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Our Authors

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Jonathan T. Hine, an ATA-certified Italian>English translator, translated his first book, a medical text, in 1962. He is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (BS), the University of Oklahoma (MBA), and the University of Virginia (PhD). He is a member of the National Capital Area Translators Association and the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association. In addition to translating and revising full-time, he conducts business and organization workshops throughout the U.S. and writes self-help books and articles for freelancers. He is also an ATA mentor and a grader for ATA’s certification exam. Contact: hine@scriptorservices.com.

Erin M. Lyons is a full-time French>English and Italian>English translator and medical writer specializing in clinical research, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices. Her experience includes in-house and freelance work as a translator, editor, and project manager in both Europe and the U.S. She has a BA in Romance languages and literature from the University of Chicago and an MA in Italian and French translation from the Monterey Institute of International Studies Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education. She has presented at several ATA Annual Conferences, as well as at the 2011 World Congress of the International Federation of Translators. Contact: elyons08@yahoo.com.

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Three Ways to Connect to ATA

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Voting procedures provide ATA members with a regular opportunity to help shape the direction and leadership of the Association, but not all ATA members are voting members. ATA certification is not available in all language combinations, and many ATA members, particularly those working as interpreters, hold other credentials in the field. To address this, the Active Membership Review process was originally set up as an alternate route for these members to obtain voting (Active or Corresponding) membership status. Specifically, the following options were established in 1999 to qualify for Active Membership Review:

- Current accreditation or certification from a member organization of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs or the United States Federal Court Interpreter Certification Program.
- Degree or certificate in translation or interpreting (based on a list of accepted programs).
- Professional engagement in at least three years of work as a translator or interpreter, or in work closely related to translation and/or interpreting.

Although the program has been in place for more than a decade, relatively few members have taken advantage of it, possibly because its existence is not well known or because the application procedure has become outdated.

To make Active Membership Review more visible and accessible to individual members without changing any of its qualification criteria, the Board of Directors decided at its recent meeting in San Diego to move the entire process to an electronic format, which has been incorporated into the membership application/renewal form. This will allow new and renewing members the option to request voting (Active or Corresponding) membership in ATA by self-reporting their professional credentials or work status. Because the self-reporting feature eliminates administrative overhead, the procedure will no longer be associated with a fee. To see the new option, please go to www.atanet.org/memb_review.php for details. If you are not a voting member, but meet the options outlined above, please take a look at the online renewal form to report your credentials.

What else is in store for 2013? ATA will continue to provide a wide range of membership services in innovative formats for everyone working in the language services industry. 2013 will see the launch of our completely redesigned website, additional business tools such as a guide to interpreting agreements, and new webinars. Our 17 divisions will continue to offer forums for professional discussions and networking in many language combinations and areas of specialization, and our Annual Conference will again bring together the best presenters of the industry to talk about the latest developments.

I hope you will agree that your membership in ATA offers exceptional value. Thank you in advance for renewing your membership and have a happy and healthy 2013.
Translators and interpreters spend a great deal of time and energy trying to explain to those around us just what we do. We know how complicated and amazing our work is, but even our most faithful clients do not always understand us.

Of all the impressions I came away with from the 2012 Conference of the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas (which immediately followed ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference in San Diego), this surprised me the most: machine translation (MT) researchers and developers feel much the same way. Misunderstood. By family and friends, by clients, and especially by human translators (which they call professional translators, by the way).

In spite of our similarities, our failure to appreciate the interests and unique passions that drive each other means that we often speak past each other rather than listen and understand. And we are communication specialists!

As ATA’s representative and invited keynote speaker, I walked into AMTA’s conference thinking I had a good grasp of the basics. I left three days later with a greater appreciation of what our MT colleagues are up to—there is some very exciting stuff—and a better sense of where we both fit in an incredibly diverse translation market. I want to share some of my big takeaways from this conference with you:

1. It is about numbers. Over two quintillion bytes of digitized data are created every day. Translation providers (individuals and companies alike) currently handle less than 0.0001% of that; even though the translation industry is growing at 12%, data volume is increasing at an even faster clip. Most MT targets this divide rather than trying to compete with what humans do best. It already handles huge amounts of “perishable” data that would otherwise remain untranslated: chats, text messages, and real-time subtitling for newscasts and other programming. MT is also edging into interpreting, as voice recognition technology integrates with MT engines.

2. We need each other. MT has made incredible strides in quality, no doubt, but it still relies heavily on humans—leveraging large, human-generated translation memories to train MT engines, referring to human translations for quality metrics, and wrestling with the human post-editing question. We have an opportunity to influence a viable model for post-editing services: defining a skill set, education and training, and how to structure fair payment. From their side, MT developers are looking at ways to package MT to appeal to translators in order to compel us to add it to our productivity toolbox. They need to understand how the industry and people work to be able to make a business case for investing in MT.

3. The real-world market. The MT community is focused intensely on highly theoretical and technical work, and is looking more closely at how today’s businesses do business. Much MT research happens outside the reality of current enterprise solutions—think code management systems, enterprise applications and products, and translation environment tools. We human translators know a lot about dealing with business clients and educating them, and we can help MT developers learn to present their technology in terms that end users can understand. We all stand to benefit, as presenting a unified message to potential clients will reduce confusion.

I am deeply grateful for AMTA’s invitation and hospitality, reaching out in an effort to foster mutual understanding. Based on the positive response from attendees, AMTA is planning to co-locate with ATA again in 2014 in Chicago. In spite of our differences, we have a great deal in common—we are all driven by the same desire to foster better communication. We need to continue to actively listen to each other.
ATA’s Board of Directors met October 27-28, 2012 in San Diego, California, in conjunction with ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference. Here are some highlights from the Board meeting.

**Certification:** The Board approved three proposals put forward by Certification Committee Chair Geoff Koby, who participated in the discussions.

- The establishment of a Swedish into English certification exam.
- An administrative change to the effective date for eliminating the certification eligibility option for those with master’s degrees or higher, effective January 1, 2013 (instead of 2014). (To sit for the certification exam, a candidate must satisfy the eligibility requirements. For more information, please see: www.atanet.org/certification/eligibility_overview.php.)
- The addition of a new certification eligibility option: provide an official American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) reading proficiency test score for the source language and an official ACTFL writing proficiency test score in the target language.

**Active Membership Review:** The Board approved the following changes to the Active Membership Review process:

- Remove the fee.
- Move to an electronic format.
- Incorporate the process into the membership applications and renewals.

The Board took these steps to promote the review process and to administratively streamline the process for prospective Active and Corresponding members. More information on this appears in the 2013 membership renewal notices.

**Language Technology Division:** The Board approved the appointment of Jose Palomares as the acting administrator of the Language Technology Division (LTD). He will serve until the next LTD election in the fall of 2013.

**Certification Software:** The Board was briefed on the successful keyboarded exam sitting held in conjunction with ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference. The keyboarded exam sitting allows a candidate to use his or her own laptop to take the certification exam. While there are minor issues to be worked out, future keyboarded exam sittings will be scheduled. The dates and locations will be posted online once they are set.

The Board meeting summary is posted online. The minutes will be posted once they are approved at the next Board meeting. Past meeting summaries and minutes are also posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. The next Board meeting date and location are to be determined. Board meetings are open to all members, and members are encouraged to attend.

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**Be Sure to Renew:** Membership renewals have been mailed. If you prefer to renew online, please go to: www.atanet.org/ren_form.php. Thank you for being an ATA member in 2012 and please renew for 2013 today.
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### The National Center for Interpretation Testing, Research and Policy  
[nci.arizona.edu](http://nci.arizona.edu)

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[www.latitudescoach.com](http://www.latitudescoach.com)

### TransPerfect Translations  
[www.transperfect.com](http://www.transperfect.com)

### U.S. Department of State, Office of Language Services  
[language.services.state.gov](http://language.services.state.gov)

### University of Denver  
[universitycollege.du.edu](http://universitycollege.du.edu)

### University of Louisville  
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### Wordfast  
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ATA wishes to thank all of the volunteers from chapters, affiliates, and other groups who staffed their tables during the Annual Conference in San Diego.

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www.atisda.org

**Chapters**
Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators
www.aait.org

Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters
www.catiweb.org

Delaware Valley Translators Association
www.dvta.org

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www.mitinweb.org

Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters
www.maltia.org

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National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
www.najit.org

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http://translatorswithoutborders.com
Call for Nominations

The 2013 Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is pleased to call for nominations from ATA’s membership to fill the positions of president-elect, secretary, and treasurer (each a two-year term), as well as three directors’ positions (each a three-year term). Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting of Voting Members on Thursday, November 7, 2013, in San Antonio, Texas.

Under ATA’s Bylaws, all Active members of ATA are eligible to run for elected office. Active members are those who have passed an ATA certification exam or who are established as having achieved professional status through an Active Membership Review (for more information on this process, visit www.atanet.org/memb_review.php ). Active members must be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. Other member categories are not eligible to serve as officers or directors. However, any member may submit a nomination.

Please note that members of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee are not eligible to run for elected office.

2013 Nomination Form: ATA Officers and Directors

Members may make a nomination using the form on page 12 or online (www.atanet.org/elections.php). Nominations should be submitted as early as possible so that the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee can fully consider proposed candidates. The deadline is March 1, 2013. Mail, e-mail, or fax the completed form to:

Jiri Stejskal
Chair, ATA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA
Fax: +1-703-683-6122
E-mail: Walter@atanet.org

If you plan to put names forward for nomination, please contact the potential nominees first, explaining your intention and the fact that a nomination does not guarantee a formal invitation to run for office. If a nomination is not put forward by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee to ATA’s Board of Directors, an individual may still petition to be added to the slate of candidates by submitting the nomination in writing along with the signatures of at least 60 voting members endorsing the nomination. The petitions must be received by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee no later than 30 calendar days after first publication by the Board of Directors of the names of the candidates proposed by the Committee.

All ATA officers and directors serve on a volunteer basis: please do not nominate colleagues who express serious concerns about service, or who have conflicting priorities.

Please fill out the nomination form completely with the candidate’s help so that the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee has up-to-date information about the candidate’s service and affiliation with ATA. Members may nominate themselves.
2013 Nomination Form: ATA Officers and Directors

Person making nomination: ____________________________________________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________ Telephone: ____________________________

Nominee information

Name: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________ Telephone: ____________________________

Please check all that apply:

- full-time
- part-time
- translator
- interpreter
- in-house employee
- other (specify):

Working languages and directions (e.g., German into English): ____________________________________________________________

Membership in ATA chapters, other regional groups, and/or divisions: ____________________________________________________________

Volunteer service for ATA, ATA chapters, other regional groups, and/or divisions: ____________________________________________________________

Other relevant service: ____________________________________________________________

Please answer the following questions:

How has the candidate demonstrated commitment to the translation and interpreting professions?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What strengths would this person bring to ATA’s Board of Directors?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Why did you nominate this person?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Final thoughts: What perspectives or points of view do you feel are important to have represented on ATA’s Board?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Any other comments?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for being an ATA member and for your active commitment to the future of your association.
2012 Honors and Awards Recipients

JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation
Jennifer Clowery

Jennifer Clowery is the 2012-2013 recipient of the $2,500 American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation’s JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation. This award was funded a decade ago by Muriel Jérôme-O’Keeffe, a past president of both ATA and AFTI, to encourage and recognize students in technical translation and interpreting programs.

Jennifer is a graduate student in the Spanish Translation and Interpretation Program at the Monterey Institute of International Studies Graduate School of Translation, Interpretation, and Language Education. She is looking forward to a career as a scientific and technical translator.

Jennifer worked as a summer intern at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights with the Organization of American States. During her internship, she helped streamline translation processes and manage terminology through the creation of a glossary and translation memory that can be accessed via a secure cloud server. One of the end goals of the internship was to create a translation manual for the Court of Human Rights to ensure high-quality translations.

Jennifer is also a freelance quality assurance specialist with Idem Translations, a translation and localization company focusing on life sciences. “The most attractive part about working in the scientific and technical field is that it is changing constantly, and thus, the translator or interpreter must also adapt with the industry and update his or her knowledge and professional skills,” says Jennifer.

About JTG, Inc.
Founded in 1995 by ATA and AFTI Past President Muriel Jérôme-O’Keeffe, JTG, Inc. is a language consultancy that supports homeland security, intelligence, and global business with cross-cultural communications. JTG, Inc. has underwritten the AFTI scholarship since 2001. Visit: www.jtg-inc.com.

About AFTI
The American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) was established in 1997. AFTI’s primary charitable and educational activities consist of sponsorship and dissemination of research and education in the fields of translation and interpreting through research grants, scholarships, conferences, and commissions for the production of education materials, as well as through the establishment and maintenance of an archive for the collection of documents and artifacts related to translation and interpreting. Visit: www.afti.org/about_AFTI.php.

S. Edmund Berger Prize for Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation
Amy Lesiewicz

Amy Lesiewicz, of Sugar Land, Texas, is the recipient of the S. Edmund Berger Prize for Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation. The award was originally established by ATA and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation in honor of Dr. S. Edmund Berger, a distinguished translator of chemical texts, to recognize an accomplished translator for his or her achievement in scientific or technical translation. This year, with the cooperation of Ed Berger’s family who established the prize, ATA decided instead to support an up-and-coming sci-tech translator attending his or her first ATA Annual Conference. Since Amy is a mentee in ATA’s Mentoring Program, ATA’s Mentoring Committee was also very much involved in making the selection.

Alexis-Charles-Henri Clérel de Tocqueville (July 29, 1805-April 16, 1859) was a French political thinker and historian best known for his *Democracy in America* (appearing in two volumes: 1835 and 1840) and *The Old Regime and the Revolution* (1856). In both of these works, he analyzed the rising living standards and social conditions of individuals and their relationship to the market and state in Western societies. *Democracy in America* (1835), his major work, published after his travels in the U.S., is today considered an early work of sociology and political science. Tocqueville was an active participant in French politics, first under the July Monarchy (1830-1848) and then during the Second Republic (1849-1851).

In *The Ancien Regime and the French Revolution*, Tocqueville considers the French Revolution in the context of France’s history. Tocqueville worried that although the revolutionary spirit was still alive and well, liberty was no longer its primary objective. Just as the first Republic had fallen to Napoleon and the second had succumbed to his nephew Napoleon III, he feared that all future revolutions might experience the same fate, forever imperiling the development of democracy in France.

Arthur Goldhammer’s new translation of this classic aims to be both accurate and readable. Tocqueville’s subtlety of style and profundity of thought offer a challenge to readers as well as to translators. As both a Tocqueville scholar and an award-winning translator, Arthur is uniquely qualified for the task. Readers will appreciate *The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution* for its sense of irony.
as well as tragedy, for its deep insights into political psychology, and for its impassioned defense of liberty.

Arthur has translated more than 100 works from French, including Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*. He is a three-time recipient of the French-American Foundation translation prize. France made him a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the Académie Française awarded him its Médaille de Vermeil.

The *Lewis Galantière Award* is bestowed biennially in even-numbered years for a distinguished book-length literary translation from any language, except German, into English. This award honors distinguished ATA founding member Lewis Galantière (1894-1977). His translations from French drama, fiction, poetry, and scholarship enriched cultural life during the middle decades of the 20th century, and are still being read over a quarter century after his death.

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**Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation**

**Lisa Carter**

Lisa Carter is the recipient of the Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation for her Spanish>English translation of *El calígrafo de Voltaire* (*Voltaire’s Calligrapher*), a novel by Argentine writer Pablo De Santis (Harper Perennial, 2010).

Dalessius, the novel’s protagonist, is 20 when he goes to work for one of the Enlightenment’s most famous minds, the author and philosopher Voltaire. As the great man’s calligrapher, Dalessius becomes witness to many wonders—and finds himself in the middle of a secret battle between the malevolent remnants of the all-but-dead Dark Ages and the progressive elements of the modern age. The calligrapher’s role in this shadowy conflict will carry him to many perilous places. As the conspiracy to halt the Enlightenment’s astonishing progress intensifies, young Dalessius’ courage—as well as Voltaire’s unique cunning and wit—are put to the ultimate test as they strive to ensure the survival of the future.

Pablo De Santis is a journalist and comic-strip creator who became editor-in-chief of one of Argentina’s leading comics magazines. He is the author of six critically acclaimed novels (including *The Paris Enigma*), one work of nonfiction, and a number of books for young adults. His works have been published in more than 20 countries.

Lisa Carter is a Spanish>English translator with nearly 20 years of experience, specializing in literary, legal, and commercial banking texts. She has published six works in translation, one of which was nominated for the 2012 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. She provides translation, writing, and editing services through her company, Intralingo Inc.

The *Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation or Interpretation* was established in memory of Alicia Gordon, known for creating imaginative solutions to knotty translation problems, based on rigorous research. It is given for a translation (from French or Spanish into English, or from English into French or Spanish) in any subject. The award was established by Alicia’s sister, Dr. Jane Gordon, and the award fund is administered by the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation.
Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award

Javier Gil

Javier Gil is the recipient of the 2012 Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award. ATA and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation offer this $1,000 prize to recognize an outstanding presenter of a financial translation session during ATA’s Annual Conference. Javier presented an advanced session entitled “Hot Topics in Financial Translation” at this year’s conference in San Diego.

In his presentation, Javier addressed some of the most relevant developments affecting the main financial sectors—from asset management and accounting to banking and insurance—and their implications for the financial translator. Also covered were the terms being introduced as a result of new regulations.

Javier is a freelance financial translator and external translator at the European Central Bank. He has over 13 years of experience, including serving as the head of the Spanish Translation Service at KPMG Spain. He has a translation degree from the Universidad Europea de Madrid and a master’s degree in management and finance from Bath University (U.K.). He works for private companies in the financial sector and a number of international bodies. He delivers financial translation seminars at universities in the U.K. and Spain on a regular basis.

Marian S. Greenfield is a past president of ATA (2005-2007) and the New York Circle of Translators. Currently, she is the chair of ATA’s Professional Development and Ethics Committees. She is the owner of msgreenfield Translations. She has worked in the translation industry for over 30 years. A translator in New York’s Financial District for 20 years, she is the former manager of translation services at JP Morgan. She is a translation industry consultant, Trados instructor, and freelance Spanish, Portuguese, and French into English financial and legal translator. She has taught at the University of Chicago, New York University, and the University of Puerto Rico.

Harvie Jordan Scholarship

Francesca Samuel

Francesca Samuel, an ATA active member and English<>Spanish translator and interpreter, is the recipient of the 2012 Harvie Jordan Scholarship.

Francesca is a freelance interpreter and translator in Tucson, Arizona. In 2000, she founded A La Carte Translation Services, a web-based translation business. She has 15 years of experience working with a national language services company that supports proceedings related to immigration.

Francesca was recently elected administrator of ATA’s Spanish Language Division (SPD). She has been a member of ATA and SPD since 1998. In 2002, Francesca was elected SPD treasurer. She was elected assistant administrator of the division in 2004, serving three consecutive terms (2004-2010). In 2012, she served as chair of the SPD/Interpreters Division Mid-Year Conference Planning Committee.

In addition to ATA, Francesca is a member of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. She is also a member of the Pima Community College (Tucson, Arizona) Translation Studies Advisory Committee, and continues to spread the word about the industry to students of all ages with the assistance of ATA’s School Outreach Program. She was recently appointed vice-president of Arizona Translators and Interpreters, Inc., an organization that provides educational resources to translators and interpreters in Arizona.

Harvie Jordan was the first assistant administrator of ATA’s Spanish Language Division. He served as president of the Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association, which he co-founded. He was also a freelance Spanish<>English translator and Spanish and English voice talent. The scholarship is given in honor of his lifetime contributions as a language professional.
The Harvie Jordan Scholarship is awarded by the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation to a member of ATA’s Spanish Language Division in good standing to promote, encourage, and support leadership and professional development within the division.

Student Translation Award
Eyal Sherf

Eyal Sherf is the recipient of the 2012 Student Translation Award for his translation project from Arabic into English of an excerpt from Alawiya Sobh’s novel, It’s Called Love. Eyal recently earned a certificate in Arabic>English translation from New York University.

It’s Called Love follows the fortunes of a number of characters in Beirut society, whose experiences reflect the tragedy and destruction of the Lebanese people, from the civil war to foreign invasion and the events leading up to the July 2006 war. It is a novel that speaks about human suffering and the extreme experiences of love and fear in a world constantly overshadowed by violence.

Alawiya Sobh is a Lebanese journalist and novelist born in Beirut in 1955. She has bachelor’s degrees in both Arabic and English literature from the Lebanese National University in Beirut. She has worked in journalism since the early 1980s, writing for a number of newspapers and magazines. In the 1990s, she founded Snob Al-Hasnaa, the best-selling women’s cultural magazine in the Arab world today, and remains its editor-in-chief. Her books include The Sleep of Days, Dunya, and Maryam of the Stories. It’s Called Love, her fourth book, was nominated for the 2010 Arabic Booker Prize. Sobh’s works have been banned in all Arab countries.

Eyal Sherf is an Arabic and Hebrew translation specialist and principal at Sherf Translations, based in New York. A runner-up at Toastmasters International’s humorous speech contest, he is also a communication consultant and an accent reduction specialist at Elson Global Speech in New York. He has worked in governmental institutions and the defense field as a translator, Arabic curriculum designer, and instructor. His translation specialties include the commercial, legal, medical, and political fields, as well as the performing arts. In addition to his certificate in translation, he has a master’s degree in vocal performance/musical theater, also from New York University, and a bachelor’s degree in acting from the Birmingham School of Speech and Drama, in England.

The Student Translation Award is presented by the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation to a graduate or undergraduate student, or group of students, for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project.
Congratulations to Birgit Vosseler-Brehmer, Winner of ATA’s 2011-2012 Outreach Contest!

ATA member Birgit Vosseler-Brehmer won free registration to ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference in San Diego for a photo of herself with an English class at the Kurfürst-Salentin-Gymnasium in Andernach, Germany.

Birgit’s School Outreach presentation, entitled “Translation: A Global Career,” gave the students a glimpse into the life of a translator—a typical workday, the pros and cons of working in a home office, and tools used in the profession. At the teacher’s request, Birgit also discussed how students might tailor a curriculum vitae before applying to schools in other countries. “The teacher was very pleased about the abundance of information, and the class was interested,” says Birgit. Her presentation accomplished two important goals: raising awareness of translation, and establishing a professional connection with the students and teacher.

A freelance English>German translator, Birgit specializes in automation and measuring instruments. She is based in Andernach, Germany.

The 2012-2013 School Outreach Contest is now open. The winner will receive free registration to ATA’s 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas, November 6-9, 2013. To enter, visit www.atanet.org, click on CAREERS, and choose School Outreach.
The medical field is a discipline undergoing continuous change, both in terms of innovations in treatment and new developments in the information technology and e-documentation used to record patient procedures, therapies, and progress. The wide range of possibilities for subspecialties and the lucrative nature of the industry’s enduring growth, despite a rather lackluster economy, make specializing in medical and life sciences translation an intriguing option. However, translators entering this field will need to embrace technology in order to survive.

Medical translators are already required to be well versed in medical terminology and to keep up with advances in research, technology, procedures, and standard of care, so the ever-changing context of the field presents additional challenges. Translators must remain vigilant to ensure that they acquire and maintain the necessary skill set to stay ahead of the technological curve. By using the appropriate tools, resources, and training, translators can leverage these technological advantages in what is becoming an increasingly niche-oriented business. One of the ways in which translators can maintain this edge is to understand how innovations in e-documentation used in medical records and clinical trials is transforming the translation process.

What Are the Latest Developments in E-documentation for Clinical Trials and Medical Records?

The internationalization of the pharmaceutical and medical technologies industries has continued to have a far-reaching trickle-down effect as more countries become actively involved in clinical trials, with global teams accessing data at sites around the world in real time. The emergence of new technologies and data workflow systems represents a multidisciplinary effort to bridge the diverse processing of data collected during clinical trial protocols in order to compile, analyze, and archive study data for the most effective review of the results. Ultimately, the primary goals behind the innovations taking place in electronic data capture include:

- Creating templates and processing data uniformly to leverage for future use.
• Improving the efficacy of data processing to save time and money.

• Standardizing data capture so that modifications can be implemented in real time.

• Providing data that can be retrieved instantly to safeguard patient safety further and improve public health drug safety monitoring (pharmacovigilance).

• Minimizing human error and omissions to ensure data accuracy and prevent data loss.

Essentially, the impact of these latest advancements in e-documentation and data capture has been two-fold: 1) the digitalization of the paper-based system, and 2) the consequent reform of the clinical trial workflow process as a result of technological improvements.

“Intelligent” electronic means of data collection and patient reporting in clinical trials include using hand-held devices and tablets to answer patient and quality-of-life questionnaires, completing patient e-diaries for immediate access to information, using digital pens and tablet dispensers for automated drug administration, and employing interactive voice response systems for urgent physician contact. In addition, the embedded and stand-alone medical software used in diagnostic procedures (e.g., electrocardiogram interpretation), apparatus (e.g., radiation therapy administration), or decision-triggering devices (e.g., blood glucose meters) also continue to undergo improvements.

Many medical devices also now have extension mobile applications to control the devices and display, as well as to store, analyze, or transmit patient-specific medical data. Mobile apps include those allowing remote access to the measurements of a patient’s vital signs, ones that calculate the amount of chemotherapy needed based on a patient’s body surface area, and those that monitor a patient’s movements to determine conditions such as sleep apnea, fall detection, or heart rate.

Moreover, medical software is now included in the definition of a medical device under the European Medical Device Directive Amendment of 2010, which states: “Stand-alone software that does not meet the definition of a medical device or of an IVD medical device, but is intended by the manufacturer to be an accessory to a medical device, or an IVD medical device, falls respectively under the scope of Directive 93/42/EEC or Directive 98/79/EC.” As a result, new attention is being paid to software by global regulators for validation and verification purposes, creating new opportunities for translation, localization, and validation.

How Have These Developments Affected Clinical Trial Administration?

Data management workflow for clinical trials has clearly been forced to evolve due to these new tools and changes in how, and by whom, data is collected and stored. For the most part, traditional clinical trial management has been overhauled in favor of clinical trial management systems to provide the infrastructure necessary for multi-site clinical trials. The rapid growth and expansion of clinical research has made paper-based collection woefully inadequate and data-based centralized systems essential.

These centralized workflow systems allow data managers and clinicians to work together in a centrally managed database, using the same standard operating procedures and processes, regardless of language or location. Clearly, these types of processes involve translators, who are responsible for translating patient source data and reports and harmonizing and reviewing data collected from multiple sites.

How Are These Technological Innovations Changing the Translation Workflow?

Despite all of these technological advances, translation is still translation, but expectations have changed in terms of productivity, timeliness, and integration. As British physicist, civil servant, and novelist C.P. Snow wrote in *The New York Times* in 1971, “Technology … is a queer thing. It brings you great gifts with one hand, and it stabs you in the back with the other.”

Medical translators spend much of their time translating source documentation and case report forms (CRFs) so that international data from multicenter studies can be collected and harmonized. Most medical translators are all too familiar with CRFs, the standardized form used by clinical
sites to transcribe relevant data from patient medical charts (the “source documentation”) and compile it with data from other sites around the world to create a statistical pool for study data analysis. The migration from paper-based data collection and medical records to electronic ones has resulted in the development of the electronic case report form (eCRF). As clinical trials expand globally, a properly internationalized and localized eCRF application is essential to provide faster, less expensive, and more consistent translations. The eCRF is basically a means of removing the paper-based step. This makes it possible for data entry to be pushed back to an earlier stage in the data processing protocol and to be performed directly at the clinical sites, rather than being performed internally by one of the sponsor’s subcontractors or a clinical research organization. The key features of the eCRF are that it provides:

- Faster data collection;
- Cleaner data;
- Easy monitoring; and
- The immediate evaluation of results.

For translators, the types of data requiring translation have essentially remained unchanged (e.g., adverse event reports, subject randomization assignments, medical histories, diagnostic reports, laboratory values, etc.), but the platform through which the information is collected and presented has changed, as well as the constraints.

While most medical translators are fairly accustomed to using translation memories (TMs), terminology databases, quality review of document templates, and other reference guidelines, eCRFs call for standardized data input and mapping, as well as classifications such as the Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine—Clinical Terms (SNOMED CT) and its related glossaries. All of these systems also tend to use controlled language as part of proprietary systems, which then need to be merged with other systems to compile and cross-analyze data. This means that official regulatory terms (for adverse events, dosing, etc.) need to match up with the translated terms used by the proprietary software platforms at local clinical sites and hospitals. Failing this, automated data processing will be ineffective, with potential duplications of single instances of adverse events that may require additional manual reconciliation. This means that translators and terminologists need to contribute to both the upstream and downstream of software internationalization to ensure that data collection processes remain accurate and effective. Integrated terminology databases and TMs become integral during the initial translation process in order to generate consistent and accurate translations, particularly when there is the added challenge of interlinguistic text expansion and contraction that requires localization and retooling for specific markets.

Data collection and medical records ultimately aid translators because data element attributes have become standardized, creating greater consistency and fewer reporting ambiguities across clinical sites. At the same time, however, the resulting translations are also less “flexible.” Standardized terminology can risk degenerating into “jargon” when linguists are stripped of discretionary translation possibilities and forced to work around rigid terms and controlled language. For medical translators, the global nature of clinical trials means that the use of computer-assisted tools (CATs) has become essential as the process becomes increasingly commodity-driven, with extremely accelerated timelines and data turnover deadlines.

**What Tools and Training Are Essential for Translators to Remain Competitive in an Increasingly High-Tech Environment?**

Advancements in the field have made continuing education more indispensable than ever for medical translators, who can no longer rely on scientific and medical expertise alone to remain competitive. The complexities of documentation in international clinical studies means that it is no longer enough to be “just” a translator. While there are not necessarily any gold standards in terms of the specific tools used for clinical trial documentation management, with an abundance of proprietary and open-source systems available, translators can take some key steps to ensure success in working with these new aggre-
gate systems to manage content across diverse linguistic and cultural groups.

1. **Become an expert on your CAT/TM.** Most translators only have an elementary knowledge of the tools they use on an everyday basis. Learn all of the features of your TM tool of choice, including search functions, terminology “locking” capabilities, terminology plug-ins, and module frameworks. Set tangible goals, such as spending one hour per week to master a specific feature or attending one webinar per month hosted by the tool’s developer.

2. **Become a terminologist.** Become a master of clinical and technical documentation terminology. Learn the standard terminology for the instructions for use, user manuals, package inserts, labels, etc., for your language and country combinations. For example, the European Medicines Agency Working Group on Quality Review of Documents is a great place to start and is the international multilingual gold standard.

3. **Research graphical user interfaces and content management systems.** Learn enterprise-level technologies, such as proprietary plug-ins or data transfer systems, used by your end-clients to gain a macro-prospective on quality control and worldwide process alignment. Understanding the end-use of the translated content (data compilation, regulatory submissions, patient documentation) is key to a translator’s ability to contextualize and tailor translations appropriately.

4. **Work your way up the ladder.** Start using the information technology interfaces used by your clients, such as database integration tools and XML editors as a linguistic reviewer, before diving into the deep end and mastering them for your own translations. You will find it easier to advance to increasingly integrated support roles if you learn the ins and outs of the client’s proprietary system early on.

**Innovation is Key**

Although it may seem overwhelming at first, adapting to new innovations in medical technology should be viewed as an opportunity and business driver for even the less than tech-savvy translator. As in all business sectors, it is vital that translators strategize to find ways to add value to their “product.” Providing quality translations that meet technological expectations is an excellent way for medical translators to find their niche and differentiate themselves from the competition.

**Notes**


Salima rubbed her eyes and stretched. It was time to take a walk around the house. She was glad that Jim had brought the twins to the zoo because this translation was taking much longer to revise than she had estimated. The source was handwritten by a doctor and the author’s lousy calligraphy had led to many mistranslations in the target text. Salima had trained as a nurse, which was why she had a comfortable niche as a technical and medical translator. As she rose, the phone rang.

“Salima, it’s Kate at Purrfect Translations.” Salima noted how Kate had gradually acquired a British accent since transferring to London last year.

“Hi, Kate. What can I do for you today?”

“We have a translation coming in next Tuesday. 10,000 words. I think it’s about a ship boiler explosion.”

“Language pair, Kate?”

“Oh, sorry. It’s been a crazy day. Italian into English.”

“It’s nuts here, too. Kate, you know I work from Arabic and French, and I don’t know anything about boilers.”

“I know, but you know so many people, I wonder if you could give me a lead … Salima, you there?”

“I’m thinking, Kate. I know three technical translators who might be able to help you, and one of them was in the navy.” Salima reeled off the names of the three colleagues she had met at a conference.

“You’re the best, Salima. That’s why we call you first. Thanks awfully.” Click.

Salima refilled her coffee mug and reflected that she was glad that she did not have Kate’s job. Even this messy revision was better than that.

Every professional translation deserves to be checked by a second translator (reviser) before delivery.

Teachers and those who grade professional qualifying exams may seem suited to the work, but professional revision is not the same as grading papers or exams.

What Is Revision? Why Isn’t It Editing, Proofreading, or Something Else?

First of all, when translators and translation scholars talk about revision, they are using a technical term, one that is unfamiliar to those outside our industry. Text revision as it is used here is a cognate taken from the French révision. While “revision” in English usually implies modification of the text, révision denotes a series of specific activities performed on a written text, which may or may not require modifying the text. Webster’s New International Dictionary defines revision as:

Do Not Take It Personally!

Secrets of Revision

By Jonathan T. Hine
1. a.) the act of revising: reexamination or careful reading over for correction or improvement. b.) something made by revising: a revised form or version.¹

Contrast this with the definition of révision in Le Petit Robert:

1. Action de réviser (un texte, un énoncé); modification (de règles juridiques) pour les mettre en harmonie avec les circonstances ... 2. Amélioration (d’un texte) par des corrections ... (-> correction, réécriture). 3. Mise à jour par un nouvel examen ... 4. Examen par lequel on vérifie qu’une chose est bien dans l’état où elle doit être. -> vérification.²

Notice that Definition 4 in Le Petit Robert refers to a verification against standards that is absent in the English definition.

Different Types of Revision

• Professional revision of pragmatic translations is the basic task performed in our working world: checking a target text against a source text before delivery to an end-user (client, editor, publisher, etc.). The reviser needs both texts, and should be at least as qualified as the translator in both language pair and subject matter. Professional revision involves a peer providing essential backup.

• Instruction goes along with didactic translation as part of foreign language acquisition. It is what a teacher does when correcting papers. It is also what we do as professionals when teaching or mentoring. For example, if a colleague were to ask me to critique a translation not for client delivery, but because she is trying to learn how to translate something new, I might mark it up more than a client delivery, and I would leave the corrections there, with comments. Then we could discuss it.

• Evaluation usually means summary evaluation, an up/down judgement, often without details. When a language services provider (LSP) retains a reviser to evaluate a new translator’s product, the task here is not properly revision, because correcting the text is not the objective. However, it may take the skills of a reviser to evaluate well.

• Quality control is why LSPs hire revisers. But it is also why project managers have to read the work, and why there are proofreaders and editors.

Monolingual revision of translations cannot be done without compromising quality and possibly making things worse.

Monolingual Versus Bilingual Revision

Strictly speaking, monolingual revision of translations cannot be done without compromising quality and possibly making things worse. A particularly well-written text can contain mistranslations that appear coherent with the rest of the text. A monolingual reviser could also repair an apparently clumsy sentence, thereby inadvertently changing the meaning or moving the entire text unit away from the author’s intent.

However, there are other forms of monolingual revision that translators are sometimes asked to perform. In technical communications, for example, a subject matter expert (SME) works closely with technical writers and translators. What the SME does is a form of monolingual revision. If the SME sees something that does not square with his or her understanding of the subject, it is either corrected or sent back to the person who wrote the text to find out what was really meant. A bilingual SME would be ideal, and I am often asked to revise technical translations as much for my engineering background as for my language pairs.

Monolingual revision occurs during final editing of almost any copy. For example, a manager or marketing expert may edit the translation, or the text may be converted for use by a voice-over talent. Ideally, the author, the translator, and the reviser of the text should be aware of its ultimate use so they can prepare it accordingly.

Finally, we may be asked to review the writing of non-native writers. In my case, this means the English writing of non-Anglophones. Professional translators add value to this task, because we can hear the authors thinking in their native language as they write and imagine a “source text” behind the strange English. You may have caught yourself doing this when you read or hear the news media transferring cognates from politicians speaking in a second language. This kind of monolingual revision applies only to material
Ideally, the author, the translator, and the reviser of the text should be aware of the text’s ultimate use so they can prepare it accordingly.

**Revision for Dummies—Not!**

Dummies cannot translate, so they cannot revise. When we revise another translator’s output, we are doing no more and no less than what we should be doing to our own translations before delivering them. Unfortunately, it is nearly impossible for anyone to edit his or her own work perfectly, and that is simply a human reality. Small errors become part of the page and we no longer see them. It takes a second set of eyes to catch those mistakes. Nothing personal here: the reviser is actually helping the translator deliver a perfect product. Working as a reviser has the added advantage of improving our own self-revision.

So, how do we revise? Here are some pointers from revisers with many years of experience.

1. **Know beforehand whether you are expected to revise for style as well as substance.** Often, the client is under a time crunch and does not want gripping prose. “Just the facts, ma’am,” as Sergeant Friday used to say on the old television show *Dragnet*. If you do not get this guidance, ask for it. You can waste a lot of time, and your client’s money, improving the coherence and style of the document when no one needs it.

2. **Know how closely the client wants you to revise.** For example, if the end-user needs to know what the document means for an internal meeting, the text does not have to be elegant as long as it is clear. Weird (but correct) spellings, unusual syntax (that is not misleading), and even omissions (that have no affect on the meaning) can be accepted. On the other hand, an annual report for big investors or another kind of sales document has to be very accurate, and it has to read well in order to place the company in a good light. A scientific journal article has to be precise, even at the expense of easy readability in some cases. (Actually, many scientists are excellent writers.)

3. **Do not take revision personally.** Always remember that you are revising a translation, not a translator. It takes special effort to set aside the human tendency to imagine the translator working on the document. Even if we do not know the name of the translator, we have a special empathy for that individual: we are peers, colleagues, and fellow travelers. But anyone can have a bad day, and there are many reasons the translation in front of you may be a mess.

4. **Stay in touch with the project manager.** One very common reason the translation is a mess may be that you have the wrong file in front of you. If something is way off or if you see that the revision will take more time than you estimated, contact the project manager right away.

5. **Avoid “happy-to-glad” revision.** This is the habit of replacing a word with its exact synonym. It is both unnecessary and insulting to the translator. In a way, it is cheating the client too, because they should not have to pay for wasted action.

6. **If the meaning is carried correctly, leave the translation alone.** Closely related to “happy-to-glad” revision is “I would not have done it that way.” One way of policing ourselves is to be sure that we can justify every change we make in terms of providing an external reference. This could be client guidelines, reference books, checklists, style guides, or glossaries. Anything we cannot justify may simply be personal preference, and that is not a reason to change someone’s work.

**Related Work**

Often revisers are asked to do things because of their position in the production chain. One of these tasks is to harmonize the work of multiple translators. This can be very time-consuming and frustrating, and warrants careful discussion up front with the project manager. It does not help if the translations dribble in while the reviser is working, because changes cannot be backed efficiently into earlier submissions. It helps greatly if the project manager and the LSP are organized enough to provide the entire team with as much glossary information as possible. This will help ensure that the translations come in with the correct choices in the first place. In fact, glossaries and
guidelines should be provided in any project with multiple translators. It speeds up the work of everyone concerned, which saves money and takes the strain off the deadline. Of course, this is not always possible, but I have often seen it work well.

Sometimes on very large projects, a direct dialogue is set up between the reviser and the translator(s) so that harmonization issues and terminology choices are communicated back in time for the translator to incorporate them (and stop looking things up). The reviser can be operating almost as a sub-project manager in these cases, until the last piece is finally delivered and everyone sends in their invoices.

Translators who have had positive experiences with revision on complex projects may be well equipped to move to the production side of the house and become project managers, or grow their own translation services companies.

How to Charge for Revision

Revision should be priced by the hour. There is almost no activity in the entire production chain that is more sensitive to the quality of the input. If the reviser is not wasting time (see the six tips above), a good translation will take less time to revise, and a poor one will cost more. It is that simple.

There is one situation in which I am willing to quote a per-word rate, and that is when I am revising the work of a colleague with whom I have worked closely for years. In that case, I know almost exactly how many words I can revise per hour, and I can convert that to a piece rate for the client.

For the LSP, lowering the cost of revision may mean trying harder to develop translation guidelines, drawing up glossaries, and providing feedback to the translators. The latter step is doubly useful: it helps the translators learn from their mistakes, and it can expose poor revisers, if that is the problem.

One way of policing ourselves is to be sure that we can justify every change we make in terms of providing an external reference.

Just as she clicked the SEND icon to dispatch the revision and her invoice, Salima heard the key in the front door. Suddenly, she felt her chair flying across the room as the two girls leapt into her lap excitedly recounting the antics of the animals in the zoo. Jim came up behind them and leaned against the doorpost, smiling.

“Does either one of them speak English?” he asked with a wink.

“Only to you, dear.”

Notes


Send a Complimentary Copy

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

Simply e-mail the recipient’s name and address to ATA Headquarters—ata@atanet.org—and we will send the magazine with a note indicating that the copy is being sent with your compliments. Help spread the word about ATA!
I just finished reading *Found in Translation*, the new book by Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche. (It is already lined up for a fifth print run!) I recommend it heartily to anyone interested in translation and interpreting. Having worked in the industry for so many years and always striving to keep up with new developments, I now realize that until I read the book, I only had a miniscule idea of all of the ways our profession affects global events ranging from personal issues to business to governmental affairs and everything in between. It is an enjoyable “must read,” and it will broaden your horizons and allow you to speak authoritatively to promote what we do. I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to talk with Nataly and Jost about their thoughts on the book and the industry in general.

What new fields do you see opening up for our profession in the digital age? Have you noticed any type of interpreting that has become obsolete over the years?

NK: The digital age is helping both the fields of translation and interpreting evolve, although it is also making things more complex. For the past few years, I have been interested in real-time online translation, which is somewhat of a hybrid between interpreting and translation. It occurs in real time, but is in written form.

Data culled for *The Language Services Market: 2012* from Common Sense Advisory indicates that all types of interpreting are growing, but especially onsite interpreting. There is always a lot of buzz about video and telephone interpreting, but they are not growing as swiftly as one might expect. Onsite interpreting has not become obsolete. Quite the contrary, it is one of the fastest-growing services in the market.

As for types of interpreting that may become obsolete, some people believe that consecutive interpreting eventually will, since simultaneous is so much faster, even though some studies suggest that the quality of simultaneous is often inferior.
mostly due to the delivery speed. When it comes to language services, it seems that speed trumps everything else for most applications and settings.

What is on your “wish list” for technological advances/devices for the profession, and how close are we to achieving any of them?

JZ: In general, I think we are on the right path with how translation technology is developing. For a long time we were stuck in the same old paradigms of translation memory and termbases, but in the past couple of years development has started to move in more interesting areas.

One area that I think is particularly interesting is a more intelligent analysis of data in databases such as translation memories. This results in many more possible matches, also called subsegment matching. The other area that I expect great things from is a close integration of machine translation into more traditional technology. I do not mean the typical “pre-translation” by machine translation that is post-edited by a translator, but processes by which data that the translator has collected can “communicate” with external machine translation data to achieve more helpful results.

On the project management side of operations, I think we will see more efficient models to allow for direct contact between the translation buyer and the translator. This in turn will challenge language services providers to find creative ways to bring added value to the table.

How can we bring together language associations around the world to help their members leapfrog the learning curve in those areas where the profession is very young or has not developed significantly?

JZ: This is an interesting question. First, we can learn what went wrong when translation technology initially entered the market 15 or 20 years ago. It was a painful experience to convince all of the different stakeholders—translation buyers, language services providers, translators, and educators—of the value of those technologies. Those stakeholders who adopted the technology at the beginning—primarily translation buyers and larger language services providers—found that their needs were naturally accommodated more in the ensuing development process.

How could clearer communication have made this process go more smoothly? That is an essential question to answer and then apply so that we can do a better job of introducing new technology and helping other industries get over similar humps. For instance, perhaps some of the more technology-skeptical interpreters could learn from the experiences of translators.

Our profession is actually still underdeveloped in some ways in the U.S., where many members of the translation and interpreting fields have a non-industry-specific educational background. Many places in Europe and South America are ahead of the game. I believe our emphasis should be on more accessible tertiary education in the U.S. that prepares students for actual work in the real world.

Associations can play an important role in helping to build and promote such programs. In the U.S. translation arena, associations tend to be compartmentalized. Rather than having one or two associations that can speak for the entire industry, our current associations represent specific constituencies. I would like to see our associations speak with a single, united voice that represents the industry as a whole rather than focusing on the dissimilarities among the different voices. This is something that we tried to do when writing Found in Translation—represent a multiplicity of perspectives with a strong, cohesive voice. I think associations should do the same to forge a stronger profile in supporting and initiating educational programs and raising public awareness.

After reading your book and about the successful instances of translation crowdsourcing for well-known publications such as The Economist, do you think crowdsourcing can spread to traditional sources of income for translators?

NK: Crowdsourced translation has been a source of income for freelancers and agencies for many years now. Already, many companies pay
for professional editing services and volunteer translator community management. It just is not a very big area, which is why so few people ever see those projects.

However, it is important to remember that crowdsourced translation is not free. Also, saving money is not the primary motivation for using this model. Many high-tech companies do this just because their online communities begin to request it. In some cases, users simply begin translating content without them even being asked to do so by the companies. As a result, some of this activity springs up without the company’s permission or even their awareness at first. This is the case of The Economist, where a number of devoted fans routinely volunteer their free time to translate the British periodical into Chinese, to the tune of three hundred pages’ worth of articles per week.

Have you noticed any pronounced differences in work categories between the U.S. and other parts of the world for interpreters and translators?

JZ: In many parts of the world outside the U.S., translators and interpreters have a stronger standing because they are seen as “real” professionals. In the U.S., with its generally low level of language learning, anyone with a smattering of any second language is perceived as capable of engaging in translation and interpreting. We hope that our book can serve to change that.

Considering the large number of retiring baby-boomer interpreters around the world, how can we increase the number of potential interpreters in the feeder?

NK: Some educational programs for interpreters report to me that their graduates cannot find work. Other sources are telling me that there is a shortage of interpreters. Much of it depends on geography, setting, and language combinations. For example, the U.S. has a shortage of interpreters for languages of national security. Locations that receive large refugee populations also typically struggle to find enough medical, community, and court interpreters for new arrivals. The challenge is not unique to the U.S., of course. Countries around the world face similar challenges.

The fastest way to attract more young people to the field is to improve remuneration, but that alone is not enough. The profession as a whole needs to become more developed and mature. Education and training programs are lacking for many areas of the field, especially in the U.S., but we are seeing more and more emerge each year.

From your experience, what advice would you give to those considering becoming interpreters and translators who want to make it to the top as quickly as possible?

JZ and NK: We can answer this one in unison—do not be afraid of technology! It really is your friend. Technology, training, and passion for languages are really the three key ingredients for success.
Time flies, doesn’t it? As I write this column, 2013 is still almost two months away, but it is never too early to make New Year’s resolutions, as overused as they may be. In general, I think it is a very good idea to have a solid plan for your business, and that includes some goals and objectives. Making them at the beginning of the year is probably ideal, so here is a list of my goals for 2013. Some of them are relatively easy to achieve while others will challenge me throughout the year. What are your goals for the new year?

1. Take (and pass) the oral portion of the federal court interpreter certification examination. I passed the written portion with good scores a few months ago, so there is some hope for the notoriously difficult oral exam. Unfortunately, the exam dates do not get announced as early as I would like, and this makes my European summer trip planning a bit challenging. My current nightmare is that the exam will be held in the U.S. while I am goofing off on a beach in Greece. I must avoid that.

2. Take another university-level law class. I try to take one or two formal legal classes a year, and my goal is to find a comparative law class to get a good overview of the Mexican, American, and Austrian legal systems. I have many books on this subject, but I tend not to read them as much as I should. I am still searching for the perfect class.

3. Take a high-level interpreting class at Germersheim in Germany. My twin sister discovered that Germersheim, which is the premiere interpreting institution in the German-speaking world, offers online interpreting classes. I am a bit apprehensive about the format and the time difference issues, but I would love to work with some top-notch instructors to get some feedback on my conference interpreting skills.

4. Take a sabbatical from pro bono work. I have served on the boards of directors of several nonprofit associations, including as the president of the Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association (NITA), for more than 15 years, and I am ready for a one-year sabbatical. I will still be involved in NITA, but probably not in a formal role. After the sabbatical, I plan on focusing my pro bono work on pressing social issues, such as homelessness prevention or women’s rights.

5. Replace non-paying clients with better clients. Just like every small business, I have some clients who are not very good at paying what they owe (or pay very late). I usually do not work with them again, even if they plead and beg. I have officially put these folks on the non-payers list and will need to replace them (they are pretty big clients) with higher-quality clients. It is a bit like getting a divorce, so I better look for a good counselor.

6. Get up a bit earlier. Both my twin sister and hubby are very early birds, and it is amazing how much they get done while I still snooze away. Legend has it that I used to be an early riser in college, but I have no recollection of this. My twin and I worked together from my home office for a month last year, and she made me get up early. I did not want to, but I got a lot more done, so this is a fine idea that I should continue.

7. Find the balance between interpreting and translating. I think I can work on streamlining my days a bit better. At the moment, I am rushing around constantly and postponing translation work to make it to an urgent interpreting assignment. Perhaps I could limit interpreting to three days a week, but the legal world does not work like that, and I like to be available for my clients. I need to put some thought into how I can streamline those workflows and minimize time on the road.

8. Attend ATA’s Annual Conference and at least five other professional development events. This one is easy, as I have not missed an ATA conference in many years, and I am quite passionate about learning. So, I will see you in San Antonio! I will try to round up a cowboy hat.

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This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors. Ideas and questions should be directed to judy.jenner@entrepreneuriallinguist.com.
A number of thoughts and events came together recently to start me thinking about how we acquire language and how the ability to speak more than one language and interpret from one to the other is seen by those outside of the language profession. I cannot say that no one understands or respects what we do as interpreters or translators; it just seems that almost everyone I come in contact with really does not have a clue as to how well one has to know the languages in which one works. They see a bilingual person interpreting for a monolingual person, and they believe that anyone can do that with a little language study. You speak some Spanish? Go ahead and translate this important medical document for our patients who do not read English.

This drives me nuts. I have had attorneys say to me, “I wish I had taken Spanish in high school; then I could talk to my clients directly.” People will come up to me and ask if I think their kid could be an interpreter: “She’s getting straight A’s in Spanish!” Some people ask me if I think their kid could talk to my clients directly. And then there was the time that I was interpreting for a witness in a rape case. At the start of the trial, the defense attorney asked me for my credentials. After I stated them, he had the nerve to ask if I had an accent in Spanish (I do not), and if the witness might not have trouble understanding me. Just a courtroom ploy, of course, but so very insulting to a professional interpreter!

The point is that the attorney had no trust in me or my hard-won knowledge of both English and Spanish. I tried to convey this to him as we were leaving the courtroom, but I do not think he really understood. How would he have felt if I had challenged him on a point of law?

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It is often the same with written Spanish. I cringe when I come across some of the signs posted in our court buildings and hospitals. (One of my favorites warns against driving poisoned.) At the risk of going off on a tangent, is there any language other than Spanish with which people feel they can take such liberties? I think not. I read a best-seller recently set in

Perceptions about Language Expertise

It takes an enormous amount of effort and study just to become fluent in two languages. Acquiring genuine command of both of the languages in your language pair goes far beyond what one can learn either in the classroom, by desultory study and reading, or by sheer osmosis. That is where outsiders just do not seem to get it. We have worked so hard to become experts, but we do not seem to get enough respect.

About a month ago, I was interpreting in a custody case for an attorney and his Mexican client. Before the hearing began, the attorney conversed with his client in Spanish. The attorney spoke fairly well, and I could tell that he prided himself on his ability. He was really quite fluent—his verb conjugations were correct on the whole, his grammar was not too terrible, and his accent, while excruciating to a language professional, was not bad for a gringo. The trouble was that he thought his Spanish was every bit as good as mine. As his client was testifying at the hearing, she used the word *playera*, the word for t-shirt used by most Mexicans. The attorney immediately said: “I object to that translation.” Well, we all just stared at him—the judge, myself, and even the defendant after I had interpreted his objection to her. I said something like: “The interpreter has interpreted the word *playera* as t-shirt, which is the word generally used in Mexico, the native country of this witness.” The attorney would have learned the word *camiseta*, which is the word generally taught in the classroom.

The point is that the attorney had no trust in me or my hard-won knowledge of both English and Spanish. I tried to convey this to him as we were leaving the courtroom, but I do not think he really understood. How would he have felt if I had challenged him on a point of law?

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I Can’t Get No Respect: Lamentations of a Language Professional

(Posted by Kathleen Shelly on the blog of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, http://najit.org/blog.)

Continue on p. 35
I took some time the other day to take an inventory of the out-of-the-box machine translation (MT) connectors or plug-ins that translation environment tools (TEnTs) come readily equipped with these days. Just a few months ago, most TEnTs came with only a connector to Google Translate, but Google’s decision to start charging for its MT service (if it is integrated into a third-party tool) made most tool vendors look for other solutions alongside Google Translate.

What follows is an (admittedly incomplete) list of tools and their connectors, along with some thoughts about their usefulness. (Note that for the actual use of most of these MT tools you will need a license key.)

**Trados Studio 2011**
- Integrated plugins for Language Weaver (BeGlobal), SDL MT, Google Translate, and Microsoft Translator.
- Free installable plugins on SDL’s app store OpenExchange for itranslate4.eu, Systran, MyMemory, Google Translate, and Microsoft Translator. The two last plugins extend the ability of the out-of-the-box connectors. For instance, this allows you—in the case of Microsoft Translator—to translate without a license in exchange for your translation data from the current project.
- How it works: You can select various engines at the same time and all matches are shown in the order of the preference you determine. Exceptions: When selecting itranslate4.eu or MyMemory, only those matches are shown.

**memoQ 6**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, itranslate4.eu, Systran, LetsMT!, Asia Online, and MyMemory.
- How it works: You can select various engines at the same time and all matches are shown with one selectable preferential engine.

**Déjà Vu X2**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, itranslate4.eu, PROMT, and Systran.
- How it works: It is only possible to select one MT engine at a time. Déjà Vu X2 uses MT hits in combination with translation memory hits.

**Wordfast Classic 6**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, itranslate4.eu, WorldLingo, and MyMemory.
- How it works: You can select up to three engines at a time and all matches are shown, including various matches from itranslate4.eu.

**Wordfast Pro 3**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, and WorldLingo.
- How it works: You can select several engines at a time and all matches are shown.

**Fluency 2011**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, Systran, and MyMemory.
- How it works: You can select only one engine at a time and matches are not shown automatically. Features an interface for writing scripts to ease post-editing.

**Lingotek**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate and Microsoft Translator.
- Possible connectors to SDL LanguageWeaver, SAIC OmniFluent, and Asia Online.
- How it works: You can select several engines at a time and all matches are shown.

**Multitrans**
- Possible connectors to PROMT and MyMemory.

**MemSource**
- Integrated plugins for Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, Microsoft Translator Hub, and Systran.

**OmegaT**
- Integrated plugin for Google Translate, Belazar (for Russian<>Belarussian), Microsoft Translator, and Apertium.

**Across**
- Possible connectors to Google Translator, Lucy LT, Reverso, Language Weaver, Moses, and Asia Online.
If you need to know what these different MT engines are and what language combinations they support, I encourage you to check on their respective websites or Wikipedia pages.

So, what is all this good for? I will leave this up to your preferences (and language combination, and kinds of translation you do, and the many likes and dislikes that you might have about this kind of technology). But there is one thing that interests me in particular: Is it helpful to have several MT suggestions shown as you translate?

Consider the example in Figure 1 from Wordfast (with MTs from Google Translate, Microsoft Translator, Linguatec, Systran, and Trident MT—the last three through itranslate4.eu).

We do not need to argue about how “good” these matches are, but most of them contain some material that in some kind of combination might be useful in the actual and final translation. What role does this information play for the translator, though? Does it help or hinder? Is it different, for instance, than having a lot of matches from a general translation memory shown?

It was interesting to discuss this question at a workshop I gave recently. Not surprisingly, the translators in attendance expressed very divergent opinions. Some felt that this would stifle creativity, whereas others liked the idea of having four or five different MTs displayed. And chances are that the answer does indeed differ for each translator and that translator’s individual style of processing data.

There is, however, one way that this simultaneous display of different results will be helpful for anyone who is looking into using these out-of-the-box MT engines (as opposed to not using MT at all or using a customized engine). It allows you to compare the results very easily. Chances are that you will quickly find one of the engines better than the others for your particular project, and this will allow you to disable the less helpful ones (and stop paying for their suggestions).

One of the (very unscientific) tests that we did during the above-mentioned workshop was to look at different MT providers with different kinds of texts in about 10 of the represented language combinations. The result? We noticed that often there was a clear “winner” on a per-project basis.

MT might not be your cup of tea as a productivity tool, but it is important to remember that the results of one MT system are always unlike those of another.

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On page 18, author Laurie Lewis notes that writers, editors, indexers, and translators “are often paid by the word,” and that “the client, not the freelancer, almost always sets the rate,” which are methods that are “unlike other pricing strategies discussed here.”

Warning to the professionals in question: Do not stop reading here, in the mistaken belief that there is nothing to be learned from this book. On the contrary, it contains a wealth of information that is useful for all of us.

Content
The chapters which I believe may be particularly helpful to translators are Chapter 3 (Task-Based Logs), Chapter 4 (Going After the Going Rate), Chapter 11 (End-of-Job Analysis), Chapter 12 (Year-End Analysis), and Chapter 13 (Increasing Your Fees). They offer a number of methods that, when practiced over a period of time, provide a black-and-white picture of exactly how we are spending our time and exactly how much we are earning for our efforts—an eye-opening experience, for better or for worse.

The methods described in the chapter on task-based logs create a body of information about our performance on individual projects that can help us in deciding to accept or reject projects, in estimating the time and effort required for similar projects, and in preparing the end-of-job analysis. Typical translator tasks that might appear in such a log could include e-mail or telephone discussions with the client, an initial read-through of a document, terminology research, translation, editing a draft, and the final edit and proofreading. The chapter includes useful advice on how to take into account those “stop-the-clock” tasks that complicate project time-keeping: the times when we answer the telephone, stop to put paper in the printer, and go to the bathroom, to mention a few.

The end-of-job analysis provides a formula for calculating per-hour earnings on a given project (subtract expenses from gross fee, then divide this net figure by the number of hours it took to complete the project). This information can be useful in making accept-or-reject decisions on similar future projects. It also reveals our strengths and weaknesses as estimators of the time that may be required for various types of projects and the true cost of that time. It also indicates possible areas for improvement.

The year-end analysis is another pattern-revealing process that looks at one-year totals for individual clients and types of clients. Another possible use is for calculation of per-hour earnings, using the formula indicated in the chapter on end-of-job analysis. Translators can use the information gained for purposes of negotiating fees, and for determining which translation company clients and other clients contribute the most to our profit picture.

Performed over a period of time, analyses of this type reveal work styles and patterns that may be helping or hindering us. They also provide information about our real income and about who our “best” clients are in terms of return on effort—information that may (or may not) lead us to edit our client list.

If nothing else, Chapters 4 (Going After the Going Rate) and 13 (Increasing Your Fees) will at least encourage us to refuse to work for rates below what our services are worth. In general, Lewis notes, time spent on low-paying jobs could better be used in prospecting for higher-paying work, cleaning out files, developing new skills, or doing business management tasks. Lewis does not discuss in detail the situ-
ation currently facing freelance translators and other writing professionals adapting to globalization, computerization, and changing client attitudes resulting from the predominance of the moving image over the written word in our society. She does, however, acknowledge that there are circumstances (discussed on pages 45-48 of Chapter 4) that justify working for rates that are lower than our normal going rate.

Other chapters contain helpful advice on assessing projects, negotiating, identifying red flags, and dealing with our emotional reactions to rejection. Chapter 9, on contracts and letters of agreement, explains why such documents are helpful and may even prove crucial in the event that problems arise. Chapter 14 covers frequently asked questions, covering additional charges for overtime and rush work, billing, and slow-paying clients. Chapter 15 (Final Thoughts) includes a useful summary of the methods discussed in the other chapters.

Overall Evaluation

Aside from its wealth of information, most of which can be useful for translators, this book can encourage us to think like business people, a fact that we need to realize and act upon. A careful reading of the entire book is well worth the time spent, in terms of encouraging us to take practical action and to undertake the attitude-changing work that we translators need in order to improve not only our professional standing in the eyes of society, but our financial situation as well.

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Blog Trekker Continued from p. 31

an indeterminate Spanish-speaking country. The Spanish words and phrases thrown in for verisimilitude were often either misspelled or apparent machine translations. Accent marks were strewn about haphazardly. Neither the author nor the editor seemed to give any importance whatsoever to the correct use of even the little bits of Spanish in the text.

I have to wonder, though. I do believe that if the book had been set in a French-speaking country, the editors would have had an expert review the use of the French language. It is French, after all! Spanish just does not seem to be accorded the same respect.

Then there was the time I worked as a part-time paralegal in a community legal assistance organization. It was a pretty cool place to work, especially since I could leave whenever I needed to go to court to interpret. One of the other people who worked there was a young “bilingual” receptionist with a high school education who had grown up speaking Spanish and English at home. The office decided that it would be a good idea to have some of their materials translated. Whom did they ask? The bilingual secretary! I tried to explain the difference between someone who really knew the language and someone who grew up speaking it at home, but it was like talking to a brick wall. The attitude seemed to be: “How can you possibly translate anything into Spanish—you’re not Hispanic! Duh!” They eventually had to cancel the project, though; the translator did not seem to be able to get any of the work done.

At any rate, I am done griping. I am sure that all you interpreters and translators out there have similar tales of woe. I guess we will just keep working away to raise the general perception of what it is to be a language professional. I know that we can and will get the respect we deserve!
Normally, when I start to read an English text I am aware of whether I am reading a translation or not. Pyongyang, a mostly-nonfiction graphic novel by Canadian author Guy Delisle, was the exception. I read it all once and was a third of the way through a second, more careful, reading before certain little context phrases, which were not at all awkward renderings, began to jump out at me. This led me to have some doubts as to whether this was an original English text. Sure enough, on the title page, in small print, was a statement that it had been translated from French. The author is from Quebec. What a great job by the translator, Helge Dascher!

New Queries
(English>Armenian 1-13.1) If a response is given, this will be the first time on my watch that the column has contained Armenian. In petroleum engineering, “trenching” seems to be the sticking point in a text that reads: “The trenching will be performed from the ice road established above the pipeline route. A slot following the pipeline route will be cut through the ice. The slot will be wide enough for the machine’s tools to pass through and reach down to the pipeline.”

(English>Swedish 1-13.2) A physics text made a very compressed, cryptic reference to three conditions, the second of which caused problems. These conditions were “Max shear stress,” “Plane Stress-Hooke,” and “Mohr’s Circ-Stress.” In the middle instance, is it plane stress that obeys the well-known Hooke’s law? And if so, what is proper Swedish for this?

(French>English 1-13.3) The subject was plastics, and the whole problem centers around the verb *perdurer, “to last or to continue.” How does it make any sense in the following paragraph? Le procédé IML permet de fusionner l’étiquette surmoulée (image graphique de haute qualité) et le plastique en une seule étape: lors du moulage de votre contenant ou de votre pièce de plastique. Votre image (marque) est protégée de façon permanente par les propriétés robustes du plastique et *perdure en post-consommation*. What is going on here?

(Russian>French [English] 1-13.9) What would be good French for брахиоцефальный бассейн, as in Начальные признаки атеросклеротического поражения артерий брахиоцефального бассейна без гемодинамически значимого стенозирования. Interestingly, the translator used a neologism of a verb, гугляться, when describing what she had done to research the matter.

(Spanish>English 1-13.10) Your columnist is a history buff, so he could hardly fail to include this query. It is in a letter written in 1847 from Friar Real to the governor of California describing details about damages to two gardens at Mission Santa Clara. Be aware that the transcription could be somewhat doubtful in places: *Espero que Usted como Juez pondrá el remedio en virtud de los docum.toos tan legales q. manifesté á U.____ Con lo que creo probada la Justicia que me asiste? para hacer este reclamo. It is that final sentence that really needs clarification.*
Replies to Old Queries

(Danish>English 8-12.1) (andet punktum): This most likely is the second sentence in a short section, writes Peter Christensen, and the term means the “second item” in the section. Helen Hasselriis defines it as “Point Two.”

(Dutch>English 10-12.1) (fiscaal tehuis): Dan Luakin calls this a “fiscal shelter.” For instance, “XXX thereby agrees to furnish the advisory office with the necessary information with a view to setting up the tax returns and, particularly, the total income received by the fiscal shelter.” Also, thanks to Dan for correcting bijzonder to bijzonder.

(German>Italian [English] 7-12.5) (Stadterhebung): In English, says Ilse Andrews, this means “incorporation” as a town or city. Apparently the Italian is incorporazione. Katya Howard prefers “gaining town status.”

(German>Russian [English] 8-12.7) (Vollstreckungshilfeverkehr): Cheryl Fain likes “assistance by enforcement” for this. The entire sentence reads: “Assistance by enforcement under the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons of March 21, 1983.” Roland Greifer clarifies that Vollstreckungshilfe is “assistance in the execution of a (foreign) judgment.” The text is requesting a prisoner transfer in accordance with the above treaty. The underlying law is the Transférüberekommens-Ausführungsgesetz, which inevitably has its own initialism, TransfübkAG.

(Greek>English 9-12.4) (επιστατική δικαιοσύνη): Lefteris Kafatos says this simply means “transfer of legal rights.”

(Italian>English 9-12.5) (ossitaglio): This is “oxycutting,” says Jacopo Madaro, referring to a metal-cutting technique using an oxyacetylene torch.

(Italian>English 9-12.6) (strappi in progressione): Lorraine Axelson offers “successive spurts” for this, and expands the phrase: “(an ascent comprising) three successive spurts [equal] both for their length and their steepness.” Jacopo Madaro renders it as “a set of three sprints, one after the other,” and the location is the Monte delle Sante Marie. Peter Christensen provided a response I have not seen in my nearly two decades of umpiring this column. He sent in a digital picture of such strappi or sections showing the Muro (synonymous with strappo) di Sormano. I wish I could reproduce it here, because, as an active bicyclist, I find it to be the kind of outrageous hairpin-turn-plus-upgrade that I really never want to see, not even in a bad dream.

(Italian>Spanish [English] 9-12.7) (bacino): One possible solution to this is “pelvic area,” and again Lorraine Axelson provides the entire phrase: “a jersey top [sweater] with two tucks [darts] at the neck, thus making it a boat neck, and then wide at the bottom across the pelvic area.” Alessandra Levine defines it as “wider in the pelvis (hip) area.” For Jacopo Madaro, it is cintura in Spanish (Alessandra Corazza agrees), and by expanding the phrase a bit, we get y una cintura más ancha.

(Spanish>English 9-12.8) (el aperto obligatorio proveniente de los descuentos efectuados): For this, Maria Bilbao provides: “the mandatory contribution from withholdings made from paychecks to all the workers in the country.” These withholdings were imposed to support (what else?) social programs.

(Spanish>English 10-12.8) (chin-ear): Basically, says Sheldon Shaffer, this verb is a Spanglish concoction for the crude English synonym of “to defecate.” And here all along the Translation Inquirer thought that cagar sufficed to convey this meaning.

The Translation Inquirer wishes to express his thanks to Per Dohler, who has faithfully proofread this column for a number of years. Thanks again to everybody who contributed, and a Happy New Year!
How old? It would not surprise me if the Hebrews told them to each other while wandering in the desert.

Well, maybe not, because, although the jokes date to the time of the Biblical Exodus, the tablet containing them is thought to have been written in Mesopotamia near the Persian Gulf. Also, the language is not Hebrew or Aramaic but Akkadian, the recent dictionary of which was discussed in the March 2012 column. But something tells me that “Your momma” jokes are universal.

The jokes, in the form of riddles, were deciphered by Nathan Wasserman, a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem’s Institute of Archaeology, and Michael Streck, a professor at the Altorientalisches Institut at Universität Leipzig. Their work was included in a recent edition of the journal *Iraq*, and several accounts of it have appeared on various websites.

The original cuneiform tablet was lost in 2003, when the Iraq Museum in Baghdad was looted. Fortunately, a scholar named J.J. van Dijk had published a copy of the Akkadian inscription in 1976, from which Wasserman and Streck could make their translation.

Many of the riddles are fragmentary and incomplete, including a “your momma” joke, the only extant words of which appear to translate into:

... of your mother
is by the one who has sex with her.

Among those that are complete is an example of gallows’ humor:

He gouged out the eye: it is not the fate of a dead man.
He cut the throat: a dead man.

The answer is a governor, who had the power to act as a judge and sentence people to punishment or death.

Another riddle, which the authors acknowledge may be partly mistranslated is:

In (?) your mouth and your teeth
(or: your urine)
constantly stared at you
the measuring vessel of your lord.

The answer is beer, apparently as popular back then as it is now.

Some riddles appear to say the opposite of what they should say:

The deflowered (girl) did not become pregnant.
The undeflowered (girl) became pregnant.

The answer is “auxiliary forces,” a group of below-average soldiers. And perhaps the riddle is correctly translated and implies that these men are so unreliable they cannot even get their sexual proclivities straight.

Sometimes, a riddle relies on metaphor:

The tower is high.
It is high, but nonetheless has no shade.

The answer is sunlight, thought of as a tower of light passing from the sky to the earth, giving no shade because it is light itself.

Here is an obscure riddle, with an uncertain translation of the first line:

Like a fish in a fish pond,
like troops before the king.

The answer is a broken bow, with the logic being that all are useless. You cannot eat a fish while it is still in a pond, and soldiers standing before their king are not fighting or protecting the kingdom.

In their article, Wasserman and Streck emphasize that the number of surviving 3,500-year-old Akkadian riddles is “very small.” But they are still large enough, I would emphasize, to show how little humor has changed over four millennia.
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