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According to the original vision of ATA’s founders, our Association was intended to be “non-restrictive” and to “provide a haven for the entire profession.”1 This inclusive structure made up of individual and corporate members sets ATA apart from other translator organizations around the world, but over the years has also caused the formation of separate special interest groups. Each of these groups has its own justified existence and there is no question about the value of their activities. At the same time, we need to be careful to ensure that the resulting multitude of different and sometimes competing voices does not obscure the message we all want to convey to the public; namely, that professional translation and interpreting is essential for worldwide communication and business.

To give you an example from the past year, the U.S. Supreme Court heard a case about compensation for interpreting and translation in court cases in February 2012 (we reported on this in March 2012), but the case received little media attention. From the perspective of our industry, it represented an opportunity we did not seize fully, as we did not have a united voice or sufficient shared communication to raise public awareness or lobby lawmakers to point this out. While the work done by various translator and interpreter industry organizations is essential and adds important facets to our industry’s representation, the multitude of voices can occasionally drown out our message, with detrimental effect.

ATA believes it is in everyone’s best interest to improve communication and cooperation among different industry groups. Two examples from the past year highlight this effort. First, our San Diego conference was collocated for the second time with a conference by the Association for Machine Translation in the Americas to ensure better communication between translators and researchers of machine translation. It simply makes sense to bring all of the information together and to talk about the specific needs of both communities rather than relying on hearsay.

Another effort in which ATA took a leading role over the past year is a new coalition of associations representing the interests of interpreters. The loose coalition currently consists of eight organizations, which also include sign language interpreters. There are monthly telephone conferences, and the group issued a joint communiqué last fall in response to proposed changes in interpreting procedures for immigration courts.

Over the past year, ATA has been reaching out to groups such as the Joint National Committee for Languages—the advocacy group for foreign language-related efforts in the U.S. government—to form broader national and international alliances that can work on a shared communication platform to highlight the importance of translation and interpreting. Looking at the way we jointly present our industry to the outside will require a different and more unified approach in the future. The challenge will be to identify the importance of translation and interpreting in economic, cultural, and strategic terms and to work toward a shared message that gets greater public attention and makes better use of our shared marketing resources.

Note
**The ATA Chronicle** is the flagship publication of the American Translators Association. As such, the magazine features monthly perspectives on various segments of the language services industry and updates members on the Association’s activities. Jeff Sanfacon, the magazine’s editor, strives to publish interesting, practical articles, from applying tips for software to marketing your services. Bottom line: we want to give members the information that will make them better at what they do and help them earn more money.

To provide additional access to this information, *The ATA Chronicle* is now available online in a searchable flip-book format: [www.atanet.org/flipbook](http://www atanet.org/flipbook). We will continue to offer the PDF version online as well, which we have been doing for over a decade. If you ever need to find an article, past issues are archived in the Members Only section of ATA’s website. There are also annual indices of articles and columns for your reference: [www.atanet.org/chronicle/chronicle_archives.php](http://www atanet.org/chronicle/chronicle_archives.php).

This past year, *The ATA Chronicle* was recognized by two leading research organizations by being added to their databases of articles and publications: EBSCO Publishing and the Modern Language Association.

EBSCO bills itself as “the most-used, premium online information resources for tens of thousands of institutions worldwide, representing millions of end-users.” The invitation by EBSCO is also recognition of the growth of the language services industry.

As for the Modern Language Association, Jeff worked to get the magazine accepted and listed in the *MLA Directory of Periodicals* and the *MLA International Bibliography*. He provided electronic copies of all the issues starting with January 2000. MLA has nearly 30,000 members in 100 countries. This inclusion underscores the recognition of translation and interpreting in academia.

The success of *The ATA Chronicle* would not be possible without the hundreds of volunteers who readily share their knowledge and expertise. ATA is also fortunate to have a veteran team working on the magazine with Jeff: Art Directors Ellen Banker and Dr. Amy Peloff, and Proofreader Sandra Burns Thomson, who is a 19-year ATA member (German→English freelance translator). The team is rounded out by relative newcomer Caron Mason, who handles advertising. Thanks to all who contribute to the success of *The ATA Chronicle*.

**Recognizing Roshan Pokharel**

Congratulations to Roshan Pokharel, ATA’s information systems manager, who marks his 20th anniversary with ATA. Roshan, who is originally from Nepal, came to the U.S. in 1992 and joined the ATA staff on April 1, 1993. He started out doing data entry and minor database work. In 1996, he became the manager of ATA’s budding information technology efforts, including the launch of ATA’s initial website. His intelligence, drive, hard work, and curiosity have helped build and maintain the Association’s complex technology needs over all these years. Thank you, Roshan, for all of your amazing work.

ATA’s Board recognized Roshan’s service with the resolution below.

**Resolution**

*Whereas*, Roshan Pokharel will have served 20 years with the American Translators Association as of April 1, 2013;

*Whereas*, Roshan’s intelligence, hard work, and can-do attitude have contributed directly to ATA’s success and growth;

*Whereas*, Roshan’s loyalty and dedication are unquestioned; and

*Whereas*, ATA has been fortunate to have Roshan’s services;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the American Translators Association thanks and honors Roshan Pokharel.
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What is LinkedIn?

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Jump Start Your Networking with ATA

Take advantage of your ATA membership. Joining LinkedIn through ATA gives you an instant community with opportunities to grow your network quickly. Don’t wait—get your online networking underway! To join, just visit www.atanet.org/linkedin.php.
The establishment of the new Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation (GSIT) program at the University of Maryland is a case study in the creative tenacity required to address the demand for translator and interpreter education in the U.S. This article outlines the process of designing, developing, and launching this program. We hope to inspire other universities and colleges to join in preparing experts with the advanced knowledge required to enable intercultural, interlingual communication in diplomatic and international relations, to promote access to justice, and to contribute to the health and welfare of individuals within local communities.

Demand for Translator and Interpreter Education in the U.S.

Despite the widespread presence of translation and interpreting courses in higher education in the U.S., calls for more in-depth educational programs for current and future language mediation professionals have been repeated frequently over the years.¹ Despite the widespread presence of translation and interpreting courses in higher education in the U.S., calls for more in-depth educational programs for current and future language mediation professionals have been repeated frequently over the years.¹

Despite the widespread presence of translation and interpreting courses in higher education in the U.S., calls for more in-depth educational programs for current and future language mediation professionals have been repeated frequently over the years.¹

There are many fine programs offering training in translation, localization, literary translation, and legal interpreting/translation in particular, but the absence of a comprehensive program on the East Coast is quite remarkable.² On the West Coast, perhaps the best known program that offers comprehensive, large-scale graduate-level training based upon industry requirements in both conference interpreting and translation is located at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

It is no secret that the demand for translation and interpreting services is rising rapidly due to the globalization of the U.S. economy, demographic developments, and mandates set by the federal government and by individual state governments. The Bureau of
Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor projects the demand for translation and interpreting to rise by 22% over the 2008-18 decade, with employment increasing from 50,900 positions in 2008 to 62,200 in 2018, which is much faster than the average for all occupations.3

Partnering to Demonstrate Need

Major employers of conference interpreters and translators have long desired to have a program established in the greater Washington, DC area or New York. An essential task in proposing any new program is documenting the need for such a program in order to present a convincing case to decision-makers within the university. In this respect, the burden of proof lies with the group or groups wishing to establish the new program, and these groups must lobby hard to convince the decision-makers that they would be making a sound investment. With this in mind, Catherine Ingold, director of the National Foreign Language Center (NFLC) at the University of Maryland, was approached regarding the prospect of establishing a graduate program at the College Park campus, which is located on the edge of the District of Columbia. Conversations were soon underway with then Dean James Harris and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Elizabeth Loizeaux of the College of Arts and Humanities.

Two focus group sessions were held at NFLC in the fall of 2010 to assess the need for interpreter training. These sessions were attended by representatives of roughly 10 organizations, including the European Commission, European Parliament, United Nations New York, International Monetary Fund, U.S. Department of State, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, National Virtual Translation Center under the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Center for State Courts, and the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Representatives of these institutions provided information on their language mediation needs so that they could be reflected in the design, content, format, and language options offered through GSIT. The prospect of an interpreter and translator education program in the Washington, DC area received an enthusiastic response from these employers, including offers of pedagogical assistance. Employer demand also proved strong at the state level. In the spring of 2011, the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Maryland approached NFLC seeking collaboration.

To buttress the documentation provided through the needs analysis sessions, the University of Maryland’s Office of Extended Studies commissioned an online marketing study, which was conducted in the spring of 2011. This survey included over 215 contacts at dozens of agencies and organizations. The results confirmed the demand for training in translation and interpreting, ascertained what course content would be of the most value, and determined appropriate tuition and credit levels for a graduate certificate and a Master of Professional Studies degree.

Finding an Academic Home

A series of meetings was held with leaders within the University of Maryland's College of Arts and Humanities (ARHU) to ascertain the level of interest in providing an academic home for the program at the university. These meetings were chaired by then Associate Dean Loizeaux, who led the discussion with key interlocutors from the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and from the Department of Communication.

After nearly a year of deliberations, it was determined that the home of the new Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation program would be ARHU’s Department of Communication.5 The decision was well received by all involved, especially given the important intersection of the two fields. Scholars and practitioners of interpreting and translation as well as communication are ultimately concerned with the exchange of meaning through language. Such communication transactions also take place in particular contexts that often involve individuals from differing cultural backgrounds. For those involved in its development, such interdisciplinarity represents a hallmark of the new graduate studies program.

Developing the Curriculum

Once a decision was made for GSIT’s academic home, it took several
months for the program to be designed. The courses in interpreting and translation were devised and merged with courses in communication. Plans of study were envisioned for the proposed degree tracks. Assessment processes also needed to be created. In essence, the program was built from the ground up, which represented a major undertaking. David Sawyer, the chief of the European Languages Branch and a senior diplomatic interpreter for German at the U.S. Department of State’s Office of Language Services, and Diane de Terra, a former professor and dean at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, served as interpreting and translation consultants for the project. Together, they designed the curriculum in consultation with Elizabeth Toth, the chair of the Department of Communication, and Shawn J. Parry-Giles, the director of Graduate Studies in Communication.

Given the various options for curriculum models, decisions were necessary regarding the relationship between translation and interpreting, the certificates and/or degrees to be offered, the role of assessment in the program, and the relationship between theory and practice. In the interest of curricular efficiency, the decision was made to offer separate translation and interpreting credentials and graduate certificates that could be attained after one year of study. These could be followed by a second year of coursework culminating in a Master of Professional Studies degree. While the graduate certificates offer an entry-level qualification in the field, the Master of Professional Studies degree develops a functional specialization in a specific area and begins to develop specialized knowledge. This specialization is essential for a successful career.

As forms of intercultural and interlingual mediation, interpreting and translation represent communication activities situated within the specialized domestic and international contexts of health, politics, and law. So while GSIT is a professional studies program that focuses on the practice of interpreting and translation, an important feature is the integration of communication theory and practice with interpreting and translation theory and practice. While students are training to become conference or community interpreters, translators, and/or managers and administrators in one or more of these fields, they become familiar with the processes and effects of intercultural communication in areas such as health, law, and/or the political sphere. The program thus draws upon some of the most up-to-date scholarship from the fields of interpreting and translation as well as communication. The integration of communication studies is a notable curricular innovation, while roughly 75% of the coursework is aimed at interpreting and translation skill development.

One of the advantages of designing a new program is the ability to start with a clean slate, in that there is no hidden curriculum that drives decisions regarding the structure and content of the program. The latest developments in teaching methodology can be taken into consideration. This was the case with the design of the assessment measures, which are highly integrated into the curriculum and based heavily upon learning portfolios that include documentation of summative tests at the program and course levels. It was decided to incorporate all summative tests into coursework, including the career exams that are paired with a formal review of a career portfolio as a requirement for graduation. These assessments offer students a means to showcase their knowledge and skills before major employers, including international organizations, federal agencies, and private-sector entities employing staff translators and interpreters.

University Approval Process

With the curriculum designed, the next step was the approval process, which took two full semesters to complete. After first receiving unanimous approval from the faculty of the Department of Communication, the proposal then wound its way through the Committee on Programs, Courses, and Curriculum at both the college and then the university senate level. The proposal was also reviewed and supported by the University of Maryland’s Graduate School, the office of the senior vice-president and provost, and ultimately the chancellor of the University System of Maryland.

Throughout the process, the Department of Communication...
was asked to clarify and refine the proposal in ways that led to greater precision and clarity. Some of the most consequential discussions ensued over whether or not to feature a Master of Arts or a Master of Professional Studies in interpreting and translation. Eventually, it was decided to feature the latter. The university’s professional studies programs are typically “multidisciplinary” in focus and are designed to meet “the needs of employees of government and private sector organizations.” GSIT’s mission emphasizes the study of professional practice over a theoretically-based MA degree. This means that students are being prepared for work as a translator or interpreter through a curriculum consisting of roughly 75% procedural skills training in translation and/or interpreting.

Although the process of revising the proposal was arduous, it was important in developing a common understanding and a consensus about the aims, goals, and structure of the curriculum. As with any curriculum, periodic review is necessary. The framework put in place by the Committee on Programs, Courses, and Curriculum for the approval of any revisions of structure and content ensures that any program modifications will be well-considered and appropriate.

**Program Launch**

Among the key considerations for the rollout of the program have been administrative staffing, instructor staffing, the language pairs offered, and enrollment targets during the critical early phase of the program. The University of Maryland’s Graduate School requires that each new instructor be approved to teach graduate classes. Numerous staff and freelance interpreters and translators in the Washington, DC metro area have already expressed interest in teaching and have applied. Such individuals currently work for organizations like the International Monetary Fund, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and the Pan-American Health Organization. Some of the freelance interpreters include former staff and freelancers accredited with the institutions of the European Union.

Rather than launch with a suite of language programs, it has been determined that GSIT should attempt to recruit a full program in the Chinese<>English language pair for the fall of 2013. This decision reflects the strong presence of the University of Maryland in China, the role of the China Initiative and the Confucius Center on the College Park campus, as well as the extraordinary growth of the interpreting and translation professions in Chinese-speaking countries. However, it is in the long-term interest of the program to offer additional language pairs immediately. For this reason, the program will also include a multilingual track to accommodate all other languages for the fall of 2013. Each multilingual classroom will feature a primary instructor who is supported by other instructors with the needed language expertise to offer specialized instruction and evaluation. New language pairs will be added based on student interest with the intent of developing full language programs in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish as demand allows.

The logistics of orchestrating the establishment of such a comprehensive program also dictated the need to focus on classroom instruction during the early phase. Although GSIT will eventually offer blended learning, the advantages of focusing on face-to-face instruction, especially when training for professions defined by communication, seem obvious. Such an approach will also afford GSIT more time to put in place the special parameters that are needed for effective distance learning in an effort to address additional unmet demand.

**Developing a Program Through Creativity and Discourse**

The design, development, and launch of the Graduate Studies in Interpreting and Translation program at the University of Maryland reflect the creative efforts of a broad group of individuals dedicated to translator and interpreter education and the strategic use of discourse in the public sphere. This sustained, multiyear effort has culminated in a curriculum that addresses the concerns of institutional employers, the faculty of a top-ranking academic department, and the most senior decision-makers of a public research university.
Notes


5. To read more about the Department of Communication at the University of Maryland, see: www.comm.umd.edu. To read more about GSIT, see: www.gsit.umd.edu.


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Language is history.
Words have been our constant companions on the long journey of human evolution, capturing the prosaic and the sublime, conveying the tangible and the ephemeral, expressing the essence of our existence. In the natural order of things, words are assimilated and discarded as times change, people move, and cultures overlap. Like us, our languages are organic; like us, our languages evolve or die.

Sometimes the assimilation involves just a word or two; a convenient expression crosses a linguistic frontier to take root in a different language and, after a period of time, loses its “foreign-ness” and is granted “native” status. Words like paparazzi, glasnost, and geisha come to mind.

In other cases, a whole collection of words is borrowed when a new technology of some kind is introduced from one culture to another, as we have recently seen with the migration of computer-related terms from English to other languages. Something similar occurred many years ago when the French brought their cuisine to Great Britain, enriching the English language with words like au gratin, canapé, and roux.

And then there are loans and transfers on a massive scale that influence a language and give it a breadth of expression and depth of nuance that it never had before. One example of this was the Norman conquest of Britain in 1066. Another was the Moorish invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 711 A.D. Who were the Moors? Where were they from? Before answering those questions, let us very briefly review the history of the land they conquered.

Neanderthals, of course, roamed the Iberian Peninsula about 32,000 years ago, long before our story begins. Far closer in time to our period, the area was inhabited by Iberians, Celts, Celtiberians, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Greeks, among others. The region was called Hispania when it became a province of the Roman Empire, and the language spoken there during that period was a variation of the Vulgar Latin imposed by the Romans over existing local dialects. The Empire collapsed around 476 and Hispania was subsequently taken over by the Visigoths—Germanic tribes that ruled the Peninsula until they were defeated by the Moors.

These Moorish invaders were nomadic Muslims who crossed the western Mediterranean at its narrowest point, the Straits of Gibraltar,
then swept across the rugged Iberian terrain in wave after conquering wave that carried them as far as the Ebro River in the north. They were mainly Berbers and Arabs from North Africa, but their inspiration was the Islamic faith, which had been born almost a century earlier many miles to the east in Mecca. During the late 7th century, the Muslim empire rippled out from the desert kingdoms of the Arabian Peninsula to hold sway over a vast territory that stretched from India in the east to the Pyrenees in the west. Arab horsemen rode as far west as they could across Northern Africa, converting those in their path to Islam, and then turned north. In 711, they landed in Gibraltar and were soon masters of this southwestern tip of Europe, which they controlled for the next 800 years. They brought with them a refined sense of art and architecture, a profound respect for learning, and their language: Arabic.

The Moors established many centers of trade, civil administration, and scholarship in their new territory, most notably in the cities of Córdoba, Toledo, Granada, and Sevilla. Córdoba, the ancient city on the banks of the Guadalquivir River that had been an Iberian settlement and an important metropolis in Roman and Visigoth times, became the capital of the Islamic Caliphate that ruled Al-Andalus (known today as Andalucía), the Moorish domain in the southern portion of the Iberian Peninsula. By the 10th century, Córdoba was considered the most populous city in the world, and was also the intellectual capital of Europe. It was a widely acknowledged center of learning, where scholars flocked to study and translate documents dealing with science, philosophy, mathematics, astrology, medicine, and education. This was truly a golden age of translation! Here, as in Damascus and Baghdad—the other great centers of the Muslim empire—classical and canonical Greek and Roman texts were translated into Arabic and preserved for posterity, providing a link to past knowledge that was all but lost when Europe slipped into the Dark Ages.

The Arabic that flourished in medieval Spain belonged to the Semitic subgroup of the Afro-Asiatic family of languages. It was closely related to Hebrew, Aramaic, and Phoenician, and was thus directly linked to the earliest languages spoken by mankind. Over the course of many centuries it had evolved into an eloquent, poetic language with a vast vocabulary, making it ideally suited to the task of transforming the Romance dialects of southern Europe into the flowering languages of the Renaissance.

This Arabic was the language that percolated throughout the Iberian Peninsula during the eight centuries of Muslim rule. It was spoken mainly by those living in the southern region of Al-Andalus, and was learned by the many European scholars who came to do research in the libraries and universities established in Toledo and Córdoba. Over time, it seeped into the Latin dialects that were still spoken among Christian populations living in northern Spain. How, precisely, did that happen?

The Christian monarchs of the old Spanish kingdoms, of course, had never accepted the Muslim conquest and, ever since the Moorish invasion, had been fighting to reconquer the lands they had lost—a campaign that lasted for centuries and was known as La Reconquista. Toledo was taken in 1085 by Alfonso VI, the king of León and Castilla. Córdoba fell to Ferdinand III of Castilla in 1236. Málaga was taken in 1487 after being besieged by the armies of a recently united Christian Spain following the marriage of Isabella I of Castilla and Ferdinand II of Aragón, the Catholic Monarchs. And finally Granada, the last Moorish stronghold in Al-Andalus, surrendered in 1492, and an extraordinary period in history came to an end.

During the Reconquista, as the Christian forces moved gradually south, towns and cities that had been under Moorish rule for generations were flooded with northerners who spoke a variety of Romance dialects, the most durable of which was Castilian. Christians living in Moorish territory had, by and large, developed hybrid dialects such as Mozarabic, a combination of Romance languages and Arabic. These dialects were quickly absorbed and replaced by Castilian, which in turn embarked on a massive borrowing spree, assimilating Arabic grammar and vocabulary and transforming itself into the forerunner of the Spanish that is spoken today. As a result of this dual Latin and Arabic influence, the “language of Cervantes” became rich in synonyms. Spanish speakers can thus refer to the olive in their martini with an Arabic word, aceituna, or a Latin one, oliva. Similarly, to warn of a lurking scorpion they can say alacrán or escorpión. When arranging...
appointments they can consult their almanaque or calendario, both of which mean calendar. It helps to remember that most Spanish nouns that begin with al- (the Arabic definite article) were borrowed from the Moors.

The list of Arabic words that migrated into Spanish during that period is far too long to include here. But, as a matter of interest, let us look at just a few examples, grouped in categories for ease of reference. Many of these words ultimately found their way into other European languages as well, including English.

- **Civil Administration**: alcalde (mayor); barrio (neighborhood); aduana (customs).

- **Home Furnishings**: alfombra (carpet); almohada (pillow); sofá (sofa).

- **Food and Beverages**: azúcar (sugar); limón (lemon); café (coffee); azafrán (saffron).

- **Building and Architecture**: alcoba (bedroom); adoquin (paving stone); azulejo (tile).

- **Mathematics**: cero (zero); álgebra (algebra); cenit (zenith).

As the Reconquista inexorably advanced, Castilian advanced with it to become the lingua franca of Spain—a Romance language generously seasoned with Arabic. King Alfonso X of Castilla, known as Alfonso el Sabio (Alfonso the Wise), prompted the creation of a standardized form of written Castilian in the 13th century by assembling a group of scribes at his court to transcribe an extensive collection of works on history, astronomy, the law, and other fields of knowledge.

The Spanish Royal Academy was founded in 1713, essentially for the purpose of preserving the “purity” of the language. The Academy published its first dictionary in six volumes between 1726 and 1739, and its first grammar book in 1771.

Spanish is now the official language of 21 countries. When the United Nations was established in 1945, Spanish was one of the five official languages, along with Chinese, English, French, and Russian. Interestingly, Arabic became the sixth official language of the UN in 1973.

Spain finally shook off eight centuries of Moorish rule with the Reconquista of Granada in 1492. Later that same year, Christopher Columbus was commissioned by Queen Isabella to set sail westward, and his voyage not only changed the world—it opened up a whole new chapter in the evolution of the Spanish language. But that is another story.

**Notes**

1. See “My Mother Tongue” by Tony Beckwith, published in *Source* (No. 48, Summer 2010), 31.

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Excruciating painful raw electricity shot up and down my spine. I had experienced back pain a good part of my life, but never anything like this. The diagnosis made by my chiropractor and confirmed by other doctors was a pinched nerve. Medication was prescribed to alleviate the pain, but this caused a different kind of nightmare. Steroids provoked super hyperactivity and gave me the assurance that I had the power to convince anyone of anything. Painkillers created a sense of anger, paranoia, orneriness, rigidity, and aggression that was completely counter to my easygoing personality. Epilepsy medication caused utter confusion and forgetfulness. It was a frightening experience. Meanwhile, the pain was agonizing.

How did I get to this point? At the time, I was working as a coordinator of health care interpreting services at a medical center in northern Iowa, and every summer I would cover for my interpreters when they went on vacation. Most of them were short-term or contract interpreters who were brought in as needed. They had no benefits and could take off when they chose. Since I was the one who established the interpreting services department, I took the responsibility to cover appointments very seriously; actually, too seriously. I went against the very advice that I gave to my interpreters: I skipped lunch or ate yogurt in my car and ran from appointment to appointment, literally short of breath. I also attempted to perform my regular duties while covering for everyone. My back would inevitably go out every summer, but the pinched nerve pushed me over the edge.

I was a medical interpreter with a severe case of burnout. I hit rock bottom and ended up having to leave a job I dearly loved, one that was closely tied to my identity. I was so shaken by this experience that I concluded interpreting was no longer feasible for me, even though I had studied and practiced interpreting passionately for over 10 years. The thought of experiencing that kind of pain and the fear of having more adverse drug reactions kept me away from my field for some time.

Medical Interpreters and Stress

In general, working conditions are stressful for medical interpreters, since the job brings with it many responsibilities and high expectations. The quality of our interpreting and the information relayed during interactions with the patient and physician will ultimately affect the care a patient receives. There will also be situations where on-the-spot interpreting could mean the difference between life or death. Because of the ever-changing conditions to which we are exposed, we cannot afford to practice a “black box” model of interpreting.

Because of the ever-changing conditions to which we are exposed, we cannot afford to practice a “black box” model of interpreting.
cultural nuances and interventions. However, medical interpreters in this area are expected to act as cultural brokers. In the case of mental health interpreting, for example, interpreters are considered an integral part of a three-person alliance and as a therapy conduit. As interpreters, we also witness many traumatic situations during our work, such as the effect of serious illness on families, heartbreaking stories during counseling sessions, and even death. The quantity and speed of interpreting sessions can be very intense, where we are literally running from one interpreting session to another. Combine these factors with the pressure to keep up to date with challenging medical terminology, and it is easy to see how stress can overtake even the most competent professional.

The effects of stress on interpreters can be very detrimental. When under stress, it becomes difficult to think clearly and concentrate, which can cause the following:

- Difficulty processing new information.
- Difficulty maintaining accuracy and completeness.
- More mistakes.
- Greater need for repetition.
- Greater likelihood of being affected by the emotions around us and of losing objectivity.

All of these factors affect our ability to manage the flow of conversation during an interpreting session and can ultimately lead to burnout.

**Defining Burnout**

What is burnout? The coining of this term and recognition of this phenomenon began in the U.S. in the 1970s in social services occupations such as in the medical profession, social work, the ministry, and especially in occupations where staff cuts were occurring. Today, burnout is recognized in a wide range of occupations. Also of note for today’s high-paced professional are studies indicating that the risk of burnout is raised considerably if a person works over 40 hours per week.

A recent study among university workers in Spain identified three different types of burnout.

- **Frenetic burnout** is characterized by people who are involved and ambitious but overload themselves. People who work over 40 hours per week are often included in this category.

- **Under-challenged burnout** occurs when employees are indifferent and bored.

- **Worn-out burnout** refers to feeling a lack of control and acknowledgement. These feelings tend to increase with advanced years on the job.

As medical interpreters, I think we experience frenetic burnout most often since we tend to push ourselves too much. Medical interpreters would not usually be characterized as under-challenged or bored. Worn-out burnout might also occur when there is low morale and the interpreter has been on staff for a long time.

**Recognizing Burnout**

There are a number of symptoms of burnout that can be recognized before it is too late, including:

- Chronic fatigue.
- Sleeplessness and depression.
- Frequent headaches and gastrointestinal problems.
- Weight loss or gain.
- Shortness of breath.
- Cynicism, negativity, and irritability.
- Self-criticism for putting up with demands.
- Anger toward those who make demands.
- Feeling harassed or hounded.
- Feeling suspicious.
- Feeling helpless.
- Increased degree of risk taking.

**Departmental Strategies to Prevent Burnout**

Improvements in our working conditions as medical interpreters and changes in departmental policies for staff interpreters can benefit interpreters immensely. For example, interpreters should be encouraged to take their lunch breaks no matter what their interpreting schedule is like. Interpreters should also be encouraged to drink enough water. If possible, team interpreting should be available upon request to alleviate excessive fatigue. Sharing the work between two interpreters will ensure consistent quality and reduce errors. If that is not possible, interpreters should have the protocols available to request breaks when necessary. Full-time interpreters should have limited
on-call hours. Interpreters also need to have some “down time” from straight interpreting hours; for example, the availability of administrative tasks such as answering the department phone or even working on translations. Employers also need a system for providing adequate interpreter training for new hires. For instance, classes for vocabulary development, or at the very least print and online resources, should be available to ensure a better understanding of medical procedures and conditions.

In addition, interpreters need a support system and mechanisms in place to process the various types of scenarios they will encounter. In a study of mental health interpreters, it was determined that a support system, specialized training in psychotherapy, and debriefing with therapists were effective strategies for interpreters to counteract the traumatic content they covered during sessions with refugees.7

Self-Evaluation and Follow-up

Strategies to Prevent Burnout

Medical interpreters can use some of the basic techniques below to help relieve stress.

Ask Yourself Where the Stress Originates

• Know your strengths and weaknesses.
• Develop strategies to turn your weaknesses into strengths.
• Improve your skills on a continual basis.
• Recognize where stress makes itself known in your body.
• Increase your sense of security when interpreting.

What can increase your sense of security on the job?
• Keep up with changes in the field in which you work.
• Read material in your source and target languages to keep your vocabulary up to date.
• Develop glossaries to share with colleagues.
• Attend training sessions regularly.
• Always arrive on time and dress professionally.
• Follow the codes of ethics of medical interpreters.8

Understand the Physical

Signs of Stress

Are you aware of the situations that are most stressful to you? Below are some physical symptoms of stress of which you should be aware:

• Do you make tight fists?
• Does your mouth shut tight or does your jaw tense up?
• Do you hold your breath?
• Do you take shallow breaths and tire easily?
• Do you perspire when under stress?
• Where does stress make itself known in your body (e.g., neck, shoulders, throat and chest, lower back, or legs)?9

Start Practicing Healthy Habits

Once you start to answer the questions above, you will be in a better position to take steps to manage your stress. How? Interpreters need to take care of themselves while taking on the responsibilities of the workplace.

• Get enough exercise (e.g., stretching and toning exercises).
• Get enough sleep.
• Pay attention to your diet.
• Do not smoke.
• Foster healthy relationships and emotional support in your personal life, and get counseling if needed.
• Participate in enjoyable activities and hobbies outside of work.

One study of interpreters discovered that the three most popular methods for coping with stress were talking about work problems, increasing social relationships, and participating in sports and exercise.10

A Long Road to Recovery

As an interpreter coordinator who was overworked, I had neglected my health and paid a heavy price for...
it. Three and a half years later, I am finally returning to my chosen profession. It is a gift to me to have the confidence to do so. Also, due to a vigorous exercise program, my back is stronger than it has been in 15 years. If I travel extensively in the car or am on my feet all day—situations that normally would have caused muscle spasms—I have no back pain whatsoever. Once again I can proudly call myself an interpreter.

Notes

2. Burns, Julie. “Stress Busters for Interpreters (And Everyone Else),” The ATA Chronicle (July 2010), 25.


9. Ibid.


Medical Interpreters and Burnout: Preventing a Negative Outcome Continued

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In October of 2011, after working as a U.S.-based freelance German-English translator for 14 years, I accepted an 18-month contract as an in-house translator at the parent production plant of a large chemical company in Burghausen, Germany. I decided to take this position for multiple reasons. Though I had a very successful business, after many years of freelancing I felt the need for a change, a bit more financial security, and a bit of adventure. My husband and I also wanted our eight-year-old son to have an international living experience and to learn a foreign language. So, my family and I packed up our house and moved to Germany.

When I first started this job, I was asked frequently why I gave up a successful business as a freelancer to work for a company again, or, as I like to paraphrase, why go from freelancer to factory girl? Now that my tenure at the plant is coming to an end faster than I would like, I have had some time to reflect on the answer to this question and the benefits of such a career move.

**Professional Benefits**

The most obvious advantage of the proverbial day job is the greater financial security that comes with it. From Freelancer to Factory Girl: The Professional and Personal Benefits of Returning to the Office

*By Hilary Fayen Higgins*
Working in a Team: After 14 years of working in my isolated home office, it has been a nice change to work as part of a team. I am one of five translators that the chemical plant hired to translate the technical documentation involved in a special two-year project. Three of us are native English speakers (two Americans and one Brit) and two are native German speakers. This has been invaluable for all of us because the English speakers have been able to consult with the German speakers concerning source-text comprehension, and the German speakers have consulted with the English speakers regarding style and terminology use. This type of collaboration has been a real confidence booster. When working as a freelancer, I would naturally do my best to verify my understanding of the text by consulting colleagues online or leaving comments for my clients, but it is nothing compared to being able to ask my colleagues immediately whether I have correctly understood a sentence written in "Ingenieur Deutsch." It has also led to some lively discussions about translation style and approach (e.g., whether to favor an accurate, yet close-to-the-original style, or accurate, yet easier-to-read style).

Learning New Skills: Working in-house has also greatly improved my skills with computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. As a freelancer, I had very little experience working with tools such as MultiTerm. Clients usually just send the translation memory and a glossary, but almost never a MultiTerm database file. However, I have since learned the value of working with the MultiTerm component of Trados, which enables you to select the appropriate term for a specific context more accurately.

Tips and References for Those Thinking about Working Abroad

1. To find in-house jobs for your language combination, try checking out Monster.com, Monster.de, or the localized Monster jobs site in your desired country.
2. The Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer, which is the German equivalent of ATA, posts translation and project management job openings on its website (www.bdu.de).
3. Refer to local professional translator associations in the country where you want to work.
4. If your direct clients have their own language services department, you could ask them if there are any openings.

Special thanks to my colleagues for their comments and feedback.
rather than just using the concordance feature in Studio. The particular benefit is that not only can you add terms, but also term definitions, categories, and comments on usage. When I return to freelance work, I intend to create my own MultiTerm database where I can set up client terminology databases, create client glossaries, and use filters for mini databases for individual customers. Most language services providers probably do this, but I think it might be to my benefit on a freelance level as well.

Working Onsite: The biggest advantage of my job here has been the fact that our office is located directly in the middle of the production plant. There are American and German engineers working in offices next door to us, and the production hall is in the building across the street. When we first started, we were given a tour of the various production areas, machines, and equipment, which has enabled us to visualize the equipment descriptions and instructions we translate more accurately. When confronted with particularly complex technical texts, we are able to consult with the engineers. They explain the process and often just take us over to the production hall to show us the piece of equipment or the machine in question. As freelance translators, we often work in a vacuum and can only dream of this kind of access. In my job here, the engineers review our translations and verify terminology. This feedback gives me the confidence that I am doing my job correctly.

Broader Networking Opportunities: Working in a different environment can create a host of new networking opportunities and contacts. I now have a broader range of colleagues not only in translation, but also from a wide range of engineering fields. I hope to leverage my expanded network using LinkedIn and other social media sites when I return to freelance work.

Personal Benefits
There have been a few personal benefits garnered from this experience. For example, working in an office has meant having to improve and update my wardrobe to include professional business attire. I have also enjoyed more free time as a company employee than I did running my own business. The established nine-to-five workday means I can (usually) leave my work at the office. I do not work evenings or weekends the way I did as a freelancer, giving me more time to spend with my family, to pursue hobbies, and to travel. This experience has also made me rethink how I want to manage my time when I return to the freelance world.

A Rewarding Experience
Overall, working as an in-house translator has been a positive experience. I have come away with a lot of ideas on how to improve my freelance business and better manage my time. My CAT tool skills have improved, and I have extended my professional network. But most importantly, my son now speaks better German than I do, but do not tell him I said that.

While I am enjoying my in-house job and my time in Germany, I am looking forward to returning to the States with my family, and to my home office and clients. In the meantime, you can read more about my family’s adventures in Germany on our blog, From Bellingham to Burghausen and Back (bellinghamtoburghausen.blogspot.com). Also, for those who are thinking about working abroad, please check out the tips listed in the box on page 24.

Note
1. Poorly written technical German that can give translators a real headache.
A few months ago, my twin sister and I ran a 5K charity race in Las Vegas, during which she proceeded to kick my butt. As a reward, aside from my twin having bragging rights for life, we both received a nice finisher’s goodie bag containing a free one-week pass to a very fancy gym. We decided to take advantage of this fantastic offer immediately.

While we were very impressed with the gym’s world-class installations, spa-like locker rooms, and the fact that we were working out two machines away from Andre Agassi, we also were struck by something else: the place was deserted. It felt like the zombie apocalypse had actually happened and that the world’s former number one tennis champion and the two of us were the only survivors. It was truly spooky. Even though the gym had a lot of things going for it, I did not join. I missed the energy and the great vibe from my regular, much less fancy gym.

After this experience, I started to think about what potential zombie apocalypse conditions feel like in our profession. The closest scenario I can think of is when the phone does not ring and the inbox is empty, making us think that no one will ever hire us again. We have all found ourselves in this situation at one point. Unfortunately, this feast or famine phenomenon is part of our everyday business reality. The question is how do you handle it? I have a few tips.

There will be more work. Really. You simply have to believe that the phone will ring again. Our business tends to be somewhat cyclical, and some periods will be busier than others. If possible, try to identify those times in advance so you can plan. For instance, I know that December is a relatively quiet interpreting month in Vegas, which is just as well because I need that time to decorate the tree, make cookies, and treat clients to holiday lunches.

Try not to be depressed. This is a challenging skill to master, as it is only natural on occasion to find ourselves questioning our choice of occupation or thinking about what we did to deserve this sort of punishment. Look on the bright side: you finally have some time to have coffee with your long-lost friend, catch up on your DVR recordings, or take the neglected puppy for a real walk. A few months ago, I finished my last project of the day mid-morning and spent the afternoon with a girlfriend I had not seen in months. I came home happy and re-energized, and sure enough, there was a new project in my inbox.

Be a clever squirrel. This might be the best time to catch up on reading, continuing education, or that paperwork you have been avoiding. Chances are you will be so busy in the near future that a lot of these non-revenue-making tasks will be put off, so act like a smart squirrel now and prepare in advance for the hectic times ahead by checking some of these things off your list. For example, a slow period is an ideal opportunity to focus your energy on professional development. There is nothing like meeting great fellow professionals and learning something new to get you excited about your profession.

Find new clients. The slow periods are also the best time to network, as painful as that might sound. Make it your goal to attend one networking event and try to meet at least one or two new people. Or take a potential business contact to lunch. I tried this a few months ago, and the lawyer I took to lunch promptly sent me a project a mere four weeks after our lunch date.

Now, rest assured that in our business there is no such thing as a true zombie apocalypse as far as I know. Quite the contrary: the industry is growing steadily. However, I would not be so sure about that fancy Vegas gym. The zombies might have taken it over by now. I should stop by and check one of these days.

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.
Getting It Done: Managing Your Time As a Freelancer

(Posted by Corinne McKay on her blog, Thoughts on Translation, http://thoughtsontranslation.com.)

As freelancers, we wear a lot of hats. Some days, I feel like translation is the easy part of my job: the harder parts being my roles as an accountant, marketing director, customer relations manager, office ergonomics expert, and so on and so on, not to mention the rewarding but time-consuming gigs as a wife, mom, daughter, friend, chef, and suboptimal housekeeper. Based on personal experience, here are some tips to help manage your time more effectively. They range from quick-and-dirty to big-picture, so just bear with me as I jump around!

Prioritize What Really Matters to You

This involves accepting that you simply cannot do everything you want to do and remain sane, unless you only need 45 minutes of sleep a day. But you can make time for the things that are critical to your happiness and/or to the success of your business. For example, I find that when my e-mail inbox is backlogged, I feel panicky about work. So I make that task a priority, and I really try to end every weekday without pending items in my inbox. In my personal life, I know that if I do not exercise for about an hour on most days, I start to, for lack of a better phrase, go crazy. Even if that means doing a YouTube yoga video at 10:00 p.m., I do it. In the same vein, no matter how busy my family is, we really try to cook a real dinner and eat together almost every night. Other things might slide (see the reference above to suboptimal housekeeping), but we try to maintain our family dinner routine. Also, I absolutely do not do all-nighters or really even work past 11:00 p.m. I feel that this it is important to my mental health and to family harmony, so I force myself to avoid really crazy deadlines that require this kind of work.

Create as Much Uninterrupted Work Time as Possible

The reality of life in the 21st century is that our attention is pulled constantly in 127 different directions. In order to produce good translations, you need some mental space and some time that is free of distractions. Here are a few of my strategies to carve out this time:

**Keep a running to-do list next to the computer.** When, as seems to happen about every 12 seconds, a to-do item pops into my head (e.g., “buy cat food”), I write the item down instead of interrupting what I am doing. Then, when I need a mental break, I go through a few to-do items at one time. I try to do the same with phone calls: write the items down, then make the calls to book appointments for the snow tires, the dentist, and the furnace cleaner all at once.

**Avoid inbox alerts.** “You’ve got mail” almost all of the time, and if you read it as it arrives, you will spend your entire day doing that. So, shut off the alerts and just check e-mail every so often. I say “every so often” because, ideally, I would like to check e-mail only a few times a day and answer it all at once. But realistically, clients sometimes need a quick answer right away, so I would say I check e-mail about every 15-30 minutes.

**Find a time of day when you can catch up.** For many people, this is the early morning. I am getting my family out the door at that time, so although I do not love it, I often work from about 9-10:30 at night. This slot has the added advantage that neither my U.S. clients nor my European clients are normally at work at that time, so I can send e-mail without generating an immediate response that then requires another response from me.

Work on Long-Term Projects in Small, Daily Chunks

Here is an illustrative example. I published the first edition of my book How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator in 2006. On January 1, 2008, I shook my fist in the air and said, “If I finish one long-term project this year, it will be the second edition of that darned book!” Who wants to guess the actual publication date? May 2011 (no, really). Basically, I was waiting for a big chunk of uninterrupted work time, fantasizing that I would take a month and do nothing but work on the second edition. News flash: unless you are independently wealthy and have no responsibilities to anyone but yourself and have someone who cooks your meals, cleans your house, and does your laundry, that chunk of time is never coming. After taking two years to accept that reality, I resolved at the beginning of 2010 that I would work on the second edition every day, even if I only wrote one sentence. This sounds like overstating the obvious, but here it is: even if you work on a project for only 15 minutes a day, you will eventually finish it. But if you never work on it, you will never finish it. So stop waiting for that elusive block of time and start working with the amount of time you have. This works for other goals, too. I once did a training program to run a marathon, and the coach told us that we were never allowed to use the “not enough time” excuse to avoid training. His advice: “If you only have 5 minutes, do burpees [squat thrusts] for 5 minutes and you’ll be ready to drop. If

Continued on p. 31
The other week I launched into a relatively large translation project dealing with a subject matter with which I am extremely familiar. I had already worked for every major competitor of this client—literally—so I had very good reference material, including glossaries and translation memories. I even had a full-blown terminology database from one of the client’s early competitors. In fact, I had even worked for one of the early market leaders in the field that had been purchased by my current client. So, it did not seem to matter that this particular client was not going to provide me with translation memories or glossaries.

You will not be surprised to hear that I quickly accepted this project, even though I was booked solid, because I felt pretty sure that I could just breeze through the work.

Well, things turned out a little differently. Unfortunately, I had inconveniently forgotten that my previous clients in that field had all equipped themselves with unique terminology, some in the target language only, others in both source and target languages. After all, this was still a subject area with a cutting-edge feel in which companies wanted to give themselves a unique and distinguished identity.

I realized quickly that the situation was no different with this client. Yes, there was some translated material out there which I checked after starting on the project, and, yes, the terminology was different from any and all of the previous projects, ironically including the company that had been bought by my client. With the sinking feeling that I was going to miss all of my daughter’s basketball games in the next couple of weeks, I decided to spend some time reading through the material I found online and jotting down any specialized terminology. After about an hour spent covering two large sheets of paper in my scribbly handwriting, something in the back of my mind began taunting me: “You are the author of a translation technology newsletter and ATA’s GeekSpeak column and you are doing what?” So, I started to look at more automated solutions.

I knew I could try to download the websites I had found and align them to

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Decision Matrix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the project have an existing translation memory/glossary/termbase?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yes:</em> Hurray! Stop here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No:</em> Go to the next question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the client have some high-quality translated material accessible online?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Yes:</em> Can I use URL-based searches?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ <em>Yes:</em> Great, if it is for a small- to medium-sized project. Stop here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ <em>No:</em> Can I use language-specific searches with a search engine?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → <em>Yes:</em> Great, if it is for a small project. Stop here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → <em>No:</em> Should I download and align?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → → <em>Definitely,</em> if your overall productivity increases (depending on your alignment speed and project size). Stop here!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → → <em>Definitely not,</em> if your overall productivity decreases. (Hint: never go with the hunch that you might still use the aligned material for possible upcoming projects, since that typically does not pan out.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No:</em> Are there competitors with high-quality translated material?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ <em>No:</em> You will have to start terminology research from scratch and charge accordingly. Start researching!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ <em>Yes:</em> How similar is the terminology?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → <em>Similar:</em> Start with “Yes: Can I use URL-based searches?” above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ → <em>Not similar:</em> You will have to start terminology research from scratch and charge accordingly. Start researching!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
use as a translation memory, but I also knew that this would take several hours and make me miss Lara’s basketball game that night, so I looked at the website addresses, the URLs. Many URLs are written in a fashion that can be used by translators to switch back and forth between the different languages easily (see my June 2009 column, “Interpreting URLs”: internationalwriters.com/toolkit/09_June_URLs.pdf). Unfortunately, these URLs were not. I did see that all of the English content was located behind www.<client>.com/en-us and the relevant German content was behind www.<client>.com/de-de. Since this was a project that kept me busy for another week, the initial three-hour investment paid out very smoothly. My per-word output probably doubled since I no longer had to undertake tedious web searches. All I needed to do was use the concordance feature in my translation environment tool. Since this was a project that kept me busy for another week, the initial three-hour investment paid out many times over, and I was confident that I was returning a high-quality product to the client.

As I reflected back on this long odyssey of always trying to find the quick-way-out solution, I realized that it would be helpful to develop a decision matrix to help us determine how we can approach projects like this. It would be structured something like what appears in the box on page 28.

No doubt my little “honing strategy” could be greatly improved, and it is certainly not a one-size-fits-all kind of solution for everyone. But if anything, I hope to communicate that it is to our advantage to make informed decisions on how we tackle translation projects before we start them or even bid on them. Every project is different, and a one-size-fits-all approach is bound to be inadequate.

Note
1. Rettungsroutine (rescue routine) was not what I actually searched for; I am using it as a sample because it was the odd choice for the German word of the year for 2012.
Regardless of skill level and familiarity with the profession, we have all faced the following at one point in our careers as court interpreters: challenges to experience/credentials, workplace anxiety, and objections to the interpretation. It is recommended that you plan in advance for how to respond to each of these items so you will not be caught off-guard and fail to put your best foot forward.

Challenges to Experience/Credentials: It is important to have a well-rehearsed elevator speech ready to go for situations where you are asked to provide information regarding your qualifications. Make sure it is concise and to the point for different environments in which you work or plan to work. The speech should highlight any pertinent education or certifications, as well as the work experience you have in that setting. If you do not have a viable story to tell, your first priority is to research how you can acquire the needed expertise. If you are just starting out, an effective method is to observe more experienced court interpreters to see how they respond to situations in the courtroom. You might also want to investigate taking basic or advanced courses, either onsite or online. Subsequently, you can sit for professional exams to gauge your proficiency. Keep abreast of new developments and best practices by following the opinions of interpreting industry leaders, reading literature about the profession, and joining local and national trade associations where pertinent issues are regularly discussed. The key is to always be in a “learning mode” in order to advance your level of expertise.

Science has proven that the brain is susceptible to persistence and dedication and that learning, especially if imbued with passion, creates new synapses in the brain, allowing you to improve your output. As best-selling author and physician Deepak Chopra and Rudolph Tanzi, a professor of neurology at Harvard Medical School, state in their book *Super Brain*, increased self-awareness and conscious intention allow the brain to “connect new information with what you learned in the past.”

Anxiety: Workplace anxiety cannot be discounted in this job, since we are often asked to interpret in unfamiliar situations and without adequate resources to prepare. The best way to deal with this is to acquire any available material for the job at hand. Attorneys are often hesitant to provide documents that might hurt the case if they were to get into the wrong hands. As such, it is helpful to educate attorneys by reinforcing that you are an officer of the court, bound by confidentiality, and that your ability to see the documents in advance will only help the case by making the interpretation smooth and flawless. This is especially true if technical terms will be included in the testimony.

Objections to the Interpretation: Do not take objections personally. Remember that in a legal setting, one of the roles of an attorney is to share with the jury any information he or she feels could help the case. You must not let your emotions get the upper hand, causing you to experience feelings of unfairness, anger, fear, or helplessness if an objection is leveled at your interpretation. Such an emotional reaction is a survival instinct. As Tanzi explains, before these feelings get out of hand you must STOP:

S: Stop;  
T: Take three deep breaths and smile;  
O: Observe what is going on; and  
P: Proceed with mindfulness.

In the event you are called upon to respond to an objection to your interpretation, collect your thoughts and deliver your explanation to the challenge calmly, and in a positive and confident manner. This is significant because you do not want to undermine the trust the players in this scenario have in you. If you are wrong, correct the record professionally and move forward. Do not get stuck on a mistake or misunderstanding that may trigger more pre-programmed negative responses.

I hope these tips will help you to surmount the challenges in your professional lives.

Notes
2. *The Washington Post* had a very useful article about top-notch universities offering online courses, many of which are free: http://bit.ly/open_online_courses_wp.
you only have 20 minutes, run sprint intervals for 20 minutes. Even these small amounts add up."

**Fit Stuff In, Within Reason**

I kind of hate the term “multi-tasking” because I like to give my attention to one task at a time. Also, I have ways in which I absolutely will not multi-task. For example, I do not talk on the phone while I am driving, even with a hands-free device. But I do try to combine certain kinds of activities to save time. For instance, we do not have a clothes dryer, so I often talk on the phone while hanging laundry on the clothesline. I have learned that I can prep a batch of bread dough while my husband and daughter are eating breakfast and getting ready for work and school in the morning, and I leave it to rise while I am working. Sometimes you can fit in extra time for tasks in a way that works well for your family. For example, now that my daughter has 30-45 minutes of homework per night, I make a habit of sitting with her at the dining room table while she completes her assignments, and that is when I work on my long-term writing projects.

**Accept That Your Other Options Are Worse**

I admit that there are times when I get tired of being highly effective. There are days that I wish I could just fluff off, hit the celebrity gossip websites, and then go to a hot yoga class. But I try to focus on my other options: making less money, having less time to spend with my family, using after-school child care, or being up until 2:00 a.m. to meet my deadlines. In that light, things seem pretty good!
The very much awaited second edition of Thomas West’s Spanish-English Dictionary of Law and Business has been received with open arms and excitement. As with the first edition, this dictionary fills many needs when translating from Spanish into English. In his preface, West mentions that he saw the need for a new edition because important laws in many Spanish-speaking jurisdictions have been replaced since the publication of his first dictionary of law and business. The new edition also includes legal language used in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, making this the first bilingual law dictionary, to my knowledge at least, to incorporate this language region.

Unlike the previous version of this dictionary, the second edition is available only as a soft-cover. However, it is printed on very good quality paper. The font has been reduced, but the type is very clear and makes up for the reduction in size. (Initially, I longed for the larger font, but there is nothing a good pair of glasses cannot solve.) Looking up terms does not present a problem since entries are listed alphabetically. The entry indicates where the term is used, although this does not necessarily mean that the term is used exclusively in that country.

Content

While at first glance there appear to be filler words that can be found easily in many other dictionaries, the reader will appreciate the breadth and scope of the definitions West offers for these supposed “filler” items. Definitions will always be extremely helpful in aiding the translator to understand the document being translated, and the information contained here really sets the entries apart from what can be found in many other sources. Here are two examples of the types of definitions offered for what one would initially think of as filler words.

padre father
padre adoptante/adoptive adoptive parent (SYN) arrogador Bol, padre adoptive padre putativo putative father

Padres de la Constitución framers of the Constitution, Founding Father (SYN) poder constituyente, autores de la Constitución Pue

juez judge (DEF) Spanish – language documents often refer to el juez, where the English-language document would refer to “the court.”

The second term above seems like one of those that would be really easy to find anywhere, but in West’s dictionary it is followed by a listing of 81 different types of judges in Spanish-speaking countries followed by the corresponding term in English! At the risk of being repetitive, I find these entries extremely useful, especially since the mention of special judges is very common in legal documents and it can be difficult to establish the English equivalent.

To highlight the detail and thought placed in this reference work, I will mention that there are four pages dedicated to the term derecho (law, rights) and its modifiers, as well as for the term bien/bienes (property). Another term that might initially seem easy to find in any dictionary, deuda (debt), includes 51 specific kinds of debt after the initial entry. And those are not the only terms that have been defined extensively.

Here is another example of the valuable information to be found in the definitions West provides in this dictionary.
obligación de medios best efforts obligation (DEF) An obligation to use one’s best efforts to achieve the purpose of the contract as opposed to an obligación de resultados. For example, attorneys have an obligación de medios when they represent clients, not an obligación de resultados. In other words, they must do their best to represent their clients, but are not obligated to win the case for them. (SYN) obligación de actividad.

Without the definition, you would tend to doubt the translation even though you might go with the term. With it, a translator can see how it applies to the document at hand.

Also very helpful are the examples of usage in which you see the term or phrase in context together with the English translation. For example:

en rebeldía in default (De no concurrir el actor o el demandado a la audiencia de conciliación, se procesará en rebeldía. If the plaintiff or the defendant fails to attend the settlement hearing, a default judgment will be entered.)

There were no obvious typographical errors found in this dictionary. It is a very thorough and well thought out collection of terminology found in legal and business documents from Latin America and Spain. The addition of terms from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic is welcome. As pointed out by West in the preface, the legal Spanish used in those jurisdictions is often a literal translation—from the English in the case of Puerto Rico, and from the French in the case of the Dominican Republic—making translation more challenging.

This edition does not include an English into Spanish section, which is a resource I miss. Of course, if you have a vague idea of what the term could be, you can always check if there is something similar in the Spanish section to see if that might lead you down the right path.

Overall Evaluation

In spite of the fact that this is a dictionary intended for reference, I find that it is also entertaining to read. I consider it to be much more than just a reference in which to look for an elusive term. This work becomes a learning tool when you go through it page by page and find many terms that can increase your legal and business vocabulary, whether translating or interpreting. Overall, I consider this to be an excellent dictionary and a must for any translator or interpreter specializing in legal and business documents from Spanish into English.

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

ATA Scholarly Monograph Series XVI
Translation and Localization Project Management: The Art of the Possible
Edited by Keiran J. Dunne and Elena S. Dunne
John Benjamins Publishing Company

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

To order: http://bit.ly/ATASeriesXVI
Today, for the first time, it was my great privilege to host a high school student for job shadowing. It just so happened that I had received a patent translation assignment that lent itself to being observed. I had no worries that this high school sophomore’s eyes would glaze over, because the document had a mere 17 short paragraphs in the specification and six modest claims. She was able to see the translation process from beginning to end, which made it a godsend from my viewpoint. Her language pair is not the same as mine, but that was not a problem either. If a secondary school student gets exposed to the world of patents—in any language—she is miles ahead of her contemporaries, and a lot of people much older and more experienced than she is, too.

New Queries

(English>Italian 3-13.1) In the up-and-down world of forex trading, the phrase “support-turned-resistance” seems almost intuitively comprehensible, if it refers to a price trend, but certainly it is better to obtain an explanation from someone who knows. It appears in what looks like a memo, where the writer speaks of selling, “EURUSD on a textbook retest of support-turned-resistance after prices took out a trend line guiding the July-October rebound.” What is it, and how about the Italian?

(English>Portuguese 3-13.2) Statistics and social science got married so long ago that they can now be considered an elderly couple, but one that still produces puzzles. Take this pair of sentences, for example, in which the term “non-overlapping shift” proves difficult: “A manager wants to determine if the distribution of defect type varies by the non-overlapping shift (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) in which the product is produced. Is there a relationship between shift and defect type at α = 0.05?” Please help if you can.

(English>Spanish 3-13.3) This query is not about electronics but market research. Proper Spanish is needed for “closed loop visibility” in the following sentence: “[Company’s name] production and inventory control systems provide closed loop visibility of our global supply chain.”

(English>Swedish 3-13.4) “Shared folder aggregation” is the problem term in a text dealing with network systems. For example, in which the property “non-overlapping shift” proves difficult: “A manager wants to determine if the distribution of defect type varies by the non-overlapping shift (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) in which the product is produced. Is there a relationship between shift and defect type at α = 0.05?” Please help if you can.

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believes the sentence is trying to say that once the brand is imprinted on the plastic container, the brand-image will last (perdurare) even after the contents of the container have been consumed. Dominique Carton expresses it this way: “lasting through the post-consumer life of the product.”

(English>Croatian [English] 1-13.4) (Rücklösung): Domingo Mendo says that this word is used in Austria, where Germans would prefer Einlösung (i.e., the granting of an amount of money). His suggested translation is given with the caveat that he knows very little about the Austrian banking system: “After having met the requirements set forth in these conditions we shall transfer the loan (Zuzählung), provided that (gegen) cash loan no. 337 007 is paid off at the same time.” Either we are dealing with two different loans—one being transferred to a client’s checking account and the other being paid off (Rücklösung)—or the client’s credit limit has been raised. If the latter, then a possible translation might be “your credit limit will be raised and cash loan no. 337 007 will be granted.”

(English>Czech [English] 10-12.6) (Touwenladebericht): Cynthia Klohr was very diligent in her reply about this. It is not a common expression in German logistics, but shippers, forwarders, and recipient companies often have their own designations for the same documents. If viewed as a route and load report, it is a document that reveals the route (distance, time), the means (air, sea, road, railway), the mode of transport (truck, train, plane, ship), and the actual load. In the context of the query, it appears to be an all-in-one letter of consignment, bill of lading, and proof of delivery. Nowadays many shipments are consigned automatically, and what is called a TLB (Transport Load Builder) automatically becomes the document used for invoicing in a self-billing procedure.

(English>Italian 1-13.5) (mis): Alessandra Corazza believes this stands for misurino, which is a “measuring cup” or “measuring device” that comes with the medication. Manuela Francavilla states that this is not a standard measuring instrument, therefore, the best translation seems to be “1 measuring cup or measuring spoon.” Dominique Carton agrees.

(English>Spanish 1-13.10) (Con lo que creo probada...): The troublesome last part of this query sounds like “which justify my right to make the claim to Rey Rivera.” For Domingo Mendo, the proper translation is “I hope that you, in your capacity as judge, will remedy this issue based on the (absolutely/tan) legal documents that I presented to you ... Thus, I believe that it has been proven that justice assists me in making this claim.”

Both a movie and a comic strip are entitled “It’s All About You,” and the same could be said about this column. As 2013 gets under way, I am so glad that the input of ATA members remains healthy and abundant. Thank you all!
The English definite article “the” is usually considered an unimportant word. Indeed, no competent composer would set the word so that it was musically decorated unless he or she was trying to be funny. Similarly, no competent translator of a piece to be sung would set “the” in this manner. Unfortunately, many translators of opera are not competent, as Joseph Addison (1672-1719), the British essayist, poet, and statesman, complained as far back as the early 18th century:

… we immediately fell to translating the Italian Operas; and as there was no great Danger of hurting the Sense of those extraordinary Pieces, our Authors would often make words of their own, that were entirely foreign to the Meaning of the Passages which they pretended to translate …. By this Means the soft Notes that were adapted to Pity in the Italian, fell upon the Word Rage in the English; and the angry Sounds that were turn’d to Rage in the Original, were made to express Pity in the Translation. It oftentimes happen’d likewise, that the finest Notes in the Air fell upon the most insignificant Words in the Sentence. I have known the word And pursu’d through the whole Gamut, I have been entertain’d with many a melodious The, and have heard the most beautiful Graces Quavers and Divisions bestow’d upon Then, For, and From; to the eternal Honour of our English Particles. (The Spectator, No. 18, March 21, 1711)

But, as usual, the use or misuse of “the,” with or without music, is often not simple for a translator. For example, consider Bedrich Smetana’s comic opera Dvě vdovy (Two Widows, definitive version, 1878), adapted by librettist Emanuel Züngel from Alexander Bergen’s German translation of the French play Les deux veuves (The Two Widows) by P.J.F. Mallefille. There is no choice in Czech and French: there is no “the” in Czech and “the” is required by French grammar. But in English, there is definitely a choice, and Two Widows and The Two Widows are subtly different, despite the fact that, in both cases, the usual assumption would be that two particular widows are being referred to. That is, both are definite rather than indefinite, with the addition of the definite article “the” making the title more definite, as if the title should really be The Two Widows Who... with everything after the word “widows” being temporarily omitted. Note that this distinction is possible only with plurals. If the title were Vdova (Widow), the English would have to be either A Widow or The Widow, since Widow by itself is (usually) not an acceptable English title.

“The” implies not only definiteness but also completeness, and this allows English-speaking politicians to insert ambiguity into their pronouncements. The Two Widows Who Live in a Haunted House implies that there are only two widows who live in a haunted house, but Two Widows Who Live in a Haunted House allows for the possibility that other widows also live in a haunted house, and not necessarily the same haunted house. Which brings us to the problem of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories.

As first pointed out in this column back in February 2001, the Palestinians have generally maintained that Article (i) of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967 requires the Israelis to abandon all territories seized during the six-day war, and that no lasting peace can occur until the Israelis do so. But the official English wording of the article states that the requirement is “withdrawal of Israeli armed force from territories occupied in the recent conflict.” Since there is no requirement of a withdrawal from “the” territories, the English wording allows for the possibility of withdrawal from some but not all of the territories in question. Once again, just like for Two Widows, the French version includes the definite article and the Russian version omits it, since Russian, a Slavic language like Czech, has no “the.” The Arabic version, for both stylistic and political reasons, includes the definite article, but, at the time of the UN Resolution, Arabic was not an official UN language.

Finally, “the” in English can be synonymous with “in,” since certain slang expressions beginning “What the …” can also begin “What in …,” though others cannot. And some expressions, such as “What in the world …,” require both.

So, translators beware! “The” can be a very important unimportant word!
**Member News**


- **Language Line Services**, a provider of interpreting and translation services for many fields, including health care, has acquired **Pacific Interpreters**. Language Line bought the Dallas-based firm, which has annual revenue of nearly $50 million. The combined organizations, with total annual revenue approaching $300 million, create the nation’s largest interpreting provider for hospitals, medical practice groups, clinics, and emergency rooms.

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**Upcoming Events**

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<td>April 27, 2013</td>
<td>Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters Annual Conference</td>
<td>Wilmington, NC</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.catweb.org">www.catweb.org</a></td>
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<td>May 4, 2013</td>
<td>New England Translators Association 17th Annual Conference</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.netaweb.org/cms2">www.netaweb.org/cms2</a></td>
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<td>May 4-5, 2013</td>
<td>Colorado Translators Association 3rd Annual Conference</td>
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<td><a href="http://cta-web.org">http://cta-web.org</a></td>
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<td>May 15-18, 2013</td>
<td>Association of Language Companies Annual Conference</td>
<td>Boston, MA</td>
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<td>May 17-19, 2013</td>
<td>National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators 34th Annual Conference</td>
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<td>June 14-15, 2013</td>
<td>InterpretAmerica 4th North American Summit on Interpreting</td>
<td>Reston, VA</td>
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<td>October 11-13, 2013</td>
<td>California Federation of Interpreters 11th Annual Continuing Education Conference “Expanding Our Horizons”</td>
<td>Oakland, CA</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.calinterpreters.org">www.calinterpreters.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>November 6-9, 2013</td>
<td>American Translators Association 54th Annual Conference</td>
<td>San Antonio, TX</td>
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<td>November 22-24, 2013</td>
<td>American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Annual Convention and World Languages Expo</td>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
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<td>August 4-6, 2014</td>
<td>International Federation of Translators 2014 World Congress</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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Visit the ATA Calendar Online [www.atanet.org/calendar/](http://www.atanet.org/calendar/) for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.
2012–2013
ATA School Outreach Contest

Make a School Outreach presentation this year, and you could win free registration to ATA’s 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas, November 6-9, 2013. Here’s how to enter.


2. Choose the age level you like the best and download a presentation, or use the resources on the School Outreach page to round out your own material.

3. Speak on translation and/or interpreting careers at a school or university anywhere in the world between August 1, 2012 and July 18, 2013.

4. Get someone to take a picture of you in the classroom. For tips on getting a winning shot, visit the School Outreach Photo Gallery on ATA’s website at www.atanet.org/ata_school/photo_gallery.php and click on Photo Guidelines.

5. E-mail your photo to Meghan McCallum (meghanraymccallum@gmail.com) with the subject line “School Outreach Contest,” or mail your entry to 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314. Please include: your name and contact information; the date of your presentation; the school’s name and location; and a brief description of the class. You may submit multiple entries.

The deadline for submissions is midnight on July 18, 2013.
The winner will be contacted no later than August 20, 2013. You must be a member of ATA or an ATA-affiliated organization to enter.

ATA eCONFERENCE

Couldn’t make it to ATA’s Annual Conference this year? No problem! Over 150 sessions at ATA’s 53rd Annual Conference were audiotaped, synchronized with supporting slides, and integrated with handouts to create an online multimedia experience. To learn more, visit www.atanet.org/conf/2012/dvdro.htm.
WANTED YOU AT THE American Translators Association 54th Annual Conference San Antonio, Texas Marriott Rivercenter Hotel November 6-9, 2013
The U.S. is under cyber attack, every minute of every day. That’s why cyberspace has become today’s new front line. What you know can make a difference at the National Security Agency. Whether it’s collecting foreign intelligence or preventing foreign adversaries from accessing U.S. secrets, you can protect the nation by putting your intelligence to work. Explore technology that’s years ahead of the private sector. Plus exciting career fields, paid internships, co-op and scholarship opportunities. See how you can be a part of our tradition of excellence and help the nation stay a step ahead of the cyber threat.

KNOWING MATTERS

NSA has a critical need for individuals with the following language capabilities:

- Arabic
- Chinese (Mandarin)
- Pashto
- Persian-Dari
- Persian-Farsi
- Russian
- South and Central Asian languages
- Somali
- And other less commonly taught languages

WHERE INTELLIGENCE GOES TO WORK®

U.S. citizenship is required. NSA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All applicants for employment are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or status as a parent.