarda, but it can also be rendered as autoridade, chefe, diretor, executivo, or funcionário de alto escalão. The term can be used as part of common expressions such as CEO (chief executive officer, translated as diretor executivo). Some other terms that might be misleading and cause misunderstanding include collar, college, ingenious, résumé, and the adverbs virtually and eventually.

The usage alerts provided in blue under some terms serve as key entries that will help the translator avoid lit-
eral translations and the pitfalls they can represent. Fortunately, many options for translation are given for each entry, expanding the scope of various meanings and forms. Lando also provides clues to pronunciation for some entries. For example, the adjective “minute” (pronounced maiNÚt) has many meanings, including diminuto, mínimo, and pequeno, and differs from the noun “minute” (pronounced MÍnit), which is minuto in Portuguese (related to time). A good addition here would be to include “meeting minutes” (pronounced MÍnis), which refers to the documents drawn up after a meeting to inform all interested parties.

Another point I would like to comment on is Lando’s attention to register, particularly to the formality of some words and usages. For instance, Lando advises readers to avoid translating “how” as quão in most situations due to its excessive formality. In this case, the syntax should be reworked to render a more idiomatic sentence in Brazilian Portuguese.

**Overall Evaluation**

There is an additional advantage to the *Mini Vocabulando* that many people may not realize. This condensed version can provide a good starting point to students and those interested in “having a taste” of contrastive linguistics and translation work in a cost-effective way. The interested reader can start with this shorter version as an “appetizer” before spending the money for the full volume. With its rich up-to-date material and user-friendly layout, it is an invaluable resource for translators and Brazilian students of English.

**Brazilian Portuguese-English/English-Brazilian Portuguese Concise Dictionary**

**Author:** Amadeu Marques

**Publisher:** Hippocrene Books

**Publication Date:** 2010

**Number of pages:** 531

**ISBN:** 978-0-7818-1239-9

**Price:** $14.95

**Available from:** Hippocrene Books

www.hippocrenebooks.com

**Reviewed by:** Ilka M. O. Santi

It is very rare to find someone who studied in the Brazilian public educational system who has not heard of Amadeu Marques, the author of many English as a second language course books. Still, I have to admit that when I started studying the basics of the English language, it was not with one of his books. However, I have since become familiar with his name and works.

Amadeu Marques, originally from Lisbon, Portugal, has lived in Brazil since the age of 13. His extensive experience as an English teacher at the elementary and high school levels, as well as at English as a second language schools and preparatory schools, inspired him to write material devoted to the common learner. Since the 1970s, he has published more than 50 titles, including schoolbooks, course books, pronunciation guides, fiction books, and dictionaries. His many titles (e.g., *New Password English*, *Inglês Série Brasil—volume único*, *Prime Time*, and *English for Life, Say It Right*) provided many Brazilians with their first formal contact with the English language and its grammar.

In addition to being a popular author within the Brazilian educational market, Marques’ publications have now started targeting an audience outside the country, and perhaps one far removed from the classroom. For example, the *Brazilian Portuguese-English/English-Brazilian Portuguese Concise Dictionary*, a new pocket dictionary, has just been launched by Hippocrene Books in the U.S. Unlike his other publications, this volume is not intended for translators or language professionals and does not attempt to give an extensive description of the terms it contains. Like the name says, it is a concise pocket dictionary. It is designed more for tourists, businesspeople, and casual non-native speakers who might need to look up a term quickly.

The simplified structure of the pocket volume is bidirectional (English-Brazilian Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese-English) and contains a pronunciation key for both languages. Useful terms include baldeação (transfer), estações de trem ou ônibus (bus or train stations), fretamento (charter), and multa/fine, diária de hotel (daily rate). Containing 10,000 straightforward entries, the dictionary adopts the
New Spelling Agreement, in effect since the end of 2009 for Portuguese-speaking countries.

Closing Thoughts
Perhaps Marques can devote himself further to travelers who need help with the terminology of daily life, such as producing a conversational guide with common phrases. Live languages change all the time, and it is always good to have an attentive eye to cope with that.

Ilka M. O. Sant is an ATA-certified English→Portuguese translator based in São Paulo, Brazil. She specializes in information technology, chemistry, and pharmaceuticals. Besides technical assignments, she teaches and translates books and papers. Contact: ilka@santistudio.com.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

NATIONAL LANGUAGE SERVICE CORPS

The National Language Service Corps (NLSC) is a public civilian organization made up of on-call multilingual volunteers willing to offer their diverse language skills to help communities and government agencies. The organization’s goal is to provide and maintain a readily available civilian corps of individuals certified in English and other languages. To find out more or to apply, please visit nlscorps.org.

REGISTER TODAY FOR ATA’S 51ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ATA’s 51st Annual Conference program and registration are available online: www.atanet.org/conf/2010. Take a look at the depth and breadth of over 150 educational sessions, the multitude of networking opportunities, and the exhibits that are a part of ATA’s 51st Annual Conference, October 27-30, 2010, in Denver, Colorado.

And, don’t miss out on the joint efforts with the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas, which is holding its conference in Denver immediately following ATA’s meeting. For more information, please see http://amta2010.amtaweb.org.
The XIX World Congress of the International Federation of Translators (FIT), to be held in San Francisco, California, on August 1–4, 2011, will bring together translators, interpreters, terminologists, and other professionals from all over the world to discuss topical issues. Over 75 educational sessions will be offered in a variety of categories.

Presentation proposals are now being accepted in the following categories: Audiovisual Translation; Community Interpreting; Copyright; Human Rights; Language Standards; Legal Translation and Interpreting; Literary Translation; New Trends; Terminology; Training and Education; Translation and Culture; Translation Technology; Varia.

Proposals will be selected through a competitive peer-review process. Presentations may be offered in English and French only.

Deadline: December 10, 2010

The FIT XIX World Congress will be hosted by ATA in cooperation with FIT. For more information, including the proposal form, visit www.fit2011.org/proposals.htm.
In Australian English, “outback” and “woop woop” are not synonymous. The former refers to places in the sparsely settled desert of the nation’s interior. Presumably these places could be relatively urban, like Alice Springs or Darwin. The latter can mean any far off, isolated location, presumably in a country other than Australia. Still, if you visit Australia and use “woop woop” in conversation to mean “the boonies,” I assume you will go farther socially than if you tried to convey the idea some other way.

**New Queries**

**(E-F 8-10.1)** For sheer weirdness, few word combinations are the equal of “benchmark-agnostic,” a financial industry term. It derives from the phenomenon of “unconstrained equity investing,” which easily could be a query of its own into any language. It means mandates for investment managers to construct and manage their portfolios in a way that reflects their judgment, unhindered by limits set relative to a benchmark index. In that context, “benchmark-agnostic equity investing” is the same as “best-ideas equity investing.” But having this concept more or less clear is still far from finding a good French term for it. What is it?

**(E-G 8-10.2)** This query about the position of “treatment coordinator” in an orthopedic jaw treatment center brought a German translator to a full stop. What do such health care professionals do, and is there any way to express it in German?

**(E-I 8-10.3)** Ports “upstream” and “downstream” of an infusion pump in a drug infusion line are problematic when trying to produce an Italian version of this term. The context should make it easier: “The upstream ports (above the pump) should not be used to deliver a manual bolus into the line. They should be used only to connect a secondary line. The downstream ports (below the pump) must not be used to connect a secondary line.” How would you convey this notion of upstream and downstream ports?

**(E-R 8-10.4)** The bolded term followed by its acronym is the problem in the following quote from a chemical patent: “Radiative diffractive materials based on crystalline colloidal arrays have been used for a variety of purposes. A crystalline colloidal array (CCA) is a three-dimensional ordered array of mono-dispersed colloidal particles.” How would you render this into Russian?

**(E-Sw 8-10.5)** This commercial query has to do with the unknown concept of a “pure-play MEMS foundry,” coming from some text in which X boasts that it “is a world leading pure-play MEMS foundry providing manufacturing capacity, advanced process technologies, and proven standard process platforms to a wide range of high-tech companies.” Hint from the Translation Inquirer: this type of foundry bears no relation whatever to typical 19th-century industrial foundries. It is for microelectronics. That really reduces the query to the meaning of “pure-play.” How would you render this into good Swedish?

**(E-Sw 8-10.6)** A “rescue hub” is part of a fall-protection system (rescue device), and this part of the equipment posed problems for a translator trying to go into Swedish. The full reference was to “a Rollgliss R500 Descender, 40 m length with rescue hub (140M).” What sort of rescue equipment is it?

**(F-E 8-10.7)** Trousse composite is the troublesome term in this text about the storage of equipment and materials for operating theaters. Coming as it does after several other items in the following sentence, the term might not be too hard to figure out: L’espace aujourd’hui réservé au “non-tissé [non-woven items]” est également à optimiser et à agrandir avec l’espace “sous-fenêtre,” qui pourrait être réservé pour les casques, libérant de l’espace sur chariot pour trios références de troussé composite (la pharmacienne responsable a donné son accord de principe pour entreposer le non tissé avec les produits sortant de la stérilisation). Anyone wish to try this one?

**(F-Pt [E] 8-10.8)** This is the first time this language pair has appeared in the column, although the subject matter is not a happy one: divorce proceedings. The document mentions propriété du sol in this sentence: Et les 58/10.000èmes de la propriété du sol et des parties communes. What is being referred to here?

**(R-E 8-10.9)** In civil-engineering Russian, what does узел перегрузки mean? Here is a helpful sentence: Узел перегрузки конвейера А на конвейер Б непонятен, просим...
дать конструктивное решение по опиранию галерей в данном узле.

(Sp-E 8-10.10) This query is from the culinary world: *tueste torrefacto*. We are blessed here with good context: *Para la elaboración de este producto hemos utilizado cafés sometidos a diferentes procesos de tostado. 50% de cafés de tueste natural y 50% de cafés de tueste torrefacto*. Esta mezcla de tuestes otorga a la taza un sabor más fuerte y amargo, dotándola de cuerpo y carácter. What is it?

(Sp-E 8-10.11) In the world of vegetable oil refining (which this column surely is touching upon for the first time), what is *torta de palmiste*? The text speaks of *XXXX S.A. es una Empresa perteneciente al Grupo empresarial YYYY dedicada al cultivo de palma africana para la producción y comercialización de aceite de palma crudo, aceite de palmiste crudo, almendra de palma y torta de palmiste*. Any ideas about this?

Replies to Old Queries

(G-F [E] 5-10.4) (eine Widmung zu öffentlichem Zweck): Jeffrey Buntrock calls this “a dedication to a public purpose,” but adds that it has to do with the relationship between a landlord and a renting tenant. The landlord cannot use part or all of what the tenant rents to benefit the public. If the tenant pays for a terrace on the ground floor, for example, the landlord may not use it to store bicycles belonging to other tenants.

(G-I [E] 6-10.6) (angepfropft): Denzel Dyer says that *anpfropfen* means to “graft onto,” but English usage is often just “graft.” Oliver French agrees, but in this case it could be translated as “linked to a polymer chain.”

(G-Pt [E] 6-10.7) (*Meldewesen*): Rudy Kutz says this is an umbrella term used in Germany for reporting one’s residence. Citizens and residents report to an *Einwohnermeldeamt* (residency reporting office), and *Meldewesen* is broad enough in its extent to cover these offices as well. Susanna Bunzel-Harris calls *Meldewesen* the “registration administration,” referring to this whole public system and public administration of registering people in Germany. She refers to the four-volume *Langenscheidt Muret-Sanders* dictionary’s offering of “system of registration.” Tina Banerjee calls it the “citizen registration system.”

(I-E 6-10.8) (effetto tossico proprio): Sharlee Bradley says that *proprio di* could be “specific to,” if the expression is in line with the other Romance languages. Laura Dossena uses “peculiar” or “typical” of something or somebody as her rendering of *proprio di*. Oliver French says this means a “toxic effect specific to compound xxx.”

(Po-E 6-10.9) (ze skutkiem natychmiastowym): Larry Shofer says this simply means “effective immediately.”

(Pt-E 5-10.8) (*Plástica e métodos visuais*): Sonia Labate provides Portuguese-language details of this course offered by Mackenzie University in São Paolo: *principios fundamentais da composição artística através dos elementos conceituais, visuais e relacionais da linguagem plástica no plano bidimensional. A análise compositiva e as características estruturais do plano bidimensional para a adequada aplicação dos conceitos na criação de composições bidimensionais.*

(Sp-E 3-10.11) (política de acogida e integração): Knowing that *acogida* can mean simply “welcoming,” Patricia Barker assumes a word was left out of the query that meant “providing.” So her suggestion for the entire phrase is: “We have a policy of welcoming refugees and helping them integrate into the community.”

Thanks to all of our contributors for their research and carefully worded responses! You make my work almost easy!

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821. Email 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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The boundaries of Jewish composer Kurt Weill’s life require more than the two dates of birth and death, 1900 and 1950. He was a German (1900-1933), a Frenchman (1933-1935), and an American (1935-1950; an actual American citizen from 1943). He composed such prototypically German works as Der Protagonist (The Protagonist), Der Jasager (The One Who Says Yes), and, of course Die Dreigroschenoper (The Threepenny Opera), the French play with music Marie Galante, and then such prototypically American musical works as Knickerbocker Holiday, Lady in the Dark, and Street Scene. He died of a heart attack while working on a musical version of Huckleberry Finn.

And, through it all, there was his tempestuous relationship with Karoline Wilhelmine Blamauer (1898-1981), better known as Lotte Lenya, to whom he was married from 1926 to 1933 and then again from 1937 till his death in 1950. She created four major roles in works composed by him, and he loved the convergence of his music and her voice:

For me all of you is contained within this sound; everything else is only a part of you; and when I envelop myself in your voice, then you are with me in every way.

The above quotation is taken from issue No. 5 of Five Dials, the online literary magazine of Hamish Hamilton, a London publishing house founded in 1931. This issue also formed the basis for the May and June humor columns. Downloads and free subscriptions to Five Dials are available at www.hamishhamilton.co.uk/fivedials.

The above quotation appears in an introduction preceding a compendium of the many things Weill and Lenya called themselves and each other, taken from the Appendix of the collection of their letters gathered by Lys Symonette and Kim H. Kowalke, published under the title Speak Low (When You Speak Love). Some of these pet names and signatures, with some of the definitions altered by me, are reprinted below with the kind permission of Craig Taylor, the editor of Five Dials.

**Weill’s Signatures**
- Affenschwanz (monkey tail)
- Äppelheim
- Bibiboy
- Birühmti (famous one)
- Didi
- Freunchen (little friend)
- Froschi (little frog)
- Glätzchen (little baldy)
- Jésus
- Knudchen
- Kurtio Weillissimo
- Pünkitchen (little dot)
- Schnutz (bigmouth)
- Träubchen (little grape)
- Trrr
- Zappelfritz (fidgety fellow)

**Lenya’s Pet Names for Weill**
- Bibi-Schwänzchen (little beaver tail)
- Blumenblümchen (little flower of flowers)
- Delicious
- Honey-chil’; Honey chile’
- Kleene (little one)
- Lenja-Benja
- Lenscherl
- Lila Schweinderl (little purple pig)
- Linderl
- Littichen
- Pfläumchen (little plum)
- Pfläumchen (little plum)
- Pflänzchen (cocky boy)
- Pfännchen (little plum)
- Schwänzchen (little tail)
- Schweenchchen (little piggy)
- Sir Weill
- Sugar
- Sonnenblume (sunflower)
- Träubchen (little grape)

**Lenya’s Signatures**
- Blümchen (little flower)
- Blütte (blossom)

**Weill’s Pet Names for Lenya**
- Bläumchen (little flower)
- Fröschelein (little frog)
- Glätzchen (little baldy)
- Herr Johann Strauss-Weill
- Hollywoodpflanze (Hollywood flower)
- Pflänzchen (cocky boy)
- Pfläumchen (little plum)
- Schwänzchen (little tail)
- Schweenchchen (little piggy)
- Sir Weill
- Sugar
- Sonnenblume (sunflower)
- Träubchen (little grape)

**Private Expressions in Dialect or Invented Language**
- auf Wiedili (goodbye)
- beese ([Berlin dialect] angry)
- Bobo (rump)
• Feinlebe (the good life, living it up)
• G’schamster, Gschamster (fawning minion)
• Knüschen (little kisses)
• Lebe (farewell)
• niedelich (cute, nice)
• Popo (rump)

• primi (first rate)
• Sächelchen (trifles, small items)
• schnecki (sluggish)
• Schniepelpison (sleepyhead)
• Schweinerei (snafu)

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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