In this issue:
ATA 2012 Elections: Candidate Statements
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ATA 2012 Elections: Candidate Statements

ATA will hold its regularly scheduled election to elect three directors.

Settling the Boundaries in Diplomatic Translation

By Joseph P. Mazza

How does one define diplomatic translation, and are there special qualities one should ascribe to the diplomatic translator? Read on to gain some insight on this topic from the head of the Translating Division at the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Language Services.

Translating for Television: A Peek Into Another World

By Sarah Alys Lindholm

Learn some of the ins and outs of what it takes to localize your favorite television shows.

10 Things You Should Know About Automatic Terminology Extraction

By Uwe Muegge

A small investment in automatic terminology extraction can yield a big return in efficiency and client satisfaction.

COLUMNS

From the President
From the President-Elect

DEPARTMENTS

Letter to the Editor
Standard Issue
The Entrepreneurial Linguist
Blog Trekker
Interpreters Forum
GeekSpeak
Member News
ATA Certification Exam Information
New Certified Members
Active and Corresponding Membership Review
Dictionary Review
The Translation Inquirer
Humor and Translation
Upcoming Events
Sarah Alys Lindholm has been working as a Japanese–English translator since late 2003, specializing mainly in television and related media (film, video games, artist and actor pieces, comics, and traditional print stories). Representative works include Eden of the East, Guilty Crown, The Harimaya Bridge, Princess Jellyfish, .hack//Quantum, and Yugo the Negotiator. She is also a quality assurance translator for FUNimation Entertainment. You can find her on LinkedIn and her website (http://sal.detailwoman.net). Contact: sarahalys@gmail.com.

Joseph P. Mazza is chief of the Translating Division at the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Language Services (LS), which has been providing translating and interpreting support to the president and secretary of state for over two centuries. After receiving a BA in international relations from The George Washington University, he worked as a translator of Russian and Romance languages at the Navy Department before joining LS in 1989. He worked as a translator, reviewer, and Romance languages branch chief at LS before assuming his current position in 2006. He also enjoyed a 10-year nighttime career as an instructor of English as a second language. Contact: mazzajp2@state.gov.

Uwe Muegge has more than 15 years of experience in translation and localization, having worked in leadership functions on both the vendor and buyer sides of the industry. He has published numerous articles on translation tools and processes, and taught computer-assisted translation and terminology management courses at the college level in both the U.S. and Europe. He has been with CSOFT since 2008, and currently serves as senior translation tools strategist for North America. Contact: uwe.muegge@mis.edu.

American Translators Association
53rd Annual Conference
October 24–27, 2012
www.atanet.org/conf/2012

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SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

The growing practice of moving resources online is changing the way we work, but also how we communicate and take care of a myriad of everyday chores. For instance, installing a second computer monitor eliminated the need to print scanned documents in my office, which in turn led to sizeable paper savings. Such changes in text display are just one small example of a major shift occurring in our work and all around us. As you can probably confirm in your own practice, paper-based dictionaries are no longer our first go-to resource to look up terminology, and you probably have noticed your paper files growing thinner as well.

In line with saving resources while providing relevant information, ATA is keeping up with the trend toward reducing printed material in a number of different ways. This year, we stopped offering the printed Membership Directory. Demand for our printed directory had dropped off dramatically because the online directory offers better search options and is always up to date, while the printed directory was outdated as soon as it was printed.

We have also made a number of internal adjustments to move away from printed documentation. These include electronic meeting materials for Board members, digitized handbooks for volunteers, and placing greater emphasis on division blogs and websites compared to the printed newsletters of the past.

As we move toward ATA’s Annual Conference and the associated annual election of directors, another electronic innovation will affect all voting members who plan to vote by proxy. While the format of the proxies has not changed and you can still instruct a designated proxy holder to cast your vote at the conference, this year you will receive an electronic notification with a personalized link to file your proxies. The company we are working with for this purpose has experience with elections in other associations and corporations. We hope the process will encourage more voting members to submit proxies and look forward to your feedback.

Another exciting change to an online solution involves the popular Job Marketplace at the conference. While it used to be standard advice for newcomers to our Annual Conferences to bring plenty of résumés for display at the Attendee Network and to give away during networking events, this year’s best practice is to make sure you have entered your data correctly in the new Electronic Job Marketplace. This innovation will make it possible for those interested in your language combination and specialty to review and download your digital CV.

We will continue to provide conference handouts and the Proceedings on a CD. This solution is not only easier on the environment, but it also keeps your conference files organized neatly for later reference. For more on our latest electronic conference additions, including the brand-new ATA Conference mobile app, please see President-Elect and Conference Organizer Caitilin Walsh’s column on page 7.

Last but not least, a live sitting of our keyboarded certification exam was held successfully in Washington, DC, August 18. Thanks to the dedicated work of many volunteers, but specifically ATA Director Alan Melby and ATA Member Jost Zetzsche, the option to keyboard the certification exam will now be offered at conference sittings and sessions around the country in the coming years.

As always, thank you for everything you do. I look forward to seeing many of you in San Diego next month.
Technology has marched steadily and predictably forward over the two decades since I joined ATA (with a letter typed on onionskin and mailed in an envelope), providing us with solutions and possibilities we never even imagined. My manual Royal typewriter is now somewhere in the basement, replaced by multiple cloud-synced devices; screeching dialup has become fiber-optic broadband; the onionskin paper has given way to e-mail; and the landline has been cut in favor of a smartphone. ATA has also adopted new technology along the way, maximizing and enhancing the member—and ATA conference attendee—experience.

Over the years, we have welcomed a few changes. The conference Proceedings moved from print to CD. (Book lovers can still order a print copy from ATA’s website.) Then came a DVD of sessions, which makes it easy to revisit all of the educational material presented during the conference. And, most recently, we added an online option to the ATA eConference for greater portability.

But we are not stopping there. The proliferation of connected devices has changed our expectations and our ability to connect. So I am excited to introduce the ATA Annual Conference Mobile App, which puts the entire conference at your fingertips. Here are just a few highlights:

• The app serves as a personal planner. You can browse the complete program and put together your own schedule, and even select multiple sessions for the same time slot. There is a handy map feature to show you the way to your next session. Both of these features are available even if you are offline. You will also be able to view handouts and slides and submit your evaluations using your mobile device.

• The Attendee Network means no more waiting until the conference for a printed attendee list. You will have those contacts in real time, before the conference! Want to set up a lunch date? Just click to call or e-mail a colleague. The app also integrates with social media platforms so you can use check-ins and Tweets to stay in touch.

• The app provides a complete list of exhibitors, as well as a map and planner for you to create your own list of booths to visit. And you can call, e-mail, or visit an exhibitor’s website with just a click.

• The Attendee Network also replaces the oceans of paper résumés in the Job Marketplace. You submit your résumé electronically before the conference, and prospective clients can view your information and contact you directly from the app. Save yourself the trouble and expense of printing, packing, and dragging a ream of résumés to the conference. (You still might want to bring a few paper copies just in case you meet that perfect client in the Exhibit Hall or at a reception).

The aim of this mobile app is to enhance the conference experience for every attendee, so we have worked hard to make it accessible to all. Any smartphone or computer with a browser can access all of its features, and the conference hotel provides great connectivity, with room rates including complimentary in-room Internet and free wifi connections in many public spaces. What’s more, the information on your phone or tablet will still be available to you even when you are offline.

Note that the app is available only to registered attendees, so if you have not already registered, now is the time! In mid-September, all registered attendees will receive details on how to download the app to your mobile device and how to submit a résumé to the Attendee Network. In the meantime, if you are on Twitter, you can already start using the hashtag #ata53 to join the conversation before, during, and after the conference.

Looking forward to seeing you all at #ata53!
At its meeting on July 28, 2012, the Board approved the budget for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 and the draft budgets for Fiscal Years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. For the past fiscal year, the unexpected one-time loss that resulted from ATA hosting the International Federation of Translators Congress in August 2011 distorted our finances and resulted in a substantial accumulated deficit, despite the good performance of most other ATA programs. To correct the situation, ATA President Dorothee Racette proposed, and the Board agreed, that we plan on eliminating our negative Net Assets in two or three years. The budget approved in July 2012 does exactly that, by calling for a yearly surplus of $37K, $50K, and $185K (total of $272K) during Fiscal Years 2012-2015.

Total expenses for Fiscal Year 2012-2013 are budgeted to be $2,762K. Revenues are projected to be $2,799K, which would give us a surplus of $37K for the fiscal year.

The higher surplus for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 is to be generated by a projected dues increase to be introduced in 2014, and becoming effective on January 1, 2015. This will be the first dues increase in five years.

The percent distribution of budgeted revenues and expenses is shown in the accompanying pie charts. Please note that, unlike the final audited financial statements, the budget does not allocate ATA Headquarters’ resources used in the different programs to those programs. Such an allocation would reduce General & Administrative expenses to about one-half of the amount shown in the budget and increase the expenses of the programs.

ATA’s Board of Directors

met in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 28-29, 2012. Here are some highlights from the Board meeting.

Budget: The Board approved the final budget for July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. The $2.8-million budget is $300,000 less than last year. (ATA had one-time revenues and expenses from hosting the International Federation of Translators triennial Congress in August 2011.)

Certification: The Board had lengthy discussions on various proposals regarding ATA’s Certification Program. Specifically, the Board approved:

• Allowing nonmembers to take practice tests;
• Changing some eligibility requirements for the exam; and
• Investigating the possibility of offering proficiency ratings to candidates in addition to the current pass or fail results.

Arabic Language Division: The Board approved the establishment of the Arabic Language Division (ALD). In addition, the Board approved the appointment of Faiza Sultan as acting administrator and Heather Knight Wiersema as acting assistant administrator. ALD will hold its first division meeting on October 25 at ATA’s Annual Conference in San Diego. More information on ALD can be found at www.atanet.org/divisions/ALD_message.php.

Voting Rights and Active Membership Review: The Board continued its discussion on ways to increase the number of voting members through means other than passing ATA’s certification exam. Governance and Communications Committee Chair Caitilin Walsh outlined current plans for linking the Active Membership Review application with the online membership renewal form, as well as establishing criteria to recognize additional certifications related to translation and interpreting.

Board Meeting Summary and Minutes: The Board meeting summary is posted online. The minutes will also be posted online once they are approved at the next Board meeting. Past meeting summaries and minutes are posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting is scheduled for October 27-28, 2012, in conjunction with ATA’s Annual Conference in San Diego. As always, the meeting is open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

2012 Candidate Statements

This year, ATA’s election is for three directors (each will serve a three-year term). The candidates are: Anne Connor, Cristina Helmerichs, Odile Legeay, Corinne McKay, Faiza Sultan, and Gail Tanaka Burns. The candidate statements appear in this issue on page 12, and are also available on ATA’s website (www.atanet.org/membership/election2012_candidate_statements.pdf).

Register Today for ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference

ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference program and registration form are available online. Take a look at the depth and breadth of over 180 educational sessions, numerous networking opportunities, and the exhibits that are a part of ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference in San Diego, California, October 24-27, 2012. Plus, see what is new, including The Attendee Network, designed to help market your services and facilitate networking, and the Conference Mobile App, which will allow you to browse the schedule, receive updates, and create your personal schedule. Be sure to check out this and more online: www.atanet.org/conf/2012.

Conference Tweets #ata53

What does this mean?
It is the Twitter world at ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference!
Join the conversation or just tell colleagues “wish you were here.” Search #ata53 at www.twitter.com or follow ATA at www.twitter.com.atanet.
You might just have so much fun reading the conference tweets that you will want to follow @atanet on Twitter throughout the year.
It is never a long-winded conversation or endless discussion—just translation and interpreting news you need as needed. And remember, if it cannot be said in 140 characters, it will never be a tweet on Twitter!
Here are three bits of feedback regarding three articles I read in the July issue.

1. Maxwell Hoffmann’s piece was a sweet surprise. What started as an inconvenient trip ended up as a life lesson, not just for the average translator, but for anyone in a similar circumstance. Although it is not necessary to take a long train trip, most of us who have traveled overseas have experienced at least an “inconvenience” or two when it comes to not having a common language to connect with other human beings. I finished reading this article with a smile on my face.

2. Judy Jenner’s “My Lucky Break” is a gentle reminder that many of us got started with the help of a mentor, even though that mentor was not acting purposely as such nor did we set out to find a mentor back then. The gist that I got from her story is that we need to be thankful for the breaks we get in life.

3. I have known Jost Zetzsche for more than a decade. As an on and off reader of his biweekly Toolkit newsletter, I know that I can count on Jost to shed light on some new software tool that could be useful for us translators. That is why I was a bit surprised to find that he was talking about coffee in his latest entry, “The Spice of Life.” However, I kept on reading. What a pleasant surprise to find a good, tangible metaphor for machine translation to which we can all relate (I drink coffee) and to help our customers and other translation users discuss the value of professional translation services. Well done, Jost!

Mario Chávez
Westlake, OH

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**ATA Webinars**

*For more information, visit www.atanet.org/webinars*

**October 4, 2012**
**12 Noon Eastern Time**

**Putting Face-to-Face Networking to Work for Your Business**
**Presenter: Sara Freitas**

Are you looking for ways to expand your translation business? Would you like to avoid spamming your contacts with annoying direct e-mail? Are you reluctant to spend money on strategies like online or print advertising? Does the thought of cold calling leave you, well, cold? Then this webinar is for you! Professional networking is a great way to take your business to new heights, and all it will cost you is a few hours a week of your time.

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- Learn tips for getting your foot in the door.
- Get the most out of professional networking events.
- Organize your networking activities according to your own personal system.
- Choose the best tools for keeping track of your contacts.

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- Edit source to allow small changes to the original document
- Work more effectively with reviewers even if they don’t have the latest SDL tools
- Enhanced AutoSuggest functionality, increase translation speed with sub-segment matches

* Compared to non-CAT tool user environments

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ATA 2012 Elections: Candidate Statements

ATA will hold its regularly scheduled election at the upcoming 2012 ATA Annual Conference in San Diego, California, to elect three directors.

Director (three-year term)
Anne Connor
Anbrec@cs.com

It is a great honor to be nominated to run for ATA’s Board of Directors.

I started out as an in-house interpreter and translator in the export and medical fields after graduating from Temple University in 1982. After launching my freelance translation career 21 years ago, I immediately joined both ATA and the Delaware Valley Translators Association (DVTA). I attended my first DVTA meeting in February 1991 and my first ATA Regional Conference in Cape May, New Jersey, in April 1991. Elected to DVTA’s board of directors in 1994, I served as the liaison to the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce and also helped plan our workshops and social events. Along with other board members, I lobbied to get enough signatures from our membership to have DVTA—which was the first chapter chartered by ATA in 1961—regain the chapter status that it somehow lost over the years. (This finally occurred in 2004.)

In 2005, I spearheaded DVTA’s efforts to have a professional website created, complete with an online membership directory and a portal for receiving payments for our seminars and membership dues. Revamped in 2011, the website now includes a corporate members’ page, a blog, as well as Facebook and Twitter links. I continue to serve on the Website Committee, regularly contributing content and updates, and am the current co-chair of DVTA’s Programming Committee.

From early 2006 until the end of 2011, I served as president of DVTA. During my presidential tenure, our recognition and membership in the Philadelphia region increased by 19%, and we incorporated as a 501(c)(6) Business League. As the current DVTA secretary, I field calls and e-mail inquiries both from potential clients for our members and those looking into joining our association.

In 2009, I worked with board members from the New York Circle of Translators and the National Capital Area Translators Association to help organize the third East Coast Regional Conference. The conference, which was held at LaSalle University in Philadelphia from June 12-14, 2009, was a great success, drawing participants from the entire Northeast region and beyond.

In addition to my activities within DVTA, I belong to ATA’s Italian, Medical, and Spanish Divisions, have served on the Nominating Committee of the Spanish Language Division, and am a member of the Medical Division’s Leadership Council.

I have always enjoyed helping students choose the appropriate classes for a career as a professional linguist, and have conducted several school outreach presentations over the years. If elected to ATA’s Board, I hope to help with school and client outreach, since we are such a large and vibrant group, and would look to leverage support from ATA Headquarters to further promote such efforts. Having served on a local board for 18 years, I would bring to the table an ability to collaborate on and follow through with ideas and projects, my lifelong passion for the fields of translation and interpreting, extensive experience in organizing professional development events, and a zeal for advancing the recognition of our profession worldwide.

Director (three-year term)
Cristina D. Helmerichs
cristina@cristinahelmerichs.com

I have to begin by thanking those who voted for me three years ago. I hope I have lived up to your expectations as a member of ATA’s Board of Directors. I have worked to give a greater voice to both freelance and staff interpreters and translators within our professional organization.

When I was first elected, I was a member of ATA’s Interpretation Policy Advisory Committee. Recently, I became chair of this committee, and it is my hope that, with the assistance of my fellow committee members, it will play an active role in ATA’s future. I am a former member and chair of the board of directors of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (1996-2004), a founding member of the Texas Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, and a member of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association. It is my intent to put everything I have learned through those experiences and terms of service to use on behalf of ATA and its members.

I will support and add my efforts to the continued development of the highest standards for translation.
and interpreting in a manner that will not only help protect the individual practitioner’s interests but further strengthen the professionalization of this industry. For this reason, I supported the formal adoption of ATA’s mission statement and Code of Ethics and Professional Practice so that these may guide all of the activities of the Association and its Board of Directors.

As a member of ATA’s Governance and Communication Committee, I lend my voice to efforts that will make ATA even more inclusive and open to the active participation of more of its members.

I will continue to listen to the concerns of the membership and work with those who seek to find positive and proactive measures to respond to these concerns. I will continue to work with the other directors, ATA Headquarters, and ATA’s divisions and committees to ensure that the Association continues to offer its members even more valuable services and support. I will work to allow the Association to represent effectively the concerns and interests of our professions before the world at large.

I hope that you will allow me to represent your voice—that of the working interpreter and translator—on the Board. Once again, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you as a member of the Board of Directors.

---

Director
(three-year term)
Odile J. Legeay
odile@legeay.net

It has been a privilege to serve as an ATA Board director for the past three years, and it is an honor to be nominated for a second term.

During my time on the Board, I have been active on various projects, particularly in providing tools to assist members with the business side of being a freelancer. The first project I chaired was to work on a standard agreement between freelance translators and agencies. This document, “Guide to a Translation Services Agreement,” is now available on ATA’s website. We are currently working on a similar guide for freelance interpreters, which we expect to have ready in a few months.

I have also been chairing another project that was launched this summer. It is a spreadsheet called USCalPro, originally developed by the Asociación Española de Traductores, Correctores e Intérpretes, which we have adapted for use by U.S.-based translators and interpreters. This tool will be especially useful to help freelancers understand their own cost structures and know how much to charge in order to have a sustainable business.

If I am given the chance to continue as a Board director, I will be able to leverage fully the knowledge acquired during these first three years about the inner workings of ATA and its Board, which will allow me to hit the ground running and tackle new projects more nimbly and effectively. I plan to be particularly active in providing interpreters with the same tools and visibility within our Association that have been given to translators so that ATA can truly be “The Voice of Interpreters and Translators.”

I have been involved in the translation industry since the early 1970s. After completing my translation and interpreting studies at the university in France, I started my professional career, working as a freelance translator until I obtained a two-year contract with the United Nations in New York. I also worked for over a decade with European and U.S. banks, specializing in Latin American sovereign and corporate lending. I managed the subsidiary of a French company in the U.S. for five years. As a co-founder of a high-tech start-up venture, I raised initial capital and organized the company for public offering. During that time of entrepreneurship, I went back to my original love and once again became a freelance translator and interpreter of French and Spanish, part-time at first and full-time since 1999, the year I joined ATA.

Since then, I have tried continuously to make a difference in our profession by getting involved: at the local level, as a board member of the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association; at the state level, as a board member of the Texas Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators; and directly with ATA, as a member of various committees and as a Board director.

I would be honored to continue working with the Board and making a difference in the future of ATA to benefit its members, and sincerely hope you will trust me again with your vote.
Director (three-year term)

Corinne McKay, CT

corinne@translatewrite.com

Over the past 10 years, I have served in roles of increasing responsibility within ATA and the Colorado Translators Association. Running for ATA’s Board feels like the logical next step in my service to the profession, and I am honored to have been nominated.

My past volunteer positions within ATA include serving as assistant administrator and administrator of the French Language Division, chair of the Certification Maintenance Committee, chair of the Public Relations Committee, chair of the Ethics Complaint Review Subcommittee, and chair of the Active Membership Review Committee, a role that I currently hold. I recently completed two terms as president of the Colorado Translators Association (CTA), during which time CTA increased its membership by 50%, held two conferences, and earned high praise for its role as the host association for ATA’s Annual Conference in Denver.

If elected to the Board, three action items that I would like to spearhead are:

1. Working with ATA’s attorney and the Ethics Committee to rewrite our ethics complaint review guidelines. We have a strong code of ethics in place, but we need to streamline the process by which the Ethics Committee reviews the complaints that ATA members submit.

2. Providing more avenues for ATA members to communicate with the Board and learn about the benefits of ATA membership outside of the Annual Conference. For example, I would like to organize a series of free conference calls on topics such as ATA’s certification process, the Active Membership review process, the various divisions that are open to ATA members, and the services ATA Headquarters provides to the membership.

3. Increasing recognition and use of the CT (Certified Translator) credential. ATA worked hard to establish this credential, and those of us who are certified worked hard to earn the CT designation. I would like to see every certified member of ATA using the CT credential after his or her name in all professional settings, and I would like to increase recognition of the CT credential in the international business community.

I am flattered to be seen as a leader in our industry, because I know that the respect of one’s colleagues must be earned through years of hard work. My book, How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator, a career guide for beginning and experienced freelance translators alike, has sold over 5,000 copies and has become a go-to reference for the profession. My blog, Thoughts on Translation, has been a lively discussion forum for freelance translators around the world since 2008. In addition, I have presented at every ATA Annual Conference since 2004. These experiences have given me a broad view of what ATA members need and want from their association; what ATA is doing right and what we can do better in the future. I look forward to contributing my experience, energy, and enthusiasm to the work of ATA’s Board.

Director (three-year term)

Faiza Sultan

info@translation4all.com

When I was in college, my English professor, Mr. Nabil, looked at me and said, “Faiza, one day you will go to the United States and you will be something big there.” I smiled and planted the first seed of my dreams inside my soul.

Years later, I fled from Iraq, being persecuted by the former regime for working as a translator. In the land of war, doing the job I loved was punishable by death, and that is how seriously I took my job.

I came from the land of war, pain, and dreams. In 1997, I took my first U.S. interpreting job as a Kurdish and Arabic interpreter the moment I landed at the airport in San Francisco, even before I got to my final destination in Seattle.

I am deeply honored to be nominated for a position on ATA’s Board of Directors, and I thank the Nominating Committee for recommending me as a candidate. I am delighted to be a part of this great organization and humbled to be nominated for this position.

Working hard and wearing a lot of hats (in my case, scarves), I found my passion in languages. I worked as an interpreter, teacher, cultural advisor, curriculum developer, oral proficiency interview tester, and translator. In 2004, I founded my own translation agency, Translation4all, Inc.

I joined ATA in 2005. During my affiliation with ATA, I have had the privilege to serve as a board member, and later vice-president, of the
Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society (NOTIS) in Washington. I have served as president of NOTIS for over two years.

I initiated the process to establish the first Arabic Language Division within ATA. It is about time for Arabic linguists to have their own division, and I am thrilled about the opportunity and the support that ATA has given us.

What can I offer ATA? I bring my leadership experience as the president of NOTIS for over two years. I also bring creativity, new ideas, a rich cultural background, a deep understanding of the culture of the Middle East, and experience with media production. If elected, I will:

• Work more closely with the translation departments of universities and colleges in the U.S. and around the world.

• Work closely with the Leadership Council of the newly established Arabic Language Division to offer ATA certification in English into Arabic to our members.

• Work with ATA to find a way to recognize translators who have lost their lives working in wartime to help their country, and to bring attention to the role of translators in wartime and peace and their vital role working with government agencies in national security.

Experience matters, and I have a proven record of my leadership experience, creativity, success, and honesty, and that is what I bring to you. I hope for the opportunity to serve you and to prove that dreams can become real when you believe in yourself!

---

Director
(three-year term)

Gail Tanaka Burns
tanakatalk@comcast.net

It is a great honor for me to be nominated to serve on ATA’s Board of Directors. I have been a member of ATA since 1994, and a full-time freelance Japanese→English translator and interpreter since 1999.

I am one of the founding members of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association, an ATA chapter, and have been involved with a number of local nonprofit organizations in my state, such as the Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee and the Japan American Society of Minnesota. I have also served on the board of directors for my homeowners’ association.

Although I do not have a long list of organizational accomplishments, I come to you as somewhat of a “blank slate,” with an open mind and an eagerness to become involved and reach my goals. My biggest asset is my bilingual/bicultural background, which has given me the ability to view things from more than one perspective. I take a great deal of pride in the role that a linguist plays in the fields of translation and interpreting.

Over the course of my 20-plus years of experience in the translation industry, I have seen a significant change in the role of the translator, and in the perception of the value that is brought to a business transaction or a client visit by a skilled interpreter. Globalization has contributed significantly to these changes, but the efforts of ATA in promoting awareness of translating and interpreting have, without a doubt, been instrumental.

I would like to contribute to ATA by encouraging the development of outreach endeavors that involve mentoring as well as improving client-translator relationships. My experience in working as a linguist in a variety of corporate and commercial settings can serve to promote better relationships between clients and translators, and to improve awareness of ATA. Some possible ways to achieve this goal would be through the enhancement of current publications, including contributions to The ATA Chronicle that are written from a variety of different perspectives, both by professionals who hire translators and interpreters and by the linguists who perform the jobs.

Prior to starting my career in translating and interpreting, I taught English as a second language in Japan for more than 15 years. The combination of this teaching background and my experience in mentoring prospective translators, both in-house and through a school outreach program, provide a solid foundation for my goal to help others in my profession and promote educational outreach. As our population in the U.S. becomes increasingly diverse, I believe that there are many opportunities to communicate directly with schools to establish mentorship programs in translating and interpreting. If I am elected to the Board of Directors, I would like to work toward accomplishing this goal.

I thank you for your consideration and sincerely hope that you will give me the opportunity to serve on ATA’s Board of Directors.
As chief of the Translating Division of the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Language Services (LS), I look forward to the summertime duty of preparing for our office’s participation at ATA’s Annual Conference each fall. Recently, we booked our booth in the Exhibit Hall, which got me thinking about what message my colleagues and I will deliver to the hundreds of people who stop by that booth. Two lines I have certainly used in the past are: “At LS, our specialty is diplomatic translation,” and “LS can count on the combined talents of the country’s foremost diplomatic translators.” But when pressed, how does one define diplomatic translation, and are there special qualities one should ascribe to the diplomatic translator?

Defining the Turf

An expansive definition of diplomatic translation that includes all documents used in support of diplomatic exchange is far too broad. Any document type can arise in diplomatic exchange—an autopsy report, an invoice for damaged furniture, an environmental impact statement. I favor a narrower view. Diplomatic translation centers on those document types peculiar to the world of diplomacy, namely:

1. Diplomatic correspondence;
2. Diplomatic cables;
3. Treaties and other international agreements; and
4. Other “deliverables,” such as joint declarations and other VIP remarks.

Diplomatic Correspondence

With stock phrases such as “I should like to inform Your Excellency” and “the Embassy avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Department the assurances of its highest consideration,” diplomatic correspondence is sometimes regarded as florid and stodgy. At its best, it is actually a very controlled means of delivering a clear message, where the writer never strays from the central point and the stock phrases serve as wallpaper simply to remind the reader that nothing (not even the message being delivered) has upset the underlying harmony in relations between two states.

Another misperception is that all diplomatic correspondence follows one international standard. While it is true that the basic wording for these notes was laid down first in Latin, then in French, each country has developed its own variations. Indeed, one of the challenges facing the diplomatic translator is striking just the right tone. Case in point: a note in Italian is addressed to the Onorevole Consolato Generale degli Stati Uniti. Translators at LS have been taught to drop the “Honorable” because it is considered as too much courtesy for modern American English. Similarly, we are taught that “sincere” wishes are as good as they come—“most sincere wishes” is a hyperbole in English, implying that there are degrees of sincerity.

The two types of diplomatic notes (we call them “dipnotes”) that LS sees most commonly are third-person diplomatic notes, literally from one building to another: for example, the Embassy of Burkina Faso at Washington, DC (not “in” DC!) to the Department of State. They are initialed, not signed, and bear no individual’s name. A large amount of
diplomatic business is accomplished through these third-person notes: the ratification of treaties is announced, changes in embassy officials are communicated, and other routine business is transacted. The first-person diplomatic notes are some of the most interesting and timely work we do. Here, the principals (heads of state or government, foreign ministers) are writing to one another directly. Not every first-person note is earthshaking. For every instance where a prime minister explains in detail the justification behind her particular stance on a burning international issue, there is another time in which a foreign minister pens a perfunctory thank-you to the secretary of state for an enjoyable and productive visit to DC.

Requests for agrément and letters of credence and recall are a less common treat for LS translators (e.g., one head of state informs the other that his ambassador is being recalled and that a new one is being sent). These letters are easily the most formulaic in the diplomatic genre. They often begin with the salutation “Great and Good Friend,” and contain such phraseological gems as “I therefore request that you give entire faith and credence to all that he shall communicate to you in the name of the Republic of X and its Government.” One modern twist to the agrément process is that the CV of the ambassador-designate is appended, and, as any translator knows, CVs are a veritable minefield of institution names, academic degrees, and national awards, many of which are a great challenge to translate.

I learned long ago never to say that any diplomatic note would be easy to translate. Recently, one from San Marino landed on my desk for review, translated by my colleague and mentor Paul T. Hopper. It contained the vexing phrase iter legislativo, which no dictionary or website could help us crack. We ultimately decided on “legislative formalities.” The note also contained a beautiful piece of local color: next to the date of the note (2004) was the phrase “1704 d.F.R” (the 1704th year since the foundation of the Republic). This serves to remind us here in Washington how young we are as a nation—as of 2012, the Most Serene Republic of San Marino, founded on September 3, 301, is entitled to 1,711 candles on its birthday cake.

Diplomatic Cables

Foreign ministries such as the State Department tend to send instructions to their embassies abroad (or “posts” as we call them) in the form of cables. Because these are internal documents, they are not typically subjected to translation. Among the notable exceptions are the cables used to instruct posts on how to approach their host government’s officials on a certain issue (e.g., a controversial vote at the United Nations or support for an international conference to address a key environmental issue, etc.). The French term for making such an approach is démarche (literally “manner of walking,” “step,” “gait”; figuratively “line of approach”); hence we call these démarche instruction cables. Typically, they contain a succinct account of the issue, detailed background, talking points to be stressed when the approach is made, and a statement that can be left with the host government’s officials, often called a “non-paper.”

Treaties and Other International Agreements

This is the bread and butter of the translator’s career at LS. Quite often, the translator is called upon to certify a foreign government’s translation of a treaty or agreement. But not infrequently, particularly at the draft stages, it is LS doing the translation, either into English or into a foreign language. Each of the parts of a treaty has its own stock phrases to be mastered:

- The Preamble (the parties recite what motivates them to conclude the treaty);
- The Body;
- The Testimonium (“in witness whereof, the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have signed this Agreement”); and
- The Jurat Clause (“Done at Bratislava, this 14th day of June 2012, in the English and Slovak languages, both texts being equally authentic.”).

In treaty translation, the weight of precedent is enormous. The treaty will refer to existing agreements, institutions, programs, and conferences, and these names are considered blessed language and cannot be reinvented. Like the wording of diplomatic notes, the stock phrases of treaties were
set down first in Latin, then in French, and then translated into numerous languages—first European, then those of the rest of the world.

Other Deliverables and Remarks

When the principals meet, it is customary to sign something. If no treaty or agreement is in the offing, a non-binding joint declaration helps to give the two countries “action items” that may lead to future agreements. LS translators quickly learn a term I believe I coined—“modal mayhem”—because the challenge of these declarations is to find verbal expressions that do not imply obligation (such as “shall”) and opt for those that signal intent. Some languages mark obligation with the present tense, others with the future, still others (such as English) with modal verbs. More than once, the translator has been forced to go back to the grammar books to examine the fine shades of meaning present in modals such as “should” and “will.”

The remarks made by a president, prime minister, or foreign minister in a diplomatic context—be they a formal speech or simply an interview with a media representative—are among the most heart-racing assignments encountered by translators. It seems that everyone wants to know yesterday what was said! Here, more than in any other area of diplomatic translation, the classic meets the modern. Our translations of a presidential speech may be posted as captions on YouTube, so we may have to first transcribe a foreign minister’s remarks from YouTube before we can translate them. Such assignments make for formidable project management challenges, prompting LS to recruit a translation project management team savvy in both language and technology.

The Formation of a Diplomatic Translator

It can take years to master the intricacies of the various text types encountered in diplomatic translation. And though it is important to be able to handle stock phrases expertly, the crucial task for the diplomatic translator is the same task facing any translator: delivering a message clearly and completely, not embellishing, respecting terms of art, and even learning to grow appropriately vague when the source text does the same. Treaties become the law of the land, and diplomatic notes are sometimes headed straight to a president’s desk. These facts add an element of excitement or anxiety not present in every translation assignment. The key to forming a diplomatic translator who can do it all and make it look easy is to provide mentoring throughout the career, particularly in the form of review and feedback. Not every translator takes to mentoring. For some, the experience entails a degree of professional vulnerability that feels uncomfortable. For others, the benefits far outweigh the occasional bruise to the ego or capricious rewrite, and these are the translators who thrive at a place like LS.

Treaties, notes, and cables are about something. They are not about diplomacy itself; they are about real-life international issues such as a civil war, a disputed boundary, a child abduction case, climate change, conflict diamonds, radio spectrum congestion, or tariffs on lemons and limes. The successful diplomatic translator must be a generalist who can float from one subject to another...
many times over the course of one day and produce translations that are convincing not only to the diplomats, but also to the lawyer, the boundary surveyor, the telecommunications engineer, or the trade specialist. Hence, the diplomatic translator is a nimble researcher, quick to authenticate terms of art and sensitive to nuances that may bypass the layperson completely. For instance, how many people know that boundaries are delimited on a map but demarcated on the ground? Now just suppose the map is wrong and the survey team discovers a different reality. That is the stuff of more diplomatic notes and agreements, if calmer heads prevail.

Complicating the diplomatic translator’s task is the fact that there can be long stretches of time spent translating other text types, such as a course manual, website, slide briefing, or conference agenda and bios. These are text types common in diplomatic contexts, but not really peculiar to the diplomatic world. A successful diplomatic translator can be immersed in a three-week course manual on cybersecurity only to be interrupted by a series of sensitive one-page notes from a head of state seeking help in the face of a national calamity. Deadlines are deadlines, and it is up to the time management skills of the diplomatic translator to determine how much time to allot to the analysis of the more nuanced portions of those notes. Sometimes, the buddy system—translating the note together with your reviewer—is the only route to go.

It can take years to master the intricacies of the various text types encountered in diplomatic translation.

Never a Dull Moment
Most diplomatic translators agree that theirs is an exciting branch of the world of translation. Quaint usages combine with headline-grabbing issues. And every now and again, the diplomatic translator will turn on the evening news just in time to see his or her work—say a bilateral treaty—being signed by government leaders at a lavish ceremony. Not surprisingly, once immersed in the world of diplomatic translation, most translators stay with it for the rest of their careers.

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Imagine this scenario. It is 2005, and the first season of *Lost* has just blown minds all over the world. Now it is going to be localized in your country, and you are the translator who gets to work on it. Congratulations! All you have to do is imply everything that needs to be implied, hint at everything that needs to be hinted, set up all of the right clues, and make sure your translation complies with the original intentions for the story established by the creators of the series. Just leave the right amount of ambiguity for their mystery to work—although, since the series is nowhere near over yet, you do not have a clue as to what the mystery really is or how it ends. And all the while you will need to keep the dialogue nice and snappy in your language. Oh, and could you do that each week on a 24-hour deadline for the foreseeable future, please? (I do not actually know if any of the *Lost* translators had 24-hour deadlines, but I know it happens to me all the time.) Welcome to the exciting world of television translation!

Films, television shows, poetry, short stories, and novels all fall into the same broad category of literary translation, and translators of this genre share the same broad purpose: to take the experience of the work in its original language and faithfully convey that experience in another language. The nitty-gritty of how that is done simply varies according to the medium. The following will serve as an overview of how things can work in the audiovisual media: what material we receive, what we do with it, what we need to consider, and how the translation evolves into the final product that reaches the market. Those details will vary a bit in different corners of the industry, so just be aware that for now I am going to speak mostly from my own experience, which is mainly with Japanese animation (with a pinch of live-action thrown in here and there).

**The Elements**

For the purpose of this article, let’s say we have been hired to localize Super-Awesome TV Show X. Before we can get this program off the ground, however, we need to take a look at the elements and the audience.

The translator is not usually involved in pursuing or negotiating for the rights to a particular television series unless she also holds some other position in the company going after the license. Therefore, she comes into the picture when the elements for Super-Awesome TV Show X begin to come in from the licensor. The licensor is the entity that owns the right to license the foreign release of the product. The licensor may choose to translate a particular show or let the licensee do the translation. Either way, to do it right, we need the elements. These “elements” are literally pieces that, when put together, become Super-Awesome TV Show X.

The most basic elements are the video and audio. These can be deliv-
ered separately, and are actually produced separately in some cases. If either the video or audio is missing, not much happens! The licensor will also often provide additional material, such as a music cue sheet or a printed script for each episode. That script may be the final version, reflecting the exact dialogue of Super-Awesome TV Show X, or it might be the original screenplay. Those of you who have read original screenplays of your own country’s movies probably already know that a lot changes between that screenplay and what is actually done and said in the movie.

That is one reason why, while we enjoy having access to screenplays because they are very helpful—sometimes indispensable—those of you who are experienced know that the script itself is usually not what we are really being hired to translate. Ideally, our job is to translate the work itself, which may or may not be the same as what is in the script. So we have to work with our clients to make sure everyone understands that a translation of the script before the final version of the movie or television show is ready will often not suffice as a final translation, and will need to be adjusted when it is “in the can.” If we have to translate the script without the final audio and video elements, we may need to translate the whole show twice in some cases! And, yes, that absolutely does happen sometimes, particularly with movies because they tend to change more during production. At that stage, non-final elements, such as a rough edit of the movie without the soundtrack, can help reduce re-scripting significantly. Ultimately, what the audience comes to see is the product as it is, not as it almost was.

If you hired me to translate Super-Awesome TV Show X, my personal approach would be to translate from the final audio and video elements, using the script and any pre- or mid-production elements and material for reference. Others prefer to translate the script first and then make adjustments for the audio and video as necessary, but I find that process does not work as well for me. The truth is, we do not always get a script, in which case relying on one becomes a big problem if we have not been giving our ears a workout and listening to the audio.

The Audience

Okay, so now we have got our elements together for Super-Awesome TV Show X. Translators in all areas of the profession, literary or otherwise, may ask themselves, “Who am I writing this for? Who is my audience? Is this for someone’s reference or something to be consumed directly by the public?”

Well, in my corner of the world, the answer could be the former, the latter, both at the same time, or a giant question mark. The show I am working on might be intended for subtitling or for dubbing, which are very different beasts. In the animation industry, for example, where I spend most of my time, it is often intended for both. If you buy the Princess Jellyfish DVD/Blu-ray pack, for example, you will see that there is a language menu on each disc where you can choose whether to watch the show with an English-language dub or in the original Japanese with English subtitles.

Imagine translating the first chapter of a whodunit when you do not know who did it!

What does that mean? Practically speaking, my translation is often both a final product (for use as subtitles) and a non-final one on which a different localization (the dub) will be based. We will go ahead and assume that Super-Awesome TV Show X falls into this category. In which case, I now have two audiences: the viewer and the dub localization team.

For the viewer, I need to provide a translation that is ready to go as-is for the subtitles. When the U.S. first started importing shows from other countries, this process worked somewhat differently. In the digital age, while the subtitler and quality control team will be my editors, they generally will not be reshaping my work into a separate subtitle script. I may even act as the subtitler myself, though I find editors invaluable and would much rather have someone else look at my work before publication.

For the dub localization team, I need to provide everything they require to do their own adaptation from my translation. The core team working on that adaptation will usually consist of, at minimum, a writer and director. They will need to adapt my script into something that fits the “lip flaps” (the movements of the characters’ mouths) and maximizes the naturalness of the actors’ performances. If you have ever fantasized about writing “copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers” à la Vladimir Nabokov, this is the part you will like.!
Because certain jokes may come across well in the subtitles but not fit the lip flaps, or, conversely, may be impossible to convey in the subtitles but work well with an actor to put emphasis in all the right places, I make detailed notes dissecting each joke so that my colleagues can rebuild it into something that works for them. All of the cultural knowledge that affects the plot and dialogue, but which may not be readily available to our team, gets noted as well. This includes literary and cultural references, as well as all of the bits of dialogue that are missing or hard to understand.

**The References**

In the section on audience above, we learned that there are times when a literary translation is being used for two different purposes. In these situations, the translator should ideally deliver both a highly polished final product ready for display and an instruction manual detailing exactly how she put it together so that it can be disassembled and rebuilt as necessary. One part of my “instruction manual” (i.e., my translator’s notes) for a television dub staff is the information on literary or cultural references.

Just as in a novel, quotes are tracked down, researched, and sourced where they occur for correct English delivery. I think audiences assume that the script tells me when a man in the Japanese anime series *Guilty Crown* is quoting Dante’s *Inferno* and when a girl in *Nerima Daikon Brothers* is punning on a 1970s commercial for laundry detergent, but unfortunately it ain’t so. And if the translator mistranslates because she does not notice the Dante going on, the error does not stop with her: she leads everyone else down the wrong path.

Then there are the innumerable visual cues that occur outside of the dialogue. (If we were dealing with a novel, these would be included in the descriptive passages.) These have to be noted as well if they are too culturally specific. This situation happens all the time in all forms of literary translation, of course. In a novel, we might add an explanatory note, or we might leave it to the reader to wonder, or not, about an unfamiliar cultural reference. However, in a situation where an actor has to deliver a performance based on the translation, I try to make sure the staff and cast have access to each character’s full motivation for their actions. This includes information about the culture where the story is originally set.

For example, in the anime series *This Ugly Yet Beautiful World*, there is a dream sequence where the main character finds himself surrounded by trees with white kimonos hanging from them. The Japanese staff and cast immediately begin to interpret how the character must feel in the dream from this visual cue, because they understand the image of the trees and kimonos symbolizes an approach to the River of Three Crossings, which is roughly equivalent in Japanese mythology to the River Styx. A North American audience probably would not get the visual reference, but if the actors perform well, the audience will easily get the right sense of creepiness. They do not actually need the details. But a localization staff does need those details. An actor will be able to pick up on the fact that there is something creepy going down, but if I can give his director the exact details behind a character’s behavior, I can make everyone more comfortable in their ability to nail the scene, which makes their jobs easier.

**The Timing**

All this assembly and disassembly comes on tighter and tighter deadlines as the years go by, because television shows and movies get localized and broadcast overseas sooner and sooner after their original airdate. As a result, some movies and television shows are now released at home and abroad at the same time. In the anime industry, for example, we now have “simulcasts,” where the North American broadcast of a television show runs concurrently with the Japanese broadcast (usually subtitled-only).

Because of this, translators of film will increasingly find themselves having to revisit multiple versions of the same script. Translators for television will more often face a challenge that is less common with printed works: translating something without knowing how it ends. (Though I know it happens to all of us sometimes!) Perhaps the licensor can provide you with this information, but maybe the creative staff is still deciding on the details. What if you suddenly have a question you did not know you would have and time zone differences make it impossible for you to ask before the deadline? Imagine translating the first chapter of a whodunit when you do...
not know who did it! To adapt to the changing needs of this market, we need to develop a new toolkit to deal with this problem, particularly in the U.S., since we are coming to the party rather later than most other countries.

The Missing Bits

I will only mention one other key difference between audiovisual and print work. In print work you do not commonly have situations where part of the text is literally missing for you, yet appears to the audience to be there. I am sure every translator out there who has done audiovisual work knows exactly what I am talking about: the dreaded situation where a line is not in the script and you just cannot make the dialogue out in the audio. Sometimes you can grab a colleague and try to figure it out together; sometimes no one is available to help. In the worst-case scenario that is all too common, no one can make the whole thing out. If you are lucky, perhaps you have just one word of the entire sentence that is clear enough to understand in the audio, so you have to work with that.

You have to, because the audience expects a subtitle there. They can hear that there is dialogue in the original, so they naturally, and rightfully, expect to see translated subtitles or hear the dubbed version. The Japanese audience watching the original probably cannot hear the dialogue either, but they do not sweat it as much. They just think, “I didn’t catch that,” and if it does not seem too important, they likely simply move on. This is true for me when I am watching English-language movies. But when you watch a subtitled product in your non-native language, you have no way of judging whether the dialogue sounded important or even necessarily whether it is clearly audible. (Maybe the guy shouts the words, but they are so guttural that volume is not the issue.) So each translator has to develop her own theories of how to approach these situations.

Now think of all the (recorded) live interviews we do, perhaps for DVD extras or as part of unscripted television programming, where, instead of actors trained in enunciation, we have normal, everyday people talking. It gives you a whole new appreciation for the fact that any of us can understand anyone, especially the way we all mumble and forget to speak into the microphone. Not to mention a whole new world of respect for closed captioners and our interpreter colleagues. I can only hope the overseas translators of Lost did not encounter unintelligible dialogue too often. It is bad enough when something is “lost” in translation, but it is really depressing when something is lost before translation even begins.

Comments?

I hope you enjoyed this little peek into the world of translating for television as much as I enjoy peeking into the worlds of different artistic media. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at sarahalys@gmail.com.

Notes

1. Vladimir Nabokov was a multilingual Russian novelist, poet, and short story writer. On translating Aleksandr Pushkin, he wrote: “I want translations with copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page so as to leave only the gleam of one textual line between commentary and eternity.” “Problems in Translation: Onegin in English,” Partisan Review (Volume 22, no. 4, 1955), 512.
It is probably safe to say that many, if not most, commercial translation and localization projects today are carried out without a comprehensive, project-specific, up-to-date glossary in place. I suspect that one of the primary reasons for this inefficient state of affairs is the fact that many participants involved in these projects are unfamiliar with the tools and processes that enable linguists to create monolingual and multilingual glossaries quickly and efficiently. Below are 10 insights for linguists wishing to give automatic terminology extraction a(nother) try. (Please see the links in the box on page 27 for information on all of the tools mentioned here.)

1. The two biggest issues with terminology extraction tools are noise and silence. Many commercial terminology extraction tools use a language-independent approach to terminology extraction, which has the benefit of giving linguists a single tool for extracting terminology in many different languages. The drawback of this approach is that the percentage of “noise” (i.e., invalid term candidates) and “silence” (i.e., missing legitimate term candidates) is typically higher than in linguistic extraction tools that use language-specific term formation patterns. As a result, many linguists who use these popular extraction products are disappointed by the amount of clean-up work that some of these fairly expensive products can require.

2. For short texts, manual extraction may be your best option. To the best of my knowledge, there is no automatic terminology extraction system—at least for the English language—that creates term lists reliably...
Many commercial terminology extraction tools use a language-independent approach to terminology extraction.

without requiring substantial human intervention either prior to extraction (e.g., set-up, importing word lists, creating rules, etc.) or after extraction (primarily manual or semi-automatic clean-up). For this reason, short texts are typically not well suited for automatic terminology extraction. (What qualifies as “short” differs from tool to tool, but 1,000 words serves as a general guideline.) This rule holds particularly true when the person performing the term extraction will subsequently translate the source text. It is generally a good idea to read the text to be translated in its entirety before translation, which creates a perfect opportunity for manual terminology extraction.

3. Rule-based MT systems are a great choice for low-cost automatic terminology extraction. Rule-based machine translation (MT) systems are among my favorite translation tools. Unlike statistical MT systems, rule-based MT products do not require any linguistic training on bilingual data to be useful, but rely on built-in grammar rules for the analysis of the source and generation of the target. More than 10 years ago, at the translation quality conference TQ2000 in Leipzig, I presented a paper on how to use rule-based MT systems to perform automatic terminology extraction.1 One would expect that after so many years, it would now be common knowledge that the “Unknown Word” feature of rule-based MT systems is highly suitable for automatic terminology extraction. But, unfortunately, it just is not so. So let me tell you again: If you are a freelance translator or small translation agency, the most powerful, customizable, and cost-effective terminology extraction solution you can buy is a rule-based MT system. My two recommendations for this category are Systran Business Translator (available for 15 languages; Price: US$299) and PROMT Professional (available for 5 languages; Price: US$265). Both of these translation tools are very mature. They also offer a built-in translation memory and very large general and subject-specific dictionaries that make these products a great investment for any professional translator working in a covered language combination.

4. Some free translation memory systems offer excellent built-in automatic terminology extraction. Similis is an often overlooked, yet extremely capable, free translation memory system. Since Similis, much like a rule-based MT system, uses language-specific analysis technology, the quality of the term extraction lists that this translation memory product generates puts it in a class of its own among translation memory systems. One particularly useful feature of Similis is its ability to extract highly accurate bilingual glossaries from translation memory (TMX) files. If you work from English and a half-dozen other supported languages, this might be the terminology extraction tool for which you have been looking.

Another translation memory solution that is available at no cost to freelance translators and students is Across Personal Edition, which includes crossTerm, a full-featured terminology management module complete with a statistical terminology extraction function. Unlike Similis, the Across tools support a wide range of languages and language combinations.

5. Use a concordance tool for simple terminology extraction. Stand-alone concordance tools have been used as research tools in corpus linguistics for a long time. A concordancer is a type of software application that allows users to extract and display in context all occurrences of specific words or phrases in a body of text. While concordance software is typically used to study collocations, perform frequency analyses and the like, linguists can use, and have been using, concordancers for terminology extraction. One of the best concordancers for terminology extraction is AntConc. This tool is highly customizable. For example, it allows users to define the word length of terms and supports multiple platforms (i.e., Windows, Mac, and Linux). It is also free.

6. Free online tools provide powerful terminology extraction, and there is nothing to install. If you are still not convinced that automatic terminology extraction is for you, let me introduce you to a set of tools where all you have to do to create a term list is to specify a source text and then press a button or two. There is no software to install, no manual to read, and, of course, no price to pay. With web-based terminology extraction
services like TerMine and FiveFilters Term Extraction, automatic terminology extraction really is child’s play.

Do not let the simple interface of these sites fool you. Both of these online tools produce professional quality extraction lists that include compound nouns, and, in the case of TerMine, even scored rankings of term candidates.

7. Are you using free MT? Start post-editing with a glossary. As using free MT services is becoming more and more popular among professional translators, so is the desire to control terminology in the final output that is delivered to clients. Google Translator Toolkit is a free, full-featured online translation memory system that allows users to post-edit translations generated by Google Translate, Google’s proprietary MT system. Since Google Translate is a statistical MT system that has been, and continues to be, trained on a wide variety of documents, the same source term might get translated in multiple ways even within the same document, not to mention across documents.

While it is currently not possible to submit user glossaries to Google’s MT engine, it is possible to upload glossaries to the Translator Toolkit. And using one of the tools mentioned in this article to extract terminology and build a bilingual glossary before translating/post-editing in Google Translator Toolkit may be the best thing linguists can do to improve the efficiency of an already very efficient process.

8. Clean up your terminology extraction list to identify the most important term types. In my professional experience, term lists generated by automatic terminology extraction tools are never perfect. Even the best term extraction systems introduce “noise.” For example, in the TerMine term list shown in Figure 1 below, I would argue that at least three of the 10 term candidates in this list require editing.

While most illegitimate term candidates are easy to identify (e.g., misspelled, truncated, incorrectly hyphenated words), many linguists have a hard time answering the following question: Which term candidates should users of terminology extraction systems actually develop into multilingual glossaries? There is no simple solution to this problem, as each translation project has its own limiting factors, available time typically being the most important one.

My recommendation for commercial translation projects is always to include the following types of terms in a project glossary, even if the term occurs only once in a source document. Mandatory term types include:

- Client business names;
- Product names; and
- Trademarks.

Yes, I know, this piece of advice runs counter to what many other terminology experts say; namely, if a term occurs only once in a text, there is no risk of inconsistency, and therefore single terms should not be included in glossaries. To that I say: There are terms that are so important that if a linguist gets them wrong, even just once, it would be a huge embarrassment for all parties involved.

Including every term of the above-mentioned types is particularly important when working with MT, as MT systems are notorious for “making-up” their own terminology in the target language. As such, the following term types should be included in glossaries based on the frequency

Figure 1: A sample term list generated by TerMine, a free online terminology extraction service.
of their occurrence in the source text (many terminology extraction tools provide frequency information):

- Feature names;
- Function names;
- Domain-specific terms; and
- Generic terms.

9. **Use the recommended data categories when integrating an extraction list into a terminology management system.** Once the extraction list has been cleaned up, the next logical step is to develop a multilingual glossary that will add value not only to the translation process but ideally to the entire translation cycle. The most valuable glossaries are those that provide information that goes beyond simple word pairs of “source term” and “target term.” Here is the minimum data model I recommend for commercial projects:

- Client and/or business unit and/or project name;
- Source term;
- Part of speech (e.g., noun, proper noun, compound noun, verb, adjective, other);
- Context (e.g., a sample sentence in which the source term occurs); and
- Target term.

The big question at this stage is: What software platform do we use for developing and managing terminology after extraction? This is an important question as many, if not most, linguists do not have a proper terminology management system in place. While it may be tempting to use Microsoft Word or Excel tables to manage terminology—after all, these are programs that most linguists own and know how to use—word processors and spreadsheet applications are not good choices for managing
If you are a freelance translator or small translation agency, the most powerful, customizable, and cost-effective terminology extraction solution you can buy is a rule-based MT system.

10. A small investment in automatic terminology extraction can yield a big return in efficiency and client satisfaction. Being able to extract terminology quickly and efficiently is a wonderful thing. With automatic terminology extraction as part of a comprehensive terminology management effort, you are able to:

- Create comprehensive multilingual glossaries before translation.
- Have the client authorize project-specific, multilingual glossaries before translation.
- Have translation memory systems automatically suggest authorized translations for every term during translation.
- Have all members of a translation team use the same terminology during translation.
- Eliminate (terminology) review and corrections after translation.

With so many powerful terminology extraction tools to choose from, as long as the source language is a major language, there really is no excuse for not extracting terminology and creating a glossary as part of every translation project.

Notes
1. The material presented here was inspired by a two-part series I wrote for T for Translation, the blog of CSOFT International, blog.csoftintl.com. If you read German, an expanded version of this article is available at: http://owl.li/ciGr9.
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The explosive growth in the translation and interpreting business worldwide has increased the call for the creation of global standards for the language services industry. ATA’s Standards Committee is actively involved in this process. This column will appear periodically to update members regarding standards development, addressing what they are, how they work, and, most importantly, how they affect translators and interpreters.

There seems to be one in my inbox every day: another form asking me to detail my translation or educational experience—even from agencies for whom I have worked for years. Why? Because the agency wants to be certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO, www.iso.org), an international standards organization that creates quality standards for everything from fire alarms to forensics.

I usually take the time to fill out the form and wish the agency the best of luck. It reminds me of my time as a translation project manager in the early 1990s, when my boss charged me with the same thankless task of prepping the agency for ISO certification. At the time, many agencies wanted to become “ISO-certified” so that they could meet their clients’ requirement to use only ISO-certified vendors, even if there was no ISO standard specifically for the translation industry. So, I spent more than a year and a half documenting the labyrinthine decision-making processes involved in handling everything from an Icelandic voice-over and Korean software localization to Hindi desktop publishing.

Although the boss ultimately decided that the cost of applying for ISO certification was too expensive, the work I did helped us understand how things were done at our company and identify areas for improvement. Instead, the company opted for the tagline of “ISO-compliant” on our marketing material, with the explanation that when ISO certification for the translation industry was available, we would be ready.

That time is around the corner. The recently released “ISO/TS 11669, Translation Projects—General Guidance” is a document that clients, agencies, and translators can purchase that describes best practices for the translation industry. The document provides an overview of the process, an explanation of various translation concepts, and a structured approach to creating translation specifications.

Much of the standard clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the project manager, translator, editor, reviewer, and the client—in wonderfully painstaking detail. In brief, the project manager determines the specifications for the project during a consultation with the client, including the size, purpose, and target audience. The project manager then assigns the appropriate translator based on documented competence and provides the relevant reference material or technical aids. The translator then works his or her magic to produce a translation that meets those specifications. The translation is then checked by an editor and potential reviewer, who ideally provide feedback to the translator to improve the quality of future translation projects.

The above is either obvious or awe inspiring, since many of us are familiar with the problems of dealing with clients or agencies that have not quite figured out the system. Hence, this technical standard is meant to work in conjunction with another standard—in-the-making, “ISO/WD 17100, Requirements for Translation Services,” which covers much of the same material in a more abbreviated form. This working document outlines the requirements for a translation company to become ISO-certified. Essentially, companies need to have a process for creating project specifications, documenting translator competence, and tracking projects.

Again, this would be obvious to most of us, but these two documents establish a baseline for quality that can help in comparing services, and can serve as a reference point when disagreements arise. This is why standards are created in the first place.

Indeed, potential translation-related standards in the pipeline include those addressing interpreting services and the contentious issue of quantifying the quality of a translation. Each of these areas is fraught with varying outlooks and opinions. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of creating an ISO standard is that the standard has to be accepted by stakeholders in all participating countries. The standardized translation process must be as achievable for an agency in China as it is for one in Chile.

It is a monumental undertaking, but dedicated representatives and volunteers from translation agencies and national organizations, including ATA, are putting forth their best efforts. Conferences and meetings are held throughout the year where dedicated language industry professionals are trying to work out the details of upcoming ISO standards.

The outcome of many of these efforts remains to be finalized, but many agencies are not waiting. This is why many translators are seeing translation agencies implement translation scoring systems, issue never-ending checklists, and require translators to document, yet again, their qualifications and translation experience. Filling out these forms comes standard with the job.

David C. Rumsey is an ATA director and serves on ATA’s Standards Committee. He is a past administrator of ATA’s Nordic Division. A former project and localization manager, he has been a freelance translator for business, medical, and technical documentation from the Scandinavian languages and German since 1998. Contact: david@northcountrytranslations.com.
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American Translators Association
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Invariably, at some point in their careers, translators and interpreters will have outstanding invoices that do not get paid in a timely manner. While our small business has been quite lucky on this front, we have had to make extra efforts to get some invoices paid—usually one or two a year. Recently, a new interpreting client in the U.S. had an outstanding invoice that had been on the books for some 35 days.

Instead of sending an e-mail, I tried an old-fashioned method: the telephone. Sure, this device has fallen in disuse, but it is a powerful way to communicate. The phone is immediate and a bit uncomfortable for all parties: perfect for a please-provide-payment call.

The entire call did not take more than five minutes. I called the main number of the law firm and kindly asked to be connected to the correct person in accounting. I was transferred promptly to the office manager. I introduced myself briefly, mentioned that I had e-mailed the invoice to the attorney (as per our agreement), and gently asked when I might expect payment on the overdue invoice. I also mentioned that it was a small sum and that the reason I was calling was to make sure that nothing had slipped through the cracks. I made sure to keep an upbeat, friendly tone during the conversation.

Once I said what I had to say, I took a deep breath (quietly) and waited for the other person to respond instead of rambling on (which is tempting). Turns out the mortified office manager had never seen the invoice because the attorney had apparently not given it to her to process the payment. She promised to take care of it immediately, and I agreed to e-mail the invoice again. I sent the invoice, along with a friendly note, and sure enough, two days later, I received the check in the mail.

Sometimes a call really is more effective than e-mail. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind:

**Take a deep breath.** You might be a bit nervous, but it is just a phone call.

**Sit in a quiet room.** Make sure there are no barking dogs or children within earshot.

**Be friendly, but firm.** Give the other person the benefit of the doubt, especially if this is the first time you have an issue with the customer.

**No diatribes.** Say what you need to say, but keep it brief. Then pause for a few moments and give the other person a chance to respond.

**Do not threaten anyone.** Be polite and accommodating. It is easier to get paid this way.

**Offer solutions.** Offer to send the invoice again via the postal service, etc.

**Ask to be added to the customer’s vendor database.** Doing so will prevent future glitches in the payment process.

**Be gracious.** This might very well be an isolated incident, and this customer might turn out to be a superstar long-term client (this has happened to us).

Who knew that a simple phone call could be so effective? I might just dust off my phone and use it more frequently.
Blog Trekker

10 Time- and Space-Wasting Widgets You Should Delete From Your Blog Today

(Posted on LifeHack, www.lifehack.com.)

It is easy to get so excited about your new blog that you want to use every bell and whistle that you can get your hands on. But if you are serious about building a significant readership or turning your blog into a business, going overboard with widgets and plug-ins can actually hurt you. Here are 10 time- and space-wasting widgets you should delete from your sidebar today.

1. Subscription Count/RSS Widget:
   This is a great idea if you have a legion of subscribers, since nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd. Otherwise, it can work against you by functioning as negative social proof. If your RSS widget shows you only have a handful of subscribers, many readers will wonder why they should subscribe if no one else is doing so.

2. Calendar:
   Calendar widgets were fun and interesting when the Internet and blogs were new, but now they are really not. If someone wants to see something you have posted at an earlier day or month, they can always check out your archives page.

3. Irrelevant Affiliate Ads:
   I often see new blogs whose sidebars are stuffed with all sorts of random banner ads and affiliate offers. It is important to remember that people will not click on your ads just because they are there, and they are definitely not more likely to click just because there are a ton of ads on the page. Relevance is key, so stick to promoting just one or two offers you know your readers will find useful and relevant.

4. “Share This” Sidebar Widgets:
   Unless your blog is the most groundbreaking and incredible thing they have ever seen, visitors are much more likely to share single posts or pages than they are to share the homepage of your blog.

5. “Hosted By” Badges:
   Most visitors do not care who hosts your blog. And if they do, they are more likely to respond to a well-written review post about the pros and cons of your hosting service. If you want to make affiliate sales through your hosting provider, writing a review is a much better way to go about it than a stand-alone widget in your sidebar.

6. Blogroll/Link Exchange:
   If you must have a list of links of other blogs, move them to a separate page. Your sidebar should be reserved for the things you absolutely need your readers to see or do, and having them click away to someone else’s site should not be your priority.

7. Facebook Stream:
   Facebook page status updates that are out of context can be distracting to your readers. If you really want them to become a fan or friend of your Facebook page, skip adding the feed preview and just use a simple and compact “Like” button instead.

8. Recent Posts:
   It is much more useful to have your most popular posts listed in the sidebar. Recent posts can easily be found in the archives or on your blog’s front page.

9. Tag Cloud:
   No one uses them, and no one has ever left a blog just because it did not have one. Use a search form instead, so people can find exactly what they are looking for instead of having to weed through post tags.

10. Blog Ranking/Technorati Widget:
    Your Alexa and Technorati rankings do not mean much to your average reader (unless you are blogging about blogging), and I can guarantee you they will not be looking it up just because they noticed it on your sidebar.

If you give your readers too many calls to action at the same time, they will generally decide on inaction, since it is far easier to do nothing than it is to choose from a plethora of options. The best thing to do is to keep it simple and save your sidebar space for the most important actions you want your visitors to take on your blog.

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As many of you already know, as it has been widely publicized, in August 2011 the British Ministry of Justice entered into a Framework Agreement with Applied Language Solutions (ALS) in the U.K. to provide language services to Her Majesty’s Court and Tribunals in England and Wales. ALS was the lowest bidder among the competition for the contract. The initial reasoning behind the decision to go with ALS was that the five-year contract, estimated at £300 million ($US469.2 million), would generate a savings to the courts of £18 million ($US28.1 million) a year, or roughly one third of the prior cost for freelance interpreters outsourced from the National Registry of Public Service Interpreters.

In July of this year, the Ministry of Justice announced that £12 million of the savings predicted for the first year of the new courtroom interpreting arrangement would “probably not be achieved.” There have been repeated complaints from lawyers, magistrates, and judges regarding the services provided by ALS. Hundreds of interpreters have boycotted the new contract because they refuse to work for reduced rates and lower travel expenses. ALS has also been accused of providing unqualified interpreters to the court. As a result, court hearings reliant on interpreters have been delayed or postponed, at a high cost to the Ministry of Justice and the taxpayer.

At the time of this writing, investigations are ongoing into the way in which ALS was awarded the contract and the company’s subsequent “underperformance.” Below are a few highlights from the case:

• In response to the controversy, ALS has provided information on the Framework Agreement with the Ministry of Justice on its website.

• According to reports from the press and interpreters, there have been an unacceptable number of complaints regarding the company’s operations. (See tweets on the issue reflecting the experiences of observers on the ground.)

• Encouraged by Margaret Hodge, chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee, the National Audit Office began investigating the situation in July. The scope of the investigation was deemed significant.

• On July 18, the Justice Select Committee of the House of Commons, which scrutinizes the policy, administration, and spending of the Ministry of Justice, also launched a call for written evidence to examine the service provided by ALS and the process by which it was selected. (See an article in the Law Society Gazette from July 18, 2012, for details.)

• The chief executive officer of ALS resigned in July. You can read the circumstances in the Business Section of The Manchester Evening News.

Great Britain is at a crossroads regarding the status of its interpreting sector. The situation has not been improved by its attempt to save money at the expense of justice and the traditional rights owed to limited-English-proficient individuals who are served by its courts.

It is up to the international interpreting community to inform itself regarding this case so that we can collectively ponder the repercussions this can have for the rest of the industry and other countries facing similar financial constraints during the present economic crisis.
Imagine this. Your computer is a mere terminal with Internet access. Aside from a browser, it has virtually no programs installed. There is no data in any mentionable capacity stored on your terminal, and the data that you access to aid in your translation tasks is all stored online; a mixture of your own information and third-party data from a large variety of sources. How that data is presented to you in its first draft varies: some comes from machine translation engines, while other records emerge from translation memories, corpora, or glossaries. Electronic communication is not conducted via e-mail but through a mixture of social networks, file-sharing sites, instant messengers, and texting. Collaboration is built into any of the tools you use and is a natural part of any process. Most if not all data entry is controlled by voice rather than keyboard.

Twenty years ago—no, make that 10 or maybe even five years ago—this description would have sounded like science fiction. It would either have been greeted with disgust or that kind of nervous excitement I had when I read in the 1970s that within 20 years there would be cities on the moon and deep down in the oceans. But today, we realize that the translator’s utopia I have described will actually happen for many of us—and already has for some of us, in varying degrees.

It is up to us individually to decide whether a work environment like this is desirable, and if not, to look for the industries and clients that are unlikely to adopt it in the near future. No doubt they can be found. In fact, I feel very certain that those translators who have mostly shunned technology at their work stations and have still been able to work profitably will be able to continue doing so for a long time to come. It seems unlikely that clients who have not asked for the use of technology in the translation process will do so in the near future.

But those translators who are already using today’s (or yesterday’s) translation technology will likely be confronted with transitioning into a work environment that resembles the utopia I have described.

We are in the beginning phases of the largest shift in technology since the widespread use of the personal computer. This trend takes neither a genius nor a prophet to predict. But the challenge may actually be most acute for those of us who were early adopters in the era when computerized translation technology first appeared.

My wife and daughter just returned from a month-long stay in rural India, and they confirm what you and I have read many times before. While some crucial services that we might take for granted, such as consistent power, cannot always be relied upon, more modern services like cell phone technology are very widely used and remarkably robust—more reliable, in fact, than here in the rural northwestern United States. This is what is called leapfrogging. Early adopters of a previous technology are often so constrained by the infrastructure they built for it that they now have to bend to make work for newer technologies that are best supported by more modern infrastructures.

As we enter the new age of cloud computing, we need to be careful not to constrain ourselves with existing mental infrastructures. As I read through postings in newsgroups and talk to colleagues, I sometimes get the sense that there is a certain faithful allegiance to the technology that was adopted many years ago, a loyal logic that insists “if it was visionary then it must be visionary today.” But that is not how the development of technology works. We have seen it throughout history—what was truly visionary years ago may now already be an antique.

As inhabitants and drivers of a technological industry, it is up to us to open our eyes and embrace the new visions that are up for grabs, up there on the moon, under the sea, and in the cloud.
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English into Japanese
Satomi Nishimuro
New York, NY

English into Portuguese
Mirna Soares Andrade
Washington, DC
Solange Jonsson
Skarpnack, Sweden

English into Swedish
Anna Hermerén
Limhamn, Sweden

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

Milena Calderari-Waldron
Seattle, WA

• Tony Rosado has published The New Professional Court Interpreter: A Practical Manual, which is available from CreatSpace, InTrans Book Service, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble.

• The following ATA members have been elected to the board of directors of the Japan Association of Translators: Charles G. Aschmann (vice-president and webmaster) and Karen E. Sandness (director, and meeting and special interest group liaison).

• Thomas L. West III has published the second edition of his Spanish-English Dictionary of Law and Business (Intermark Language Services).

Send your letters to Jeff Sanfacon at jeff@atanet.org or American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314.
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The Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière has a sturdy, hard binding, a four-color cover, and very legible typeface (black print on white paper), with entries in bold and capital letters. The section for each letter is indicated by a gray rectangle on the edge of the page, making the dictionary very easy to flip through. The first entry on the left page shows at the top left of that page; the last entry on the right page shows at the top right of that page. The dictionary weighs a little over five pounds (quite a brick), and in spite of the extra entries and the additional 300 pages, the publisher has managed to keep it more or less the same size as the previous edition. This was done by using a different, but not smaller, font and modifying the layout slightly. Quite a feat!

Components

Quoting the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants (CICA): “The new 2011 edition contains more than 840 new entries, and nearly 40% of the main entries have been modified to reflect and integrate the terminology used in International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and in auditing standards (International Standards on Auditing and Canadian Auditing Standards). In all, 8,661 entries covering more than 16,400 English terms, and over 22,000 French terms are at your fingertips.”

Its 1,812 pages include 1,510 pages for the dictionary itself (English into French), 259 pages for the French into English index, and more than 16,400 English terms, and over 22,000 French terms are at your fingertips.”

Contents

This is the third edition of the Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière published in Canada by CICA. It is the latest in a long line of similar dictionaries published since the early 1960s under the direction of Fernand Sylvain (the early editions were often referred to as le Sylvain), and then Louis Ménard, who is a professor at the Ecole des sciences de la gestion of the Université du Québec in Montreal. The two previous editions with this exact same title were published in 1994 and 2004.

The work is a collaborative masterpiece among CICA, the Ordre des experts-comptables and Compagnie Nationale des Commissaires aux Comptes in France, and the Institut des Réviseurs d’Entreprises in Belgium. For this reason, it is useful to practitioners and translators in all three countries, as well as to a wider audience.

Canada adopted the IFRS in January 2011 for publicly traded companies, but these standards were already in wide use in Europe and Australia. The standards are issued in English, but translations of them exist in several languages. The dictionary team performed a terminology extraction of IFRS terms as they stood in early 2010. They also included terminology from the Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS) and the Canadian Standards on Quality Control (CSQC). Under the heading Comptabilité et gestion financière, you will find terms dealing with general accounting, accounting theory, reporting, bookkeeping, internal control, audit assignments, tax and management accounting, and accounting standards. The computer-related entries deal with system controls and security.

Value

The Dictionnaire de la comptabilité et de la gestion financière is the bible for financial translators in Canada and internationally.
Canada, and no one will take you seriously as a financial translator if you do not use it. Because of the involvement of the French and Belgian organizations, the usefulness of this dictionary extends well beyond Canada. The variant term preferred in each country is indicated (e.g., CA, FR, BE). I consider it a formidable learning tool as well, because of all the definitions, explanatory notes, cross-references, synonyms, and the specific references to rule and section numbers of the International Accounting Standards Board, Financial Accounting Standards Board, Canadian Auditing Standards, and International Federation of Accountants standards and other sources.

Words that have a general meaning are found in this dictionary strictly under their relevant financial or accounting meaning. For example, “custody” does not refer to the custody of children in a divorce, and “extension” refers strictly to its accounting meaning. I am sure you do not need to consult Le Ménard to know what “customer” means, but the usage note explaining the distinction between “customer,” “client,” and “patron” is valuable in that the information provided is not all that common.

On the other hand, entries I would consider to be out of place or fillers include a number of acronyms, such as WYSIWYG, PST, GST, EDI, VAT, EEA, NGO, and WTO. These should be included in lists of abbreviations and acronyms rather than in the main body. If LBO is already in the list of acronyms, I expect to find “leveraged buy-out” as an entry with its acronym, but not “LBO” listed again as an entry in the body of the dictionary itself. In other words, there is room for some cleaning up.

One could also question the need for terms such as “volunteer” for a person who works without compensation at an NGO—but NGO is one of the subdomains covered—or “luxury goods,” even if that term gets an explanatory note about the possibility of a luxury tax on the sale of certain luxury goods. So there are a few fillers.

The vocabulary covered is extensive. I found 24 entries starting with “bond,” from “bond” to “bonded with warrant,” and 19 pages of “cash” + something (over 100 entries). I was quite pleased to find terms related to securities, such as “cashless collar,” LYON (“liquid yield option note”), and variations on “collar,” “tunnel,” and “swap.” I do wonder if “loser” is too colloquial a term for a security that goes down in value. Also glossed here are “leads” and “lags,” which I have found previously only in an older (1988) financial market dictionary, and “hurdle rate,” which was the subject of a recent question on the Yahoo! Financial Translators Forum (http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/financialtranslators).

The greatest value of this dictionary may be the alignment of International Accounting Standards/IFRS vocabulary as an aid to choosing the right term when translating a public company’s annual report. For Canadians like me, who must deal with the constant interference between English and French, the indications here of incorrect usage or deprecated Anglicism are a welcome bonus, and on several occasions these have helped me stand my ground with a client. A “fiscal year” is not une année fiscale, and “sunset clause” has a real translation in French, not just clause sunset!

Overall Evaluation

This dictionary is definitely a must, but unless you do weightlifting and your hands are big enough to hold this brick safely, get the CD (the shipping costs less), copy it onto your hard drive, and put it away for safekeeping. Then consult Le Ménard on demand on your computer, or get the online subscription—or do both.

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A minor miracle saved this column from being late this month. I live on a dead-end street, where, as I type this, the entire west side of the street is without electric power in lengthy fashion due to a bit of wild weather yesterday, bringing to an end a brutal heat wave seemingly typical of the northeastern U.S. this summer. I am in haste, though, because another cluster of thunderstorms is approaching from the ever-dangerous southwest within a few hours. Think of it as the Revenge of the Big Thicket, and Texans will understand what I mean by that.

New Queries

(English-Polish 9-12.1) “Traffic data” can be used in a context outside of transportation. One of our colleagues encountered the term in the area of information technology: “Details of your visits to the website, including, but not limited to: traffic data; location data; web server logs; and other communication data, whether required for your billing or otherwise and the resources that you access.” How would you express this in Polish?

(English-Portuguese 9-12.2) Few medical conditions could be more obscure than “bladder ears.” At least we have a definition to help us translate this into Portuguese: “Normal ‘bladder ears’ (incompletely filled bladder extends into femoral-inguinal canal).” Mention is also made in the same text of a “cystic structure in or near the bladder wall.”

(French-English 9-12.3) A colleague found latéralat in a text dealing with human resources. Is “lateral transfers” the correct translation? Use the following bit of context to help solve the problem: Lateralat est un dispositif de promotion interne.

(Greek-English 9-12.4) In the area of law and patents, what are we to make of the term εκποιητική δικαιοπραξία? Plenty of context follows: Το δικαίωμα στην πνευματική ιδιοκτησία μπορεί κατά το περιοσιακό του περιεχόμενο να αποτελεί αντικείμενο οικονομικής εκμετάλλευσης, δηλαδή μεταβίβασης (εκποιητική δικαιοπραξία). Go for it if you can.

(Italian-English 9-12.5) In the context of personal protective equipment, what can be made of ossitagli o? Some other items in the same list are assistente saldatore, saldobrasatura acetilene, and ossigeno. What is it?

(Italian-English 9-12.6) Let’s supply plenty of context so that this bicycling query will not go amiss. Strappi in progressione is the problem phrase here: Bici e fatica: il binomio che fa il ciclista, e che qui è ampiamente ripagato dal primo all’ultimo metro, con momenti che diventano memoria bilia: per noi che abbiamo scelto i due percorsi lunghi quello della verità passa per il Monte delle Sante Marie, un’ascensena tutta su terra fatta da un trittico di strappi in progressione—sia di lunghezza che di pendenza. Well, that is the context, so what is it?

(Italian-Spanish [English] 9-12.7) Bacino seems opaque in this query about clothing: Maglia di jersey con due spacci nel collo, quindi un collo a barca, e in più un’appiattita maggiore sul bacino. English is acceptable as an answer, although the original query did not involve English.

(Spanish-English 9-12.8) Who can resist Argentine history if Evita is involved? This might be the only opportunity the Translation Inquirer will ever get to have a query of this kind, with the troublesome part in bold print: Su primer depósito fue un donativo de 10.000 pesos de la propia Evita. Poco después, el gobierno decidió que iría directamente a la cuenta de la Fundación el aporte obligatorio proveniente de los descuentos efectuados a todos los trabajadores del país por los feriados del 1 de Mayo y el 17 de octubre.

(Spanish-French [English] 9-12.9) This query comes from international cooperation, in which the bold-print section indicates the troublesome part: Las políticas de recortes y expolio se generalizan a escalas global y europea. La economía financiera juega la partida en un tablero que excede con mucho las fronteras nacionales. What is to be made of this? English is acceptable as an answer, although the original query did not involve English.

Replies to Old Queries

(English-French 3-12.1) (time trial points): In response to Peter Christensen’s reply in the June issue, Douglas Herman says that while working in France, he has always seen temps de mesure for time points in clinical trials. He believes that heures ponctuelles de visites is dangerous because: 1) time points may be measured in any unit of time, such as minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, etc.; and 2) the important thing is that...
Humor and Translation

Poetry Untranslatable

During the past century, disparaging the translation of poetry has become commonplace. For instance, Robert Frost supposedly said that poetry is what gets lost in translation, and Vladimir Nabokov argued that all verse translations of Pushkins’s Eugene Onegin fatally betray the author’s use of language. Obviously, just one well-translated poem would refute the argument that all poetry is untranslatable, but who is to decide what well-translated means? Translation theorist André Lefevere points out an irony: “Translations can only be judged by people who do not need them.”

A recent addition to the fray appeared on July 31, 2011. Ernie Lepore, in the Opinionator, an online commentary of The New York Times, argued that in poetry, “the medium is the message,” and too many aspects of the medium are untranslatable. He implies that a literal translation cannot be poetic, and that paraphrase wrecks the message. He quotes T.S. Eliot’s statement that his line from Ash Wednesday (“Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper tree in the cool of the day …”) means “Lady, three white leopards sat under a juniper tree in the cool of the day,” and e.e. cummings’s statement that even the visual impact of the typography is part of a poem’s meaning. Lepore laments the unsuitability of languages like English for translating the soft, melodious, and cadentially fluid Romance languages.

But despite all arguments to the contrary, poetry always has been and always will be translated. There is no poem so great that a sufficient number of people will learn its language just to be able to read it, and thereby render translation unnecessary. It is true, as the disparagers argue, that once anything besides absolutely literal meaning comes into play, a translation has to be different from the original (and even literal meaning can get in the way at times). So, the question should be: Does the translation convey enough of the qualities of the original so that it is worth reading?

For an example of a well-translated poem, here is one, of a round often sung by children no less, the translation of which is constrained further by the fact that it must be singable. The example is simple, but the translation is not trivial. I leave it to the reader to determine the several points at which the differences between French and English rhythm, grammar, and sound force the translation to differ significantly from the original:

French Original:
Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques, dormez vous? dormez vous?
Sonnez les matines, sonnez les matines, din, din, don! din, din, don!

English Translation:
Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, Brother John? Brother John?
Morning bells are ringing, morning bells are ringing, ding ding dong! ding ding dong!

The nasal n’s of the French in the final lines are a different sound than the ng’s of English. But I don’t give a dang. Do you?

Submit items for future columns via e-mail to mh18@columbia.edu (that is 18, not el-8) or via snail mail to Mark 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.

The ATA Chronicle • September 2012

The Translation Inquirer Continued

We are back at ebb tide in this column, as sometimes happens. To change the flow, check out the new queries here and help enrich the dialogue with your responses! Thanks in advance.

(English-Spanish 4-12.6) (candied fruit): Gerardo García Ramis says these are frutas abrillantadas in Puerto Rico as well as South America.

one or more study parameters are being assessed, regardless of whether the patient is coming in for a visit, already on-site, or performing a self-evaluation.
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