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

Help spread the word about ATA!
What is the ATA-certified translator seal?
The ATA-certified translator seal was developed for the exclusive use of ATA-certified members in good standing. It offers certified translators an opportunity to document their certification for a client or translation job. The seal includes a member’s name, unique certification number, and language combination. The seal also includes a link to an online ATA verification system that allows a client to confirm the member’s certification.

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How is the ATA-certified translator seal used?
The seal is available electronically as a JPG image. ATA-certified translators may also want to have their seals made into rubber stamps or embossers. Translators may include the seal as part of a translation job or affix the seal to a certification of accuracy statement. For information and examples of certification of accuracy statements, please visit www.atanet.org/certification/certification_seal_how_to.php.

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How does a client verify ATA certification?
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How do I get my ATA certification number?
If you are an ATA-certified member who would like to access your unique certification number, visit www.atanet.org/certification/check_certification_res_mem.php.

How do I get my ATA-certified translator’s seal?
If you are an ATA-certified member who would like to download your electronic seal, visit www.atanet.org/certification/check_certification_res_mem.php.

What are the terms and conditions of use for the seal?
In order to retrieve a certification number, the member must log in and agree to the terms and conditions of use. These terms limit the use of the seal to ATA-certified translators who are currently members in good standing. To read the complete terms and conditions of use, visit www.atanet.org/certification/check_certification_res_mem.php.
On February 21, 2012, the Supreme Court was scheduled to hear the case Kouichi Taniguchi v. Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd. The case originally arose out of a dispute between Kouichi Taniguchi, a former professional baseball player from Japan, and a resort in the Mariana Islands. Taniguchi fell though a wooden deck during a tour of the Mariana Resort and Spa and subsequently sued the owner of the resort, Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd. for damages resulting from the corresponding injuries he sustained.

Section 1920 of 28 U.S. Code defines which types of expense costs can be awarded to a prevailing party in lawsuits. Among others, such costs include clerk fees, fees and disbursements for printing and witnesses, and “compensation of interpreters.” The question presented in the case before the Supreme Court was whether costs incurred in translating written documents are included in the category “compensation of interpreters.”

The district court that heard the original complaint awarded the judgment to Kan Pacific, and ordered Taniguchi to cover the litigation cost of Kan Pacific, which also included the cost of translating documents from Japanese into English. This award was based on the assumption that “compensation of interpreters” as listed in the U.S. Code refers implicitly to compensation for the translation of documents as well. Taniguchi appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, citing the distinct difference between interpreting and translation. The Court, however, affirmed the award for the document translation and denied Taniguchi’s petition for a rehearing. Taniguchi subsequently appealed, bringing the case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

As ATA has been working hard to explain the difference between interpreting and translation, it was gratifying to see that the brief of the petitioning party prepared for the Supreme Court case makes extensive reference to our public relations and outreach materials. Cited documents include the two Getting It Right brochures on translation and interpreting as well as materials posted on ATA’s website.

Additionally, two organizations, the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) and Interpreting and Translation Professors, a group of scholars with expertise in the language services industry, have filed so-called amicus curiae briefs, which support the argument that interpreting and translation require different skills and are not interchangeable terms.

The ruling of the Supreme Court hearing may affect how translation and interpreting costs are awarded to prevailing parties in the future, and ATA will continue to monitor and report on the developments of the case. In our increasingly multilingual and diverse society, the number of lawsuits involving both translation and interpreting is likely to keep growing, and a more precise distinction between these two types of linguist services may be called for in the U.S. Code. In addition, those of you who have been involved in translation for court cases may disagree with the statement of the legal team for Kan Pacific that “awards for the cost of translating documents are typically quite modest.”

Don’t Miss Out!

Many of ATA’s announcements, including division newsletters, webinar schedules, and conference updates, are sent to members by e-mail. To be sure that these messages don’t end up in your spam folder, take a minute now to add ata-hq@atanet.org to your “safe senders” list.

ATA does not sell or rent the e-mail addresses of its members. Also, be sure to keep your contact information updated. You can make updates online at www.atanet.org/MembersOnly or you can send your updated information to mis@atanet.org with your ATA membership number in the subject line.
It is a quiet Saturday morning here in San Diego, but there is a definite hum as people start their day. A few folks make their way into the Starbucks, where everyone appears to be in front of a screen, taking advantage of the free wifi that extends to the generous patio. A steady stream of traffic comes and goes in the hotel’s fitness center, which has such a beautiful view of the bay that I am almost tempted to jump on a treadmill. There are even two women in Santa hats outside alternating between the pool and sunning themselves. Families and joggers predominate along the promenade, enjoying the morning sun and watching the pelicans dip and glide. With so much easy flow between indoors and outdoors, it is sometimes hard to tell where the hotel ends and the park begins.

As I write this, it is shortly before Christmas, and it seems incongruous not only to be able to head outside without scarves and gloves (and rain boots) but to have to shed layers. But Southern California is all about the weather, a respite of sunshine in the bleak midwinter that grips most of the rest of the world. There may be bare trees at home, but Birds of Paradise are in bloom here.

However, as much as the sunshine beckons, this conference venue is just as impressive indoors. Brand new, contemporary and bright, and already running smoothly. With generous session rooms, excellent food, and very friendly staff, it is easy to imagine our group here, clustered in the hallways and spilling out onto balconies and the area around the hotel.

The water of San Diego Bay literally laps at the hotel’s back door. Maritime buffs will thrill at container and military ships coming and going, or dream about life on one of the beautiful yachts moored nearby. Or turn your back on the water and move inland to the nearby Gaslamp District, with dozens of restaurants and shops. A trolley can take you throughout the downtown area, or you can take a water taxi to some of the beautiful Coronado beaches to watch the sunset over the Pacific (and cross that one off your bucket list). Further afield, family activities like the world-famous San Diego Zoo and SeaWorld beckon and gracious Balboa Park offers many museums.

Also of note is that the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (AMTA) will once again be holding its annual conference (October 28–November 1, 2012) immediately following ATA’s Annual Conference. Look for sessions on machine translation that continue the conversation we began in 2010 in Denver, and consider lingering in San Diego to attend at least one day of AMTA’s event to see the other side of the equation.

I reluctantly fly home tonight, to freezing temperatures and one of the longest nights of the year. After the new year, armed with your feedback on last year’s sessions, we will get down to the brass tacks of putting together the winning educational program that is the centerpiece of ATA’s conference experience. Judging from the caliber of presentations the past few years, it makes sense to schedule your few days of well-deserved R&R in the sun for before or after the main event. One conference veteran reminds me that he always comes away with something from every session, and says he does not want to miss a single one.
Our finances improved during FY 2010-2011. Membership dues exceeded last year’s level by $100K. All major programs performed better financially than in the previous year: The ATA Chronicle yielded a net deficit of ($416K)—previous year ($445K); Certification a net deficit of ($113K)—previous year ($127K); and the Denver Conference a net surplus of $63K—previous year $29K. These figures include Headquarters’ expenses allocated to the different programs in proportion of Headquarters’ resources utilized.

While operating expenses exceeded operating revenues by ($56K), an unrealized gain of $42K on our investments reduced the deficit for the year to ($14K)—previous year ($26K)—leading to an accumulated net assets deficit of ($82K). We would have had a small surplus for the period, were it not for changed accounting rules for office rent and inventory, which introduced an extra expense of ($16K).

Our cash flow was positive, with a net increase of $162K in cash and cash equivalents from $384K to $546K.

As in previous years, the auditors gave the statements presented by Headquarters their unqualified approval, which is the highest possible rating.

The full financial statements for FY 2010-2011 can be viewed in the Members Only section of ATA’s website (www.atanet.org/membersonly/switch.pl/url=p_treasurer_report.php).

After the close of FY 2010-2011, our finances were negatively impacted by a substantial loss from the FIT Congress, mitigated by the positive result of the Boston Conference.

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Visit www.atanet.org/providers.php to start saving!
ATA’s Board of Directors met January 21-22, 2012, in Washington, DC. The meeting followed the Board’s Annual Planning Day. The Planning Day allows the Board to discuss various aspects of the Association’s activities and governance in-depth. These in-depth discussions help the Board reach a consensus on the Association’s priorities and work through complex options for the Association. Here are some highlights from the Board meeting.

**Nominating and Leadership Development Committee:** The Board approved the appointment of the members of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee: Beatriz Bonnet, Jean Leblon, Connie Prener, and Courtney Searls-Ridge. Jiri Stejskal, the new chair of the committee, had already been approved.

**Interpreter Certification Feasibility Study:** The Board agreed to reinvestigate offering an interpreter certification exam. The Board discussed certification programs currently being offered and the needs of interpreters and their clients. The Interpretation Policy Advisory Committee will report back to the Board on this matter at the July 2012 Board meeting.

**2017 Annual Conference:** The Board approved the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC, as the host hotel for the 2017 Annual Conference, pending further negotiations. While ATA met in the Washington, DC, area (Arlington, Virginia) in 1989, it has not held a conference in the city since 1975.

**Job Task Analysis Report:** The Board reviewed and discussed the Job Task Analysis (JTA) report. The JTA was undertaken by ATA to strengthen further ATA’s Certification Program. The testing specialist contracted by ATA reviewed the results of multiple focus group discussions to establish the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required by translators to do their work. The report takes these KSAs, looks at their relative importance, and incorporates them into a testing blueprint. The Certification Committee will work with this information to incorporate it, as appropriate, into ATA’s Certification Program.

**Standards Survey Results Discussion:** The Board reviewed and discussed the results of the standards survey conducted by Translation and Computers Committee Chair Michael Metzger in conjunction with Standards Committee Chair Beatriz Bonnet. The survey, which was sent to all individual ATA members, looked at the awareness of standards, their impact, and what, if any, standards members would like to see. The clearest message from the survey results was that more education needs to be done in terms of explaining the various standards in the works and how they apply to individual translators. The challenge, as discussed in the Board meeting, is that the material may be dull and confusing, but standards do, and will, affect all translators, so members need to be aware of these standards.

The Board meeting summary is posted online. The minutes will be posted once they are approved at the next Board meeting. Past meeting summaries and minutes are posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. The next Board meeting is set for April 14-15, 2012, in Alexandria, Virginia. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

**We Want You!**

*The ATA Chronicle* enthusiastically encourages members and nonmembers to submit articles of interest. For Submission Guidelines, visit www.atanet.org/chronicle. *The ATA Chronicle* is published 11 times per year, with a combined November/December issue. Submission deadlines are three months prior to publication date.
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In my early days as a linguist, consecutive interpreting was all I did and all I was comfortable doing. That all changed one morning.

I showed up for what I thought was going to be business as usual and proceeded to greet the speaker I would be interpreting. We shook hands and engaged in casual chat, slowly drifting toward the back of the auditorium as we spoke. Before I knew it, I was standing by the door of a fully equipped interpreting booth. “We’ll start as soon as you’re ready,” she said, pointing to the chair in the little cubicle. I contemplated it for a second, somewhat puzzled, and tried to clear up the obvious misunderstanding. At the end of a series of indistinct expressions of denial on my part, the speaker cut me short. “You’ll be fine,” she said, glancing at her watch and looking hurried.

First Jump

I can still recall the anxiety. The feeling was not new, but the last time I had experienced anything close to it I was being pushed out of an airplane mid-flight with an awkward backpack tied around my torso. I let my body fall into thin air for about five seconds and was relieved when the knapsack unbolted into a huge green umbrella, letting me glide smoothly over beautiful meadows, trees, and houses.

Once the parachute opens, it is easy to feel empowered. But at the door of a noisy single-engine airplane two thousand feet off the ground, there are no heroes. Not among first-timers, at least. After a month of intensive training, I had learned how to fold meters of cord and fabric and squeeze the bulky lot into a bag that would hardly accommodate a pillow. I was ready for my first jump. And, of course, I was petrified.
As the plane soared, so did my fear. At that point, the only thing you can do is sit there and try your best to look tough and not panic, all along wondering how you are going to respond when it is your turn to jump. Luckily, there is always a “friend” to help you through this fleeting moment of indecision. You do not actually jump off the plane. You are pushed out. But once back on the ground, you feel you are the bravest guy alive.

I wish I could say I felt as brave that first day in the booth, but that would be twisting the truth a little. Before I could voice any further objection, the speaker was gone. Lights went off and the audience plunged into the deepest of silences. The plane was off the ground and the push had come in the form of a clear-cut command: “Get in there and do the best you can.” I sat down and put on the clunky earphones. I had jumped and now felt myself sucked full speed toward the bottom of a vertiginous cliff.

**Free Fall**

Fear is a powerful emotion. Within reasonable limits, it is a healthy disposition that protects and preserves us. Yet phobic fear is not only unhealthy but incapacitating. Jack it up a notch and you are in panic mode, fully deprived of your ability to think. That is when the rational mind abandons the boat and leaves at the helm the protobrain we inherited from some distant cousins in the evolutionary trail—an encephalon capable of nothing but the basic instincts of reproduction and life preservation. Under intense fear, we slide back as a species. We revert to mere primates. We fear simply, without the slightest clue as to the origin of our fears, most of which are unfounded. Under extreme circumstances, without the counterpoint of reason, a series of overlapping irrational worries start to pile up, eventually triggering a physiological chain reaction in response to actual or imaginary threats. This process may easily escalate to a surge beyond control.

Interpreters are no strangers to fear. Budding interpreters, in particular, are very fear-prone. They harbor unrealistic expectations. They tell themselves not to fail or draw a blank, lest their career might come to an end before it even starts. They panic at the judgment of others and are quick to engage in negative self-talk that may spiral out of control. In their semi-paranoid fantasy, Murphy’s Law becomes as ubiquitous as the law of gravity and equally unforgiving the minute they set foot in the booth.

A beginner’s fears are mostly circumstantial. They stem from the uncertainty surrounding a craft one does not quite yet know. Such fears also tend to be self-centered. Sure, you must get it right and deliver a flawless interpretation, but take an honest, deep look at your fears and you will probably admit that you are not that worried the message may eventually get twisted for those in the audience. As a beginner, your stress level does not yet afford such an ethical sophistication. Having your shortcomings exposed is what scares you.

Now, if you are a novice interpreter and feel like you are not afraid of anything, mind the words of Greek philosopher Thucydides: “Ignorance is bold.” Worry not. As you progress in your career, your fear of failure will be replaced gradually with genuine sympathy for your audience. At some point the true measure of your responsibility—a different kind of concern—will start to weigh on your shoulders. This apprehension is positive and comes with experience. It breeds, rather than undermines, confidence.

**Cruising**

Contrary to popular belief, the greatest limiting factor in conference interpreting is not linguistic. It is emotional. Mastery of the most challenging vocabulary will be of little use in the absence of the fine stress management skills required to talk your way out of trouble. The possibility of failure increases greatly when you are in panic mode. Actions geared at taming your anxiety should therefore be assigned the highest priority.

Escaping the stronghold of your fears involves confrontation and exposure. To progress beyond fear you must face it. You must project outward and put yourself to the test until you can draw the line that will allow you to choose consciously between flight and fight every time. Pressing through and beyond your fears takes determination and resolve. It is a yang approach, the disciplined way. As Michel de Montaigne, one of the most influential writers of the French Renaissance, once wrote, “It takes courage to be afraid.”

Learn to love, rather than dread, your professional insecurities.
Courage is the disposition to face our demons at a time when we feel weakest, without a clue as to our true chances of success. Courage is the deliberate decision to run some serious risks and bear the consequences, and comes from the realization that not doing so may eventually harm us more. Yet, confrontation alone does not free us from fear. Courage should not be just a call to war. It should also be an invitation to reconcile, rather than subjugate, our ego. In our quest to conquer fear, a softer, yin approach is equally important and far more effective.

Adjusting your expectations is a good first step. Next time you feel anxious, try challenging some of your beliefs and altering your perspective. First off, imagining that the audience is attending the meeting simply to appreciate or critique your performance as an interpreter is an unnecessary exercise in vanity. Nobody is there for you, believe me. Interpreters play a vital role, but a supporting one. For the most part, people will be oblivious of the interpreter. And whatever fleeting thought they might spare for that poor soul in the booth will certainly be a reassuring one. They are not out to get you and they do not impose their expectations on you. They genuinely want you to succeed and will forge an alliance with you early on, if you let them. This should help abate your fear a bit.

Next, train yourself to go beyond fighting or resisting your anxiety. Remind yourself of the true reason you are there and gently shift the focus away from you. Put the audience first and silently reiterate your commitment to serve them in the best possible way. Ultimately, the antidote to fear is not brute force, but love. Learn to love, rather than dread, your professional insecurities. Despite your shortcomings, honor your courage in stepping up to the plate for the benefit of others. Then sit back, relax, and get out of everybody’s way, including yours. Problems and accidents can happen to anyone, but between possibility and probability there is an immense field. This is where you want to be. Admit the possibility, but live in the probability. There are no assurances in life, but you are free to choose that in which you prefer to believe.

The use of interpreters dates back time immemorial and will probably linger for many centuries more, until mankind speaks a single language (or Apple comes up with an iPhone app for instant interpreting—whatever happens first). Until that day comes, however, we need to discharge our professional functions conscientiously and responsibly.

Do not underestimate the circumstances. Do not overestimate your gear or skills. Gently fold and verify every cord and square inch of your parachute before a jump. Rehearse your actions and be sure to carry a reserve canopy. Never underestimate the importance or complexity of a speech. Be diligent in your search for information on the talk and the speaker. Prepare your glossaries. Anticipate pitfalls. Have a Plan B. Get the right training and sharpen your tools constantly. Then, and only then, practice the desensitizing drills suggested here. Only then board a plane or enter a booth, with or without fear. You may survive your first couple of experiences out of sheer luck, as I did, but to do it consistently, you will need to get serious about your passion or profession. A newly acquired ability to control your emotions is no excuse not to prepare.

Safe Landing

The first three jumps I had logged in my promising career as a skydiver did a lot to bolster my self-confidence, but a frustrated, nearly tragic fourth dive buried my dreams of Icarus forever. The dual-engine Navajo darted through the dirt runway of the battered airfield on the outskirts of Brasilia. It had barely taken off the ground when it bumped across and struck and killed a stray horse. In true rodeo style, the captain managed to jolt the aircraft down to a firm landing and slowly taxied us back to safety, despite the serious fuel leak we could see and smell through the plane’s open door.

Back at the impromptu terminal, we deplaned quickly on very shaky legs and sick stomachs. I laid my gear on the ground one last time, walked away from the aircraft, and never turned back. It was about 7:00 p.m. and darkness had fallen. We knew we had exceeded the takeoff deadline by at least one hour. My recently acquired confidence was fast turning into disillusion. The experience I had just survived was a benign wake-up call.

May the near-disastrous end of my flying career be an equally gentle reminder to you as well. An unexpected or early failure in the interpreting booth may prove equally off-putting. Shoot happens. When it does, you will want to be ready.

Expect the best, but be ready for the worst. Keep cool but vigilant, and remember the skydiving adage: “There are old jumpers and there are bold jumpers, but there are no old, bold jumpers.” All it takes for things to go south is one entangled cord, a minute tear on your gear, or a stray horse crossing your way.
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Most freelance translators and interpreters truly enjoy their craft and the flexibility that comes with being in business for themselves. The creativity involved in working with languages, the sense of building bridges between different cultures, the exposure to a variety of topics, and setting one’s own schedule all add to the satisfaction of our profession. We are our own bosses and we like it that way.

The flipside is that freelance work can get quite lonely at times when it is just you, your computer and the vast Internet, and when there is very little personal interaction other than project-related communication with clients. There is no friendly office banter, no language geek across the room who will appreciate a quick recitation of an exceptionally well-crafted translation, and no one who will empathize with you if a project does not progress as expected. Support can be hard to find, especially when you are dealing with an uncooperative computer or have a software issue with a deadline looming, all the while losing valuable time waiting for answers to questions posted on a faceless website portal. And what do you do if you are having a bad case of writer’s block? You may be able to clear your head with a walk around the block (if your deadlines are generous enough), but that does not necessarily help with producing interesting alternatives to express a tricky...
phrase in the source document in the required target language. Or how do you work up the courage to go for the desired rate increase when you are presented with the opportunity to submit a bid to a new client? And who will care and be there to supply a much-needed pep talk if you are having a real downer of a day and feel like this whole freelance business is just overwhelming?

A good working partner can be the solution to all, or at least most, of these quandaries. Reflecting on four years of successful virtual partnerships, we would like to share our experiences, discuss the basis for a functioning professional relationship, and introduce valuable tools to help make working with a virtual partner an enjoyable and productive experience. It is our hope that more freelancers will feel encouraged to start breaking out of their individual shells to enjoy the rewards of working as part of a self-managed virtual team.

**Benefits of Virtual Partnerships**

The ideal virtual partnership is a win-win situation for everyone involved: the individual team members, the team as a whole, your language services providers (LSPs), and the end clients. Aside from being a cheerleader and sounding board via instant messaging or Skype, the right partner can be the source of continued professional development. For example, while one person spends extra time learning about new technologies or better ways to use current translation tools, another team member could concentrate on keeping an updated list of new glossaries, dictionaries, and helpful websites for particular areas of interest. The end results can then be freely shared and each party benefits from the other’s research.

Maybe you are excited about new marketing opportunities, but do not have the bandwidth to take on additional projects on your own. Why not bid on those larger contracts and share them with your virtual business partner(s)? By swapping or merging translation memories and collaborating during the translation process, you will be able to grow professionally and experience the satisfaction of supportive teamwork.

There have been many times when one of us has been swamped but another team member was not. If one of us is busy, we refer the customer to another team member and everyone is happy. This puts us in the wonderful position of not having to say “No” to additional inquiries for our services. Peaks and valleys tend to even themselves out when customer requests can be distributed among several team members based on availability. In addition, we can now go on vacation and truly relax. Our individual automated e-mail reply directs potential new customers to our partners who are “on call.” This way everything stays within the family.

If you can negotiate with your project manager to have your partner be your proofreader, you will have the rare opportunity to receive unbiased and friendly feedback on your work. This will give you a chance to reject changes with which you disagree and to identify recurring mistakes or errors of which you may have been previously unaware. Your teammate may also be able to give you a gentle but necessary nudge when you have worked yourself into a rut and translated on autopilot instead of giving your best. Your client will ultimately benefit from this cooperative, multi-layered review process by receiving a higher quality product, and you can complete the assignment and walk away with clean and proofread terminology to add to your translation memory (with the client’s consent, of course). You will have also successfully avoided the risk of having your work proofread by an unknown editor who may feel the need to justify her existence by marking up more than what is truly warranted.

**Identifying a Partner**

Compatibility and a similar level of experience and adherence to translation standards between potential freelance partners are essential building blocks for a rewarding relationship. Having some overlap of common interests and a similar skill level is also important. It will get frustrating if one person is consistently doing the heavy lifting and the other is unable to provide professional support in return (unless you agree to have a mentoring relationship, which can be very rewarding for both parties, but this is a different concept and therefore a topic for another article).

It makes great sense to look for someone who complements your skill set. As a native German speaker working in the German-English language pair, it is incredibly helpful to me to have a teammate who is a native English speaker. This allows me to leverage her native speaker skills and perspective when I translate into English, and she can make sure she captures all of the nuances of the German source text with which she is working. Working with a partner who has different areas of specialization broadens your spectrum of what you can offer to customers. It also allows you to become familiar with topics that you would otherwise not choose to work with due to a lack of experience in a particular field.
Opportunities for Creating Virtual Partnerships

It takes time and effort to develop a trusting partnership. Before we started working together on a regular basis, my freelance partner Jeana and I had plenty of one-project relationships, or what we jokingly refer to as “one-night stands,” most of which we gladly left behind when the last word of the project was written and reviewed. But occasionally you work with a person and it just clicks. If you are so fortunate to have this experience, make a connection with that person and try to develop a professional relationship with a purpose.

If you have the opportunity to find out who proofreads your work after you submit it to your trusted LSPs—take it! Even a casual introduction will be better than working “blind” on the same project. Let the proofreader know that you are open to constructive feedback. Ask if he or she is willing to discuss potential questions with you while you are still working with a particular text. You may be able to break down a roadblock faster and can avoid recurring issues that may otherwise take your proofreader a long time to polish after the translation has been completed. Make sure you take criticism graciously when it is offered and remain open to different perspectives. If the cooperation works well, stay in touch and see if there may be a match with one of your fellow translators that you could nurture into a productive working relationship. If so, keep in touch!

On those occasions when you have more work than you can comfortably handle, try outsourcing a non-crucial piece to test the linguistic and communication skills of a potential freelance partner (only with the consent of the project manager or client, of course!). Be prepared to not always be pleased with the results. Rather than bringing about a happily ever after, one-night stands with strangers (more often than not) can turn into disappointment. If that is the case, do yourself and the other person a favor: let him or her down gently. Provide the person with a clean copy of what you feel meets your standards, thank him or her for the effort, and move on.

Technology

Technology is an important aspect of successful virtual partnerships. Here are just a few of the tools we have used:

• **Microsoft Instant Messenger (IM)** works great for day-to-day interaction with team members. We use it as a quick way to ask trusted colleagues to double-check troublesome sentences and to discuss terminology.

• **Skype** allows us to talk to each other if issues are too complex to be handled via IM or e-mail. A new feature for the upgraded version allows us to make our desktops visible on the Skype screen. We are able to look at screen shots together to figure out software issues.

• **Same-generation computer- assisted translation tools** make it easy to exchange files, merge translation memories, and share termbases.

• **Google docs** enables team members to share documents online so multiple people can access and edit a document simultaneously. This allows everyone to see the most current document in real time.

There are plenty of other tools readily available to support teamwork and the exchange of information between collaborating parties. It would be interesting to circulate a survey and develop a more comprehensive list of useful tools, but this is a topic for yet another article.

Challenges

When entering into an informal virtual partnership with another person, keep in mind that you are still operating as two separate entities. I need,
and want, to respect my partner’s autonomy, her voice, and her individual style. She manages her own schedule, which she readily shares with me. We keep in touch so we know what is going on in each other’s lives that may affect our availability or general state of mind. As stated previously, IM is a great way to do that. Brief status updates like “looking for work,” “totally swamped,” or “out from x to y” help to keep communication channels open.

Upholding the highest level of a voluntary honor system and making sure that you have each other’s backs are key in establishing a trusting relationship. For us, that means we may have to jump in and rescue the other in an emergency without immediate benefit. What goes around comes around, or as one presenter at last year’s ATA Annual Conference explained so nicely, this type of support system is like a bank account of goodwill that you deposit into and that you can draw on in time of need.

A final thought to keep in mind when thinking about collaborating is that different laws and regulations apply for different locations. Therefore, each team member must operate and manage his or her business accordingly. Make sure you have blanket nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) in place between all partners. Also, ask your client to issue NDAs to individual teammates so you are not liable for their actions if you take on the role of a project facilitator or project manager.

At the end of the day, we are still our own bosses, are responsible for our own billing, our own collections, and the deadlines to which we have personally agreed. But we can operate our businesses in a smarter and more powerful way. We freelancers tend to spend a lot of time by ourselves in front of our computers, but we do not have to feel alone and isolated. Working together with compatible and reliable freelance partners, we can be more flexible, have more brain-power, be better equipped to compete in the marketplace, and ultimately have more fun doing what we love!
Weary of typing on keyboards for hours on end and seeking a new way to make the words swimming in their heads jump onto the computer screen, many translators are looking to speech-to-text software as an alternative to traditional text entry. It has only been within the past few years that dictating words into a Microsoft Word document or computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool has become a viable option for professionals wanting to expand their software tools in a way that benefits them directly. Many freelancers missed the boat in the early adoption of CAT technology, and over the years discounts for repetitions in text have become an increasingly common requirement of language services providers. Speech recognition tailored to an individual’s voice is finally fast and accurate enough to boost personal productivity. In my own case, I have been able to achieve words-per-hour gains of between 20% and 40% without sacrificing accuracy, and some others swear by it as well for similar reasons. But some limitations in the technology remain.

Currently, U.S.-based Nuance Communications is the only software publisher I know of that has released a robust dictation engine that offers any advantages over normal typing for individuals. Nuance’s solution for Windows is known as Dragon NaturallySpeaking, and its Mac version is called Dragon Dictate (not to be confused with Dragon Dictation, a mobile app with limited features). The latest version of Dragon NaturallySpeaking (11.5) was released in the summer of 2011. I have tried it out and am happy to say its accuracy has greatly improved over the version 9 that I once tried and dismissed out of frustration.

Using Dragon

Dragon NaturallySpeaking can be used to dictate text in any application that can accept text input from a keyboard.

Training a Dragon: Using Speech-to-Text to Boost Productivity

By Andrew D. Levine

Dragon NaturallySpeaking can be used to dictate text in any application that can accept text input from a keyboard.
Dragon will remember the word the next time you say it. (This is done by speaking the commands “Select <incorrect word or phrase>” and “Spell that” and then typing the word you wanted to see appear.)

Crucially, Dragon NaturallySpeaking 11.5 offers a more refined out-of-the-box experience when creating a user profile than earlier versions. Older releases required very lengthy and tedious “training” processes in which the software’s many mistakes had to be corrected by speaking a command to select the misheard text and choosing from a menu of alternatives. Only many hours of voice training could forge a robust user profile that would allow spoken text to outpace careful typing. The newer version is better: just five minutes are spent creating a profile, choosing a native accent (British, Midwestern, and Spanish-accented English are among the many options), and reading a prepared text. Once this is done, misheard words that require correction are reduced to a manageable level. If you speak clearly and articulately in an accent that matches one of the pre-programmed options, pausing at grammatically appropriate moments, it is likely that only one word in 20 will be entered incorrectly. If you speak English with an accent all your own, it may take a bit longer to train the software. I have spoken to native German and Polish speakers who use Dragon to translate into English with little trouble, and the software did not take too much longer to master their accents.

**Dragon Refined**

When attempting to distinguish between possible sound-alikes (such as “they’re,” “their,” and “there”), Dragon uses grammatical clues as context. For example, “there is” will never be entered as the syntactically impossible “their is” or “they’re is.”

To give another example, some surnames, like “Park,” could be heard as common nouns, but Dragon will normally capitalize them if they are preceded by a common given name or lack an article or adjective before them. The current version of Dragon NaturallySpeaking goes even further, parsing complex sentences and attempting to ensure verb agreement. It is for this reason that Dragon is at its most accurate and efficient when dictating complete sentences of 10 words or longer. Sentence fragments have a greater chance of being misheard, and are usually entered no more quickly than simply typing them.

Unquestionably, one major barrier to Dragon’s widespread adoption by translators is the limited number of languages available for text input. Dragon NaturallySpeaking goes even further, parsing complex sentences and attempting to ensure verb agreement. It is for this reason that Dragon is at its most accurate and efficient when dictating complete sentences of 10 words or longer. Sentence fragments have a greater chance of being misheard, and are usually entered no more quickly than simply typing them.

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One of the most attractive aspects of speech recognition is the ability to relieve strain on wrists, hands, and fingers caused by typing. However, overuse of vocal chords can be just as much of an irritation. It is for this reason that I strongly recommend a back-and-forth approach to entering text. I normally will translate for about 45 minutes dictating into Dragon, then switch to keyboard typing for 15 minutes to give my voice a break.

Frustratingly, some small nuisances that can be fixed easily remain in Dragon. The software may sometimes act contrary to its normally sophisticated context matching. For example, if you do not take the time to tinker with the default commands, Dragon can sometimes interpret the word “period,” spoken in the middle of a sentence with no pause in dictation, as an instruction to insert a period punctuation mark. Nuance also continues to supply a very poor headset microphone with the packaged version of the software. If you buy the boxed CD rather than downloading Dragon, I strongly recommend stuffing the default microphone in a drawer and using a decent USB headset instead. (You should not need to spend more than $40 on this device if you do not have one. I use a Logitech headset that cost a bit less than that, and it works very well.) Lastly, for customer support, you would be best served by heading to the unofficial bulletin board.
forums at KnowBrainer (www.knowbrainer.com) rather than contacting Nuance’s own support, although the official Twitter feed (@DragonTweets) is helpful at answering quick, simple questions.

Overall, Dragon is most likely to be a boon to those translators who think faster than they can type, saving revision and editing for the end. These users will often find that with a little practice, they can dictate their translations at a very efficient pace. In its current state, Dragon is less likely to be of much use to those whose normal work methods involve typing just two or three words at a time, then pausing to reconsider word choices. Fluid speech and complete phrasing are essential to using Dragon efficiently.

The primary difference between Dragon and other off-the-shelf speech-to-text products lies in its “speaker-dependent” interface.

At its price ($99 for the basic Home version, $199 for the Premium version with a larger native vocabulary and more flexible features), Dragon NaturallySpeaking version 11.5 already merits serious consideration for many translators. If a future version expands its base of supported languages to serve a more international audience and allows the importing of translation memory files to tune its accuracy, Nuance could become as much a fixture of the industry as Trados or Wordfast.

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In order to bring clients to your door, they have to know what you do. That means client education is one of the best ways to build your customer base.

For several years, translators have used the Translation: Getting It Right brochure to do just that. Interpreters now have the same opportunity to market their skills. ATA has published Interpreting: Getting It Right, a plain-speaking brochure that explains why hiring a professional interpreter is a good business decision. In a style similar to the very successful Translation: Getting It Right, the brochure is a quick read.

The brochure can be downloaded from ATA's website in PDF format at www.atanet.org/getting_it_right_int.php. ATA members can also receive free copies by request. E-mail ATA's Member Relations and Office Manager Kwana Ingram at kwana@atanet.org for details.

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One of the most important things to remember in editing a translation is to do no harm. If it is not broken, do not fix it.

With this in mind, I have developed the following guidelines on the basis of others’ edits of my work and feedback I have received about my own edits. Let me be the first to acknowledge that they are subjective. I hope they will generate some fruitful discussion and perhaps provide a basis from which each of us can take a fresh look at some of our own practices.

1. **Be very careful about making universal changes.** You may have a good reason for changing “contract” to “agreement,” but before you implement that “universal search and replace” you must go through every instance of “contract” to make sure you are not adding awkward phrases, such as “it has been agreed in the agreement,” and that you are not going to end up with phrases such as “the agreementing process.”

2. **Talk to yourself.** Take this one as literally as is comfortable for you. I keep notes as I move through a document and justify my edits. I am probably justified in changing “personnel” to “staff” if that is what the translator has been using all along, except for one instance. But am I comfortable that he or she did not use “personnel” here in order to avoid some awkward construction or excessive repetition of the same word or phrase?

3. **Write a memo.** This is especially important if you have found serious issues with the translation you are editing. Take that conversation you had with yourself back in point 2 and commit it to paper. The client wants to know, and the translator deserves to know, where you found fault.

4. **Never guess.** I have seen editors get into trouble by not checking the dictionary. For example, they will delete the correct translation of *radiodifusión* as “broadcasting” and change it to what they perceive as the closest cognate: “radio broadcasting”—which,
according to my copy of the *Oxford Spanish Dictionary*, would be incorrect. Likewise, you may want to check with the translator on where he or she found the translation for a given term. Often the translator is right on target. Sometimes he or she is guessing or working from memory. The client always deserves the correct translation.

5. **Do not make the translation sound as though it is your own, unless you have been specifically asked to do so.** Changing “personnel” to “staff” and “staff” to “personnel” generally serves no purpose except that of leaving your imprimatur on a document. (I will grant you an exception if the subject is Moses and the Red Sea.) Ask yourself how the change makes the translation better. Is it more accurate? Does it resolve a “consistency” issue? Does it make the translation clearer? Less wordy? Are you making a change for the translator (to correct an error or inconsistency), for the reader (to make it clearer), or for yourself (because you prefer “persons” to “people”)? Level with yourself about why you have just picked up that blue pencil. Distinguish between correcting an error and substituting your preference.

6. **Sit down and read the document through in the target language.** You may be amazed at what jumps out at you: grammar issues, punctuation issues, consistency issues, and—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask yourself how the change makes the translation better.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7. **Review the entire document before you start making changes on paper (or in “Track Changes”).** This will save you a lot of perspiration if you realize, on page 15, why the translator chose a certain word on page 1. In other words, review all the language in context before you change anything.

8. **Do not add errors to the text.** I once changed the translation of *seguridad alimenticia* from “food security” to “food safety,” wondering how such a brilliant translator could make such an obvious error. However, I failed to research “food security,” and *in that particular context* the translator was 100% right and I was 100% wrong. Do your research. Never assume. If you cannot do the research, you owe it to the translator and the end client to ask where he or she came up with that apparently questionable term.

9. **If it looks wrong, assume that there may be an error and research the issue.** The translator may have just picked the wrong definition from a long list. One of my favorite obvious examples is translating *desarrollo* as “development” when it means “implementation.”

10. **Sometimes, it just cannot be done.** Alas, not every translation is professional or satisfactory. It is your job to tell the client that the translation cannot be fixed and that he or she would be best served by having it redone. I generally accompany this bad news with an edit of at least a few paragraphs, so the client can more easily see where the problems lie.

In the best of all possible worlds, the translator and editor would work as a team, bouncing questions and concerns back and forth. In the real world of commercial translation, the process may become compressed and truncated—which perhaps may make it even more important to (a) check with the translator and (b) proceed with caution.

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**Three Ways to Connect to ATA**

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www.atanet.org/linkedin.php

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Many readers might know that I am a strong believer in social media and professional networks. For us as small business owners, I think that Web 2.0 is the best way to promote our services. It is largely free, but it requires some work. Even though I was critical of it in the beginning, as many people are now, I was an early adapter of Web 2.0 and social media and quickly became a fan. Now, many years later, I have been able to use the power of social media to achieve something I never thought possible. With the help of hundreds of cyberfriends, most of whom had never met us in person, my twin sister and I raised almost $10,000 for a colleague in need who had suffered a heart attack. I have never been more convinced of the power of social media than after the overwhelming response from our colleagues and friends around the world.

Here are some tips for creating a powerful online presence while building strong relationships with colleagues.

**Consistency and continuity are key.** Just like in real life, creating bonds and relationships in cyberspace takes some time and effort. Do not set yourself up to fail by thinking that you will see an immediate increase in business once you start a blog or start tweeting a lot. Over time, as your exposure grows, so should your business—but there are never any guarantees. Consider your social media efforts a long-term investment in your business.

**Do not engage in hard selling.** A few weeks ago, I saw a tweet stating, “If you need a good Spanish-to-Mandarin translator, contact me!” Needless to say, this person did not have many followers on Twitter, as all his tweets were quite sales-oriented. In general, you will be able to build a strong following on Twitter if you have interesting things to say (go beyond the “I am sitting in a café” tweets), retweet what others are posting, ask open-ended questions, answer questions that others might have, and find interesting links to share. It is all about building an online community.

**Surround yourself with good people.** When I was in graduate school, my mentor was the very successful chief executive officer of a Las Vegas casino. He gave me plenty of good advice, and I particularly like the tip to surround yourself with good people. This was back in 2000, so my mentor was not talking about the Web, but his advice is as valid online as it is offline. The Web can be a big, scary place, and just like in the offline world, you might encounter some phonies, flakes, impostors, and all sorts of want-to-be translators and interpreters. You might be judged partially by the company you keep, so choose wisely.

**Give before you get.** Our blog is probably my favorite social media outlet. Granted, a blog is a lot of work, but it is also a wonderful opportunity to share what you know with colleagues, clients, and whoever reads your blog. Posting to a blog also presents an opportunity to establish yourself as an expert. A dear friend of mine, who is a CPA, recently started a blog and turned to me to figure out why no one was visiting it. I had a look and realized that all her entries were sales-oriented, along the lines of “Tax season is around the corner. I am the CPA you have been waiting for!” As with tweeting, do not look at a blog—whether it be a translation blog, a cooking blog, a gardening blog, or a Dungeons & Dragons blog—as a direct sales opportunity, because it is not. It is an opportunity for you to build your brand online, and you have to give something for free (read: advice) before you can reap the potential benefits of online recognition. Once my CPA friend started posting entries such as “five things you should know before tax season starts,” she saw her traffic increase tremendously.

**Meet your cyberfriends in person.** I go to great lengths to meet cyberfriends in person when I travel or when they come to Vegas. Make an effort to interact with your contacts in person and share a meal or a cup of coffee. As wonderful as the Internet is, there is nothing quite like personal contact.
Five Reasons It is Hard to Say “NO” to a Client

(And why you should get over many of them)

I admit it. I have a hard time saying no to my clients. And they know it, too. They are very good at pushing all the right buttons. Given the onslaught of extra work in the run-up to a few days off, I have added “working on getting better about this” to my list of things to ponder while lazing about.

These are my five reasons I have a hard time saying NO NO NO!

1. A Great Professional and Personal Relationship: It is harder to say no to faithful clients with whom you have a terrific professional and personal relationship. Call it loyalty, call it interdependence, call it a partnership—whatever—you are involved in these projects together, you know the company inside out, and how “this” project fits into the bigger picture.

   It is no struggle for me to say no to prospects or previously one-shot clients with whom I have not shared anguish over a turn of phrase or met in the flesh. But clients I like and with whom I have been in the trenches? It pushes my guilt button.

2. Interesting and Rewarding Projects: As luck would have it, is it not often the case that the juiciest, most interesting projects show up in your lap just when you have no or little availability? It is easier to walk away from a run-of-the-mill project where the added value you can bring is limited (such as a quick translation for information) than something more challenging and rewarding, such as adapting a text for publication or writing a speech. So what can you do?

   • Burn the midnight oil? That is risky—if you are tired, the quality of your work suffers (and you are only as good as the last project you hand in).

   • Sacrifice your weekend? Seems like I have done that a lot lately (it was my choice, so no regrets or frustration).

   • Get help on the noncritical project from a colleague (with your client’s blessing, of course)? That is a good option, provided you have time to go over the entire job with a microscope.

3. Client Insistence: Sometimes clients make you feel like they do not want anyone else to do the job. Sometimes clients really do not want to hand over the job to somebody else. They know your work and how you work. It gives them peace of mind and saves them time. In this too, you provide value.

   So you explain why it would be unprofessional for you to take on their project because of X, Y, and Z, or that you would have to charge them double time to get it done (knowing full well they do not want to spend even more). When the client strives to tweak his calendar to suit yours, it really is tough to say no.

4. The “Grab the Job in Case Tomorrow is a Rainy Day” Argument: Freelancing can be unpredictable.

   Sometimes it is feast or famine. Taking on more than you can reasonably handle is a panic response and not a sound business decision most of the time (the “you are only as good as your last project” argument again). Some freelancers fear turning down a client will mean losing them.

   Get serious: clients are not stupid. If you are really good and at the peak of your learning curve with this client, he may take on someone else in a pinch, but he is not going to start over from scratch building a relationship with a new service provider. He would be taking a risk and having to invest time all over again. That is not a sound business decision.

   Ask yourself one question before taking on that extra “rainy day” project. Is it tied to anything else? In other words, does it contain the seeds for upselling? Is it the first phase of something larger? What visibility, inside the company and publicly, might you derive from taking it on? Or is it just a one-shot, stand-alone number that is not terribly critical? The value of a project to the service provider is not simply how much it may earn you.

5. Believing You CAN Fit that Extra Bit into Your Schedule: If you are like me, you make sure your schedule has buffer time just in case a project turns out to be more difficult than you

Continued on p. 31
What is it? The Interpreting Journal Club is defined loosely as a group of people, usually professionals, who meet on a regular basis to discuss literature that has been published in the field of interpreting.

The group was established last September through the initiative of Lionel Dersot, a liaison interpreter in Tokyo, Japan. Lionel sent out an invitation on Twitter welcoming anyone interested in the field of interpreting to join in discussions on topics pertaining to the field. The group met eight times over Twitter last year, with each session lasting from an hour to an hour and a half every two weeks. Membership has always been unrestricted.

How does it work? The group is asked about potential subjects or issues they would like to discuss. Once the topic is decided, links to background material are provided and a list of five questions to be debated is created. This year, subject matter experts will also be invited to participate. To see the discussion archives and learn more about #IntJC, the hashtag the group uses on Twitter, visit http://sites.google.com/site/interpretjc/home.

Participating in this group is a great way to learn what is happening in our field and to meet practitioners from all over the world. There is usually a core group of between 10-12 participants at each meeting, made up of interpreters, trainers, and students in countries such as the U.S., Japan, Belgium, Spain, Venezuela, France, and Slovenia, which makes for lively conversations. (To get an idea of the range of specialty areas members represent, please see the list of blogs on the right.) It is very easy to participate through Twitter. If you want to follow the conversation without participating, you can do so without a Twitter account. If you wish to participate in the tweetchat, you will need to open a Twitter account, which is very easy.

A Conversation with the Founder

I recently asked Lionel what prompted him to sponsor this endeavor. He explained that he believes the group can serve as a vehicle to allow professionals, from beginners to veterans, to “exchange experiences, thoughts, concerns, and recommendations,” in an environment of mutual respect. Lionel feels the group’s format is ideal because you can be present and not feel obligated to participate. He believes the group has also helped create a bond among a number of participants who would not have met otherwise.

I asked Lionel if there was anything that he would like to do differently in 2012. He said that he would like participants to “strive to get people involved who recognize themselves as part of the public interpreting sector,” so that all areas of interpreting can be represented. He is confident that #IntJC has begun to play a role in promoting professionalism, understanding, and camaraderie among participants. He is also very happy with the promotion the tweetchat is getting as more and more contributors spread the word and the audience increases.

The group is open to anyone and no advanced registration is required. To learn the meeting dates and subjects to be discussed, please visit http://sites.google.com/site/interpretjc/home.

Interpreter Blogs

Aventuras de una traductora-intérprete en Madrid

Bootheando
www.bootheando.com

In My Words
http://interpreter.blogs.se/

La Asociación Venezolana de Intérpretes de Conferencias
http://elblogdeavinc.blogspot.com

The Interpreter Diaries
http://theinterpreterdiaries.com

The Liaison Interpreter (Lionel Dersot’s blog)
http://japaninterpreter.blogspot.com
Every so often I will meet a reader at a conference who refers to me as “geeky.” In today’s techno-world, I know that this is not an insult (and as the author of the GeekSpeak column, I surely have only myself to blame). In my own defense, however, I must protest. I am not really into science fiction so loved by geeks—aside from a very intense early-adolescent Jules Verne episode—but I have long been intrigued by the fascination that some of the science fiction classics from the 1960s and 1970s hold for a good number of the folks who determine our Internet experience today.

Take Google, for instance. The Googleplex, Google’s headquarters, is named after a character in The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy. What was the first building on the Googleplex that Google used? Building 42. Now, if you are an über-geek, or even reasonably well-read, you will naturally know that, according to the Hitchhiker’s Guide, “the answer to life, the universe and everything” is 42. Bizarrely, you can also find this same ultimate answer by typing the answer to life the universe and everything into the search engines Google, Bing, or—I kid you not—the very serious WolframAlpha computational knowledge engine.

I find this fascination (or obsession) interesting because of translation, of course. Do you remember the Universal Translator from Star Trek? Mega-hyperpolyglot C-3PO of Star Wars fame who spoke six million languages? And the babel fish from the Hitchhiker’s Guide? In each of these sci-fi worlds, automatic translation was solved. For good.

If you take a look at the other predictions from these retro classics—space and time travel, de- and rematerialization (“Beam me up, Scotty”), and interaction with alien life forms—it is clear that the translation component has come a lot closer to fulfillment than any of the other futuristic technologies, regardless of how inadequate most machine translation still is.

Not a very pleasant thought? How about this geeky alternative? There has been a flurry of articles on artificial languages lately (you know: Esperanto, Klingon, Elvish, etc.), and I had a ball doodling around with a very feminine language called Làadan. I had to wait until our youngest had gone to bed to read some of the words and their meanings to the rest of my family a couple of weeks ago, but we certainly had a fun time with it (check out a translation for this column’s heading at laadanlanguage.org).

But here is what I have been wondering about in the context of artificial languages. Read the recent Huffington Post article on the resurrection of Wampanoag (http://huff.to/tHuvmR), or rent the beautiful documentary We Still Live Here (see makepeaceproductions.com/wampfilm.html), and then consider this humble proposition: Why don’t we invest all that linguistic and sci-fi energy evidenced above into restoring dead languages rather than coming up with new ones? Just asking.  

TheATA Chronicle  March 2012  |  29

ATA Scholarly Monograph
Series XVI

Translation and Localization
Project Management: The Art of the Possible

Edited by
Keiran J. Dunne and Elena S. Dunne

John Benjamins Publishing Company

Over the past three decades, translation has evolved from a profession practiced largely by individuals, to a cottage industry model, and finally to a formally recognized industrial sector that is project-based, heavily outsourced, and encompasses a wide range of services in addition to translation. As projects have grown in size, scope, and complexity, and as project teams have become increasingly distributed across the globe, formalized project management has emerged as both a business requirement and a critical success factor for language service providers. In recognition of these developments, this volume examines the application of project management concepts, tools, and techniques to translation and localization projects. The contributors are seasoned practitioners and scholars who offer insights into the central role of project management in the language industry today and discuss best-practice approaches to translation and localization projects.

## New Certified Members

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

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<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>French into English</td>
<td>Joanne Archambault</td>
<td>Glen, NH</td>
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<td>Portuguese into English</td>
<td>Robert E. Finnegan</td>
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<td>Kathy A. Mutz</td>
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## Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

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<td>Sahar Elyas</td>
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### ATA Certification Exam Information

#### Upcoming Exams

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<th>State</th>
<th>City</th>
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<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>May 6, 2012</td>
<td>April 20, 2012</td>
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<td>Novi</td>
<td>August 4, 2012</td>
<td>July 20, 2012</td>
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<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Reno</td>
<td>May 19, 2012</td>
<td>May 4, 2012</td>
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<td>New York City</td>
<td>April 21, 2012</td>
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<td>Winston-Salem</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>May 26, 2012</td>
<td>May 11, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>April 28, 2012</td>
<td>April 13, 2012</td>
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All candidates applying for ATA certification must provide proof that they meet the certification program eligibility requirements. Please direct all inquiries regarding general certification information to ATA Headquarters at +1-703-683-6100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from ATA’s website or from Headquarters.

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### Reserve your Spot today!

Did you know?

- 60% of readers turn to The ATA Chronicle as their primary source of information about the translation and interpreting professions.
- 81% of subscribers read the advertisements in The ATA Chronicle.
- 36% of readers BUY products in The ATA Chronicle advertisements.

Contact:

Caron Mason, CAE
caron@atanet.org
+1-703-683-6100
EXT. 3003
• The following ATA members have been elected to serve on the 2011-2013 board of directors of the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Florida, ATA’s newest chapter: Giovanna Lester (president); Olga Santiago (interim vice-president and membership chair); Deborah Spector (interim treasurer); Emmy Prieto (secretary); Gloria Nichols (director); and Yilda Ruiz-Monroy (director).

• CETRA Language Solutions, of Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, has established a subsidiary in Limerick, Ireland, under the name CETRA Ireland Ltd. The company is located at the Limerick Institute of Technology Acceleration Centre.

• Para-Plus Translations, Inc., of Barrington, New Jersey, received the 2011 Small Business Growth Success Award from the New Jersey Small Business Development Centers. The annual award honors small businesses that have demonstrated exceptional development and success.

• J.V. Guy-Bray’s English translation of Mireille Gayet’s illustrated 184-page monograph Les fossiles du Liban - Mémoire du temps (The Fossils of Lebanon—Memory of Time) has been published by Adverbum Editions.

• Olga Rojer’s co-translation (with Joseph Aimone) of Carel de Haseth’s novella Katibu di Shon (Slave and Master) has been published by Peter Lang Publishing as part of its Founding Fictions of the Dutch Caribbean series (volume 17).

Blog Trekker Continued from p. 27

thought. In case your Internet connection goes down. In case your computer crashes. Or simply because you refuse to take on an assignment under the kind of stress that can damage your work.

So, yes, sometimes I will take on that extra bit because I do have wiggle room and I like being able to do a favor for a client in a pinch. That often turns out to be a dumb decision.

• Giving up my wiggle room is not good for my Zen.

• Giving up my wiggle room is not good for my creativity.

• Projects often take longer than you think (optimistically).

• If others are involved in the outcome, you do not control their schedule. A slight delay on their end could put you in a real jam.

Cemeteries are full of irreplaceable people. Public transport is filled with commuters on the verge of burnout. I think I can manage to overcome points 3, 4, and 5 by putting a greater priority on my overall well being on the one hand, and signaling a much firmer “No” on the other. Points 1 and 2? Ouch. They are intimately tied to why I love being an independent professional (choosing clients and professional relationships) and am passionate about the work I do.

What about you? When and how is it hard for you to say no to clients?

ATA eCONFERENCE

Couldn’t make it to ATA’s Annual Conference last year? No problem! Many sessions at ATA’s 52nd Annual Conference were audi-taped, synchronized with supporting slides, and integrated with handouts to create an online multimedia experience.

To learn more, visit www.atanet.org/conf/2011/dvdrom.htm.
The Catalan Dictionary & Phrasebook is a welcome pocket-size dictionary designed specifically for travelers to Catalan-speaking regions. This uncommon and compact dictionary contains a brief explanation of the Catalan language and culture, 4,000 entries with pronunciation and grammar tips, and a useful phrasebook.

The dictionary’s size and lightweight shape make it portable everywhere. It is only about 7 inches high and 3.75 inches wide, yet its content is quite complete. The nice quality of the paper, the legible fonts, and the beautiful softcover (with a picture of architect Antoni Gaudí’s Parc Güell in Barcelona) make this dictionary very appealing for its intended audience.

Structure

The dictionary has a very brief but accurate introduction to the Catalan language and the regions where it is spoken, followed by abbreviations and a summary of Catalan pronunciation and grammar. These preliminary pages give way to the dictionary proper, containing both Catalan-English and English-Catalan entries. Each section starts with a page that is framed with a darker border, which makes it easy to look up entries. Another dark border separates the actual dictionary from the section containing the phrasebook. The phrasebook’s format is convenient because it is divided into different topics that cover the most basic things that readers are likely to need or want to express, for example, essential phrases, greetings, exclamations, accommodations, transportation, directions, food, entertainment, people, clothing, colors, technology, weather, the environment, animals, and emergencies. The final pages of the phrasebook also include a practical reference to numbers, time, dates, measures and conversions, and the appendix provides the conjugation of 25 common verbs that can be used as a model.

Content

It is a valiant endeavor to abbreviate Catalan pronunciation and grammar for foreign speakers in 14 narrow pages. However, I must say that the author is quite successful when it comes to explaining basic tips. Readers will be able to make use of the phrasebook and dictionary entries immediately. The inclusion of some pronunciation tips at the end of every dictionary page also makes it very practical, and the conjugation of 25 common verbs in the appendix facilitates language use even further.

The amount of entries also reflects the objective of this dictionary. It does not seek to provide the audience with encyclopedic information, with synonyms, or with exceptions or differences due to dialects or social levels. Instead, it is targeted to tourists who want to travel to Barcelona, Valencia, or Mallorca and the surrounding areas, to business people working in these places, and to students who only need a brief introduction to Catalan and no further knowledge.

There are quite a few common words related to food (e.g., “eggplant,” “flan,” “ham,” “parsley,” “fig,” “clam”), animals (“slug,” “tick,” “ladybug”), physical pain (“headaches,” “toothaches”), and many other practical entries (“credit card,” “be hungry,” “be afraid”). Other entries associated with tourism, though, are not included, such as “hostel,” “sightseeing,” or “car rental.”

Each entry contains a label that indicates the part of speech and noun gender. For adjectives, there is a reference on page 15 that contains a short grammar clarification. The phrasebook aims to give readers the basic tools to start using Catalan immedi-
ately. Essential phrases such as “I need,” “I have,” “Is there?”, and “What is this?” can make life much easier for people who really want to approach the language in a short time. For example, the entries on numbers, time, and dates are explained very clearly and concisely. For size, volume, mass, and temperature measures, the English entry is translated into Catalan and followed by the equivalent in metric or Celsius.

The dictionary contains up-to-date terminology, with words like “e-mail,” “computer,” “DVD,” “Internet,” and “cybercafé.” In terms of vocabulary related to food, I found “frankfurter,” “cheeseburger,” “ketchup,” but, interestingly, no “chicken nuggets.” The common expressions and phrases given are used widely and will generally be understood, although in Andorra, Valencia, and the Balearic Islands, food vocabulary varies notably within each region. The essential phrases provided are ones that can be heard readily on any street. This will allow the traveler to understand much more of the culture and people of these places.

**Typos/Shortcomings**

Typos are rare, but *atreure* should be *atreure* (pages 23 and 81), *cuart* should be *quart* (pages 33 and 116), and *rimmel* should be *rimel* (pages 63 and 107). The worst erroratum, however, which should be modified immediately because it is much worse than a simple typo, is found in the blurb on the cover and on the publisher’s website. On the back cover, there is a brief explanation about where Catalan is spoken: Catalonia, Valencia, and Andorra, which are correct. Then it includes the Basque Country and Galicia. This is an inexcusable mistake, since an entirely distinct language is spoken in the Basque Country, namely Basque, a pre-Indo-European language that belongs to a completely different culture. Galicia, for its part, is located at the very far west of the Iberian Peninsula, and its language, Galician, descends from the medieval Galician-Portuguese. Galician has something in common with Catalan because it is a Romance language (like Portuguese, French, or Italian), but Basque is unique. Fortunately, this huge mistake does not appear in the dictionary. Actually, the author is very accurate in the brief introduction when he states that Catalan is spoken by over seven million people in Catalonia, Valencia, Spain’s Mediterranean islands, French Roussillon, and the city of Alghero in Sardinia. The error in the blurb on the cover and website might have been introduced by the publisher, but it should definitely be changed.

**Overall Evaluation**

The Catalan Dictionary & Phrasebook will be a welcome tool for all those travelers who did not have access to a dictionary like this previously. The other Catalan-English/English-Catalan dictionary, the Hippocrene Concise Dictionary by Sabater and Freixenet, was much bigger, had a long list of words that might not have been that useful to readers, and did not have the pronunciation tips. An added bonus of the current dictionary is its phrasebook, which allows readers to function in the language (at a beginner’s level) even without extensive knowledge of Catalan. Of course, this is also a shortcoming. While a godsend to tourists and business travelers, the dictionary is too concise and basic to be of use to advanced students. It is entirely unsuitable for translators. All in all, though, the dictionary is an excellent, practical, brief introduction to Catalan for American-English speakers, and I highly recommend it for tourists, business people, and students.
**Family** comes first, and the Translation Inquirer got swept up in a firestorm around November 22 and the days immediately before it and after, when his father-in-law needed a lot of help of all kinds at home following surgery. So, your January column became your February column. Here I present the March version, and trust that a month’s absence did not kill the column.

**New Queries**

*(E-F 3-12.1)* “Trial time points” appeared on the x-axis of a graph regarding various visits during a trial study. What are they? The context sentence speaks of them in a way that seems to make them identical with the visits. What would explain this in French?

*(E-Po 3-12.2)* “Range of motion” is an extremely widely used medical term, but what about “acceptable functional arc of motion?” In a text about a brain seizure with the extremities affected, it is mentioned that “active ROM may correlate with the available functional arc of motion,” leaving the impression that this term is not identical with ROM. Who can render this into Polish?

*(E-Pt 3-12.3)* In a fixed firefighting manual, one of our colleagues found “Unitor Fixed Local Application Fire Fighting System.” Try rendering this into Portuguese if you can.

*(F-E 3-12.4)* This query seems to relate to the terminology of naming files, as in “My file name.” The term is *barre soulignée*, and beyond that, I cannot provide any more context. Is there a term in English for it?

*(F-Po [E] 3-12.5)* The metal-casting term *dégourdissage* should not be too difficult to translate into Polish (or English) with the following definition: *Préchauffage réalisé à basse température (inférieure à 100 °C) afin d’atténuer partiellement le choc thermique dû à l’opération de soudage qui va suivre. So after all that, what is it?*

*(G-E 3-12.6)* The context is the world of transport, and *Direktladungsquote* is the problem word. Here is some context: *Maximale Verringerung der Direktladungsquote um 3% (bedeutet, dass kaum Mehraufwand durch die Prozessänderung entsteht).* What might it be?

*(G-SI [E] 3-12.7)* In the following context paragraph, *Bruttowertschöpfung* is the problem word. Here we go: *Unternehmen des produzierenden Gewerbes mit hohem Stromverbrauch (seit 1. Januar 2012 (EEG 2012) 1 Gigawattstunde im letzten Geschäftsjahr bei 14 Prozent der Bruttowertschöpfung) können auf Antrag beim Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle weitgehend von der EEG-Umlage entbunden werden."

*(Ro-E 3-12.8)* I have an impossibly long paragraph involving shipping containing the problem Romanian term *talonarea semicumpenelor,* and can only hope that, not knowing that language, I pick the section most helpful for those who can solve the problem. Here is some context: *Talonarea am mai întâlnit-o cu referire la macaz, cu sensul de atacar falsă a macazului în direcția vârfului, care ar fi “trailing,” dar cu semicumpănă nu știu care-i sensul.*

*(Sp-E 3-12.9)* In a patent regarding the food and dairy industry, what do the words in bold print mean? The troubling phrase reads: *Acta de capacitación de muestra por renta de licores.*

*(Sp-E 3-12.10)* In the world of investment, *guayabera* is a puzzle, and the literal meaning of “shirt” only serves to make the query more intriguing. So, here we go with the context phrase in hopes it will help: *nos joden por el lado del pricing de mercado después de que ellos son los que dan la información, y nos volvemos a quedar como la guayabera, con riesgo financiero y de reputación. Go for it if you can.*

*(Sp-G [E] 3-12.12)* The term in bold print below was the sticking point in a paragraph that otherwise was relatively easy for this colleague. Here is the con-
Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821. Email address: jdecker@uplink.net. Please make your submissions by the first of each month to be included in the next issue. Generous assistance from Per Dohler, proofreader, is gratefully acknowledged.

text: Debo condenar y condeno a esta a pagar a la entidad actora la cantidad de 67,531,92 €, en la persona de su representante legal, intereses conforme a lo establecido en el anterior fundamento de derecho cuarto que se considera parte integrante del presente fallo. English is acceptable for this query.

Replies to Old Queries

(E-Sp 11-11.2) (double layer surface complexation adsorption model): Denzel Dyer helps us along the path to a proper Spanish rendering by pointing out that “complexation,” not “complexion.” Now, with that settled, the reply is recycled into a renewed query that deserves a reply.

(Pt-E 10-11.7) (Patrimônio de Afetação): Andrei Winograd says this phrase is not related to surveying. It is a Brazilian legal and accounting concept. Perhaps “detached assets” comes close. The “detachment” mentioned is a detachment of, say, a piece of real property from being subject to the pecking order of creditors should the seller or builder go bankrupt before the deed of sale is executed. This always happens after a time lag for one reason or another. Thus, the “detached asset” becomes a separate entity with its own tax inscription number. This should make the buyer feel more secure about this purchased asset. Andrei will be glad to answer further questions about this at andrei@sefer.net.

(R-E 11-11.7) (доверительное управление): Katya Howard says Lingvo’s Russian-English Law Dictionary calls it an “entrusted administration.” The Russian Federation Law on the Securities Market provides the definition. It appears to be analogous to portfolio management.

(Sp-E 10-11.8) (traspaleros): Cindy Coan suspects this is a typo and should be traspateros. In its singular form, as an online search revealed, it means “transshipment.” Thanks to Cindy for the careful sleuthing.

(Sp-E 11-11.8) (adscripción sanitaria): Leonor Giudici says this is related to the tendency of the Spanish national health system to assign services to specific medical departments. Specializing physicians have to stay within their specialties. Where more than one specialty could apply to a patient’s case, the term could be referring to who or what kind of institution can deal with a certain pathology or case.

(Sp-R |E| 11-11.9) (por oposición de esta Capital): Here, says Leonor Giudici, the notary is making it clear that she has obtained her position by passing a public examination, rather than becoming a notary by decree; thus, the notary establishes herself as more bona fide. Isabel Fierros adds some interesting details to the above. Oposiciones are the much-dreaded examinations that Spaniards must take to compete for a government job. The document does not need to state that the notario passed this examination. She suggests that a good translation of the phrase is “ZZZ, head of this office in this Capital City.”

Thanks to all the contributors to this column, and I only regret that their pieces had to wait an extra month to see the light of day.

Mark Your Calendar

May 18-20, 2012
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
33rd Annual Conference
Cambridge, MA
www.najit.org
“I can write a washing bill in Babylonian cuneiform ....” So sings the Major-General in Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Pirates of Penzance.

Well, now he actually can! And so can you!

Because, after 90 years of work, a 21-volume dictionary of the language of the ancient Semitic language of Mesopotamia has finally been completed by scholars at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. The language, Akkadian and its Babylonian and Assyrian dialects, has not been spoken for 2,000 years. It is the earliest known Semitic language written in cuneiform, and is probably the first written language anywhere. The dictionary is encyclopedic in range, incorporating the work of more than 90 experts from around the world. It required almost two million index cards, includes some 28,000 words deciphered over the past two centuries, and comes complete with extensive references to original source materials.

These source materials are scientific, medical, and legal documents; love letters; epic literature; and messages to the gods preserved on clay tablets and in stone inscriptions made between 2500 BC and 100 AD. Although the project is officially over, the dictionary will continue to grow. There are words whose meanings are still unknown, and new discoveries are still being made.

Akkadian was the language in which Sargon the Great, king of Akkad in the 24th century BC, commanded what is reputed to be the world’s first empire, and in which Hammurabi proclaimed the first known legal code around 1700 BC. It was used by the creator of the Epic of Gilgamesh, the oldest known masterpiece of world literature, and by Nebuchadnezzar II when he promised his homesick wife that he would cultivate the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

And Akkadian was also the language used for everyday communication, though perhaps not for an actual washing bill. It was the language of enterprise, of agriculture and the irrigation of lands and shipments of grain, and of instructions on how to read a sheep’s liver to divine the future.

According to dictionary editor Martha Roth, the most surprising results of the project are the similarities discovered between then and now. “Rather than encountering an alien world, we encounter a very, very familiar world.”

Matthew Stolper, a University of Chicago professor who devoted—on and off—30 years to the dictionary, told the Associated Press that, “a lot of what you see is absolutely recognizable—people expressing fear and anger, expressing love, asking for love. There are inscriptions from kings that tell you how great they are, and inscriptions from others who tell you those guys weren’t so great. There’s also a lot of ancient versions of ‘your check is in the mail.’ And there’s a common phrase in old Babylonian letters that literally means ‘don’t worry about a thing.’”

Robert Biggs, professor emeritus at the Oriental Institute, spent almost 50 years on the project, as an archaeologist on digs recovering tablets as well as on the dictionary. He said, “You’d brush away the dirt, and then there would emerge a letter from someone who might be talking about a new child in the family, or another tablet that might be about a loan until harvest time. You’d realize that this was a culture not just of kings and queens, but also of real people, much like ourselves, with similar concerns for safety, food, and shelter for ourselves and their families. They wrote these tablets thousands of years ago, never meaning for them to be read so much later, but they speak to us in a way that makes their experiences come alive.”

The project’s formal name, the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary Project, is actually a misnomer because the basic language in question is Akkadian. The misnomer dates from 1921, when the project was started by Oriental Institute founder James Henry Breasted, and much of the available written material was attributed to Assyrian rulers. Also, biblical references had left the impression that the term “Assyrian” was synonymous with most Semitic languages in antiquity. “Assyrian” is still sometimes used as an umbrella term for the entire field of study.

The complete 21-volume dictionary is purchasable for $1,995, but every volume is also downloadable for free from the website of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago (http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/pubs/catalog/cad).

Note that Mesopotamia, from the Greek “meso,” meaning “middle” or “between,” and “potamos,” meaning “river,” refers to the ancient land between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, more or less the site of modern-day Iraq. Gil Stein, director of the Oriental Institute, in an Associated

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to mnh18@columbia.edu 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.
The dictionary will facilitate such an understanding, more perhaps than the lyrics of the 2007 song “The Mesopotamians” by the band They Might Be Giants, a few of the lyrics of which are:

We’re the Mesopotamians
Sargon, Hammurabi, Ashurbanipal, and Gilgamesh
Then they wouldn’t understand a word we say
So we’ll scratch it all down into the clay
## Upcoming Events

Visit the ATA Calendar Online  
www.atanet.org/calendar/  
for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Date</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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| April 28, 2012   | Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters  
Annual Conference  
Winston-Salem, NC  
www.catiweb.org   |
| April 28, 2012   | American Translators Association  
Professional Development Seminar  
“Marketing Yourself and Your Business”  
Seattle, WA  
www.atanet.org/pd/market |
| May 5, 2012      | New England Translators Association  
16th Annual Conference  
Boston, MA  
www.netaweb.org/cms2 |
| May 5, 2012      | Colorado Translators Association  
Mid-Year Conference  
Boulder, CO  
www.cta-web.org/2012-conference |
| May 16-19, 2012  | Association of Language Companies  
Annual Conference  
New Orleans, LA  
http://alcus.org/education/conference.cfm |
| May 18-20, 2012  | National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators  
33rd Annual Conference  
Cambridge, MA  
www.najit.org |
| June 1-2, 2012   | Iowa Interpreters and Translators Association  
8th Annual Conference  
Orange City, IA  
www.iitanet.org/Annual_Conference_Q185.html |
| June 15-16, 2012 | InterpretaAmerica Annual Conference  
3rd North American Summit on Interpreting  
Monterey, CA  
www.interpnetamerica.net |
| September 8-10, 2012 | Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators  
Annual Conference  
Nashville, TN  
www.tapit.org |
| October 24-27, 2012 | American Translators Association  
53rd Annual Conference  
San Diego, CA  
www.atanet.org/conf/2012 |
| October 28-November 1, 2012 | Association for Machine Translation in the Americas  
10th Biennial Conference  
San Diego, CA  
www.amtaweb.org |
| November 16-18, 2012 | American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages  
Annual Convention and World Languages Expo  
“Many Languages: One United Voice”  
Philadelphia, PA  
www.actfl.org |
Get Ready To Go!

American Translators Association

53rd Annual Conference

San Diego, California
Hilton San Diego Bayfront
October 24–27, 2012
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- Uzbek

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