In this issue:
Signing Your Work
Beyond Subtitling
Tackling Scientific Texts
Make Your Own History

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To Sign or Not To Sign? Chris Durban Answers the Question

By Catherine Jan

When nobody takes responsibility (and credit) and opacity reigns, clients and good translation suppliers suffer.

Are Translators Luddites?

By John M. Milan

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the Luddite uprising in England. As technology gains traction in the language services industry, translators and interpreters may be tempted to follow their example.

Translation and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

By Gary Smith

Scientific translations are not so mysterious nor the texts so difficult as you might think.

Beyond Subtitling: Audiovisual Translation in the 21st Century

By Christine Kretschmer

Learn about the main modes of audiovisual translation, such as subtitling, dubbing, and audio description, including new growth areas within the industry and the changing role of the translator.
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The American Translators Association (ATA) was established in 1959 as a non-profit professional society to foster and support the professional development of translators and interpreters and to promote the translation and interpreting professions. The subscription rate for a member is $43 (included in the dues payment). The U.S. subscription rate for a nonmember is $65. Subscribers in Canada and Mexico add $25; all other non-U.S. subscribers add $45. Single copies are available for $7 per issue.

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

Looking for continuing education events in your area?
Check out ATA’s online event calendar at www.atanet.org/calendar.

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KNOWLEDGE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES.

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International Federation of Translators
Federation Internationale des Traducteurs

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Register today for the International Federation of Translators XIX World Congress, August 1-4 in San Francisco. Learn more about this year’s FIT Congress—hosted by ATA—by checking out www.fit2011.org.
Our Authors

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

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

Help spread the word about ATA!

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Christine Kretschmer is the program director of the Master of Arts in Audiovisual Translation Program at City University, London, where she is also responsible for continuing professional development. She helped establish City University’s MA in Legal Translation Program. She has been an English→German translator since 1985. She has a master’s degree in screenwriting and is a graduate of European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs. Contact: c.kretschmer@city.ac.uk.

John M. Milan is an ATA-certified Portuguese→English translator, economist, and independent researcher, with nearly 20 years of professional experience. He was a foreign language fellow at Ohio State University, where he earned an M.Sc. in applied microeconomics. He worked for 10 years in São Paulo, Brazil, as an adjunct professor of economics at Fundação Armando Álvares Penteado University, concomitantly freelancing as a translator, interpreter, researcher, and consultant. He currently lives and works in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and is the vice-president of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters, an ATA chapter. Contact: john@gypsytranslations.com.

Gary Smith translates from Spanish→English and Catalan→English. A British native, he has lived in Spain for 19 years. He also spent a year in France, where he translated documents at a research center. He has experience in the environment, finance, the food industry, and business and labor contracts. In addition to ATA, he is a member of the Spanish Association of Translators, Copyeditors, and Interpreters and serves on the board of the Valencia Region Association of Translators and Interpreters. Contact: info@glokalize.com.
From the President

Nicholas Hartmann
President@atanet.org

A Culture of Plenty

“We are well placed to benefit from globalization and the ongoing revolution in information technology.”

Robert Louis Stevenson was the first to write down this particular happy thought, but translators and interpreters should take it to heart. Our profession is a wealthy one in many ways: we are rich in intelligence and in learning, and rich in potential. We are members of a fast-growing profession that is well placed to benefit from globalization and the ongoing revolution in information technology.

Consider the following recent events in and around Washington, DC, in the space of just a few days, exemplifying the wealth of ATA and our profession:

• Representatives of every ATA division made significant progress toward adapting the component structure of the Association, its essential organizational “bones,” to new realities and new objectives. The 20-odd people who spent an entire day sitting in a windowless room represent an extraordinary wealth of talent and commitment, and the inspiration and momentum generated by this event will soon spread throughout ATA and enrich all of us.

• Speaking of divisions, something wonderful happened that straddled the line not only between Maryland and the District of Columbia, but also between two important communities within ATA. For the first time, the annual mid-year conference of the Translation Company Division was organized from the outset to attract both company owners and freelancers, and to provide benefits to everyone attending. It turned out to be a very successful educational model, and plans are already being made to implement the same format in the future.

• Back in Virginia, another group of smart and dedicated ATA members spent their weekend in the ongoing pursuit of excellence for the Association’s certification exams. The language chairs oversee a program that presently includes 23 language pairs and is, by design, always open to new ways of serving new needs. The Certification Committee itself is also working steadily, with constant expert guidance, toward another long-term goal: external validation of the program. That stamp of approval will demonstrate unequivocally, to our colleagues and potential clients around the world, that this Association offers a credential of real value.

• The Board of Directors also held its Spring meeting, applying more hard work and creativity to many aspects of this Association’s present and future, especially with regard to ATA’s identity and presentation of itself to its members and to the outside world. The Association’s objectives as outlined in detail in the Bylaws have been distilled into a Mission Statement that will serve as a template against which the Board can measure many ATA activities. The recently approved Code of Ethics and Professional Practice will now be illuminated by a Commentary that will expand upon the principles set forth in the Code and constitute an adaptable teaching tool. Last but not least, work is now well underway to redesign both the appearance and the substance of the Association’s website, making it more useful to potential ATA members, to translators and interpreters who already belong to the Association, and to everyone who wants to find out more about them and their services.

It is only fitting that the plenitude of resources and opportunity that is our Association will be on display to literally an entire world’s worth of translation and interpreting organizations in just a few weeks, when ATA hosts the 2011 FIT (International Federation of Translators) XIX World Congress, August 1-4 in San Francisco, California. You are cordially invited to continue spreading the word—and the wealth—by joining your international colleagues and letting them know more about what we have achieved. Complete details on the Congress are available at www.fit2011.org.
Take Charge of Your Business

When you look at your career in the translation and interpreting industry, you will realize you are changing and learning new skills consistently. Your experience grows with every resolved terminology challenge, new client, or interpreting assignment. You have learned some lessons the hard way, while others came easy. Still, are you making the most of your capabilities? Are you the best translator or interpreter you can be? Are you earning what you are worth?

With every project you accept, your business is evolving further. But where is it going? What are your goals for your professional future, and how will you achieve them? Would you like to specialize in a specific field but have not figured out how? What are your strengths and how can you market them to your advantage? Which areas are of particular interest to you? How can you improve your earnings?

The routine of work and life can get in the way of exploring these questions in detail. ATA’s Annual Conference is an ideal opportunity to break away from the routine of your work, assess your own business, and set new standards for yourself. Here is what the conference offers to help you take charge of your business.

**Educational Sessions:** Close to 200 hands-on sessions in a wide range of language combinations and specialties, carefully coordinated to suit the needs of your business. Sessions are peer-reviewed for their practical relevance and are evaluated carefully year after year.

**Networking:** In a world of social media and online directories, word-of-mouth referrals still are the secret to getting new business and advancing your career. The conference offers a wide range of options to introduce yourself to colleagues and recruiters, including breakfast meetings, receptions, speed networking, coffee breaks, and discussions between scheduled sessions.

**Divisions:** Divisions within ATA have grown into valuable networks that provide a wide range of benefits to members. The conference in Boston will again feature a free Division Open House, allowing division members to gather in an informal setting.

**Job Marketplace:** As always, we will offer tables to display your résumés and cards.

**Tools:** Just like your business, translation tools keep improving and undergo changes consistently. Learn what has changed or attend the free tool tutorials offered by vendors to find out more about individual products.

Attending ATA’s Annual Conference is a valuable investment in your business and your career. Come join us in Boston October 26-29 and find out why so many of your colleagues come back year after year.

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**2011 Honors and Awards Now Open**

ATA presents annual and biennial awards to encourage, reward, and publicize outstanding work done by both seasoned professionals and students of our craft. For complete entry information and deadlines, visit: [www.atanet.org/membership/honorsandawards.php](http://www.atanet.org/membership/honorsandawards.php).

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“**To me, attending the conference is not a business expense but an investment that yields a sure and constant return.**”

—ATA member Susanne van Eyl,
**ATA Business Practices List, November 30, 2010**

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From the President-Elect

**Dorothee Racette**

dracette@hughes.net
The ATA Board of Directors met in Alexandria, Virginia, April 30-May 1, 2011. Here are the highlights of the meeting.

Budget: The Board approved the working budget for July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. The $3.2-million budget is roughly $400,000 higher than the past few years due to the projected revenues and expenses to be generated by ATA coordinating the International Federation of Translators (FIT) XIX World Congress, to be held August 1-4 in San Francisco. The working budget provides an interim financial framework to which changes and revisions can be made based on the actual year-end figures. The final budget will be approved at the next Board meeting.

Mission Statement: The Board approved an ATA Mission Statement: “The mission of ATA is to benefit translators and interpreters by promoting recognition of their societal and commercial value, facilitating communication among all its members, establishing standards of competence and ethics, and educating both its members and the public.” The statement, which draws from Article II of ATA’s Bylaws, will provide members and the public with a concise summary of the Association’s essence.

Presentation of Candidates: The Nominating Committee presented the slate of candidates for this year’s elections.

- For president-elect: Caitilin Walsh
- For secretary: Boris M. Silversteyn and Frieda Ruppaner-Lind
- For treasurer: Gabe Bokor

(Please see page 10 for more information.)

Proposed Bylaws Amendments: The Board approved several proposed Bylaws amendments that, according to ATA’s Bylaws, require a two-thirds vote of the voting members of the Association to be approved. The proposed amendments will be put forward to the membership during the elections this October.

Additional highlights are included in the Board Meeting Summary, which is online in the Members Only section of ATA’s website. In addition, the official minutes of the meeting will be posted following the next Board meeting. (Past meeting minutes are online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php.) The next Board meeting is tentatively set for July 30-31, 2011 in San Francisco, California. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

In Memoriam
Regina Tocci

ATA Membership Services Specialist Regina Tocci, 57, died April 25, 2011. She had worked for ATA for eight years.

Regina started as a certification specialist. After two years, she moved over to work in membership. She assisted members by helping them renew their membership, make address changes, update online profiles in the Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services, and register for conferences. She was also our in-house postal regulations guru and shipping expert. Her focus on members and attention to their needs will be missed.
ATA will hold its regularly scheduled election at the upcoming 2011 ATA Annual Conference in Boston, Massachusetts, to elect a president-elect, secretary, treasurer, and three directors.

Further nominations, supported by acceptance statements in writing by each additional nominee and a written petition signed by no fewer than 35 voting members, must be received by the Nominating Committee by July 20. Acceptance statements and petitions may be faxed to the chair of the Nominating Committee, Tuomas Kostiainen, in care of ATA Headquarters at (703) 683-6122.

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

**President-elect:**
Caitilin Walsh

**Secretary:**
Frieda Ruppaner-Lind
Boris M. Silversteyn

**Treasurer:**
Gabe Bokor

**Director (three positions, three-year terms):**
Virginia Anderson
Lois Feuerle
Vania Haam
Gerardo Konig
Virginia Perez-Santalla
Timothy Yuan
“Sometimes a brilliant lawyer just isn’t enough... to save you. You might need a brilliant interpreter, too.”

This book is an entertaining and informative read for legal professionals, those who work with interpreters, or anybody who simply enjoys a good read.

The Interpreter’s Journal
By Benjawan Poomsan Becker
Thai and Lao interpreter
Available on www.amazon.com

ATA, the host for this year’s FIT Congress, is now selling exhibit and advertising space as well as sponsorship opportunities for the FIT XIX World Congress in San Francisco, California, August 1-4, 2011. This triennial conference and exhibition is a unique international networking event for over 800 translators, interpreters, language services company owners, and clients from around the world. Space is limited and sold on a first come, first served basis.

For more information, visit www.fit2011.org/index.htm. Questions? Contact Caron Mason, ATA Headquarters, at caron@atanet.org or +1-703-683-3100, ext. 3003.
Should translators sign their translations? Chris Durban thinks so.

A Paris-based freelance translator specializing in finance and capital markets (French-to-English), Chris is a past president of the Société Française des Traducteurs. She co-chaired ATA’s Public Relations Committee from 2002 to 2005, and was the recipient of ATA’s Gode Medal in 2001. A Fellow of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting in the U.K., she is the co-author, with Eugene Seidel, of the “Fire Ant & Worker Bee” advice column that has run in the online Translation Journal since October 1998. In October 2010, they published a revised compilation of past columns in book form entitled The Prosperous Translator.¹

Chris regularly gives lectures/workshops on specialization and working with direct clients, and has published many articles emphasizing the benefits that accrue to translators and clients alike when linguists take a proactive approach. She recently explained why it is in translators’ and agencies’ interest to take credit (and responsibility) for their translations.

When I talk about signing your translations, I am referring not just to books, but to corporate, technical, and other types of translation as well.

Catherine: Why are you so adamant about translators getting credit? What is the point of signed work?

Chris: The quick answer: to promote transparency and let everyone reap the benefits it brings. Well, let me temper that: everyone who takes this business seriously.

I would prefer that the cynics, jokers, sellers of snake oil, and just-making-a-buckers exit left ASAP, and I see signed work as one way to achieve that. Note that when I talk about signing your translations, I am referring not just to books, but to corporate, technical, and other types of translation as well.

One feature of our market is that many (most?) buyers simply cannot judge what they are getting when a translation is delivered. This distinguishes us from providers of many other intellectual services. And it makes clients particularly vulnerable to glib or clueless vendors who weave a convincing quality narrative to clinch the sale, only to deliver shoddy or downright unacceptable translations.

Catherine: You sound like you are speaking from experience.

Chris: I am. For years I wrote a column called “The Onionskin” that ran in various professional magazines. This ultimately led me to write Translation: Getting It Right, a client education booklet containing advice for translation buyers, which has now been translated into a dozen languages.²

For my “Onionskin” columns, I
researched good and bad translations in the public domain. The column celebrated the good translations (and yes, there is some very good work out there), but also moved up and down the supply chain to identify exactly how, when, and where flawed work had skidded off track. It was fascinating but also frustrating. And beyond a certain point, what was uncovered was downright embarrassing for the translation industry as a whole.

Because when singled out, the vast majority of slipshod suppliers (both freelancers and agencies) ran for the hills, declining responsibility for the work they had produced and/or brokered and sold. A surprising number refused to admit their paternity/materni-
ty, or spent vast amounts of energy hiding their connection to their off-
spring. When pushed, others admitted their powerlessness to enforce quality standards—and with it, the hollow-
ness of the claims on their websites and in their own brochures.

Catherine: So at one level this “sign your work” campaign is a truth-in-
advertising issue.

Chris: That’s right. I am aware of no suppliers who claim in public that they are producing “so-so” or “moderately good” work, and certainly no one is crowing about selling garbage. But, hey, the mediocre translations are out there for all to see. And one thing is sure: they are not all being produced by low-cost suppliers in the third world, students grubbing for pocket money, or wannabe bilinguals concocting silly texts in-house with a dic-
tionary in one hand and a grammar book in the other.

It is time for our industry to face up to it: many language services providers (again, both freelancers and agencies) are producing and selling work that makes the cut only because clients cannot judge how poor it is. I like to think the chickens will come home to roost at some point, but in the meantime, sloppy translations tarnish everyone’s image.

Catherine: What are some of the benefits of signed translations?

Chris: The beauty of signed work is that everybody sees who does what—clients and peers alike. So genuinely skilled translators and quality-oriented intermediaries can get their names out at zero cost. (Did I mention that inserting your name in the credits costs nothing?)

It is also straightforward: there is no need for a costly certification pro-
cedure or endless negotiations by industry leaders at venues around the globe over a 5- or 10-year period. Anyone who understands the point and wants to buy in can simply agree it is a good idea and do it. Starting tomorrow morning at 8:00 a.m. or tonight at midnight. Whenever. You take responsibility for the texts you produce and sell by asserting your maternity/paternity.

The good news is that taking responsibility means you get the credit too. And with that comes leverage that most translators and translation companies do not have now (along with a superb client education tool). More about that in a minute.

Finally, signed work promotes best practice among translators by encour-
aging us all, whatever our size and market segment, to think twice before overcommitting ourselves.

So if you claim to sell high quality work and your name is going to be out there on the text you deliver, well, you will probably decide to decline that 15,000-word job for delivery a day from tomorrow—either that or negotiate a longer deadline. With signed work, good translators and agencies that might be tempted to cut corners are actively encouraged not just to talk the talk but also walk the best-
practice walk.

Catherine: When do you request that your name be added to your translation? When you send in the quote or when you deliver the translation? Do you mention it in your terms and conditions?

Chris: It appears as Point #3 in a one-
page summary of the terms and condi-
tions that I send to first-time clients before a job starts. As readers of the “Fire Ant & Worker Bee” column know, I am not a big believer in glossy brochures, but a sheet like this is a useful way to give new clients a clear idea of what they are getting into and what their role is.

Catherine: How do you word your request?

Chris: It is a statement, not a request. That is important. Just like when you make annual adjustments in your prices and announce this to your clients, it is not a good idea to phrase it as a request.

Most of my clients are native speakers of French, so I communicate with them in that language, but an English version of Point #3
The beauty of signed work is that everybody sees who does what: clients and peers alike.

Concretely, I have them make note of this essential revision-of-proofs stage and include it in their production schedule. If for some reason time runs out and there is no time for revision, I inform them, regretfully, that they will then have to take my name off, explaining that “it’s too risky for my reputation.” Interestingly, that sentence alone is often enough for them to find the time and extend the deadline. If not, they strike my name from the credits and pay me my normal fee (of course). Encouragingly, I have not yet had to apply the surcharge.

Chris: I have been going on about signed work for about 30 years, and run into the same reactions from translators all the time. Some get it immediately. Others start “yes, but-ing,” which I think is a pity. Let me recycle a few of the latter reactions here:

“**My clients would never allow it.**”

Response: have you asked them? I used to nod understandingly when translators pulled this one, but have now stopped. The fact is translators tend to project their own worries and fears onto clients (this applies to jitters about prices, too). They may be the first to weigh in with opinions on discussion lists and blogs, often expressed very articulately. But when it comes to standing up in public with “this is what I produce and sell,” they twist, turn, and shuffle, using a million tactics to keep out of what they apparently see as the line of fire. Which says a lot about their self-confidence.

In contrast, quality-oriented clients understand exactly what the point is. Many have experience with formal quality control and quality assurance procedures, in which identifying who does what at each stage is a given. So they do not have a problem with signed work. On the whole, it is insecure translators and brokers unwilling to stand behind their work who do.

One of the very few exceptions I have experienced first-hand is in-house client departments that want to pretend...
they have done the translation themselves. I have no problem with that. As I have written elsewhere, you certainly do not have to sign every single text you translate. But if you do not sign any at all, well, that says a lot.

“I’d love to, but everything I do is 100% confidential.”

Er, yup. And agreed if we are talking about, for example, contracts and such. But let’s be serious. Claiming that every single translation you have produced for the past 10 years has been confidential is the sign of a terminally anxious translator, full stop. Get a grip. Be brave. Translator up! (In fact, your work is probably very good, but how will the praise and future clients reach you if you do not dare tell anybody you did it?)

“Clients change things after I’ve finished; I have no control over what happens to a text when it leaves my computer.”

That can happen. But isn’t it about time you reclaimed control of at least a few projects a year? The penalty clause discussed above gives you that control.

If you do not participate actively in client education, if you buckle under each time and accept conditions that you know are incompatible with quality, surely you are part of the problem. Here is a free tool that will help you move everybody ahead!

If you can lose your clients that easily, the problem lies elsewhere.

In translation, there are many ways to reinforce your ties to the businesses in your client portfolio. Making signed work your standard actually reinforces your value proposition: it is a differentiator that confirms your pride in your work and helps you stake out your section of the premium market.

“We are a top-end translation agency; we add massive value. Why should the translator’s name appear when we do most of the work?”

If you are convinced that is the situation, by all means sign with your agency’s name. But somebody sign, please. And in a few years, your agency may be brave enough and secure enough to use both the agency’s and translator’s names: Spanish text: José Bloggs for International Global Translation Excellence Group & Partners.

The fact is, when nobody takes responsibility (and credit) and opacity reigns, the people who interest me—clients and good translation suppliers—all suffer.

If language services providers (both freelancers and agencies) were to get into the habit of signing even 50% of the commercial, technical, and other translations found in industry and elsewhere, we would be well on our way to a healthier market in just two or three years. And that is a shake-out I would really love to see.

You can reach Chris Durban at chris.durban@gmail.com.

Notes

2. You can download a copy of Translation: Getting It Right as a PDF file from ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/publications/getting_it_right.php.

Additional Reading
Catherine Translates
http://catherinetranslates.com

Translation Journal
www.translationjournal.net
ATA Webinars
For more information, visit www.atanet.org/webinars

July 14, 2011
12 Noon Eastern Time
Preparing to Take ATA’s Certification Exam
Presenter: Celia Bohannon

What can you do to better prepare yourself for taking ATA’s certification exam? Now is your chance to find out! Veteran grader Celia Bohannon will outline the path to exam day, pointing out opportunities and pitfalls along the way. The webinar has been structured to accommodate questions and answers submitted ahead of time and during the presentation. Attendees will learn:

- How to approach eligibility requirements.
- What to do with the practice test results.
- How to train for taking the exam.
- What the examination results mean.

August 25, 2011
12 Noon Eastern Time
Working with PDF Files—Part 1: Using Adobe Reader/Acrobat
Presenter: Tuomas Kostiainen

Translators encounter PDF files daily in various situations, but often do not know the best and most efficient ways to handle and utilize these files. This webinar will cover the basics of Adobe Reader and Adobe Acrobat. Topics will include:

- Editing, commenting, searching, and viewing PDF files.
- Filling electronic forms and using electronic signatures.

Attendees will also learn the main differences between the free Adobe Reader and the paid Adobe Acrobat versions, and what is new in the most recent Adobe Acrobat/Reader version X (10).

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.
One night in 1811, a group of men from a village just north of Nottingham, England, gathered outside a shop and made a collective decision to destroy the machines that were threatening their livelihood and way of life. As they burst into a room filled with a half dozen weaving machines, they imagined a future in which their actions might be the first step in turning the tide against a rising industrial revolution. After smashing the equipment, the men ran off into the night, pleased with their deed and emboldened by the thought that if enough people reacted in a similar way, these devices might be put in their proper place: subservient to men, rather than supplanting them.

The group claimed their social movement was inspired by a man they called “Captain Ludd” or “King Ludd”—a reference to Ned Ludd, a weaver from the region who had allegedly stood up to mistreatment a few decades earlier by destroying a pair of knitting frames. The group became known as the Luddites. Luddism, though apolitical and at times disorganized, still managed to wreak havoc throughout England for a number of years. The Luddites’ stated objective was to prevent “all machinery hurtful to commonality,” which meant, as a group of Luddites explained in a letter in 1812, not all machines or all technology, but only that which could do harm to the common good.

The Luddites lived in a time of great social upheaval and economic distress. Their movement was about much more than technology, which was one of many factors enabling an industrial revolution that was changing traditional ways of life and creating societal gaps. It was about growing inequality, poor working conditions, and the belief that their world was changing for the worse. But at the same time, technology was the most tangible of these factors, and as such, one that the average man could attack directly and hope to affect some measure of change.

Modern Technology Revolution

Fast forward to 2011. This “Luddite Bicentennial” seems a good opportunity for language services professionals in general, and translators in particular, to pause and take stock of their own modern technological reality. This is likewise a time of upheaval, with advances in artificial intelligence, software, and means of communication that threaten the way in which language services have
been, and are being, rendered.

New technologies seem to appear every day, such as the telephone software system that interprets in real time, or the application that can be downloaded onto a smart phone and uses the phone’s camera to provide a rough translation of simple text almost instantaneously. And of course, there is Google Translate, a free online service with enough capital and intellectual power behind it to make even the most stalwart of translators tremble.

Translation and interpreting are among the world’s oldest professions. They have been conducted in a fashion that has varied little from generation to generation. From the solitary scribe toiling away over barely legible sacred texts to the bilingual envoy charged with delivering news that might very well result in his own demise, skilled polyglots were a limited bunch whose ability to do their job depended upon studying, memorizing, and faithfully reproducing communications among distinct groups.

Yet now, with a few keystrokes on a laptop, or a camera phone with the right application, translation and interpreting are truly at the fingertips of the masses. No longer must the monolingual wonder in a mixture of fear, distrust, and amazement about what “foreigners” are saying or thinking. With the technology now at their disposal, people are able to read, hear, and gain a basic understanding of what is being said and written in another language. This is a major breakthrough.

For those in language services, it is an essential point to keep in mind, because while rightfully concerned about quality and accuracy, translators and interpreters are not terribly representative of the population at large. They may quibble over the right word, tone, or register, but these are the details, the trees in the forest, and not the larger communication picture. Despite their best intentions, “good enough” translations may often be just that: good enough for the purposes in question. Far from perfect, with mistakes here and there, but they get the job done.

Which raises the question: What, if anything, should translators and interpreters do?

Like the Luddites of the early 19th century, today’s language professionals face forces beyond their control and, with certain technologies, beyond their comprehension. Translation and interpreting technology is a small part of a much larger revolution in the way in which people communicate, do business, and interact on a global scale. It provides a means to an end: to understand what is going on in another part of the world, or to communicate with someone when a common language is not shared.

This technology exists because it solves a problem in a useful way. Most people do not competently speak multiple languages and may not have the means, desire, or wherewithal to develop these skills. Thus, it is much easier for them to rely on imperfect technological solutions, which will continue to be developed and to improve. As more people become aware of and familiar with these technologies, they will adopt them and begin using them in novel ways, not just for chatting online or understanding a menu while on vacation, but eventually to make legal decisions and to conduct business.

This reality is quickly approaching, and language services professionals need to prepare. How will they face this future? Will they recognize that technology has indeed changed the industry and adapt their business models accordingly? Or will they seek to organize in the night and make plans to break the machines of the 21st century?

There are, of course, plenty of possibilities in between, but the point is the future for language services is now. The sooner this future is embraced, the sooner translators and interpreters will be able to determine their roles in it.

Notes
Having entered the field of translation through engineering (nearly 20 years ago in an industrial research center), I have often been met with suspicion from linguists who wonder what on earth I am doing “invading their territory.” However, when faced with translations on nuclear reactors or catalytic converters, these people grudgingly accept that I can translate texts they themselves would not touch. That said, this suspicion is mutual; I have also encountered it from engineers who wonder why they need a translator (“What do linguists know about bridge construction?”). These attitudes give rise to misconceptions such as the myth that “good grammar does not matter in technical texts.” It is a sobering thought that a misplaced comma in the emergency procedures for a nuclear power station or an aircraft maintenance manual could have catastrophic results. But who is “qualified” to translate such texts? A monolingual nuclear engineer? A scientifically illiterate linguist? My aim here is to reverse the negative attitude of certain linguists regarding scientists “invading their turf” and to encourage them to do likewise; that is, to “invade” the area of science, where there is good money to be made and you are needed, regardless of what some engineers may tell you.

You Can Learn New Tricks

First, let me stress that people who master different languages are by definition intelligent people, and therefore perfectly capable of learning new subjects, especially if they decide to specialize. And the wide world of science has enormous possibilities for specializing in something you like (astronomy, the environment, marine biology, medicine, sustainable architecture, antique motorcycle maintenance, etc.). The problem is that many who have only studied linguistics believe that this is an esoteric world of microbiology druids whose secretive terminology is accessible only to a chosen few. This is a strange attitude for people who boast of having a greater vocabulary than most.

This was brought home to me when a translator friend of mine saw a text I was working on about the isomerization of certain compounds. She burst out laughing, finding it incomprehensible. Where to look? Which bilingual specialized scientific dictionary to use?

If you have an ordinary, medium-sized monolingual dictionary at hand, look up the word “isomer” now. (If not, check Wikipedia.) Go on. Found it? Surprised that such a word exists in any old run-of-the-mill dictionary? You should not be. After all, you are a translator and should therefore find no surprises in such a dictionary. (Take note: you will need a monolingual dictionary for scientific translation. There is little point knowing that isomer in...
Spanish is isómero if you still have no idea what the word means in your own language.)

My point is that science is not so mysterious nor the texts so difficult as you might think. In fact, you will probably find that the average 15-year-old high school student is familiar with isomers, as you yourself probably were at that age before your linguistic specialization led you to forget half the things you learned at school. This is a common drawback in education in the developed world. Again, it works both ways—I once had an engineering client who did not know what an adjective is. This may explain why many believe that there are no Da Vincis or Aristotles around today, which is quite untrue—they just specialize now. I also know a production engineer for a multinational glass manufacturer who studied fine arts, and a globetrotting troubleshooter for the cement industry with a degree in philosophy.

As translators, we are condemned to be cultivated and always win at Trivial Pursuit. But if you wish to show just how cultivated you truly are, there is yet another piece of the pie to be won. Science is also culture, and it changes the world and society far more than any poet, politician, or preacher. And it therefore provides a seemingly infinite amount of texts to be translated.

It’s About Adaptation

To my mind, there are two very distinct kinds of texts: scientific and technical. The former are usually of a standard layout, including an abstract, methodology, results, conclusions, and bibliography, rounded off by effusive acknowledgements for the translator, preferably with your e-mail address. These are often written by academics with fairly good linguistic competence for publication in international journals. Technical translations, on the other hand, can provide more problems and should be taken with some humor if you do not want to end up banging your head against the keyboard and sobbing loudly. They are often written by private company technicians with scant regard for such trifles as commas and full stops/periods.

A classic example is provided by instructions manuals. One may well be mistaken for thinking that everybody reads instructions manuals in the same way. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even cultural issues come into play. Let us take the example of the mobile/cell phone manual, a technical text with which we are probably all familiar and which some of you may even have actually bothered to read. Let’s say that in Mediterranean and Latin countries, the procedure after purchasing a mobile/cell phone is as follows:

1. Open box.
2. Throw away pesky bits of paper (i.e., instructions manual and guarantee).
3. Proceed to fiddle with buttons and moveable parts for 10 days until:
   a) You realize you do not know how the phone works.
   b) You receive an electric shock.
   c) The phone breaks.
4. Look for instructions manual (being chewed by cat/dog and/or in the trash).
5. Discover phone is indeed broken and/or parts are missing and/or is in fact an electric razor.
7. Discover 10-day trial period has now expired.
8. Curse manufacturer.

In colder climes, however, the procedure can be quite different:

1. Open box.
2. Proceed to read instructions manual step-by-step for 10 days.
3. Take phone out of cellophane. (Keep cellophane out of reach of children as instructed.)
4. See Points 5 to 8 above.

The point is, instructions are read differently depending on who reads them, and this affects how they should be written. Our example above shows that in warmer climes people often skip the “boring bits” and prefer to discover the product for themselves, using the instructions only as a reference when they come across something they do not understand. For the translator, this implies avoiding the use of pronouns or references to other sections, even if you end up being repetitive. Technical texts are not meant to be works of art, but to be unequivocal and unambiguous. Indeed, many of the rules that should be applied to instructions manuals can be applied to legal texts as well.

Apart from cultural preferences, there may also be other reasons for skipping excess wording. Take emergency procedures, for example. All companies have two possible emer-
emergency procedures in the event of a fire, for example. Let’s call them Plan A and Plan B. Plan A involves following a well-rehearsed drill and assembling staff at a prearranged meeting point. Plan B involves racing round like headless chickens, arms flailing, screaming for dear life. Unfortunately, when people’s lives are in imminent danger, it is Plan B that prevails.

So let us imagine a fire breaks out in a factory. Our hapless hero worker seizes an extinguisher and begins to read the instructions with understandably great haste:

1. Congratulations on purchasing your X-300 fire extinguisher, the top of the range bla bla bla.

[A ball of flame flares up, searing the seat of our hero’s pants.]

2. Ensure this apparatus is cleaned every two months according to European guideline 1:2002 F. Begin by carefully applying a damp cloth, etc.
Translation and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance Continued

[As the hair on the back of our hero’s neck begins to singe, he or she will obviously move quickly on to Point 10.]

10. Connect the former to the latter and turn in the same direction as in Point 5.

At this point, our hero wisely decides to wield the extinguisher as a hefty weapon with life-or-death ferocity, mercilessly beating a ruthless warpath through the pack of panic-stricken people blocking the emergency exit (indicated in Diagram F of Emergency Procedure Appendix II). At least it came in handy.

Clearly, essential points should be brief and come first. Points 1 and 2 should come later, if at all, in publicly visible emergency instructions, and full nouns should be used rather than “former” and “latter.” Again, one should avoid references to information that is nonessential to the fire extinguisher’s function, and which are likely to be skipped over by the reader.

Such rules when writing technical texts and instructions can be found in “controlled languages” created artificially for this very purpose. These are used in multinational joint ventures where people from many countries are involved and where English is used as the common language, but the employees’ grasp of the language is not perfect. One such example is ASD-STE100 Simplified Technical English. This includes rules such as avoiding the passive voice, keeping sentences short, and always using an article. Such rules, while helping to prevent misunderstandings, inevitably lead to a repetitive style, which in turn leads to a high degree of translation memory fuzzy matches. This fact has not been lost on some companies that have even produced controlled languages with this in mind (Caterpillar and CLOUT).

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Wikipedia is the Sesame Street of science.

Google and Wikipedia: Proceed with Caution

Here is another tip to help you when translating technical texts: find pictures! To understand fully the parts of a ship, the cross-section of a road, or the workings of a machine, the “Images” search in Google is priceless, not to mention picture dictionaries such as the Merriam-Webster online. And what better example of a picture dictionary than an encyclopedia? And what better example of an encyclopedia than Saint Wiki? Obviously, Wikipedia should not be used as a reference for correct terminology, but as a learning tool it is unbeatable, especially if you need to gain a general understanding of a scientific text. Perhaps it is necessary to explain first just how to use it—and how not to.

Wikipedia is a site that depends entirely on contributions, both in terms of financing and information. The articles are written by volunteers, which should obviously set alarm bells ringing as to its reliability as a dictionary. Sometimes you will find a symbol next to the language that has been defined as a “good article” (often in German), and the site applies a “verifiability” policy, which means that all pages should cite sources whose reliability you can then check. So why use it at all? Well, its reliability is proportional to the simplicity of the subject matter due to its democratic form of editing. For example, if you decide to write an article about kangaroos, saying that they are a kind of gigantic mollusk that lives in the Arctic Ocean, it will be removed immediately by Wikipedians with more authoritative knowledge than yours on the world’s fauna; not least because they have a “no original research” policy, and the idea of huge polar mollusks is, well, quite original. If, however, you decide to give the world the benefit of your meager knowledge about erythropoiesis in hemopoietic tissue, there will be far fewer people qualified to dispute you if you affirm that it is caused, say, by ingesting huge Arctic gastropods (though you will have to provide prior research into the phenomenon, which could be tricky). In other words, Wikipedia is the Sesame Street of science. It is where Grover explains isomers to you, and in this respect it does indeed work and can be an invaluable self-learning tool.

Another important point to note about Wikipedia is that texts in different languages are written by different authors who usually bear absolutely no relation to each other. In other words, the texts are different and this may even lead to slightly differing definitions.

One trick to help check the names of flora and fauna is to look for the Latin name that scientists have generally agreed upon to find the corresponding common name in each respective language. Again, double-check with official sites other than Wikipedia. It is a curious fact that in certain scientific respects Latin is still the most widely used language.

A similar tip applies to chemical
nomenclature. Find the chemical notation for a compound and you can find its name in another language, but beware of isomers! The chemical notation can also change slightly from Asian to European languages. You can also look up the International Non-Proprietary Names (INN) for chemicals at the World Health Organization (www.who.int/en), with their corresponding official translations, to avoid prosecution from companies that have patented a chemical product (similar considerations should be applied to technical translations).

**Just Give it 15**

While my intention with this article is to encourage translators to delve into science, I must obviously stress that you should not attempt to translate texts you honestly do not understand. All I am saying is that before you reject a job upon seeing the title alone, give yourself 15 minutes to check it out to see if it really is as difficult as you thought at first. You may surprise yourself; maybe even Grover can understand it. That said, obviously medical texts, for example, should be left to the experts.

Nevertheless, if this subject interests you, make yourself an expert by taking official courses in science and translation. The same goes for perhaps the most difficult of all subjects to translate: mathematical texts. These also require sound understanding. By no means do I advise anybody to try to bluff one’s way through the translation of a text without really understanding why the Dirac delta is not strictly a function since it should have total integral zero. I would like to see Grover try to explain that.

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**2010-2011 ATA School Outreach Contest**

Make a School Outreach presentation this year, and you could win free registration to ATA’s 52nd Annual Conference in Boston, Massachusetts, October 26-29, 2011. Here’s how to enter.

2. Choose the age level you like the best and download a presentation, or use the resources on the School Outreach page to round out your own material.
3. Speak on translation and/or interpreting careers at a school or university anywhere in the world between August 1, 2010 and July 18, 2011.
4. Get someone to take a picture of you in the classroom. For tips on getting a winning shot, visit the School Outreach Photo Gallery on ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/ata_school/photo_gallery.php and click on Photo Guidelines.
5. E-mail your photo to Meghan McCallum (meghanraymccallum@gmail.com) with the subject line “School Outreach Contest,” or mail your entry to ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include: your name and contact information; the date of your presentation; the school’s name and location; and a brief description of the class. You may submit multiple entries.

The deadline for submissions is midnight on July 18, 2011. The winner will be contacted no later than August 19, 2011. You must be a member of ATA or an ATA-affiliated organization to enter.
Film, whether produced for the big screen or television, is a global business. Any film that is not made on a small budget exclusively for a regional or national audience will have an international dimension—either through co-production or co-financing with producers from other countries, filming in foreign locations, or international distribution designed to recoup the often large production costs. Language services may be needed at every stage in the production process, but the amount of work will vary significantly.

During film development, for example, translators may be asked to translate synopses of the film story, film treatments, step outlines, or any underlying material (e.g., translating the book or play upon which the film is based). They may also have to translate marketing information during the financing process, as well as budgets, schedules, correspondence, and other documentation. During production, translators may be needed to translate such material as amendments to the screenplay and possibly contracts. Interpreters may also be required on the set.

The largest volume of translation work is generated just before or during the distribution stage, when the completed film or television program is subtitled or dubbed into different languages before its release in theaters or on DVD. Over a period of months and years, the producers of the film recoup their investment through a combination of theater ticket sales, pay-television sales, terrestrial and satellite television broadcasts, DVD and Blu-ray sales, Internet downloads, and merchandising. As a result, a film is likely to be translated more than once, and possibly several times into the same language, for different purposes. Often, theater distributors, broadcasters, and DVD subtitling companies each create their own subtitled versions of a film, and films may be released both in subtitled and dubbed versions to maximize revenue. In addition, DVD bonus material and video games make up a significant portion of audiovisual translation assignments.

**DVD Revolution:**
**Different Forms of Subtitling**

Over the past 15 years, the amount of work available in the audiovisual translation industry has risen steadily. The first major impetus for growth was the DVD revolution during the 1990s. Whereas VHS tapes had usually provided a single-language version of a film, DVD technology now enabled as many as 32 different subtitle files or eight different voice tracks to be stored alongside each other on one DVD. For the first time, consumers could select different language versions from a menu.

The new technology led to the centralization of the DVD industry and the standardization of the translation process. Given that a number of different languages were now combined on a single disc, separate translations were no longer commissioned via film distributors in individual countries, as the entire process could be handled under one roof. A number of subtitling companies emerged, with London and Los Angeles becoming the two main centers for DVD subtitling. (London is a particularly suitable location for this industry, given the availability of linguists in a city where over 300 languages are spoken.) These developments led to other innovations in the field, leading to further growth.

**Software**

The standardization of the subtitling process became possible through the use of specialized PC-based subtitling software and the introduction of translation templates. In terms of software, some of the most common packages used by subtitling companies nowadays include SWIFT, WinCAPS, and Spot. These are all based on the same principle and tend to have three main parts: 1) a window showing a digital video clip of the film to be subtitled; 2) a second window displaying the subtitles that
are being generated; and 3) a third window displaying the time code that links the subtitles to the relevant part of the film. Each subtitle is shown for a particular duration, which is determined through the IN- and OUT-points set during the timing, or spotting, process. Ideally, the IN-point should coincide with the beginning of the relevant part of the dialogue, and the OUT-point with its end. However, the translator needs to work around shot changes to ensure that the subtitles work with the rhythm of the film and not against it. The translator must also be aware of the reading speed of the audience. Most subtitling companies in Britain work to an assumed reading speed of 180 words per minute. However, the speech rate of many films and television programs is considerably higher (220-240 words per minute in some interview and discussion programs). This means that editing is an important part of subtitling. Most subtitling software packages help translators locate shot changes in the original film and monitor the reading speed of subtitles as they are being created.

Templates
The increased use of translation templates is another contributing factor that has allowed the DVD subtitling process to become fully standardized. When first introduced in the 1990s, templates enabled companies to use freelance translators who did not need to know the software, which was beneficial at a time when technical knowledge was at a premium. A translation template is essentially a fully timed, or spotted, master file in the original language of the film on which all translations are based. Produced by a native-speaking linguist in the source language, templates ensure accuracy, increased efficiency, comparability across language versions, and cost-effectiveness. Along with the template, translators receive so-called “Checker’s Notes” and “Translators’ Notes.” These notes ensure that all translators use the correct spelling for names and places, and provide additional explanations of concepts in the source language where needed.

Audiovisual Translation
Apart from the centralization of the industry and the standardization of the translation process, DVD technology has also contributed to the growth of audiovisual translation. There are two main reasons for this. First, the additional storage capacity of the disc enables it to carry a range of bonus material, such as documentaries, interviews, and additional scenes, all of which need to be translated. Second, both celluloid, and particularly videotape, degrade over time, whereas digital formats do not. As a result, entire archives, including film classics, have been digitized and re-released on DVD. In the early years of the industry, as households bought DVD players and built up their own film libraries, increased DVD sales led to substantial growth in the subtitling industry.

Hollywood films continue to dominate the DVD subtitling market and audiovisual translation as a whole. Research conducted by Olivier Debande and Guy Chetrit in 2000 estimated that the market share of American films in terms of theater admissions in the European Union was around 74%. Their study also indicated that the share of American programs accounted for 70% of the volume of imported fiction shown on television.

There are several reasons Hollywood studios have been so successful. Having a large domestic market enables them to invest more heavily in the film development process. Studios spend time tailoring projects to the international market and are able to develop a larger number of projects per film made than their European colleagues. In addition, film marketing becomes easier when a film project offers known talent and high production values—both of which are more easily attained within the budget level of a Hollywood studio. There is also the fact that a Hollywood studio tends to have more money to commit to prints and advertising for each film. As a consequence, much of the translation work available, particularly DVD subtitling work, is from English into other languages, with key countries being Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. However, many DVDs also contain subtitle files for the deaf and hard of hearing and audio description tracks for the blind and visually impaired, both of which provide work for native English-speaking translators and interpreters.

Satellite and Terrestrial Television
Aside from the DVD, other developments have led to an upsurge in audiovisual translation. For example, since 2000, the number of satellite and terrestrial television chan-
nels available to consumers has continued to expand dramatically, despite the global economic crisis. A press release from the European Commission states that “more than 245 new channels were launched in Europe in 2009; [which] implies a total of 7,200 European television channels at the end of 2009.”

While this proliferation of channels has increased the number of available programming slots and generated a demand for additional programs, production budgets in the film and television industry have steadily declined in recent years. This has also had a secondary effect on budget allocations for language transfer (dubbing and subtitling), thereby affecting pay rates.

**Switching to Digital: Increasing Accessibility**

Over the coming years, much of Europe will face the next part of the digital revolution: the switch to digital television. This could bring some exciting possibilities, particularly in the area of accessibility. The main function of accessibility is to make audiovisual works available to particular audience groups such as the blind and visually impaired, the deaf and hard of hearing, and language learners. While much of the increase in audiovisual translation within the area of language transfer has been driven by export and commercial necessity, any increase in accessibility tends to be driven by legislation. A report published by the Media Consulting Group in 2008 found that the overall volume of programs available to hearing- or visually-impaired viewers in Europe is very low. Another survey conducted by the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People in 2009 showed that the percentage of programs broadcast with subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing varies widely among European countries, ranging from less than 1% in Hungary to well over 90% on average in the U.K. The fact that the U.K. is among the countries with the highest percentage of subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing within Europe is at least partially due to legislation that required 90% of ITV and Channel 4 programs to be subtitled by the end of 2010. The BBC is committed to subtitling all programs, which it announced on its website in 2008. This is delivered either live or as pre-edited subtitles.

So what does providing accessible programming involve? Here is a breakdown of the various methods used.

**Subtitling for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing differs from foreign language subtitling in that it includes descriptions of sound effects and music on a film’s soundtrack. This type of subtitling work can be quite challenging for the translator, but equally rewarding. When working with films in which the soundtrack conveys a large part of the narrative, the translator has to find ways of representing this information in visual form. In addition, it is necessary to indicate which character is speaking. Some broadcasters place the subtitles under the relevant character on screen while others use a coding system in which the subtitle for each character is assigned a different color.

Live subtitling is offered by the main broadcasters in the U.K., including the BBC and Channel 4, particularly for news and other live programs. This form of subtitling is often referred to as re-speaking. The subtitler listens to the live dialogue through headphones and re-speaks it, often in slightly edited form, while inserting any necessary punctuation. The re-spoken dialogue is then fed into voice recognition software, which produces the live subtitles. This work is very challenging and requires almost as much concentration as simultaneous interpreting. Live subtitlers have to take regular breaks, and the process is not entirely flawless. The software occasionally misunderstands unusual words or names, and the viewer might find it difficult to read the subtitles because they tend to appear on the television screen word by word, rather than as a whole subtitle. This means that the viewer’s attention is being drawn back repeatedly to the changing subtitle instead of being allowed to focus on the image and take in the information provided. This shortcoming was demonstrated by Pablo Romero Fresco, who carried out a reception study on re-spoken subtitles. Nevertheless, live subtitling has made a big contribution to accessibility for viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

It should also be mentioned that many broadcasters nowadays allow viewers to watch programs via their websites. A portion of recordings are available with subtitles, but these are often re-edited and presented in a different format from those offered on terrestrial television. Also, subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing are not always produced as intralingual subtitles. In some cases, translators are asked to create foreign language subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, for example, working out of English into French or Italian.

**Translation for Dubbing and Voice-over**

Regardless of the growth of subtitling in recent years, dubbing remains the main form of language transfer within audiovisual translation in several countries. For example, Germany,
France, Italy, and Spain are large markets and can bear the higher costs associated with dubbing, whereas countries with smaller populations, such as the Scandinavian countries, Belgium, and Portugal, tend to subtitle their programs. Dubbing and voice-over are also favored generally for cartoons and news programs. Translators do not necessarily need specialist software when preparing dubbing scripts, although they need to have a mechanism with which they can assess with accuracy the duration of each section of dialogue to be translated. For example, translators have used frame-accurate DVD players or Windows Movie-Maker to time their scripts, but ultimately the recording of the dubbing or voice-over track takes place in a professional recording studio using either Pro-Tools, Avid, or Final Cut Pro, none of which the translator will be required to master. The recording is made by a team comprised of at least one voice-over artist, a sound engineer, and usually a dubbing director. Having said this, there are some software packages available that allow the translator and/or dialogue adaptor to prepare dubbing scripts for recording, such as VoiceQ DUB.

To clarify, a voice-over is a voice track that is laid over the original soundtrack while the latter usually remains barely audible in the background. The term “dubbing” (used in the context of audiovisual translation) refers to the replacement of the original dialogue with the foreign language version that is made to look as if it is spoken by the character on the screen. From the translator’s point of view, translating a voice-over script involves fewer constraints. Constraints in voice-over translation are mainly related to timing and to any visual references contained in the film that relate to a particular point in the voice-over narration. In news interviews, for instance, the voice-over tends to come in a few seconds after the beginning of the dialogue.

In contrast to voice-over, translation for dubbing has the additional requirement that the translated dialogue must be able to be synchronized as much as possible with the original lip movements of the actor in order to achieve a natural look. This is particularly important if the actor is shown in mid-shot or close-up. Frederic Chaume has outlined translation strategies and techniques for translators trying to achieve the best possible lip synch in a chapter he authored in the book *The Didactics of Audiovisual Translation*.10

Given the above-mentioned constraints, and also due to the high cost of recording and mixing the tracks into the original film, dubbing is significantly more expensive than subtitling, which is why many smaller productions choose subtitling as a cost-effective alternative to dubbing, even in countries where dubbing is traditionally used.

But using subtitles can also have other benefits, for example, in the area of language learning. In 2009, the European Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency announced it would be conducting a study on the use of subtitling to investigate the potential of subtitling as a means to encourage foreign language learning and improve the mastery of foreign languages.11 The findings should be available sometime this year. It will be interesting to see whether new legislation might emerge regarding the provision of additional subtitling services for digital television broadcasts.

**Audio Description**

Another area of accessibility that has enjoyed growth in recent years is audio description. Designed to make films accessible to blind and partially sighted viewers, audio description involves the insertion of a narrator’s commentary alongside the film’s soundtrack to describe what is happening on the screen. The narration tends to occur during the natural pauses in the audio and may require volume adjustments on the original soundtrack. Audio description is increasingly available in many European countries. A report by the European Blind Union (EBU) found that, in 2005, audio description was available in theaters in seven European countries—Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the U.K.—while six countries offered audio description on television (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and the U.K.).12 In recent years, other countries, including Greece and Spain, have introduced audio description. The EBU report focused on access to television and did not include DVD bonus material and video games make up a significant portion of audiovisual translation assignments.

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any data on audio description for DVDs. However, it has been estimated that there are now almost 500 DVDs available with audio description in the U.K., either for sale or rent. This has been achieved through lobbying and support by organizations like the Royal National Institute of Blind People and the (now disbanded) U.K. Film Council.

In recent years, audio description has also attracted interest from academics, whose work focuses on a range of issues, including text cohesion and the application of official guidelines for audio description. One such example is the Calling the Shots Project at London’s City University that is tracking a new approach to audio description called cinematic audio description. Cinematic audio description aims to convey the full cinematic experience, giving access to such information as camera shots, editing techniques, and lighting, which are such an important part of the language of film. This practice is contrary to guidelines issued by Ofcom, the independent regulator and competition authority for communications industries in the U.K., which suggest that narrators convey the intellectual argument of the narrative and the main visual images but leave out references to specific filmic terms such as camera angles. As part of the project, City University has conducted test screenings of David Lean’s 1945 film Brief Encounter that incorporates this new type of audio description, written and recorded by BBC presenter and audio description narrator Louise Fryer. The screenings have received positive feedback from blind audience members, although further research is needed to establish whether blind and partially sighted audiences generally prefer this type of description.

Among the software packages used to generate audio description is ADEPT, which is used by several London companies. Produced by the same manufacturer as the subtitling software SWIFT, it also works on the same principle: linking the film to be described via time code to the corresponding sections of script. The difference is that the IN-point of the relevant part of the description coincides with the end of the dialogue, and the OUT-point with the beginning of the next part of the dialogue. Narrators work in two stages: they prepare the script and then record the description using the same software. Not all narrators record their own descriptions; some companies use professional voice-over artists for the recordings.

In addition to audio description, some countries offer audio subtitling that makes subtitled foreign language programs accessible to blind and partially sighted viewers. The subtitles are spoken and broadcast separately from the general sound track. This service is available in The Netherlands and Sweden, and can be selected on a menu.

**Sign Language Interpreting**

Another important area of accessibility is the provision of sign language interpreting. In the U.K., the BBC broadcasts a number of programs with British Sign Language interpreting every day, including programs for children. At present, analogue television broadcasting requires that the sign language interpreter be vision-mixed into the main image before the program can be broadcast. Rather than showing this version to all audiences, broadcasters tend to repeat programs, often showing the vision-mixed versions during the night. However, the Internet and the switch to digital television may, at least theoretically, open up ways of providing additional sign language interpreting during the day. This is because the digital transmission allows the image of the sign language interpreter to be broadcast as a separate signal that can be selected on a menu, so that the image of the interpreter no longer has to be vision-mixed into the original image.

### The Internet and Industry Challenges

One of the positive aspects of the availability of broadband Internet has been the ability of many audiovisual translators to work from home on a freelancer basis rather than having to work in-house at a company. While 10 or 15 years ago, many translators had to watch videos of the programs to be translated at the offices of the company for which they worked, they are now able to download low-resolution clips from FTP sites.

Overall, the Internet has brought growth to the audiovisual translation market, particularly in the corporate sector. Currently, many websites include a number of videos to advertise a company’s services, often in several languages. Here, in contrast to the Hollywood-dominated DVD market, language combinations may vary. The Internet and Industry Challenges
widely, as the source texts are generated in different countries. However, a significant portion of the work is into English, the lingua franca of commerce. Translation work of this kind is often handled by professional subtitling companies, but this is not always the case. Corporate video producers tend to be small and independent, and sometimes prefer to take care of their own subtitling into English, particularly if they only commission one translation. Thus, for translators, it is useful to be visible to potential direct clients; for example, by being listed in the media section of professional translators organizations or translation agencies. There are also a number of film industry publications in which translators can advertise their services directly to producers, such as directories like Kemps (www.kftv.com) and The Knowledge (www.theknowledgeonline.com).

While the Internet has brought many positive developments to audiovisual translation, it has also introduced a number of challenges. Piracy is now a serious threat to the viability of the film industry. Amateur subtitles provided online by enthusiasts can be beneficial to the viewer, but at their worst, they can also be used to support piracy. Even though the quality of these subtitles tends to lag behind those produced professionally, they still have the capacity to damage sales. In order to reduce the risk of piracy, many studios hand over their completed films for subtitling and dubbing as close to the release date as possible in order to minimize the risk of illegal recordings appearing on the Internet before the release date. However, for the translator this means short turnaround times, which is not always conducive to quality.

In relation to changing viewing habits, DVD sales have also dropped dramatically. An article in the Los Angeles Times in May 2009 estimated that DVD sales had shrunk between 15% and 18% over the past year due to a combination of the closure of DVD sales outlets and consumer behavior attributed to the recession. Viewers are now more likely to watch a film in the theater or as an Internet download and are less likely to buy it as a DVD.10 Plummeting DVD sales have affected the viability of the studios and the film industry as a whole. Early in 2010, for example, MGM announced that it was halting production on its new James Bond movie due to financial difficulties. By November, the studio was up for sale.

London subtitling companies are also reporting a drop in DVD work. While corporate clients have shifted their marketing and publicity videos to the Internet, broadcasters who used to distribute many of their programs on DVD are now more selective about what they choose to put out. Some subtitling companies have cited a drop in DVD translation volumes of up to 25%. Yet at the same time, much of this volume has shifted to alternative distribution platforms such as the Internet. The key difference, however, is that pay television, Internet downloads, and other distribution platforms are not as profitable for producers as DVDs. With overall profitability affected, and the continuing pressure on budgets, pay rates for audiovisual translation services have been affected as well.

Regardless of the growth of subtitling in recent years, in several countries dubbing remains the main form of language transfer within audiovisual translation.

Strategies and Skills for Translators Working in the Field

The industry continues to undergo fundamental changes, so translators wishing to work in this area must adapt with it to succeed. The following are some key strategies to help achieve this end.

Be Willing to Learn New Technology

As mentioned earlier, each area within audiovisual translation uses its own software. Professional subtitling software such as SWIFT or WinCAPS allows translators to monitor reading speed, characters per line, and various aspects of their work, and to check the finished product. Many translators now own “light” versions of the software, or receive these on loan from the companies for which they work. One of the key skills in using professional software is the ability to time, or to prepare a “spotting list” (essentially defining the “IN” and “OUT” points for each subtitle within the timeline). This takes practice to learn and perfect. However, many freelance translators still work from templates generated within a company. They receive fully-timed files and can translate these within a Word or similar file document format before the translation is imported back into the software. Some companies used to ask freelancers to revise their translations in-house once they were completed, but nowadays proofreaders and project managers can take on

Regardless of the growth of subtitling in recent years, in several countries dubbing remains the main form of language transfer within audiovisual translation.
Beyond Subtitling: Audiovisual Translation in the 21st Century Continued

this role to save time.

Audio description narrators use professional audio description software like ADEPT, on which they prepare the written script and then record it. Again, timing plays a key role in creating the narration, as it must be inserted into the natural gaps between the dialogue, music, and sound effects. Apart from knowing the software, audio narrators also require training in recording facilities, as they are expected to be able to use a professional recording booth to record their narrations.

In addition to the aforementioned software skills, project managers need to be aware of a wide range of technical issues. These include familiarity with the formats of audiovisual material supplied by the client, such as Betacam, Digibeta, or any digital file formats such as MPEG. They need to know the working principles of digital editing and mastering, including the different file sizes (those for Blu-ray, for example, differ substantially from those used for DVDs). This knowledge is necessary to be able to brief technicians or to communicate effectively with authoring houses that create the subtitled DVDs. At times, in the absence of a technician, project managers may need to take on the role of the digital film editor in order to produce a subtitled or dubbed version of an audiovisual product that is destined for the Internet. In such cases, knowledge of such programs as Final Cut Pro or other evolving Internet technologies that may offer cheaper ways of preparing clips for publication might provide an advantage. Project managers also need to consider the environment in which the client will ultimately use the material. For those seeking training in this area, some companies offer positions that, while offering limited remuneration initially, provide an excellent way of learning about the entire management process and the complex technical aspects.

Be Fast

Ten years ago, professional subtitlers used to subtitle a feature film in about three days. Nowadays, turnaround times are so short that colleagues who can complete the same job in one and a half days are more likely to get the work. Being fast and efficient—while still finding creative solutions to translation problems—is key to being successful in this industry. Subtitling 30 to 40 minutes of source material per day is seen by many in the industry as the norm.

Be a Team Player

It is not uncommon for a subtitling company to receive the English version of a film five days before its release in the theater or on DVD and to be asked to prepare subtitles into dozens of foreign languages. In some cases, a film may arrive in individual reels that are delivered non-consecutively. The only way in which companies can continue to provide a professional set of services is through the use of translation templates, and of course, through teamwork. In this respect, the relationship between project managers and their team of translators and proofreaders is crucial, particularly given the time pressures.

Be Adaptable

Audiovisual translation is constrained translation. In subtitling, for example, there are restrictions in terms of the number of lines or characters that may be used, or the reading speed which must not be exceeded. These stipulations are not generally made by the subtitling company for which the subtitler works, but by the client; that is, the broadcaster, film distributor, or film production company. Many broadcasters use two line subtitles with a maximum of 39 characters or more, while others, such as the BBC, stipulate that up to three lines may be used for their subtitles for the deaf and hard of hearing, with a maximum of 34 characters per line. The difference in line length alone means that subtitlers need to use different strategies for creating good line breaks in order to make their subtitles more readable for the viewer. Other stipulations include rules for punctuation, positioning, and the coloring of subtitles. In the case of subtitles for the hard of hearing, there are rules regarding labels (e.g., whether to describe the type and mood of music used, or to simply indicate that there is music). Getting used to a client’s specifications may take some time, but subtitling companies often have established links with particular clients. As a result, subtitlers tend to work for the same series or project for weeks, months, or even years.

In addition to client specifications, subtitlers also have to bear in mind their company’s in-house guidelines. These may stipulate whether English-language translation templates are pre-edited or not, how they are timed, and how to deal with shot changes.

Be a Good Translator

Ultimately, the best audiovisual translators are also good translators. Most companies will ask freelancers to take a test in order to determine their suitability.

Challenges

Digital technologies have led to an expansion of the audiovisual transla-
## Sources for Researching Film Industry Terminology

There is a wealth of information on the Internet, but not all sources are reliable. It is usually best to focus on the following types of websites from Europe and the U.S. to ensure accurate results:

### Film Ratings
- **Motion Picture Association of America Ratings**
  - [www.mpaa.org/ratings](http://www.mpaa.org/ratings)
- **Motion Picture Production Code**
- **U.S. Classification and Rating Administration**
  - [www.filmratings.com](http://www.filmratings.com)

### Filmmakers’ Networks
- **FilmerForum**
  - [www.filmerforum.de](http://www.filmerforum.de)
- **Independent Filmmaking**
  - [www.shootingpeople.org](http://www.shootingpeople.org)

### Laboratories and Digital Post Production Facilities
- **Bucks Laboratories**
  - [www.bucks.co.uk/Bucks.html](http://www.bucks.co.uk/Bucks.html)

### Legislation, Certification, Funding, Training
- **British Department of Culture, Media, and Sport**
  - [www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/5060.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/creative_industries/5060.aspx)
- **British Film Institute Screenonline**
  - [www.screenonline.org.uk/film/indaud.html](http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/indaud.html)  
  *(Guide to British film and television history)*
- **Filmförderungsanstalt (in German and English)**
  - [www.ffa.de](http://www.ffa.de)
- **Film London**
  - [www.filmlondon.org.uk](http://www.filmlondon.org.uk)
- **Filmstiftung NRW**
  - [www.filmstiftung.de](http://www.filmstiftung.de)

### Subtitling and Translation Information
- **TransEdit**
  - [www.transedit.se/index.htm](http://www.transedit.se/index.htm)

### Training Organizations
- **Film Sound Design**
  - [www.filmsound.org](http://www.filmsound.org)
- **Movie College**
  - [www.movie-college.de](http://www.movie-college.de)
- **Skillset Film**
  - [www.skillset.org/film](http://www.skillset.org/film)

### Unions
- **Equity**
  - [www.equity.org.uk](http://www.equity.org.uk)
- **Interessenvertretung von Medienschaffenden**
  - [www.connexx-av.de](http://www.connexx-av.de)
tion market, particularly in areas like subtitling and audio description. This trend will no doubt continue. At the same time, the film industry is facing a number of challenges that have affected its profitability, including piracy and reduced DVD sales. These and other challenges have put pressure on the audiovisual translation industry and have, unfortunately, resulted in lower fees and a demand for faster turnaround. However, despite these challenges, the work of the audiovisual translator continues to be varied, enjoyable, and creative.

Notes
4. Growth of the Number of Television Channels and Multi-Channel Platforms in Europe Continues Despite the Crisis (European Audiovisual Observatory, 2009), www.obs.coe.int/about/oea/pr/mavise_end2009.html.
8. “BBC Vision Celebrates 100% Subtitling” (BBC, 2008), www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2008/05_may/07/subtitling.shtml.
15. Video-mixing is accomplished via a vision mixer (also called video switcher or production switcher), a device used to composite (mix) multiple video sources into one or more master outputs. The technique is often used to add special effects to a video.
ATA Professional Liability Insurance Program

Program Highlights
- Limits ranging from $250,000 to $1,000,000 annual aggregate (higher limits may be available)
- Affordable Premium: Minimum annual premiums starting from $400
- ATA certification discount
- Experienced claim counsel and risk management services
- Easy online application and payment process

Coverage Highlights
- Professional services broadly defined
- Coverage for bodily injury and/or property
- Coverage for work performed by subcontractors
- ATA agency endorsement

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Adventures: Working Remotely

The Entrepreneurial Linguist

Judy Jenner

judy.jenner@entrepreneuriallinguist.com

One of the great pleasures of being a translator is the ability to work from anywhere in the world where there is a reliable Internet connection. While I work remotely from my twin sister and business partner’s place in Vienna at least one month a year, I have never worked remotely from another location. Last year, my twin Dagmar decided to head to Chile to do research for her dissertation on the Chilean writer Isabel Allende, and an idea was born: why not meet up in South America, do some language immersion, travel, visit clients, connect with local associations, and simply run our business from the Southern Hemisphere? The question was how do we make it happen? Can we really work efficiently from a place we have never seen? Read on for some of what we learned during our April adventure.

Accommodations: This is perhaps the main issue, and one that turned out to be quite a nightmare for us. Most likely, you will be renting a place sight unseen, which is quite scary. Thus, we decided to go through a reputable Santiago agency. However, the apartment was completely filthy and the agency refused to take any responsibility. If you have a local contact who can look at the place beforehand, that would be ideal. Your safest, albeit most expensive, bet might be an international hotel chain with long-term rentals for business travelers.

Internet Connection: The Internet is our lifeline, and you need to find a way to have reliable high-speed access. We looked for an apartment with fully ready-to-go wireless Internet, which mostly worked without a hitch. Working out of random Internet cafés simply is not an option.

Dictionaries: We are heavy users of dictionaries on CD-ROM, but some of our favorite dictionaries do not exist in electronic form. With a one-suitcase limit and no desire to pay for excess luggage, we did without these print dictionaries, and at times missed them.

Gadgets: Neither one of us felt like paying exorbitant phone or data charges for our foreign cell phones, so we changed our voicemail messages to say that e-mail was the best way to reach us. We also made extensive use of Skype. One of our wonderful colleagues in Santiago came to our Providencia apartment to drop off a cell phone she was no longer using. We just had to buy some minutes and we were good to go! Renting cell phones or buying a cheap model with pre-paid minutes are also good options.

Power: Speaking of gadgets: their life will be limited if you do not have a way to charge them. Most modern electronics are dual voltage, meaning they will work with 110 V and 220 V, but you will need plugs to fit the local electrical outlets. Many times, you can buy them locally, but find out exactly where these small but very important plugs are sold before you leave.

Local Associations: Prior to our departure, we made contact with the local association in Santiago. They were very helpful, and we met up to share ideas about our respective associations. We attended an event and learned about our colleagues’ lives and challenges in Chile. I highly recommend getting in touch with your local association if you decide to work remotely. It will make you feel instantly connected! Speaking of connecting: our new friend, ATA member Dolores Rojo Guíañazú from the Argentinian association, invited us to her house in Buenos Aires and cooked us the best meal we had all year. It was a wonderful way to start our trip.

Daily Routine: We both like to work out on a daily basis, so we had to find a nearby gym that offered monthly memberships. Our other plan of action was to find nearby grocery stores and restaurants so we could settle into an almost-like-home routine. However, it is all new and things tend to take longer, so you might need to calculate that into the deadlines you quote and the projects you accept while working remotely.

Yahoo! Business Discussion Group

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

**What Happens to Your Blog, Profile, and E-mail When You Die?**


**Death is a dreary topic**
that most of us refrain from discussing, but have you ever wondered what may happen to your online life if you die? To the countless pictures you have stored on Facebook, or the priceless videos you may have uploaded and shared on YouTube? What will happen to the blogs containing those personal stories, or the Gmail account where you may have stored important documents? What happens to these profiles? Who gets access to them, and what does he or she do with them? These questions are gaining strength because of the vast data we have begun storing online.

**Digital Inheritance**

Through social networking sites, we share our personal and professional lives that may deserve an after-life. But who decides their fate? Who gets access to our account passwords? Will our profiles be deleted or will they continue to show? Or will they become an online memorial for the deceased?

Sensing a need for provision of digital inheritance, some websites in the U.S. have come up with a new service that is worth considering.

“Some social networking sites have added death policies. But the processes are radically different from site to site, and they take a one-size-fits-all approach. Ideally websites should allow users to specify their wishes ahead of time, perhaps in their account settings, instead of taking a singular approach,” says Evan Carroll, co-owner of The Digital Beyond, a website giving information on digital estate services in the U.S.

“I would like my profile to be memorialized once I’m gone so that my friends and family can remember me through it,” says Ritika Rana, an assistant manager with Nestlé and a social networking junkie.

**Protecting Your Digital Profile**

The idea of having a digital manager to help you handle all your digital belongings is fast gaining popularity in the U.S. The law, though, is silent on the issue of devolution of digital assets. “The cyber laws of the country are silent on the issue of digital legacy and digital insurance. There is no common repository where a legal heir can be appointed. There are serious lacunae in the information technology laws that need to be amended,” says Pavan Duggal, a Supreme Court lawyer and cyber law expert.

For a generation like ours that has grown up in the Internet era, with tweets and wall posts as our daily way of communication, digital inheritance holds relevance and is poised to gain more ground in the future.

**Credit:**

www.hindustantimes.com/News-Feed/lifestyle/Do-you-die-online/Article 1-654184.aspx

**The Entrepreneurial Linguist Continued from p. 34**

**Office Stuff:** For this trip, I narrowed my office supplies down to sticky notes, a few pens, one pencil, one highlighter, and one small ruler. I did miss my stapler, though. Depending on where you are going, you can buy items when you get there easily, but if you already have it, it is easier and cheaper to bring it.

Overall, I had a fantastic time in Chile and it was mainly business as usual. Our clients knew that we would be working remotely and were fully supportive. My main lesson from this adventure: it can very well be done, but there might be more difficulties than you expect and hope for. It was very worth it for us, and we would do it again in a heartbeat.
During a talk I gave last week about translation technology, I was criticized for painting a much too rosy picture of machine translation (MT). This frustrated me a little because I am not trying to convince anyone that MT is positive (or negative); instead, it is a reality with which many translators will have to deal or—in more accurately—in which they will have to participate. I have been talking a lot about the interesting opportunities that may be connected with that reality. Here is the story of one.

I spent this past week training a rules-based MT engine, during which I finally came to understand a rather fundamental truth about MT. (I have never claimed to be particularly quick-witted!)

The translation results out of the box (language direction English-to-German) were really rather pitiful. And while they got better after changing some basic settings (such as the text genre and form of address for the user group), they still were not good and not much of a productivity boost for any translation effort. Plus, they were decidedly worse than what Google Translate would have given me.

But then I set out to work to improve the results. I imported large and high-quality translation memories the client had given me. I extracted terminology from the source texts that I translated based on the data in the translation memory and defined grammatically. I also imported and fine-tuned glossaries. Now the results were better, but still far from what they were supposed to be. The rest of the week was spent “translating” the source texts with the MT engine at its current state, hunting down terms that were not (or incorrectly) recognized, and entering them into the dictionary. (Note that “entering them” does not just mean sending the source and target translation, but defining them grammatically as well.) I then spent time retranslating, hunting down more terms, and on and on.

At some point it was fun to see the results getting better each day, and at the end of the week the results were certainly better (though still maybe less idiomatic) than that of Google Translate. Assuming that the final product will be a translation of “high” quality, I would guess that the post editor will save somewhere between 20% to 40% of the time that it would take to translate the text within a traditional translation environment tool.

Clearly, this is not something that would make sense for a smallish kind of project, but it can be a large productivity boost for a very targeted project with a few hundred thousand words. (And if the goal is to deliver “only usable” translation, the savings would naturally be higher.)

But here is what I learned. I know that more and more translators are using tools like Google Translate or Bing Translator as productivity boosts. Aside from the confidentiality issues (your clients probably will not be too thrilled to see you uploading their data to Google or Microsoft), the results might look like decent productivity boosts at first glance (this obviously depends on your language combination and the kind of translation you are doing). But if you are inclined to use MT as a productivity tool and you generally work in the same domain, you will achieve greater boosts with MT tools that you can train. In turn, however, this means that you will have to make a heavy investment of time before you see any results.
• **Syntes Language Group**, of Centennial, Colorado, has hired **Noriko Nakazawa** as a senior project manager and **Laurie Gerber** as the director of business development.

• **Lawrence Schofer** received his *diplôme de français professionnel affaires C1* (diploma in business French) from the Paris Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

• ATA Past President **Jiri Stejskal** and **Anne Connor** were featured in an article about the translation and interpreting industry published in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* (“Translating and Interpreting Is a Growing, But Uneven, Industry,” May 8, 2011). Stejskal is the president of **Cetra Language Solutions**, of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, and is the vice-president of the **International Federation of Translators**. Connor, a freelance translator in West Deptford, New Jersey, is the president of the **Delaware Valley Translators Association**, an ATA chapter. The article is published online at www.philly.com/philly/business/121453919.html.

• **U.S. Translation Company**, of South Ogden, Utah, has been named a Best of State Award winner for the third consecutive year. The Best of State awards recognize outstanding individuals, organizations, and businesses in Utah.

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**In Memoriam**

**Royal L. Tinsley Jr.**

1925-2011

**Royal L. Tinsley Jr.**, 85, died April 13, 2011 at Spring City Care Center in Spring City, Tennessee. Royal served as ATA president from 1975 to 1977.

Born July 26, 1925 in Houston, Texas, Royal was the son of the late Royal L. and Cora Lee Steeley Tinsley Sr. He served as a merchant marine during the Normandy Invasion in World War II, and was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, having served during the Korean War. He and his wife, Hazel, moved from Connecticut to Spring City in 1991.

Royal was a retired professor and translator of German and Russian at the University of Arizona. During his time as ATA president, he helped establish standards and certification requirements for translators. In addition, he served as the Association’s treasurer from 1978 to 1980. He received ATA’s Gode Medal in 1978.
New Certified Members

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

**Russian into English**
- Glenn P. Bryant
  - Mount Airy, MD

**English into Spanish**
- Rachel E. McRoberts
  - La Jolla, CA
- Bruce Taylor
  - Los Angeles, CA
- Joan L. Wallace
  - Omaha, NE

ATA Certification Exam Information

**Upcoming Exams**

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<th>State</th>
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Language into Language: Cultural, Legal, and Linguistic Issues for Interpreters and Translators

Authors: Saul Sibirsky and Martin C. Taylor

Publisher: McFarland

Publication date: 2010

Number of pages: 240


Price: $49.00

Available from: www.mcfarlandpub.com

Reviewed by: Charlotte Brasler

Language into Language has something for everyone. Since I am primarily a translator who does next to no interpreting on a regular basis (more from lack of demand in my language combination than lack of desire), I picked up this book wondering what relevance it would have for me as it seemed to be heavily targeted toward interpreters. I was pleasantly surprised to find that it makes for interesting reading and contains a great wealth of information for many other people besides interpreters. Among other things, it devotes an entire chapter to describing how an employer can spot a good interpreter and what they can realistically expect from such a professional. Another chapter explains to interpreters the function of many of the employers who hire interpreters. In explaining the roles and expectations of both sides to both sides, Language into Language becomes a bridge of understanding between those players, which is very relevant to anyone.

Structure

Language into Language is divided into two main parts. The first part is a kind of introduction to the interpreting profession, answering the question: “So you want to become an interpreter, do you? Well, here is what it is all about.” This book should be part of the curriculum of any interpreting program so that students can learn from the veterans who have seen it all. The book describes where to go to get training, the types of work to which you may be exposed, the professionalism you need to possess, the kind of personality you need to have to be able to handle the emotional and intellectual challenge that is interpreting, and the rewards, pecuniary and otherwise, you are likely to receive. Reading this book will prepare students for what they are really about to get themselves into. Students undecided about whether to pursue translation or interpreting will find its lengthy comparison of these two professional avenues extremely helpful.

The second part of the book provides more in-depth detail about selected topics. For example, there is a chapter devoted to the various modes of interpreting (consecutive, simultaneous, etc.) and the skills needed for each. Another very interesting chapter explains the concept of “searching for verbal equivalency” in order to achieve “the universal goal of translation and interpreting, i.e., to render a faithful and accurate rendition from the original source language into the target language.” The reader will receive specific advice on how to handle cases where, for example, a witness may give a strange answer to a question, use slang or obscene language, or make sounds or nonverbal gestures (nods or shrugs) that will need to be rendered properly by the interpreter so that it can be captured by the court reporter. This is the kind of information that is extremely useful for students and colleagues alike.

Content

Language into Language is exhaustive in its description of the many areas of endeavour in the field of interpreting. It lists practically all the places in the U.S. where you can study interpreting. It lists no less than 38 separate classifications of situations where interpreting may take place, including agency investigations, health issues, home visits, legal actions, meetings, and telephone conferences. Each of these classifications is then subdivided according to physical arrangements, the participants involved, the procedure, the mode of interpreting used, and specific observations. I cannot imagine a more structured and thorough description of what you might be exposed to as a professional interpreter.
Another interesting chapter provides a “behind the scenes” look at what goes on in the courtroom. This chapter is excellent for novices and veterans alike, as it lists many pitfalls and explains why they are a problem and how they can be avoided.

Language

The fact that this book is written by two language professionals becomes readily apparent just from reading the preface, where Saul Sibirsky and Martin Taylor ask themselves about the purpose of their book. “What was the purpose in writing? At the back of our minds, after three years of research and writing, the authors might have projected a fanciful future of life-long lusting for limitless lucre. In their wildest dreams, the authors could project fugitive pursuits of a hefty advance, loyalties, book signings…. As realists, hēlā, used to professional budgets and frugality, we awakened from the dream and cast aside those vanities.” Wow, “life-long lusting for limitless lucrē”—where do you ever hear such language in today’s twittered sounds bites? Throughout the book, you feel the authors’ sense of joy in writing and their apparent love of words. Sibirsky and Martin are clearly both veterans interpreters, and I got the distinct feeling that they had taken the content of their brains and put it down on paper. Having the desire to share your knowledge with others is an admirable task itself, but the authors also manage to structure and convey that well-researched content successfully into a very interesting book. This book is meant to be read not just by colleagues in the field, but by anyone with an interest in languages. Do not miss it.


Editors:
Jacek Fisiak, Arleta Adamska-Salaciak, Michal Jankowski, and Renata Szczepaniak

Publisher:
Hippocrene Books, Inc.

Publication date:
2009

Number of pages and/or entries:
612 pages; over 30,000 entries

ISBN:
978-0-7818-1237-5

Price:
$22.95

Available from:
www.hippocrenebooks.com

Reviewed by:
Katarzyna Jankowski

The new Polish-English/English-Polish Dictionary (American English Edition) published by Hippocrene Books is an abridged paperback version of The New Kosciuszko Foundation Dictionary, a popular and highly regarded resource written by a team of lexicographers and professors from the School of English at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland. Unlike other dictionaries available for this language combination that focus more on British English, this one is an “American English Edition.” The two large volumes of the original dictionary are combined into a single, well-bound, 1.6-pound volume. Although it is not quite a pocket book, it is just the right size and weight to carry around.

Organization

The dictionary includes an introduction by Alex Storozynski, president and executive director of The Kosciuszko Foundation. Storozynski’s native language is American English, but his parents’ native language was Polish; hence his understanding of linguistic nuances in the two languages. The introduction is followed by a list of abbreviations that are consistently used throughout the dictionary entries. The following pages provide instructions on how to use the dictionary, including detailed grammar and pronunciation rules for both Polish and English. The dictionary ends with “A guide for Poles who wish to visit, study, or live in America,” written by Tomasz Deptula, chief U.S. correspondent for Newsweek (Poland). The first couple of pages of the main Polish-to-English and English-to-Polish vocabulary sections have black margins, visible as dark lines on the dictionary’s front outer edge, making it convenient for the user to navigate between sections. The font size is small, but the type is clear and easy to read.

Content

The “How to use…” sections provide detailed information on the specific components of the dictionary entries. For Polish, all descriptions pro-
vide examples of how they are structured for different parts of speech, with the exception of verbs. The rules are followed consistently in the entries. Numerous tables illustrate declension of nouns and adjectives (gender specific), conjugation, and irregular forms of different types of pronouns and numerals. For English, there is a table describing the pronunciation of vowels and consonants, followed by a handy list of English irregular verbs.

Individual entries include a boldface headword, a pronunciation key (in the English-to-Polish section), an abbreviation denoting a part of speech, a stylistic indicator, and English/Polish equivalents with helpful semantic indicators given in parentheses and phrases and/or idioms in which the headword commonly appears. For the Polish-to-English section, noun entries also provide case-specific vowel alternations or irregular endings.

For the most part, entries include many context-specific counterparts and modern uses of a word. For example, Polish zespół lists:

1. (grupa profesjonalistów) group, team. 2. (grupa muzyczna) band, group. 3. (zbiór) set, group. 4. bud. complex.

What is missing, though, is the term’s medical use of “syndrome.” When cross-referenced, the word “syndrome,” the English-to-Polish section lists a Polish equivalent of “syndrome,” but the word does not appear in the Polish-to-English section.

Another example is the Polish verb odracać:

odracać ipf. postpone, put off, defer, adjourn; odrzucić na miesiąc postpone/put off for a month; odrzucić rozprawę adjourn a trial; odrzucić termin płatności defer payment.

This dictionary should list the commonly used term “to continue (a trial/a case),” rather than “to adjourn,” which sometimes means “to end a meeting/proceeding.” Odracać is also not among the equivalents under the English word “continue.”

The small drawbacks I found refer to field-specific meanings (medical/legal). The dictionary is intended for a general audience. The editors’ focus seems to be on how the words are actually used in the language. As such, the entries are full of phrases and idiomatic expressions, which is a feature that many users will find very helpful.

The Guide

“A guide for Poles who wish to visit, study, or live in America” is included at the end of the dictionary and deserves special attention. It is a 25-page informative, concise, and up-to-date compendium on the U.S. The guide is written in Polish and consists of an introduction and five chapters devoted to: 1) the U.S. legal, political, and social systems; 2) visas, traveling, and residency requirements; 3) studying in the U.S.; 4) the American tax system; and 5) the different means of transportation available for visitors who wish to experience the vast country. The last page lists additional resources for those who were intrigued by the explanations given in the guide and want to know more. The guide captures the reader’s attention because it is very well written and provides tons of current information.

Overall Evaluation

If it is not clear from the above description, let me say it now: this is an excellent general dictionary. There is not a claim on its cover that is not substantiated by its content. Any Pole, encouraged to travel to the U.S. by its “guide for Poles…” would find it helpful to know the American English counterpart of a word, and any American visiting Poland would benefit from clear explanations of individual words and phrases. Is there any room for improvement? Maybe a guide showcasing contemporary Poland. Also, a CD or electronic version could be a nice addition to the paperback dictionary (the two-volume original edition does come with a CD). For now, however, this dictionary is a valuable resource to have, whether to keep on one’s desk or use on the go.

Katarzyna Jankowski is a philologist and an ATA-certified English→Polish translator. She has a master’s degree in English philology from Silesian University in Katowice, Poland, and a master’s in public administration from Roosevelt University in Chicago. She is also a certified paralegal. First hired as an in-house translator in 1993, she has been a freelance translator and court interpreter since 2003. Contact: kate.jan@att.net.
Recent events have provided us with a reminder that the government can save itself billions of dollars by having professional foreign language programs in place. With them, we can do the national security tasks that need to be done elegantly, quickly, and efficiently. Without them, we just reinforce the opinions of many beyond the borders of the U.S. that Uncle Sam’s brain is all in place except for the part where language ability resides. What a perpetual sore spot that deficiency is!

New Queries

(A-E 6-11.1) In an Arabic marriage there are some unique events have provided us with a reminder that the government can save itself billions of dollars by having professional foreign language programs in place. With them, we can do the national security tasks that need to be done elegantly, quickly, and efficiently. Without them, we just reinforce the opinions of many beyond the borders of the U.S. that Uncle Sam’s brain is all in place except for the part where language ability resides. What a perpetual sore spot that deficiency is!

(E-G 6-11.2) It is automotive time. The term “low-fuel injection” is not quite clear in this passage in need of a good German equivalent: “A diesel engine is also available with a power output of 155 kW and features low-fuel injection for improved economy when compared with the previous engine.” Try to solve this teaser if you can.

(I-E 6-11.3) It appears that a thorough knowledge of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools system abroad is a good qualification to answer this one: the word “dependents” in the phrase “consists of the dependent schools located overseas, and the domestic dependent elementary and secondary schools located in the United States and its territories.” Finding good Italian for this probably hinges on understanding the use of “dependent” here as a plural noun.

(F-R 6-11.4) There are some unique qualities to this query concerning a cartoon, the plot of which at least in part deals with a severe water shortage. Two characters who appear to be animators sit in front of their computer screens. One asks the other, “Flux capacitors, are they phasing right now?” The other replies, “Yeah, they’re phasing.” What sort of electronic devices are “flux capacitors” (if not simply high-tech mumbo jumbo), and how do they fit into the context? And what about the Russian?

(G-I [E] 6-11.6) The component parts of the term Aluminiumosteopathie were easily enough perceived, but nevertheless the translator had trouble finding precise Italian for it. Perhaps you can help, even without any additional context.

(I-E 6-11.7) In a prospectus of a collective investment scheme, the term valori centrali proved troublesome. The context material is too lengthy to quote, but it describes sub-funds with material detailing the investment objective, risk profile, etc. One paragraph shows the probabilities of various outcomes for the investment: Por ogni scenario sono indicati la probabilità di accadimento (probabilità) e il controvalore finale del capitale investito rappresentativo dello scenario medesimo (valori centrali) considerando il versamento di un Premio Unico Iniziale di 15.000 euro. What are they?

(Sp-E 6-11.9) Inclined to leave the phrase before it in the original and then follow it with an explanation inside brackets, the translator who posed this query wondered about a la brutesca in this culinary query: los inevitables Caracoles, cocinados a la llama, a la brutesca o incluso con frutas. Is it virtually the same as a la llama (oven-cooked in a spicy sauce)?

(Sp-G [E] 6-11.10) Perhaps some kind of frozen account is being referred to by retención especial en cuenta, but the translator is not sure. Here is a bit more context: El XX.XX.XXX se crea una retención especial en cuenta por el importe de la transferencia fraudulenta recibida. Just what are they doing with this account?
Replies to Old Queries

(F-E 2-11.2b) (TA Gauche couche): Dominique Carton says this means tension artérielle, bras gauche, couché, the last word meaning supine. Sharon Neeman says the mystery word couche is simply the accent-free version of couché (“lying down”).

(F-E 4-11.4) (effets de prélèvement): This, says Dominique Carton, means “money drawn on an account.” Effets are “bills, drafts.” Termium states that an avis de prélèvement is a document used by a creditor to request payment under the direct-debit method of payment. Dominique believes that the document should read recouvrement par effets (one method of recovering the money) and recouvrement par avis de prélèvement (a second method). She does not believe it should read effets de prélèvement.

(G-Sp [E] 5-10.6) (härtebindende Komplexbildner): To my knowledge, Margarite Heintz Montez is the first to respond to this query, an entire year after it first appeared. Her English rendering is “hard-binding.” She likes un vinculo muy duro for the Spanish.

(G-Sp 4-11.6) (Präsenzhandelsunternehmen): For Margarite Heintz Montez, in Spanish it is a patio de operaciones de la Bolsa (sociedad mercantile con operaciones en el patio de la Bolsa). She is open to better wording for this.

Perhaps Melissa Field’s reply provides just that. It seems to refer to a company involving in-floor trading using the “open outcry” trading system. This requires the physical presence of the parties involved in the trade, as opposed to electronic trading.

(I-E 4-11.7) (sospetta E.P in pz con TVP asse iliaco fem.dex): This is standard Italian, says Miriam Eldridge, but filtered through doctors’ usage as they write their medical reports. The crucial abbreviation is “E.P.,” meaning embolia polmonare (“pulmonary embolism”). The entire passage is best translated: “Suspected pulmonary embolism in patient with deep vein thrombosis of right femoral iliac axis.” Laura Meucci agrees almost completely with the above, adding the well-known medical abbreviation “DVT” (deep vein thrombosis).

(R-E 4-11.9) (мал мала меньше): Alex Lukoff and Vadim Khazin say this simply means “one smaller than the other.” Inna Oslon agrees and points out that it is usually in the context of a single family where all the kids are still small. Darya Chernina emphasizes that the age differences are not great, but still enough to permit identification. Leonid Gornik notes the feminine form of the second word, and that it does not make too much sense to a non-native speaker. Shifra Kilov takes a different approach, offering “a host of little children.” So does Lev Gutman’s rendering, “small children of various ages.”

(Sp-E 4-11.10) (dadas las irregularidades en el empadronamiento): Margaret Wolfe-Roberts thinks the final word refers to local census rolls. The word actually refers to more than this. The reason being is that in Spain a lot of other things depend on whether you are signed up, such as in which country you pay taxes and whether you are able to enroll your children in the local schools. In this context, the text seems to be indicating that the variability in numbers is due to irregularities in the rate at which foreigners actually register with their local government in Spain. Not all of them do, making it difficult to pin down the numbers accurately. Her rendering of the entire context phrase: “More than 180 nationalities come together in today’s Madrid, with the number of foreigners ranging from an estimated 480,000 to 650,000 (the variation in numbers owing to irregularities in the registry of local inhabitants).”

Graciela Daichman points out that the root (padrón, meaning census) of the final word provides greater clarity regarding its meaning (registration). Sheldon Shaffer suggests “due to registration inconsistencies” for this phrase. To him, it sounds as if information was compiled from several official documents in which individuals declared their nationalities, and that the numbers varied greatly. Margarite Heintz Montez likes “taking into account the irregularities in the census.”

The Translation Inquirer thanks Hugh Oechler for having taught him the technique that at last allows Chinese, Arabic, Korean, Japanese, and other languages to appear in this column with no apparent loss of clarity and no need, at last, for transliteration. Let the times of the non-Western alphabets roll!
Marina Yaguello’s book, *Language Through the Looking Glass: Exploring Language and Linguistics* (Oxford University Press, 1998), is the best introductory text about linguistics that I have yet read. It is also unusual in that, though many of the examples are taken from two classic English texts by Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, it was originally written in French. Indeed, the title page reads: “Adapted from the original French by Trevor Harris and the author.” The preceding French book was titled *Alice au pays du langage*, and writing about English wordplay in a French book presented what Yaguello calls “difficulties” (page v). Fortunately, according to Yaguello, in the English version, “Alice finds herself back among her own kind” (page v). If Alice is now back among English speakers, can the French text be considered the translation of an English original, despite the fact that the French was written and published first?

One of the things which Yaguello does well is to distinguish between meaning, which, in oversimplified linguistic terms, concerns the relationships of words to each other within a language system, and reference, which is the relationship of words to the real world. Alice confuses the two when she declares that the White Rabbit’s speech at the end of the mock trial has no meaning:

They told me you had been to her,  
And mentioned me to him:  
She gave me a good character,  
But said I could not swim.

He sent them words I had not gone  
(We know it to be true):  
If she should push the matter on,  
What would become of you?  

I gave her one, they gave him two,  
You gave us three or more;  
They all returned from him to you,  
Though they were mine before.

Another topic covered by Yaguello is the tendency of young children to over-regularize word forms, saying “goed” and “doed.” But here is a nursery rhyme cited by Yaguello that goes to the other extreme, completely eschewing the regular “ed” past tense:

Forth from his den to steal he stole,  
His bags of chink he chunk,  
And many a wicked smile he smole,  
And many a wink he wunk.

Yaguello’s book does have a few lapses. British and American usages are often not clearly distinguished, so it takes a while for an American to figure out that Yaguello’s “crossword puzzles” are the cryptic crosswords common in England but rare in the United States. Sometimes, a technical linguistic term will be used but not defined until several chapters later. And her statement, “native speakers of the language do not make mistakes [regarding the use of different diction registers]” (page 143), may be true to some extent in class-conscious England where, a la *My Fair Lady*, one’s speech determines one’s status in society. But, as any grader of student papers will attest, many Americans can not distinguish among colloquial, informal, and formal diction registers.

But, all in all, this is a book well worth reading, if only so that, like Mrs. Malaprop, we might reprehend the true meaning of what we are saying (page 108).

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Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@cmsinter.net or via snail mail to Mark Herman, 1409 E Gaylord Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-3626. Discussions of the translation of humor and examples thereof are preferred, but humorous anecdotes about translators, translations, and mistranslations are also welcome. Include copyright information and permission if relevant.
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<td>October 7-8, 2011</td>
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