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New Policy and Governance Structure for ATA Divisions

By Dorothee Racette

ATA’s new Governing Policy for Divisions contains many significant innovations for division leadership. The most significant is the establishment of a Leadership Council for each division, which will share the workload associated with increased membership and ensure the future of the division.

Translating Labels for Museum Exhibitions

By David McKay

Translators of museum texts, particularly those to be used in exhibitions, must package information effectively to help visitors engage with the objects around them.

Computer Crash — Twice!
SDL Trados Studio Lost — Twice!
Now What???

By John Matthews

It seems that sometimes the installation of new software can adversely affect other existing software on your computer. Following a few preventive tips can help you avoid disaster.

Talking with a Project Coordinator for Interpreting:
Meredith Liscovitz

By Evelyn Yang Garland

A project coordinator for interpreting services provides an inside look into the daily operations of a large company, including tips on how to get assignments.
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Our Authors

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John Matthews is an ATA-certified Japanese → English freelance translator focusing on legal issues, pharmaceutical development, and other business-related areas. He worked for 20 years at the Consulate General of Japan in Kansas City, where duties included in-house translation. He has been a member of ATA and the MidAmerica Chapter of ATA (MICATA) for more than 20 years. He is a former president and the current treasurer of MICATA. He is also a member of ATA’s Japanese Language Division and the Kansas City Heart of America Japan-America Society. He has an MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management focusing on East Asia and a BS from Georgetown University in Japanese and applied linguistics. Contact: jwmatt@yahoo.com.

David McKay translates for Dutch museums, scholars, literary authors, and publishing houses. Recent projects include the Encyclopedia of Fictional Artists, a Gauguin exhibition at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam, and Danielle Hermans’s The Tulip Virus, a thriller about the 17th-century Dutch tulip trade published in the U.S. by Minotaur Books. Contact: mckay@openbooktranslation.com.

Dorothee Racette is the president-elect of ATA. She works as a full-time freelance translator in upstate New York. She is an ATA-certified English → German translator specializing in medical and biomedical texts. She served as the administrator of ATA’s German Language Division from 2000-2004 and chaired the Divisions Committee from 2001 to 2005. Contact: dracette@hughes.net.

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 Kwana Ingram at ATA Headquarters—kwana@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!
Mere translators—who have the luxury of looking up words, pondering alternatives, and coming back to a text later for a second look—are often awed by interpreters, who seem to respond so gracefully to the pressure of saying exactly the right thing right now. Interpreters are the neurosurgeons and fighter pilots of our profession, possessed of extraordinary skill and even more impressive nerve, and ATA provides a wide range of resources and services to meet their special needs.

The greatest such resource is ATA itself, now over 50 years old and with almost 11,000 members. ATA is one of the world’s oldest and largest and most highly respected associations of translators and interpreters, with global reach and a well-earned reputation for excellence. New programs and services are brainstormed and implemented constantly, always with input from those who will benefit most from them. That continual interchange among members, volunteer leaders, and professional staff is one of the secrets of ATA’s success. Its other crucial strength is that despite its name, the American Translators Association encompasses many diverse language-related communities and interest groups in addition to translators: interpreters of course, but also translation companies and multi-language service providers, teachers of translation, researchers, representatives of government agencies at all levels, and providers of translation tools. The Board of Directors has spent much time and effort in recent years expanding this already broad umbrella, beneath which everyone whose business involves multilingual communication can find unique value and ready communication.

A more specific resource for interpreters is the online Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services, which is a sophisticated and highly customizable tool allowing quality-conscious clients to connect with language professionals. Many interpreters find this a valuable source of new business, often leading to long-term working relationships with customers; in the past 12 months, more than a third of all directory searches have been specifically for interpreting services. If you are an interpreter and a new member of ATA and have not yet created your profile in this directory, or if you are an established interpreter and have not refreshed it up for a while, please be sure to visit www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/update_profile_ind.php, log in with your membership number and password, and make sure you are accessible and attractive to potential clients.

The better your skills, and the deeper your understanding of both your craft as an interpreter and the subject areas in which you work, the more appealing you will be to those clients. ATA offers numerous opportunities throughout the year for cost-effective education and training: professional development seminars are held around the U.S. on an ever-changing variety of topics, and a growing roster of online webinars makes it even easier (and less expensive) to expand your capabilities. The crown jewel of these educational venues is, of course, the Annual Conference, with its almost inexhaustible smorgasbord of presentations, panel discussions, pre-conference seminars, and much more. The quality of this year’s program for interpreters is especially high, so the buffet of learning in Boston is a rich one. You will also be able to enjoy the company of thousands of your colleagues, making this a networking event literally without equal.

In its educational and professional offerings, its organizational philosophy, and every one of its governing documents, ATA is an association in which interpreters are not just welcome but essential. Thank you for being part of us.

ATA is an association in which interpreters are not just welcome but essential.

Scam Alert Websites

Federal Bureau of Investigation/National White Collar Crime Center
The Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov

National White Collar Crime Center
www.nw3c.org
With the early-bird registration deadline for the Boston conference approaching quickly (September 23), here is some additional useful information to help with your planning.

Finding a Roommate
Considering the many professional events and networking opportunities in the conference hotel, it is in your best business interest to stay right where everything is happening. Not only will hallways, elevators, and bars be filled with friendly ATA conference attendees, staying at the conference hotel also offers the option of taking a quiet break in your room during the daytime. But what about the expense? Big conference hotels in central city locations are not always the cheapest in town.

If you would like to reduce the cost of accommodations, consider using ATA’s Conference Roommate Blog to locate a potential roommate for your stay in Boston. The link to the blog can be found on the conference hotel webpage at www.atanet.org/conf/2011/hotel.htm. Sharing expenses with a roommate is a particularly attractive option for newcomers. Other options for finding a suitable conference roommate include your local ATA chapter or division forums.

As an additional benefit of staying in the conference hotel, we have again negotiated free Internet access in all guest rooms and will also offer a Wireless Café area for conference attendees in the hotel.

Getting Your Conference Materials in Order
The conference will provide many opportunities to hand out your business cards and résumés. It is a smart investment in your business to make these materials look as attractive as possible. Now is the time to take a good look at your printed marketing materials and to order new business cards or rewrite your résumé. These materials should reflect your areas of specialization and be completely up to date.

Division Events in Boston
In addition to the free Division Open House held on the first night of the conference, many ATA divisions will organize get-togethers and dinners outside of the conference hotel. If you are not a regular reader of division mailing lists or newsletters but would like to take part in these events, now is the time to inquire to make sure you do not miss a registration deadline.

Insider Tips for Visiting Boston from the New England Translators Association
As you prepare for your trip to Boston, do not miss the beautiful insider blog compiled by the New England Translators Association, ATA’s host group for the Annual Conference, at www.ata-in-boston.netaweb.org, where you can also post specific questions you may have about the city. The site is full of useful local information about Boston and includes restaurant tips, information about copy centers near the conference hotel, a listing of nearby health care providers, and transport information.

See you in Boston on October 26-29!
ATA's staff is an experienced, dedicated group continuously seeking to offer more for the membership. Mary David and Teresa Kelly are two staff members who exemplify this recognition. As of this summer, both will have been with ATA for 10 years.

Mary David: Mary is the member benefits and project development manager. She has created or assisted in the establishment of several significant ATA programs and services, such as the monthly enewsletter Newsbriefs, the webinars, and the Member-Provider Program. She has also served ATA as the chapter and division relations manager.

Prior to ATA, Mary had an established career as a medical practice manager. In fact, Mary has been honored as a fellow of the Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity and is a certified medical transcriptionist.

Teresa Kelly: Teresa is the meetings manager. She came on board as the administrative manager and within a year took over the meeting planning responsibilities with no real prior experience. Teresa has single-handedly made all of ATA's meetings—from one-day professional development seminars to ATA's Annual Conferences—more professional in every aspect, including printed programs, websites, and even down to the signage.

One of the strengths of ATA's Annual Conferences is that while we maintain a core consistency with the program, we are always looking to improve and add new features. Teresa is the engine behind this success. She constantly aims to incorporate new ways of doing things and to streamline processes.

Thanks to Mary and Teresa for all of their outstanding contributions to the Association and for helping to make it the thriving organization that it is today.

Welcome Kwana Ingram

Kwana Ingram joins ATA's Headquarters staff as the member relations and officer manager. She replaces Maggie Rowe, who retired after 18 years with ATA. Kwana will assist ATA members and nonmembers alike with inquiries and requests regarding ATA programs and services. Prior to ATA, Kwana was a senior membership services representative at the National Society of Professional Engineers.

Register Today for ATA's 52nd Annual Conference

ATA's 52nd Annual Conference program and registration form are available online: www.atanet.org/conf/2011. Take a look at the depth and breadth of over 150 educational sessions, the multitude of networking opportunities, and the exhibits that are a part of ATA's 52nd Annual Conference, October 26-29, 2011, in Boston, Massachusetts.

How Does It Work?

Begin by inviting colleagues and clients to join LinkedIn and connect to your network. Next, add to your community by searching LinkedIn for professional contacts you already know and inviting them to connect to you. Then, post a profile. Each connection expands your network. The result? Your network now consists of your connections, your connections’ connections, and the people they know, linking you to thousands of qualified professionals.

Jump Start Your Networking with ATA

Take advantage of your ATA membership. Joining LinkedIn through ATA gives you an instant community with opportunities to grow your network quickly. Don’t wait—get your online networking underway! To join, just visit www.atanet.org/linkedin.php.
Divisions have long played an important part in the activities of ATA and can look back on considerable membership growth. The governance structure of divisions was originally established in the 1980s and 1990s, and called for division management tasks to be split between a division administrator and an assistant administrator. Division dues, which used to be collected separately from ATA membership dues, ranged from $5 to $30 and covered the expense of sending out printed newsletters. With the increasing use of electronic resources such as websites and mailing lists, division dues were abolished in 2006 because the expenditures of division communication had decreased drastically. This led to an explosive growth of division membership (see Figure 1 on page 11). Today, ATA has 16 divisions which have grown into valuable networks that provide a wide range of benefits to members, and represent one of the most important reasons for membership in the Association.

Because ATA divisions typically form strong communities and are frequently a member’s “home” within the Association, they are important value drivers that often shape new members’ impressions of the entire organization. Due to the revolutionary changes in communication technology and the membership growth that had occurred since the establishment of ATA’s first divisions, the governance structure of ATA’s divisions was in need of a thorough update.

In an effort to provide continuity in running the divisions, as well as to ease some of the pressure on division leaders by distributing the workload and streamlining the governance structure of divisions, ATA’s Board has developed a new Governing Policy for Divisions. The new policy applies to all divisions and replaces individual division bylaws. This policy brings together the best practices of all divisions.

At a special meeting held in Alexandria, Virginia, in April 2011, representatives of 15 divisions discussed the policy in detail and talked about its effective implementation. Prior to the meeting, four divisions (the Science & Technology, Korean Language, French Language, and Spanish Language Divisions) had been asked in early 2011 to explore the most significant change—the formation of a Leadership Council—as a
pilot project. Their reports on the experience helped clarify how the new policy would work in practice.

This article summarizes the most important changes for divisions resulting from the new policy, which will formally take effect at this year’s ATA Annual Conference, October 26-29, in Boston, Massachusetts.

**Leadership Councils**

The most significant innovation is the introduction of a Leadership Council for each division, which will share the workload associated with increased membership and ensure the future of the division. This larger group of volunteers will consist of 3 to 10 division members (depending on the division’s resources) and will be headed by the division administrator and assistant administrator. Members of the Leadership Council will serve by annual invitation of the division administrator. The councils will provide an opportunity to involve interested new volunteers without necessarily requiring them to serve as officers. The councils will also provide a role to past leaders in order to take advantage of their institutional knowledge. It is hoped that the councils will produce more volunteers who have leadership experience. Members of the Leadership Council, which includes the assistant administrator, will be assigned specific tasks associated with the core services of the division. Tasks could include involvement with the division’s newsletter, blog, website, listserv, professional education offerings, hospitality planning, and special projects.

According to the policy, the division administrator may invite division members to join the Leadership Council throughout the year, or can work with the division’s nominating committee to issue a call for council members. Council members stay in regular contact throughout the year, forming

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**Figure 1: Membership in ATA Divisions as of May 2011**

![Membership in ATA Divisions as of May 2011](chart.png)
a dedicated forum to talk about such issues as division projects and coordinating conference schedules. To ensure continuity and a suitable talent pool, this team will ideally represent a mix of experienced long-term division members and talented newcomers. A new Leadership Council will be formed every year, but there are no term limits for council members aside from those applied to the division administrator and assistant administrator. In addition, broad participation will be encouraged by allowing all members of a division to serve on the Leadership Council, regardless of their voting status.

To ensure continuity and previous experience with division leadership, candidates for the office of division administrator and assistant administrator will ideally have been involved previously with the work of the division’s Leadership Council.

Most divisions have already begun the process of forming Leadership Councils and will continue this effort in the coming months. More information will be shared at the annual meetings of the divisions at the Annual Conference in Boston.

**Nominating Committees**

Nominating committees, which are charged with identifying potential candidates for the position of division administrator and assistant administrator, play an important role. While divisions used to assemble their nominating committees every spring, the new policy calls for nominating committees to be established one year in advance of division elections. A call for nominating committee members will go out in advance of the Annual Conference so that committee members—who must be voting members of ATA and may not be current members of a division’s Leadership Council—can be introduced to the membership at the annual meeting of the division. The division administrator may also ask the nominating committee to issue a call for Leadership Council volunteers after the Annual Conference.

During the summer, the nominating committee will preferably submit the name of one candidate for the position of division administrator and one candidate for the position of assistant administrator for publication to the division membership in August, along with letters of acceptance by these candidates. If division members have no objection to the slate by the August deadline, the candidates will be elected by acclamation. However, if a Leadership Council or nominating committee deems it impossible or undesirable to present a single candidate for administrator and/or assistant administrator, or if there are objections to the slate presented by the nominating committee by the August deadline, a contested election will be held electronically in advance of the Annual Conference.

**Division Administrator and Assistant Administrator**

The division administrator is the principal representative of the division and serves as the communication liaison among the division, ATA’s Board of Directors, and ATA Headquarters. The administrator may delegate specific duties to members of the division’s Leadership Council and is also expected to oversee its activities. As before, only voting members of the Association (meaning those who are certified or have passed Active Membership Review) may serve as division administrator or assistant administrator. As in the past, the term in office is two years. The administrator and assistant administrator may serve no more than two consecutive terms. In the interest of smaller divisions with a limited pool of volunteers, the policy does not limit the number of times someone can serve. For example, an administrator or assistant administrator may serve two terms and then serve two more consecutive terms after being out of office. Figure 2 on page 13 provides the timeline for division elections.

**A Comprehensive Policy**

In summary, the new Governing Policy for Divisions represents an update of division structures that responds to technological advances, reflects the recent growth of divisions, and brings together the most successful practices of ATA’s Divisions.

**Note**

1. According to Robert’s Rules of Order, election “by acclamation” refers to an election by unanimous consent; this means a candidate can be elected by acclamation only if there are no objections to the slate and if there are no other candidates for the position.
### Figure 2: Timeline for Division Elections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October/November</td>
<td>Division nominating committee appointed at the annual meeting of the division. Call for nominating committee members goes out before the conference; nominating committee members must be voting members of ATA.</td>
<td>12 months before the division election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April-May</td>
<td>Nominating committee evaluates members of the Leadership Council or other members of the division as candidates for administrator and assistant administrator. Preference is given to candidates with previous involvement in the activities of the Leadership Council.</td>
<td>Leadership Council established for several months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early June</td>
<td>Nominating committee submits report to ATA chapter and division relations manager along with a written acceptance letter from each candidate.</td>
<td>16 weeks before annual meeting of the division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-June</td>
<td>ATA Headquarters publishes slate of candidates along with a written candidate statement from each candidate, sending a broadcast e-mail to division membership.</td>
<td>14 weeks before annual meeting of the division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early August</td>
<td>Deadline for receiving objections to the slate or nominations to add candidates to the slate; each nomination must include a written acceptance letter from the candidate to be added.</td>
<td>45 days after publication of slate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-September</td>
<td><strong>Multiple candidates for office?</strong></td>
<td>45 days before annual meeting of the division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of September</td>
<td>Deadlines for receipt of ballots by Inspector of Elections in care of ATA Headquarters; electronic process.</td>
<td>30 days before annual meeting of the division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October/November</td>
<td>At the annual meeting of the division: new division administrator and assistant administrator approved by acclamation or election results announced.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Translating Labels for Museum Exhibitions

By David McKay

(The following was originally published in the Spring 2011 issue of Source, the newsletter of ATA’s Literary Division.)

Translators who work for museums may find themselves confronted with all sorts of documents, from a terminology-laden conservator’s report on the restoration of a 19th-century masterpiece to a brochure advertising an upcoming children’s workshop. They will undoubtedly encounter many text types that are not specific to the museum world, such as press releases, annual reports, scholarly articles, websites, blogs, newsletters, subtitles, and popular books. Museum translators also deal with other, more specialized, varieties of text, such as provenance records (which describe the ownership history of an object). Any translator grappling with such records for the first time will understand the need to learn the relevant conventions. For example:

Prov.: “Paton, the Shippainter”; Tollemache Estates Sale, 15 May 1953, no. 60 as Richard Wilson; Messrs Edward Speelman Ltd.; purchased 1955

Less obvious perils await the translator when the text seems straightforward at first glance and the greatest challenges are posed by the context and audience. I will focus here on such challenges in the translation of one major text type: exhibition labels. Even this topic is still very broad, so I will limit myself to a few introductory remarks, drawing primarily on my personal experience as a translator for Dutch museums. Most of the examples relate to the visual arts, but many of the same principles apply to translators of other types of museum exhibitions.

“Label” is used broadly in this context as a generic term for the many panels, plaques, cards, and other printed surfaces—on walls, in display cases, and elsewhere in museum galleries—that provide information relating to an exhibit. This information may range from a simple statement of the title and artist of a work to a general introduction several paragraphs long. Most museum labels are interpretive, in the sense that they try to make the displays more meaningful and relevant to visitors. Freeman Tilden, author of the classic Interpreting Our Heritage, formulated six well-known principles of interpretation, the first of which is highly relevant to translation:

Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
This suggests a basic guideline for all exhibition translation: consider the impact of the translation on the visitor’s experience.

Repackaging Information
With this in mind, it is useful for translators to think about how to write a good label. Museum visitors rarely read each label diligently from start to finish. Instead, they often stroll around the galleries in search of objects, images, and information that appeal to them. Some of them might be willing to wrestle with complex sentences under other circumstances: in their professional reading, or when curled up on the couch with a book. At museum exhibitions, however, most of them are looking for information that is presented in a straightforward, easily digestible way and that helps them to engage with the objects around them. Let us look at one example of how we might revise our label translations so that they communicate more effectively. Consider these two versions of the same sentence:

1. In this painting, the often erotic image of a woman bathing instead conveys a melancholy mood.
2. The image of a woman bathing often has erotic overtones, but in this painting, it conveys a melancholy mood.

In both versions, we learn that this type of image is often erotic. But in Version 1, this information is embedded in a long, complex noun phrase: “the often erotic image of a woman bathing.” In Version 2, it is presented explicitly in the form of a complete clause: “The image of a woman bathing often has erotic overtones.” This invites readers to stop and process the first piece of information before moving on to the next one.

Furthermore, Version 2 moves from old information to new information. In fact, it begins with the reader’s immediate experience: the appearance of the painting. This is a common strategy in museum labels, which often begin by noting a visible fact about the object in question, perhaps one of its more striking or puzzling features. In contrast, Version 1 scrambles old and new information together. Finally, Version 2 uses parallelism to make the contrast clear; the first clause ends in “erotic overtones,” as opposed to the end of the second clause, “melancholy mood.”

Notice also that packaging information effectively does not necessarily mean using short, staccato sentences. Version 2 is a single sentence and is longer than Version 1. The key difference is that it presents one chunk of information at a time in a logical order. This raises the issue of faithfulness to the original text. Do translators have the freedom to reorder information in this way? I would say that they have the responsibility to do so. As we all know, the order of words and phrases often has to be changed radically in translation, for both grammatical and stylistic reasons. Finding an order of presentation that communicates the author’s message effectively in English is a crucial part of the translator’s job, and copying the word order in the source language is unlikely to be a helpful strategy. In this context, the best way to be faithful to the original message is by presenting it somewhat differently in translation.

Obviously, translators have much less freedom than label writers, and it is important to be alert to possible departures from the intended meaning. I often have the luxury of working with Dutch-speaking museum educators who can read the English translations critically and discuss potential problems. When this type of safety net is absent, we have to be doubly careful. For instance, consider the following two versions of the same sentence:

1. This is an early Italianate landscape by Jan van Huysum.
2. This is one of Jan van Huysum’s early Italianate landscapes.

The two versions may seem identical in meaning at first glance, and in the context of an entire exhibition about Van Huysum, Version 2 probably reads more naturally. But Version 2 also introduces a subtle presupposition, which is that Jan van Huysum painted more than one early Italianate landscape. If the translator does not know for certain that this is true, then it has to be checked. The lesson of this example is always to be alert for ways in which stylistic changes may affect meaning.

A Global Audience
What sorts of visitors will be reading the English labels? Outside the English-speaking world, and even at major museums in English-speaking countries, many will not be native speakers of English. Furthermore, most of them will not be experts in the field, but tourists...
or other casual visitors. They are likely to form a heterogeneous group: retired Italian schoolteachers, French businesspeople, Australian teenagers with Eurail passes, and Russian families on vacation. This makes it important to respect the likely limits of their English skills and their knowledge without adopting a patronizing tone.

For example, a technical description of papermaking might describe a beater that “macerates and hydrates the cotton fibers into a slurry.” This description includes both the specialized term “slurry” and the difficult English words “macerate” and “hydrate.” The majority of visitors will be better served by a different version of this description. We might write, for instance, that the beater “soaks the fibers and turns them into a pulp, called a slurry.” This version simplifies or omits the difficult words and introduces the technical term by means of a near-synonym.

Different museums have different styles, and it can be worthwhile to discuss these issues with the client. Some exhibitions and labels are pitched at specialists, rather than at the general public. Yet in general, there are plenty of reasons to keep the translation simple. This may be true even when the vocabulary in the source language is more complex. It is important to remember that the audience for the source-language labels (in Dutch or Japanese, for example) often consists largely of native speakers, in contrast to the diverse international audience for the English versions. It follows that communication strategies that are appropriate in source texts may not be appropriate in translations.

For example, a Dutch label might use the phrase *tussen droom en daad* (literally “between dream and act”), a reference to a well-known line of poetry by the great Flemish writer Willem Elsschot. The suggested meaning is very similar to the meaning of the English proverb, “There’s many a slip ’twixt cup and lip,” and it might be tempting to use this proverb in the translation. In a scholarly book or article, this would probably be an excellent solution. But the archaic word “’twixt” could well confuse museum visitors who are not native English-speakers (even if some of them can look it up on their iPhones). It might be better simply to paraphrase the intended meaning, or at least to modernize the wording of the proverb: “There’s many a slip between the cup and the lip.”

**Writing Blind**

Museums often send translators detailed descriptions of objects but no images of the objects being described. This places the translator in a position of ignorance, relative not only to the authors of the labels but also to their future readers, who will have the object in front of them. Translating on the basis of guesswork is a dangerous game. The best solution is to request images of the objects described, unless they are so well known that you can easily Google them. A few brief examples in English should give some impression of the complexities involved.

- The ring has matte petals surrounding a lapis lazuli stone in a scalloped setting. The stone has been cut *en cabochon*, without facets. The earrings are decorated with tiny balls, or grains, of gold.
- [Describing an abstract painting] The tiny black shapes in the upper left corner appear very far away from the large plane. The colors chosen by the artist influence the weight of the elements.
- [Describing a triptych] The right panel seems to depict a theater lounge, with a warrior or soldier at far right—the counterpart of the lovers at left.

Usually the client will be able to send images of some or all of the objects in advance. In other cases, you may need to request specific images after finishing the first draft. Digital photography and e-mail have greatly simplified this process. If in spite of this, some images are not forthcoming, then the second best solution is to keep track of any uncertainties or guesswork and present your questions to the client before putting the finishing touches on the translation.

**Tense Decisions**

In the context of an exhibition, it can often be difficult to choose between the past and present tense. In some cases, both options are available.

1. Rembrandt uses light and shadow to suggest the spiritual dimension of his subject.
2. Rembrandt used light and shadow to suggest the spiritual dimension of his subject.
Even if we are discussing a dead painter, the use of the present tense can emphasize the enduring presence of his work. But we do sometimes use the past tense to emphasize the original, historical act of creation or to situate this statement in the biographical context of Rembrandt’s life.

In other cases, the conventions of English may require a different tense than the one used in the source language. For instance, the narrative (or historic) present often sounds unnatural in English.

1. Around 1500, Michelangelo **returns** to Florence, where he **begins** work on the Statue of David. He **completes** it in 1504 and **returns** to Rome soon after.

2. Around 1500, Michelangelo **returned** to Florence, where he **began** work on the Statue of David. He **completed** it in 1504 and **returned** to Rome soon after.

3. Around 1500, Michelangelo **returned** to Florence, where he **began** work on the Statue of David. He **completes** it in 1504 and **returns** to Rome soon after.

Version 1 sounds unconventional in English, but analogous uses of the present tense are quite normal in some other languages. Version 2, which uses the past tense, would generally be preferable. The source text may even hop back and forth between the two, but in English this is rather disorienting, as we see in Version 3. Timelines are one exceptional case in which the narrative present tends to be used in English.

1499-1501: Michelangelo **returns** to Florence.

1505: Michelangelo **is invited back** to Rome by Pope Julius II.

There is another important case in which the narrative present is required in English, while other languages may prefer the past tense. This is when describing events in fictional stories, myths, and legends.

In the version of the Narcissus story recounted by Pausanias, he **does not fall in love with his reflection**, but with his twin sister.

Retellings of stories from the Bible and some other religious texts may use the present or the past tense, depending on whether the content of the story is being treated as a historical event or a mythical tale. The author’s perspective is crucial in such cases. Similarly, the present tense, rather than the past, is used to discuss the narrative content of a pictorial representation such as a painting, sculpture, or photograph.

The snake **is strangling the male figure, who is petrified with fear.**

**What’s in a Name?**

Works of art in museum collections tend to have generally accepted titles. Source-language titles therefore cannot simply be translated word for word. If the work has been referred to in English before, then the accepted English title should generally be used. In fact, some traditional titles have survived even though they no longer reflect modern English usage. For example, the word “cattle” is sometimes used in the titles of 17th-century paintings to refer to livestock other than cows, such as goats or sheep.

On the other hand, the titles of works of visual art are more fluid than the titles of books or films. Sometimes new research reveals that a traditional title was inaccurate. The well-known painting by Paulus Potter traditionally known as *The Young Bull*, which is in the collection of the Mauritshuis in The Hague, is now thought to be based on drawings of several different animals, including at least one adult bull. Therefore, the Mauritshuis has changed the title to *The Bull*, though the traditional title is still frequently encountered.

When translating exhibition labels, it is important to understand the curator’s general approach. Do these works have generally accepted English titles? Are the traditional source-language titles being used, or have some or all of them been changed? Even if traditional titles are clearly being used some of the time, the translator should consult with the client about any source-language titles that deviate markedly from the traditional English versions. The source-language title and the English one do not always correspond neatly.

*The Chicago Manual of Style* provides succinct guidance on the typographical treatment of the titles of works of art:

Titles of paintings, drawings, statues, and other works of art...
are italicized, whether the titles are original, added by someone other than the artist, or translated. The names of works of antiquity (whose creators are often unknown) are usually set in roman. Titles of photographs are set in roman and enclosed in quotation marks.4

Finally, it should be noted that the names of some artists differ from one language to another. This is true mainly of pre-modern artists, but even the 20th-century painter who started his career as Piet Mondriaan, later moving to New York City and changing his name, is still referred to as Mondriaan in Dutch and Mondrian in English.

Resources

There is much more to be said about translating museum exhibitions, but I hope that this somewhat idiosyncratic collection of introductory comments will inspire interested translators to learn more. Here are a few resources that should prove helpful, especially when working for art museums.

Oxford Art Online
www.oxfordartonline.com
This is a subscription-only online service that can be accessed through many academic libraries. It includes Grove Art Online, the web edition of the authoritative art reference work, which, according to the website, contains “23,000 subject entries, 21,000 biographies, 500,000 bibliographic citations, and 40,000 image links and 5,500 images.” Besides being a treasure trove of information about artists, techniques, schools, themes, and individual works, Grove can also be a useful reference for generally accepted titles and the spelling of proper names.

The Getty Vocabularies
www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/
These online glossaries contain specialized art and architectural terminology, artist names, and geographic names of places especially relevant to art and architecture. The Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) includes some foreign-language equivalents, and there are also separate sites with versions of the AAT in foreign languages, such as Dutch (www.aat-ned.nl) and Spanish (www.aatespanol.cl).

Article

Books
The J. Paul Getty Museum, in collaboration with various institutions, has produced the Looking at… series of art glossaries, or “guides to technical terms.” Each one deals with a different art form (e.g., Looking at European Sculpture or Looking at Photographs), and the entries not only define terms but place them in context and explain how they are used in practice. Since each guide is only about 100 pages long, it is feasible to skim through the relevant one when embarking on a major translation project.

Meyer, Ralph. The Artist’s Handbook of Materials and Techniques (London: Faber & Faber, Fifth edition, revised and expanded, 1991). This is a comprehensive tome, especially useful for texts on art conservation, restoration, and other technical matters.

Routledge Heritage Series
www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415366342/
The Routledge series Heritage: Care—Preservation—Management includes both useful introductory works, such as Museum Basics and Handbook for Museums, and books on more specialized topics, such as Hands-On Exhibitions and Museum Ethics.

Serrell, Beverley. Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach (Walnut Creek: Alta Mira Press, 1996). This book provides a clear and complete introduction to the issues that label writers face.

Author’s Note: I am grateful to Beverley Jackson for her helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier draft of this article.

Notes
1. From View of Portsmouth from Portsdown Hill, in Ann Sumner and Greg Smith (eds.), Thomas Jones (1742-1803): An Artist Rediscovered (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 143. Ideally, a provenance record makes it possible...
to retrace a work of art’s ownership history from the work’s creation to the present day, thereby helping to guarantee its authenticity. This relatively brief British-style provenance record shows that the painting’s first owner was “Paton, the Shippainter,” that it was sold to Messrs Edward Speelman Ltd. on May 15, 1953 at Tollemache Estates Sale, where it was lot number 60, incorrectly attributed to the artist Richard Wilson, and that the present owner purchased it in 1955. Possibly the most comprehensive and useful introduction to provenance issues is Nancy H. Yeide, et al. *The AAM Guide to Provenance Research* (Washington, DC: American Association of Museums, 2001), which explicitly discusses conventions for provenance records on pages 33-34.

2. As cited on page 10 of *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*, which is listed in the Resources section of this article. The complete list of Tilden’s principles for interpretation can also be found in the Wikipedia article “Heritage Interpretation,” last checked on July 11, 2011.

3. Many exhibit labels do not describe individual objects, but provide background information or introduce an entire gallery or display case. In this article, I focus largely on labels that describe objects, because they raise some of the most interesting translation issues.


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**Communication strategies that are appropriate in source texts may not be appropriate in translations.**
As the chief executive officer of my freelance translation business (a one-man shop), I made the executive decision last August to upgrade my computer and software. That included upgrading from SDL Trados 2007 Freelance to SDL Trados Studio 2009, which I am going to call “Studio” here for short. A license to activate the program twice, or on two computers, is part of the purchase agreement. I generally use just one main computer for my translation work, so I thought this was great; I would use Studio on that computer and just keep the other activation as a backup.

Well, the expensive and powerful new computer I bought was alright, but it always seemed a bit slow, until November, about three months after I bought it, when it crashed. I was working on a translation project at the time and it just stopped. Dead as a door-nail. Luckily, all my data are kept on a peripheral device that I back up frequently, so I did not lose any translation memories or other important files.

Best Buy told me that the hard drive had crashed, so they replaced it. When I picked it up from the Geek Squad, they had restored only the basics, such as MS Office, Internet Explorer, etc., but Studio had been installed on the hard drive, so adios and goodbye to Studio.

No problem. I downloaded it again onto the computer and new hard drive from my account at SDL’s TranslationZone.com, re-entered the activation code, and I was in business. Until January, when my hard drive crashed again. Best Buy told me that the replacement hard drive was also defective and replaced it a second time. Once again, I downloaded Studio from my SDL account, but the activation code did not work this time. Error! Error! Error! I had activated the program the maximum number of times allowed in the licensing agreement. Now what???

I must say that the people at SDL were stellar, and fast. After I explained the situation, they reset my activation code and even gave me a temporary reactivation code in the interim until my own code became functional again, so I had no down-time. But they also told me that there was an easier way to solve the issue. Now I want to share this simple solution to a vexing problem. Please note that the following is not meant to serve as a product endorsement. I am not employed by SDL. I merely want to share what I learned with others who might find themselves in a similar situation.

**Tips for Restoring Studio**

The first time your computer crashes and you lose Studio, after your system is functional again, head when you back up your data, consider backing up your operating system as well.
the problem off at the pass by following the procedure below.

1. Go to TranslationZone.com.

2. Hover your mouse pointer over the “Support” tab in the red menu bar at the top and click on “Installation and Licensing” in the dropdown menu.


4. Click on the “Solution Finder” tab in the blue menu bar at the top.

5. On the left side, click on “Licensing Problems.” (See Figure 1.)

6. Select the radio button “I have lost one of my license activations” and click on “Next.”

7. Fill out the form, submit it, and SDL Trados will handle the problem.

In the worst-case scenario of losing Studio a second time, you will now be prepared and ready to go without missing a beat. But what if the situation that caused Studio to crash on your computer does not match the one outlined above? Your computer was stolen? You reformatted your hard drive? You suffered some other unrecoverable disaster? No problem. Just follow the same procedure.

**Calling for Backup**

This seems like a good time to discuss some tips you can use to make sure a computer crash does not prove disastrous for your business. As they say, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. And always repeat the mantra, “Back it up!”

**Tips for Backing Up Data and Prevention**

1. For a single file that you are working on today and will continue to work on tomorrow, attach it to an e-mail and send it to yourself at the end of the workday. It is free cyberspace storage.

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**Figure 1: SDL Licensing Activation Form** (Graphic provided by SDL Trados)
2. For sets of files on your computer’s hard drive, back them up to a portable hard drive or flash memory stick. These devices have really come down in price. It takes just a few minutes to back up the treasures you have created in your business and worked so hard to earn.

3. For sets of files on your portable hard drive, back them up to a second portable hard drive that you store somewhere else. (One time I accidentally dropped my portable hard drive and it immediately became inoperable, so this is why it is a good idea to back it up.)

4. Invest in online data storage. Some are free, some you pay for, and some are easier to operate than others, so search on Google for online data storage and choose the one that is best for you. Consider using “Documents,” which is available free with your Google account for online storage.

5. It is too late to back up data after a crash or other disaster, so it is best to be proactive when it comes to protecting your business.

6. Back up the bookmarks for your translation resources.

7. Back up all of the information SDL Trados sends you on your peripheral device or on paper so you know how to access your account and have your activation code and all of your original order information.

8. Unplug your computer (electricity, Internet service, any other wires) during an electrical storm. Here in the Midwest, ferocious storms and tornadoes are frequent. The best protection, surge-protector or not, is simply to unplug your computer.

9. Keep in mind that any related costs from a crash on your business computer are probably tax-deductible.

Disaster Strikes Again!

After resolving my earlier computer issues, that feeling of well-being settled in again. That is, until one morning recently when I opened Studio and MultiTerm did not work. The rest of Studio was still functioning, but MultiTerm would not connect and kept giving me error messages.

I find my productivity suffers without access to MultiTerm. It is included with SDL Trados Studio and works along with, or separately from, Studio, functioning as a terminology or glossary management program. I have combined all of my previous glossaries into MultiTerm so everything is in one convenient and easy-to-use location. With MultiTerm working, when I translate a sentence from Japanese into English, all of the terminology in that sentence, which is also in MultiTerm, is displayed in MultiTerm automatically. I do not have to look it up in the dictionary again or look somewhere else to find out how to translate a term I translated previously. It is also convenient to use MultiTerm to maintain consistency when transliterating names so I can make sure I keep using the same spelling of a person’s name. For example, Nakagawa and Nakakawa are both correct spellings for the name 中川, but since the Japanese characters tend to be too ambiguous, it is easy to miss the fact that a person spells his name with a “g” and not a “k.”

So what happened to make MultiTerm stop working? I retraced my steps and concluded that the problem must have originated from the new wireless router I had installed the day before. Before that, MultiTerm worked, and after that, MultiTerm did not work at all.

I reinstalled the router software, and lo and behold, MultiTerm worked just fine—for about five minutes. Then it crashed again. Microsoft Word and other programs were also having problems opening. It appeared there was some major disconnect happening between my operating system and the software programs I use all the time in my business.

I considered taking my computer to Best Buy and having the Geek Squad work on it again, but that takes a week or so, which can be very difficult in my business. I ended up calling a friend of mine who is a tech wiz, and he graciously offered to come over and look at my computer to see if he could locate the problem.

He told me that the Microsoft operating system has a feature called “Restore” so you can restore your operating system to the state it was before a problem occurred. He said we could try to restore my system and that this might correct the problem. Before doing so, however, we made sure that all data were backed up, because the Restore feature might actually create more problems than it solves. I resolved that we would try it...
and if it failed, a new computer and new download of Studio just might be in my future. We could see that the computer had established a restore point when Windows recently updated itself automatically, so that is the restore point we used. It just happens that it was a point a few days before I installed the wireless router. I am happy to report that MultiTerm functioned properly again after restoring the computer’s operating system. The problems with Microsoft Word and other programs were also resolved without any ill effects to the wireless router.

**A Miracle!**

It seems that sometimes the installation of new software can adversely affect other existing software on your computer, and when or if that happens, the Restore feature might solve the problem. The following steps might provide a simple solution to an annoying problem.

**Restoring Your Operating System**

1. Click on the Windows “Start” button and then click on “Control Panel.”

2. Click on “System and Security” and then click on “System.”

3. In the “Control Panel Home” on the left, click on “System Protection.”

4. Click on “System Restore” and read the information. Click on “Next” when you are ready to proceed.

5. Select the most recent “Date and Time” System Restore Point when your computer and program were working properly. Click on “Next” and follow the instructions to perform the Restore function.

When I restored my system, the process took about two to three minutes. I restarted my computer and was back in business again. You can also create a restore point manually to mitigate this kind of problem. I suggest that when you back up your data, consider backing up your operating system as well. Your computer will probably do this automatically from time to time, but you can also be proactive. It is easy. It took me less than one minute. I just followed the steps below.

**Creating a Restore Point for Future Use**

1. Click on the Windows “Start” button and then click on “Control Panel.”

2. Click on “System and Security” and then click on “System.”

3. In the “Control Panel Home” on the left, click on “System Protection.”

4. Highlight (if it is not already selected) your C: System drive (which is where your operating system resides) and click on “Create.”

5. Give the restore point a name (for example, Mary Translator’s Restore Point) and click on “Create.”

You may notice that the restore points you create get deleted periodically. This is nothing to worry about. It happens because your computer may have updated the operating system automatically, or it may just be set up to do this periodically, but it leaves you a newer restore point and sometimes purges older restore points. You can use that newer one if you ever need to restore your system.

**Be Safe, Be Prepared**

Good luck, and remember to back up your translation memories, glossaries, any bookmarks for translation resources, billing invoices for the year, tax records, and all other notes and resources for your translation business. You worked hard to develop all this data and you can prevent it from being lost through simple maintenance efforts.

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Talking with a Project Coordinator for Interpreting: Meredith Liscovitz

By Evelyn Yang Garland

Meredith Liscovitz, manager of the Interpretation Department at TransPerfect Translations, recently shared her experience to help interpreters, especially those new to the field, thrive in their chosen profession. (The following represents the views of the interviewee and does not necessarily reflect the views of ATA or the author.)

Evelyn: What is your background? How did you become a project manager at TransPerfect?

Meredith: It is an interesting story. A few years ago, I saw an online posting for a project coordinator position at TransPerfect and thought that it was something that I would not only be good at but would enjoy doing. I was brought in for an interview and ended up being hired for the position in the Interpretation Department.

The job is a good fit for my personality, since we have a little more interaction with our linguists on the phone and have opportunities to go onsite and meet with interpreters. I did not know anything about the translation/interpreting industry prior to joining TransPerfect, but have really learned a lot during the past few years. I think my background in business management has been a part of my success with the company.

Evelyn: What exactly is your role at TransPerfect?

Meredith: As the current department manager, I oversee the staff of project managers in both the U.S. and Europe and continue to manage projects as needed.

Evelyn: How many project managers do you work with in the department?

Meredith: Currently, the department has six project managers based in the U.S. and Barcelona.

Evelyn: How many interpreters are you in contact with on a daily basis?

Meredith: I would say that we are probably in touch with close to 100 different linguists each day.

Evelyn: So that is 100 linguists to whom you make phone calls and write e-mails, but not necessarily give assignments.

Meredith: Correct.

Evelyn: What is your day like?

Meredith: In one word, hectic! Every day is different, which is one of the best parts about my job. The time flies and the day is filled with contacting interpreters for projects, handling rush requests, following up with our ven-

It is critical to review the contracts and guidelines for each agency with which you might consider working.

A Project Manager’s Day

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Evaluating Job Performance

Evelyn: How is a project manager’s performance evaluated?

Meredith: It is evaluated on a few different skills. Basically, we are rated on a quality score, such as the type of feedback we receive from clients about the linguists we send onsite. Obviously, if we are getting great feedback, that is going to reflect positively on our quality scores. Other than that, we are evaluated on how fast we bill our jobs, get the invoices from our linguists, and process those final costs for our clients. We are also evaluated on the volume we handle.

Evelyn: Do you follow up with each client for feedback?

Meredith: Yes.

Evelyn: How about feedback from linguists? Do you collect such information to evaluate project managers?

Meredith: We do not have a formal system where linguists evaluate project managers, but we do touch base with linguists after the assignments to see how things went.

Interpreter Selection Process Demystified

Evelyn: How do you decide which interpreter to call for a particular assignment?

Meredith: There are a few different factors. When you have been doing this for a while, you tend to get to know the linguists in certain areas. A lot of it is getting comfortable in a geographic region and knowing our tried-and-true interpreters whom we can send onsite and know the client will be pleased. More importantly, we need to look at the background and find an experienced interpreter who is specialized in the subject matter of the particular assignment, especially for patents, depositions, and technical assignments.

Evelyn: How important is the rate factor in the interpreter selection process?

Meredith: It really varies according to the assignment. Sometimes we are faced with a really tight budget. We have certain goals we have to hit on our end, so we are looking for someone who can negotiate with us. We are very aware what the market is; we are looking for interpreters who are in the range of the market for their language pair and their geographic location.

Evelyn: From your perspective, what qualities are important for an interpreter?

Meredith: From our perspective, we would like somebody who has a good personality and can interact with our clients well onsite, and also someone who is very professional. I always say that showing up on time and dressing professionally is half the battle. And if you are there a few minutes early and are dressed professionally, you are already getting off to a good start with the client. Communication between an agency and the interpreter is key!

Evelyn: Is it common that an end client would request a particular interpreter?

Meredith: Yes. Certainly that happens. I see that the most with asylum interviews and cases. If an end client gets very comfortable working with one interpreter, the interpreter is requested to return onsite repeatedly. I also see this happening with depositions. If somebody started working on a case, it went well, and the linguist was comfortable with the subject matter, then the client will tend to have the same person there next time.

Evelyn: How about peer referral? Is it common?

Meredith: Yes. We get a lot of referrals. Many of the linguists in our database whom we use are referrals from other interpreters. We always welcome those. For example, if I contacted you and you were not available but referred a colleague, that would be valuable. I would get in touch with him or her and try to start a working relationship.

If You Are a New Interpreter

Evelyn: Under what circumstance would you use a new interpreter, someone with whom you have never worked?

Meredith: We tend to use new interpreters we have not used before when our established pool of resources is not available for a project. In such cases, we would step outside of our database and go to professional organizations such as ATA and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators to look for new vendors to work on projects.

Make your contact information and qualifications accessible.
Talking with a Project Coordinator for Interpreting: Meredith Liscovitz Continued

**Evelyn:** What is your suggestion to new interpreters on how best to work with language services companies and project managers?

**Meredith:** Clear communication! Communication is so important to any successful working relationship. It is critical to review the contracts and guidelines for each agency with which you might consider working, as everyone operates a bit differently. If you are expecting to get paid for mileage or parking or travel time, make sure that those terms are all spelled out in the contract and communicate those with the project manager upfront.

**Evelyn:** How can new interpreters get more work?

**Meredith:** Make your contact information and qualifications accessible. Being a member of a professional organization is very worthwhile. Getting court certified or court registered is also a great way to pick up additional work.

**Evelyn:** Is it better for a new interpreter to specialize or be a generalist?

**Meredith:** That’s kind of tough to answer. It really depends on what the interpreter is trying to do. I have seen interpreters who have specialized and been very, very successful. Clients fly them all over the country, all over the world, because they have established themselves as the best interpreters for a particular subject matter. I think it is really good to specialize in one thing and go after that, but also to be able to handle the general assignments to supplement when the work is slow.

**Remote Interpreting and Machine Interpreting?**

**Evelyn:** In the past few years, have you seen an increase in telephonic interpreting or video interpreting, that is, remote interpreting?

**Meredith:** We do get a decent amount of over-the-phone interpreting work, but our clients seem to prefer having someone onsite whenever possible. Phone calls are usually quicker and used when clients have a short lead time and need to speak with you on the phone, or if a client has people all over the world and needs everyone on one call.

**Evelyn:** In light of the development of machine translation, what do you see in the future of interpreting? As machine translation develops and matures, could the next thing be machine interpreting?

**Meredith:** I never really thought of that! There are circumstances where a machine will never be as good as having a person onsite. For certain business engagements, having a machine just would not do the job. But who knows what the future holds? The industry has changed so much in the past 10 years or so. Maybe it will be very different in the next 5-10 years with increasing technology.

**Meredith** can be contacted at mliscovitz@transperfect.com.
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It’s not only convenient, it’s also a good business decision. You’ll find yourself networking in the elevator, in the lobby, in the lounge ... who knows when the exact right contact will be made? Plus, the ease of getting to meetings and events will keep you well rested and less stressed. You’ll simply have a better experience in the host hotel!

Need a Roommate?
Use the [ATA Roommate Blog](http://www.ataroommates-boston.blogspot.com) to locate a potential roommate during your stay in Boston: [www.ataroommates-boston.blogspot.com](http://www.ataroommates-boston.blogspot.com)
Does this sound familiar? You have been sitting at your desk for what seems like 12 hours, and it has been at least five hours since you last got up to get a cup of tea or look out the window. Your days are long, your eyes are glued to the computer, and your sneakers are gathering dust in the corner.

I know, I know: we are all busy, and when there is business, we need to take it and do the work, right? However, in order to ensure your productivity, sanity, and health in the long run, you also need to integrate some sort of exercise into your life. Now, I can almost feel you cringe, but before you skip this column, remember that this is not a late-night infomercial. I am not promising you an amazing six-pack in 30 days nor do I want to change your life. However, I do want happy and healthy colleagues, and I want them to be around for a long time, so here are a few simple tips on how to make exercise part of your routine. Remember to check with your doctor if you have not worked out in a long time.

The great news is that you do not need a lot of time to do a little bit of a workout. For some of these suggestions, you do not even have to change into workout clothes. Remember that every little bit counts. You do not have to run a 10K to get the benefits of exercise. Just try a few of the activities listed below.

**Walk:** Have a canine friend? Take him or her for a walk. Fluffy will be grateful and you get to take your eyes off the computer. No dog? You can still walk 10-15 minutes, with or without a furry friend. Only have five minutes? Walk around the block or at least to the end of the street. If you can, do simple lunges or a few squats (this is a good way to spend a few minutes while Fluffy does doggie business).

**Jump Rope:** You can do this anywhere, unless you live in an upstairs apartment with thin ceilings and walls. Jump ropes are available for a few dollars at most stores, and it is a perfect workout for those who are pressed for time. You will know what I mean after you jump rope for a mere two minutes. Try to do the boxer shuffle jump if you can, but any kind of jumping will do.

**Yoga:** If you have taken a yoga class or watched a video, you will be familiar with some of the basic but highly effective poses such as downward dog, tree, or warrior. Taking a few minutes to practice some deep breathing in a quiet room will help you focus. Even if you just have time to do a forward bend, that is still a great start.

**No Equipment Necessary:** You do not need to join a fancy gym or spend a lot of money on equipment. Simply use what you have around the house. Use full water bottles as dumbbells to do quick biceps curls and do triceps dips with your arms on a sturdy chair. For sit-ups, try sitting at the edge of the bed, holding your legs horizontal to the floor, and pulling them into your chest as far as you can. Speaking of abdominals: try the plank. Get in a push-up position, but rest on your forearms and tighten your abdominals and hold for as long as you can. If you can do this for more than two minutes on the first try, I will buy you a drink at the Annual Conference in Boston. How about some jumping jacks? They are both fun and effective exercise for adults. Finally, there are the very tough frog jumps—I can usually do no more than 20 in a set. Start standing up, then squat with both legs until you almost touch the floor. Then accelerate up and jump into the air with your hands up, reaching toward the ceiling—see, it is a frog jump!

**Multitask:** If you do not have time for anything else, do a few squats or lunges while waiting for your tea water to boil, your microwaveable meal to cook, or while brushing your teeth. Everything counts, so even if you only have time for a few sit-ups and five minutes of stretching, your body will thank you.

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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.

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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.
Blog Trekker

Word Soup


What do investment fund bylaws, anti-money laundering policies, and the Spanish Civil War have in common? Nothing, beside the fact they are all translation projects I am working on concurrently.

Being a freelance translator means accepting a variety of projects, often all at once if that happens to be when your clients call and have specific deadlines. I am usually very happy to have a variety of work: it is challenging and allows me to remain engaged, rather than getting bored with any one topic.

But each area of work has its own vocabulary and approach. When translating investment fund bylaws, I need to write in legalese and use terms like bonds, commercial paper, and certificates of indebtedness. For anti-money laundering policies, I need to know buzz words like placement, layering, and integration. I also need to make this document formal yet approachable because it is for a course employees must take. The Spanish Civil War references are from the novel on which I am working. Here, I have to weave in references to uniform colors and the shape of a hat that will offer readers a glimpse of history without issuing a treatise in the form of a footnote.

I guess by now you can see the word soup sloshing around in my head, turning my brain to mush by the end of each workday!

I have a few strategies to protect my precious brain cells—and sanity—when working on a variety of projects.

• I try to assign a half or full day to each project. This lets me get into a rhythm and maintain consistency of style.

• When it comes time to switch projects in a single day, I often take a 15-minute power nap or go outside for some fresh air to clear my head, letting one project drift out while making room for the next.

• I keep each project—paper copies, dictionaries, notebooks, reference material—in an individual pile. That way I can have the project I am working on close at hand, while all others are tucked safely out of sight behind me on a corner of my L-shaped desk.

• Most importantly these days, I close down all other tabs on my browser, put my BlackBerry with its flashing light announcing e-mails and tweets out of sight. I must focus on the vocabulary and writing style in a particular project without any distractions.

All of these little tricks help, to be sure, but after an 8-, 10-, or 12-hour day, there is no doubt that word soup has got the better of me.
August 31, 2011
12 Noon Eastern Time
Shhh...Don’t Say That! Ethical Dilemmas for Interpreters in Health Care
Presenter: Elena Langdon

Medical interpreter training often focuses on terminology and medical background knowledge, but in a cross-cultural encounter between patient and provider there is often a lot more going on than words. This webinar will examine a few case studies and possible approaches for resolving them. Topics will include:

- The differences and similarities between the three main professional standards of practice and codes of ethics for medical/health care interpreters.
- Case scenarios in hospital and outpatient settings.
- How to break down a case and examine the pros and cons of different actions.

September 13, 2011
12 Noon Eastern Time
Tips for Navigating Your First ATA Conference
Presenter: Jill Sommer

Attending ATA’s Annual Conference can be overwhelming for most first-time attendees. This webinar will present some valuable tips to help ensure that you are prepared to get the most out of the experience.

September 22, 2011
12 Noon Eastern Time
Working with PDF Files—Part 2: Tools, Tips, and Techniques for Converting and Translating PDF Files
Presenter: Tuomas Kostiainen

Learn the possibilities and limitations of PDF files and their conversion tools. Knowing the right tools and methods can save you hours of tedious manual work when converting PDF files to an editable format or when trying to reuse PDF file content for translation memories, glossaries, or any other use to make the translation process more efficient. Topics will include:

- Converting text-based and graphics-based PDF files to editable file formats, such as Word and Excel files.
- The conversion capabilities and limitations of various tools, such as Adobe Reader, Adobe Acrobat Professional, ABBYY PDF Transformer, and ABBYY FineReader.

A brief demonstration on how to create translation memories from PDF files using LogiTerm AlignFactory will also be included.
I am well aware that I recently rhapsodized rather romantically about codepages, Unicode, and fonts, but please bear with me just once more: I promise that this time I will actually have some useful information for you.

As language professionals—and particularly as project managers—we need to have the ability to work in a large variety of languages. Long gone are the days when “a large variety of languages” meant those natively spoken in Europe. To work adequately in the languages of the world, we need to have fonts on our system that can display the languages not covered by the fonts that come preinstalled on our computers.

So how does one do that?

First, there is the panic strategy. Here is how this plan of action works. You receive a translation in, say, Inuktitut, and all you see is empty squares or other odd-looking placeholders. You panic, Google something like “Inuktitut font,” download a couple of fonts, install them, restart your computer so that they are properly loaded, and then find out that they are actually not Unicode fonts.

You search Google again, this time for “Inuktitut Unicode font.” You install these, restart your computer, and you can finally see the text.

This is the strategy I would recommend!

Just kidding.

Obviously, you want to be prepared to work with languages beyond Latin, Cyrillic, Arabic, Hebrew, Thai, Indic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean scripts, all of which are “covered” by the preinstalled fonts on your Mac or Windows computers.

You could also install a lot of Unicode fonts that cover all eventual possibilities. Sites like www.wazu.jp have remarkable collections of Unicode fonts for all kinds of languages and scripts that you could download to ready your system. This might be a fine way of going about it, but it is also one that will slow down your system quite a bit—the more fonts, the slower the computer.

By the way, a “Unicode font” is a font that uses the code points for the characters of the script according to the Unicode convention. A non-Unicode font merely replaces code points of “ordinary” fonts, so you do actually see characters when you open the text without the font—just not the ones you were hoping to see. So as a little side note: always, always remind your translators in less common languages to work with Unicode fonts!

Now back to our strategy session. To equip your computer with the fonts you will need at some point—without panicking or having the computer run at a snail’s pace—you will need to get yourself some fonts that cover a huge variety of scripts.

You should probably start with Code2000, which is arguably the most important font that a multilingual project manager should have on his or her system. This is the most comprehensive Unicode font, with more than 60,000 glyphs and an impressive array of languages. I do not want to bore you with endless lists of languages and scripts that you have never seen or heard of (and I can almost guarantee you that there are many among those that Code2000 covers), but let’s just say that if you ever wanted to display Klingon alongside Inuktitut and Amharic, Code2000 is for you.

Another font you should download is called Everson Mono. It covers fewer scripts than Code2000—including Armenian, Canadian Syllabics, Cherokee, Cyrillic, Georgian, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Ogham, and Runic—but some of these are not covered by Code2000.

And finally, you should also look at Doulos SIL. This font does not cover as broad a range of languages, but it includes virtually every feasible character needed for almost any Roman- or Cyrillic-based writing system, many of which are not included by the fonts above.

If you round out your existing assembly of fonts with these newfound friends, I can (almost) promise that you will never have to scratch your head again at odd-looking squares or other placeholders where you should be seeing text. Whether you actually understand what you are seeing, however, exceeds the terms of this warranty.

Code2000
http://sourceforge.net/projects/code2000

Everson Mono
www.evertype.com/emono

DoulosSIL
scripts.sil.org/cms/scripts/page.php?site_id=nrsi&id=DoulosSILfont

The F-Word Again

Jost Zetzsche
jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com
New Certified Members

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

**Russian into English**
- Nathan J. Klausner
  - New Haven, CT
- Dana Skelton
  - Pacific Grove, CA

**Spanish into English**
- Matthew J. Bouillon
  - Canton, GA
- Kacie L. Daughety
  - Grifton, NC
- Curtis Draves
  - Berkeley, CA
- Daniel M. Greuel
  - Brown Deer, WI
- Wanda S. Lehman
  - Silver Spring, MD

**English into Spanish**
- Nancy A. Leveson
  - Silver Spring, MD
- Patricia E. Mason
  - Columbia, SC
- Yliana M. Tuck
  - Winchester, VA
- Joan L. Wallace
  - Omaha, NE
- Edurne Chopeitia
  - Holly Springs, GA
- Maria Beatriz Toro
  - Arlington, VA
- Ana L. Velilla
  - Alexandria, VA
- Maricela Villalobos
  - Charleston, SC

Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

- Caroline K. Kim
  - Los Angeles, CA
- Olga Santiago
  - Miami, FL
- Masae Y. Sullivan
  - Manti, UT
- Madalena Sanchez Zampaulo
  - Columbus, OH
- Matthew F. Schlecht
  - Newark, DE
- Susan E. Westphal
  - Minneapolis, MN

ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

- **Illinois**
  - Chicago
  - September 17, 2011
  - Registration Deadline: September 2, 2011

- **Massachusetts**
  - Boston
  - September 29, 2011
  - Registration Deadline: October 29, 2011

All candidates applying for ATA certification must provide proof that they meet the certification program eligibility requirements. Please direct all inquiries regarding general certification information to ATA Headquarters at +1-703-683-6100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from ATA’s website or from Headquarters.
This is the second, revised edition of El Libro de Caló: The Dictionary of Chicano Slang, first published in 1986. The dictionary is printed on good quality paper and uses a very legible font. It is exactly what the title indicates—purely a dictionary of slang.

Content

I might be generalizing a little too much, but when people think about dictionaries, they are usually in no rush to read the introduction. However, the introduction to Caló: A Dictionary of Spanish Barrio and Border Slang is worth reading: both informative and enlightening. It is not often that one finds those qualities in introductions to dictionaries.

The rest of this dictionary is also very interesting and instructive, and I would recommend reading it as if it were a book. There are so many meanings given for everyday words and so many examples of mispronunciations of English words that at times it is not hard to imagine that you are reading a story. The examples of usage are also very picturesque, which contributes to its high readability.

Entries are arranged alphabetically, making it easy to look up a term. If you do not know the slang term or expression for a specific need you have in mind, the subject index is very helpful. Words are listed, very logically, under the subject to which they are related. For example, there are six slang terms specific to love and being in love and six regarding immigration.

There are some words that have a different meaning listed than the one I know, but we have to take into consideration that this dictionary comprises slang from very definite areas. It is not meant to be a comprehensive dictionary, that is, it does not cover slang from every Spanish-speaking area in the U.S. or from every Spanish-speaking country.

I found very few filler words and phrases. One example, would be chequear. The standard meaning of this word is “checking, reviewing,” which can be found easily in everyday dictionaries, however, the dictionary indicates that this is the nonstandard meaning. Another example is remedios caseros, which is a very common phrase that means “home remedies.” Again, the entry indicates that this is the “nonstandard meaning” and not the standard, but I disagree. There are also some words listed that I had not previously considered as slang. They could very well qualify as such, but when certain words are everyday words a person hears all the time, they lose their slang “value.”

The dictionary does contain many sayings common among Spanish speakers that possibly do not belong in a dictionary of slang. In some, the entry’s English translation does not mean the same as the original. One example is donde manda capitán, no manda marinero, which is translated as “too many cooks spoil the broth.” I disagree with that translation; something closer would be “what the boss says goes.” Another example is camarón que se duerme se lo lleva la corriente, translated as “opportunity only knocks once.” In my opinion, a better equivalent for the U.S. would be “you snooze, you lose.”

I see this dictionary as being very useful for legal and medical interpreters. Its lack of bulkiness makes it easy to carry on assignments to consult quickly. It would also be very useful for those who do surveillance tape transcription and translation, since there is an abundance of slang used in these types of conversations. However, the reader would do well to have another source to check the
Dictionary Reviews Continued

origins of any terms, since there are several words I encountered that have completely different meanings outside of the barrio and border slang. For example, the standard meaning of the word *pinga* is “yoke” while the nonstandard usage is listed as a “pill; an upper or downer.” That word among Cubans refers to a certain part of the male anatomy.

**Overall Evaluation**
I consider *Caló: A Dictionary of Spanish Barrio and Border Slang* to be a good, specialized dictionary. It contains slang definitions and examples that might be hard to find elsewhere. Overall, the dictionary is very helpful. However, as I mentioned previously, and as the title indicates, it does not cover all slang used everywhere.

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**Czech Practical Dictionary**

**Reviewed by:**
Jiri Stejskal

**Author:**
Karen von Kunes

**Publisher:**
Hippocrene Books, Inc.

**Publication date:**
2011

**Number of pages/entries:**
492 pages
42,000 entries

**ISBN:**
978-0-7818-1107-1

**Price:**
$29.95

**Available from:**
www.hippocrenebooks.com

**Specialty/field:**
This is a general dictionary for students of Czech and for travelers

**Languages:**
Czech-English / English-Czech

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I have known the author of the *Czech Practical Dictionary* for many years—in 1990, we were the founding members of the International Association of Teachers of Czech, and a few years later the two of us were the finalists for an opening to create a Czech program at Yale University. Karen got the job and I went on to become a full-time translator. Since she had already developed a similar program at Harvard University at that point, she was obviously better qualified for the task. Karen has since published several scholarly works on contemporary Czech writers and written several books on the Czech language. Her latest piece, the *Czech Practical Dictionary*, is in line with her lifelong passion: teaching Czech.

**Content**
The Czech-to-English part of this dictionary is a great tool for English-speaking students of Czech, who are always bewildered by the peculiarities of this Slavic language. Czech, spoken by some 12 million people, is an inflected language, which means that nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and numerals are declined and have a mind-boggling number of different endings depending on grammatical case (Czech has seven of those), gender (three), number (singular or plural), and sometimes for no particular reason. I believe that this is the first dictionary for students of Czech that provides this information in a comprehensive manner. Each noun entry is followed by the genitive case ending (which is particularly finicky in Czech), gender (which is quite arbitrary and has little to do with physical gender), and an indication of “hardness” or “softness” (which determines how the noun is declined). Other word categories provide similarly detailed information.
The dictionary comes in a paperback format and contains about 42,000 entries, along with a brief introduction to the Czech language, instructions for use, a guide to the Czech alphabet and pronunciation, and grammar basics. Leafing through the book, I found no errors, factual or typographical. (I still remember the typo in Karen’s voluminous Czech textbook, in which Bedřich Smetana’s famous opera, Prodaná nevěsta, was called The Battered Bride).

**Overall Evaluation**

The book makes no pretense of being a necessity on a translator’s bookshelf. The claim on the jacket that it “provides businesspeople, travelers, and students with essential words they need to learn and communicate in Czech” is accurate. While professional translators will also need a general dictionary occasionally, they will need to have much more comprehensive resources available, such as Josef Fronek’s Velký česko-anglický slovník (Large Czech-English Dictionary) and Hais-Hodek’s four-volume Velký anglicko-český slovník (Large English-Czech Dictionary).

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**Jiří Stejskal**, the immediate past president of ATA and current vice-president of FIT (International Federation of Translators), has worked as a Czech translator since the heyday of electric typewriters. He also taught Czech at the University of Pennsylvania for almost 20 years. He currently runs a translation company, CETRA Language Solutions, and volunteers his time in various language-related organizations. Contact: jiri@cetra.com.

**Sponsorship Opportunities**

Don’t miss this unique opportunity to promote your company to over 1,800 attendees while providing invaluable support to the translation and interpreting fields. Attendees will include freelance and in-house translators and interpreters, language services company owners, and clients. ATA wishes to thank the following sponsors who have already signed up for their contribution to the Annual Conference (list current as of July 19).

- **Platinum**
  - GeoWorkz, Inc.
  - www.geoworkz.com

- **Gold**
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  - www.translationzone.com

- **Wordfast**
  - www.wordfast.com

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  - www.corptransinc.com

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- **Hays Affinity**
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- **National Language Service Corps**
  - www.nlscorps.org

- **Routledge**
  - www.routledge.com

For more information on how you can sponsor an item or event at ATA’s 52nd Annual Conference, October 26-29 in Boston, Massachusetts, please contact ATA Public Relations and Marketing Manager Caron Mason at caron@atanet.org or +1-703-683-6100, ext. 3003.
• Tatiana Batova, a PhD candidate in professional and technical writing at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, received the Society for Technical Communication’s (STC) Frank R. Smith Award for Outstanding Journal Article. Batova received the award for her article, “Writing for the Participants of International Clinical Trials: Law, Ethics, and Culture,” which appeared in the August 2010 issue of Technical Communication, STC’s journal. The award honors the memory of Frank R. Smith, who served as the editor of Technical Communication for 18 years.

• CETRA Language Solutions, of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, has received both ISO 9001:2008 Certification, the overall quality management system standard, and ISO 13485:2003 Certification, the standard for medical devices and related services.

• Confluent Translations, LLC, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has received ISO 9001:2008 Certification, the overall quality management system standard.

• ATA Past President Peter W. Krawutschke, ATA’s representative to the Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS), has been elected to the JNCL-NCLIS board of directors for a two-year term. Krawutschke is a professor of German at Western Michigan University. JNCL-NCLIS represents the interests of over 60 language and international studies organizations before Congress.

• The following members have been elected to the board of directors of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators: Robert Cruz (chair); Rosemary W. Dann; and Maria Cristina de la Vega.

• Syntes Language Group, of Centennial, Colorado, has been ranked by ColoradoBiz Magazine as one of Colorado’s top 100 Woman-Owned Businesses for 2011.
Upcoming Events

**September 9-11, 2011**  
Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators  
9th Annual TAPIT Conference  
Nashville, TN  
www.tapit.org

**September 13, 2011**  
ATA Continuing Education Webinar  
“Tips for Navigating Your First ATA Conference”  
www.atanet.org/webinars

**September 16, 2011**  
Conseil Européen des Associations de Traducteurs Littéraires  
Swiss Symposium for Literary Translators  
www.ceatl.eu

**September 22, 2011**  
ATA Continuing Education Webinar  
Working with PDF Files—Part 2: Tools, Tips, and Techniques for Converting and Translating PDF Files  
www.atanet.org/webinars

**September 24-25, 2011**  
Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators  
5th Annual Conference: Industry Transformations and Trends  
Roswell, GA  
www.aait.org

**September 30-October 2, 2011**  
International Medical Interpreters Association  
Annual Conference  
Boston, MA  
www.imiaweb.org

**October 1, 2011**  
Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network  
Regional Conference on Interpreting and Translation  
Novi, MI  
http://mitin.org/conference

**October 7-8, 2011**  
Tradulinguas  
International Legal Translation Conference  
Lisbon, Portugal  
www.tradulinguas.com

**October 20-22, 2011**  
American Medical Writers Association  
71st Annual Conference  
“Writing Our Future”  
Jacksonville, FL  
www.amwa.org

**October 21-23, 2011**  
California Federation of Interpreters  
9th Annual Continuing Education Conference  
San Francisco, CA  
www.calinterpreters.org

**October 26-29, 2011**  
American Translators Association  
52nd Annual Conference  
Boston, MA  
www.atanet.org/conf/2011

**November 12-13, 2011**  
German Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators  
Seminar: Anatomy for German<>English Translators (Parts 3 & 4)  
Mannheim, Germany  
www.bdue.de

**November 18-20, 2011**  
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages  
Annual Convention and World Languages Expo  
Denver, CO  
www.actfl.org

**February 13-15, 2012**  
Israel Translators Association  
International Conference  
Jerusalem, Israel  
www.ita.org.il

Visit the ATA Calendar Online  
www.atanet.org/calendar/  
for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.
Were you miffed when last month’s “Translation Inquirer” column was a no-show? I was, too. I had scheduled some surgery that was supposed to take me away from my desk between May 9-19, leaving plenty of time to submit the July column. Or so I thought. I had barely arrived back home when it was necessary to return for additional surgery on May 24, a mere 13 days after the first surgery. A 10-day encounter with the hospital became a 30-day extravaganza, counting both hospitalizations. So here sits the Translation Inquirer at his desk, with a two-month backlog of replies. Pardon me, then, if I treat your reply with the utmost brevity to clear this backlog. I am recovering nicely, by the way.

New Queries

(E-Po 8-11.1) Photography buffs, this is for you. Good Polish is needed for “near-far relationship,” which is explained in this paragraph: “With a wide-angle you can frame background objects with foreground elements such as a doorway, or emphasize a bridge railing or fence while keeping both the foreground and background in focus. The near-far relationship will express depth.”

(E-Sp 8-11.2) I might as well present the entire context phrase immediately, because the problem term (in bold) takes up more than half of it: “Enzyme purity because the problem term (in bold) takes entire context phrase immediately, following context? (G-Sp [E] 8-11.4) A text on manufacturing contained the braille teasers 4.a) Mittenantrieb and 4.b) Einschnürrollen. Here is a bit more context for the sake of clarity: Bei Mittenantrieben mit nachspannbaren Einschnürrollen können diese zum Spannen and Feinregulieren.

(I-D [E] 8-11.5) Delibera di variazione was a problem in the following financial text: Delibera di variazione del capitale sociale, capitale procedente: deliberato […] sottoscritto […] versato […] valuta: euro variazione per aumento. What is it?

(I-F [E] 8-11.6) Here is a mouth-watering query. The term in question is sapore tondo, which appeared in the following context sentence: Il gelatoxxxxx è un prodotto dal sapore tondo e dalla mantecata morbida.

(I-R [E] 8-11.7) The phrase piastre azionamento valvole proved troublesome when it appeared in the following list pertaining to a box molder: 1.) Togliere l’aria tramite la valvola ON-OFF. 2.) Inserire una scatola con le falde inferiori laterali aperte. 3.) Avvicinare la scatola aperta alle piastre azionamento valvole.

(Po-E 8-11.8) In a text about regulations concerning human resources, odbiór godzin nadliczbowych was a puzzler. Here is the context in which it appeared: Odbiór godzin nadliczbowych lub wypłata wynagrodzenia za godziny nadliczbowe odbywa się zgodnie z uregulowaniami określonymi w kodeksie pracy.

(Pt-F [E] 8-11.9) Compressed air springs is the context of this single-word query: internos. The term appeared in the following: Válvulas de esfera com corpo em fero fundido, internos em aço inox e vedações em Teflon, DN 50,8 mm e 101,6 mm, rosca BSP. Who can help? English is acceptable.

(Sp-E 8-11.10) The abbreviation “N.I.” on a birth certificate refers to the public official working at the Vital Records Office who certified the document. “N.” might mean a notary, but maybe not. The “I.” simply compounds the mystery. Can anyone help?

Replies to Old Queries

(A-E 6-11.1) (marriage license): Joe Hitti says that the first word of the problem term refers to the “authority oversight” or “responsibility” of the “agent or representative,” probably standing before the judge most likely on behalf of the bride. Richard Marrash defines it as “guardianship of
The representative of the bride.” The Translation Inquirer ruefully notes that Microsoft Word does not accommodate right-to-left-oriented text, which might make it difficult to reproduce Arabic queries accurately in the future, so be forewarned!

(E-R 6-11.4) (flux capacitors): This term made its debut in the movie Back to the Future, says Caitilin Walsh. The character played by Christopher Lloyd invents a time machine, of which the core is the flux capacitor. Caitilin cannot help with the Russian, though. Jenn Mercer claims the movie was translated into Russian and that a definitive answer should be available in the soundtrack.

(E-Sp 3-11.4) (exploration shaft): Un pozo (también se le denomina tiro) de exploración is how Efrain Rodriguez Ballesteros would express this.

(E-Sp 5-11.3) (discharge prints): These are estampado corrosivo, meaning prints in fabrics that are done through bleaching what needs to be printed, such as labels, etc., says CC.

(G-F [E] 5-11.6) (sich vom Wettbewerb absetzen): Rudolf Vedo and Dorothy Duncan believe this is best rendered into English as “to set itself apart from the competition.” Mario Beer says it means “to differentiate oneself from the current competition” by creating a unified profile around a central theme. Tanja Steiert believes that in this case abheben would be an adequate substitute for absetzen. Ursula Baker says it is “to leave the competition behind, pull ahead of the competition.”

(F-E 4-11.4) (effets de prélèvement): Don Var Green calls this “direct billing.”

(I-E 4-11.7) (E.P. in pz con TVP... fem. dex.): William Murphy used an ingenious scheme to reply to this: “E.P.” = embolia polmonare = “pulmonary embolism”; “pz” = paziente = “patient”; “TVP” = trombosi venosa profonda = “deep-vein thrombosis”; “fem” = femorale = “femoral”; “dex.” = destra = “right-sided.” Dolly Dearner came to the same conclusions. Don Var Green’s translation of the entire phrase: “Pulmonary embolism in patient with right iliofemoral deep vein thrombosis.” Luisa Crosara’s rendition is “suspected pulmonary embolism in patient with deep venous thrombosis on right-iliac femoral axis.”

(J-E 5-11.8) (phrase in employee survey): Gary Martenson notes how the first half of the phrase on page 38 of the May issue is written in katakana characters. He says it is an approximation of A-N-KE-TO, for the French enquête (“survey”). No wonder it cannot be found in any Japanese-English dictionary.

(Po-E 5-11.9) (oligofrenologopedia): Just break it down into its easily recognizable Greek roots, says Rudolf Vedo. It is speech therapy for developmentally or intellectually challenged persons.

(Sp-E 3-11.11) (prueba de contraste de Chi): Efrain Rodriguez Ballesteros says this is prueba de contraste de Chi cuadrado, which means the test should be “statistically analyzed using the chi-square test.”

(Sp-Pt 5-11.11) (comite): This is just a typo for comité (“committee”), says Rosa María Dueñas-Ríos. The payoff for undergoing surgery is that the next time you see me at an ATA event, I will not look like a nervous wreck. Thanks to everyone who contributed this month!
Humor and Translation

A Cautionary Tale

Mima Simić is a Croatian writer and translator and a cultural, gender, and film theorist. Among her other academic credentials is a degree in English language and literature. She has kindly given me permission to quote from her writings.

Simić’s work has been translated into English, German, Polish, and Slovenian. In an interview on the website of Dalkey Archive Press (www.dalkeyarchive.com/info/?fa=text138), she makes several remarks about translators and translation, including this:

I have an extremely high opinion of great translators (and they are as rare as great writers), and translation can sometimes be a work of art in its own right, and should be treated as such. Sometimes I actually choose to read books based on who translated them, not who wrote them.

In April 2010, she was informed that her story “Moja djevojka” (“My Girlfriend”) was to be included in the 2011 edition of Best European Fiction, edited by Aleksandar Hemon, to be published by Dalkey Archive Press late in 2010. It had been selected from the English versions of a group of Croatian stories, among them her own self-translated story. After translating it, Simić had it proofread by native English speakers before submitting it to Dalkey. Dalkey sent her a contract, but it only stipulated that Dalkey would be able to use the story, or parts of it, for advertising and other purposes.

Her delight turned to shock when she received a copy of the anthology in December 2010: a Dalkey editor had made several unnecessary changes to the text. Far worse, the central relationship in the story had been changed. In an e-mail to me, she explained that in the Croatian version the relationship was explicitly lesbian. In the English version, for aesthetic and ideological reasons, she left the relationship ambiguous. But Dalkey’s editing made the relationship heterosexual! For the time being, the only way to obtain a copy of the actual story, in either Croatian or English, is from the author, who will e-mail copies to those contacting her at mimasimic@gmail.com.

After learning what had been done to her story, Simić struck back, mainly by writing an account of what had happened, published online at Three Percent (www.rochester.edu/College/translation/threepercent/index.php?id=3083). In it, she lists some of the changes Dalkey made, including such nonsensical changes as:

Some will say it’s as good as cheating, but those are the dull people always ready to explain to you the difference between love and fiction.

and:

Although she can’t see herself, my girlfriend likes to make herself up when we go out. Sometimes I get a feeling she is flirting with other men, but I suppose I’m just being paranoid.

John O’Brien, director of Dalkey Archive Press, responded online at www.complete-review.com/saloon/archive/201102a.htm#ug1. His response reads, in part:

Because of deadlines, not all the stories were sent to authors or translators for final approval. Putting together an annual anthology like this (several sub missions from approximately 35 countries, most of which then have to be translated and sent on to the guest editor for selection, and then

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.
edited in preparation for publication) is complicated and very deadline-oriented. This isn’t an excuse for what happened to Mima Simić’s story but a description of how it happened.

O’Brien goes on to say that he e-mailed Simić, telling her the edits were inexplicable to him, and that, if there were a second printing, her story would be reprinted with the damage undone. Simić never responded to O’Brien’s e-mail.

Martin Riker, associate director of Dalkey Archive Press, has further written to me:

Our side of the story is that this was a mistake, for which we apologized and tried to make reasonable amends both privately and publicly. The mistake was not the edits themselves, but the fact that they were not shared with the translator before publication. The edits may be bad ones done in haste and under a tight deadline, but editing is as subjective as translating, and to condemn the edits is to feed into the misperception among translators that editing is a ‘bad’ thing.

A complete discussion of all the issues surrounding the publication of Simić’s story would take at least a chapter in a book. There is the question of whether Simić’s English version, having been done by the original author and involving a major change, from a lesbian relationship to a sexually ambiguous one, is a translation at all. It is entirely permissible for an author to make such a change; it is impermissible for a non-author translator (or an editor) to make such a change.

Then there is Dalkey’s defense of its actions, which falls apart on several grounds. It is ridiculous to claim that the edits are “inexplicable.” They were obviously made by an incompetent person who should be summarily fired by Dalkey Archive Press. The first mistake was the edits themselves, that is, these particular edits. Editing is not necessarily bad, and good editing is far too often absent even when it is sorely needed. But bad editing, of which there is much too much, is bad.

As for letting the author or translator proofread and correct the final version before publication, that is a must. There is no excuse, no deadline, no anything that should prevent it. In addition to incorrect editorial decisions, there is the matter of typesetting errors. The idea that there is no time to do anything right, but plenty of time to do it over, must be scrapped. My personal experience is that, almost every time, if the author and/or translator does not proofread the final result, the publication will include mistakes, and often disastrous ones. Every author/translator contract should have a clause stipulating the right to proofread (provided the proofreading is done within a given amount of time; publishers have rights too).

Mima Simić does make one incorrect underlying assumption, though. In her account at Three Percent, she asks, “Would this have happened to me if I had been an American author?” implying that the answer is no. I can assure her that the answer is yes!

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