Navigating Continuing Professional Education

Phonology: Some Basics

The Art of Investigative Negotiation
From the President
Caitlin Walsh
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Working Together

If you are like me (and, according to an informal poll, my students), Facebook is part of your daily routine. Each morning, an astounding number of us reach for our cell phones and check our Facebook newsfeed, perhaps even before rolling out of bed.

With the easy—and free—interconnectedness that social media platforms offer, it is no wonder that some folks question the relevance of clubs and associations. Fortunately, most people understand that a 140-character posting on Twitter simply cannot replace an hour of face-to-face networking or an interactive workshop on the latest industry developments.

But interconnectedness goes well beyond the individual. Much of my day is spent sending messages (real, old-fashioned e-mails, with salutations, punctuation, and paragraphs) and making phone calls to leaders of other professional bodies, including associations, governmental, and other groups. Just as an association is larger than the sum of its parts, that institutional standing allows us to connect to others similarly grouped in order to pursue and support joint interests. Below are a few examples:

Interpreters: As I pen this, some lucky interpreters are enjoying the Texas sun and talking, among other things, about national certification for interpreters. ATA is at the table—there and everywhere interpreters meet. ATA is active in the National Interpreter Association Coalition, cementing our standing as an interpreter association.

Educators: In addition to ATA’s new Educators Division, President-elect David Rumsey and former Board member Alan Melby spoke at the recent Modern Language Association conference. We also hope to present at the upcoming American Council on Teachers of Foreign Language Convention later in the year. This is a targeted effort to reach teachers with our outreach message about translation and interpreting being attractive career paths.

Standards: On an international level, ATA continues to contribute to the development of national and international standards shaping our industry. With close to 11,000 members, ATA represents one of the largest constituencies, and our crack standards team works hard to speak for our members’ interests.

And there are many others, including governmental agencies, charitable organizations, sister groups both here and abroad, and more. ATA will continue to reach out in order to find common ground to benefit everyone. Together, we are so much more than the sum of our parts.

Caitlin Walsh

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The weather reports just kept getting worse. A “polar vortex” with record-setting cold was settling over the U.S. heartland. By the time you read this, it will be a headline long forgotten, but in retrospect, it is a great metaphor for my whirlwind visit to the site of ATA’s upcoming 55th Annual Conference in Chicago, November 5-8, 2014.

As the cab headed into the center of the city, we passed a smörgåsbord of various ethnic neighborhoods: Germantown, Swedishville, and the Polish Riviera. The conference venue, the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, is located in the heart of the city on the shores of the Chicago River, where it empties into the massive Lake Michigan.

From the front door of this gorgeous, newly renovated hotel, a left turn and a few steps brought us to Michigan Avenue, the world-famous shopper’s paradise. It was great to be able to pick up a pair of shoes (I had forgotten mine) and grab a fun lunch at one of the many restaurants in the heart of this “City That Works.”

A right turn from the hotel took us out to Navy Pier, which is a massive collection of shops and restaurants that juts out into the ocean-like Lake Michigan. In addition to the Chicago Children’s Museum, Park Pier (an old-fashioned amusement park), the Smith Museum of Stained Glass, and Landshark Beer Garden, Navy Pier also houses an indoor tropical garden.

Other Chicago landmarks such as Millenium Park, the Field Museum of Natural History, Shedd Aquarium, and Art Institute of Chicago, with its impressive collection of Impressionist art, are located close by on the other side of the Chicago River.

Our site visit to the Sheraton to work out the details for ATA’s Annual Conference happened to coincide with the annual conference of the Modern Language Association, which also chose the hotel as its conference venue. Language and literature people had gathered for four days of lectures and lunches.

As I sat in the large central lounge, I heard dozens of languages around me, which reminded me of ATA’s conference, where translators and interpreters come from literally around the globe. With close to 2,000 attendees and over 150 educational sessions, our conference is one of the largest gatherings of translators and interpreters on the planet. It is like a virtual linguistic vortex.

ATA’s Annual Conference provides a unique opportunity to expand your translation and interpreting skills, build your business, and explore all sides of the growing language profession. The top-notch educational sessions include a select mix of invited speakers from around the globe and colleagues who generously share their experience and expertise. In the coming months, I will be spending some quality time reviewing the hundreds of session proposals we receive.

But the heart of every ATA conference is the people: presenters and attendees alike relish the opportunity to renew old relationships and build new ones. So be sure to mark your calendars for November 5-8, 2014, to meet in the middle of the country and the center of the translation and interpreting universe. See you there!
This is the time of year when you have choices to make regarding your business. One of them should be to renew your ATA membership. Here are five reasons why you should be an ATA member.

**Marketing Your Services:** ATA’s online directories help you market your services to the general public, direct clients, language services providers, and even other translators and interpreters. ATA provides various platforms to help you stand apart from the competition. These include writing an article for *The ATA Chronicle* or a division newsletter or blog, or perhaps giving a presentation at ATA’s Annual Conference or an ATA chapter event. Looking outside, ATA can assist you when you give presentations to local business groups or other associations through our Client Education material online.

**Networking:** This business is all about relationships. Whom you know will help you get jobs. ATA provides a plethora of networking opportunities, from face-to-face interactions at Annual Conferences to online professional relationships through blogs and listserves. The hardest part is getting started. ATA membership can help.

**Education:** ATA provides a variety of resources to help your professional development. Beyond the depth and breadth of material covered in *The ATA Chronicle* and during the sessions at the Annual Conference, be sure to take advantage of ATA’s:

- 18 divisions featuring specialized knowledge and resources, including newsletters and blogs.
- Listserves and blogs offering immediate feedback from experienced colleagues on a wide range of topics. Check out ATA’s Business Practices listserv (and archives) for practical suggestions about running your business, the blogs and discussion lists of ATA’s divisions for tricky terminology assistance, or *The Savvy Newcomer*, a blog for those new to the profession. (As an ATA member, you are not alone. Other ATA members have almost certainly experienced whatever issue you are facing. The listserves and blogs can help you find the answers.)
- Blog for clients—*The ATA Compass*—providing tips and practical information as well as a value added service you can pass along to your direct clients.

- Webinars bringing the learning experience to you. Listen to a webinar when it is offered or listen to the recording whenever and wherever you want.

**Affiliation:** Show your customers and colleagues that you belong to a professional organization. Put ATA’s logo and “member of the American Translators Association” on your business cards, website, and signature line of your e-mail messages. Of course, if you are an ATA-certified translator, be sure to put “CT” after your name and include the ATA-Certified Translator Seal with your e-mail signature information.

**Investing In Yourself:** If you want to increase your income and become better at what you do, you need to invest in yourself. Start by being a member of the nation’s largest association for translators and interpreters.

If you have renewed for 2014, thank you. If you have not, please do. For more information on any of ATA’s programs and services or to renew your membership, please contact Lauren Mendell, ATA’s membership relations manager, at +1-703-683-6100, ext 3001; lauren@atanet.org.
Connect with over 1,800 colleagues from around the world, share your interests and experiences, and build partnerships. Choose from over 175 sessions, learn practical skills and theory, be inspired by new ideas, and join the discussions that matter to you and your profession.

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www.atanet.org/conf/2014
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Thank you for your past support and for renewing for 2014.
Promoting Professionalism: María Elena Gaborov Wins 2013 School Outreach Contest

By Sonia Wichmann

This year’s ATA School Outreach Award was presented to ATA member María Elena Gaborov for a photo showcasing her presentation to an undergraduate Spanish class at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC).

Capturing Students’ Attention

María, who works as a Spanish interpreter at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill, first became interested in doing a presentation for the contest after reading about a previous winner in The ATA Chronicle. The idea of doing this kind of outreach appealed to María, who describes herself as “constantly advocating for the profession.” She wanted to target college students preparing to go into the workforce, so she contacted UNC Spanish instructor Alan Reddick and arranged to visit his class of 20 students. Although the presentation was originally scheduled for only 20 minutes, students became so interested in the topic, and had so many questions, that the session extended to a full 90 minutes.

In her presentation, María began by explaining some basic facts about translators and interpreters: the different types of work that they do, the skills and training that they need for their careers, and the vital importance of using trained professionals. The students, who came to the presentation essentially unaware of this profession, were fascinated to hear about the impact that translators and interpreters have on people’s daily lives around the world, and particularly here in the U.S. They were surprised to learn, for example, that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act gives millions of people with limited English proficiency the right to receive interpreting services in health care and social service settings. They had many questions about such things as specific situations that arise in hospitals where an interpreter is needed, the difference between simultaneous and consecutive interpreting, and the pros and cons of interpreting by video or phone as opposed to face-to-face interpreting.

Real-Life Connections

To prepare for her presentation, María referred to the tips and materials provided on ATA’s website, and also collected interesting examples from the book Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World, by ATA members Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetzsche. But most of all, she drew on her own experiences and her passion for her work.

One experience she shared was the time she traveled to the small rural community of Ixtepec, Mexico, as an interpreter assisting a medical team from Tennessee. Because half of the residents there only spoke the Totonac language, she needed an interpreter herself in order to be able to do her job. Being on the other side of the interpreting relationship helped her to understand better the experience of her patients and medical staff. This example led the students to think about what the presence of an interpreter can mean to patients and their families. As they discussed this, one student recalled the experience of a family member who became seriously ill on a trip to India and was unable to communicate with hospital staff.

Focus on Professionalism

As a certified medical interpreter, María is keenly aware of the importance of using trained professionals in a medical setting and feels strongly about getting this message across to medical workers.
patients, and the general public. To this end, she is active in the International Medical Interpreters Association, serving as vice chair for North Carolina. She participates in such outreach activities as having medical and interpreting students at UNC shadow her to learn about what interpreters do. In Maria’s native Argentina, as in many other non-English-speaking countries, translation and interpreting are well-established professions that require a rigorous program of study. She was quite frustrated to find that so many people in the U.S. believe that simply being bilingual is equivalent to being a competent translator or interpreter.

Promoting Professionalism: Maria Elena Gaborov Wins 2013 School Outreach Contest

ATA School Outreach Program Committee Member Tess Whitty (right) presents Maria with her award at ATA’s 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio.

2013–2014 ATA School Outreach Contest

Make a School Outreach presentation this year, and you could win free registration to ATA’s 55th Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois, November 5–8, 2014. 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, 2013 and July 18, 2014.
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. Email your photo to Meghan McCallum (meghanraymccallum@gmail.com) with the subject line “School Outreach Contest,” or mail your entry to ATA, 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, 2014.
The winner will be contacted no later than August 20, 2014. You must be a member of ATA or an ATA-affiliated organization to enter.
Maria grew up in Argentina and studied at the Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, where, in 2008, she received a Public Translator of English degree (the equivalent of an MA in translation and interpreting in the U.S.). Since moving to the U.S. three years ago, she has continued to pursue specialized postgraduate courses in technical and scientific translation. In addition to interpreting at UNC Hospitals, she works as a freelance translator, translating medical and personal documents. She also volunteers at a local church, translating materials for the community.

When you really believe in what you do, it isn’t hard to talk about it.

Call to Others: Get Involved!

When asked how she felt about winning the School Outreach Award, Maria said she was thrilled to have the opportunity to attend ATA’s Annual Conference, which was something she had wanted to do ever since she was a student in Argentina. Above all, she added, “I am very excited about this amazing opportunity to share my experience with the translation and interpreting community.” She would like to encourage anyone who is thinking about doing an outreach presentation to go ahead and get involved: “When you really believe in what you do, it isn’t hard to talk about it. This is not just a job that you go to every day, it’s a profession.”

The Alexander Gode Medal, ATA’s most prestigious award, is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translating and interpreting professions. This award may be given annually. Nominations are solicited from past recipients of the Gode Medal and the membership at large.

The Lewis Galantière Award is given for a distinguished book-length literary translation from any language, except German, into English published in the United States. The award is bestowed biennially in even-numbered years.

The ATA Student Translation Award is presented to any graduate or undergraduate student, or group of students, for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project. The award is given annually.

The AFTI JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation is presented to a student enrolled or planning to enroll in a degree program in scientific and technical translation or in interpreter training.

The S. Edmund Berger Prize is offered by AFTI to recognize excellence in scientific and technical translation by an ATA member. The award is given annually.

The Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award is offered by AFTI to recognize an outstanding presenter of a financial translation session during ATA’s Annual Conference.

The Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation is given for a translation (from French or Spanish into English, or from English into French or Spanish) in any subject that demonstrates the highest level of creativity in solving a particularly knotty translation problem. Open to ATA members in good standing.

The Harvie Jordan Scholarship is awarded to an ATA Spanish Language Division member in good standing to promote, encourage, and support leadership and professional development within the division. The scholarship is given annually.

For complete entry information and deadlines, visit www.atanet.org/membership/honorsandawards.php.
Recently, I was watching the “special features” on a DVD my kids were enjoying. One of the costume designers interviewed spoke about how her role is to put forth her best efforts and hope everything works out to make a film successful. She realizes something that is also true to our roles as interpreters, and that is that we are not in control of every aspect of the situations in which we participate. The designer’s sage advice is to enjoy the process thoroughly. So, how can we apply that to our work? Let’s look at a few of the many ways to have a better day.

**Understand the Value We Add**

Regardless of where we work as interpreters, it is easy to take our task for granted. We forget the level of expertise we have developed and how what we do makes a process possible. Interpreters often pride themselves on achieving true “invisibility” by performing well and avoiding becoming a distraction or disrupting the flow of communication. In fact, we do not expect much in the way of thanks and praise; we are just doing our jobs. This makes it incumbent upon us to stand back and realize the value we add and pat ourselves on the back once in a while. When we understand that we are a quiet yet powerful force in the room, we can see how important we are, and that is a great way to keep ourselves positive and ready for the next challenge.

**Work on Being a Positive Influence**

Even when we are able to handle vicarious trauma, stress, and negativity, those around us may not be so adept at it. Their attitudes could tend to rub off on us, making for an environment full of drama. Although it may be easier to keep to ourselves and choose to be inwardly happy-go-lucky, spreading the good vibes is a simple way to multiply our efforts. For example, an interpreter friend of mine has the reputation for being the “cheerleader” wherever she goes, and her positive influence makes for a better work setting for everyone around her. Even if we are not naturally so outgoing, simple and heartfelt friendly gestures can suffice to rid our surroundings of unnecessary negativity. We can even start dressing up a bit more or revamp the old work wardrobe for a nonverbal positive image. On a more personal level, we

(“Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” — Abraham Lincoln)
have to remember to surround ourselves with those who choose to see the workplace in a positive way. These are all techniques to see our own attitudes improve even in the darkest of days.

Think, Then Speak

Piggy-backing off of the suggestion to be a positive influence is the notion of not being a naysayer. As we try to enjoy the process of the work we do every day, our own worst enemy can be our thoughts. If we can challenge ourselves to think positively, we can help deter negative words from working their way into our conversations. We can commit to finding the proper time and place to express our thoughts, and by thinking before we speak, we can often prevent a situation from becoming worse than it may already be. Even the slightest comment can open the door for others to start a war of words, which in turn can make for a real bummer of a workday.

Look Forward to New Challenges

Things are changing around us all the time, and a natural reaction is to resist change. If, instead of pushing back, we invite new challenges, we are taking control of the situation, at least for ourselves. Looking forward is not just about being accepting and tolerant; it is about affirming our commitment to be our best even at the slightest hint that our ability is about to be put to the test. Whether or not we are in control of the tasks we could be expected to perform on any given day, we should mentally prepare to be surprised with a challenge. This keeps us on our toes and allows us to be open to experiencing situations to their fullest. By preparing constantly for the unexpected, the process of what we do in a day becomes anything but routine.

Remember How Fortunate We Are

Our ability to work between two languages and cultures within interesting environments is nothing to shake a stick at. Surely we have all known somebody who wishes they could be in our shoes, and we all probably started our journey by finding this profession to be exciting and fascinating. Let’s remember this even when we are having a particularly difficult or mundane or maddening day. My distaste for Mondays and over-the-top busy weeks does not come from disliking what I do, but from the push to be in too many places at once, fight traffic, deal with paperwork, and so on. If we can separate out the “yuck” and instead delight in the moments when we are performing at our best, it will be easier to recognize our good fortune.

Remember We Can’t Control Everything

Our role is both mighty big and mighty small within the grand scheme of things. Without our skills, understanding could be hampered, but even when we give our top performance, a myriad of other factors go into making somebody’s medical appointment, parent-teacher conference, court date, or business meeting either a huge success or a total flop. Much like when we stop to smell the roses, when we recognize that we are not in control of everything, our minds and hearts become free to concentrate on our part and enjoy the process.

Are You LinkedIn?

**What Is LinkedIn?**
LinkedIn is a free e-networking service that helps you create an online community of links to new contacts, prospective clients, and great jobs. Through a LinkedIn network you can discover inside connections and reach the clients you need to meet through referrals from people you already know and trust. Your professional relationships are key to building your business.

**How Does It Work?**
Begin by inviting colleagues and clients to join LinkedIn and connect to your network. Next, add to your community by searching LinkedIn for professional contacts you already know and inviting them to connect to you. Then, post a profile summarizing your professional accomplishments, associations to which you belong, schools you have attended, and places you have worked so that former business associates, co-workers, and classmates can find you and connect. Each connection expands your network. The result? Your network now consists of your connections, your connections’ connections, and the people they know, linking you to thousands of qualified professionals. 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.
Continuing professional education (CE), known in the U.K. as continuing professional development (CPD), has been a contentious topic of debate among language professionals for the past decade. This is because, unlike the medical or legal professions, the translation profession is unregulated both in the U.S. and in the U.K., where I live. Any requirement to carry out a CPD program to develop skills, knowledge, and expertise is difficult, even impossible, to make compulsory for its practitioners. Fortunately, ATA-certified members are required to undertake continuing education to maintain their certification. Of course, others are encouraged to continue their professional development.

What is Continuing Professional Education/Development?

In this article, I shall use the initials CPD rather than the customary U.S. designation CE. My reason for doing this is that I believe the term “education” has the potential to be confused with undergraduate university education, which is not the subject of this article.

As explained above, CPD stands for continuing professional development. It is not the initial education program, by which I mean the university undergraduate courses or MA courses that lead to qualifications in a particular field. Rather, CPD is lifelong learning and the gaining of experience in one’s chosen field. Professional development does not have to be expensive or even particularly formal, but it does have to be structured. The Chartered Institute of Surveyors in the U.K. defines CPD as:

- “A way of systematically maintaining and improving knowledge skills and competence … taking responsibility for developing and directing your career.”
- “It is continuing because learning never ceases, regardless of age or seniority.”
- “It is professional because it is focused on professional competence in a professional role.”

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Professional development does not have to be expensive or even particularly formal, but it does have to be structured.
advocate that all language professionals maintain an individual and structured program of CPD with which they can develop their careers on a path leading from entry into the profession, through its many career stages, and eventually to senior practitioner. But I do not believe that translators and interpreters should necessarily engage in further expensive and time-consuming academic training. A CPD program does not need to be complicated or costly, but it does need thought, planning, and review.

**How to Build Your Own Personalized CPD Program**

Getting the most out of your professional development requires a plan of action, but where to start? The following section discusses some of the steps to take in organizing a personalized CPD program that works for you. This information should help you take stock of what you want to achieve and figure out how to align your activities to accomplish your goals.

1. **Set Goals:** The first thing to do is to think about where you want to be in one year’s time, five years’ time, or in 10-20 years’ time, and then work out a plan by setting a number of goals you want to achieve. Here are a few examples of the types of goals you might set, but there are many more that might be well suited to your area of specialization:

   • Learn a new skill to add to your portfolio: transcription, legal translation, subtitling, or maybe a new computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool or technological aid.

   • Learn how to run a better business: preparing taxes, bookkeeping, marketing, and time management.

   • Develop expertise in your chosen area of translation or interpreting.

   • Keep up with changing legislation in your chosen field.

   • Practice your language skills.

Unlike most other professions, every language professional will have different goals and different ways of achieving them.

2. **Identify and Plan:** The next step is to identify some activities that will allow you to achieve the goals you have set. In recent years, CPD resources have increased exponentially, so now there is much more available online either at no cost or low cost.

   I use a grid to organize my own CPD plan, where I subdivide my areas of development into four categories: language skills, business skills, specialist fields, and contribution to the profession. I then subdivide each of these categories into formal, semi-formal, and informal training. With the exception of the “contribution to the profession” category, which is the area of CPD where most senior practitioners will concentrate, the bulleted items below contain ideas on where to start and review.

   • Practice your language skills.

   • Keep up with changing legislation in your chosen field.

   • Develop expertise in your chosen area of translation or interpreting.

   • Learn how to run a better business: preparing taxes, bookkeeping, marketing, and time management.

   • Formal Training: Attend conferences, lectures, seminars, and language workshops. Professional associations such as ATA organize many such events. ATA also runs a program of webinars on
Making Sense of the Continuing Professional Education Maze Continued

various topics (www.atanet.org/webinars). Online training is also available at a reasonable cost from commercial companies such as eCPD Webinars, the Alexandria Library, and ProZ. To find training in your specializations, research the professional organizations for your field and check out what is offered or recommended in the way of seminars. iTunes U (www.open.edu/itunes) is a good source for finding free university lectures on various topics. If you want a full university course for free and have the time, you can investigate Coursera (www.coursera.org) and Massive Open Online Courses (www.mooc-list.com).

- **Semi-Formal Training:** Attend trade fairs or exhibitions, familiarize yourself with a new software tool, build a glossary, and read and learn from publications and websites related to your specializations. For example, you could visit your local county court to watch law in action.

- **Informal Training:** Read a novel, subscribe to newspapers and magazines, or watch television or films—all in your source language. You can also join and contribute to professional forums such as LinkedIn groups. And do not forget to keep your target language writing skills honed.

From the above, and from the many other available sources, you can very easily find many hours of structured learning to fit into your grid. The thing to do at this stage is to commit to the training you have selected and keep a written record of what you have done.

3. **Record-Keeping, Review, and Reflect:** Be sure to maintain good records, and even more important, review what you have learned. Jotting down what you have learned, along with your thoughts regarding what you have achieved since attending the event, is an excellent way to start thinking about how you can build upon your experiences as you expand your goals. It is also important to reflect on whether your experiences have made you a better or more successful practitioner. Before finalizing your records, you should start planning ahead for the next year, or even the next five years. Use your written reflections on your activities over the year to decide where you want to go next.

4. **Publicize:** Finally, make sure you tell your customers and colleagues that you maintain an active CPD program. Use your website to show that you take CPD seriously. Make sure that your professional association has a record of your activities, and tell your clients that you are as up-to-date as possible in your field.

**CPD: Helping to Maintain Standards**

By undergoing a structured CPD program, language professionals make a contribution to maintaining high standards in our profession. This can help counter the growing global trend by work providers to push rates (and therefore standards) down to the point where professionals can no longer afford to work. It is our duty as professionals to keep standards as high as possible and to raise our image in the eyes of the outside world—our end customers.

**Notes**

Accents can pose difficulty to interpreters and others working with nonnative (or even native) speakers of a language. A few years ago, members of the Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network, ATA’s Michigan chapter, began complaining to me that, while having no problem understanding most U.S.-born English speakers, and naturally no problem understanding people from their own countries, the accents of people from other countries posed a challenge. I prepared a talk on the topic for the group (also delivered at ATA’s Annual Conference in 2012). The following outlines a few of the principles presented there, but without most of the fun that occurs during a live presentation.

It is easier to understand unfamiliar accents if you know something about the much-feared discipline of phonology. (Phonology is claimed to be the portion of general linguistics courses that students dislike the most.) The concepts discussed here are drawn from that field. Please note that most of the phonetic transcription is written using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

**Sound Substitution**

It is common knowledge that some languages have sounds that others do not. It is also well known that speakers will replace “difficult” sounds with sounds that are easier for them to pronounce. When trying to understand an unfamiliar accent, the first thing you should ask is: Are any sounds being replaced with other sounds?

Students of mine from the Middle East all seem to know a story about an Arabic man who pulled into a parking lot in downtown Detroit and asked the attendant, “Can I bark here?” According to the tale, the attendant replied, “This is America! You can bark anywhere you want!” This story is popular among my Arabic-speaking students because most of their dialects of Arabic lack a /p/ sound, and if they are not paying attention, they might replace it with [b].
Another problem (but not for most Arabs) is what in English are often called “the TH sounds,” phonetically represented as /ð/ (as in “thing”) and /ɹ/ (as in “there”). Most people are aware that these are commonly replaced with sounds like [t] or [s] (thing > “ting” or “sing”), and with [d] or [z] (there > “dere” or “zere”). However, it is less known that some speakers replace the sounds with [f] and [v]. The issue becomes noticeable when a Czech writes, “This is the thirsty time I have tried it,” or a Ukrainian student says, “I have to go before my graduate committee and defend my thesis.” This replacement can cause confusion when it comes to numbers, such as whether the speaker is saying “thirty” or “forty,” or whether someone is talking about “three people” or “free people.”

Of course, such replacements are also made with vowels or even combinations of sounds. The English syllabic /r/ in words like “first” and “curb” is sometimes decomposed into a vowel plus /r/, such as when a Russian says [fyorst] and [kyorb] or a Bengali says [farst] and [karb].

**Rule-Based Sound Substitution or Deletion**

If you notice that someone is replacing one sound with another, or deleting one, ask yourself if this happens only in certain places. For instance, does it happen only next to other sounds, or only in certain parts of the word?

English speakers are aware that in certain dialects, such as varieties in England and some in the eastern U.S., “people drop their R’s.” What most people do not contemplate, however, is that these R’s are not deleted in every position. They are deleted before another consonant or at the end of a word. This is why all English dialects retain the /r/ sounds in words like “rent,” “break,” and “around” (where /r/ precedes vowels), while many delete it in words such as “pair” [pɛə] or “order” [oːdə], because in those, /r/ precedes a consonant or word break.

This same kind of deletion rule can be found in language after language, but with different sounds. For example, many dialects of Spanish delete the /s/ sound in exactly the same environment—before a consonant or a word break. Therefore, in a sentence like, *Estamos en el hospital* (“We are in the hospital.”), *all* the S’s will be deleted because they are in one or another of those positions, giving us something like *Etamo en el hopital*. Some Spanish speakers will transfer this phonological rule to English and pronounce a sentence like “His sister was in the hospital” as something like “Hi sitter wa in da hopital.”

In English, many speakers of Vietnamese and other Southeast Asian languages will change the pronunciation of /l/ before a consonant or a word break, but which sound they replace /l/ with will vary depending on what the preceding vowel is. After front vowels, such as [i] (as in “peek”) or [e] (as in “cake”), they may pronounce /l/ as [w]. Thus, “feel” will be pronounced [fiw] and “bell” will be [bew]. If /l/ comes after a back vowel ([u, o, ɔ, a]), they may change it to [n], so “fall” will be [fən] (pronounced like “fawn”), and “bowl” will be pronounced [bon] (like “bone”).

Many Chinese speakers have trouble with /n/ at the end of a word, replacing it with [ŋ], which is the final sound in words like “ring” or “hang.” Thus, when I ask Chinese students to repeat “You will go to hell if you sin,” it usually comes back “You will go to hell if you sing.” Similarly, a Chinese priest I met began talking about sin, and it took a while for his American listeners to realize he was not talking about music. This sound replacement is confined to just that word-final environment.

**Phonotactics**

“Phono” means sound and “tactics” has to do with touching, so the term “phonotactics” refers to which sounds can “touch” each other in various languages. Even if two languages have the same sounds, the sounds may not be allowed to line up in the same way.

For example, English syllables can begin with no more than three consonants, unlike those in Slavic languages, which may start with as many as four. But in English, you cannot use just any three consonants. The first one has to be /s/, the second one has to be /p/, /t/, or /k/, and the choice for the third sound is limited.
Thus, when a native English speaker confronts a foreign word starting with four consonants, such as the Czech word *pstruh* (“trout”), his impulse is to break up that cluster somehow. He might drop the initial /p/ and say [stru], or he might insert a vowel and say [pəstru]. Note that in both cases, he ignores the /h/ at the end, because no English word ends in an /h/ sound.

Speakers of other languages bring this principle to English, but in different ways. For example, many speakers of Spanish and Chaldean have trouble with English syllables starting with three consonants, so they may insert a vowel to break the word into more syllables. As Figure 1 on page 18 shows, though, they do not add the same vowel or add it in the same place.

In some languages, such as Japanese, barely any consonant can be next to another one or at the end of a word, which is why a Japanese aikido instructor once wished me, *Meri Kurisimasu* (Merry Christmas). He had inserted vowels between all of the consonants in the English word Christmas.

Speakers of some languages will even add consonants to the beginning of words to create a syllable structure with which they are comfortable. Telugu speakers, for example, might add a /y/ sound before some words to prevent them from starting with a vowel. A word like “any” may be pronounced as [yɛni], and “ooze” may be pronounced as [wuz]. Some Chinese speakers will pronounce “in” as [yɪŋ] for the similar reasons.

**Crucial Questions**

If you are having trouble with someone’s accent, here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Are they replacing one sound with another? If so, where?
2. Are they deleting sounds? If so, where?
3. Are they inserting sounds? If so, where?

There are more useful principles, such as issues of hypercorrection and spelling pronunciation, though the issues discussed in this article should provide a good basis.
Even the most savvy business owners frequently leave unclaimed value on the negotiation table. Investigative negotiation goes beyond the primal fight or flight response or the traditional win-win approach. Language professionals understand that translation is an art form requiring research skills and creativity, just as negotiators fully understand the importance of preparation and thinking outside the box. However, the research prowess and creativity utilized in investigative negotiation is on par with that used in transcreation. The following offers practical information for language professionals who want to hone their investigative negotiation skills to create the most value for everyone involved.

What Does It Take to Be a Good Negotiator?

Good negotiators are a lot like good leaders. The recipe for success in both cases involves a combination of strategic thinking, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and creative problem-solving with a healthy dose of persuasiveness. Most of us are well aware that leadership skills can be learned, and the same is true for negotiation. People are not born good negotiators. People become successful negotiators by diligently preparing and strategizing ahead of time, being creative during the negotiation, and taking time afterward to reflect on how they can improve.

Investigative Negotiation

Investigative negotiation transcends the two basic types of negotiation, which are distributive negotiation (claiming value) and integrative negotiation (creating value). Investigative negotiation is essentially a mindset that is useful in all types of negotiations. It is about asking the right questions, with the most important question being “Why?”. We have a tendency to enter a negotiation focused entirely on “What?” (e.g., “What do I want?” or “What does the other party want?”). In doing so, we are focused on positions instead of interests.

To gain a better understanding of how positions and interests affect a negotiation, imagine two people sitting in an office. One person wants the nearby window closed and the other wants the window open. (These are their positions.) If they compromise and agree to leave the window half open, neither one will be happy. Now, suppose a friendly coworker comes along and inquires why they are having an animated discussion. He discovers that one needs fresh air and the other is tired of the breeze blowing his papers around. (These are their interests.) The friendly coworker then offers to open a window down the hall, thereby bringing in fresh air without the pesky breeze. If we can teach ourselves to focus on interests by asking “Why?” or even “Why not?” then we will be more likely to reach an agreement that satisfies the mutual inter-
ests of both parties regardless of the negotiation. (For an illustration of position versus interests, see Figure 1 below.)

**Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)**

The acronym BATNA stands for Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement. All investigative negotiators should identify their BATNA and the BATNA of the other parties before entering into a negotiation, since this facilitates strategic planning and decision mapping. It is particularly important for us to identify whether our BATNA is weak or strong. If it is weak, we should try to strengthen it before the negotiation. However, the point of strengthening our BATNA is not about putting it in our back pocket so we can hold it over the other party’s head later. It is best used as a decision-making tool to help us determine objectively what we are willing to accept, when to seal the deal, and when to walk away.

**Areas of Application for Language Professionals**

We are all negotiators. We negotiate every day with project managers, clients, our colleagues, our children, or the waiter at our favorite restaurant. This means we are all in a position to benefit from investigative negotiation when working out payment terms or computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool deductions with a new client, looking over contracts, and even when collaborating with a project manager. The objective is to remain inquisitive and creative throughout the negotiation process and to remember that our reputation is our most valuable asset.

**Payment Terms**

Payment terms and payment methods are an excellent place for translators to utilize investigative negotiation skills because of the wide range of available options. The key is to examine our individual situations and understand all of the costs involved. This oftentimes involves weighing time to collect payment against the respective fees. For example, an American working for European companies might decide it is best to accept longer payment terms in exchange for fewer wire transfer fees and negotiate accordingly. He or she might negotiate to invoice by way of month-end statements that are payable within 30 days, with the stipulation that payment be sent via wire transfer if it is above a certain threshold and via PayPal if below.

**CAT Deductions**

End clients have a basic understanding of CAT tools, so they expect agencies to provide discounts. However, agencies are already operating on thin margins. This puts the translator in a tough negotiating situation. For example, a translator might be asked to translate a document, but half of the document is 100% translation memory matches and repetitions for which the agency is expecting a standard CAT deduction. An investigative negotiator understands that the reduced rate is an issue and will

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**Figure 1: Position versus Interest**

![Diagram of Position versus Interest]
seek clarification on what the expectations are for those 100% translation memory matches (e.g., full edit or spell check only). The translator might be willing to accept the deduction for the repeats but not for the 100% matches, or accept an hourly rate to edit the translation in its entirety in lieu of any per word payment for those segments. The situation will only be successful for everybody involved (end client, translator, and agency) if the parties can come up with a creative solution that meets everybody’s needs.

**Contracts**

Many of us have gotten in the habit of automatically clicking “Agree” to any terms and conditions that pop up before downloading software or installing an update, but taking this approach to contract negotiations is very risky for language professionals. Egregious and far-reaching clauses are sometimes hidden in the legalese of independent contractor agreements and confidentiality agreements. Therefore, it is advisable to err on the side of caution and read whatever we are signing very carefully. The ensuing contract negotiation is the venue for working out the details of the contract until both parties are satisfied. If the other party is not willing to negotiate, then we are probably better off walking away with our BATNA.

**Project Managers**

We can certainly understand why project managers might like to have rolling deliveries or regular progress updates, especially in light of demanding clients, tight deadlines, or when new translators and editors are added to existing teams. In cases where the relationship between the project manager and translator is paramount, it is best to negotiate the terms of interaction before the project even starts. For example, we could agree to rolling deliveries, but by batches of similar documents instead of after each individual document. Or, if progress reports are required, we could negotiate for weekly instead of daily reports, or e-mail versus phone reports.

By doing so, we would gain the consistency and efficiency we desire, while project managers would maintain quick turnaround and be assured that their projects would remain on schedule.

**Due Diligence**

Successful negotiation requires diligent preparation, strategic BATNA analysis, and creativity. Investigative negotiators understand that asking the right questions focuses attention on the mutual interests of both parties. This investigative approach provides tangible results for negotiating payment terms, CAT deductions, contracts, or building relationships with project managers. Negotiating to satisfy both parties’ mutual interests takes some diligence and patience on our part, but the end result is the best possible product and people who actually look forward to working together again.

*Investigative Negotiation: The Art of Asking Why Continued*

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*Investigative Negotiation: The Art of Asking Why Continued*
After three months of waiting, I found out the results of the oral portion of the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (FCICE) late last year. I will make this short and sweet: I did not pass. It was close, but I still failed, and it is certainly very disappointing. Since I decided to make my preparation process very public, now here comes the hard part: sharing that I did not pass. I scored a 76%, and I needed 80% to pass. This was my first time taking this notoriously difficult exam, so I am providing some thoughts on the results and on the exam in general below.

1. Contrary to the rumors that circulate about this exam, it is quite fair—at least it felt like it. I had heard from many other people that they would leave the exam room feeling quite confident, but when the results came in, they got 60%. I would say the same was true for me. I felt quite relaxed and good about my performance in a Denver hotel room in mid-July.

2. There have been many administrative challenges with the FCICE, and getting the results was no exception. The website crashed under the weight of candidates trying to access their scores.

3. The FCICE goes to great lengths to make the process transparent, and they issue a detailed examinee handbook that is quite helpful. However, some parts of the process are entirely opaque. For instance, examinees do not get a breakdown of their scores by sections (the exam consisted of five sections), making it impossible to identify one’s area of weakness. I find this truly incomprehensible. If each individual section were scored to arrive at the overall final score, why is an individual breakdown not printed on the result sheet? It sure seems to be in everyone’s interest to have more federally certified interpreters, and the only way to get there is to improve the skills of the current pool of test-takers. After I inquired about this, I was dispensed with a one-liner stating, “the test is not meant to be a diagnostic tool, and we therefore do not provide individual section breakdowns.” That cannot be the whole story, as I have seen colleagues’ exact breakdown of the results from previous years with my own eyes. Clearly, the organization discontinued issuing exact breakdowns for some reason, which does not seem to benefit anyone.

4. Many friends and colleagues have asked me if I plan on taking the exam again in 2015, and I have considered it. However, since I do not really know where things went wrong, it is a challenge to adapt my study plan. While I will certainly admit that I could have studied much more than I did, I took several courses, including one at the venerable Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS) and a somewhat useful online class at the Southern California School of Interpretation (SCSI). I passed all my mock exams, many of them with flying colors (which surprised me).

5. I really do not want to join the legion of exam takers who have long alleged that the exam is (fill in the blank: biased, unfair, etc.), because I think that the exam is well-developed, well thought-out, and seems quite fair. However, the experience does give me some food for thought. I have no way of knowing where I did poorly, and clearly, my strong performance in mock exams was no indicator of future performance.

6. Of all the people I know, which includes my MIIS colleagues, friends from Google Groups, and my study group in Vegas, I only know of three people who passed the exam this time around. I am absolutely delighted for
I am sure we all agree that one of the basic requirements for a professional to deliver a successful interpretation, be it in the booth or in a court or other environment, is first to have a disciplined mind to render the task at hand free of distractions. And, in order to have a disciplined mind, your physical body must be healthy, relaxed, and rested.

During my over 30 years in the business, I have tried a lot of methods to achieve this goal in the most expedient and effortless manner. These methods have included watching my diet, personal training, and practicing concentration techniques, but I found all of them lacking in some aspect. Either they conferred better health without the necessary relaxation and mental concentration, or they met some other incomplete set of criteria. Then I discovered yoga.

Ultimately, the proof is in the pudding, and I have been able to verify through my personal practice that the combination of the three basic physical and mental disciplines of yoga—postures, breathing, and meditation—achieve a focused mind exceptionally well.

Postures: Yoga postures differ from traditional Western exercises that focus on developing large muscles and disciplining the body. These postures are designed to affect both the mind and body positively. Yoga postures are unique in that they also tone up the body’s chief endocrine glands, such as the adrenal or suprarenal capsules, the pineal and pituitary glands, the thyroid, carotid, and the gonads, all of which produce hormones that regulate your body’s growth, metabolism, and sexual development, as well as function. We need a well-tuned body to carry out the oftentimes stress-inducing work of interpreting, which in time will affect us adversely if left unchecked. It should be noted that the gonads are responsible not only for an individual’s sexuality, but also for his or her remaining in an optimum state of health. They maintain youthful vigor, prevent the onset of senility, and exercise a deep psychological and physiological influence on the organism.

Breathing: By learning to control our breathing, we can control our life energy, which we draw in through the breath. The aim is to increase oxygenation of the blood. All metabolic processes in the body are regulated by oxygen and work to rid our bodies of waste and toxins. Our brains process billions of bits of information each second, so even our ability to think, feel, and act requires oxygen-related energy production. Scientists now agree that oxygen plays a powerful and primary role in our overall health and well-being. A growing number of researchers have demonstrated that the best way to improve health may be related to the optimum oxygenation of every cell.

When energy is distributed evenly through proper oxygenation, we achieve psycho-physical coordination, which helps us rid ourselves of emotional complexes and the unbalances that give rise to fear, anger, envy, or a sense of inferiority. Breathing is an indispensable resource for an interpreter who may succumb to any of the above during an assignment because of external circumstances or because of his or her own sense of inferiority during a very demanding job. Proper breathing counteracts anxiety swiftly and allows us to perform optimally.

Meditation: Finally, and most important, there is meditation. The fatigue of the senses demands rest, which is why we sleep at night. However, the
mind is working subtly even during sleep, so we do not achieve full rest. Real rest is only secured through meditation. The entire mind and nervous system become reenergized. New neural grooves, cells, and channels are formed, which allow you to experience serenity, a sense of focus, one-pointedness of mind, patience, and contentment at all times, even under stress. The neural pathways created during meditation will help you control the wanderings of the typical mind, which often jumps unrestrained from one thought to the next without respite. Meditation is an invaluable asset in our field, where we have to render the thoughts and words of others continuously, playing down the normal interference created by our minds as a reaction to said input. It creates a space where our mind is stilled and we can be creative in how we manage the output of what we are hearing.

Not convinced? Check out the sources at the end of this column for more information on the benefits of a proper yoga practice. The philosophy of yoga starts with the tenet that any idea not confirmed by experience must remain mere speculation.

Notes
I earned a degree in translation and interpreting from a university in Peru a long time ago (I will not share how long). I was naive enough to think that my degree had totally prepared me to enter the workforce. I had a rude awakening when I moved to the U.S., where the business of translation was handled very differently than in Peru. The first job I took was as an in-house translator to learn the business aspects of the industry in my new home. After a few years, I decided to freelance, and it was like starting all over again.

Now, many years later, I have built a successful translation business in which I work with clients from around the globe to help them reach the expanding Hispanic market. I have learned several things over the years. Some lessons took longer to learn than others, but a few have stood out as ones I think all translators, especially newbies, could benefit from learning faster than I did.

1) Know Your Worth

There are too many—way too many—translators out there who do not know or recognize their own worth. If you are going into business, please treat it as such. Take the time to do pricing research for your language pair. Call several translation agencies and find out how much they charge. Get an average and decide how much you need to charge for your time and expertise.

It is tempting to enter into freelancing and offer discounted prices, cheaper rates, and big savings to potential clients. After all, what client does not want to save a little money? I will answer that … None of them. No client will want to save money. What they want is more bang for their buck. Direct clients want to know that if they pay you $3,000 to translate their new website, this new website is the best possible website they could have received in your language pair for $3,000. They want to know that the quality of their new website, the service that they received, and everything in between, was absolutely worth the cost.

Clients often have no idea how much their projects are worth. Most do not even know how much work goes into completing a translation. The only thing that a client knows is how much he or she can spend (in other words, his or her budget) to get that project completed.

In a perfect world, the client’s budget will match or surpass your worth, making everyone happy. But sadly, we do not live in a perfect world. When you find that client whose budget does not match your worth, it is up to you to decide whether or not that client can afford your services.

So, when you start lowering your prices and offering discounts, are you really giving your clients what they want? Are you actually giving them more bang for their buck? Or are you, instead, lowering your bang to meet their buck?

2) Marketing: Spread the Word

Many freelance translators ignore this part of business either because they are “too busy” with assignments, or simply because they do not realize how critical marketing is for their survival.

The truth is that all top-tier freelance translators are excellent and aggressive marketers, and none of them miss an opportunity to tell the world about their services and how they can help businesses communicate in a foreign language more effectively.

Study and notice how they market their services so you can become a top-notch marketer and a sought after translator.

Be proactive in your approach. Promote your work through social networking websites, forums, articles, and blog comments. Use the power of LinkedIn to get in touch with your clients. Join discussion groups and add value through your comments. Get out there and let your future clients know about your services and expertise.

It is also important to have an updated résumé ready, answer e-mail promptly, and have translation samples and references ready to go. If you are asked to fill in forms, do so quickly and be ready to follow up.
3) Networking: Meet People, Have Fun!

As a freelance translator, networking is almost as critical to your chances of success as your translating skills.

If you think networking means walking around a room, meeting people, and exchanging business cards, you are mostly wrong. While this method works for some people, it typically does not result in many clients. Erase this definition of networking from your mind and think of networking as a synonym for building relationships.

Many newbies find networking challenging. Here are three strategies to help you develop successful relationships with fellow translators, interpreters, editors, and future clients:

- **Get involved with your local translators association and the American Translators Association.** These are excellent resources that allow you to meet other people and learn extensively about the translation industry. Associations keep you in the loop about the latest conferences, software, and workshops. Attend a conference or workshop in person. Get your name in the directory of translators or interpreters.

- **Get to know your fellow translators.** Yes, they can be your competition, too. But you will most likely get referrals from your colleagues when they cannot take an assignment or, even better, when they are forming a team of translators to work on a large project.

- **Volunteer.** If you are a newbie in the translation industry and lack the necessary experience to promote your services, you can always sharpen your skills while contributing to better, more connected communities around the globe. Find an organization or a nonprofit that is close to your heart and offer your services. Who knows, it might even lead to paid translation assignments.

I hope you find these tips useful. As a newbie, I learned a lot by making mistakes, but then again, those are very valuable lessons that I will not forget easily. I encourage you to practice consistently at least one of the things I have shared with you and comment on your successes or perhaps write an article about it.

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**Did you know?**

- 60% of readers turn to *The ATA Chronicle* as their primary source of information about the translation and interpreting professions.

- 81% of subscribers read the advertisements in *The ATA Chronicle*.

- 36% of readers BUY products in *The ATA Chronicle* advertisements.

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Upcoming ATA Webinar

**Time Management for Freelancers: Hot to Get Things Done!**

Presenters: Corinne McKay and David Rumsey  
Duration: 60 minutes  |  CE Point(s): 1

**March 20, 2014**  
12 Noon U.S. Eastern Daylight Time

Poor time management is a major pitfall for many freelancers. Without a system for scheduling and prioritizing, we can end up earning less than we want or need. As a result, we may feel that we have no free time and suffer significant stress in our work and personal lives.

In this webinar, we’ll examine concrete ways to organize the day, prioritize what matters to you, and tame the beasts of modern life such as e-mail and smartphones.

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The ATA Chronicle

February 2014

CETRA Language Solutions, of Elkins Park Pennsylvania, was ranked one of the fastest-growing, privately-held businesses in the Philadelphia region in 2013 by the Philadelphia 100, the Wharton Small Business Development Center, the Entrepreneurs’ Forum of Greater Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Business Journal.

Margaret Jean Flynn’s translations of Metonymy in Proust (by Gérard Genette) and Marcel Proust: A Chronology have been published in the second Norton Critical Edition of Swann’s Way (W.W. Norton & Co., October 2013).

Liv Bliss’ translation of Dmitry Chen’s The Pet Hawk of the House of Abbas has been published by Russian Information Services, Inc. (www.russianlife.com/books/fiction/silk-road-trilogy).

Eriksen Translations, Inc., of Brooklyn, New York, received the Women Presidents’ Educational Organization’s Access New York City Award for reporting the most “Done Deals” with the City of New York in 2013.

MasterWord Services, Inc., of Houston, Texas, celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2013. The company was recently included in Houston’s Top Workplaces list in the Houston Chronicle.

Peter McCambridge co-founded ambos.ca, an online English-language showcase for literature from Quebec. The site is designed to be a place where readers, publishers, and translators will come to find out more about what has just been translated, what is going to be translated, and what should be translated.

Member News

Want to let your colleagues know about your professional activities? Send your news to Jeff Sanfaçon at jeff@atanet.org.

Information and Contacts

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.

ATA Certification
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Upcoming Exams

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March 29, 2014
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March 30, 2014
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May 3, 2014
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South Carolina
April 6, 2014
Spartanburg
Registration Deadline: March 21, 2014

Washington
May 3, 2014
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Washington, DC
March 15, 2014
Registration Deadline: February 28, 2014

Argentina
Rosario
June 28, 2014
Registration Deadline: June 13, 2014

Hungary
Budapest
May 1, 2014
Registration Deadline: April 17, 2014

Japan
Tokyo
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THE CENTER FOR TRANSLATION STUDIES

The Center for Translation Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign invites applications for a Lecturer (PhD in hand)/Instructor (MA or ABD) in Interpreting with a target start date of August 16, 2014.

The position has the possibility of reappointment each year contingent on demand and strong annual performance reviews.

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I love real estate! By this, I do not mean the buying and selling of houses and apartments. I simply have a great appreciation for these man-made structures that provide us with housing, workspace, and a place to enjoy our spare time. I view buildings as quasi-alive structures with a soul. Perhaps this is because they tend to have certain features that, on the one hand, correspond to their function, but, on the other, are sometimes also the result of architectural fashion trends that tend to give them a certain character (e.g., playful, stern, boring, square, etc.). Not to mention that the quality and beauty of these structures is, to a certain degree, determined by how well they fulfill their respective functions.

A stint at a real estate investment company a few years back brought me face-to-face with some of the most beautiful Manhattan office buildings. It was during this time that my appreciation for such structures grew even more, solidified by my exposure to terminology related to both architecture and the economic workings of real estate.

When I was asked to review the Dictionary of Real Estate Terms, I agreed gladly. As a trained linguist, I love language. As a translator, I work constantly with dictionaries, word lists, and terminology specific to a certain field. What could be better than combining my love for real estate in the broadest sense and for words by reviewing a dictionary devoted to real estate terminology?

Content

As luck would have it, the book arrived in the mail when I was translating a real estate text. However, the first word I looked up was not in there. “Uh oh,” I thought, “this is not starting out too well.”

The text on the front cover states that the dictionary contains:

- Approximately 3,000 terms with concise definitions and examples covering real estate topics from A to Z: appraisal, architecture, brokerage, construction, debenture, flood plain, negative amortization, security instrument, subprime loan, underlying mortgage, zoning, and many more.

- More than 200 line illustrations, graphs, charts, tables, and an extensive abbreviations list that applies to all aspects of real estate.

- Quick reference guide for home-buyers and sellers, real estate

Information and Contacts

Esma A. Gregor has a PhD in linguistics from Humboldt University, Berlin. She has been a full-time translator since 2008. An ATA-certified English-German translator, she specializes in finance, law, and information technology. Before becoming a professional translator, she gained several years of experience with a real estate investment company in New York City, and had worked as a part-time translator since the early 1990s. Contact: esma.gregor@gmail.com.

Have an idea for a dictionary you would like to see reviewed? Contact Peter A. Gergay, chair of ATA’s Dictionary Review Committee, at pgergay@aol.com.
professionals, business students, investors and attorneys.”

In addition to meeting all of its stated purposes, the dictionary also makes for good reading. In my search for specific terms, I invariably lost track of time while leafing through subsequent definitions and marveling at the dictionary’s broad reach. Anybody interested in real estate, architecture, and the financial workings of the field should consider adding this dictionary to their collection.

As noted on the front cover, the dictionary has over 200 line illustrations, graphs, charts, tables, and an extensive abbreviations list that applies to all aspects of real estate. It is a paperback with a sturdy binding. The paper is a nice weight, not overly thin, and the print itself is of good quality. The typeface is good and very legible. The terms are arranged in alphabetical order in bold capital letters followed by their definitions in regular font. The examples are also clearly visible and are offset against the definitions, so it is easy to skip them if they do not interest you.

The dictionary does have some filler words (e.g., “promissory note,” “red herring”). These terms are not really specific to real estate, but they are part of the general finance environment related to the field. They seem to fit the general objective of the dictionary, which, as I understand it, is to provide everything that “might possibly be mentioned in a real estate finance context.”

A search for terms that I frequently encounter in real estate texts (e.g., “investment proposals,” “floor area ratio,” “gross leasable area,” and “gross building area”) revealed most of them, but there were a few exceptions, including “gross floor area” and “passing rent.” You can find a definition for “gross floor area” at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_floor_area. “Passing rent” was the very first term I looked up in this dictionary. Although it was not listed, I did find it online (http://uk.practicallaw.com/6-107-6977). This term appears to be specific to a U.K. context, which proves my general impression that this dictionary caters very specifically to a U.S. market. At times, I found this somewhat annoying, and it can lead to erroneous assumptions, particularly when translating texts by real estate professionals who trained in the U.K. and not in the U.S. In such cases, this dictionary might not provide a definition for a term, but the fact that the term or concept is missing does not indicate that it is not used in the field or is incorrect. It might simply be a term or concept that is not used in the U.S. For me, the dictionary’s U.S.-specific focus is possibly its greatest drawback.

By the same token, I found the exclusive reference to Fahrenheit temperatures without using the unit sign also somewhat annoying. I stumbled across this issue in the definition for the term “heat island effect,” which refers to the higher temperatures found in cities as compared to the surrounding countryside. In the definition for that term, the temperatures are listed without the unit, but clearly refer to Fahrenheit temperatures. As a non-American, I would have wished for a slightly broader approach regarding the target audience. However, the appendix does list some conversions from the English to the metric system, which is helpful.

On the other hand, I found a number of terms that I did not know before and that had a completely unexpected meaning. One of these is “superfund,” defined as “the commonly used name for a federal environmental cleanup law; if a site is on the ‘Superfund list,’ it is required to be cleaned up by any and all previous owners…” Discoveries such as this make the dictionary a page-turner, and it is easy to lose track of time.

As far as my knowledge of the field goes, the dictionary is mostly up to date. However, I stumbled across the definition for “hedge fund,” which is defined as:

An unregulated pool of investment money, sometimes invested in real estate. By operating outside of financial regulatory requirements applicable to banks or mutual funds, hedge funds may gain investment opportunities that are superior to regulated entities …

In view of the ongoing and increasingly stricter regulation of the hedge fund industry, to me, the definition appears to be slightly obsolete and not quite accurate.

Overall Evaluation

The customer reviews on Amazon are positive, coming mainly from real estate professionals. According to these reviews, the dictionary lists all of the terms that real estate professionals use on a daily basis and provides easy access to them in a comfortable format. For us translators, this dictionary is equally interesting. It provides definitions for many terms that occur in real estate texts, in construction-related texts, and in real estate-related financial texts. The general problem that I see, however, is that, although it is nice to read up on the definition of a term, knowing a term’s definition or understanding the concept behind it does not give me the equivalent term in another language, although it may assist in identifying the correct equivalent in the other language.

I like the Dictionary of Real Estate Terms very much despite the above-mentioned drawbacks. It provides a lot of information that helps the reader understand the concepts used in real estate and real estate finance, and also provides other information that may be helpful in the long run. I keep picking it up and reading bits and pieces. My favorite parts included the illustrations of different types of houses (e.g., Prairie, Adobe, Western Row House, Tudor, Stick Style, and Saltbox Colonial) and the first appendix page that shows an illustration specifying and naming the various parts of a house. In summary, I think this dictionary can be a very helpful tool for the working translator.
For the first time in my career, for study purposes, I am doing a close reading of a translation of nonfiction material with the original at hand. I am discovering quickly that more questions pop up than answers. Why, I ask myself, did the translator choose to delete a female name that was given in the original? Is it because the name is normally given to a male? And why are two sentences in one paragraph deleted that obviously could have contributed to the reader’s overall understanding of the text? I guess I will never know. After all, the translator might not have been at fault, since this could be an editorial decision.

New Queries

(Dutch>English 2-14.1) What kind of safety structure is an uitbouwsteiger? The term was found in an employee safety document that details the risks of falling at elevated locations where the uitbouwsteiger is used. The term appears in connection with tarped-in scaffolds and suspended scaffolds.

(English>Dutch 2-14.2) This query has the potential to be fun: Blinking Blobs, the title of a mobile game application. Without knowing the intimate details of the game, how might its title be rendered into Dutch?

(English>Hungarian 2-14.3) The term “tollgate process” is found and defined on the Internet. Also referred to as stage gates, “tollgate process” is defined as the approval points in the development of a project that must be agreed upon before proceeding to the next stage. Given that it is easy to understand what this term is in English, what about the Hungarian? The entire context sentence was: “He will be responsible for following the tollgate process through the first article and the ramp up of supplies to aerospace sites in the U.S.”

(English>Portuguese 2-14.4) On the construction side of civil engineering, what are “quad joints”? The snippets of context our colleague quoted include: “Laying SCR pipe by J-lay, at near-vertical angles, significantly reduces fatigue on the quad joints by reducing the distance of the flowline touchdown to the sea floor.”

(French>German | English] 2-14.5) Help is needed for the term bassin romand. Does it refer to the entirety of Romandy, or does the term imply only a specific part?

(German>English 2-14.6) Not many of us will ever have the opportunity to consider seriously the merits of a Tuscany villa, but in a description of a recently renovated villa, klimaaktiv proved to be troublesome. Here is some context: Sie verfügen über freigelegte Natursteinwände und edle Serenastein-Einfassungen, mit klimaaktivem Lehm bearbeitete Wände und seidig glänzendem Stucco Lustro. What are the properties of the clay at this wondrous location?

(Icelandic>English 2-14.7) This query marks the first appearance of Icelandic in this column—welcome! The troubling word is fyrirtaka, which means something similar to “preliminary session.” The documents where this term appears mention the following: fyrsta fyrirtaka, önnur fyrirtaka, and sidasta fyrirtaka. What is it?

(Italian>English 2-14.8) In a patent for medical syringes, a colleague had trouble with allargamento. His context statement was long, so I will quote only fragments of the claims: Siringa in cui i mezzi bloccamento sono costituiti da almeno un dente, preferibilmente da almeno due denti ... e da allargamenti radiali sul l’estremità posteriore libera del corpo. Please forgive me if the context I just provided makes hash of the text and hinders proper understanding.

(Spanish>English 2-14.9) It is nice to have stuff related to children in this column occasionally. Asientos de banda was translated initially by a colleague as “fyle type,” but without those final three words. This has to do with outdoor play equipment. Here is a bit more context: Columpios Metálico de 4 chinos tipo Fyle asientos de banda. Who can attempt it?
The legal term *por la presente causa* is the problem in this query. Here is what was written: *Por la letrada Dña. XX se presentó escrito solicitando que se concediera a YY la libertad provisiona* *l por la presente causa.* What kind of legal provision is this? Can good German or English be supplied?

A school-leaving certificate from a vocational school in Åland states that the student is qualified as *Sociokant.* Evidence suggests that this is an Åland-specific term that is used nowhere else in Sweden. How do we handle it?

(English>French 10-13.2) (patient acceptability): Dominique Carton would simply say *acceptation par les patients.* Amy Lamborn says this rather compressed source-language term has two possible meanings, depending on the context. If the context implies that the particular patient is a good candidate (as med-speak usually renders it) for that particular device, then *la pertinence du patient* would be best. If the context is talking about whether or not the patient finds the product acceptable, then *l’acceptabilité pour le patient* is how she would translate it. Erin Lyons goes further, saying that the term also implies willingness and ability (or lack thereof) to adhere to a therapy or regimen, which might include high-tech or computer-controlled devices. If that is what is being referred to, she would translate the term as *l’acceptabilité par le patient,* a phrase widely used in French publications.

(English>Portuguese 10-13.6) (cardiac valves): The devices referred to in the query, says Sorel Kohn, are used in surgery. The designs are old and are not gentle with the blood that courses through them, causing more destruction of the blood’s solid components than newer biological designs such as the Carpentier cardiac valve.

(English>French 10-13.7) (gens de voyage): There is a typo here: *de* should be *du.* Anne Vincent characterizes it as a legal term for a certain category of the population whose culture or working conditions keep it on the move. Not necessarily vagrants, these people need to live in mobile homes and travel across various regions of France. For Anne, what works best is to leave the term in French and provide a footnote definition. Later occurrences could employ “transient workers.”

Approaching it from the ethnic side, Amy Lamborn prefers “gypsies,” since “Roma” is too ethnic-specific. Catherine Merlen votes for “Roma,” since it has been increasingly more accepted in recent history as the generic term for the Romani people as a whole. In French, the Roma, who were called gypsies (*tsiganes*) in the past, is a broad notion that covers several groups, including the Sintés, Manouches, Gitans, Yéniches, and Romanichels. “Travellers” should be avoided as a translation for *gens du voyage* because this group is usually Irish.

Christelle Maginot says this is a bit more complicated. Most Romani persons are now sedentary, and many *gens du voyage* are not Romani. She would use “migrants,” “itinerants,” or “transients,” but definitely not the offensive “vagrants” or “vagabonds.” Dominique Carton suggests “nomadic people” or “itinerant people.”

(English>German 2-14.10) The legal term *por la presente causa* is the problem in this query. Here is what was written: *Por la letrada Dña. XX se presentó escrito solicitando que se concediera a YY la libertad provisiona* *l por la presente causa.* What kind of legal provision is this? Can good German or English be supplied?

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Humor and Translation
Mark Herman

What Gender Are You?

Why do translators get so little respect? Why is it, in the words of Lori Chamberlain, that:

translators are often reviled or ignored: it is not uncommon to find a review of a translation in a major periodical that fails to mention the translator or the process of translation. Translation projects in today’s universities are generally considered only marginally appropriate as topics for doctoral dissertations or as support for tenure, … even the best translators are still poorly paid. (315)

One possible reason, discussed in Chamberlain’s article, “Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation,” which appeared in the second edition of The Translation Studies Reader edited by Lawrence Venuti (Routledge, 2000), is that, historically, translation has been considered an act of reproduction, a mere copy, inferior to production, that is, original writing. “In the original abides what is natural, truthful, and lawful, in the copy, what is artificial, false, and treasonous” (Chamberlain, 307). Traduttore traditore!

This notion, extended to a false analogy between literary and biological reproduction, considers translation to be an essentially feminine activity, subject to the traditional contempt many segments of society held, and unfortunately still hold, for women. Though foreign to the mind-sets of most contemporary working translators, this idea, explicitly or implicitly, has been discussed for centuries, and has, without doubt, contributed at least partly to the present status of translators and translation.

Of course, there is no rational basis for any of this. As usual, it is simply a matter of power: who has it, and who wants to keep it. Chamberlain’s article discusses some of the ways that translation, and language in general, have been used to symbolize and convey power, and, in particular, serve as a tool of imperial expansion.

The idea of translation as a seizure of power is explicit in Thomas Drant’s preface to his 16th-century English translation of the Roman poet Horace:

First I have now done as the people of God were commanded to do with their captive women that were handsome and beautiful [in Deuteronomy 21:12]: I have shaved off his [Horace’s] hair and pared off his nails, that is, I have wiped away all his vanity and superfluity of matter … I have Englished things not according to the vein of the Latin propriety, but of his own vulgar tongue. (Quoted by Chamberlain, 310)

Ironically, the feminization of translation has allowed women to indulge in translation at times when they were barred from almost every other public activity. There are at least two books about the situation in England: 1) Silent But for the Word: Tudor Women as Patrons, Translators, and Writers of Religious Works, edited by Margaret P. Hannay (Kent State University Press, 1985), which was cited by Chamberlain, and 2) Deborah Uman’s recent Women as Translators in Early Modern England (University of Delaware Press, 2012), which was reviewed by Rachel Galvin in Translation Review (#85, 2013).

As is typical of metaphors and analogies with little basis in reality, the idea that translation is inherently feminine has to be stretched in ludicrous ways to accommodate situations for which it is obviously inapt. One such situation occurs when the translator, for whatever reason, has to be considered, or has the power to consider himself, male, such as seems to be the case for Drant quoted above. (Note that the actual gender of the translator is of no concern here.) Well then, according to Serge Gavronsky in his article “The Translation: From Piety to Cannibalism,” which appeared in Substance (#16, 1977), an oedipal triangle is created, with the original author as the father, the translator as the son, and the text and/or the target language (the “mother tongue”) as the symbolic mother. The translator/son, if he chooses, can then carefully respect the text (that is, not
commit incest with the mother) and bow down to the father. Or, according to Gavronsky, he can kill the father by being a cannibalistic, aggressive translator who seizes possession of the “original,” who savors the text, that is, who truly feeds upon the words, who ingurgitates them, and who, thereafter, enunciates them in his own tongue, thereby having explicitly rid himself of the “original” creator. (Quoted by Chamberlain, 312)

Wow! I think I’ll stop here.
Upcoming Events

Visit the ATA Calendar Online
www.atanet.org/calendar/
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March 23-26, 2014
InterpretAmerica and the Globalization and Localization Association
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www.interpretamerica.com/index.php/events/think-interpreting

March 28-29, 2014
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MICATA Symposium
Overland Park, KS
www.micata.org

April 3-5, 2014
American Translation & Interpreting Studies Association
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New York, NY
www.atisa.org

April 5, 2014
Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters
Annual Conference
Spartanburg, SC
www.catiweb.org

April 26-27, 2014
Colorado Translators Association
4th Annual Conference
Boulder, CO
http://cta-web.org

May 3, 2014
New England Translators Association
18th Annual Conference
Natick, MA
www.netaweb.org/cms2

May 16-18, 2014
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
35th Annual Conference
Las Vegas, NV
www.najit.org

May 18-21, 2014
Society for Technical Communication
STC Summit
Phoenix, AZ
http://summit.stc.org

May 18-21, 2014
Association of Language Companies
Annual Conference
Palm Springs, CA
www.alcus.org/education/conference.cfm

June 6-7, 2014
National Council on Interpreting in Health Care
8th Annual Membership Meeting
“Enhancing Partnerships to Advance Language Access”
Charleston, SC
www.ncihc.org

June 21-22, 2014
Japan Association of Translators
International Japanese-English Translation Conference (UJET-25)
Tokyo, Japan
http://ijet.jat.org/site/index25

July 3-6, 2014
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
Regional Conference
Atlanta, GA
www.utrid.org

August 4-6, 2014
International Federation of Translators
2014 World Congress
Berlin, Germany
www.fit2014.org

September 13-14, 2014
Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators
Annual Conference
Memphis, TN
www.tapit.org

October 10-12, 2014
California Federation of Interpreters
12th Annual Continuing Education Conference
“Expanding Our Horizons”
Los Angeles, CA
www.calinterpreters.org/confERENCE

October 29-November 1, 2014
Conference of Interpreter Trainers
Biennial Conference
Portland, OR
www.cit-asl.org/conf/presenters.html

November 5-8, 2014
American Translators Association
Annual Conference
55th Annual Conference
Sheraton Hotel
Chicago, IL
www.atanet.org/conf/2014

November 21-23, 2014
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Annual Convention and World Languages Expo
San Antonio, TX
www.actfl.org/2014conference-expo
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