Online Scams: Protecting Your Identity

Tips for Project Managers from a Freelance Translator

The Savvy Newcomer: One Year In
From the President
Caitilin Walsh
president@atanet.org

Making Our Bed

Sending a kid off to college these days is not as easy as when we went. I am not talking about helicopter parents letting go, but rather bedding.

Back in my day, Mom reached into the linen closet and pulled out some old twin sheets to which she was not terribly attached. But nowadays, it seems universities across the country have conspired with bedding companies (and their big box brethren) to furnish freshmen dorms with extra-long twin beds, a size rarely heard of outside of these fine institutions of higher learning. Parents must now navigate the waters of linen shopping, buying new sheets to send off to college.

It gets even worse when dealing with the antique bed inherited from my family. It needed all new bedding, and I honestly cannot tell you what size, because the bed predates any attempt at a standard size. It is wider than a twin, narrower than a double, and certainly shorter than either (much to my tall husband’s chagrin), resulting in a shopping trip that required a tape measure. Thank heavens for universal pillow sizes.

The real irony is that in terms of official standards, the only ones that apply to mattresses have to do with flammability and other safety considerations, and not with size. Indeed, while there is even a mattress size called “standard,” mattress sizes are really de facto industry standards—informal understandings among manufacturers that allow bedding manufacturers to make it easier for consumers to purchase their products. This non-mandatory standard provides bedding purveyors with the flexibility to invent new things like pillow tops to enable consumers to make their beds exactly as they wish.

I have been thinking about standards a lot recently, as folks have become more aware of ATA’s involvement with standards bodies. The Standards Committee report received by ATA’s Board each quarter tracks the progress of no fewer than 20 standards, ranging from technical and terminology standards (think tools and glossaries), to translation company certifications and community interpreting guidelines. The area of quality metrics is the source of much debate, as the notion of defining quality is slippery. However, this is a key issue for purveyors of machine translation as well for all of us trying to reassure monolingual clients.

ATA is at the table in some form for all of these standards. It is especially important to note that we are there not necessarily as proponents, but to monitor how these standards might play out for our members if implemented. Some, such as technical standards that will free us from the proprietary “job packages” from different vendors, are clear wins for our freelance translator members; just as community interpreting standards further professionalize our interpreter colleagues and give their clients reliable service. Others may not be as clear, but, fortunately, the process of developing a standard is lengthy and designed to solicit input from as many stakeholders as possible. This gives us a chance to hear from our members about what they may think of a particular standard so we can bring that opinion back to the table.

This is where I urge you to dip into articles and posts on standards and to ask intelligent questions. It is up to all of us to make standards make sense, since we must lie in the bed we make.

Caitilin

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It is the Twitter world at ATA’s 55th Annual Conference! Join the conversation or just tell colleagues “wish you were here.” Search #ata55 at www.twitter.com or follow ATA at www.twitter.com/atanet.
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The free conference app for ATA’s 55th Annual Conference (November 5-8, Chicago, Illinois) is a tool available to all registered attendees, and is accessible from all mobile devices with a browser or from a laptop or desktop. Since its debut in San Diego two years ago, the conference app has proven to be overwhelmingly positive. Just as we spend the time to learn our professional tools, it makes sense to spend some time with the app now, before arriving at the conference, in order to maximize its utility.

Most people dive immediately into the app to check out the sessions and events and to familiarize themselves with the schedule planner feature. (Note that the app will reflect the latest changes and cancellations to the program.) In addition to conference sessions, you can also use the app to include your own personal events into the schedule you create (e.g., a division dinner or lunch with a favorite project manager). Here is what else the app will allow you to do:

**Contact People:** The app can be used as a powerful networking tool. The names of all attendees will be included automatically in the app, which means you will be able to see the list of attendees before you arrive. The Matchmaker utility filters the list by a number of criteria, letting you create your own contact list. Whether you access the app from your phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop, you are just a few clicks away from reaching any attendee via phone, e-mail, or social media. (Remember, even though your name will be included in the app automatically, you will still need to log in and add your contact information to your profile.)

**Polish Your Appearance:** As I mentioned before, the app will already include your first and last name, but you can upgrade your profile: add a picture so clients and colleagues know for whom they are looking when you schedule lunch together or meet up after a conference session. You can also enter your languages, specializations, and upload a freshly polished résumé. Those simple actions mean that potential clients can research you in advance of the conference and meet you there. (I just want to emphasize again that you can access the app and take advantage of all its features wherever and whenever you want using a laptop, computer, or any mobile device with a browser.)

**Research Exhibitors:** Take the time to look through the exhibitor information in the app in advance and use it to plan a strategy. Instead of wandering aimlessly through the Exhibit Hall and avoiding eye contact, you can plan whom you want to see in advance and figure out your specific needs. This way you can get specific answers from software vendors that interest you, ask degree program representatives detailed questions, and come prepared with your best smile for recruiters that you have already researched.

**Increase Your Visibility:** Use the social media features to post to Twitter (#ata55) and LinkedIn. Let clients know you are sharpening your skills with cutting-edge educational sessions and stand out from the crowd.

**Plan Your Free Time:** The app includes information about our host city, from opening hours for the Chicago Institute of Art to the closest restaurant and a weather forecast. The conference website also links to other Chicago tourism sites and apps to help you plan time for rest and relaxation (www.atanet.org/conf/2014/city.htm).

**Make the Conference Even Better:** You can submit your session and conference reviews from the app (just a few thumb taps on your way to the next session). You will also be automatically entered in the daily drawing, as well as the big drawing for a free registration for next year’s conference in Miami. As conference planners, we take your feedback very seriously, and it helps us evaluate the flood of session proposals each year.

**Streamline Follow-Up:** Rather than having a pile of business cards, brochures, and scraps of paper, the app puts all of the important information in one place and makes it easy to integrate into your task software. Speakers can share their slides and handouts online, which means less paper to lug home.

Of course, you will still find a printed conference program in your registration bag, and nothing will ever replace the ATA conference badge with all of its language dots and ribbons. However, spending a few minutes familiarizing yourself with all of the features in the app before arriving at the conference may be one of the best investments you can make.
Making the Most of ATA’s Annual Conference

The Wall Street Journal recently ran a very timely article on getting the most from attending professional conferences. In “Turn That Soul-Crushing Conference into a Win,” reporter Sue Shellenbarger follows a “savvy conference-goer” who has been to 15 conferences in the past five years. The article provides tips—many of which various ATA conference organizers have also shared over the years.

Here are a few of the tips plus some observations particular to ATA.

Plan ahead. Prior to the conference, plan out which sessions you will attend. Be sure to have backups in case the first-choice session is not what you expected. (The savvy conference-goer profiled in The Wall Street Journal went an extra step, marking the first choices in one color highlighter and the second choices in another color.) For ATA’s Annual Conference, the easiest way to do this is to download the conference app and build your schedule there. (See David Rumsey’s column on page 7 for an overview of the features available in this year’s app.) Finally, do not just attend sessions within your comfort zone; pick ones that may challenge you to learn something new or do something differently.

Introduce yourself to speakers after their sessions. This tactic is an excellent way to network with folks you might not have access to normally or might feel uncomfortable speaking with in a different setting. You can also take advantage of the additional opportunity to meet the folks waiting in line for the speaker to see what they thought about the presentation.

Avoid groupthink on your session attendance. If you are a first-timer, try to avoid the groupthink that happens when you and your new friends decide which sessions to attend. Stick to your plan. You can catch up after the sessions.

Network around the coffee area. The format for ATA’s Annual Conference was structured with just this type of networking in mind. Attendees told us that they did not want to rush between sessions. Coffee breaks encourage informal chatting by providing attendees with generous half-hour breaks between sessions.

Be prepared with your “elevator speech.” Attendees should practice a brief introduction that they can deliver in a short amount of time. You may want to have various pitches depending on the audience. It could be one about yourself if you are talking with colleagues. However, if you are talking with potential clients, you should focus on what you can do for them. For more on this topic, please see ATA’s website (www.atanet.org/client_outreach/skill_writing_and_delivering.php).

Ask questions. People like to talk about themselves and their work. Plus, ATA attendees are known to be collegial and helpful. It never fails that a first-time attendee will submit a conference evaluation commenting on how presenters and other attendees were so generous to share their knowledge and experience.

Follow up when you get back to the office. When you receive a business card from another conference attendee, make a note about your conversation on the back of the card. Then, once you get back to the office, take time to reinforce your contact with a brief e-mail. Be sure to include something specific about your meeting, and if you promised to follow up on something, this is the time to do it.

Use the tactics above to make the most of this year’s ATA Annual Conference. Just this little bit of planning will go a long way toward a successful conference experience. For more information or to register for ATA’s Annual Conference, please visit the conference website (www.atanet.org/conf/2014). See you in Chicago!

Notes

Conference Links

Conference App
www.atanet.org/conf/2014/app.htm

Conference Schedule
www.atanet.org/conf/2014

Buddies & Newbies
www.atanet.org/conf/2014/newbies.htm
The technology we build can collect signals from foreign adversaries, but protecting the nation requires a human understanding of nuance, context, cultural overtones and dialect that only you, a language specialist, can provide. The product of this combination of technology and your expertise will provide the most complete and accurate intelligence to U.S. policy makers, military commanders and other members of the Intelligence Community to help the nation stay a step ahead of foreign threats. Explore career opportunities at NSA and see how your language proficiency can have a direct impact on national security.
A lot of online scams involving identity theft are hitting the industry these days. In many of these scams the victims’ CVs/résumés are stolen by the scammers, who then use the information for their own criminal purposes. There are several basic categories of scams:

- The scammer impersonates the client/buyer.

Even if you are careful and check the credentials of a potential client, you can still be fooled into doing business with a scammer.

- The scammer impersonates the language services provider.
- The scammer orders a translation from a translator but never pays.

This article will discuss a few of the common schemes targeting both buyers/end clients and translators/language services providers, including how they work and how to avoid becoming a victim. While the exam-
people discuss the scams as they apply to the translation profession, the underlying principles apply to other sectors and endeavors as well.

**Why Would Anybody Impersonate a Client?**

This is the age-old check-scams trick, a variant of the Nigerian lottery scam. Here is how it works:

1. The client orders a translation, most of the time without haggling over price or without signing a contract, sending a purchase order, or any other written documentation. The entire transaction is done via e-mail, more often than not via a free e-mail account such as Google, Yahoo, or Hotmail.

2. The translator delivers the translation and sends an invoice.

3. The client pays immediately by check, but “accidentally” makes the check out for an amount larger than the invoiced amount.

4. The client tells the translator that the “accounting department” made a mistake and that the translator should just go ahead and cash the check and then wire back the difference or send a check for this amount. The client explains that this would be the best solution since it would be too complicated for the “accounting department” to remedy the error by any other means.

5. The translator goes ahead and deposits the check and sends back the amount that was overpaid.

6. A few weeks later, when the banking system finally finishes turning its wheels, it is discovered that the client’s check is fake and the check bounces. The translator is charged with a bounce fee by the bank after already sending the client the amount that was “overpaid” on the fake check. Of course, in the meantime, every trace of the client’s existence is erased, which means the translator has lost money for providing a service.

This and a few other variations of that scheme are actually quite common in the U.S. and all other places where payment by check is still prevalent.

**Why Would Anybody Impersonate a Translator?**

Quite simply, people without the necessary skills need to impersonate reputable translators to obtain projects from unsuspecting clients.

1. The scammers impersonate reputable translators with stolen CVs, where they just edit a few contact details.

2. After checking out the impersonated translator’s profile online, unsuspecting clients order translations from the fake translator under the assumption that they are getting a quality product.

3. The projects are then translated by the scammers via online open-source machine translation (a simple copy-and-paste operation) and sent back to the client without post-editing. More often than not, the client does not speak the target language and is therefore unable to judge the quality (or lack thereof) of the delivered product. (As an aside, machine translation by itself is not bad if it is implemented properly and post-edited, but these scammers skip this time-consuming step to make a quick buck.)

4. The client pays the scammers the amount invoiced. By the time the client notices that the translation is bogus, the scammers have long disappeared.

5. The client complains to the real translator who allegedly provided the fake translation. Both the end client and the real translator are the victims in this case. The end client has lost money and the real translator whose CV was stolen ends up with a damaged reputation.

There are many scenarios for these types of scams. An excellent resource with a comprehensive list of scam types is The Scammers Directory at www.translatorscammers.com. Along with the scammers’ names, the site also lists the names of their victims. Please pay attention to the column headings in the table on the site so as not to confuse the scammers with the victims.

**How Can Somebody Order a Translation and Get Away with Never Paying for the Service?**

This is surprisingly easy if the buyer and the provider do not live in the same jurisdiction and there is no established dunning procedure between these jurisdictions. More often than not, any action taken to collect the outstanding amount would cost more than the amount owed.

ATA’s website has a Business Practices resource section where you can obtain advice for dealing with bad payers (www.atanet.org/business_practices/index.php). The site also contains tips on how to collect outstanding invoices, assuming that you are dealing with a client who simply does not pay for some reason and not with an impostor as described above. Of course, the best way to prevent this situation is to vet your client thoroughly before you accept the assignment.

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The main line of defense is to make it as hard as possible for somebody to impersonate you.
Verifying Identities and Payment Practices Online

The best protection against a scam is to verify that you are really dealing with who you think you are. Scammers generally fall into one of the following two categories:

1) Scammers Who Do Not Try Too Hard: They assume that they will eventually find a victim who is gullible enough. These types of scams are fairly easy to spot, as I will explain.

2) Impostors Who Impersonate a Reputable Person: Even if you are careful and check the credentials of a potential client, you can still be fooled into doing business with a scammer. These types of scams are much harder to uncover.

Anybody with a computer and Internet access can open a translation agency today from anywhere in the world. While there are many very reputable agencies out there, there are also any number of fly-by-night “agencies” who are only looking to make a quick buck at the expense of translators and end clients. Therefore, if you are doing business with agencies, it is beneficial to become a member of various online forums that discuss payment practices or to subscribe to databases that list the payment practices of various agencies. Here is a list of forums and databases I consult regularly:

- **The Payment Practices Database**
  
  [http://paymentpractices.net](http://paymentpractices.net)
  
  (A fee-based site, but ATA members get a discount.)

- **ProZ Blue Board**
  
  [www.proz.com/blueboard](http://www.proz.com/blueboard)
  
  (The overview is free, but the details are fee-based.)

- **Zahlungspraxis Yahoo Group**
  
  
  (A free, very active site mostly for German-speaking countries/translators.)

- **World Payment Practices Free Yahoo Group**
  
  
  (A free site with a medium level of activity.)

- **Translation Agency Payment Yahoo Group**
  
  
  (A free site with a low level of activity.)

- **Translation Agencies Business Practices LinkedIn Group**
  
  
  (A free site with a low level of activity.)

These are just a few among many, and your mileage may vary. I personally rely most on the Payment Practices database, but have also found the Zahlungspraxis Yahoo group quite useful.

Impostors and Scammers: Typical Red Flags

So, are there any signals you should look for to help determine if you are dealing with a scammer? Indeed there are, but note that the presence of any one of the following warning signs alone does not mean that you are interacting with a dishonest person. All of these signs, combined with a few online checks, however, strongly point to a scam attempt. Your alarm bells should ring if you receive an inquiry that contains the following:

- The e-mail is sent from a free account, such as Gmail and Yahoo, etc. While this is not necessarily in itself an indication that the request is a scam/spam e-mail, the chances you are dealing with a scammer increase if the other factors discussed below apply. I have, in fact, several good direct clients who correspond via Gmail, but I am familiar with them from other sources and know they are legitimate. Most of my other clients, however, write via their corporate accounts.

- A proper salutation is missing and the e-mail is sent to my e-mail address via blind carbon copy. This type of e-mail points to the fact that this is a mass scam attempt.

- The request is written in really, really bad English, despite the fact that the sender claims to have a source text in English and identifies himself or herself with a name indicative of a native English speaker.

- The request does not contain any contact information aside from a generic e-mail address and possibly a telephone number in a foreign country. In general, this is a strong indicator that the e-mail is a scam/phishing attempt. Everybody has an address and telephone number, and most people have a website these days. A name such as “Maria Brown,” which is essentially un-Googleable because it is too generic, immediately raises red flags. If somebody really wants a translation, even if they have never bought a translation before, they give a name and address and possibly other contact information so that the provider can contact them with a quote. A name and address can also be used by the translator to search for
the prospective buyer online and verify his or her existence, which I will explain below.

But what if you receive a serious inquiry from a person/company for whom you searched and found online with apparently proper contact information? You should still check out the potential client more thoroughly. For one, they could be impersonating somebody else, or they could be one of those black sheep on the translation market who never pay (and get away with it!).

Verifying IP Addresses and Internet Domains

Typically, impostors proceed as follows:

• They steal a reputable person’s credentials. (Read on to learn how to safeguard yourself against this.)

• They modify the contact details to display their own contact information, possibly with a fake name.

• If they are smart, they use an e-mail address and possibly a domain name that very closely resembles the original address and domain.

I fell victim to this once when I was contacted by somebody purporting to be a project manager of a reputable agency. I checked out the agency and did my research, but what I did not notice was that the inquiry was sent from an e-mail address ending in “.net” instead of the agency’s “.com.” That is, the e-mail came from “projectmanager@translationagency.net” instead of “projectmanager@translationagency.com.” Of course, when I checked out the agency, their website was at “www.translationagency.com.” The scammers had simply temporarily bought the domain name “translation-agency.net,” since domain names are fairly cheap these days.

So, how can you check whether an e-mail/inquiry is legitimate if scammers buy domain names left and right? One way is to check the domain name via Whois (www.whois.net) and then check the IP-address from which the inquiry was sent. This is done as follows:


2) Type the domain name into the search box and check the options “domain whois record” and “network whois record.” The rest of the options may be a bit confusing.

3) The Domain Whois Record tells you who registered the domain and the name of the administrator, along with their address and telephone number. This is important if you receive an inquiry from somebody supposedly from the U.S. but who is in reality sitting somewhere else.

4) The Network Whois Record tells you the IP address range of that domain. Every computer on the web has an IP address, uniquely identifying the computer’s location and the computer itself (just like a phone number). The format for an IP address consists of four numbers separated by three dots (e.g., 123.456.789). This is important because you can check whether the e-mail that was sent really came from this domain, as I will explain in the next step. Checking the e-mail is optional because it does not always provide more information. The domain record should already give you lots of information.

5) If you do not want to check the e-mail IP address, skip the next two steps. Otherwise, go to your e-mail program or webmail and display the header information. (Headers contain tracking information for an individual e-mail detailing the path a message took as it crossed mail servers.) A good list compiled by Google explaining how to find the headers for various e-mail/webmail programs can be found at http://bit.ly/Google-message-headers. Once you have displayed the header, do not panic if what you see does not make sense. Instead, read on.

6) You can safely ignore everything in the header except the lines that start with “Received:.” These lines represent a list of all the servers/computers through which the message traveled on its way to you. The top “Received:” line is your own system. The last “Received:” line at the bottom is the computer from which the message was sent. You want to check this one again at http://centralops.net/co/DomainDossier.aspx. (Yes, the search box also works with IP addresses). Of course, this may or may not correspond to the information you obtained from the domain name, because in this day and age some people reroute their e-mail through other interfaces.

By following these steps, you should now have a pretty good idea who contacted you and from where. Armed with this information you can do further research if the contact is a translation agency.
Protection Against Identity Theft

So, how can you protect your identity from being stolen in the first place? The main line of defense is to make it as hard as possible for somebody to impersonate you. Of course, it is never completely impossible to steal somebody’s identity, but if you make it very hard, then the scammers will likely look for another victim and leave your reputation intact. Here are a few tips:

1) **Never post details that are too personal online, for example, your precise date and place of birth, your social security number, and other personally identifying details that are not needed to conduct business.** Of course, in some countries you might be legally obligated to post this type of information. For example, in certain German-speaking countries such as Austria and Switzerland, local legislation requires you to post your tax number online in your "Impressum" (the term given to a legally mandated statement of the ownership and authorship of a document). I am talking about the equivalent of the Umsatzsteuer-ID, which is NOT your Steuernummer/tax ID/social security number. The former identifies your business; the latter identifies you as a person and can be used to impersonate you. Please check your local legislation regarding this matter and do not confuse the two ID numbers.

2) **Get your own domain name and set up your e-mail to run through your domain instead of using a free provider such as Gmail, Yahoo, etc.** By setting up your own domain, it will become much harder for the scammers to impersonate you. They will have to hack your account to do so. If you use a free e-mail account, a scammer can set up another account with a name very similar to yours and use that account to impersonate you. For example, if your e-mail account is “janedoe@freeemail.com,” scammers could set up an account at “janedo@freeemail.com” and pretend to be you.

And no, you do not have to have your own website to own a domain name and run an e-mail account through that domain. However, having a website is always a good idea, even if it is just one page with your name and basic contact information. Most hosting providers, including mine, have simple tools

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**Resources on Scams and Identity Theft**

ATA Business Practices Resource Page  
www.atanet.org/business_practices/index.php

ATA Members and Internet Scams  
www.atanet.org/membership/internet_scams.php

Domain Dossier  
http://centralops.net/co/DomainDossier.aspx

Federal Bureau of Investigation Scams and Security Information  
www.fbi.gov/scams-safety/fraud

Fake Check Schemes  
www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0159-fake-checks

Finding Message Headers  

National Consumers League  
http://fraud.org

National White Collar Crime Center  
www.nw3c.org

The Scammers Directory  
www.translator-scammers.com

Whois  
www.whois.net
that you can use to build your own rudimentary website. You do not have to be a graphic designer or a website wiz to set up a simple but good-looking page. And having a website does not break the bank these days either. Still, if you do not want a website, many providers offer e-mail-only options.

3) Do not send out your résumé or CV in plain text or Word format. Save it in PDF format instead and secure the document with a password.

Regarding Point 3, every word processing program with which I am familiar has the option to “Save as PDF.” Plain text or a Word file is much easier to edit and tamper with than a PDF, especially if the PDF is protected by a password against editing. Obviously, you do not want to password-protect the file against viewing, so here is how to accomplish that with Adobe Acrobat, assuming that you have saved your document as a PDF file. Please note that the free Adobe Reader will not work for this. If you do not own Adobe Acrobat, there are freeware programs out there that allow you to password-protect PDF files. I personally am using Acrobat, so I cannot comment on other programs. Here are the steps for Acrobat:

1) Save your document as a PDF. This is accomplished easily in most word processors by simply choosing the option “Save as” and then choosing “Portable Document Format/PDF.”


3) Set up password protection for editing. Obviously, you still want people to be able to view your document without requiring them to type in a password. You only want to protect the document against someone editing or copying and pasting the content. This is done with the following settings:
   • Check “Encrypt All Document Contents.”
   • Uncheck “Require a Password to Open the Document.”
   • Check “Restrict Editing and Printing of the Document.” Set the “Printing Allowed” and “Changes Allowed” options to “None.”

4) Enter the “Change Permissions Password” and click “OK.” A popup window will be displayed where you have to enter the same password again and click “OK.” Click “OK” again when the warning is displayed. Close the dialog box by clicking “OK.”

5) Save the document with the changed permissions. That’s it!

Now your CV/résumé is password-protected against changes and copy-paste operations.

A Little Prevention

Taking steps to safeguard your identity and minimize the risk from scammers is not as difficult as it sounds, but it takes diligence. While no single tool or technique can guarantee total immunity from the constantly evolving methods employed by scammers, the information presented here should help you be more aware of how these individuals work and how they take advantage of the open community we have created on the web.

WIN
A Free Night’s Stay at the ATA Conference Hotel

Five lucky winners will receive one free night at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers, the host hotel for ATA’s 55th Annual Conference, November 5-8! Reservations made before November 3 will automatically be entered to win. Winners will be announced at the Closing Session on Saturday, November 8. You do not have to be present to win. Make your reservation online now: www.atanet.org/conf/2014/hotel.htm.
In her article “11 Tips for Freelance Translators from a Project Manager” (The ATA Chronicle, May 2014, pages 12-13), Enas Ibrahim raised a number of issues aimed at improving interaction between a freelance translator and a project manager and, accordingly, their overall performance. Indeed, documenting a translator’s invoice properly and reading the work order carefully are important enough to be mentioned from the project manager’s standpoint. Other experienced project managers would be able to make this list much longer by including more sins typical of freelance translators—from omissions to outright incompetence—and, alas, all of them are undeniable facts of life.

However, a translation project is a two-way street and it takes two to tango to achieve a smooth and professional translation project execution. Having worked as both a practicing translator and a project manager for over 30 years, I would like to offer my view of the same problem, but from the freelance translator’s point of view.

Different Perspectives

Generally speaking, both participants in the process—the freelance translator and the project manager—work toward the common goal of delivering a high-quality translation to the client on time and within the project parameters, including the project budget. However, their business drivers, practices, behavior, and limitations are different, if not sometimes conflicting.

As in many other industries, translation project management is about the allocation and reallocation of three interrelated resources: money, time, and risks. Naturally, each party involved in this process seeks to maximize its own profit margin and minimize risks. For example, the client wants to receive a translation in 10 days, but the project manager wants the freelance translator to complete it in five days, thus minimizing the risk of less-than-timely delivery and maximizing the project manager’s own work schedule flexibility for the remaining five days. Meanwhile, the freelance translator wants to have seven days for a number of personal reasons. When negotiating the rate or contract price with the freelance translator, the project manager tries to maximize the agency’s profit margin, while the freelance translator does the same thing for his or her own benefit. A consensus in this process is preconditioned on a complete understanding of each other’s business drivers and expectations.

The project manager/freelance translator interaction normally comprises the following three stages:

1) Pre-assignment stage: before the project is assigned to a specific freelance translator.

The interaction between a project manager and freelance translator can be made smooth, clear, and open when the project manager uses a project brief.
2) Assignment stage: before the freelance translator completes the project and submits it, along with the invoice, to the project manager.

3) Post-assignment stage: before the freelance translator’s invoice is paid in full.

Let us review each stage from the freelance translator’s side of the project.

Pre-Assignment Stage
Under an ideal scenario, a project manager will:

- Select the two or three most qualified translators from the entire freelance pool in a specific language pair and check their availability.

- Forward the project files, technical requirements (a project brief), and the project manager’s budget to the candidate freelance translators.

- Receive and review proposals from the candidate freelance translators.

- Assign the project to the selected freelance translator and issue a purchase order or work order.

In reality, however, the actual pattern is often quite different. Here is a typical inquiry that the freelance translator often receives:

“We have a translation project in your language pair. Are you available? What’s your rate per word?”

How informative is this inquiry to the freelance translator? Not very. It immediately raises the following questions (the list below is not exhaustive):

- What kind of translation project is it (for publication, for the client’s internal use, or other)?

- What is the subject area?

- What is the format of the source file(s)?

- What is the volume and how is it calculated?

- What is the time frame/deadline?

- Are computer-assisted translation tools required? If yes, is a translation memory available and how reliable is it?

- What are the special requirements and/or preferences, if any (e.g., unit of measurement conversion)?

- Are there any graphics and, if so, how are they supposed to be handled?

- Is the assignment part of a larger project? If so, are other translators involved?

- Are any background/reference materials available, including prior translations, glossaries, style guides, etc.?

- Does the project manager assume that the freelance translator will do a post-editing review and/or galley proof for free?

- Does the project manager anticipate any revisions, whether on-the-fly or after the translation is completed?

- What is the budget?

For any experienced freelance translator, it is obvious that one or more of the parameters here may become a stumbling block when making a decision on whether or not to accept the project. Unfortunately, there are many project managers who are unaware of this. Furthermore, some project managers even resort to questionable tactics, including:

- Asking the freelance translator to do the legwork (e.g., requesting an itemized work breakdown structure to support the cost estimate), which they then use to hire another freelance translator.

- Calculating the deadline based on calendar (rather than business) days, conveniently disregarding the fact that the freelance translator is a human being who needs some rest and may have a family.

- Holding back substantial aspects concerning the project that will affect the freelance translator’s time or labor.

- Not answering the freelance translator’s questions or failing to respond until the project is close to the end.

- Providing a translation memory generated from a poor-quality translation (or even a machine translation).

- Delaying the work order and/or failing to include pre-agreed terms and conditions.

In addition, the prospective translator needs to pay particular
attention to how some project inquiries are worded. Certain business practices and bargaining tactics should raise red flags, including:

- **Vague Promises**
  - Project Manager’s E-mail: “This may become a long-term project” or “We anticipate a steady work flow from this client.”
  - Freelance Translator’s Response: “Do you imply and guarantee that in such cases I would be your preferred vendor?”

- **Unsubstantiated Requests**
  - Project Manager’s E-mail: “What’s your volume discount?”
  - Freelance Translator’s Response: “A large project requires extra effort and time per word, and makes me unavailable to my other clients for an extended period of time. This means I would have to be turning down assignments from my regular clients at my normal rate in order to process your job at a lower rate. In addition, a large project interrupts my cash flow and forces me to accept a higher risk of nonpayment.”

- **Bluffing**
  - Project Manager’s E-mail: “I already have an offer from another translator at a lower rate, but I want to work with you. Would you agree to lower your rate?”
  - Freelance Translator’s Response: “What is more important to you: an opportunity to work with me, or a lower rate?”

- **Delays in Responding to the Freelance Translator’s Quote**
  - Project Manager’s E-mail: “Last week we received your quote for the XYZ project and it has finally been approved. Unfortunately, the deadline remains the same.”
  - Freelance Translator’s Response: “This reduces the time allocated for this project from two weeks...”
to one week. Are you willing to pay a rush rate?"

or

– “I have already accepted another assignment and will be available again in three days.”

Such practices alienate seasoned freelance translators, make them unwilling to work with certain project managers, inspire distrust, and, in the long run, substantially reduce the resourcefulness of the freelance translator pool used by a given project manager.

Assignment Stage

At last, an agreement is reached concerning all of the project parameters, terms, and conditions, and the project is assigned to a specific freelance translator. For the sake of simplicity, let us assume that this is a legal document featuring plain text and that the deadline, as is frequently the case with legal documents, is very tight.

The freelance translator is well into the project when the following message arrives from the project manager: "The client has made some minor changes in the source document." This message is accompanied by a file similar to the one shown in Figure 1 on page 18.

Minor changes? Does the project manager understand that revisions sometimes take more time than the translation itself—especially in languages where the replacement of one word may require changing the case or gender endings of five or six words, or even the entire sentence structure?

Unless it is explicitly stated in the work order that the freelance translator is not responsible for any revisions to the source document, when situations like this arise, the freelance translator may seem to be between a rock and a hard place. Refusing to make the changes carries the risk of partial payment or nonpayment, while accepting the request means a significant increase in the freelance translator’s labor and a decrease in the profit margin, to say nothing about jeopardizing timely delivery.

This practice is a very typical example of risk reallocation, whereby the project manager shifts the risk of unpaid labor to the freelance translator, either unintentionally (the project manager’s contract with the client does not cover revisions) or intentionally (the project manager is simply trying to reduce costs and increase the agency’s profit margin).

Another example of how a project can go astray is neglecting to pass on feedback from the client that the freelance translator may need. This includes, among other things, clarification of certain internal corporate jargon phrases, references to facts and circumstances not widely or publicly known, or other extralinguistic information. Any delay in or lack of such feedback may become a major complication in the freelance translator’s work process and could even lead to re-translation of some parts of the text—again, at the freelance translator’s expense. Regrettably, many project managers often disregard the importance of such feedback and fail to press the client hard enough to get prompt replies.

Post-Assignment Stage

Finally, the freelance translator completes the project and submits it to the project manager, along with the invoice. End of the story? Not quite. Again, unless the work order stipulates otherwise, the freelance translator can anticipate a number of various queries from the project manager. Responding to such queries may take time—in some cases, a lot of time. Here are some examples of the types of queries a freelance translator might receive (again, this list is not exhaustive):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Delivery Date</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Translation</td>
<td>10/01/14</td>
<td>10/10/14</td>
<td>xxx words @ $yy = $ zzz.zz</td>
<td>Includes UoM conversion in Tables 1-8, 12, and 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One round of revisions</td>
<td>10/12/14</td>
<td>10/14/14</td>
<td>xx hours @ $yy = $  zz.zz</td>
<td>Not to exceed 15% of the source word count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One round of editor’s notes review</td>
<td>10/16/14</td>
<td>10/20/14</td>
<td>xx hours @ $yy = $  zz.zz</td>
<td>Incorporate accepted suggestions into the translation; provide redlined and clean copies thereof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two rounds of post-graphic review</td>
<td>10/24/14</td>
<td>10/26/14</td>
<td>xx hours @ $yy = $  zz.zz</td>
<td>Use Adobe Acrobat sticky notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$ zzz.zz</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The client is wondering why you have rendered the term __ as __.

• The client wants __ to be rendered as __.

• The freelance translator is asked to respond to the reviewer’s comments and questions.

• The freelance translator is asked to review the edited text and accept/reject the changes introduced by the editor.

Remember that the post-assignment stage is the period between the submission of a completed project and the payment of a freelance translator’s invoice. Unless clearly and explicitly stipulated and budgeted in the work order, the above queries are based on the project manager’s implicit premise that the freelance translator’s failure to respond might serve as a pretext for partial payment or even nonpayment. Meanwhile, the freelance translator assumes that his or her obligations have been fulfilled once a completed project is forwarded to the project manager on time. Again, this expectation gap could have been avoided if the project manager had clearly itemized (and budgeted) these additional tasks in the work order. (See Figure 2 on page 19 for an example.)

As my daily practice shows, most of the project manager’s faults are unintentional and stem from a poor understanding of translation process mechanics and parameters. Much worse are the intentional practices of some project managers, such as the unwillingness to share all of the project details with the freelance translator for bidding and/or contract award. (It is not uncommon for the project manager to send the same file to the freelance translator, again requesting that he or she check to make sure that all of the corrections have been made properly.) The same happens when the project manager requests that the freelance translator review the editor’s or in-country reviewer’s notes, comments, and suggestions and provide justification for the terminology used and stylistic preferences, while silently assuming that this is the translator’s obligation.

Creating a Project Brief

Except for unusual or unpredictable situations, the interaction between a project manager and freelance translator can be made smooth, clear, and open when a project brief is used. By brief, I mean a statement of the work to be done that contains detailed project parameters and requirements. These are usually prepared by the project manager and forwarded to the freelance translator for bidding and/or actual translation. Specifics that should be included in a project brief vary according to the project, but the three most common details that tend to get omitted (at least in my experience) are listed below:

1) Project managers tend to imply conveniently that, after typesetting the translated material, the translator is obliged to review the resulting PDF file, compare it with the original, identify any flaws introduced by the typesetter (incorrect hyphenation, omissions, split sentences, etc.), mark them (sometimes even with explanations), and return the file to the project manager. (It is not uncommon for the project manager to send the same file to the freelance translator, again requesting that he or she check to make sure that all of the corrections have been made properly.) The same happens when the project manager requests that the freelance translator review the editor’s or in-country reviewer’s notes, comments, and suggestions and provide justification for the terminology used and stylistic preferences, while silently assuming that this is the translator’s obligation.

2) For whatever reason, the project manager fails to mention that all units of measurement must be converted from the British imperial system into the International System of Units, or vice versa. Unless factored in, budgeted, and stated explicitly in advance, this type of omission in the project brief can result in many hours of unpaid work by the translator.

3) It is not unusual that when the translator is approaching the end of the project, the project manager forwards the project glossary or other reference material received from the client and requests that the translator make his or her translation fully consistent therewith. It should be noted that in most languages other than English a simple search-and-replace technique will not work for this type of request. In order to replace one term with the one suggested by the client, the translator frequently needs to change the endings of several words (adjectives, verbs, etc.) associated with the term in each sentence. Again, this takes substantial extra (and often unpaid) time.

If the project manager does not provide such a statement of work, the freelance translator must have his or her own template for inquiring about project parameters and requirements. This makes it possible to:

• Establish a realistic bidding rate and/or contract price.

• Avoid unnecessary distractions and/or questions during the assignment stage.

• Avoid unfounded expectations. In terms of where to look to compile such a template, the U.S.
translation services standard (ASTM F2575-06 titled *Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation*) states only a few parameters (rather than an exhaustive and prescriptive list) to be considered while compiling a project brief before beginning a translation project.

A good resource for drafting a project brief is European Standard EN 15038, *Translation Services – Service Requirements*, specifically Annexes A-E, wherein project registration, technical pre-translation processing, source text analysis, style guides, and added-value services are detailed. Although EN 15038 certifies translation service and not process management (as is the case with ISO 9001), it establishes a framework that adequately covers a number of project management issues that should be reflected in the project brief. Using this type of framework will help facilitate substantial improvements in the project manager/freelance translator interaction process and save time as well as money.

Here are five aspects of a project that a freelance translator should ask about before accepting an assignment:

1) Purpose of translation (e.g., for publication or for internal use).

2) Layout (e.g., single- or two-column format).

3) Graphics (e.g., availability of the source images, content translation style).

4) Formulas and equations (e.g., source code, method of reproduction).

5) List of references (e.g., mono- or bilingual, compliance with the bibliographic description standards).

Unless defined in advance, each of these five factors can appreciably change both the time and labor required to complete a project.

**Conflict-Free**

To summarize, smooth and conflict-free project completion is based on two major premises. First, all project requirements and parameters should be made explicit and spelled-out in the project brief or statement of work as an integral part of the work order. Second, while preparing a project brief, the project manager should step into the freelance translator’s shoes in order to assess properly the time and labor required at each phase of the project.

One measure a translation agency might want to consider to ensure that their project managers fully understand the specifics of translation is to invite translators to give a presentation about their work process. This would allow both sides to learn the challenges each faces and to discuss potential improvements to the way they interact. Such a mutually enriching experience could substantially contribute to an agency’s performance and the bottom line.

**Notes**


Gabriel García Márquez

Gabriel García Márquez died on April 17, 2014, and the world of Spanish letters was instantly plunged into mourning. The sadness and sense of loss spread even farther afield, however, for his writing had made him famous everywhere. “Each new work of his is received by expectant critics and readers as an event of world importance,” said the Swedish Academy of Letters when it awarded him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982.

In the days after his death, online translation sites were abuzz with conversations about the legendary Colombian writer. This was as it should be because in his own way Gabo—as he was widely known—made an unprecedented contribution to the art of translation in 1970 when his extraordinary book, Cien años de soledad, was translated by Gregory Rabassa and published in the U.S. as One Hundred Years of Solitude. A generation of American readers was thus introduced to Latin American literature in particular, and to literature in translation in general. The book’s phenomenal success was not lost on the publishing industry, which began to take a greater interest in authors writing in Spanish and other languages, and it was a good time for literary translators in this country.

Inevitably, the focus of the chatter on these sites soon shifted from the big picture of García Márquez’s passing and what that meant in a variety of contexts, to the rubber-meets-the-road aspect of translating the work of a writer of his stature. Stories and rumors bounced back and forth, generously seasoned with gossip and speculation, and then a particular thread caught my attention. The subject of the conversation was Gabo’s apparent aversion to the use of adverbs in his writing. I confess I had never heard about this fetish (if that is the right term) and was intrigued. The chatter went on to claim that he was not alone in this particular area. The writer Stephen King, for one, has very definite ideas about the subject. In his book On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft, King cautions that “The adverb is not your friend,” and goes on to say: “I believe the road to hell is paved with adverbs.” Well!

I searched my mental hard drive for similar literary examples of adverb aversion syndrome and recalled that, in one of his greatest poems, the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas wrote: “Do not go gentle into that good night.” Did he consciously choose to say “gentle” rather than “gently” because he disliked adverbs? Would it have made any difference? I also remembered Truly Madly Deeply, the 1990 movie directed by Anthony Minghella. Gabo might have thought, “Three strikes, you’re out,” but I loved the movie and thought the title was terrific, even if it was nothing but adverbs.

But there is more than one kind of adverb, so which kind did García Márquez prefer not to use? In an interview in The Washington Post, Carlos Lozada asked Edith Grossman, who has translated several of Gabo’s books, about his rules. Grossman said: “He did not like adverbs that ended in -mente (in Spanish; the English equivalent is -ly). I sometimes felt like a contortionist as I searched out alternatives.” One can sympathize. Adverbs, after all, are here for a reason. I shudder to think that Minghella’s...
movie might have been titled: *In a True Way, a Mad Way, a Deep Way.*

Respecting a Writer’s Decisions

There have, of course, always been writers with fixations and suggestions. Mark Twain made lists of rules, and urged writers to: “Use the right word, not its second cousin; avoid slovenliness of form; and employ a simple and straightforward style.” Hard to argue with any of that, or with Isabel Allende, who encourages us to: “Just use one good noun instead of three adjectives.” As a more extreme example, in 1939, one Ernest Vincent Wright wrote a novel, *Gadsby,* that managed to rattle on for over 50,000 words without using a single letter *e.* The novel was written as a lipogram (ancient Greek for “leaving out a letter”), which is a form of constrained writing, a literary technique that prohibits certain things or imposes a pattern of some kind. One can only imagine the challenges facing a conscientious translator of a book like that.

From a translator’s point of view, of course, one of the essential challenges is always to capture the writer’s voice, the *sound* of the work. To achieve that we must zoom in on each word and sentence to grasp not just the meaning but the rhythm, the tone, and the structure of the original. If the writer prefers to avoid a particular figure of speech or grammatical construct, then that decision is something we must respect and come to terms with.

But I am far more interested in the words a writer does use than the ones he or she does not. Those words are, after all, the essential building blocks of the story or poem I would like to translate. They have particular meanings, certainly, but they also have particular sounds and connotations that I must take into account and attempt to replicate. If I were translating the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, for example, I would have to keep in mind that he used ordinary Anglo-Saxon words like “sod,” “drain,” and “rot” to make his poems sing. He said he wanted to write with “a musically satisfying order of sounds,” so that is what a translation of his work should aim for. The target language should somehow convey “the squelch and slap of the soggy peat.”

If, on the other hand, I wanted to translate the work of Billy Collins—U.S. poet laureate from 2001 to 2003—I would have to remember that he said, “My poetry is suburban, it’s domestic, it’s middle class, and it’s sort of unashamedly that, but I hope there’s enough imaginative play in there that it’s not simply poems about barbecuing.” His poems are conversational, whimsical, and witty with a deceptive simplicity that beguiles the reader and could easily trip up the unwary translator. For example:

I closed my eyes and thought about the alphabet, the letters filling out the halls of kindergarten to become literature. If the British call *z* zed, I wondered, why not call *b* bed and *d* dead?

Speaking of deceptively simple poems, I would love to translate Wislawa Szymborska, but I do not speak a word of Polish. Instead I read what sound like exquisite versions by Clare Cavanagh and Stanisław Barańczak:

No day copies yesterday no two nights will teach what bliss is in precisely the same way with exactly the same kisses.

In a review of *Here,* the collection of Szymborska’s poems translated by the same team and published in 2010, Hanna Gil, writing for the Polish Book Club in Seattle, said: “Her poetic images are universal, and for that reason her poems might seem easy to translate. However, it appears the opposite is true; because their language is so simple, they are very difficult. Poetry needs to be effortlessly transformed in English, not by simple words but by something difficult to grasp, by the poem’s mood.”

A Transformative Experience

On the subject of translation as transformation, Edith Grossman discussed this idea with Maria Cecilia Salisbury in her interview for the Center for Translation Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas and refers to “… the translator’s obligation to recreate, in another language, the tone, sense, and impact of the original. In order to fulfill that obligation, literary translators must be sensitive writers in English …” In the interview in *The Washington Post* mentioned earlier, Grossman said: “Translating means expressing an idea or a concept in a way that’s entirely different from the original, since each language is a separate system. And so, in fact, when I translate a book written in Spanish, I’m actually writing another book in English.”

When contemplating certain projects, then, instead of wondering “How good a translator am I?” perhaps we should be asking “How good a writer am I?” How sensitive are we to the nuances of the source text and how well can we express them in the translation?

For example, if we are translating the work of a poet like Billy Collins, can we recreate in another language the essentially American feeling conveyed by, say, a Norman Rockwell painting? How do we do that? In her book, *Why Translation Matters,* Edith Grossman talks about the daunting challenge of working on the opening words in Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote,* arguably the most famous phrase in Spanish literature: “En un lugar de la Mancha, de cuyo nombre no quiero acordarme.” She recited those
words to herself “as if they were a mantra,” searching for an English phrase with comparable rhythm, “that echoed some of the sound of the original,” trying to recapture how readers might have experienced it centuries ago. The words came to her, and she wrote: “Somewhere in La Mancha, in a place whose name I do not care to remember.” The resulting “rush of euphoric satisfaction” that she felt is the translator’s high we can all recognize and relate to. Over and above the fee we may earn and the applause we may enjoy, that euphoria is our most intimate reward for immersing ourselves in the words and ideas of a writer whose work we want to carry into another language.

Once I have finished a translation and the euphoria has died down, I am usually ready to dive into the next one. But apparently not everyone feels that way. “When I finished one book, I wouldn’t write for a while,” Garcia Márquez once said. “Then I had to learn how to do it all over again. The arm goes cold; there’s a learning process you have to go through again before you rediscover the warmth that comes over you when you are writing.” I imagine we can all understand what Gabo means, since we must all be familiar with the warmth that comes over us when we are translating.

Notes
6. “Nothing Twice,” from View With a Grain of Salt, by Wislawa Szymborska, winner of the 1996 Nobel Prize in Literature “for poetry that with ironic precision allows the historical and biological context to come to light in fragments of human reality.”
One year ago, The Savvy Newcomer (http://atasavvynewcomer.org) stepped into the role of a trusted advisor and ready resource for translators and interpreters just getting started. Along the way, the blog has also become a favorite read for veterans of the profession who find fresh perspectives in the “do this, don’t do that” advice to newbies.

Helen Eby, Jamie Hartz, and Daniela Guanipa developed the blog with the support of ATA’s Board of Directors and Headquarters staff (in particular, Mary David, ATA’s member benefits and project development manager). The idea behind the blog was to provide ongoing advice for those starting out in translation and interpreting. The blog is not just for those straight out of college, but also for those who are investigating making the move from other professions.

In recognition of the blog’s one-year milestone, what follows is a conversation with those involved with bringing the blog to fruition.

I have learned that amazing things can be done with a team where members have total trust in each other and nobody cares who gets the credit.

How did the idea for the blog come about?

Helen Eby: In 2012, Dorothee Racette, who was ATA president at the time, invited a group of people to brainstorm about how to reach out to newcomers to the profession. The idea that sounded most realistic was to create a blog.

At first sight, The Savvy Newcomer was “just a blog.” It was an undeveloped idea, a place where we could provide information for newcomers. “Sure, we’ll do it!” we said. Then we learned what was involved. Many people provided support, advice, and encouragement. I have learned that amazing things can be done with a team where members have total trust in each other and nobody cares who gets the credit. We filled in for each other at times and had fun at our meetings, and in the process became friends. We have also learned a lot from the posts others have written. There have been good reminders, new ideas, and fresh perspectives every week.

Jamie Hartz: It was Helen’s vision to reach out to students and budding translators/interpreters and to connect them with resources. It all hinged on other volunteers’ willingness to see the project through. As Helen mentioned, we started out as a group who wanted to see something happen and talked about the best means to carry it out. We all decided that a blog was the best medium.
Daniela Guanipa: Fun fact: we found the name of the blog on our second try! The first name was “The Savvy Linguist,” but everybody thought the word “newbie” or “newcomer” needed to be included somewhere. And that is how the name came about!

Mary David: A number of ATA members saw the need to connect newcomers of any kind—but especially students—with resources. Rather than just talk about it, however, this group did something about it and The Savvy Newcomer is the result.

How did you get others involved?

Helen: We asked them. Amazingly, they often said yes! They did so because they shared our vision. Now that the blog is “real,” it is getting easier to get people to contribute.

Jamie: We asked one person to contribute and then asked him or her to share the content of the blog with friends and colleagues, and the whole idea garnered interest that way.

Daniela: I came into the picture through my connection with ATA’s Spanish Language Division (SPD), where I was a member of the Leadership Council. Francesca Samuel, the division’s administrator, suggested to Helen that I could help with the project. Helen called me and we talked about her idea of creating a blog. I agreed to come on board.

Mary: We asked people to contribute, as in “picked up the phone” and asked them. We did not rely on social media; in fact, we did not tweet or post to Facebook at first. This was a very personal effort of committed volunteers, beginning with Helen who recruited Jamie and later Daniela. We asked colleagues to share the blog with friends. The effort just snowballed from there. So many people share the vision of helping newcomers enter this profession with the information and resources they need to be successful. Translators and interpreters are truly a generous community.

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

Helen: We needed a blogmaster. Daniela showed up. When Daniela needed to go on maternity leave, Samantha Lisk volunteered to help out. We needed an editor. Lisa Carter

There are always questions to answer. We want to provide resources that are practical, realistic, and founded in solid content.

What was involved with setting up the blog?

Helen: Planning and teamwork. Here is a basic rundown of the initial process we followed:

1) We met weekly for two hours for a few months.

2) We listed possible contributors and topics.

3) We developed a schedule. We tried to make sure that we would not have to write every week ourselves. To this end, we decided to have one guest author and one reblog each month. Before the blog went live, we made sure that we had at least six posts lined up.

4) We decided on the template for the look and feel of the blog. This is where Daniela stepped in as blogmaster.

5) First Lisa Carter did the editing, and then Samantha Lisk came on board.

6) We began the blog with a post explaining the purpose and vision for the blog.

This sounds frenetic, and it was. But it was so much fun, and it worked!

Jamie: We put together a team and divided up the tasks. We designated one person as the main point of contact, one person as the blogmaster, and one person as moderator. We now have an editor and backup editor, as well as a social media expert and other support roles. The contact person reaches out to authors and asks for posts, the editor revises them when they come in, the blogmaster schedules and sets them up, and the moderator follows up on comments and replies. Because we plan several weeks in advance, we are able to post consistently. This system really works!

Mary: We knew that the blog’s success depended on teamwork and having a plan. Following the advice of ATA’s Past President Dorothee Racette, we collected two months of content before launching. At the same time, we developed a schedule for how often, who, and what to blog. Most importantly, we worked for the future. The blog post you see today was written and edited six weeks ago.

One of the smartest decisions we made was to divide the tasks into clear responsibilities. Helen was named the main point of contact, Daniela took on the role of blogmaster, and Jamie became the moderator. That is not to say that our paths did not cross, but we always knew who was ultimately responsible for getting each job done.

We “met” several times a month through GoToMeeting. These conference calls were not only crucial to help us stay on track, but also to learn how to work together. We got to know each other as people with interests and families. It helped that our personalities meshed. We listened to each other, debated the pros and cons, and reached decisions together. There were no power struggles.
said yes. When Lisa’s schedule changed, Samantha took that role. We needed basic advice. Mary David was always there. ATA Headquarters has been extremely supportive, and Mary is basically one of the gang. ATA’s Board has also been tremendously supportive from day one. Eventually, we needed another team member with social media experience, so we reached out to Catherine Christaki because she had been putting us on her “Weekly Favorites” on her blog frequently. She is now our backup blogmaster and Twitter master.

*Jamie:* The biggest challenge at first was getting volunteers who were willing to be in it for the long run. Getting a steady flow of posts was also difficult. Whether new or re-blogged, we needed to come up with one post a week and try to stay ahead of the game in case something fell through. We have developed into a great team.

*Daniela:* Finding people to write and promote our blog was a challenge. Of course, the blog is well known now, but that was not the case a year ago. Inviting key authors was very important. Now the blog has a presence in over 20 countries and gets a steady (and large!) number of visitors per week. Currently, we are experimenting with Twitter, and this is where Catherine Chrstaki’s experience with social media has been invaluable. We are also looking into creating a visual identity and have brainstormed about different options. I guess we started as an experiment and nobody knew how far we would go, but now we have grown to the point of needing a brand.

*Mary:* A good blog needs consistency as well as content. Both were a bit challenging at first. The goal of being there every week meant that the project needed committed volunteers who were in it for the long haul. Getting off the ground required a big commitment of time and effort. We may not have realized just how much time and effort in the beginning, but the project took on an importance and sense of mission that kept us going. We encouraged each other, stepped in when needed, and—as mentioned earlier—listened. “Content is king” say the blogging gurus, and we agreed on this from day one. Yes, you have to be consistent in being there every week, but not at the expense of posting something just to meet the deadline. Again, planning was everything. We decided on topics well in advance and then recruited the most experienced person we could find to write the post. When a post on another blog offered advice that was perfect for newcomers, we re-blogged. Practical information written in an open and warm manner was what we wanted.

*Samantha Lisk:* We also kept in mind, as Mary mentioned, that consistency—i.e., posting at the same time on the same day every single week—is not as important as the quality of what we publish. I served briefly as webmaster when Daniela was on maternity leave, and in doing so I learned that it is okay to be a little later than usual in our posts. The important thing is that we have top-notch content.

**Get Acquainted with The Savvy Newcomer Blog**

Take a look back at some of what has been posted during the past year.

- Eight Unusual Tips for Newcomers
- How to Market Yourself at ATA’s Annual Conference
- Finding Your First Translation Clients
- ATA Business Practices: Red Flags for Avoiding Scams
- To the Shy Networker
- The Hidden Part of the Job
- The Top Three Things I Wish Somebody Had Told Me When I First Started as a Freelance Translator
- Get Acquainted with The Savvy Newcomer Blog

The information we share also helps experienced professionals, since revisiting the basics is always smart.
Do you feel like you have achieved the blog’s intended purpose?

Helen: The main goal has always been to develop a place where newcomers can find the tools and connections to get a better sense of how to dive into this dynamic profession. We could not do this without the students/newcomers on our planning team.

The blog has to be by newcomers for newcomers, or we will lose touch with that reality. We share resources, talk about ATA chapters, divisions, listservs, and training opportunities, and point people to great blogs. All of this has been done to develop a community of support for newcomers.

Newcomers are the future and it is refreshing always to be looking at things with fresh eyes. The information we share also helps experienced professionals, since revisiting the basics is always smart, especially since we did not all get the basics in an organized way. Many of us “just figured it out” somehow, with lots of bumps and bruises along the way! This is something to which our team can definitely relate, since we are newcomers at running a blog (i.e., without a road map). Having access to the type of information the blog provides is the difference between hiking cross-country with or without a sketchy map.

Jamie: The purpose is to bring newcomers into contact with the resources and experienced professionals that will allow them to succeed. These are things newcomers will not always get from a course in translation or a webinar on interpreting. We post real-life stuff—advice from translators and interpreters who have been in their language skills and need to be connected to people and resources that will fill the gaps they need. Some have been working at this for years, but have decided they want to focus on it in a professional way. There are always questions to answer. We want to provide resources that are practical, realistic, and founded in solid content.

Since we will always need newcomers on our team (it is the only way to really know what newcomers need), we have to develop ways to have two-way communication. Our next dream: a Yahoo listserv for student representatives and faculty to discuss issues with which they are dealing, as well as an online powwow once a quarter or so. Will it happen? We will give it a try.

On a related note, we also think the “Buddies Welcome Newbies” session at ATA’s Annual Conference is really important. This is a great way to connect with the newcomers to the conference and to the ATA community. We hope to have some of our newbies and our buddies join our blogging team.

If you are not already a reader of The Savvy Newcomer, please consider giving it a try. You can sign up for new posts on the blog’s home page, or if Twitter is your method for news, look for the blog at twitter.com/SavvyNewcomer.

The purpose is to bring newcomers into contact with resources and experienced professionals that will allow them to succeed.

Newcomers will continue to join ATA and the profession. They come in all shapes and sizes: students like Jamie and Samantha, people making a career transition in their 50s, and people who change careers due to personal reasons. Some get to study full-time, others have amazing language skills and need to be connected to people and resources that will fill the gaps they need. Some have been working at this for years, but have decided they want to focus on it in a professional way. There are always questions to answer. We want to provide resources that are practical, realistic, and founded in solid content.

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IN MEMORIAM

Maria Teresa Coggins

Maria Teresa Coggins (affectionately known as Pimpi) died on August 4, 2014. She had been an ATA member since 1993.

Maria was a freelance interpreter and an English>Spanish translator based in Houston, Texas, specializing in technical, commercial, and scientific documents. She was active in ATA’s Spanish Language Division, serving on the editorial board for *Intercambios*, the division’s newsletter. From 1994 to 1999, she helped organize the division’s Spanish Forum sessions at ATA’s Annual Conference. In addition to her work for ATA, she designed and led translation workshops throughout the U.S., Argentina, and Mexico.

As a member of the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association, Maria served as its president, vice-president, treasurer, and the editor of the association’s newsletter, *Transletter*. In 1994, she co-authored the *Bilingual Glossary for Medical Interpreters and Translators*.

In an October 2009 profile for the online *Translation Journal*, Maria shared her professional mantra: “The secret to becoming a good and insightful translator is to think, think, and think some more. Then research, analyze, read, and never ever lose your sense of humor.”


Special thanks to Veronica Albin, Gabe Bokor, and Francesca Samuel for their help in compiling this tribute.

ATA Member-to-Member Discounts

Are you an ATA member who wants to save money? See what discounts your fellow members can offer through ATA’s Member-to-Member Discount Program!

www.atanet.org/member_provider

- The Tool Kit
- Payment Practices
- Translate Write
- Intralingo
- The Translator’s Tool Box
- Getting Started as a Freelance Translator
- Translation Office 3000

To participate in the program or to learn about the benefits, contact ATA Member Benefits and Project Development Manager Mary David at mary@atanet.org.
ATA Certification
Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

<table>
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<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>City</th>
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All candidates applying for ATA certification must provide proof that they meet the certification program eligibility requirements. Please direct all inquiries regarding general certification information to ATA Headquarters at +1-703-683-6100. Registration for all certification exams should be made through ATA Headquarters. All sittings have a maximum capacity and admission is based on the order in which registrations are received. Forms are available from ATA’s website or from Headquarters.

New Certified Members

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

**English into Chinese**
- Xiaoming Gao
  - Washington, DC

**English into German**
- Carola F. Berger
  - Redwood City, CA
- Barbara M. Maucher
  - Frederick, MD

**English into Japanese**
- Kyoko S. Johnston
  - Martinez, GA
- Hideaki Maruoka
  - Sunnybank, Australia
- Lauren B. Fournier
  - Tokyo, Japan

**English into Polish**
- Katarzyna Dorota Diehl
  - Warsaw, Poland

**English into Spanish**
- Maria Vega
  - New York, NY

**French into English**
- Kerstin Trimble
  - Annandale, VA

**Japanese into English**
- Don’t Miss
  - October 29 – November 1, 2014
  - Conference of Interpreter Trainers
  - Biennial Conference
  - Portland, OR
  - www.cit-asl.org/conf/presenters.html

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.
I like memoQ because the tool reflects the people behind it: straightforward yet ingeniously creative, and truly committed to making their users’ lives easier.

Susan Starling
German-English translator
Sarasota, FL

Owner retiring after 21 years in business wishing to sell her agency located in Miami, Florida. Solid base of qualified translators and very strong client portfolio. Specialized in legal translations given that client base is mostly law firms and legal departments of large multinational and world renowned corporations.

Asking price: $400,000.00

Please send email to: guadalupeg51@gmail.com

Contact: Caron Mason, CAE
caron@atanet.org
+1-703-683-6100  EXT. 3003
A few days ago I received a message from a reader of this column here in the U.S. who is also a fellow legal interpreter. He is under the (correct) impression that conference interpreting is an intriguing field and asked me how to begin. I am delighted to try to answer his question here to the best of my ability. Please note that this advice is based on the U.S. market for conference interpreting.

First things first. Let’s talk logistics and details:

• I have never met an interpreter who does not love conference interpreting work. It is often-times exciting and a nice change of pace for medical and legal interpreters. I do know quite a few full-time conference interpreters who are not medical/legal interpreters, but they are mostly in Europe and tend to work with the European Union (and other international organizations). Here in the U.S., I know few freelancers who can make a living just doing conference interpreting work, but there are certainly exceptions (in-house at the U.S. Department of State, United Nations, etc.).

• Getting conference interpreting assignments can be challenging. They require a lot of legwork. Do not expect to get a conference interpreting assignment every week (or even every month). Every interpreter I know would like to have more conference interpreting assignments, including me.

• You do not get paid to prepare for the assignment, so you need to factor that into your price quote. You should not accept an assignment to interpret at the annual meeting of the American Association of Ventriloquists unless you know something about the field.

• There are more conference interpreting assignments available in cities. Not all conferences are large and not all conferences happen in Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Chicago, or Las Vegas, but as a general rule, you have a better shot at being a conference interpreter if you live in a larger city. Most conference organizers are usually not willing to fly in interpreters from Boise to Omaha when there are perfectly good interpreters in Omaha.

• Conferences are planned well in advance, but proper equipment can be rare. I have yet to encounter a single hotel in Las Vegas that has permanent interpreting booths installed. Most hotels rarely work with booths and equipment, so it is oftentimes a struggle to get this all organized.

Now, how do you get these assignments? Let’s start with a few basics.

• Many conference interpreting assignments come through agencies. Language services providers that specialize in conference interpreting are relatively easy to find, and you can contact those in your area by consulting various professional online directories.

• Other conference interpreting assignments come from tourism bureaus, convention centers, individual hotels, and destination management companies. Market your services to them. Get out in the community and talk to the decision-makers.

• Team up with a good equipment provider who can take care of the A/V and all of the equipment so you can recommend someone you trust to the client. Being able to recommend someone will
make you more attractive to clients, and the person you recommend will probably refer business your way.

- Find a top-notch booth partner. Conference interpreters always work in pairs, so nothing is more essential than a superstar booth partner. Remember that you will be sharing a small space for extended periods of time, so make sure you choose wisely.

- Request documents ahead of time. Many conference organizers struggle to get the presenter’s PowerPoint files or even the outline, but trust me, you do need some material to prepare properly. If nothing can be found, you should still spend several hours compiling vocabulary based on the client’s website and general company information that is available to the public. I usually include a disclaimer in our price quotes that I cannot guarantee our usual quality if I do not receive pertinent materials X days before the event. Sometimes I still do not get any material, but the show must go on.

- Finally, the best way to get conference interpreting clients is to do a great job at any interpreting you do and to let clients know that you are also interested in conference interpreting assignments. Get the word out.

Happy conference interpreting!
Don’t Be Afraid: How Asking the Right Questions Can Add to Your Credibility

(Posted by Karen Rückert on her blog, Translator Mentoring Blog, http://karenrueckert.wordpress.com.)

Last week, I was contacted by one of my mentees who had landed herself a proofreading job and wanted to know what proofreading actually entails. She specifically wanted to know whether she should just read the text through and correct grammatical and stylistic mistakes, or whether she should go through the text phrase by phrase, sentence by sentence, checking the translation against the source text. More specifically, she wanted to know what I would do. Here is an edited version of my response.

Proofreading means something different to everyone. Every customer, project manager, and translator instructing someone to “proofread” a text will naturally mean something different depending on the circumstances, how they work, and the purpose of the final product. We are all familiar with the phrase “the customer is always right,” but in this situation it seems completely irrelevant in light of what I understand the instruction “proofread this text” to mean. This is because the only way you will be able to satisfy your customer is by finding out what your customer actually wants and expects you to do.

Do not be afraid to ask questions. Many beginning translators are very wary about asking their customers questions. They do not want to let on that they are not 100% sure about what they are doing and are scared that by asking questions they are shouting their lack of experience from the rooftops. However, in my experience, asking (the right) questions actually adds to your credibility. By asking questions you are demonstrating to your customer that his or her needs are important to you, that you are a conscientious professional, and that you want to find out as much information as you can to ensure that you can provide your customer with the best possible final product.

Take your customer’s perspective into account. Some may argue that your customer should provide all of the relevant information from the outset, but that is idealistic. Translation and proofreading issues are omnipresent for us as translators, but this is not necessarily the case for people from other industries—even if they do have regular contact with translators and commission a lot of translations. As translators it is our job to consider each assignment from the customer’s perspective and to ask the right questions so that the customer feels confident that his or her text is in good hands.

What if the customer is a translation agency? Many beginning translators start off working for translation agencies. Indeed some freelance translators continue to work (exclusively) for agencies throughout their freelance careers. I also have past experience working for agencies. It would be unfair to say that all agencies are the same, but many of the large agencies (or language services providers, as they like to call themselves these days) employ inexperienced project managers who are the point of contact for the freelance translator. In many cases these project managers will not have asked the right questions of the customer in the first place or will not think to pass on any information they have received. This leaves you, the translator, in a difficult position.

You should definitely send any questions you have to the project manager, but it is unlikely that you will always get the helpful answers and additional information you need. This is an extremely frustrating situation for conscientious translators because, while trying to provide a good service, at the back of your mind you are never really sure that what you are doing is what the customer really wants you to do. Personally I do not cope well with these kinds of situations and find working for direct clients and smaller translation agencies, which are usually run by one or two other translators who really know what they are doing, much more rewarding.
Asking the Right Questions

Whether you have been contacted about a proofreading or a translation assignment, here are some suggested questions that you could, and perhaps should, ask your customer to obtain the information that will help you produce the best possible final product:

1) Which language variety would you like me to use? Do not assume that your client wants one language variety over another—ask!

2) What is the purpose of the translation/final text? If the translation is needed for an important publication, the client is not going to thank you for whizzing through the text and only correcting the worst mistakes and leaving what seem to you to be minor stylistic errors. On the other hand, if the text is required as a draft version of a document to be used as the basis for important negotiations to take place in two hours’ time, your client is not going to be very happy if you are doing such a thorough job of proofreading that you are still only on the first page of a five-page document when the negotiations are due to commence.

3) Who is the target reader and what background knowledge does he or she have? This will help you decide how much additional information it is necessary to provide.

4) Would you like me to only correct actual grammatical and lexical errors, or would you like me to improve the document stylistically?

5) Would you like me to use track changes?

6) Do you have any past translations or reference material?

7) Could you please clarify this ambiguity? This sentence does not seem to make sense. Is there something missing? Nobody reads a text as closely as a good translator. In my experience, customers are always very pleased to receive feedback on the original text. I translate a lot of documents to be filed with German courts. My translations are for information purposes—for the information of the client who does not speak German—so it is the original version that is actually going to be filed with the court. It is not unusual for the author of the original text to have accidentally inverted the parties (claimant and defendant). Pointing out mistakes and typos in the original text, particularly when you know that the original text is going to be used in its own right (rather than simply as the basis for a translation), also demonstrates to your customer that you actually understand what you are translating. This definitely enhances your credibility.

Bottom line: do not be afraid to ask questions. Asking questions adds to your credibility. Guessing is a very risky business.
The Serbian and Croatian-English Medical Dictionary, a resource for translators working in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and English, was first published in 2010 as an 814-page print edition. (See the review by Eric S. Bullington in The ATA Chronicle, September 2010, pages 39-40.) The second edition, released on CD-ROM, has been expanded to 59,500 terms (25,000 of which are main entries), 2,137 abbreviations, and 1,990 eponyms. As in the print edition, the author credits medical consultants Zorica Plavšić and Paul Pavlović, and editor/proofreader Paula Gordon.

The electronic format offers the advantages of portability and searchability. Although the author identifies English as the “target language” of the dictionary, the careful bookmarking and cross-indexing make it feasible to match terms in both directions. In addition, the English definitions provided for many terms (a distinctive advantage noted previously in the review of the first edition) gives those translating out of English additional confidence in choosing the correct Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian terms.

**Content**

Djordjević’s extensive bibliog- 

**The Serbian and Croatian-English Medical Dictionary (Medicinski Recnik – srpsko i hrvatsko-engleski)**

**Reviewed by:**
Laurence H. Bogoslaw

**Author:**
Svetolik P. Djordjević

**Publisher:**
Jordana Publishing

**Publication Date:**
2013 (2nd revised edition, CD-ROM)

**Price:**
$135.95

**ISBNs:**
0976448068
978-0976448068

**Available from:**
www.jordanapublishing.com

The electronic format offers the advantages of portability and searchability. Although the author identifies English as the “target language” of the dictionary, the careful bookmarking and cross-indexing make it feasible to match terms in both directions. In addition, the English definitions provided for many terms (a distinctive advantage noted previously in the review of the first edition) gives those translating out of English additional confidence in choosing the correct Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian terms.

**Content**

Djordjević’s extensive bibliog-
Overall Evaluation

From its humble beginnings as a collection of notes handwritten on index cards by a diligent medical translator, this reference collection has evolved into a comprehensive, authoritative, flexible, and eminently practical resource for translators and interpreters working between Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian and English in a variety of clinical fields.

French-English Dictionary of Medical Abbreviations, Acronyms & Eponyms

Reviewed by:
Elliott B. Urdang

Author:
Svetolik P. Djordjević

Publisher:
Jordana Publishing

Publication Date:
2013

Price:
$75.00

ISBN:
978-0-9764480-5-1 (CD)

Number of pages and/or entries:
29,000 terms (13,934 abbreviations and acronyms, 15,180 eponyms)

In terms of its usefulness as a resource separate from the print version of the French-English Dictionary of Medical Abbreviations, Acronyms & Eponyms from which this CD is derived, it is a somewhat perplexing task to write this review.

As the publisher’s note states: “This dictionary is available only on CD … The bulk of the terms included was taken from the fourth edition of the author’s Dictionary of Medicine French-English with English-French Glossary. However, it also includes new terms not included in the fourth edition as noted … 1,488 abbreviations and acronyms are new … 807 eponyms are new.” Based on

Table 1: Acronyms/Abbreviations

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J. courbe</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (but not specific to medical)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. chaîne (misspelled - circumflex missing)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. O. (can search without periods)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (not with this meaning)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KGB</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No (not with this meaning)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kTa</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No (not with this meaning)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kVC</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No (not with this meaning)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z, attitude en</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (in French)</td>
<td>No (not with this meaning)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

this statement, the 1,488 abbreviations and acronyms and 807 eponyms mentioned represent the advance over the fourth edition, which is available from the publisher as a “bundle package” for $184.95. At the same time, the complete French-English Dictionary of Medicine (fourth edition, 2012) is available from the publisher for about $159.95 (without the new items).

The bottom line, I guess, is whether, for the sake of the relatively few new items contained on the CD, it is worth having the Dictionary of Medical Abbreviations, Acronyms & Eponyms as a separate resource. If you translate medical material from French into English, perhaps you would be better off getting the bundle. If you already have the fourth edition, will you really be gaining enough by adding the separate CD? In addition, the Internet is replete with resources, both general and specific sites, where most of these entries can be found, including the searchable Google Book version of the second revised edition of this dictionary. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

Table 2: Eponyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>In 2nd Revised Edition - 2004</th>
<th>Available on Google</th>
<th>Available on Termium</th>
<th>Available on Dictionnaire médical de l’Académie de Médecine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jaboulay, opération de</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes (in French)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joanny (does not give alternative spelling: Jahanny)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmers, hémoglobine de</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuder-Richardson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubik et Hampton (Hampton is misspelled)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (Kubik and Hampton)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitsch</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nackermann</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: What’s In and What’s Not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item from French Papers</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
<th>In the CD</th>
<th>Not in the CD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TCD</td>
<td>test de Coombs direct</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAI</td>
<td>recherche d’agglutinines irrégulières</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHIA</td>
<td>anémie hémolytique immuno-allergique</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EURTAC</td>
<td>A clinical study</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATURN</td>
<td>A clinical study</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMC</td>
<td>indice de masse corporelle</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESCL</td>
<td>Enquête sur la santé dans les collectivités canadiennes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPAO</td>
<td>interview en personne assistée par ordinateur</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MH</td>
<td>maladie de Horton</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCZ</td>
<td>tocilizumab</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNFMI</td>
<td>Société nationale française de médecine interne</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPR</td>
<td>pseudopolyarthrite rhizomélique</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DC</td>
<td>dermocorticoids</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indice de Karnofsky</td>
<td>Karnovsky (performance) scale</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FN</td>
<td>fascite nécrosante</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDMS</td>
<td>staphylocoque doré sensible à la méticilline</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IST</td>
<td>infections sexuellement transmissibles</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHU</td>
<td>centre hospitalo-universitaire</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PYR-CLIN</td>
<td>pyriméthamine-clindamycine</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3TC</td>
<td>lamivudine</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intervention de Nissen</td>
<td>opération de Nissen</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller</td>
<td>Miller moyen</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsh</td>
<td>indice de Walsh</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Content

It is pretty difficult to determine what new items have been included. I attempted to do so by printing out some screen shots of sample pages (you cannot print directly from the PDF files for understandable reasons) and comparing them with the 2000 print edition, which I have owned and

Another approach I used to check the adequacy of the dictionary was to randomly test abbreviations, acronyms, and eponyms in material I have translated from French medical literature to see if they are in the new CD. I should note that in all cases I was able to find these on the Internet if they were not already in the earlier edition at my disposal.

**Overall Evaluation**

While the contents of the CD are extensive, they are far from exhaustive. In many cases, as indicated in the tables, if the item is not on the CD, it is generally and fairly readily available on the Internet. Therefore you still have to do your own hunting in many instances, and it is unlikely that you will be unable to find it elsewhere.

What we are left with is, in my opinion, mainly an easily searchable resource. Is it worth the money as an item separate from the bundled package? This depends on your needs and preferences and what you already have at your disposal.

Laurence H. Bogoslaw directs the Minnesota Translation Laboratory, which was founded at the University of Minnesota in 1996. His teaching experience includes translation courses at the University of Minnesota and Century College. He has a PhD in Slavic languages and literature from the University of Michigan and an AIA in Italian from the University of Connecticut. He is also an AIA-certified Russian-English and Spanish-English translator. He has written many articles and presentations on translation, and is a published literary translator. He is the founding president (2001-2007) of the Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association, which became an AIA chapter in 2002. Contact: larry@translab.us.

Elliott B. Urdang spent 25 years as a child psychiatrist before realizing a life-long dream to become a translator. Since receiving an MA in Russian from Boston College, he has translated full-time for 25 years, from Russian as a generalist and medical specialist, and more recently as a medical specialist from Spanish and French. He is an AIA-certified Russian-English translator, and is also certified by the U.S. Department of State in this same language pair. Contact: penrhyn854@aol.com.

Have an idea for a dictionary you would like to see reviewed? Contact Peter A. Gergay, chair of AIA’s Dictionary Review Committee, at pgergay@aol.com.

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What dictionary has yet to be written, but which, if written, will (alas!) include perhaps 30-40% of all conversational human speech? It is the Multilingual Dictionary of Filler Words. As people worldwide become ever more inarticulate in this era where video trumps the written word (e.g., “like ... y’know ...”), the need for such a dictionary grows with every passing year. The only problem is that the task of researching what must go into it will be nauseating.

New Queries

(Bulgarian>English 10-14.1) After a long absence, we bring back Bulgarian to this column. In a secondary-school diploma, what is to be made of непрофилирана подготовка?

(English>Spanish 10-14.2) Four examples of the problem term concerning this query are given in the context sentence fragment, but they fail to provide an overall idea of what “lance products” are: “A spray nozzle for application of lance products (spray plaster, smoothing filler, droplet, decorative plaster), fibrous products (pulp, decorative fiber filler), waterproofing products.” Do not bother with an Internet search for the answer, since all you will get are many citations for a brand of crackers and munchables.

(English>Spanish 10-14.3) In the context of tire maintenance, the expression “rubber meets the road” is a literal expression, but it has become something bigger in English. An English-language advertising blurb states: “Tire maintenance ... Your tires are where the rubber meets the road. Maintaining good traction and tire pressure is essential.” I will be very surprised if this does not provoke much comment.

(English>Spanish 10-14.4) This query deals with serious oncological material. The phrase “front-line and relapsed settings” appears in a text discussing how chemoimmunotherapy is used to treat mantle cell lymphoma (a kind of non-Hodgkins lymphoma). The effectiveness of the therapy is often limited in the typically older population in which the illness appears. What is the Spanish for this?

(English>Swedish 10-14.5) A colleague stumbled over “corporate accounts sales” when it became one of the alternatives for answering a question (Vilken avdelning tillhör du?). Are there such departments, and what is the Swedish for this?

(English>French [English] 10-14.6) When discussing a device that produces rolls of paper, what does the world in bold print mean? Here is the context: Schalten Sie den Haltezug des Bremsgenerators ein.

(Polish>English 10-14.7) When describing a c-section, the author of this text used some short sentences, but one of them was difficult: Macicę zszyto szwem ciągłym. Toaleta jamy otrzewnowej. Material operacyjny zgodny. Szycie warstwowe powlok.” What about the three-word sentence in bold print?

(Portuguese>English 10-14.8) In the clothing textiles field, what are we to make of raleira? Here is a pair of context sentences: Raleira – fios pouco batidos. Uma barra no sentido do trama, em toda a largura do tecido, que se caracteriza pela diminuição acentuada do número de normal batidas.

(Russian>English 10-14.9) In the field of management guidelines for managing tuberculosis, инфильтративно-очаговые изменения proved difficult. Here is what the text says: В случае низкой приверженности к лечению и / или отрицательного прогноза относительно излечения (распространены инфильтративно-очаговые изменения в легких и / или полностью исчерпаны резервы химотерапии, невозможности проведения оперативного лечения). What are these changes?

(Spanish>Polish [English] 10-14.10) The term renada de servicio was the only stumbling block in an assignment regarding railway transport. The sentence started like this: Los trenes dispondrán de un sistema que corte la tracción en caso de renada de
servicio, urgencia o emergencia. Something happens to the passenger (or freight) service, but what is it? And how about the Polish, or English, for this?

(Spanish>English 8-14.11) (ceramic listada): This, says Leonid Gornik, is “banded ceramics” or “band-decorated ceramics.” The verb listare, among other things, stands for applying bands or borders to ceramic objects. It also means “edging” as applied to finishing ceramic shapers before baking.

Replies to Old Queries
(German>Italian [English] 8-14.4) (Ungehorsamsbusse): Tina Banerjee Chittom defines this as a “penalty for non-compliance (with the regulation).” Geoffrey Koby consulted with a legal translation firm in Switzerland, and they suggested “disciplinary fine.” Otherwise, he would not try to make the English translation as precise as the German, and would just use “monetary fine” or “penalty.” Cheryl Fain would translate it as “fine for contempt,” and would use multa per disobbedienza in Italian. For the entire sentence, her English rendition would be: “In case of non-compliance, a supervisory measure can be associated with a fine for contempt of up to a maximum of xxx Swiss francs.”

(English>Spanish 8-14.12) (Estas asignaturas originan el promedio de la Materia de Inglés): Sheldon Shaffer likes “these courses form the basis of the English average” for this. Victoria Banales states that in the context of a school transcript, the subjects (and corresponding grades) marked with an asterisk will count toward the average grade for the subject of English.

Thank you to those who offered responses. A sixth sense tells me that over the past few months, queries have appeared that are still orphans waiting for someone to claim them. (This situation reminds me of that memorable dockside scene where little Mary Lenox has no one to step forward and help her as she debarks from the boat in the movie The Secret Garden. Remember it?) I hope you find something in this column that moves you to respond.
Humor and Translation
Mark Herman

How Does That Mean?

Last month, I discussed words and phrases whose meanings were difficult to figure out. This month I will discuss words and phrases for which the literal meaning, although clear, is not the translator’s primary concern.

In Canto 95, which includes a translation of part of Homer’s Odyssey, Ezra Pound translated the Greek word krēdemnon into the anachronistic English word “bikini.” Now a krēdemnon is actually a veil for the head, with strings to tie it shut across the face, which ancient Greek women wore while swimming. But such a translation, or worse, a footnote, would have stopped the story dead. As the critic Hugh Kenner explains:

With tiller and yardarm gone, the raft a shuttlecock for wind gods, Poseidon Earthshaker rearing up great black waves, are we to pause for an archaeological footnote about the costumes of Greek ladies? Or to wonder why a sea nymph’s costume includes something to put on her head? Something, moreover, with strings to tie it shut across her face? A miraculous garment is what the story requires, a miraculous garment wearable at sea. (Hugh Kenner, “Leucothea’s Bikini.” Quoted in Digging for the Treasure by Ronnie Apter, Paragon House Publishers, 1987, page 154)

In Le Ton beau de Marot (Basic Books, 1997), Douglas R. Hofstadter discusses Georges Perec’s 1969 French novel La disparition, an entire novel written without the letter “e,” and, in some passages, without the letter “a” as well. In French, as in English, “e” is the most common letter. Gilbert Adair managed to translate the novel into English as A Void, preserving the lack of “e.” And when Perec did without both vowels, so did Adair. One such sentence is “Un loup fuit [A wolf flees/fled].” Adair’s English rendering, preserving the absence of both “a” and “e,” is “Chipmunks run wild” (Hofstadter, page 116).

La figlia del mago (The Sorcerer’s Daughter) is a children’s opera with music by the contemporary Italian composer Lorenzo Ferrero and a libretto by Marco Ravasini. One of the characters, a sea serpent, is called mareserpa, the two parts of which translate literally into English as “sea serpent.” But “sea serpent” is ordinary English, and mareserpa is very strange Italian. The standard Italian term is the masculine il serpe marino. Not only is mareserpa feminine, but Italian just does not form compound words that way. Since one of the points of the opera is the strangeness of the language, Ronnie Apter and I could not translate mareserpa as “sea serpent.” Instead, we invented the word “aquaconda,” a strange English compound that also had the virtue of having the same stresses and number of syllables as mareserpa, and is therefore always singable on the original musical notes.

Submit items for future columns via e-mail to mnh18@columbia.edu. Discussions of the translation of humor and examples thereof are preferred, but humorous anecdotes about translators, translations, and mistranslations are also welcome. Include copyright information and permission if relevant.
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