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October 2012

The Words We Use to Describe Ourselves
By Nataly Kelly
For us, the intricacies of how we refer to and define our own professions seem plain as day. For outsiders, things are not so simple. So who is right?

Lessons We Can Learn from the Olympics
By Jennifer De La Cruz
The Olympics provided the ultimate example of achievement that we can use to inspire us in our own professional lives.

Reviewing Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World
By Corinne McKay
Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche’s new book explores how language is the engine of human interaction, from the mundane to the life-threatening.

Let’s Talk About English
By Madeline Newman Rios
Here is a look at some of the myths and challenges of the English language from the perspective of a language practitioner.

Sitting Down with InterpretAmerica’s Barry Slaughter Olsen and Katharine Allen
By María Cristina de la Vega
The co-founders of InterpretAmerica share their thoughts on the profession, including training, industry fragmentation, and technology.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE TRANSLATION INQUIRER

HUMOR AND TRANSLATION

NEW CERTIFIED MEMBERS

ACTIVE AND CORRESPONDING MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

UPCOMING EVENTS
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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Every spring, the graders and language chairs of ATA’s Certification Program come together for a weekend of training and discussion, which often involves spirited debates. Thanks to the continuous efforts of the Certification Committee and its long-term perspective, ATA’s Certification Program has become a model that is admired and emulated around the world.

Although it turned out that it was not feasible to accredit the entire program, many efforts have been made over the years to ensure that examinations are fair and defensible across all languages. Graders undergo rigorous training and put in many hours of volunteer time to find suitable passages and evaluate their difficulties. Beyond that, we have worked with renowned testing and standardization experts to identify steps we can take to make our certification even more solid, which ultimately benefits the reputation of the credential and increases the market value of those who hold it.

The passing rate of our exam has held steady at below 20% for a long time (see ATA Certification Committee Chair Geoff Koby’s column on page 28 for further details) and is comparable to the statistical results of other international translator examinations. However, in recognition of the importance the credential has for working translators and the demand for the exam, the Certification Committee has repeatedly evaluated the eligibility criteria to make sure we do not exclude suitable candidates.

Candiates may also receive individual feedback by taking the at-home practice test. The practice test is a valuable tool for explaining the difficulty of the actual test and pointing out areas where a candidate may still need improvement. Given the interest in these practice tests, ATA’s Board recently approved a motion by the Certification Committee to allow non-members of ATA to take the practice exam. The necessary preparations are underway, with more information about the practice test to be published early next year.

**Keyboarded Exam Update**

ATA successfully held a keyboarded exam sitting last month in Washington, DC. Candidates must satisfy the eligibility requirements to sit for the keyboarded exam as well. For more information on the eligibility requirements, please see www.atanet.org/certification/eligibility_overview.php.

For more on ATA’s Certification Program, visit www.atanet.org/certification/index.php.
ATA’s Annual Conference: More than Just Sessions

With ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference almost upon us, I am sure that you have a full dance card of educational and aspirational sessions to attend. But we cannot live by professional development alone, so please take note of a few of the “extracurricular” activities that round out this year’s conference program. There are too many to fit in this column, but you will find a complete listing at www.atanet.org/conf/2012/events.htm.

We start things off with a bang on Wednesday evening with the Welcome Reception. One of the highest attended events of the conference, this is the place where friends reunite and new friends are made. Plan to stick around afterward for the tasty desserts offered at the Division Open House. This new tradition is a chance to meet and mingle with your fellow division members, as well as an opportunity for newcomers to talk to others with the same specialties and languages. Division leaders and members will be there to answer questions and provide information about joining a division. (Remember, divisions are free with your ATA membership!)

Even if you are not a morning person, you might find that getting up early leaves you more energized than sleeping in. Enjoy the spectacular sunrise over the Coronado Bridge by treating yourself to the pre-breakfast Stretch, Breathe, & Move (Thursday-Saturday, 6:30 a.m.-7:15 a.m.). This gentle start to the day gets your blood flowing and relaxes and rejuvenates you for the intense day ahead. If running is your thing, both the Bayfront Promenade and Fitness Center provide a great view of Coronado.

Do not forget to take advantage of the Continental Breakfast, served Thursday-Saturday from 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. Besides fueling and caffeinating your body for the morning sessions, breakfast presents another opportunity to chat with fellow conference attendees and key volunteers. If you are looking for an easy conversation starter, find someone with the same language dot, or look for newcomers and make them feel welcome.

Immediately following the Opening Session on Thursday morning, we will kick off our special series on the Future of Translation and Interpreting. It starts with “Lightning Talks,” a lively series of quick, energetic four-minute presentations by industry movers and shakers who will share their views on big-picture issues affecting your future. You will be able to add your voice to this important conversation throughout the conference via the “Comment Capture,” an analogue (pencil and paper) and online (think Twitter and e-mail) forum designed to collect reactions to the Lightning Talks. Many of these comments will be incorporated into the final event, “The Debate” on Saturday, which will feature a panel discussion on some of the more lively topics discussed during this series.

Good things happen during breaks. Look for ways to combine soaking up some of the bright Southern California sunshine with opportunities for networking. Consider a walking meeting on the promenade or in the nearby Gaslamp District, or grab a box lunch and perch on the seawall to watch pelicans and freight ships. Or perhaps a quick dip in the pool to regroup before the afternoon sessions.

For the bibliophiles among us—and that would be most of us—we have two special literary-related events on Friday. We are delighted to host the Book Launch Celebration for the much-anticipated Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World, by Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche. Come let co-author Nataly Kelly inspire you with some of the stories from the book. Afterward, put on your virtual beret, channel your inner poet, and join the open microphone at the After Hours Café. Read your original or translated excerpt, listen to readings from our multitalented members, or both.

The intense days of professional development and blur of badges and business cards come to a festive close on Saturday night with a high-energy Dance Party. There will be plenty of time to enjoy the Pacific sunset and fresh California cuisine in the hours beforehand, so be sure to pencil in this final event! And for those of you staying on for the Tenth Biennial Conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (www.atanet.org/conf/2012/amta.htm), which will take place in San Diego, October 28-November 1, immediately following our conference, I hope to see you there!
So what do you think of ATA? Nearly 1,700 members shared their thoughts on ATA and the professions in our recent membership survey. Here are some of the highlights.

Membership: 90% rate their ATA membership as valuable, and 90% would be likely to recommend ATA to a friend or colleague. So what do members value?

- 87% say networking
- 87% say learning from others in ATA
- 87% say access to specialized information
- 84% say professional relationships
- 74% say attending conferences

Work: 64% of the respondents reported that they received work from their online directory listing. (A professional services profile in one of ATA's online directories is an exclusive member benefit, www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories.) Furthermore, 83% of those who received work said it was the kind of work they wanted, and 74% said the work paid for their ATA membership dues. The results also reflected that members who updated their professional services profile at least one to two times a year were more likely to get work from their directory listing than those who never updated their profiles. As for workload, 57% of the respondents reported they either have enough work or are forced to turn down work.

Certification: 77% of the respondents, whether ATA-certified or not, thought ATA certification was important, with 61% of those respondents rating it as very important.

Communications:
Website: 87% of the respondents who visit ATA's website said they would likely recommend it. Of the non-visitors to the site, 65% do not use any site or service for news on translation and interpreting.

The ATA Chronicle: 77% rated The ATA Chronicle good to excellent.

Social Media: 38% said social media was important to networking and marketing

- 54% rated LinkedIn as important
- 34% rated Facebook as important
- 24% rated Twitter as important

On the other end, 18% said they never use social media.

Demographics:
Gender: 71% female, 29% male

Age Range:
18-24: 1%
25-34: 13%
35-44: 22%
45-54: 28%
55-64: 24%
65-74: 9%
75 or older: 3%

Employment Status:
Full-time independent contractor: 51%
Part-time independent contractor: 19%
Full-time private sector employee: 9%
Part-time private sector employee: 3%
Company owner: 8%
Government employee: 5%
Academic: 5%

(Since we are looking at demographics, though not covered in the survey, ATA’s international membership continues to grow, with 16% of the membership residing outside the U.S.)

Conclusions: It is reassuring to see that ATA members value their membership and would recommend ATA to a friend or colleague. The results also reflect that there is more to be done in such areas as promoting the online directories and the value of maintaining a professional services profile online. We also need to look at basic education for social media, ATA webinars (hour-long online educational presentations), translation tools, and ATA listservs (63% of the respondents have never participated in these valuable online forums that are only available to ATA members). The Board will discuss the survey results to help determine ATA’s future programs and services. Finally, thank you to all who took the time to complete the survey.
Transit\textsuperscript{NXT}

Context-Sensitive Translation and Localization

The sentence is a self-contained linguistic unit – but that doesn’t make it a self-contained unit of meaning. Translators read sentences in the source text, but can only translate them appropriately if they can see and understand the content in context. That’s why Transit\textsuperscript{NXT} employs a reference material-based approach to translation memory – unlike other translation memory systems, which use an exclusively sentence-based database.

Transit\textsuperscript{NXT} reference material preserves document intelligence and context. A unique approach that has proven to be successful for over 20 years.

Reuse Guaranteed
The translation memory is stored as a file in an XML structure with attributes. The result is language pairs that are used directly as the translation memory (Transit\textsuperscript{NXT} reference material). The translation memory can be used in a targeted, efficient manner, is easy to manage, and guarantees ultimate performance, even when project volumes increase.

Context Counts
Quality problems due to lack of context are a thing of the past. The technique used in Transit\textsuperscript{NXT} of linking the source and target documents at the sentence, paragraph, or section level allows translators to consult the context of the fuzzy suggestions, concordance suggestions, and terminology suggestions in a process called Dynamic Linking. This proves all the more valuable when translation results are already being used to create source content. In this case as well, contextual reference in the Transit\textsuperscript{NXT} reference material ensures that the writer chooses appropriate sentences for the specific context. Thus the correctness of the subsequent translation is already ensured at the writing stage.

Corporate Wording with a Click of the Mouse
An integral part of Transit\textsuperscript{NXT}, TermStar\textsuperscript{NXT}, is an ideal tool to help translators and terminologists manage specialized technical terminology: With the click of a mouse or button, terminology entries are compiled into dictionaries. The sophisticated technology of TermStar\textsuperscript{NXT} allows simultaneous searching in decentralized, local dictionaries and databases and in centrally maintained terminology resources via WebTerm.
As translators and interpreters, we are accustomed to scrutinizing words. We think about their meanings, toy with synonyms and alternatives, and analyze the contextual soil in which they are planted. Our tendency to dive deeply into the meaning of a word is almost second nature. As a result, professional translators read words more carefully than most non-translators. Likewise, professional interpreters typically listen more closely to speech than non-interpreters. It is no wonder we care about words so much, because their meaning can either live or die by our hands (or mouths).

But how often do we really stop to think about the words we use to refer to ourselves? Among our peers and colleagues, we often bemoan the fact that the general public misuses the terms translators and interpreters. “But the distinction is so simple!” we exclaim. “Translators deal with written words; interpreters deal with spoken ones.” Why, we wonder, does everyone else have so much trouble remembering this? From our perspective, the way we use these terms is right, so the rest of the world must be wrong.

In my current role as a researcher and analyst, I often help investors, start-ups, and journalists come up to speed quickly on the language services industry. Most of them have no prior background or knowledge of the field. I always take great care to try to use the terms that practitioners in these professions use themselves. Obviously, I let them know that translation is not the same thing as interpreting. However, this distinction is not always as clear or simple as it seems.

In one call I took from a venture capital firm earlier this year, an especially bright investor seemed to understand the distinction between a translator and interpreter quite well. He was interested primarily in the interpreting market, so he asked me where companies find interpreters in the United States. I explained that the profession is quite segmented by industry, with court interpreters, medical interpreters, conference interpreters, military interpreters, and sign language interpreters all congregating in separate groups. When he asked me which association is the largest membership organization for interpreters in this country, I cited one that has the word “translators” in its name.

“Wait a minute,” he interrupted, “Didn’t you just say that interpreters are different from translators?” I managed to answer his question, but he had pointed out an important contradiction in the way I was using these terms. The discussion then moved on to different segments of the interpreting market, and he wanted to know more about the world of judicial interpreting. I gave a quick overview of different skills that court interpreters must master—sight translation. “Hold on,” he interjected, “I thought interpreters dealt with spoken words and translators dealt with written ones.” Ouch—he had me again. I provided the clarification, but felt slightly embarrassed that my supposed straightforward distinction had failed me once more.

Then he began asking about the history of the market and different segments within it, as well as its trajectory. As I mentioned the fact that many translators formerly used Dictaphones and that some still use dictation software, I could practically hear him saying, “Aha! Spoken mixed
with written! Caught you again!” However, this time, with his prior objections fresh in my mind, I managed to beat him to the punch and provide an additional explanation before he could protest. But he did not need to. I already saw his point. For us, the intricacies of how we refer to and define our own professions seem plain as day. For outsiders, things are not so simple. So who is right?

In the world of linguistics, there is a concept known as prescription. Prescriptivists seek to standardize language, to teach others what is “correct,” and to enforce rules for things like grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. Generally, people in the prescriptivist camp are resistant to the natural phenomenon of language change. Description, on the other hand, refers to the area of linguistics that records objectively how language is actually used by a given population. Most linguistic research falls into this category. It is impartial, scientific, and does not judge.

In our daily work as translators and interpreters, we often have to strike a balance between a prescriptive approach and a descriptive one. Our code of ethics requires us to be objective and free of bias in our work. We must choose terms that are most appropriate for the target audience if we want them to be understood. On the other hand, we also have to exercise a deep understanding of the rules of language for various audiences and social groups, and we often have to make judgment calls about which term will be deemed most acceptable. In other words, we adopt a mixture of both of these approaches when we carry out our work.

But when we discuss our work with outsiders, we tend to be almost entirely prescriptive. Instead of listening to what society believes to be the correct way of using the words that describe us, we resist and try to “educate” them on how we believe we should be described. Yet we are a minority. The people who are not translators and interpreters far outnumber us. Is it realistic to think that we can ever get people outside of the profession to change their views and the way they refer to us?

I looked for answers in a somewhat expected place—the dictionary. My trusty Merriam-Webster defines translation as, “a rendering from one language into another; also: the product of such a rendering.” Hmm. No mention of written words versus spoken ones. I needed a second opinion. Perhaps the British lexicographers would be on our side? No such luck. The Oxford English Dictionary defines translation as, “the process of translating words or text from one language into another.” The second definition listed actually says, “a written or spoken rendering of the meaning of a word, speech, book, or other text in another language.”

What these definitions tell me is that, if we truly want to defend our position that translation and interpreting are two completely different and distinct activities, we need to convince not only everyone who is not part of our professions, but the people who write the actual dictionaries we rely on every day for our work. We trust those books to give us clear answers in so many instances, but when it comes to describing our very professions, we do not want to trust what they say. Suddenly, our case is not looking too good.

Personally, my favorite area of linguistics has always been sociolinguistics, which looks at the effect of society on language. Sociolinguistic studies take a look at how cultural norms affect the way language is used. Why is this relevant? We are our own little social group, made up of hundreds of thousands of translators and interpreters throughout the world. Our viewpoint is valid and important, especially within the confines of our professions. But it is probably unrealistic of us to think that we will ever change everyone else’s mind, especially when they can say, “See? Even the dictionary says I’m right and you’re wrong! Take that, you so-called linguistic expert!” Oh, how it stings.

When it comes to choosing words that describe not only who we are but what we do, the situation gets even worse. Translators have it a bit easier, because most people understand the word translation. However, when the average person thinks of the word interpretation, they start thinking of subjectivity and individual viewpoints—the very opposite of what interpreters are meant to provide. I will never forget the time when I asked a layperson to describe the difference between translation and interpretation. He knowingly and self-assuredly stated, “A translation is an exact rendition, whereas an
interpretation is an opinion.” As a result, many in the field use the term interpreting instead and avoid the word interpretation like the plague. Even the more cumbersome interpreted utterance seems a better choice than using a word that can be so terribly in conflict with how we view ourselves.

The purpose of this discussion is not to suggest any answers. After all, whether prescriptivists like it or not, each person uses language uniquely, and our work-based social group will continue to use and define these terms as the majority of its members see fit. Likewise, mainstream society will continue making its own decisions, over which we have limited control.

No matter how earnest our attempts, we most likely will not change the words that society uses to talk about translation and interpreting. However, what we can and should change is how frequently people talk about our work. It should be our goal to catapult translators and interpreters onto the stage before mainstream readers, so that they are not only impossible to ignore, but enjoyable to watch. We want others to see how powerful and important this work really is—not just in the heart of this writer, but in society at large—including the schoolteachers, police officers, government workers, attorneys, and nurses in your local community. Yes, even your next-door neighbor. Hopefully then, the very real and enormous contribution that our work makes will be felt, not just within our field, but in the wider world.

After all, I had worked at times in my life as both an interpreter and a translator. Maybe it does make sense to have a word for people who do both.

The list of potentially confusing terms we use to describe ourselves goes on and on. We throw around all kinds of words such as localization, transcreation, fixer, “terp,” and more. Once, I was even referred to by one of my less educated clients as “the interpreter.” While it did make the prescriptivist side of me chuckle, my inner descriptivist regarded it non-judgmentally as a creative hybrid.
Lessons We Can Learn from the Olympics

By Jennifer De La Cruz

At home, we certainly got involved with the Olympic games this year. It was amazing to see these young athletes put forth their very best and to rejoice with them in victory, or weep with them in their defeat. I learned a lot from these games. I even found interesting parallels with our profession as linguists, some of which I think are also among life’s most important lessons.

Appearances can be deceiving. To me, coming from an area where you can find just about any nationality, at first glance some of the athletes looked and acted like the typical American teenager. It was only when I was able to overhear the languages they were speaking, or noticed the team colors, that I realized that they represented a rich heritage and tradition different from what we know. This reminds me of a time when I interpreted for an indigent plaintiff in a civil matter, of whom my first impression was deceiving. He was very unkempt, both in terms of his clothing and facial hair, and was extremely rambunctious. My first impression was shot down like a skeet target when I witnessed an extensive conversation between him and the court attendant, wherein he proved to be a veritable expert in the social and political issues of his country! He spoke with great confidence and wisdom. Lesson learned.

Every team member counts. The Team USA women’s gymnastics “Fab 5” brought this point home for me when they achieved the gold medal. Each girl had strengths to contribute, and none stood out more from the
others overall. When I think of all the specialties we represent as linguists, it is hard not to wonder if any is inherently more important than the other. True, there are fields that require an incredible level of expertise and skill for a solid performance, but, as a profession, we are all standing smack-dab in the middle of a cultural divide and working to ensure that others can achieve their goals. Recently, interpreters on a social media site I follow discussed the importance of seeing ourselves as one, each with something to contribute, whether in a hospital, a court, at a conference, or as the voice of international figures. Much like the sports team in a relay, each one of us reflects on the other, and can leave a lasting impression about linguists in general. Within our ranks we should be supporting each other, as a team, for the good of the profession.

**Consistent preparation is essential.** I repeatedly saw athletes preparing both physically and mentally for their tasks. There were the gymnasts who would take to the floor and practice their acrobatics while waiting for the meet to begin, swimmers who donned fat headphones to listen to music and get in the “zone,” and divers who had very specific rituals with hand towels. They all had something they did on a consistent basis that they seemed to need for optimum performance. In my view, the best linguists take their preparation very seriously: step-by-step methods to tackle a translation, the ideal office setup, voice preparation before a long day of simultaneous interpreting, or a deep breath and a wardrobe and resources check prior to taking the stand with a witness. This is something beyond the “homework” part of our preparation; it is something a bit more individual, more personal. We must all figure out what we should be doing in preparation for our task and make a habit of it for the sake of consistent success.

**Criticism is part of the game.** I was a little surprised at many of the reactions that the athletes had to the judges’ scores after a performance. Rather than a look of extreme anger or disappointment at low scores, I perceived introspection, as if each athlete was graciously taking the score as constructive criticism rather than an all-out attack on their skills. This was enlightening because each seemed to be so focused on achieving whatever the judges would call perfection that they did not react like the stereotypical professional athlete who wants to punch some unsuspecting referee’s lights out. We can learn from this, colleagues. Our performance is absolutely subject to criticism, but even when we are being judged by somebody who has not been in our shoes, this feedback is still valuable and worthy of consideration when reflecting on our skills. Rather than getting defensive, we need to be smart and sit back and listen to the message, and its source, and be open to the possibility of polishing even the most honed skills based on the feedback we receive. In the end, no matter who the judge or referee is in a sport or in our profession, he will call it like he sees it, and we will be affected in some fashion.

A great performance is inspiring and educational. Many of the stories told by and about the successful Olympians included the history of why they decided to pursue their sport. Somebody along the way had inspired them and they thought, “I can do that!” True, not everyone who thinks they can achieve Olympic fame will get there, but having a goal to strive for is important and can give great satisfaction and meaning to life. Moreover, the athletes seemed very genuine when they would congratulate each other at the end of a race or performance, and often appeared very attentive when they watched their rivals in action. Whenever I have the opportunity to edit the work of another linguist, I make it a point to learn and be inspired by the way language is expressed or a certain term is rendered. It is educational to watch how my colleagues perform on the witness stand or listen to the interpretation of an important political speech. We cannot make the mistake of closing our minds to improving, even after we have achieved our desired status or position as linguists. Much more than just taking continuing education or passively improving over time, it behooves us to take active steps whenever possible to find these opportunities to be inspired and educated.
“Greatness is for all of us.” This line from a commercial during the Olympics was worth noting. Each of us has something to contribute to our profession. When we make strong efforts to be selected for a team, whether by physical or mental skills, it is our absolute duty to continue to strive to stay on that team. As linguists, we may not get the constant feedback that an Olympian does at the Games, but none of us is immune to that sudden difficult client or highly complex assignment that could make or break us. Although the definition of greatness may vary for each professional in our field, we need to be sure that our resolve to achieve it is fitting for the specialty we profess to practice.

In closing, this short (and, I hope, thought-provoking) list of parallels between the profession of a linguist and an Olympic athlete highlights the fact that our performance matters. No matter how tempting it may be to sit on our laurels when we are experiencing some down time in our day, consistent and focused preparation is how to achieve success. Whether the gold medal is a job well done at the end of a day, the end of a contract, or the day we retire, it has to be an amazing feeling to know that we have done well. From half a world away we have been provided with the ultimate example of achievement in an athlete’s life, giving us an excellent opportunity to be inspired and moved by it in our own professional lives. Go Team Linguists!

We must all figure out what we should be doing in preparation for our task and make a habit of it for the sake of consistent success.

ATA Scholarly Monograph Series XVII

From the Classroom to the Courtroom
A Guide to Interpreting in the U.S. Justice System

Edited by Elena M. de Jongh

John Benjamins Publishing Company

This guide will familiarize prospective court interpreters and students interested in court interpreting with the nature, purpose, and language of pretrial, trial, and post-trial proceedings. Its innovative organization mirrors the progression of criminal cases through the courts, and provides readers with an accessible, easy-to-follow format. It explains and illustrates court procedure and provides interpreting exercises based on authentic material from each successive stage of the judicial process. Supplementary instructional aids include recordings in English and Spanish and a glossary of selected legal terms in context. An ideal reference manual for interpreters!

“Translation. It’s everywhere you look, but seldom seen. This book will help you find it.” Thus begins Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche’s new book, *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*. The book is a compendium of interviews the authors conducted with people involved in all facets of the translation and interpreting professions, focusing on seven different subject areas: Saving Lives and Protecting Rights; Waging War and Keeping the Peace; Doing Business and Crossing Borders; Sharing Stories and Spreading Religion; Partaking in Pleasures and Delighting the Senses; Entertaining Fans and Playing to the Crowd; and Connecting the World and Advancing Technology. In addition to the exhaustive research they conducted for this book, the authors are uniquely qualified to write it: Jost Zetzsche is an ATA-certified English→German translator, while Nataly Kelly is a certified Spanish court interpreter. Jost wrote his PhD dissertation on translation in history and Nataly was a Fulbright scholar in sociolinguistics. Many of us in the translation industry also know Jost as the ultimate translation technology guru and Nataly as a highly regarded researcher and analyst.

As translators and interpreters, we are already familiar with the underlying concepts in *Found in Translation*. Although we do not need convincing that “translation is everywhere,” we really, really need this book, because it is packed with stories (funny, sad, moving, shocking, and thought-provoking) about the impact of our work on the world. Need to convince a client that hiring a professional interpreter might be 1,420 times cheaper than the alternative? You will find a story about that in *Found in Translation*. Wondering how to explain that a multilingual country is stronger, safer, and more competitive than a monolingual one? You will find lots of evidence in *Found in Translation*. Recovering after a headache-inducing translation or interpreting assignment? Pick up *Found in Translation* and you will find stories about some of the less uptight facets of our profession, like translating pornographic movie scripts and interpreting for mail-order bride services. In superbly written, rigorously researched, and perfectly-sized segments, the authors have encapsulated the passion that all of us have for our work and its place in the world.

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**Found in Translation** opens with a riveting anecdote from Nataly’s experience as an over-the-phone interpreter. At almost midnight on a Friday night, she receives a call from a 911 dispatcher and at first assumes that, as is usually the case for that time of night, the call is a wrong number or a noise complaint. After a few moments of silence on the line, Nataly hears a woman whisper “Me va a matar,” and quickly interprets “He’s going to kill me.” As the call continues, the caller, whose voice is barely audible, explains that she is hiding under a bed while being stalked by a man with a gun. It is a stunning example of the book’s point that language is the engine of human interaction, from the mundane to the life-threatening.

In selecting the interviews for this book, the authors did a skillful job of appealing to a broad base of readers. For instance, even if you are familiar with the book’s basic tenets, you might be surprised to learn that the only official bilingual province in Canada is not Quebec, that Nikita Krushchev did not really mean “We’re going to kill everyone in America” when he said “We will bury you,” or that if you are longing to use an ATM machine in Latin, you can satisfy the urge at the Vatican. **Found in Translation** will also give you a rare window into the lives of your colleagues: a UN interpreter who flubs an important term during the swearing-in of a new secretary general (and then has to interpret the General Assembly President’s correction of his mistake); a literary translator who has to figure out why every English speaker in the U.S. can parrot “My name is Sam, Sam I am, I do not like green eggs and ham,” and then decide how to evoke the same response in Spanish speakers; or a linguist in Detroit who creates a “Japan away from Japan” environment for Japanese businesspeople by choosing just the right rice, because “It has to be done the right way, or they will never go back.” You will also meet basketball star Yao Ming’s personal interpreter, a translator who recreates *The Simpsons* in Finnish, and the American Sign Language interpreter who serves as Academy Award-winning actress Marlee Matlin’s bridge between the deaf and hearing worlds.

But **Found in Translation** has plenty to offer the non-linguist, too. Business students would be well-advised to read the authors’ insights on international branding and country-specific localization. Nataly and Jost detail the challenges that Apple encountered in adapting a seemingly simple two-word slogan (“Small Talk,” originally used to market the iPod) for the global market, requiring multiple, culturally-specific iterations even for countries that use the same language. In the same vein, the authors show how Icelandair has made one of the world’s most inscrutable languages into a marketing tool by posting Icelandic lullaby lyrics and their English translations on the seats of its overnight flights. A fascinating segment on the multinational Nestlé conglomerate shows how the company uses translation and localization to create the impression of a local brand around the world, enabling it to sell products ranging from chocolate to low-calorie frozen dinners to instant espresso.

The book also contains some surprising and inspiring insights into the future of the translation and interpreting professions. At Google’s headquarters in Mountain View, California, the authors interview Franz Och, a Google employee who works on Google Translate. This is the point at which many practicing translators’ and interpreters’ hackles normally rise, anticipating that the Google employee is going to...
proclaim the superiority of Google Translate, the irrelevance of human translators and interpreters, and the bleak outlook for anyone trying to make a living through language work. On the contrary, Och offers a balanced view of machine translation’s usefulness, using the examples of Google Translate’s role in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake or the Iranian election protests. He posits that, “When there’s an option in an urgent situation between no translation and a gisted, or approximated, translation, the choice is clear.” When the authors ask Och how long it will take until Google Translate can meet the same quality standards as a human translator, he laughs and says “maybe in 20, or 50, or in 500 years.” So it appears that in the minds of Google Translate’s own developers, human translators and interpreters have little to worry about!

The book’s final interview is with inventor and technological visionary Ray Kurzweil, who points out that the one constant in the world is change, and that most of the jobs that we do today were nonexistent a few decades ago. Kurzweil points to his invention, in the 1980s, of a music synthesizer whose sound was indistinguishable from that of a grand piano, even to professional musicians. Many musicians feared that inventions such as this would put them out of a job, but instead electronic instruments have made music more portable, more accessible, and less expensive. Likewise, Kurzweil, who calls translation “the most high-level type of work one can imagine,” envisions that while technology may change the way we apply our language skills, the demand for what we do will only continue to grow.

From this review, it is probably not difficult to tell that I loved Found in Translation. Admittedly, I read it during several train rides across Europe, while the issues of multilingualism, international business, and the future of translation and interpreting were fresh in my mind. But Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche have truly created a reference work for our times; when English-only laws compete with language access laws, when companies wonder how to market their products to an increasingly multicultural world, and when translators and interpreters wonder what changes the next 10 or 20 years will bring to our professions and our work. Found in Translation starts from a beautifully simple premise—translation is everywhere—and weaves a rich story of the ways in which languages truly do shape the world.

In selecting the interviews for this book, the authors did a skillful job of appealing to a broad base of readers.
English is the language that unites the members of ATA. We have all studied English quite extensively, either as our native language or as an acquired language. Yet there are many myths and challenges in the English language that are particularly worthy of exploration in order to improve linguistic transfer to and from our *lingua franca*. This article examines two such grammatical features of English. A fresh perspective on these issues may be helpful for the teaching and practice of translation and interpreting.

**English Participles**

One source of confusion not only in English but in several other languages as well is the nomenclature employed for the parts of speech known as the “present participle” and “past participle.” The names for these grammatical terms are based on the manner in which a participle is formed. A participial adjective is simply a verb’s participle that modifies a noun or pronoun. It can be a present participle (a verb ending in *-ing*) or a past participle (usually a verb ending in *-ed*). For example, in phrases such as “the woman *wearing* the red dress” or “dogs *trained* by the police,” the present participle “*wearing*” is formed from the present progressive form of the verb; the past participle “*trained*” is formed from the verb’s past tense.

Yet from a functional point of view—which is the main concern of a translator or interpreter—these parts of speech are sorely misnamed. In fact, a participle has no tense. A past participle can describe past, present, or future acts; so can a present participle. To wit:

- The woman *wearing* the red dress *had* the ransom money.
- The woman *wearing* the red dress *has* the ransom money.
- The woman *wearing* the red dress will *have* the ransom money.

Mastering the tools of English informality makes it possible to produce faithful language transfers that have connotations, register, and fluidity similar to the source language.
Dogs trained by the police were able to detect a quantity of cash in excess of $10,000.

Dogs trained by the police are able to detect a quantity of cash in excess of $10,000.

Dogs trained by the police will soon be able to detect quantities of cash in excess of $10,000.

Functionally, these parts of speech do not differ in terms of tense. They differ in what grammarians call “voice.” In other words, they are active participles and passive participles. In the sentences above, the woman is, was, or will be wearing the red dress (active voice), and the dog is, was, or will be trained by the police (passive voice).

In English, participles introduce phrases that are adjectival, modifying nouns, but not all languages have the exact equivalent. In Spanish, for example, the -ndo ending that forms the present progressive tense is also used to form a gerundio, which is strictly adverbial. The -nte form found in phrases such as vendedor ambulante (street vendor) does act as an adjective, but can never introduce a phrase. As a result of such contrasts, present participles need to be expressed in Spanish and several other languages with a phrase whose tense must be specified. In the examples noted above, one would have to identify whether the woman is, was, or will be wearing the red dress. Even the tense of the sentence’s predicate may not be enough to translate the phrase correctly. Perhaps she is wearing a red dress now, and is identified as the person who had, or will have, the ransom money, but at the time of the transaction, the dress adorning her was, or will be, blue. On the other hand, perhaps a photograph of the woman with a suitcase full of money in hand would indeed show a crimson red dress.

In the case of Spanish, while the passive (a.k.a. past) participle can be translated more literally, such a conversion is not always desirable, since Spanish, among other languages, is much less “passive friendly” than English. A similar analysis of time of occurrence may thus be recommendable. Indeed, the sentence “Dogs trained by the police are able to detect ...” also entails a certain degree of ambiguity. Does the sentence refer to a police department that already has such wonder dogs, or is the speaker advocating the acquisition of such dogs in order to fight crimes in the future? These linguistic challenges are more likely to be tackled well if language practitioners are trained to be on the lookout for them.

Similarly, translations into English can become more compact, natural, and sophisticated when a translator’s awareness of the true nature of participles is heightened. The translator can thus choose to specify explicitly the time of occurrence by avoiding a participial phrase or to employ the participle, leaving the identification of time of occurrence to be expressed elsewhere in the text, if at all.

**English Informal Forms**

Several languages distinguish between formal and informal forms, particularly with respect to verbs. Students of Spanish and French, for example, invariably memorize the *tu* form as soon as they start to conjugate their very first verb. Often, they are taught that no such equivalent exists in English, a maxim that is not quite true. Deeply rooted informal forms of English cross the boundaries of dialect. When studied systematically, they can contribute significantly to a sophisticated handling of language.

Take, for example, the grammatically accepted phrase “have to,” which is rendered as “got to” by English speakers of nearly all regions, classes, and educational levels in informal speech. “You’ve got to see that movie; it’s fantastic!” is a perfect choice of words for informal speech. In practice, it is even likely to be rendered as “gotta” by very learned English speakers. Yet if one were to say “You’ve got a right to an attorney” in a court of law, it would shock everyone in the room as a strange and inappropriately informal, even disrespectful, manner of communicating such information. Indeed, I have found such a rendition to be a choice way to illustrate an inappropriate use of the French or Spanish *tu* form to English speakers.

Another example is the ingrained pattern of nearly all native English speakers to use the objective case in the predicate of any sentence that ends with a pronoun, even if the verb employed is the form “to be.” The only exception in the real world of language use where this might be acceptable is a setting where formality is consciously sought. When a stranger calls on the phone, a sense of formality and distance can be created by phrases such as “this is she.” If the call is from a close friend, a fluent English speaker would be hard pressed to use such a phrase, and instead would opt for “it’s me.” No fluent English speaker knocking on a door would answer the question “Who is it?” with the one-word answer “I.” We would all say “Me.” Even the technically erroneous grammar construction “He’s taller than me” is much more normal sounding to most English speakers than “He’s taller than I.”
A third feature that tends to informalize English is the use of contractions. I have yet to hear a judge pronounce “It’s hereby ordered.” Yet contractions are true linguistic gems for composing advertising slogans such as “It’s not nice to fool Mother Nature.” Politicians often create a sense of connection to their constituents using such devices. Take, for example, President Obama’s last State of the Union address, which contained the following carefully crafted paragraph:

These achievements are a testament to the courage, selflessness, and teamwork of America’s armed forces. At a time when too many of our institutions have let us down, they exceed all expectations. They’re not consumed with personal ambition. They don’t obsess over their differences. They focus on the mission at hand. They work together.1

This speech portrays a personal emotional bond between Obama and the troops. Several grammatical devices contribute to portraying such closeness. One device is the use of the conjunctions “they’re” and “don’t.” A second device is the string of one-syllable words “let us down” as opposed to “disappointed us,” which lowers the register and creates familiarity. Finally, the sequence of sentences goes from longer to shorter and from more complex to simpler vocabulary, ending with the three-word sentence, “They work together.” All of this results in a linguistic punch that moves a listener emotionally.

Another good example can be seen in the opening words of Christiane Amanpour’s CNN news magazine this past June: “It’s not us, it’s them. Russia and the United States are hurling charges at each other, a war of accusations over who is giving what deadly weapons to Syria.”2 Here, the phrasing starts by combining the contraction “it’s” with the objective case in the predicate (us/them). Ms. Amanpour is not unaware of the rules of grammar. She broke one here for a reason. The short, cryptic, grammatically “incorrect” phrase attracts attention. So does the simplicity of the phrase “who is giving what.”

Informal language is a useful tool for translators and interpreters in the translation of literature, political writings and speeches, and in the translation of testimony, among other situations. Mastering the tools of English informality makes it possible to produce faithful language transfers that have connotations, register, and fluidity similar to the source language.

Keep Looking at Languages

These are just two examples of prevalent grammatical features of the English language that seem to be receiving less attention than they should, at least from the point of view of this language practitioner. There are several others, ranging from a preference to have our direct objects immediately follow their respective verbs to the use of “such” as both a definite and indefinite determiner (“horses and other such animals” versus “at such time as the board of directors may specify”). I tend to believe that since more human beings are involved in language acquisition activities than in language transfer activities, most language analysis is skewed toward language acquisition functions. Perhaps a thorough reanalysis of our various languages is in order, strictly geared toward the professional needs of language transfer practitioners.

Notes


Translating and interpreting have been in the limelight this year, most notably as the subject of oral arguments for Kouichi Taniguchi v. Kan Pacific Saipan, Ltd. at the U.S. Supreme Court. (The complete transcript of the hearing can be found at www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments/argument_transcripts/10-1472.pdf.) Given the amount of focus on the language professions at the moment, it is apropos to interview two visionary entrepreneurs from the interpreting field about their insights and outlook for the industry.

Barry Slaughter Olsen and Katharine Allen founded InterpretAmerica in 2009 with the express purpose of raising the profile of interpreting. Since 2010, InterpretAmerica has organized a yearly summit that brings together leaders from across the interpreting industry, individual interpreters, and end users of interpreting services. The 4th North American Summit on Interpreting will take place in Washington, DC, June 14-15, 2013.

What trends have you identified in the interpreting industry after the first three summits?

More than anything else, we have seen a growing desire for information about the interpreting industry from all of its players—interpreters, professional associations, technology providers, agency owners, and end users. We think this is why the research and white papers we have commissioned and published as a service to interpreting over the past three years continue to be downloaded, studied, and cited.

This desire for information has dovetailed with increased awareness and acceptance among the diverse stakeholders in our industry. The inaugural summit in 2010 marked the first time that leaders from many interpreting sectors sat in the same room and got acquainted with one another and with the complexities each sector faces. At that time, the lack of mutual awareness across sectors, and even an element of suspicion and skepticism as to the validity of the challenges other sectors face, were notable. As a profession, interpreters have been careful to qualify the kind of interpreting they do and where they do it, leading to an often incorrect assumption that interpreters never cross over from one environment to another.

By this year’s summit, that atmosphere had changed completely. There is now a marked and growing interest in improving communication and collaboration among the various sectors of the interpreting profession (e.g., conference, medical, legal, signed language, etc.). Research, including the Interpreting Marketplace Study commissioned by InterpretAmerica for the first summit, has clearly indicated that there is a desire to collaborate. Professional associations have also realized this. In fact, ATA participates in a monthly conference call with interpreting association leaders in an effort to increase communication among professional leaders.

The rapid integration of technology into most interpreting sectors is also very evident, and something that we have tried to highlight and...
educate about at the summits. In particular, there has been an increasing adoption of social media tools by the profession at all levels—from individual bloggers and LinkedIn accounts, to companies embracing Twitter and Facebook as powerful marketing tools, to professional associations moving heavily into online options for education and networking, such as webinar training sessions. We have observed a growing awareness that as an industry, we must embrace and attempt to channel technology to our own best interests, rather than shy away from it in fear.

Is there an interest/willingness among various industry stakeholders to work with our sector? Are the leaders of the interpreting sector willing to work with one another to reach out to these stakeholders?

Absolutely! One of the most gratifying aspects of the summits has been the response of diverse stakeholders in our field. The willingness and interest are there. So far, the 21st century has been marked by a trend toward collaboration. Interpreting as a whole stands to benefit greatly from the collaborative efforts of all the players in the profession and industry. One excellent example of this is the workgroups that have convened at the summits for the past two years. Competition and rivalries will always exist in a free market, but the need for language services continues to expand. We believe the work undertaken by these workgroups is serving as a foundation upon which the entire profession and industry can build.

That said, one of the realizations that has come from the summits is how much work we still have to do to educate the rest of the world about interpreting and how it fits into related industries. For example, how do we, as an industry, interact successfully with the big technology companies that provide global communication solutions to encourage them to integrate features that make simultaneous interpreting possible when using their products, and to do so before they go to market? The professional workgroups on advocacy and public relations held at the past two summits have helped to define that process. We are very much looking forward to the publication of the white paper on this year’s workgroup, “One Profession, One Voice: Selling the Interpreting Profession to the Public,” led by public relations expert Spencer Critchley.

Can we overcome the much-touted fragmentation in our industry?

We are optimists. So, our answer is a definite yes! InterpretAmerica was born out of a deep frustration of how our industry’s fragmentation was holding the entire profession back. There is a great desire for a stronger, more cohesive framework knitting the profession together, so that each specialized sector can continue to provide the unique expertise required for each setting, but from within a broader context where interpreting in general is better recognized, better paid, and has the resources necessary to produce capable and competent professionals across the board. Each year, we are seeing less fragmentation and more collaboration and synergy.

Furthermore, the growing trend for individual interpreters to practice across sectors is helping to end this fragmentation, as are the technological breakthroughs of the past 10 years, which have given us access to more information about interpreting than ever before. Twenty years ago, it was difficult to find much about the profession, much less meet actual interpreters outside of your own workplace. Web 2.0 and social media have changed all that. Specialization will always exist and interpreters will always have their preferred work environments and areas of expertise, but that does not mean that we cannot work together to address issues affecting all of us.

Interpreter training is such an important requirement to ensure competent services. Are there new viable training options for those who cannot afford the time and money that a formal degree program requires? Are there any vetted online courses being offered?

The development of interpreter training and education has been a focus of the summits from the very beginning. Numerous institutions with interpreter training programs have participated, from online course...
providers to accredited institutions of higher learning with undergraduate and graduate degrees in interpreting. We can say with certainty that the number of offerings is growing, particularly online training courses. We expect these only to increase in number and variety, given existing continuing education requirements set by certification programs and professional association rules. There is currently no single organization or process for vetting these courses.

Traditional academe does not move quickly, and the creation and approval of new interpreting degrees at accredited universities and colleges take a great deal of time and effort. Even so, several new programs have been launched, and there are several more in the works in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Clear paths into interpreting that pass through institutions of higher learning are one of the best ways to “professionalize” what we do, but higher education is going through radical change brought on by technology and the new learning models it has enabled. Even so, these degree programs, particularly at the MA level, continue to be the “gold standard” for employers in many areas of interpreting. One thing is certain: interpreting needs clear standards for training and education. It is our hope that the workgroup that met at this year’s summit to discuss the creation of a national interpreter trainer consortium will provide a roadmap forward. The workgroup was facilitated by two well-known trainers of both signed and spoken languages.

There has been much talk about technology, from over-the-phone interpreting and video relay interpreting to devices used by individuals on the job, such as the iPad, iPhone, MP3 recorders, and the Smart Pen. Have you seen any of these technologies break out of the ranks and dominate a particular field?

Any technology that makes it easier and more cost effective to deliver quality interpreting services will find a solid foothold in the market. This is why over-the-phone interpreting and video relay interpreting have grown into a billion-dollar industry.

It is interesting to note that all of the technologies you mention were designed for mass markets, not specifically for interpreters. Individual interpreters (usually the technophiles) find these new tools and then figure out how to apply them to their professional activity to increase quality, performance, or productivity. Interpreting is a comparatively small industry, and few, if any, technologies have been developed specifically with an interpreter’s needs in mind. But when you couple new platforms like the tablet computer and smartphone with the relatively low cost of developing customized “apps,” there is an amazing window of opportunity for enterprising interpreters and computer programmers to focus at last on designing and producing programs that can be created to meet interpreters’ specific needs.

Tablet computers, like the iPad, have already given interpreters access to information and resources that were unavailable previously in many work environments. In conference interpreting, these devices will probably be the gateway toward a “paperless booth” for interpreters. This shift will not come without difficulty and will require adjustments, but the interpreters who adapt to this new technology-enabled environment will remain relevant, while those who require printed documents to do their work will see their opportunities diminish.

However, the real technology to keep an eye on is cloud computing. Although not possible yet, “the cloud” has the potential to deliver high-quality video and multiple channel audio across multiple platforms, making simultaneously interpreted videoconferences widely available around the world. Once this becomes a reality, it will have a dramatic effect on the interpreting industry across all sectors.

What topics are you considering for the 2013 InterpretAmerica Summit?

Anyone who has attended these events before knows that we take a unique approach to programming. Each summit allows us to take the pulse of the profession and present the most relevant and up-to-date information to a broad cross section of stakeholders. Based on feedback from this year’s summit, it is safe to say that the various workgroups will be back and that technology and innovation will be an important component next year.

Attendees have made it clear that
One of the realizations that has come from the summits is how much work we still have to do to educate the rest of the world about interpreting and how it fits into related industries.

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The ATA Chronicle  ■  October 2012
When I first became certified as a court interpreter, the biggest challenge I encountered did not involve terminology, but procedure.

Even though my home office is well-stocked with fantastic dictionaries, textbooks, and resources about the American and Mexican legal systems and civil procedure, and I have taken classes in criminal and civil procedure, I was never quite sure what to expect during the many types of legal situations for which I interpret. I had a hard time, for instance, finding out exactly how civil depositions are conducted. I looked high and low, and found limited information, so I learned it by doing it. Perhaps there is a resource out there with which I am unfamiliar that explains the processes well (please let me know if there is, dear readers!), but I wanted to share my informal (and by no means exhaustive) list of procedural structure with you.

* Most of the civil cases for which I have interpreted during depositions revolve around car accidents or some type of personal injury (think slip and fall). There are also many others, such as construction defects. Most depositions last one to two hours.

  * Depositions are usually held at law offices, either at the office of the plaintiff’s or the defendant’s attorney. There are usually at least five parties present: the deponent, his or her counsel, opposing counsel, court reporter, and the interpreter. Complex cases with multiple plaintiffs and defendants can have up to a dozen people in the room.

  * In general, the party or law firm who requested the deposition will pay. (This is very important with direct clients, so be sure to clear this up beforehand.) Be sure to get the case name and the deponent’s name for invoicing purposes.

  * Court reporters will be present at all depositions. They are taking down the record in English only, so your interpretation into English will become part of the official record. Be sure to sit next to the court reporter so he or she can hear you. The deponent should sit next to you on the other side with his or her counsel. The opposing counsel will traditionally sit across the table in a typical conference room setting.

  * The court reporter will swear you in. Be sure not to agree to “faithfully translate.” As annoying as it might be, I always correct the record so that it states “interpret.”

  * After that, the court reporter will swear in the deponent. This is when you start interpreting simultaneously.

  * Keep a blank piece of paper handy on which you will jot down difficult names and places for the court reporter, who will have to produce the transcript. I usually write down things like Eulalia, Amecameca, Tuxtla Gutiérrez—generally cities and names that are challenging for non-Spanish speakers to understand.

  * The deposing counsel will introduce him or herself and explain to the deponent how the process works. When interpreting into Spanish (or any other language) for the deponent, I usually lean close to the deponent and speak in a softer voice so I do not disrupt the court reporter, who is taking down the English for the record. When interpreting into English, I speak up so the court reporter can hear me. Portable interpreting equipment is traditionally not used in depositions.

  * Attorneys love to object to each other’s questions. Unfortunately—and attorneys obviously know this—there is no judge to issue a ruling on the objection. The attorneys are just trying to get on the record with their objection, and you must interpret the objection, which can be confusing for the
Wizardry of Simultaneous Interpreting

(Posted by Eugene Alper on his blog, alperisms: on life and other distractions, http://eugenealper.blogspot.com.)

A few weeks ago, I watched a simultaneous interpreter in action. Four days in a row, six hours a day, I witnessed wizardry.

Conference interpreting is a rare assignment, well-paid and highly prized. Interpreters look forward to it nervously and with great anticipation, not because of the money, but because it is their star performance.

The star performance takes place in a dark booth. There, in front of the microphone, life narrows down to a tunnel: the interpreter puts on her headphones and the world ceases to exist. She (let’s call her NK) tunes herself to the speaker, his mood and manner, his voice and gestures. She turns into his alter ego, for he will now speak through her voice and she is his oracle.

Saying she is talented would explain away too readily and detract from the character and hard work. She has put in a lot of effort—hours of reading and research—to become familiar with the topic, understand it in a different language and find succinct equivalents and memorize them. Only yesterday she interpreted for a criminal court hearing; today it is the latest business model for running a successful fitness club. Preparation is essential.

Still, she is talented. Because aside from her preparation, beyond the memorized words and expressions, something unconscious takes place. As quick as her thinking is, she could not consciously go through all of the options and choose a sentence. It happens on a different and deeper level. She says what she says in a moment of creation where there is no thinking and no mental control. Her talent is in the fact that she allows herself to exist in the moment, like the pianist who casts aside his technique and lets something unnamable rise from the depth of his soul to the surface. She is the dancing dervish—peeking into the booth, you can see her wave her arms, make faces, move her feet—she is possessed by the spirit of simultaneous interpreting. Her talent is in the fact that her mind is split in two: one part is listening and remembering what the speaker is saying; the other part is saying what the speaker said five seconds ago. Her talent is in the fact that more than 200,000 words of modern Russian are in a tiny bubble bouncing on the tip of her tongue, readily jumping out in millions of combinations within the split of a second. Her talent is in the fact that when life starts hurling at her, she is still racing. Fragments of sentences, missed words, vague thoughts—she heard them all but perhaps did not have the time to render. When the speaker said that, she could have interpreted it more elegantly. There was something more precise she could have said, but what was it? Can’t remember now … then the speaker said something else that…

Even wizards fall asleep, sometimes sitting on the couch. It is good that the kettle is electric and will turn off automatically.

The Entrepreneurial Linguist Continued

deponent. Usually, their counsel will instruct them if they should answer the question or not. Attorneys will also say things like, “For the record, I think defense counsel is being unreasonable,” which you must also interpret.

Part two of this series will follow next month. I hope this information has helped you gain some insight into what is ahead if you get called to interpret at a deposition.
For many years, ATA’s Certification Committee has only published an overall pass rate for the Certification Program, which was “under 20%.” While true, it is unsatisfying for many candidates and does not accurately communicate the variety and diversity of the Certification Program. Therefore, at ATA’s Annual Conference in Boston last fall, the Certification Committee decided that, effective in 2012, it will publish pass rates for most individual language pairs, using an 11-year moving average (i.e., in 2012, we publish the average for 2001-2011, inclusive). The 11-year pass rates will be published each year for the preceding period once all examinations, reviews, and appeals have been completed.

To describe the results effectively and avoid distortion, we have divided the information into two groups: languages with 40 or more examinations in the reporting period, and languages with extremely low volumes (ELV),
defined as fewer than 40 examinations in the reporting period. In the following, we report statistics summarized for the entire group and broken down by these two groups.

The overall pass rate for the Certification Program from 2001 to 2011 is 15.64%. (This is comparable to the pass rates for the translation exam given by Australia’s National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd., which is around 15%, and for the California court interpreter exam, which is 16%. The pass rate of the federal court interpreter exam is only 4%.)

A total of 7,585 candidates took the examination in 29 language pairs, and 1,186 examinations were rated “pass.” Of these language pairs, 19 have 40 or more examinations over this period. In Table 1, the individual language pairs are listed in alphabetical order with the number of examinations and the pass rate.

Ten of the 29 language pairs each had fewer than 40 examinations over this period. (Please see Table 2 on page 30.) Their combined pass rate is 42.42%. These language pairs have been combined in the tables shown here, for two reasons. First, the largest number of examinations in this group is 25, that is, just over two examinations per year. Because of this small number of examinations, any average that we might calculate would be unreliable, since even one or two individuals passing or failing would cause the pass rate to fluctuate widely. Second, some of these languages have not been offered for the entire 11-year period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English.

Two figures exceed one standard deviation: the aggregated extremely low volume languages (1.75% of all examinations), and Italian-English (0.62%). Both of these extreme figures represent language pairs with low volumes (averaging four examinations per year or fewer), where a slightly higher or lower number of passing exams can greatly skew the individual average. We would future, we will add in such smaller-volume languages and report on them individually when the number of examinations rises above 40 in the reporting period.

The graph on page 28 shows the same information in graphical form. The language pairs are shown on the x-axis, sorted by pass rate. The left-side y-axis is labeled in percent and relates to the red line with blue diamonds showing the individual pass rates. The right-side y-axis is labeled in whole numbers and relates to the blue vertical bars showing the number of examinations in each language pair. The dashed horizontal red line shows the mean pass rate of 15.64%, while the dashed horizontal yellow lines show +/- one standard deviation. The combined graph shows several pieces of information together: the pass rate for any individual language pair, the number of examinations in that pair, where that pair falls within the continuum of pass rates, how close the pass rate of that pair is to the mean, and whether the pass rate for that group falls within one standard deviation of the mean.

The pass rates generally fall within one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English. Two figures exceed one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English. Two figures exceed one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English. Two figures exceed one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English. Two figures exceed one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period. The range extends from a low of 6.25% for Polish-English to a remarkably high figure of 53.19% for Italian-English. Two figures exceed one standard deviation: in the large volume language pairs English-Spanish and Spanish-English, and in language pairs with more moderate numbers in the period.

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expect the figures for language pairs with small volumes to vary more strongly in the future.

Over 97% of the examinations were taken in language pairs whose pass rates fall within one standard deviation. Considering the number of individual graders and language pairs involved, the pass rates are relatively consistent. All examination passages are selected and all candidate translations are graded according to the same well-defined criteria, and all graders receive the same training in grading and use the same tools (Grading Flowchart and Framework). The individual language pairs have separate groups of graders (i.e., the German-English group is composed of different individuals than the English-German group, so there is no connection between the pass rates in opposite directions).

We hope that this detailed information on pass rates will be interesting and useful to our members and potential candidates for ATA’s certification examination. In addition to reporting the 11-year average pass rate each year, the Certification Committee has started to research various factors affecting the examinations, and will report on the results in coming years.

### Table 2: Extremely low volume (ELV) language pairs with fewer than 40 certification examinations, 2001-2011, n=10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Pair</th>
<th>Number of Examinations</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Examinations (n=7,585)</th>
<th>Years Offered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Croatian-English</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish-English</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish-English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.07%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian-English</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.25%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Croatian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Dutch</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.30%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Finnish</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Hungarian</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
<td>&gt;11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Swedish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-Ukrainian</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals:</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.75%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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](http://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.
When we talk about what we do and who we are, we generally have one thing really going for us: we are passionate about what we do. Sure, we are frustrated sometimes about the monotony of large jobs or the poor pay or the low status that we think translators have, but when it comes down to it, we love language and we love our work. Some of us are better at communicating that passion to outsiders than others, but the vast majority of us are really bad at talking about one thing: machine translation. We hem and haw and we do not really know what to say. What is the problem here? There is hardly any conversation where it does not come up—after all, that is what people are hearing about in the media all the time, right?

With this in mind, I thought it would be helpful to start gathering some talking points that might make us a little more self-assured in how we talk about machine translation. In my opinion, here are two pillars that can form the cornerstones of our discussions:

**Machine translation is great because it fulfills an important purpose for the average consumer.** Machine translation provides a gist (or approximated) translation that quite often offers a pretty good idea of the content of any given webpage, e-mail, or tweet. You and I know this is true because we have all used it for exactly that purpose. It is also important to recall that this is especially true for language communities with less general access to data in their language (if they happen to belong to one of the 66 languages currently supported between Google Translate and Bing Translator).

**Machine translation is a completely different activity than that performed by translators.** Human translation, like any human activity, is not guaranteed to be successful, but with the right processes in place, the likelihood of success is extremely high. Contrast that with translation by a computer: if the machine translation system works well, the likelihood of success is exactly as great as the mathematical probability that the computer can apply. Think about how communication works. Is it always based on the logic of math? No, it is based on the context of circumstance and text—something that only a translator can follow or recreate.

There are plenty of points to be made that fall between these cornerstones, from the powerful ways machine translation can be used for large-scale text analysis purposes to the impact of a constant barrage of sub-par machine-translated texts on the language sensibilities of the average consumer. But what is important for us is to present ourselves and our profession confidently when it comes to the topic of machine translation. If we do not do it, who will? And tellingly, it is these very discussions that can lead to plenty of translation and consulting opportunities connected with questions of machine translation. So do not be caught unprepared. Assemble those lucid and compelling talking points for your next elevator pitch or cocktail party or sales call, and be prepared to shine as the undisputed expert on machine translation.

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Talking Points

- Federal Bureau of Investigation
  The Internet Crime Complaint Center
  www.ic3.gov
- National White Collar Crime Center
  www.nw3c.org

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The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost is the co-author of *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*, a perfect source for replenishing your arsenal of information on how human translation and machine translation each play important parts in the broader world of translation.
Illegal Drugs Terminology for Judiciary Interpreters

Reviewed by: Virginia Pérez-Santalla

Authors: M. Eta Trabing and Alex Trabing

Publisher: Berkana Language Center

Publication date: 2010

Number of pages and/or entries:
Total of 293 pages: 96 pages (dictionary); 24 pages (English-Spanish glossary of drug slang); 9 pages (Spanish-English glossary of street names and common terms for drugs); 22 pages (drug screening and testing information in English); 11 pages (screening and testing glossary); 123 pages (information about drugs); 1 page (bibliography and source information).

ISBN: 978-088431-507-0

Price: $75

Available from: www.eberkana.us/products/illegal-drugs-terminology

Type of work: Dictionary, glossary, drug information compendium

The Illegal Drugs Terminology for Judiciary Interpreters is a soft-cover, spiral-bound dictionary. The paper is thin, so there is some show-through of text from one side of the page to the other. The font is a very legible size.

The first section is 123 pages and contains very thorough information (in English) about drugs, including their official names and, in many cases, their street names. This section also describes the ingestion method, medicinal uses, and effects. It has a detailed explanation about meth labs and hazards. There are many pictures of the drugs, plants, and packaging, albeit sometimes they are not that clear. Other topics covered include customs, the border patrol, and money laundering.

The dictionary section has a large amount of terminology from the world of drug trafficking and usage, including many street slang phrases. I would say that this section would be helpful to legal interpreters as well as translators and transcribers who specialize in drug cases and terminology. Looking up terms is easy since the dictionary follows the standard alphabetical order.

There is a large amount of filler words that can easily be found in any dictionary. Even though these terms could be related to the effects of drug usage, their meanings are not obscure. Below are a few that fall in this category, together with the Spanish equivalent term(s) as they appear in this dictionary:

- **acne**: (n) acné, enfermedad de la piel con granos y asperezas
- **beer**: (n) cerveza
- **cancer**: (n) cáncer, existen muchos tipos de cáncer
- **drowsiness**: (n) somnolencia, modorra, sopor
- **music**: (n) música
- **pain**: (n) dolor // vb estar adolorido o dolorido, sentir dolor
- **purify**: (vb) purificar, purificado
- **sun**: (n) sol

There are words that you might think are fillers when given a cursory look, but you will soon discover the drug-related variations if you keep reading. Here is an example where one word can have different drug-related meanings:

- **rush**: (n) prisa, apuro // vb correr, darse prisa, apurarse
- **rush/flash**: (n) euforia o volada de gran alegria (con drogas) // (adj) (Spanglish) cargado, subido a mil // vb izar, volar, subir, estar a mil
- **rush**: (street name for amyl nitrite/nitrate and for butyl nitrite)

The Spanish-English glossary of street and common drug names is very thorough. For example, there are several street names for marijuana that seem, to me, less common than those universally known, including *sinse*, *Santa Marta*, and *vaciladora*.

There is a 22-page appendix, in English, which explores drug screening and testing. The appendix will help an interpreter be better informed of all the screening and testing processes that occur in most cases before having a first encounter with the defendant. At the end of the appendix there is an English-Spanish glossary. The glossary includes valuable terminology for those who deal with drug cases, but again, I found a fair number of filler words that are easily found in a regular dictionary. For example:

- **analysis**: (n) análisis
- **blood**: (n) sangre
- **coil**: (n) espiral
- **detector**: (n) detector
- **filter**: (n) filtro
• lungs: (n) pulmones
• oven: (n) horno

The page that mentions the sources the authors consulted when developing this dictionary shows many valuable links to websites that can provide even more terminology. The authors also include suggestions on how to find terms in Spanish if they cannot be found in this dictionary. There is also information about a downloadable United Nations dictionary on drugs and crime.

Overall Evaluation

Overall, I consider the dictionary and glossary sections very useful. If the prosecution or defense makes material available to the interpreter before he or she becomes fully involved in the case, the dictionary could be very helpful when preparing for the trial. The dictionary could also be very useful to a transcriber and translator when encountering obscure street drug terminology.

I do question the need, when interpreting, for all of the detailed drug information in English at the beginning of the book. Even though it is a very informative section, the dictionary and glossary should suffice if there is enough information provided by the legal system before the interpreter gets fully involved. If the interpreter is in the dark about the details of the case before the trial, the assistance of a partner in looking up terms will be invaluable. Also, being able to look up terms in this dictionary onsite and consulting with a legal partner, when allowed by the court, would also be priceless. The information provided in this dictionary will be very enlightening for someone who is fairly new to court interpreting, and for interpreters with somewhat more experience. It opens up an unknown world. However, I believe that the introductory section could be more useful for transcribers and translators since, unfortunately, more often than not, interpreters do not receive all of the information required ahead of time to prepare for trials or interviews properly.

Virginia Pérez-Santalla, CT, became an ATA-certified English→Spanish translator in the 1980s. She was classified as a New Jersey Master Interpreter in 1989. In 1993, she passed the Administrative Office of the Courts interpreter’s examination. She is also an experienced conference interpreter. She served as the assistant administrator of ATA’s Spanish Language Division from 2000 to 2004. She was elected to ATA’s Board of Directors in 2004, and was re-elected in 2006. In 2007, she was elected secretary of ATA. After her two terms as a secretary ended in 2011, she was reelected as a member of ATA’s Board of Directors. Contact: virginiasps@gmail.com.

French-American Foundation / Florence Gould Foundation
26th Annual Translation Prize

$10,000 will be awarded for the best English translation of French in both fiction and nonfiction. Translations must have been published first in the U.S. between January 1 and December 31, 2012. All categories of work are eligible in fiction and nonfiction, with the exception of poetry, technical, scientific and reference works, and children’s literature.

Deadline: December 31, 2012
For submission details: www.frenchamerican.org/tp-submissions
No worry-free profession exists on the globe. Even if, as a freelance translator, you always have an opportunity to choose reasonable deadlines for your work, there is still the nagging worry of how big a bite ever-more-high-tech machine translation will take out of your market in, say, 2015. Or how big a bite income taxes will take from your profits. Or whether your own high-tech machinery might suddenly die during a job. And setting those factors aside, there is still the humanitarian worry concerning the continuous snuffing out of languages of very limited diffusion. Or the even more gut-wrenching humanitarian worry about interpreters being in harm’s way in war and terrorism zones. All in all, this profession can supply the chronic worrier with plenty of raw material for his or her obsession.

New Queries
(Dutch-English 10-12.1) The last two words of this long sentence in a Belgian employment contract dealing with taxes are the problem: XXX verbindt er zich toe om het advieskantoor de noodzakelijke informatie te bezorgen met het oog op het opstellen van de belastingaangifte en, in het bijzonder, het totaal van de inkomsten ontvangen door het fiscaal tehuiss. Try it if you are able.

(English-Hungarian 10-12.2) Evidently some military technology continues to elude everyday usage, like “spike gun.” It brought nothing to mind when it appeared in this sentence: “Aside from a range of standard guns, like a pistol, machine gun, and shotgun, you also have more advanced weaponry like a spike gun, remote controllable grenade launcher, or sniper rifle that allows you to slow time.” Is there something about this sentence that makes you suspect that the context might have to do with video games? In any case, Hungarian is needed.

(English-Italian 10-12.3) Oh no, a multiple-choice question! Embedded in this physical training query, though, is the answer, so check out what “biasing” might mean in this context and what an Italian equivalent might be: “Targeting is intentionally programming workouts to _____, while biasing is intentionally programming workouts to _____.” [Choices:] a) assess performance, develop a specialty; b) develop a specialty, improve a weakness; c) improve a weakness, develop a specialty; or d) develop a specialty, assess performance.

(English-Romanian 10-12.4) There is an eel-like vagueness about the problem word “instrumentality” in this political science query. The term appears in the following sentence: “Agents acting in an official capacity for or on behalf of a government agency, department, instrumentality, or public organization.”

(English-Spanish 10-12.5) Obviously related to the Olympics, this gymnastics query goes into the nitty-gritty of technical terms with “an uber technical hardflip to backside 50/50 grind,” although perhaps, given the level of difficulty, that is not enough context. So we will add this: “Last year’s event was won by Rino Herman, who not only took the overall prize, but also scooped best trick with an uber technical hardflip to backside 50/50 grind.” This could be the hardest query of 2012, so good luck.

(Swedish-German [English] 10-12.10) The question for this almost contextless problem word is whether prickrör, referring to a plastic product, could be the same thing as Punkrohr. As a single word appearing in the heading of a quality control specification, it is opaque to the nth degree, but at least we know that it is a plastic item whose quality needs to be checked. English is acceptable as an answer, although the original query did not involve English.
Replies to Old Queries

(Danish-English 7-12.2) (rulkeskakt): Heidi Ecchols and Dan Lufkin are in virtually total agreement about this one. It means “scroll bar,” in this case the horizontal scroll bar that can be made longer by dragging on the handle to the left of said scroll bar. If vertically aligned, it would remind one of an elevator shaft (skakt), says Yngve Roennike. The original context sentence on page 34 of the July issue mentioned an opdelningshåndtag, and that could be a handle separating the two areas, above and below (i.e., a slider). The way it is portrayed in the context sentence, it is perhaps a split-screen handle.

(Dutch-English 7-12.1) (rilkoorts): The entire phrase Plots ontstaan van rilkoorts looks like “sudden chills” to Randall Condra. Bryan Crumpler explains that this ailment is a type of high fever or flu causing shivers throughout the body. Imre Takacs calls them “shivers” or “cold shivers.” Dan Lufkin notes a somewhat antiquated English term for it, “rigor,” a classic sign of septicaemia or blood poisoning.

(English-Spanish 4-12.6) (candido): Victoria Imas-Duchovny is in favor of caramelizado for this. Example: batatas caramelizadas.

(German-Italian [English] 7-12.5) (Staderhebung): Alex Schwartz has never seen this word previously, but given the context of die älteste Stadt, it is reasonable to conjecture it means “elevation to the status of a town.” This would seem to be the opposite of the situation described in Gilbert and Sullivan’s comic opera The Mikado, where a town received a threat to be demoted to a village if no execution occurred in the near future.

(Norwegian-English 7-12.7) (utvalgsansvarlig): Perhaps, says Heidi Ecchols, “selection manager” could be used for this, depending on what he or she is in charge of selecting. The term possibly could also mean a “hiring manager” or someone in charge of choosing products (“product selection manager”). The term is often used in education, where it refers to the person in charge of addressing education majors or programs of study (linje og utvalgansvarlig). Dan Lufkin would like, in translation, to elevate this person to the status of an officer, so he offers this for the entire sentence: “A verbal decision on this will be provided to the selection officer of X Company at the end of November.” But the utvalg could also mean “committee,” in which case the translation would read “…to the officer responsible for the committee for X Company.”

(Portuguese-English 7-12.8) (ânimo de novar): Alan Clarke took apart the entire sentence, for which we are grateful. It is found in full on page 34 of the July issue. Novação can be translated as “renewal,” and a renewal implies retention of all obligations contained in the original agreement. Aditamento translates as “amendment,” implying a change in the obligations found in the original agreement. Animo, with its multiple meanings, should be rendered as “intention.” Putting this all together, Alan proposes the following for the entire sentence: “The present amendment does not constitute a renewal, since the parties do not have any intention of renewing the obligations assumed in the agreement that is herein amended.”

(Russian-English 5-12.13) (овчина-голяк): Shifra Kilov states that this term refers specifically to sheepskin with a wool length up to 1.5 centimeters, used as fur. For a wool length from 1.5 to 4.0 centimeters, it is called овчина-полушерстная (“semi-woolen”). For a wool length longer than 4.0 centimeters, it is called овчина-шерстная (“woolen”). As for голяк, note that гольё is also a kind of sheepskin with its wool completely removed that is used as leather. For obscure matters like this, Shifra consults the Экспортно-импортный словарь, Внешторгиздат (Moscow, 1953, volume 2, pages 448-449).

(Russian-English 7-12.9) (фактурный): Neil Stephens, a new member (welcome!) proposes “well-cast,” in the sense of having elevated public stature as well as physical attributes to match. Neil is almost, but not quite, willing to stretch the meaning a bit and use “stately” for this.

We are back at high tide in this column. Do not change the flow! Thanks for the generous responses.

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Twitter: http://twitter.com.atanet
Humor and Translation

Curiouser and Curiouser

Mark Herman
mnh18@columbia.edu

When electronic computers were coming into their own in the 1950s and 1960s, they were gigantic machines that could fill a high school gymnasium. There were some who envisioned them merely as number-crunching machines with letters needed only for headings, so why bother with anything other than upper-case English letters? Even when it became obvious that word processing was going to be of major use, many chauvinistically thought the English alphabet would be sufficient. It is not, and, after a series of complicated fits and starts, we now have Unicode, with its potential Universal Character Set. But the translator wanting to type Balinese or N'Ko into his or her computer might still have trouble finding suitable printing and screen fonts.

Coming to the rescue is Michael Everson, and I thank Jack Thiessen for informing me about him.

Michael Everson, born in Norristown, Pennsylvania, and now based in Westport, County Mayo, Ireland, is an expert in the writing systems of the world, one of the co-authors of the Unicode Standard, and a contributing editor and Irish National Representative to the committee responsible for the development and maintenance of the Universal Character Set. He is a linguist, typesetter, and font designer who has contributed to the encoding of many scripts and characters—a veritable alphabetician to the world.

And so, on Everson’s website, www.evertype.com, it is possible to read about and purchase fonts for more alphabets than probably anywhere else. Evertype also publishes many books in and about Celtic languages such as Cornish and Irish.

But another obsession of Everson’s is a single book, or rather two books, Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865), and its sequel, Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There (1871), by Lewis Carroll, the pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Though many translations of the famous poem “Jabberwocky” from Through the Looking-Glass are known, less well known are the many translations of both books in their entirety, which have inspired and tormented translators with their word play and twisted logic almost from the day the originals were published.

And Everson seems to have in his catalog almost all of the versions, from early Victorian efforts to Jack Thiessen’s own recent Mennonite low German version Dee Erlännsse von Alice em Wundalaund. As well as the expectable French, German, Italian, and Swedish translations, there are versions in Latin, Esperanto, and Low Saxon, and, in keeping with Everson’s Celtic interests, Cornish, Irish, Manx, Scots, Ulster Scots, and Welsh. But then there are also many parodies of the originals, retellings of the originals (including one in words of one syllable), and many spinoffs of the originals by other authors, including one turning the female Alice into a male Alix. There are also many different editions of the originals, illustrated and unillustrated, annotated and unannotated. One is the original story reprinted in the Nyctographic Square Alphabet invented by Carroll himself so that he could take notes in the dark! Carroll invented the writing instrument he called the “Nyctograph” in 1891, in frustration at the process of “getting out of bed at 2 a.m. on a winter night, lighting a candle, and recording some happy thought which would probably be otherwise forgotten.” The website’s notes call this version “A real puzzler, perfect for the code-breaker and font aficionado.”

Carroll’s works remain a gold mine for translators, a chance to demonstrate, or to attempt to demonstrate, a facility for language manipulation equal to that of Carroll. It is ironic that one of Carroll’s characters in Through the Looking Glass believed that no such facility was actually needed, because, “‘When I use a word,’ Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, ‘it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.’”

Submit items for future columns via e-mail to mnh18@columbia.edu (that is 18, not el-8) or via snail mail to Mar Herman, 2222 Westview Drive, Nashville, TN 37212-4123. 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.

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.
New Certified Members

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

**English into Spanish**
- Carlos González-Rivera
  Lappersdorf, Germany

**English into Swedish**
- Birgitta I. Swärm
  Hägersten, Sweden

**Spanish into English**
- James F. McMillan
  Louisville, CO
- Stephen Volante
  Lexington, MA

Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

- Maria A. Aguada
  North Shore City,
  Auckland, New Zealand
- Suraj Joshi
  Dollard-des-Ormeaux,
  Quebec, Canada
- Jacqueline S. Klesing
  Parkville, MO
- Jan Schuster
  Pompano Beach, FL
Upcoming Events

November 16-18, 2012
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Annual Convention & World Languages Expo
Philadelphia, PA
www.actfl.org

November 21-23, 2012
Languages and the Media
9th International Conference on Language Transfer in Audiovisual Media
Berlin, Germany
www.languages-media.com

January 3-6, 2013
Modern Language Association
128th Annual Convention
Boston, MA
www.mla.org/convention

January 18-20, 2013
International Medical Interpreters Association
Annual Conference
Miami Beach, FL
www.imiaweb.org/conferences

January 25-27, 2013
ATA Translation Company
Division Conference
13th ATA-TCD Conference
“A Recipe for Business Growth: 10 Ingredients”
Orlando, FL
www.ata-tcd.com

January 25-27, 2013
ATA Translation Company Division Conference
13th ATA-TCD Conference
“A Recipe for Business Growth: 10 Ingredients”
Orlando, FL
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May 17-19, 2013
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
34th Annual Conference
St. Louis, MO
www.najit.org

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KNOWING MATTERS

NSA has a critical need for individuals with the following language capabilities:
- Arabic
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- Persian-Dari
- Persian-Farsi
- Russian
- South and Central Asian languages
- Somali
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