In this issue:

New Client Outreach Newsletter: The ATA Compass

Does Translation Matter?

Overcoming the Mot Juste Syndrome

With this issue:

Preliminary Program

Supplement to The ATA Chronicle

American Translators Association

51st Annual Conference

Denver, Colorado

October 27–30, 2010
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Andrea Ondak Wins Naming Contest:
New Client Outreach Newsletter Dubbed The ATA Compass
By Lillian Clementi
Andrea Ondak, a French—English translator and English copywriter based in Connecticut, won the naming contest for ATA’s new client outreach newsletter, The ATA Compass.

Does Translation Matter?
By Susan Welsh
Edith Grossman’s Why Translation Matters is a thoughtful and hard-hitting argument that literary translation is something a civilized society simply cannot do without. So why do most large English-language publishers—unlike their counterparts in continental Europe—refuse to issue more than one or two such translations per year?

Report on ATA/Delaware Valley Translators Association Finance Seminar
By Timothy A. Brinkley
This skill-building seminar—geared toward translation and interpreting in the new economy—presented an opportunity to learn finance from the experts.

Translatability and Untranslatability in Simultaneous Interpreting (Or Overcoming the Mot Juste Syndrome)
By James Nolan
Why do translators and interpreters need to employ different tactics to render meaning? The answer could lie in an examination of the encoding process that takes place during every interpreted encounter.
We Want You!

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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  — 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.
**Our Authors**

**July 2010**

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**Send a Complimentary Copy**

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

Help spread the word about ATA!

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**ONLINE NOW**

**ATA’s 51st Annual Conference**
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**ATA’s Client Outreach Kit and Skill Modules**
www.atanet.org/client_outreach
ATA’s divisions—16 of them at last count, including the recently established Science & Technology Division—give value to ATA members by providing a “gathering place” for translators and interpreters who work in a particular language combination or subject area, or who have pursued a particular business model.

The core responsibility of a division is therefore to function as a more intimate home, within what has become a very large and all-encompassing association, for people who share a particular common interest.

Mr. Dumpty would approve of the way in which we use the word “division” within ATA, because our divisions do much more to unite than to divide. Each division is different—that is why it exists—but it is in no way separate from ATA itself. First of all, division membership is a privilege enjoyed only by members of ATA, a status that we all share. Second, regardless of language, subject specialty, working mode, or business approach, all of us must now live and work in the same environment of rapid globalization, technological progress, and shifting attitudes toward knowledge and social interaction. We must face the same resulting challenges: outsourcing, price pressure, commoditization, and the endless struggle to explain why our work is so important and should be valued accordingly. Thanks to the work of volunteers whose commitment is to the profession as a whole, and of a Headquarters staff dedicated to serving the entire Association, ATA is addressing these issues as a coherent and unified organization.

The divisions of ATA are essential to this effort. Each division was established in order to serve a particular subset of our membership, allowing members of that smaller group to communicate with and support one another. Divisions also communicate beyond their own boundaries, however, and their special expertise ends up serving all of us. Each division embodies a great deal of experience about one particular aspect of our business—Slavic languages, for example, or interpreting, medical terminology, running a language services company, and much more—and that information in turn becomes part of ATA’s overall “knowledge base.” Across every specialty and language, everyone benefits as information flows not only from divisions to their own members, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, from each division to ATA’s volunteer leaders and professional staff and to everyone in the Association.

In addition to having strong opinions about how he expressed himself, Humpty Dumpty had a great fall and could not be put back together again. ATA, on the other hand, continues to rise as a unified organization, and our divisions are doing much to hold us together and help us grow.

(Any ATA member can join any division. Please visit www.atanet.org/divisions/division_admin.php to learn more.)

Remember: ATA Members Can Access The ATA Chronicle Online

All ATA members have access to complete issues of The ATA Chronicle, from 2000 to the present, on ATA’s website. Each issue is posted there as a PDF. Just log onto the Members Only section today and start reading!
This issue of the magazine is being shipped together with the preliminary program for our Annual Conference to be held in Denver, Colorado, October 27-30. This colorful program, with its neatly organized session codes and scheduling announcements, is the distillation of a great deal of work. Some 250 session proposals received from all over the world have been reviewed, ranked, and discussed in detail, with help from a number of volunteer reviewers who take their obligations very seriously. This year, greater emphasis was placed on offering sessions and pre-conference seminars at the advanced level for seasoned professionals, but there are still plenty of sessions catering to newcomers.

Every year, the submitted proposals show evidence of certain trends in the translation and interpreting industry. Just a few years ago, for example, ATA offered sessions on creating your own website and marketing your services on the expanding Internet. Judging by this year’s proposals, this trend has been replaced by a focus on social media. As a result, our program offers multiple sessions on blogging and effectively marketing your services through platforms such as LinkedIn and Twitter. We received a number of proposals focusing on the complex problem of machine translation and the threats and opportunities this technology represents. We felt that the discussion about these trends in our profession was so important that we added a new program category to this year’s conference schedule. The sessions categorized as “Translation & Interpreting Professions” (TIP) offer opportunities to analyze the future outlook of our industry and to discuss technical and business trends with national experts.

Of course, the program still offers many outstanding language-specific sessions and presentations in important specialty fields such as medicine, law, and finance. Other exciting events at the Denver conference include hands-on tool tutorials offered right in the Exhibit Hall and a free Open House event shared by all ATA divisions, along with annual favorites such as the Welcome Reception, the Book Splash, the Job Marketplace, and the Speed Networking Session.

If you would like to explore the world of machine translation in much more detail than our own conference offers, you may be interested to know that the conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (AMTA) will also be held in downtown Denver this year, and is scheduled to open the day after our conference ends. To allow the members of the two organizations to make the most of this unique opportunity, we have arranged for a certain amount of program overlap between the two conferences. ATA’s conference program for Saturday, October 30 will include several sessions that explore the impact of machine translation on the work and business conditions of human translators, while the first day of AMTA’s conference will be dedicated to so-called “tutorials” that focus on practical applications. We have also arranged for members of both organizations to attend the conference of the other organization at membership prices, and ATA members who attend AMTA’s conference can claim continuing education points.

See you in Denver!
ATA Annual Conference:

ATA’s 51st Annual Conference will be in Denver, Colorado, October 27-30. This will be the first time the Annual Conference has been held in Denver. (The one previous ATA Annual Conference in Colorado was in Colorado Springs in 1996.)

With the Rocky Mountains as a backdrop, this year’s conference will offer a very special vibe. ATA President-elect Dorothee Racette’s column, on page 8, goes into more detail about what is planned for one of the largest translation and interpreting events in the world. In addition, please take a look at the Preliminary Program, mailed with this issue of *The ATA Chronicle*, and check out ATA’s conference page: www.atanet.org/conf/2010.

Special thanks to ATA Meetings Manager Teresa Kelly for her usual meticulous planning and execution and for the Preliminary Program and conference website design; to ATA Information Services Manager Roshan Pokharel for his work on setting up the “back end” of the website—the programming—and the newly expanded conference database, which not only streamlines communication with the conference presenters, but also makes it easier to enter information on the conference website; and to Jeff Sanfacon, editor of *The ATA Chronicle*, for reviewing and editing the presentation abstracts and speakers’ bios.

Continued on p.10

UPDATE: CANDIDATES ANNOUNCED

ATA ELECTION | 2010 ANNUAL CONFERENCE | DENVER, COLORADO

ATA will hold its regularly scheduled election at the upcoming 2010 ATA Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado, to elect three directors.

Candidate statements and photos of the candidates will appear in the September issue of *The ATA Chronicle* and on ATA’s website. Official proxies will be mailed to all eligible voters prior to the conference. Votes may be cast: 1) in person at the conference; 2) by proxy given to a voting member attending the conference; or 3) by proxy sent to ATA Headquarters by the date indicated in the instructions enclosed with the proxy. The candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee are:

**Director (three positions, three-year terms):**

- Alan K. Melby
- Gloria K. Quintana
- David C. Rumsey
- Caitilin Walsh
- Ted R. Wozniak
Plan now to attend. Register online or by using the registration form included with the Preliminary Program.

Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (AMTA): The 9th Conference of AMTA will also be in Denver, October 31-November 5. ATA and AMTA have made arrangements for some joint efforts, including a panel discussion—"Man vs. Machine"—set for Saturday, October 30 at ATA’s Annual Conference. ATA President Nicholas Hartmann notes that this co-location is an excellent opportunity for human translators and people who develop and use machine translation to gain a better understanding of each other’s work, and of the challenges and opportunities facing the translation industry as a whole.

ATA members may register for AMTA’s conference at AMTA-member rates. Please note that while both groups are meeting in Denver, they are in different hotels. ATA is meeting in the Hyatt Regency at the Colorado Convention Center. AMTA is meeting at the Westin Tabor Center. For more information, please visit www.amta2010.amtaweb.org.

ATA Election Update: The Nominating Committee has presented the slate of candidates for the 2010 Election. This year, there are elections for three director positions for three-year terms. The tentative slate was published in the June issue. Since that time, a fifth candidate has been added.

Thank you to Alan K. Melby, Gloria K. Quintana, David C. Rumsey, Caitilin Walsh, and Ted R. Wozniak for being willing to serve.

The English Department of the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Translation is looking for high-caliber linguists to join its team. The Commission’s translation service is one of the largest and most prestigious in the world. Translators not only work on EU legislation, but also on the day-to-day documents that keep the organization running—reports of member states, press releases, speeches, consultation papers, and online information. The work covers all areas of EU activity, from energy to farming to humanitarian aid and consumer protection.

Yes, the job is challenging, but there are excellent language-learning opportunities, competitive salary, health care, and many other benefits.

With the ever-increasing demand for translation into English and the imminent retirement of translators who joined the Commission in the 1970s, the English Department has launched a competition to recruit new staff translators.

For more information, visit the European Personnel Selection Office’s website at www.eu-careers.eu.
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After reviewing nearly 600 entries in its name-the-newsletter contest, ATA’s Client Outreach team chose The ATA Compass as the winning name, based on an entry from Andrea Ondak, a French→English translator and English copywriter specializing in advertising. Andrea’s prize is free registration to ATA’s 51st Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado (October 27-30).

Amazing Response

“Member response to the contest was amazing,” said ATA Public Relations Chair Corinne McKay, “and we had a lot of really strong contenders. But many of them were already being used by other translation-related entities, and we had to be careful to avoid intellectual property issues. After consulting an informal focus group and ATA’s attorney, we chose The ATA Compass as the most versatile and appealing for our worldwide target audience—consumers of translation and interpreting.”

Lifelong Love Affair

Contest winner Andrea Ondak admits to a lifelong love affair with the French language. So much so that every vacation has been like a ménage à trois between her, her husband, and that year’s French-language travel destination. “I studied French in school, read it avidly, and sought out every opportunity to meet and speak with native francophones,” she explains. It took her several years, however, to realize that her passion could actually become a career.

New World of Opportunity

“I spotted an ad in The New York Times for New York University’s (NYU) translation studies program,” she recalls, “and as I read the smaller print, discovered that courses were also offered online. Suddenly a whole new world of opportunity opened up.” Andrea began her career in Buffalo, New York, working in advertising and copywriting both for agencies and the in-house communication department of Marine Midland Bank. After moving to Connecticut, she continued to work with language, this time for two publishing houses, a regional bank, and a marketing design firm. “I was involved with interesting book projects and a number of Fortune 500 accounts, but chances to use my French were few and far between,” she says.

A Real Epiphany

Her employer’s decision to close up shop—together with her fortuitous discovery of the NYU program—marked a turning point for Andrea. She began studying translation and exploring business opportunities in the field. “I attended the 2004 ATA conference in Toronto and heard Anglocom owner Grant Hamilton’s presentation on translating for the advertising industry,” she recalls. “I hadn’t realized that there...
were people who made a living doing bilingual advertising. It was a real epiphany, and I came home convinced that this would be the perfect specialization for me.”

When she later learned that NYU was offering a course in advertising and marketing translation, she signed up even though her certificate studies had been completed. And that decision led to her current position as an in-house French-to-English translator and English copywriter for Anglocom.

**Talent and Street-Wise Sensitivity**

“I’ve always found that translators who are native speakers of American English offer a unique combination of talent and street-wise sensitivity to the spoken and written word,” says Hamilton. “So I wasn’t surprised that one of Andrea’s submissions caught the eye of the contest judges.”

“Andrea’s been with us since 2007,” he adds. “She’s very adaptable and works on a wide swath of accounts—fashion, agrifood, transportation, beauty care, and more. I’m very impressed with her creativity and flexibility.”

**Charting a New Course**

Andrea’s winning title was paired with the tagline “Your guide to translation in the global market.” ATA’s first periodic publication aimed specifically at translation and interpreting clients, The ATA Compass offers consumer tips and best practices in a brief, easy-to-digest electronic format. The newsletter joins Translation: Getting It Right, Translation: Buying a Non-Commodity.

**The Right Motivation**

When ATA announced a contest to name its new client newsletter and offered free registration to the Annual Conference as the prize, corporate member Anglocom challenged its translators to participate, offering to supplement ATA’s prize with airfare and hotel accommodations in Denver if one of its translators submitted the winning entry.

It worked. Anglocom translator Andrea Ondak submitted the winning name, Compass, joining her colleagues at Anglocom to submit a combined total of about 50 entries.

“We straddle the line between translation and copywriting,” explained Anglocom owner Grant Hamilton, “so this contest was a real opportunity to draw on our advertising expertise. I am very excited that Andrea has won.”
Andrea Ondak Wins Naming Contest: New Client Outreach Newsletter Dubbed The ATA Compass Continued

and the forthcoming *Interpreting: Getting It Right* as a valuable tool that members can use to launch and enhance client relationships.

The *Compass* features a professionally designed logo, and Ellen Banker, the accomplished designer who handles *The ATA Chronicle* and many of ATA’s other print materials, generously designed its layout free of charge. “As a freelance designer, I face the same issues as all of you—how to win clients, how to keep them—and it was enticing to have the opportunity to communicate not just with ATA members but with their clients. It gives me much more insight into your needs.”

**Rolling Stone**

The first issue, which appeared in June, featured highlights from an interview with Tom Adams, chief executive officer of the highly successful language-learning company Rosetta Stone, on the critical role of exports in the U.S. economic recovery and the value of language and customer relations in international trade. The second issue, slated for later this summer, will focus on interpreting, and the third, which will appear shortly before the Annual Conference in Denver, will address computer translation. “The *Compass* covers both interpreting and translation,” McKay stressed, “and we’re recruiting members in both professions to contribute articles.”

**Wanted: Guest Contributors**

Look for the inaugural issue of *The ATA Compass* on the home page of ATA’s website. If you have ideas on future topics, please contact ATA’s PR Committee at pr@atanet.org.

Andrea is very adaptable and works on a wide swath of accounts. I’m very impressed with her creativity and flexibility.

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**American Translators Association**

**51st Annual Conference**

Denver, Colorado

October 27–30, 2010

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Edith Grossman is an award-winning translator of Latin American and Spanish literature, ranging from Don Quixote and poetry of the Spanish Golden Age, to contemporary works by Gabriel García Márquez, Antonio Muñoz Molina, and Carlos Fuentes. Her most recent book is Why Translation Matters, published by Yale University Press in 2010 (hardbound, 135 pages with index, $24.00).

A young person who loves languages and literature and is considering becoming a literary translator could get the idea from surfing the translators’ blogosphere that: 1) this profession is poorly paid and even headed for extinction; and 2) human beings are destined to be replaced by computers or to spend their lives in drudgery, post-editing the slop that machine translation spits out.¹

That person can take heart from Edith Grossman’s book, Why Translation Matters, which makes a thoughtful and eloquent case that literary translation not only matters but is something a civilized society cannot do without. After all, she writes, translation “almost defines the European Renaissance,” when the classics of ancient Greece that had been lost to Christian Europe for centuries were translated into Latin and then the vernacular languages of Europe. These works provided the springboard for the new discoveries of the Renaissance itself.

Yet today, the U.S. is fighting two wars in countries that most Americans could not find on a map, and about whose people, language, and culture they know nothing. Former National Intelligence Director John Negroponte laments that in the American Foreign Service, the “greatest challenge” is the need for officers who can speak the languages of the places to which they are deployed.²

Grossman views this gap as potentially catastrophic. She writes:

“Translation not only plays its important traditional role as the means that allows us access to literature originally written in one of the countless languages we cannot read, but it also represents a concrete literary presence with the crucial capacity to ease and make more meaningful our relationships to those with whom we may not

¹Does Translation Matter? By Susan Welsh

The ATA Chronicle • July 2010
A Paradox

Grossman’s book addresses the “dire state” of publishing in the U.S. and the U.K. today, where, she says, only 2-3% of the books published each year are literary translations, whereas in western Europe and Latin America, the number is anywhere from 25 to 40%. Prestigious publishers put quotas on the number of literary translations—two in one case that Grossman mentions—and dismiss translators cavalierly, she writes, often omitting even to put their names “in legible size” on the cover. Reviewers often seem blind to the fact that the words of the book they have read (or not read, as the case may be) are those of the translator, not the author, and the same “disconnect” is prevalent in academia. Most large English-language publishers are convinced that translated literature will not sell, and are seldom willing to go to bat for a new translation, especially given that book sales overall are declining. Grossman identifies the insularity of both U.S. and British cultures and “a deeply imprinted cultural dogmatism and linguistic isolationism that may constitute the primary obstacle to literary translation in the English-speaking world.”

But, then, how to understand the stunning success of both Grossman’s Don Quixote (more than 100,000 copies sold) and Seamus Heaney’s translation of Beowulf (more than 80,000 sold)? Or the popular Millennium Trilogy by the late Stieg Larsson? (The Girl Who Plays with Fire was the first translated work in 25 years to get to #1 on The New York Times bestseller list for hardcover fiction, and The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo has sold 764,000 in the U.S. alone.)

When I asked Grossman that question, she replied:

“I think there is a public hungry for those works. There’s no other way, to my mind, to account for that. So even if, on the one hand, we can say that the number of people who read seriously is diminishing every day, on the other hand, there is a sizable number of people who long for books of substance. How else explain [the success of] Don Quixote? Why would anyone read a 400-year-old novel? Or the success of Beowulf: I mean, it’s almost a thousand-year-old poem! I think there is an audience for it....Right after [my] book came out, the publisher’s assistant called me and said, ‘It’s #8 on Amazon!’ and I said, ‘What’s #8 on Amazon?’ And it was Don Quixote. That’s astonishing!...I don’t think there’s a resistance to translation as such.”

Is There a Solution?

Still, even with sales of 100,000, we are talking about a very small slice of the American population, and, espe-
cially among the young, the number of people who read anything longer and more intellectually challenging than a text message or a 140-character Tweet is declining precipitously. We obviously confront a cultural problem that goes much deeper than the shriveled souls of certain English-language publishers.

While I thought Grossman’s book was well-written and compelling, I wish she had addressed the question of what could be done. In our discussion, she said frankly that she does not have a solution, which is why she did not offer any. Her internalized audience is not publishers, since “publishers will do what they will do.” It is, rather, “people who read, who read literature—poetry and so forth.” What about the rest? “Our education has failed, terribly,” she said, “and we continue to graduate semi-literate students. The access to images, as opposed to words, through television and now the computer, has pulled people who have not been educated to read even farther away from the book—any kind of book.”

My own view is that history shows—from the American Revolution to Pearl Harbor to the Civil Rights Movement—that deep cultural change goes alongside political change and inspired leadership, and that poet and translator Percy B. Shelley had it right when he wrote:

“The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is Poetry. At such periods, there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving profound and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The persons in whom this power resides, may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve the Power which is seated upon the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all-penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present...Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.”

Political change and cultural change can reciprocally reinforce one another, as such periods of “the awakening of a great people” generate more hunger for great literature, and also inspire its creation.

It is the generation of our young would-be translator (or poet) who will have to satisfy that need in decades.
to come. And when young people decide that there must be more to life than a fast buck, a cool car, the latest technology, and a hookup—existence means nothing if you leave nothing of value to those who come after you—then the world’s great literature will have to be there for them. It will have to include excellent translations crafted by people who sweated over them for months or years, struggling to convey the author’s meaning in the way most faithful to both sense and artistry, yet in the idiom and form of the target language.

Which brings me to Edith Grossman’s concluding advice to aspiring literary translators: “You really have to love the work. You have to go into it the way a kid who goes into the arts loves art. You have to be willing to be poor and you have to be willing, perhaps, to have a day job, and do the work you love at night. But you have to love it.”

Notes

1. I recognize that machine translation is getting better and better for some language pairs and can be useful in some contexts. But that is not the subject of this article and has nothing to do with the translation of literature.

2. Davidson, Joe. “Language Proficiency is Foreign Service’s ‘Greatest Challenge,’ Negroponte Says.” The Washington Post (April 8, 2010). The General Accountability Office says that in Iraq, 57% of Foreign Service officers lack sufficient language skills, while in Afghanistan, 73% cannot directly communicate with the country’s people. See www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/04/07/AR2010040704503.html?sub=AR.


4. The figures are from Nielsen BookScan, but its data are only available to subscribers. These numbers come from online secondary sources, and may not be fully commensurable; they are intended only to give the order of magnitude. For comparison, the Millennium Trilogy has sold 27 million copies in 35 countries, in all languages; a translation issued by a small publisher might sell 10-15,000 copies; and Khaled Hosseini’s The Kite Runner (written in English, but long, challenging, and “foreign”) has sold 12 million copies.


6. Grossman presents numerous examples of how she does this in her translations, notably in poetry.
ATA and the Delaware Valley Translators Association (DVTA) co-hosted the Finance Seminar on May 1-2 in Philadelphia. Translators gathered to hear the seminar speakers talk about translating for the financial industry and building a freelance translation business. This skill-building seminar presented an opportunity to learn finance from the experts. In sessions geared toward translation and interpreting in the new economy, attendees examined capital, equity, and bond markets; developed marketing and negotiating skills; discovered how to use social media to reach direct clients; and how to apply best business practices to the business of being a freelance translator. Here is a general overview of this information-packed weekend. Make sure to check out the box at the end of this article for additional references provided by the speakers.

Marian S. Greenfield: Translating for the Capital Markets
ATA Past President (2005-2007) Marian S. Greenfield chairs ATA’s Professional Development Committee. Prior to launching her current, successful freelance translation business, she translated in New York’s financial district for over 20 years, including 13 years as translation services manager for JP Morgan. Given her long background working as a translator for the financial industry, Greenfield was able to provide an excellent overview of the industry and the main types of documents and financial instruments that translators encounter. She also provided helpful hints for translators who work, or aspire to work, in this field.

In her discussion of the industry, Greenfield described how com-
panies raise capital by issuing debt (bonds) or selling equity (shares) on the capital markets. She explained that governments also raise capital by issuing bonds. Government bonds are sold to private investors as well as to institutional investors such as banks or pension funds. Often these bonds are sold to investors located outside the country that issued them, so translators are called upon to translate the written material associated with the new issue.

One example of this written material is a term sheet. Term sheets are typically issued for bonds, and they include such things as the name of the issuer, the amount of debt issued, the interest rate, the maturity date, and various covenants and restrictions. There is a great deal of vernacular specific to bonds, and Greenfield reviewed a large number of terms that a translator is likely to encounter in term sheets and other bond-related documentation. She emphasized that translators should not assume that two terms that seem synonymous really mean the same thing (such as “yield” and “return,” or “tender” and “tender offer”). She also strongly favored using monolingual dictionaries over bilingual dictionaries when trying to arrive at the proper translation for financial terms, as most bilingual dictionaries are unreliable in her experience.

In addition to bonds, Greenfield also covered the basics regarding initial public offerings of shares by companies. Specific requirements vary by country, but in general the documentation and information included are similar. Greenfield provided a thorough overview of the process of an initial public offering in the U.S., as well as the documentation and terminology associated therewith.

Greenfield emphasized the need to read the financial press in your target language, and to “read with a pencil” when doing so. In other words, always jot down terms of which you are unsure and take the time to learn them. She also highly recommended the Financial Translators Forum on Yahoo! (finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/financialtranslators).

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**Related Links from the Presentations**

- **Marian S. Greenfield**
  - Translating for the Capital Markets
  - Association of Corporate Treasurers Glossary
    - www.treasurers.org/glossary
  - Charles Schwab
    - www.charlesschwab.com/glossary
  - Financial Translators Forum on Yahoo!
    - finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/financialtranslators
  - International Monetary Fund
    - www.imf.org
  - Investopedia
    - www.investopedia.com/dictionary

- **New York Stock Exchange Euronext**
  - www.euronext.com

- **Wall Street**

- **World Bank Glossary**
  - www.worldbank.org
  - (Type in “capital market terms” in the search field.)
### Related Links from the Presentations

**Stephanie Tramdack Cash**  
**New Directions in Finance**

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| **All About Alpha**                                                        | http://allaboutalpha.com/blog  
A newsletter of alternative investment research and opinion. |
| **Bookmarks: Traders**                                                      | www.jamesgoulding.com/Bookmarks_Trading.htm  
Contains Fibonacci trading rules, information on the effects of sunspot activity on investment markets, and much more. |
| **Chartered Financial Analyst Institute**                                  | www.cfainstitute.org/pages/index.aspx  
This is the main page of the CFA Institute, which grants the CFA (Chartered Financial Analyst) charter. It is an excellent source of good information on all aspects of finance. |

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**Stephanie Tramdack Cash: New Directions in Finance**

After working several years in the male-dominated world of investment management, Stephanie Tramdack Cash earned the prestigious and difficult-to-obtain designation of Chartered Financial Analyst.

When making a pitch on behalf of her firm to institutional investors in Montreal, she decided to take the opportunity to use the French language skills she had acquired earlier in life. That decision set a series of events into motion that ultimately led to a move to Quebec, where she worked (in both English and French) for over five years. Following a move back to the U.S. and several years of teaching French, she received a flyer for a translation studies course in Illinois and enrolled. Today, she happily runs a freelance translation business from home.

In some ways, investment management materials are more important than the regulatory filings that are required by companies that want to launch an initial public offering. People actually read these materials, primarily because they seek to read between the lines of what companies are saying publicly about themselves through press releases or regulatory filings, and such documentation provides context and analysis regarding a potential investment. Cash also finds this area of financial translation particularly attractive because the work is not seasonal (unlike regulatory filings) and the materials tend to be less technical and more interesting to read. Every document an analyst writes to a client is an opportunity to deepen or expand a business relationship, so analysts also use nontechnical words and styles in their writing.

Clients will differ in their sophistication, but most documents in the investment management field will contain a good deal of financial terminology, and this terminology must be learned by a translator. Cash gave an excellent overview of the primary terms that are used in English and described some of the charts and graphs frequently used by analysts.

The jargon in financial analysis can roughly be divided between terminology associated with bonds and terminology associated with stocks. Cash covered several different types of bonds, as well as the terminology analysts use to explain the pros and cons thereof. For example, inflation analysis plays a central role in bond prices, and she described the difference between inflation-linked and fixed-rate bonds and how analysts describe the risks associated with each. Unlike...
fixed-rate bonds, inflation-linked bonds offer inflation protection by linking principal and interest payments to the rate of inflation.

Seemingly innocuous words like “duration” (which is sometimes used in the financial context to describe interest rate sensitivity) have a specific meaning in financial analysis, so translators should be cautious and look at the context carefully. Cash said that doing both financial analysis and financial translation requires the use of “multiple intelligences,” including verbal, logical, interpersonal, and others, as well as patience and persistence. She even recommended that translators read (or re-read) Boethius’ Consolation of Philosophy, written nearly 1,500 years ago. One of the most translated works of all time, Cash believes that it can provide translators with the perspective they need to persevere and succeed in the field of financial translation.

Judy A. Jenner: Lessons from Business School: The Entrepreneurial Linguist

Well known to readers of The ATA Chronicle through her “Entrepreneurial Linguist” column, Judy Jenner has built on her multinational, multicultural, and trilingual upbringing, as well as her educational and business background, to create a successful freelance translation business that she shares with her similarly multicultural and highly accomplished identical twin sister. Jenner obtained an MBA in 2001, and has applied the lessons she learned in business school to her translation business. She also has a consulting business through which she shares the lessons she has learned with other translators through workshops and individual consulting sessions.

The most important thing to bear in mind is that there are no secrets or tricks to building a successful freelance translation business. More than anything else, hard work is required to get good clients and keep them. Jenner covered all aspects of running a translation business, including selling your services, using your time wisely, acquiring the proper tools, communicating well, and using good business practices to increase efficiency and minimize risk.

Translators naturally focus on doing translations well, but they often ignore other critically important aspects of their business. Making yourself known is a vital part of the translation business and requires a substantial investment of time and effort on the part of a freelance translator. Jenner described numerous ways that translators can build their brand, from blogs, websites, LinkedIn and other online social media, to the harder work of direct marketing. She stressed the need to design good marketing materials in PDF format that you can e-mail to prospective clients. Potential customers usually do not want your résumé (they are not interested in your college grade point average)—they want to know why they should use your services and what value you offer them.

While Jenner covered many practical topics such as accounting, record keeping, and effective e-mail signatures, she also focused on the importance of having confidence in yourself and enthusiasm for your business. She believes strongly that a translator should not be intimidated when negotiating with clients. A freelance translation business is as legitimate as any other business, and we should not be shy when it comes to negotiating price. Be confident that you offer a highly specialized service, know your bottom line, and be firm. Moreover, have positive passion for your job—it helps you get and keep good clients, and it helps you achieve the compensation you deserve.

Networking and Marketing

Aside from the main presentations, seminar organizers set aside time for networking activities, where attendees could have a drink and get to know one another in a positive, collegial atmosphere. They also provided the Job Marketplace for the attendees to market their services to colleagues and other potential customers. Overall, it was a productive and informative program over a beautiful weekend in Philadelphia. Everyone in attendance took away valuable tips on how to become more successful in the business side of translation and interpreting.
Related Links from the Presentations

Judy Jenner

Lessons from Business School: The Entrepreneurial Linguist

Alternate Phone Service Options

Skype
www.skype.com

Jajah
www.jajah.com

Vonage
www.vonage.com

With Skype and Jajah, you can use both of these via computer, but can also use your regular phone/cell phone. With Vonage, you can save on your regular phone by switching to VOIP, although it has some reception issues in some areas.

Blogging Sites

Blogger
www.blogger.com

Microblogging
www.twitter.com
You can use Twitter to microblog in 140 characters or less (Judy Jenner’s Twitter account is “language_news”).

Translation Times (Judy Jenner’s Blog)
www.translationtimes.blogspot.com

Wordpress
www.wordpress.com

Blogger is very easy and user-friendly, and has templates. Wordpress is also easy to use, and it has more options and looks nice.

Branding

Pole to Pole Consulting
www.poletopoleconsulting.com/about_us.html
This site offers affordable logos from fellow entrepreneur Sandra Busta (ask for the Entrepreneurial Linguist discount).

Google Standard Edition
This is the $10 website courtesy of Google. It includes custom e-mail (i.e., office@spanishwizards.com) and domain name (hosting for a year).

PDF Maker
www.pdfforge.org/products/pdfcreator
Turn Word documents into PDFs (free).

Wordpress Website Templates
www.themes2wp.com
This is another option for setting up a website. They are a little more involved, but they look nicer than Google Sites. Check out Judy Jenner’s website (www.entrepreneuriallinguist.com) for an example. It was built with Wordpress and then customized.

Professional Networking

LinkedIn
www.linkedin.com

Xing
www.xing.com

You can use LinkedIn and Xing to create professional profiles, join groups, get recommendations, and grow your network. Tip: include a good picture and complete information in your profile.
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.

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**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.

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- 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.
According to an anecdote that once made the rounds among United Nations (UN) interpreters, a young delegate attending his first UN General Assembly, upon hearing simultaneous interpreting in six languages for the first time, approached a conference officer and asked, “This translation system is wonderful, where can I buy one?” While the anecdote may be apocryphal, it pointedly raises a persistent paradox: simultaneous interpreting is as widely misunderstood as it is widely used.

Multilingual Communication in Real Time

The world relies upon simultaneous interpreting for international communication and decision-making. Without it, multilingual debates and negotiations, already hampered by many political and procedural hurdles, would slow to a crawl due to the need for everything to be repeated sequentially in all of the speakers’ various languages, as in the days of the League of Nations. Since most listeners would understand only one of several versions they would have to listen to, the stultifying effect on communication and dialogue is hard to overstate. For an organization like the European Union, with 23 official languages, multilingual debate in real time would be impossible.

Yet, despite its importance, many still do not understand the purpose of simultaneous interpreting and readily confuse or compare it with translation. (This is understandable given the fact that some of what a translator does involves “interpreting” the text, and some of what an interpreter does involves “translating” the speech.) There is even speculation that machine translation combined with voice recognition technology may someday lead to a form of machine interpretation. Of course, while machine translation is gradually learning to do it a little better, the human brain, the most powerful of all computers, does it much better and has been doing so for some 57 years, ever since simultaneous interpreting was introduced at the Nuremberg trials.

However, the confusion about “translation” and “interpreting”...
Translatability and Untranslatability in Simultaneous Interpreting (Or Overcoming the Mot Juste Syndrome) Continued

goes beyond the everyday misuse of the two terms or the assumption that it is a mechanical act that can be replicated just as efficiently by computers. The real confusion stems from not appreciating that writing/reading and speaking/listening are two different ways of understanding, encoding, decoding, and re-encoding ideas. One method works with visual/graphic symbols that are meant to be fixed or permanent, and the other method works with aural symbols—the fleeting sounds of the human voice—which convey a vastly greater range of meaning, especially emotional meaning, and are constantly evolving. The fundamentally different nature of these two forms of symbolic communication can be glimpsed when one considers, for example, why it is that a libretto can be translated but an opera is almost never performed in translation.4 Because written words originate as graphic representations of spoken words, we tend to focus on their semantic resemblance rather than on the differences between the pen and the voice as a medium of communication.

For example, word choice, a key concern in written composition, takes on different outlines when interpreting. Interpreting is not so much a composition as an improvisational performance. As with any other art, performers of simultaneous interpreting do not always do it perfectly, but are nonetheless always expected to perform. As aptly put by Douglas Schuler, one of the co-authors of Liberating Voices: A Pattern Language for Communication Revolution (MIT Press), “Totally accurate translation is impossible but imperfect translation is ubiquitous—and essential.”5 Still, if it existed, would “totally accurate” translation or interpreting be good translation or interpreting? Does an interpreter best convey a speaker’s meaning and intent by striving to reflect each and every semantic nuance with “total accuracy?” The problem is not that simple. Schuler goes on to offer an equally apt description of what good translation is and how it is shaped by context:

“Moreover, the context of the words in the sentence, the sentence in the paragraph, etc., that is being translated, all within the context of the inspiration and intent and audience are all relevant when translating….Translation, therefore, is not a mechanical act, but a skilled and empathetic re-writing or re-performing of a text or utterance or intention in which an understanding of the two cultures being bridged is essential.”6

Because the re-performing of the message requires empathy, it can only be done by another human being. Empathy helps the interpreter both to understand the speaker’s ideas and to reflect faithfully the speaker’s intent (as does contact with the speaker before the speech).7 How that empathy comes into play is an intuitive process that is difficult to describe or explain, but which can be learned through practice, like acting or music.8

Perhaps the best way to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the simultaneous interpreter’s task is through a closer look at the dynamic structure of the encoding process that takes place during every interpreted encounter. This is also a good way to explain why translation and interpreting require different tactics to render meaning. As Schuler states, such a performance is anything but mechanical.

Performance Dimensions

A concise definition of good interpreting and translation that is often cited, for example, in the codes of professional conduct of court interpreters, states that interpreters and translators should “faithfully and accurately reproduce in the target language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message [emphasis mine].”9 Significantly, this definition does not say “the nearest equivalent word.” “Closest” refers to closeness of meaning, not necessarily of words. This is the first of three important considerations regarding the performance dimensions of translation and interpreting, outlined below.

1. One must be careful to distinguish between meaning and words. Words are one means among many by which speakers and writers express meaning. Should a simultaneous interpreter attempt to track the wording of the original message? It can sometimes be done, but the effort it demands of a simultaneous interpreter can lead to omitting or distorting other parts of the message, especially with complex syntax or when a speaker’s intent differs from his or her literal meaning (as often happens in diplomatic discourse), or when the connotations may be more important than the denotation (as sometimes happens in irony, allusions, or humor). As a measure of completeness, a word count can be a rough indicator of whether the full text of a book has been translated from the source language into the target language, but it does not tell us whether a speaker’s message has reached its intended audience.

2. One must bear in mind the time constraints under which the communication takes place. Martin
Luther took pride in the fact that, when translating the Bible, he often spent up to four weeks researching a single word. Such patience and intellectual discipline is commendable in a translator. But to a simultaneous interpreter with only seconds in which to produce an acceptable equivalent, obsessively searching for the most suitable word is a case of “the best is the enemy of the good.” Many novice interpreters fall victim to the mot juste syndrome (the need to find exactly the right word or expression), but even an experienced interpreter will sometimes falter in mid-sentence trying to retrieve the perfect target language word from memory and still draw a blank. Simultaneous interpreting is expected to begin and end at the same time as the original speech so that participants at the meeting can complete their business and adjourn. In simultaneous interpreting, time is of the essence, and the interpreter has to perform his or her task within the time limits dictated by the speaker and the setting.

Performance Dimensions

A linguist’s performance is anything but mechanical. Here are three important considerations interpreters and translators must keep in mind as they reproduce meaning in the target language.

1. One must be careful to distinguish between meaning and words.
2. One must bear in mind the time constraints under which the communication takes place.
3. One should remember how the content of the communication was created.

Interpreting is not so much a composition as an improvisational performance.

3. One should remember how the content of the communication was created. Except in extemporaneous remarks, speakers generally prepare their speeches beforehand, memorize them or at least think them through, or speak from written notes. Therefore, the structure and style of the oral material the interpreter hears may bear a deceptive resemblance to writing. But readers are not generally expected to absorb intelligently what they read at rates of up to 170 words per minute, while interpreters nowadays must sometimes keep up with speakers who deliver their speeches at that rate. A word or expression which might force a reader to pause momentarily to reflect upon the meaning cannot be processed in that way by the interpreter. Thumbing through a dictionary is out of the question. Hence the importance to an interpreter of a general education broad enough at least to recognize any source language utterance and/or to derive the meaning from the context. The “speeches” with which interpreters work are often writings read aloud, which means they are more complex and densely packed with meaning than spontaneous speech.

What is Translatable?

Working with material whose translatability is shaped by the performance dimensions just mentioned, how much semantic content should a competent simultaneous interpreter be expected to render from the source to the target language? Opinions vary.
According to one thorough study, conveying meaning from source to target accounts for about 60% of the work done by parliamentary interpreters.11 In some contexts, a “goal” of 90% completeness is used. In some simultaneous interpreting examinations a passing performance is “getting 70% of the meaning across.” But what if the 30% that was lost in an interpreter’s “passing performance” contained some of the speaker’s main points (for example, because they came at the end and the interpreter fell behind while struggling with details)? That question suggests how arbitrary quantitative criteria can be and prompts the following two propositions about simultaneous interpreting techniques:

1. An interpreter should exercise sound editorial judgment in deciding what must be fully conveyed and what can be safely edited while keeping pace with the speaker and respecting the original meaning and intent; and

2. A simultaneous interpreter should strive to convey 100% of the speaker’s meaning by focusing on the main ideas, even if it requires systematically condensing verbiage and abridging or deleting details that are obvious, redundant, or superfluous.

We know that there is often no exact one-to-one correspondence between words and structures in different languages. This alone should suffice to immunize interpreters against the mental blocks induced by the mot juste syndrome, since it shows that searching for the equivalent is often futile. Whatever target language equivalent is used, it will probably not correspond completely to the source language item. The goal of complete accuracy in diction is often illusory. A more relevant point is that even within the confines of one language, we commonly call things by more than one name or say things in different ways, depending on context and usage. Also, there are often two or more interchangeable ways of saying something (e.g., “How are you?” and “How are you doing?”; “onerous” and “burdensome”). An interpreter in the habit of using a single target language equivalent is applying to the complex task of multilingual communication a constraint not usually applied to the simpler task of monolingual speech. As a result, the interpreter will be hard-pressed if he or she forgets that one target language equivalent.

Contexts and Choices

Consequently, being mindful that memory is fallible, it is wise to start from the assumption that for any given source language item there may be several possible equivalents in the target language, depending on the context. This means the interpreter will usually have choices. Having choices is an advantage, which is why interpreter training should include practice on “widening the options.” The fact that context largely determines meaning has many implications for the interpreter’s choices. Here are some examples.

1. The context may narrow the meaning of the source language item, making it harder to retrieve an opposite target language equivalent from memory.12 In the following example, the context makes it necessary to use two target language verbs for one source language verb:

“A través de una acción integral basada en una estrategia de acompañamiento social y educativo personalizado, los menores aprenden castellano, practican actividades de ocio y tiempo libre, habilidades sociales tales como resolución de conflictos, comunicación y pensamiento crítico…”

[“Through a comprehensive action strategy based on social support and personalized education, children learn Castilian, engage in recreation and leisure activities, and practice social skills such as conflict resolution, communication and critical thinking…”]

Because the verb “practice” does not work with the object “recreation and leisure” in this context, it is necessary to use two verbs in English, although only one verb is used in Spanish.

2. The context may make the meaning more generic, making it possible to use any of several roughly synonymous target language items, thus making the task easier. For example: “The Mayor’s office was flooded/deluged/inundated with complaints.”
3. The context may point to using a standard word or phrase, such as a common idiom or cliché. For example: arremangarse la camisa (“to roll up one’s sleeves”).

4. The context may contain structures that rule out using some of the possible synonyms or equivalents, for example, because they will not fit grammatically. For instance, in the following enumeration composed of verbs, it would be awkward to include the last item as a noun, even though it is the best interpretation of capital de inversión:

   Our company plans to:
   • Expand market share;
   • Streamline management processes;
   • Capital investment.

5. The general context (character of the audience, identity of the speaker, nature of the subject, etc.) may render some of the possible options inappropriate or “taboo,” as in the case of politically correct speech, gender-neutral language, or in a speech to a specific age group. For example, the following sentence from a discussion of EU affairs inadvertently uses a comical racial stereotype by translating literally a French expression used in reference to English-speakers: “An internal document…shows that 11 out of the 26 spokespersons who have already been designated to the incoming European Commission are Anglo-Saxon. Of these, seven are English and four are Irish.”

6. A given institutional context may require the interpreter to follow additional constraints or stylistic preferences. Most organizations have fixed conventions about terminology or jargon. Delegates at international gatherings sometimes monitor the interpreters, listening for the “right” target language equivalents they expect to hear. Courts sometimes ask an interpreter to adhere to something like a “verbatim” interpretation, and the interpreter may have no choice but to comply. (However, as one court interpreter commented, “While interpreting in the courtroom must admittedly adhere much more closely to the source, there is no reason why an interpreter cannot utter an idiomatic and faithful rendition while interpreting at the stand if he or she has good note-taking skills to back up a good memory and an intimate feeling and understanding of the languages involved.”)

Dealing with Untranslatability

Within any of these contexts, and others, an interpreter may encounter source language items that present various forms of “untranslatability,” each of which may call for a different approach. Dealing with seemingly untranslatable utterances requires one to bear in mind that the same idea or emotion may find expression in different ways from one culture to another. It involves asking, for example, whether an utterance is one of the following:

• The expression of an emotion: For example, the Portuguese word saudade is roughly translatable as “longing, yearning, nostalgia.” Rather than an awkward three-word paraphrase, the best solution, if the context allows, may be for the interpreter to express the emotion associated with saudade in his or her voice.

• An abstraction: What is referred to in one language using abstract nouns may be referred to in another language using concrete nouns (e.g., atención a la niñez y adolescencia = “care of children and adolescents”). Some source language abstract nouns may have several more specific target language equivalents. For example, normas in Spanish usually corresponds to laws, rules, guidelines, or standards in English. It is best to use the specific equivalent meant by the speaker, rather than to generalize the term by interpreting the word as “norms.”

• The title of a person: Titles and honorific words reflect social status and their usage is a matter of custom, but they are not used in all languages. For example, it is customary in Mexico to refer to all teachers and master craftsmen as maestro or maestra, but in English no such honorific title is used. Similarly, the title maître is used in French when addressing or referring to lawyers and notaries, but in English no similar title is used. The correct English equivalent of these titles is the less deferential “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” or “Ms.” (An
interpreter can preserve the missing nuance by giving a note of deference to his or her voice.) Governmental, academic, diplomatic, and military titles pose similar problems, particularly for an interpreter, since the person being addressed or referred to is often present in the audience.

• The name of a cultural institution: For example, the Scandinavian word Ombudsman, having no satisfactory English equivalent that conveys the specific features of the institution, has simply been assimilated verbatim into English and other languages. To an audience unfamiliar with the institution, a paraphrase such as “community mediator” might be appropriate.

• A technical term: Technical terms acquire equivalents in different languages through coinage and convention. Pending the adoption of a target language equivalent, the original source language term is often used for a period of time. For instance, the English term “software” was used in French for years before the French term logiciel was coined and introduced. For this reason, interpreters need to be aware of recent technical coinages.

• A figure of speech, such as a metaphor: For an interpreter, it is just as important to identify an utterance as a figure of speech as it is to understand what it means. Otherwise, the interpreter may commit the misleading (and sometimes ludicrous) mistake of interpreting figurative language literally, thus losing the underlying message. For example, in a discussion among doctors or emergency medical technicians, it would be important for an interpreter to recognize the figure of speech poner el dedo en la llaga as a common metaphor (roughly equivalent to “putting salt in the wound,” meaning “to make things worse”). If the interpreter fails to recognize this phrase as a metaphor, he or she might otherwise take it literally and interpret it as “putting a finger into the wound.”

When dealing with these types of utterances an interpreter often has to ask questions like:

• Should I look for a different part of speech? For example, many ideas expressed in Spanish with a noun are more normally expressed in English with a verb: “La mejora de nuestro sistema educativo requiere mayores esfuerzos.” = “We should try harder to improve our educational system.”

• Is there anything in the target language culture that is thought of or talked about in a comparable way? For example, the English stereotype “yuppie” is untranslatable because it is a coinage based on an English acronym for “young urban professional,” but in most contexts the corresponding French stereotype jeune cadre dynamique would convey the correct image and the right degree of irony.

• Does the context or the sub-text make clear the implications or connotations? For example, there is no good English equivalent for the Spanish word convivencia other than “coexistence,” a word tainted by cold-war political connotations. But in the context of a discussion among sociologists about family social services, a reference to mejorar la convivencia familiar (translated as “improving family coexistence”) would not mislead or confuse anyone.

A Matter of Practice and Experience

Dealing at high speed with a range of items that both present challenges while interpreting and are shaped by context requires not only a high degree of language proficiency and cultural competency, but also versatile thinking, analytical judgment, and rhetorical aptitude—a combination of skills that is difficult to master.18 Relying on a “bilingual glossary” style of interpreting is not conducive to developing that set of skills. It is only through practice and experience that the simultaneous interpreter develops a repertory of solutions that can be brought to bear immediately as problems arise. Examining the fundamentals involved in the interpreter’s art, it becomes clear why interpreting is not synonymous with translating. It is also easier to understand why computers still have a long way to go in their efforts to catch up to their human counterparts.

Notes

1. Besides communication, interpreting supports specialization by enabling experts and representatives to be chosen based on their subject-matter expertise rather than their knowledge of a particular language. This is an issue addressed by Graham Fraser, Canada’s commissioner of official languages, in his article, “Our High Court Should be Bilingual,” posted April 23, 2010 by the editor of the National Post, http://network.nationalpost.com/NP/blogs/fullcomment/archive/2010/04/23/gra
ham-fraser-our-high-court-should-be-bilingual.aspx.


7. Much can be learned from such contacts, not only about a speaker’s message but also about how he or she speaks (e.g., with an accent, in a dialect, in jargon, etc.). Judicial interpreters, unfortunately, may be precluded from such instructive contacts by rules regarding impartiality. See, for example, Romani vs. State, Court of Appeals of Georgia, decision of April 23, 2010: “…the trial court dismissed the witness’s interpreter after observing that the interpreter had watched the entire trial, including jury selection and the presentation of the state’s case the previous day, and was speaking to Romani during the trial in a way that made the trial court doubt the interpreter’s impartiality,” www.leagle.com/unsecure/page.htm?shortname=ingaco20100423159.

8. For an interesting and insightful personal account of how this intuitive process comes into play, see: Magalhães, Ewandro. “How Do You Do That?” Translated from the original Portuguese by Barry S. Olsen. The ATA Chronicle (April 2010), 12. See also related observations in: Setton, Robin. Training Conference Interpreters (Conference Interpreters Asia Pacific), www.ciap.net/webpages/news06.html.


12. The interpreter’s grasp of the source language message depends on short-term memory, but his or her target language rendition also draws on long-term memory, that is, knowledge of the vocabulary and culture of the source and target languages.


15. In this regard, see: Mikkelson, Holly. “‘Verbatim Interpretation’ Revisited.” Proteus (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, Spring 2010, Volume XIX, No. 1).


18. For example, see: Clegg, Alicia. “A Matter of Interpretation.” Financial Times (February 1, 2010). “Culture plays a huge part in the success or failure of interpretation, because the cultural assumptions that come bundled with words may literally not translate. Ms. Olivier was sometimes told that a task would be muzukashii. Her interpreter translated this as ‘difficult,’ which Ms. Olivier took to mean tough but doable. Only when her team repeatedly missed deadlines did she begin to understand that muzukashii is a cultural euphemism for saying ‘It is impossible and we cannot do it.’”
Business communication in the 21st century is easier than ever, or so it seems. While I do not want to picture myself as a translator or interpreter without access to PCs or the Internet, these new communication channels seem to have taken over completely. This is much to the detriment of a somehow old-fashioned but still highly useful device, the telephone. Even though the phone can be a tremendous time saver, this classic form of business communication is almost an endangered species. Today, I mainly communicate with our clients via e-mail, with the exception of a few clients who call on a regular basis. Using this method is supposed to make one’s professional life easier, but sometimes writing e-mail actually tends to complicate things and makes conversations longer than necessary. I frequently exchange many e-mails with potential clients before I have even gathered all the information I need to make a price quote. The following conversation is similar to the one I had with a potential client who is now a customer.

**Monday, March 29, 2010 9:35 a.m.**  
**Potential client:** I need a translation. How much does it cost?

**9:52 a.m.**  
**Judy:** Thank you for your interest in our translation services. What is the language combination? Could you please e-mail the document to be translated?

**10:13 a.m.**  
**Potential client:** It’s Spanish into German and it’s very short.

**10:47 a.m.**  
**Judy:** That is one of our language combinations. Can you please send me the actual document so I may evaluate it and send you a detailed, non-binding quote for your approval? We prefer text documents over PDF documents, if at all possible.

**11:45 a.m.**  
**Potential client:** Attached please find the document. When can you have this translation done?

**12:38 p.m.**  
**Judy:** Do you happen to have the Word document that this PDF was based on? This would speed up the process and result in a cost savings for you.

**1:15 p.m.**  
**Potential client:** I don’t understand. I already sent you the document. Do you need anything else?

**1:33 p.m.**  
**Judy:** Yes, please send the Word file that the document was based on. If you don’t have it, that’s perfectly fine.

**1:44 p.m.**  
**Potential client:** Sounds good. See attached. I will just go ahead and ask you to proceed so we can save some time. I need this ASAP.

**2:27 p.m.**  
**Judy:** Thank you for the file. Before we proceed, we must ask you to sign the attached price quote agreeing to our price and terms and conditions. Please sign it, scan it, and e-mail it back to me.

**3:13 p.m.**  
**Potential client:** I understand. I just signed it, but I don’t have a scanner. Can I fax it to you?

**3:24 p.m.**  
**Judy:** Unfortunately, I fired my fax in 2001. Since you are pressed for time, I will make an exception for you. I will accept an e-mail reply saying “I accept the terms detailed in the quote submitted to me and agree to the payment terms and conditions” in lieu of the signed agreement.

**3:32 p.m.**  
**Potential client:** Okay, thanks. I agree with your terms. When can I have the document?

**3:45 p.m.**  
**Judy:** Thanks for that. However, can you please state “I accept the terms detailed in the quote submitted to me and agree to the payment terms and conditions” in lieu of the signed agreement.

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This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors. Ideas and questions should be directed to judy.jenner@entrepreneuriallinguist.com.

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

Procrastination: A Barrier to Success


Initially, many of us are eager to start new plans, ideas, and projects we want to accomplish within a given time. However, as time goes by, we tend to leave those tasks that are going to help us reach our goals “for tomorrow.” Unfortunately, tomorrow becomes today, so the procrastinator continues to set a new goal for tomorrow—over and over again. Time runs out for all of us. So, if we continue leaving for tomorrow what we are supposed to be doing today, our desired goal quickly becomes a “never goal.”

Most people who procrastinate do it to avoid tasks that are unpleasant, challenging, or boring. These tasks are usually associated with negative feelings. Psychologists believe that procrastination may be due to a combination of emotional, biological, and experiential factors. However, procrastination is not linked to poor management skills, laziness, irresponsibility, or lack of discipline. It is more related to trying to be perfect, avoiding being challenged, or simply fearing life. Procrastinators are usually unsure of their abilities, so they simply avoid using them to prevent any criticism in case they do not succeed.

Procrastination can also be detrimental to our physical health. Some of the physical consequences that procrastination produces in our bodies are drinking, insomnia, gastric problems, and higher chances of getting viral infections.

The good news is that procrastination can be managed by applying certain techniques. However, as with any change, this is a process and will not happen overnight. If you “fall off the wagon,” do not give up.

Prepare a to-do list. Every day make a to-do list and jot down the time it is going to take you to complete the task. Then prioritize each task according to its importance. You can use a planner, a notebook, or simply a piece of paper. What is important here is to write down everything you need to do. If you cannot complete all the tasks you scheduled for a given day, do not panic. Move the tasks to the following day, but move them to the top of the list. A word of advice is to be conscious of the amount of time a task is going to take to accomplish. Do not try to accomplish too many things in one day. Plan for the “unplanned,” that is, any unexpected events that may occur during the day. Keep that list in a very visible spot so you are constantly reminded that there are tasks impatiently waiting for you.

Break tasks into manageable chunks. Any tasks should be broken into smaller, more manageable tasks. Concentrate on one step at a time. Do not focus on the big goal but on the small action steps you need to take to reach the desired outcome. This way the task will not appear too overwhelming or challenging.

Set out realistic deadlines. When writing down your goals and corresponding tasks, it is important to set very specific and realistic deadlines. Do not put too much pressure on yourself to try to reach ambitious or difficult goals. Be prepared to adjust your goals as you move along, but do NOT stop! Keep going.

Reward yourself. As you move forward, make sure you celebrate your little accomplishments with something you enjoy doing. These little celebrations will help you recharge your batteries to continue working very diligently on your task. After all, you deserve it, don’t you?

Learn to say “no.” When working on our own goals, it is necessary that we learn to say “no” to others’ requests and demands that may distract us or shift our direction.

I will leave you with the words of Theodore Roosevelt: “In a moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing to do. The worst thing you can do is nothing.”

The ATA Chronicle • July 2010
Forgive me for stepping over my tech guy boundaries once again as I share something important but not primarily technical. (Yes, there are such things!)

I just got back from a trip to the great city of Buenos Aires and a gathering of 1,700 translators for the conference of the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. I was impressed with the high level of many sessions and the attendees’ curiosity, but there was one event that really took my breath away—the conference was opened by none less than Argentine President Kirchner herself. Yes, you read that correctly. There was a translation conference in Argentina and it was personally opened by a major world leader, the president of Argentina. Should you still have lingering doubts about how special this was, why don’t we ask President Obama to open ATA’s upcoming Annual Conference in Denver and see what happens?

Now, Kirchner’s politics are not particularly popular with many of those attending translators (though everyone there seemed to succumb to her charisma), and what she actually said did not make much sense (but, again, there was the charisma). However, I cannot even begin to say how much her presence meant to the Argentine translation community, and, dare I say, by extension, the rest of the worldwide translation community.

I think—in fact, I know—that right now translation is more in the public eye than ever before. Not a week goes by without major stories about translation (or interpreting) appearing in the major media. Agreed, these often focus on failures, such as the poor, stumbling interpreter for Mexican President Calderón when he met with Obama in May, or the translation bloopers in a long-standing series of articles in *The New York Times* and many other media outlets. But there are also many articles about machine translation, which make many of us feel uneasy but definitely represent the fascination that the general public has with translation. There are stories like the one about Amazon’s plans to release a series of books consisting only of translated literature. And, of course, there are accounts of a state leader opening a translation conference.

What does this mean for us? It means we need to strike while the iron is hot and be vocal about ourselves and our profession.

Let’s write articles and have them published in major media outlets. Let’s compose blog postings or other publications that are interesting not only to the translation community but to the general public as well. Let’s be proactive in online discussions and not shy (while still diplomatic) in sharing our viewpoints. And let’s present at conferences that are aimed beyond the boundaries of our industry. Each person who speaks up clearly benefits personally and professionally, but in extension it benefits us all.

We are fortunate. We did not need to hire any ad agencies to create a “Got Milk? Translation?” campaign. Instead, the attention of the world seems to have just fallen into our laps (again). So let’s seize the day and go to work on educating that world toward a better understanding of who we are and what we do.

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The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost also publishes a free technical newsletter for translators (www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit).
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www.star-group.net
Computer assisted translation with Translation Memory

November 5-6, 2010
Australian Institute of Interpreters & Translators
Biennial National Conference: Synergise!
Fremantle, Western Australia
www.ausitconference.org
**Member News**

- **Alexis Levitin**, a professor of English at the State University of New York Plattsburgh, is one of only six faculty in the 64-campus State University of New York system to be promoted to a distinguished professorship in 2010. Levitin’s work—largely comprised of English translations of Portuguese poetry—has appeared in 33 anthologies and more than 200 literary magazines. He has earned more than two dozen awards and fellowships, including the Fulbright Senior Lecturer Award, a Columbia University President’s Fellowship, and two National Endowment for the Arts Translation Fellowship grants.

- **Syntes Language Group** has been ranked by *ColoradoBiz Magazine* as one of Colorado’s top 100 Woman-Owned Businesses for 2010.

- The following individuals from ATA corporate member companies have been elected to the board of directors of the **Association of Language Companies**:
  
  President: Sandy Dupleich  
  (Dynamic Language Center)
  
  Vice-president: Craig Buckstein  
  (Geneva Worldwide, Inc.)

  Secretary: Kristin Quinlan  
  (Certified Languages International)

  Treasurer: David Smith  
  (LinguaLinx, Inc.)

  Directors: Elisabete Miranda  
  (Translation Plus, Inc.)

  Camilo Muñoz  
  (Translation Source)

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**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 the *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.

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To learn how, visit http://twitter.com/atanet.
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**
  - October 30, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: October 15, 2010

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

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

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

**Tennessee**
- **Nashville**
  - September 12, 2010
  - Registration Deadline: August 27, 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 +1-703-683-4100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from ATA’s website or from Headquarters.

New Certified Members

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

**German into English**
- Joseph L. Doherty
  - Boise, ID
- David A. Fairchild
  - Planegg, Germany
- Rene P. Fassbender
  - Bayside, NY

**Japanese into English**
- Jonathan E. Michaels
  - Kings Beach, CA
- Tai Yamanaka
  - Napa, CA

**Russian into English**
- Paul Natkin
  - Seattle, WA

**English into Chinese**
- Jack Lian
  - Yangpu, Shanghai, China

**English into Russian**
- Halyna Field
  - Longview, WA

**English into Spanish**
- Lourdes Martino
  - Montevideo, Uruguay

Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

- Todd R. Cornell
  - San Clemente, CA

- Maria Jose Mancini
  - Buenos Aires, Argentina

- Gloria K. Quintana
  - Chicago, IL

- Thais M. Lips Zenthon
  - Centennial, CO
The Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters (AACI) is a non-political, nonprofit organization with more than 75 years of history. Currently, the association has 600 members, whose names are published in the List of Court Interpreters. AACI is a member of the International Federation of Translators and the Austrian Association of Sworn and Certified Court Experts.

**Mission**
- To promote the professional and business interests of sworn and certified court interpreters in Austria.

**Activities**
- Conducts negotiations with the Austrian authorities on matters related to court interpreters.
- Maintains contact with all Austrian authorities that have a direct or indirect impact on court interpreters.
- Nominates examiners for the certification examination.
- Organizes seminars on terminology for applicants and discussion groups for members.
- Publishes newsletters, printed fees forms, information on professional problems, as well as various work sheets and study materials.
- Acts as an arbitration forum, hearing disputes concerning certified translations.

**Additional Information**
For complete information, please visit www.gerichtsdolmetscher.at.

**Quick Facts**
- Address: Austrian Association of Certified Court Interpreters PO Box 14 A-1016 Vienna, Austria
- Tel: +43-1-479-65-81 Fax: +43-1-478-37-23
- Website: www.gerichtsdolmetscher.at
- E-mail: office@gerichtsdolmetscher.at

**ATA Scholarly Monograph Series XVI**
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ATA members receive a 30% discount off the regular price of each hardcover copy in the collection. To order:
www.benjamins.com/cgi-bin/t_bookview.cgi?bookid=ATA%20XIV
Upcoming Events

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

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

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

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

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

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

October 2, 2010
Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network
Regional Conference on Legal, Medical, Community Interpreting
Novi, Michigan
www.mitinweb.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
American Translators Association 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
Sixth International Federation of Translators 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

November 27-28, 2010
Mexican Translators Organization XIV International Translation and Interpretation Congress “San Jerónimo 2010”
Guadalajara, Mexico
www.omt.org.mx

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for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.
According to its promotional blurb, this little dictionary is designed for “students, travelers, and businesspeople...a perfect guide to the world’s second-most spoken language.” Priced at a modest $14.95, you can indeed slip this compact and lightweight dictionary into your briefcase or backpack. As you find yourself slogging through the cramped little alleyways of Old Delhi or climbing steep sandstone steps to reach the ramparts of a hill fort in Rajasthan, your shoulders or arms should be none the worse for wear.

Generally speaking, any non-subject-specific bilingual dictionary with approximately 11,000 entries would be hard-pressed to cater to the requirements of professional linguists, and this one is no exception. Indeed, it would be unfair to assess this dictionary as a translation tool. Instead, I chose to review this dictionary through the eyes of the student or traveler hidden deep inside all of us logophiles who find it hard to resist the allure of new cultures and languages. Let’s see how our dictionary would fare on a trip through the National Capital Territory of Delhi and Rajasthan. My comments correspond to the text in the travel itinerary in Examples 1-4. The underlined words in each of the boxes were checked. An “X” with a corresponding superscripted number denotes a word with no or incorrect equivalents.

Example 1

It is only my first question and I am immediately struck by the fact that a dictionary targeting tourists could do with a couple of pages of simple phrasebook type entries, such as “How much does this cost?” or “How far is the hotel?” It appears that the dictionary’s author also has another publication with Hippocrene Books entitled Hindi-English/English-Hindi Dictionary & Phrasebook, which presumably addresses these issues, but this dictionary would have also benefited from the inclusion of such phrases.

To wit, the dictionary entry for “how” is कैसे, which would work well with “How are you?” but not with “How far is the terminal?”—the Hindi for this being कितना, कितना, कितना, depending on the number and gender of the object. Surprisingly, I could not find this variant in the Hindi-to-English segment either.

Example 2

The dictionary entry for “ham” is गांठा, which actually means “rump” in Hindi. I doubt that any Indian waiter would understand this word, and who knows what sort of sandwich you would get. Two entries are given for “oranges”: संतरा (the former is correct, the latter has a typo). The Hindi-to-English segment uses the correct spelling, संतरा.
Example 2

Itinerary—10:00 a.m.: Petrol fumes and the cries of hawkers spiral lazily up to your hotel balcony. Though tired from the long flight, you cannot resist the sounds and smells coming at you from the bazaar across the street. As a savvy traveler well aware of the Delhi belly, you order a packed lunch to take along with you.

"Please pack boiled eggs, ham* and cheese sandwiches, oranges, and some Indian specialties* for me."

Example 3

Itinerary—2:00 p.m.: After the blinding heat of the streets, the marble floors of the palace feel cool beneath your feet and a soft breeze wafts through the intricate fretwork shading the tall windows. Down the hall, an erudite-looking gentleman is explaining the history of the palace to some Indian visitors. You step closer and listen.

"Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber and the X† (renowned) Bengali architect Vidysagar completed the city of Jaipur within eight years. The city’s construction was based on X* (ancient) principles of architecture and Maharaja Jai Singh himself X* (designed) the Jantar Mantar X* (located) here.

Example 4

Itinerary—7:00 p.m.: Fortified and restored by some spicy Hyderabad biryani and Rajasthani laal maans at the hotel restaurant, you amble over to the lobby where there is a lively discussion underway about the Indian cricket team.

Example 3

I upped the ante in this example by including the slightly more formal Hindi used in the gentleman’s description of the palace. This is the sort of language a student would encounter in a textbook. I drew four blanks from a total of 10 words checked, which is not bad for a pocket dictionary.

Example 4

A couple of the underlined words above are admittedly special to the sport of cricket, but this is the sort of conversation one can expect to encounter in cricket-mad India. Generalized dictionaries targeted to students and tourists would be much more helpful if they included vocabulary from subjects that are popular in the countries in question. In other words, just as I would expect to see some emphasis on cuisine in general French-to-English dictionaries, a few extra words taken from subjects that impassion Indians would be helpful to foreigners traveling through India.

Additional Comments

Finally, a short note on noun genders and the transliteration scheme. Like Romance languages, Hindi nouns are either masculine or feminine and much of the surrounding sentence structure depends on this gender. The Hindi-to-English segment of the dictionary uses n. m. and n. f. to denote the gender, but I am baffled about why the English-to-Hindi portion does not. The pronunciation guide used throughout is clear and easy to decipher despite some hard-to-pronounce Hindi sounds. The Hindi typeface is clean, the paper feels good, but a dictionary this size should not have the number of typos I encountered while flipping through it randomly, e.g., अशंका instead of आशंका (page 129); औरेजलाशा instead of उरेजाना (page 306); and उरेजाना instead of उरेजाना (page 211).

Overall Evaluation

To conclude, I think this dictionary is intended more for students than for travelers or translators. It has entries like अल्टर्‍यतम् (to exaggerate), वेंब्रेशन (to vibrate), and अस्त्रक्षेत्र (urn), none of which are particularly useful to tourists or businessmen. On the other hand, it does include a fairly comprehensive range of mid-to-upper level vocabulary entries that could be quite useful to serious students of the language on their travels through India. Overall, this is a good little reference guide for serious language learners. It is not quite so useful for regular tourists or translators.

Sangeeta Prasad is an ATA-certified French→English translator who has been in the business for more than 20 years. She focuses on legal and medical texts. She is also a certified wildlife enthusiast who assiduously saves a percentage of each check to fund her next African safari. Contact: spprasad@aol.com.
Knowledge among Americans of the events, literature, and lore of ancient Greece is rapidly fading. Now, people are considered knowledgeable in this area if they remember what Greece was like before the financial crisis that drew so much of the world’s attention. As a result, a Greek expression like “cutting the Gordian knot”—solving a long-standing problem in one simple swipe—will probably mean very little to those reading it in print. What is cool and understandable now, as opposed to in the past.

New Queries

(E-Pt 7-10.1) What about the concept of “livability” in Portuguese? Here is the context sentence in English: “The United States encourages sustainable urban development through the Smart Growth Network, the Livability Agenda, and the National Award for Smart Growth Achievement…”

(E-R 7-10.2) “Oil-wrench” proved to be the snag in this English sentence: “In lifting the casing joint into the V-door, the floor man can use the cat line or an oil-wrench, or a crewman can use a hydraulic pick-up machine, if available.” How about some good Russian for this?

(E-Sp 7-10.3) It may be that a standard phrase exists in Spanish for the reference to “price signaling” in anti-monopoly law that appeared in the following sentence: “However, beware if you think that your competitors are publishing their confidential information via public sources without an obvious justification for doing so. This may be a form of price signaling (or similar), or, in other words, a deliberate attempt to signal their future intentions to their competitors, which could be illegal.” What is it?

(F-E 7-10.4) Can encaustic ever be used as a verb in English? If not, what is to be done in English with the word in bold in this literary sentence: Dresser une carapace puissante, marteler la douceur du plomb, encaustiquer, déshabiller les couleurs, laisser seulement subsister l’émouvant murmure d’une polychromie incertaine.

(F-E 7-10.5) This is French, and the context is architectural—the first time in over 17 years of running this column that I have seen that combination. Charpente is the problem term. “Timber framework” usually works in English for this, but in the instance cited below, charpente is discussed in contrast with the stone vault that replaced it: Bien que transformée au cours des siècles la chapelle constitue un exemple typique d’art roman provençal. L’église initiale, construite à la fin du Xle s. contre une construction antérieure (chapelle sud-est: VIIIe-Xle s.) était dotée d’une charpente, remplacée à la fin du XIIe s. par en voûte en pierre. “Timber framework” could hardly be appropriate here! What is to be done?

(G-E 7-10.6) How could the very common word Entsorgung apply to finance or business? In this query, it is in the section regarding Abrechnung. It is in the lines preceding Umsatz ID, ILN, and after Abrechnung: frei Lief. What is to be made of this?

(In-E 7-10.7) Welcome Indonesian to this column! The overall area is business and finance, and the problem words are the two in bold in this context sentence: Tahun ini, PTPN II belum berencana memperluas lahan maupun mengganggarkan dana untuk sejumlah investasi perusahaan.

(PO-E 7-10.8) This query involves business and financial language. The problem term pożyczki syndykowane appeared in the following sentence: Prezentacja rynku kredytowego i wymienione zostały: pożyczki syndykowane, club deals i kredyty bilateralne. How would you render these terms?

(Sp-E 7-10.9) Is ensayo de laboratorio an essay, a trial, a test, or something else in the scientific world?

(Sp-G [E] 7-10.10) If one of the items offered during a wedding reception is brindis especial, could this be some
kind of toast? English is acceptable as an answer for this query.

(Sp-R [E] 7-10.11) Entidad Urbanística de Conservación refers to some kind of office, but how can the concept best be expressed in Russian? The translator went part way with the associated idea of a Альтернатива товарищества собственников жилья. What shall we call this, either in Russian or English? By the way, 40 years ago this Spanish-Russian pair would have had a high probability of originating in just one place: Cuba.

Replies to Old Queries

(Da-E 4-10.1) (KOM-møde): If this is the entity responsible for the recalls in question, Peter Christensen says the acronym might stand for “communal” (i.e., municipal or regional).

(E-D 2-10.1) (Don’t count your chickens before they hatch): Angele Niewland-Helou prefers Men moet de dag niet prijzen voor het avond is.

(E-I 4-10.5) (casing insulators...casing insulator elements): Laura Meucci simply calls them isolanti della guaina. “Casing” is either guaina, carter, or alloggiamento. She would have liked to have seen a picture. Indeed, one of the challenges with these types of queries is that there are no images. Stefano Crivellaro offers elementi isolanti esagonali, isolatori esagonali della protezione, del coperchio, dell’involucro, or dell’alloggiamento for “hex casing insulators.”

(E-N 3-10.2) (statutory books): Dick Lodge admits he rarely looks at languages other than Dutch, but by analogy, this might end up being the Norwegian equivalent to the Dutch statutair, meaning “pursuant to the articles of incorporation.” If the target language in the query had been Dutch, the proper answer would have been statutaire boeken.

(F-E 4-10.6) (adonnaissants): In its masculine form, Peter Christensen asserts, this refers to preadolescents under 10 years of age. So it could possibly be “early pre-adolescents.”

(G-F [E] 2-10.6) (Bindungsbilder): According to Silke Haidekker, this is “weave diagram” or “weave pattern.” These can be (mostly) analyzed upon closely studying the textile patch—often with the help of a weaver’s glass—to find out whether the fabric is woven or nonwoven.

(G-I [E]) (Trinkessig): Sasha Barbour says this is literally a “vinegar-based digestif.” Some versions of this product are made from apples and may be considered to fit within the spectrum of digestifs between apple cider vinegar and rancid wine.

(Po-E 5-10.7) (opracować oferty): Piotr Graff defines oferta as a “bid for tender.” Opracować means “to develop.” The sentence in English is “I received support documents...to develop the bid.” But Piotr feels that the jargonish word podkłady, included in the context sentence on page 42 of the May issue, is a more worthy subject for a query. It means “supporting documentation,” such as receipts and cost estimates.

(R-E 4-10.7) (ухаживать поэтапно): Alex Lukoff likes “multiphased (polyphased) courting (courtship)” or “step-up courting (courtship)” for this. For the whole sentence, he offers: “In wooing his chosen ladies he preferred to utilize a ‘step-up’ approach.”

(R-E 5-10.9) (Недостатка в людях): Jack McIntosh offers this for the entry on page 42 of the May issue: “While Islamists are not finding themselves in short supply, in this meat grinder only one in ten survive.” Meanwhile, Natalia Erpenbach prefers: “The Islamists are never short on people, but on the other hand, those who survived this slaughterhouse are worth a dozen.”

(Sb-G [E] 2-10.9) (uydurma): In German, says Victor Rauschel, it is Machenschaften, Ränke, while in English it is “machinations, underhanded shady deals, wheeling and dealing.” By the way, he asserts, this Turkish word crept into the Serbian language. He says more acceptable Serbian words exist.

(Sp-E 3-10.11) (política de acogida e integración): Acogida is “taking in,” says Sasha Barbour, and this would apply to refugees. Another sub-context is for orphans. He believes the most likely context is the refugee one. Therefore, the best translation is “policy of shelter and integration.”

As we get into the lazy depths of summer, please do not forget to keep this column healthy by supplying both queries and responses. For both, I say in advance: thanks so much!

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821. Email address: j.decker@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.
“Graecum est,” wrote medieval monks in Latin in the margins of Greek texts they could not translate. “It was Greek to me,” says Casca of Cicero’s speech in Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, Act I, Scene 2. And, indeed, anything incomprehensible to an English speaker can be “Greek.” So too, to a Norwegian, Swedish, Persian, Spanish, or Portuguese speaker. Except that Spanish and Portuguese speakers will also call utterances they cannot understand “Chinese.” And “Greek” to a Greek is of course not Greek, but Chinese or Arabic.

At least that is the situation according to an online map, probably more anecdotal than scientific, pointed out to me by Isabel Rincón, which may be viewed at http://strangemaps.wordpress.com/2009/02/26/362-greek-to-me-mapping-mutual-incomprehension. That map has been adapted by Ronnie Apter into the diagram on the next page, printed here with the kind permission of Frank Jacobs, the creator of the website above. In the diagram, arrows point from a language spoken to the language or languages regarded by speakers of the first language as the quintessence of incomprehensibility.

Below the map on the website are comments from viewers that supplement, and occasionally contradict, the information given on the map itself. For example, German speakers, not mentioned on the original map, are said to call incomprehensibilities Spanish or Chinese. The suggested reason for speakers of German and other European languages calling gobbledegook “Spanish” is that they once had to contend with Spanish-speaking Habsburg rulers (Spanish was once the official language of the Bavarian court). And the Germanic languages have words for incomprehensible sounds that may be related: German *kauderwelsch*, Dutch *koeterwaals*, and English “caterwaul,” though some believe any relationship between these words to be merely coincidental.

The English phrase “It is Greek to me” probably does not imply any disparagement of Greeks or Greece. But some references to “foreign” languages are definitely pejorative. Some are built right into ordinary words. For example, the English word “barbarian” comes from a Greek root referring to people who do not speak Greek. And, as has been mentioned in this column previously, many Slavic words for German, such as the Russian *немецкий*, are related to words meaning “unable to communicate,” such as *неметь* (to become dumb), and are sometimes used as pejoratives for anything foreign.

But the ultimate put-down of a language may be the claim that even omniscient God cannot comprehend it. That is why, say some Basques, they swear only in Spanish. And, supposedly during the nineteenth century, some Polish Catholic priests used a similar argument to convince Lithuanian peasants to pray in Polish.

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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- The Internet Crime Complaint Center
- www.ic3.gov
- www.nw3c.org
Greek To Me: Mapping Mutual Incomprehension

The following diagram is an adaptation by Ronnie Apter of an online map found at http://strangemaps.wordpress.com/2009/02/26/362-greek-to-me-mapping-mutual-incomprehension. In this diagram, arrows point from a language spoken to the language or languages regarded by speakers of the first language as the quintessence of incomprehensibility. It is printed here with the permission of Frank Jacobs, the creator of the Strange Maps website (http://strangemaps.wordpress.com).
Six Tips to Help You Make Contact

1. Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
2. Update your contact information, especially your e-mail address and phone numbers.
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5. Review your listing monthly to experiment with different wording or add new information that may set you apart from others.
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