Palm Springs, Here We Come!

B y the time you read this, registration will be open for ATA’s 60th Annual Conference. Translators and interpreters will be taking over Palm Springs, California, from October 23–26, and we can’t wait to see you there! Included with this issue of The ATA Chronicle (or online, if you receive the digital version), you’ll find the preliminary program and hotel reservation information so you can start planning for four days of education, networking, and fun!

I attended my first ATA conference back in 2004 in Toronto, Canada. At the time, I had been freelancing for about two years and had never been away from my toddler daughter (now a rising high school senior!) overnight. The trip was a huge leap—financially, professionally, and emotionally. Walking into the opening reception, I felt like I had just landed at a family reunion with over a thousand attendees, about four of whom I knew by name.

Throughout the conference, I forced myself to hand out business cards to everyone I met. I took notes during every session and made an effort to connect with some of the speakers. It was an overwhelming experience, but it also—through a chance encounter in the hallway—connected me with a new major client. In the year following that conference, I doubled my freelance income and finally knew that I was going to make it as a freelance translator.

Over the years, I worked my way up the conference ladder. Finally, I was no longer a newbie! I knew more than four people, and I didn’t have to eat breakfast alone!

After a few years, I got up the courage to submit a session proposal, which led to even more contacts and a higher profile in the profession. ATA’s Annual Conference became—and still is—the highlight of my professional year. It also seems fitting that ATA60 is where a chapter in my own professional life will close, as I rotate off the ATA Board after seven years, leaving you in the capable hands of our current President-Elect, Ted Wozniak.

As an attendee commented a few years ago, ATA’s Annual Conference truly is “the experience you can’t download.”

Attending ATA’s Annual Conference is an investment. We know that not every member can attend every year, and that’s why we’ve enhanced our offerings in terms of webinars and one-day seminars. But if you attend the conference, we promise that you’ll be glad you made that investment. The quality of our sessions is top-notch, the networking opportunities are one of a kind, and this year’s venue in Palm Springs allows for plenty of face time (real face time, not the app!) with other attendees. As an attendee commented a few years ago, ATA’s Annual Conference truly is “the experience you can’t download.” We hope to see you soon in Palm Springs! 🌴
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Looking for Member News and Humor and Translation? These columns are found in the Chronicle-Online edition: www.atanet.org/chronicle-online!
Palm Springs or Bust!

ATA60 is less than five months away, so it’s not too soon to start making plans to come to Palm Springs for four days of top-notch professional development training, numerous networking opportunities, and the chance to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Conference registration is open, so reserve your hotel room now at the very attractive Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel (the host hotel) or the Hilton Palm Springs Hotel for the extremely affordable rate of just $199/night. We expect the room block to fill up quickly, so don’t wait too long.

Remember, if you make your reservations at the Renaissance or Hilton by October 21, you could be one of five lucky attendees randomly selected to win one free night’s lodging! Need a little more incentive before making a decision? Here’s just a small preview of what’s in store for you at ATA60!

Venue: The weather should be great, with an average high in the mid- to upper 80s and a low at night in the low 60s. That can be chilly in the high desert, so a light sweater or jacket may be advisable at night. There are almost 200 restaurants in Palm Springs, and most are a short walk from the Palm Springs Convention Center, site of the main conference activity. There are also plenty of clubs and entertainment venues. On Thursdays, Palm Canyon Drive becomes a pedestrian zone for a giant block party. Vendors of all kinds offer food, jewelry, crafts, along with entertainment. I enjoyed it immensely during our planning meeting in January.

Advanced Training: Advanced Skills and Training (AST) Day will offer intensive three-hour training sessions on legal translation, machine translation and post-editing, project productivity boosters for individual practitioners, and, again this year, preparation workshops for the Chinese>English, French>English, English>French, Spanish>English, and English>Spanish certification exams. (New this year: there will be at least one exam sitting on Wednesday at the conference for those who are ready.)

Over 170 Educational Sessions: As always, ATA’s Annual Conference will be chock full of educational and networking opportunities. Over 170 sessions have been selected through a rigorous peer review process to provide you with training in almost every facet of our profession. The new audiovisual track was given special emphasis this year due to Palm Springs’ proximity to Los Angeles and the large number of submissions from ATA’s new Audiovisual Division. In addition to the regular sessions by your peers, 17 distinguished speakers have been invited to impart their expertise and perspectives to you. As we’ve learned from past conference surveys, 88% of attendees report gaining a new skill by attending the conference.

Networking, Networking, and More Networking: While education and training are great and are alone worth the registration fee, I know many of you attend the conference to get more work and expand your client base. Previous conference surveys show that 98% of conference attendees made new contacts at the conference. To help you get more work, the Job Fair will again be held on two nights to allow more time to connect with representatives from language services companies. In addition, you can also network and gain valuable business knowledge at the ever-popular Brainstorm Networking session and Business Practices Happy Hour, as well as make new contacts at the Welcome Celebration and in the Exhibit Hall. Seasoned attendees can also help newcomers by participating in the Buddies Welcome Newbies program.

Connect with Attendees Before, During, and After the Conference: There’s an app for that! Once the conference app is available, make sure you download it and complete your profile, including uploading your résumé. Not only will this put you in contact with about 1,400 attendees, but also with representatives from language services companies. In addition, you can only provide feedback on the sessions you attend using the app. Your feedback is vital and is used every year during the session selection process for the upcoming conference, so please submit your session reviews. The mobile app works on Android and iOS devices, and the online version works in all browsers.

STILL NOT SURE?
So, make your plans to attend ATA60. My investments in attending ATA conferences have been paid back many times over. I’m sure yours will as well! ☀

MORE INFORMATION ON ATA60
ATA60 Annual Conference Website
www.atanet.org/conf/2019
ATA60 Advanced Skills and Training Day
www.atanet.org/conf/2019/astday
ATA60 Hotel Information
www.atanet.org/conf/2019/hotel
ATA60 Networking Opportunities
www.atanet.org/conf/2019/networking
ATA60 Registration Information
www.atanet.org/conf/2019/register
Palm Springs Convention Center
www.palmspringscc.com
“Am I Ready for the Exam?” | Nora Favorov
I wanted to respond to the Certification Forum column in the March/April issue, entitled “Am I Ready for the Exam?” I agree wholeheartedly with Nora Favorov’s recommendation to take advantage of the practice test prior to taking ATA’s certification exam. I took practice tests in both my language pairs and benefited immensely from the experience of translating passages of that particular length and register within a time limit that simulated the actual exam conditions.

The passages on the practice test are actual exam passages (retired), so there really is no better preparation. I also received invaluable feedback from the graders and got a better sense of how the grading criteria are applied. When I saw the passages on my real exam, I was confident that I would be able to translate them well in the time allotted. So, for me, the practice tests were essential preparation—right up there with exam-day earplugs and (moderate) caffeine!

Rachael Koev | Virginia Beach, Virginia
Why Palm Springs and a Look at ATA’s Annual Conference

Planning for the Annual Conference starts immediately after the last one ends. In the planning cycle, July always marks the big reveal: the sessions and special events are online, the preliminary program is printed and available with this issue, and registration is open.

ATA’s 60th Annual Conference is set for October 23–26, 2019 in Palm Springs, California. This is the first time ATA has met in Palm Springs.

WHY PALM SPRINGS?

- Palm Springs offers a beautiful location at the base of the San Jacinto Mountains in the Coachella Valley, about two hours east of Los Angeles. The host hotel—the Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel—is a short walk to the vibrant downtown area. Adding to it all, the weather for late October should also be favorable.
- Palm Springs provides us access to a western U.S. location featuring competitive conference hotel lodging at $199 plus tax per night. ATA has reserved a block of rooms at the Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel (host hotel) and the Hilton Palm Springs Hotel. The Renaissance Palm Springs Hotel is actually connected to the Palm Springs Convention Center, where most of the activities will take place. The Hilton Palm Springs Hotel is just an eight-minute walk (0.4 miles) from the convention center.

ATA’s Annual Conference is all about learning and making connections in a welcoming atmosphere.

- Palm Springs International Airport is less than two miles from the Renaissance. The Renaissance offers complimentary shuttle service to/from the airport.
- ATA’s Board wanted to try the convention center model to investigate opening up other possible cities down the road. What I mean here is that we currently look at hotels that have several thousand square feet of meeting space broken out into at least 20 various sized meeting rooms plus over 600 hotel rooms. By using a convention center, we can use their meeting space while having the guest rooms in smaller hotels nearby.

A LOOK AT THE CONFERENCE

ATA’s Annual Conference is all about learning and making connections in a welcoming atmosphere.

- A Schedule Featuring Over 170 Educational Sessions: We’re fortunate again this year to offer some of the best educational opportunities worldwide for translators, interpreters, and language services company owners. In addition, ATA President-Elect and Conference Organizer Ted Wozniak has compiled an impressive slate of in-depth training for Advanced Skills and Training (AST) Day, which takes place the day before the main conference starts. AST sessions are at least three-hours long with limited seating to ensure greater attention from the speakers. New this year, we’ve added a full day of interpreter training by federal court interpreter and well respected trainer Melinda Gonzalez Hibner. (You can register for AST sessions when you register for the conference.)

- Plenty of Networking Opportunities: In-person networking is one of the key benefits of attending the conference. The conference gives you the opportunity to reconnect with old acquaintances and meet new ones. These connections can often lead to job opportunities and smarter ways to run your translation/interpreting practice. For starters, taking advantage of the Job Fair (offered on two nights) and visiting the Exhibit Hall during the conference are easy ways to make connections.

- Learning from Your Colleagues: Year after year, first-time attendees tell us how exhilarating it is to be around other professionals who “get” what they do and understand the daily pressures. They also tell us how welcoming ATAs conference culture is and how speakers are so willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

ATA60 will deliver the education you desire with a variety of networking opportunities. Invest in yourself and register for ATA60 today. See you in Palm Springs!
Last March, two members of the Government Linguist Outreach Task Force (GLOTF)—an eight-person group approved by ATA’s Board of Directors and led by ATA’s Government Division—attended the 30th Annual Language Conference of the Army National Guard 300th Military Intelligence Brigade (Linguist) in Draper, Utah. Monika Roske and Jeff Mitchell delivered a 50-minute presentation on the benefits of ATA membership that included a PowerPoint briefing and informal discussions with conference attendees, many of whom serve as military reserve component language specialists or foreign-language program managers. This was an important initial success in ATA’s outreach efforts to language professionals in the defense community, which is a key initiative of the Government Division.

Rusty Shughart served as the director of the foreign language education and training programs at the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence. He is a member of ATA’s Government Division. Contact: russ4ata@yahoo.com.
Collaboration among Language Professionals: Representing ATA at the ACES: Society for Editing Annual Conference

Conference attendees buzzed over the latest updates to the *Chicago Manual of Style* and Associated Press (AP) *Stylebook*. Crowds of word nerds filled the hallways between sessions. Colleagues who had only corresponded electronically for the past year hugged one another, excited about the fun weekend ahead.

Now, you might be thinking, “Wait, there are other word nerds who go on and on for hours about all things language-related?” You bet! It was my great pleasure to represent ATA at this year’s annual conference of the ACES: The Society for Editing (formerly known as the American Copy Editors Society) in Providence, Rhode Island. With over 800 attendees from various fields and backgrounds, I felt right at home among this bubbly group of professionals.

ACES is an organization for editing professionals in various industries, as well as educators and students. I also represented ATA at the ACES conference in 2018 in Chicago. My presentation and attendance at that conference were so well received that I decided to propose another session for this year’s event. As it turned out, there were a few other translation-related proposals this year! The conference organizers contacted us and requested that we work together to form a discussion panel on translation. We were delighted!

Fellow ATA member and current ATA Interpreters Division Administrator Helen Eby presented with me on the panel, along with Helaine Schweitzer, the senior editor of *Watching America*, which provides news and opinions about issues involving the U.S. published in other countries. We each brought a different perspective and skill set to the table, something the organizers recognized early on and had the vision to request that we work together to share our expertise on translation with attendees. At the end of Helen’s portion of the panel, she noted, “I’m impressed that ACES noticed how our topics complemented each other and brought us together for a stronger presentation where we could connect the dots. This shows thoughtful programming.” I couldn’t agree more!

It was clear to us that attendees were happy to see translation being represented at this conference, since ACES attendees are known for being inclusive and welcoming of others who study language.

Our panel (entitled “Language: Barrier or Bridge?”) was well received, with 30 to 40 people in attendance. When it was my turn to speak, I asked if there were any translators in the room, and several hands shot up! A few even mentioned being ATA members and working both as professional translators and editors in their areas of specialization. It was clear to us that attendees were happy to see translation being represented at this conference, since ACES attendees are known for being inclusive and welcoming of others who study language.

GETTING THE WORD OUT ABOUT ATA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HIRING PROFESSIONALS

Some editors attending our panel mentioned previous experiences working with translators. There were a few who regretted having learned the hard way about working with a specialized translator. After hiring someone they believed to be a professional, they realized that the presentations they had paid to have translated were unusable with their target audience. They were happy to know about ATA, and those who hadn’t yet worked with language professionals were very interested in finding ways to collaborate with translators and interpreters in the future.

This is where we stepped in! I directed attendees to ATA’s *Directory of Translators and Interpreters* as a prime resource for finding professional translators and interpreters. I mentioned the various search filters they can use (e.g., sort by location, language, or services) to find the right professional translator/interpreter to work with on their projects. ACES members and conference attendees are very receptive to working with freelancers, as most are freelancers themselves. They have a good understanding of what it means to be a true professional in an unregulated field, shouldering the responsibility of relaying the meaning of the words on the page as they were intended. They were very thankful to have a resource like ATA’s online directory to access. This understanding and common appreciation of one another’s work might be what I find most compelling about building collaboration between translators, editors, and other professional associations.

Taking the time to attend conferences in related industries provides us with the chance to teach people about what we do and raise the visibility of our profession.
WELCOMING DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION

This feeling of inclusivity began even before I headed to Providence. A few weeks before the conference, ACES circulated the winter edition of its member newsletter, Tracking Changes. The theme of the issue was Spanish editing, and I had been invited to write a piece entitled “Preparing Your Copy for Translation: 7 Tips for Success.” Several other ATA members were also featured in the issue. The opportunity to contribute to the organization’s main publication made it clear to me that ACES was truly glad to welcome translators and interpreters into the mix.

During the conference, I was invited by an ACES board member to attend the Diversity and Inclusion Breakfast event on Friday morning. Another board member stopped me in the exhibit hall to ask about my conference experience so far and to express how refreshing it was to see ACES events welcoming professionals from other fields. He was clearly pleased to know that translators and interpreters would find the ACES conference beneficial. This feeling of welcoming diversity and collaboration stayed with me throughout the conference weekend.

I directed the editors who attended our session to ATA’s Directory of Translators and Interpreters as a prime resource for finding professional translators and interpreters.

THE SESSIONS

Perhaps one of the main reasons the ACES conference is so attractive to a variety of professionals is because of the range of sessions and the obvious inclusive nature of the event. With over 60 sessions taking place over three days, attendees have the opportunity to learn from experts in several areas of editing. Sessions encompassed everything from tips for editing literary copy to recipes, how to handle sensitive content, and editing for readability. One of the most popular topics this year was related to making a conscious effort to avoid unconscious bias in language when discussing (and editing) topics about gender, sexuality, and race.

Perhaps it’s no surprise, then, that this year’s “What’s New in the 2019 AP Stylebook” session covered a range of updated stylebook entries, including a new umbrella entry called race-related coverage. Paula Froke, lead editor of the AP Stylebook, mentioned changes with regard to the terms “racialism” and “people of color.” The AP has also chosen to remove hyphenation from dual-heritage terms (e.g., “African-American” is now “African American”). Other changes announced were the use of the % symbol instead of writing out “percent” when associated with a specific amount, and the now acceptable use of accent and diacritical marks in names when quoted from a language in which they tend to be used. Changes like these are important for translators who work into English to know, as the AP Stylebook, while typically associated with journalism, is often used for copy consumed online. This particular session is always well attended. In fact, conference attendees look forward to it every year!

But there are many other reasons to attend an ACES conference aside from informative sessions that allow you to stay abreast of the latest style manual

From left: Mignon Fogarty, host of the popular Grammar Girl podcast, with Madalena Sánchez Zapampa at ACES2019.
ACES members have a good understanding of what it means to be a true professional in an unregulated field, shouldering the responsibility of relaying the meaning of the words on the page as they were intended.

changes. It’s the perfect venue to meet editors in all stages of their careers. Newbies and veterans, in-house editors and freelancers all come together over the written word to discuss, collaborate, and enjoy one another’s company. The event is also known to attract larger names in the editing world. This year, I had the opportunity to meet Benjamin Dreyer, copy chief at Random House and author of Dreyer's English, as well as Mignon Fogarty, host of the popular Grammar Girl podcast.

Conference attendees also have a chance to put down their red pens and have some fun. There is an annual banquet where winners of the ACES scholarships and of various awards are announced, a spelling bee that includes new dictionary entries and frequently misspelled words, networking lunches for specific interest groups within the field of editing, and more.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING FROM COMPLEMENTARY INDUSTRIES
I’m convinced that translators (and interpreters) would find this event beneficial and enjoyable. If those translators who attended our joint panel session were any indication, there’s a lot we can do to continue our collaboration with ACES members.

How? Well, for one we can use the ACES conference and other events like it to raise the profile of our professions. As I mentioned earlier, I took the opportunity to point editors to ATA as a source for finding professional translators and interpreters, highlighting the Directory of Translators and Interpreters as an essential resource. By reaching out I discovered that many attendees were interested in hiring and collaborating with professional translators. (Some even said they wanted to attend ATA’s Annual Conference to learn more about what we do!) This is a great reminder of how important it is to attend events in complementary industries, such as editing. Not only can we create a variety of service offerings for clients by working together, but attending conferences outside the translation and interpreting world allows us to expand our knowledge, learn from others we might not normally have the chance to meet, practice our elevator speech, or even meet our next client.

At the very least, taking the time to attend conferences in related industries provides us with the chance to teach people about what we do and put ourselves on their radar. If you want to propose a session at a conference where most of the attendees are unfamiliar with the translation and interpreting professions, I would suggest thinking about how translators and/or interpreters can benefit these professionals. What kinds of challenges do they face that a professional translator or interpreter can help solve? What goals can we help them reach? By thinking about your ideal session attendee, you can tailor your proposal and your presentation to be incredibly relevant and valuable to them.

So, consider attending an ACES conference in the future! I would love to see an even stronger presence of translators (and interpreters) next year at the annual conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. Who’s with me? ☺

THREE TIPS TO GET THE GIG
Want to spread the word about the value of translation and interpreting to a group or organization? The following tips will help you gain an edge in terms of getting people to ask you to speak at their event.

1. Research your target audience and decide how you can provide value to their work and/or industry with your knowledge and expertise.

2. Approach the organization either as a member or as an outsider who has a different perspective to share and make a pitch.

3. Review ATA’s Client Outreach Kit for more tips and strategies on getting the gig, preparing your presentation for your target audience, and more. You can find it here: https://atanet.org/client_outreach.

If those translators who attended our joint panel session were any indication, there’s a lot we can do to continue to collaborate with ACES members.

NOTES
4 To learn more about changes to the Associated Press Stylebook, see http://bit.ly/AP-changes2019.

Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo
is an ATA director and chair of the Membership Committee. She is the owner of Accessible Translation Solutions and a Spanish–English and Portuguese–English translator. She served as chair of ATA’s Public Relations Committee (2014–2018) and administrator of ATA’s Medical Division (2011–2015). She has a BA in Spanish from the University of Southern Mississippi and an MA in Spanish from the University of Louisville. She is also a consultant for the University of Louisville Graduate Certificate in Translation. You can read more of her articles on her blog at www.madalenzampaulo.com/blog. Contact: madalena@accessibletranslations.com.
Communicating the Value of Our Services

The image we have of ourselves as freelancers and the image that is presented to the general public do not necessarily overlap.

was delighted to see a summary of John Milan’s May 2017 ATA webinar published in the January–February 2018 issue of the ATA Chronicle, and not just because I’m a member of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters and know John personally, but because the issue of rates is intertwined with the perceived value of our services.

Given that almost every week there’s yet another article about yet another technological breakthrough heralding the death of our profession, being able to present the value of working with professional translators and interpreters is important for our industry’s future.

Although it would be nice to see people make rational decisions that are in their best interest (e.g., hiring a professional), inherent cognitive biases (also known as heuristics) in decision-making often prevent us from doing so. This applies to the perception of the value of our services. Fortunately for us, the messy question of how we make decisions and how our thinking is influenced by things that, in an ideal world of economic theory, should not be relevant at all, continues to be researched. And it doesn’t take much effort to find information about the findings.

For example, one of the decision-making biases that is frequently listed as exceptionally useful for making the price of a service seem more acceptable is “anchoring.” This concept, developed by psychologists Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, describes a cognitive bias where an individual relies too heavily on an initial piece of information offered (considered to be the “anchor”) when making a decision. As an example, in one of the experiments Tversky and Kahneman conducted, writing down the last two digits of their social security numbers affected the amount study subjects were willing to bid in an auction for a variety of items. (To learn more about the shortcuts the human brain relies on when making decisions, read a comprehensive overview on Wikipedia, or Michael Lewis’ book, The Undoing Project, or listen to episode 271 of the Freakonomics Podcast, “The Men Who Started a Thinking Revolution”.)

It would be nice to think that researching cognitive biases online and finding a way to use them on our websites or in conversations with clients would make clients and the public in general see the light. It could go something like this:

- Add images of happy people to your website. (Affect heuristic: mood changes according to a stimulus.)
- Add the number of words you translate, as long as this is a suitably large number, to the page on your website listing rates. (The anchoring heuristic discussed earlier.)
- Add an availability calendar to show that you’re a busy translator/interpreter/agency. (Scarcity heuristic: people might place a higher value on your services if they see you are in demand.)
- Add multiple testimonials, ideally from people who are already like the target audience. (Social proof heuristic: people might be more willing to consider the value of your services after reading the positive recommendations of others.)
- Describe in vivid detail how amazing a client’s life would be if only they started working with you. (Simulation heuristic: the easier it is for people to imagine something—such as purchasing products or services—the more likely it is that they will do so. It works, too!)
Speaking of the last bullet point: according to the economist Dan Ariely and financial comedian and writer Jeff Kreisler, authors of Dollars and Sense: How We Mislake Money and How to Spend Smarter (in the chapter appropriately called “We Believe in the Magic of Language and Rituals”):

Taking the time to have a better understanding and appreciation for the construction of something—an Ikea desk or a fine meal—might increase its value to us.10

But here’s the problem: an Ikea desk or a fine meal are very real and can be appreciated as objects. Translation or interpreting services are, by definition, services, so it is very difficult for a non-specialist to figure out how much effort goes into the production of the said service.

Why is this an issue for translators, interpreters, and other creatives? According to Dollars and Sense, people rarely try to figure out what exactly goes into the price of a product or service:

Assessing the level of effort that went into anything is a common shortcut we use to assess the fairness of the price we’re asked to pay.11

Which means that if the level of effort is estimated as low, a low price is more likely to be perceived as fair.

Although I happen to think that comparing translation or interpreting to manual labor is a really bad analogy, the following example from Dollars and Sense might help us understand why the perceived value of translation can be so low. One example Ariely and Kreisler use is particularly poignant. In this fictitious scenario, James, who had been locked out of his apartment and rescued by a locksmith, is outraged about the price the locksmith charged for his services:

James didn’t think the locksmith’s price was fair because it took the locksmith so little time. But would James have preferred that the locksmith bumble around, take a long time, and fake the effort? Well, maybe. It’s easy to pay for conspicuous effort. It’s harder to pay for someone who is really good at what they’re doing—someone who performs their job effortlessly because their expertise allows them to be efficient. It’s hard to pay more for the speedy but highly skilled person simply because there’s less effort being shown, less effort being observed, and less effort being valued.

Language professionals can certainly relate. You can probably see how the perceived lack of effort (“even machines can translate”), the assumed lack of necessity to acquire skills (“everybody can translate”), and the often-touted short turnaround (another way that signals a perceived lack of effort) make it more than a little bit tricky to advocate for the value of our services.

As Ros Schwartz says in her delightful article in the November-December 2017 issue of The ATA Chronicle, “translation is sometimes seen as ‘typing in another language.’”12 So, from the point of view of a potential buyer, if this is all it takes, why on earth should this cost so much? As a matter of fact, why should I pay for translation services if online translation tools can do it for free? Occasionally, a very public blunder clarifies the matter (e.g., the chefs for the Norway Olympic team using Google Translate to purchase eggs).13 But these public gaffes do little to change the fact that the general public (that includes translation buyers, obviously) doesn’t see us as skillful writers crafting our messages while carefully considering the intricacies of cultural implications.

The image we have of ourselves as freelancers and the image that is presented to the general public do not necessarily overlap. And with so many translators leading with “You should work with me because I’m cheaper than an agency,” it’s small wonder that there is a lot of resentment in translation groups (at least in the ones I follow). It would seem that in some cases even translators are not clear on the value they provide (or uncertain that they add value).
HOW TO OVERCOME THE PERCEIVED LACK OF VALUE?

As John Milan points out in his article, “each of us, on our own, has relatively limited power to help the industry understand quality and differentiate one translation from another.” How could professional associations such as ATA do more to ensure that the general public and potential clients understand what goes into mastering translation or interpreting skills and why professional services are important?

The American Medical Association is very efficient in lobbying the government for its members’ interests.14 (I’m not suggesting we copy AMA’s tactics and strategy. Obviously, AMA has deeper pockets than ATA, but this is something ATA can strive for in its advocacy efforts.) However, in his article “Doctors in a Wired World: Can Professionalism Survive Connectivity?” David Blumenthal, from the Institute for Health Policy at Massachusetts General Hospital, shows that for a professional association to command such a strong position, a recognition of professionalism by a society is a must:

The essence of professionalism is its claim to a distinctive competence, an ability to provide a service that is valued by members of society individually and recognized through law and custom collectively. That distinctive competence makes society dependent on the profession and also confers professional authority. Another way of saying this is that at the core of medical professionalism is an asymmetric competence between patient and physician.15

The situation discussed in the article might seem familiar to translators and interpreters: there are concerns that the internet will make doctors redundant, since patients would have access to information online. The study was published in 2002, so 17 years later we can see that even though the advance of technology has not obliterated medical professions, although it has changed the conditions in which they work, the discussion of the technological disruption continues.16 I strongly suspect that in 15 years translation and interpreting will also survive the technological breakthroughs.

However, for our industry the main challenges are a widespread belief that “anyone can do it” (technically true, but can anyone do it equally well?) and, consequently, the lack of recognition of the professional status of practicing translators and interpreters. I hope that ATA’s substantial public relations efforts will be augmented and complemented by useful and interesting content from agencies and individual translators and interpreters talking about our work and explaining how it’s important for each sector so that we can convincingly show that these professions are called so for a reason.

“SO WHAT?” VERSUS ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL ADVOCACY

I would argue that “umbrella” advocacy is not going to be enough. While people might occasionally be reminded about the importance of words and error-free communications when they encounter amusing mistranslations, for the most part they’re probably not going to care.

Which brings me to the last point. The work of ATA, other translator and interpreter associations, and the media highlighting the importance of hiring professional translators and interpreters within in our own specializations. Unless people in the fields in which we work have a very real reason to believe that their projects, jobs, and their lives are going to be negatively affected by choosing the wrong translation or interpreting provider, the most likely response is going to be “So what?”

But what do buyers of translation and interpreting services in different sectors care about?
For website translations, there is a way to measure data and build a business case for an investment. For instance, K International has published “ROI of Translation: 4 Ways It Makes Businesses More Competitive.” Among other things, the article mentions research from Common Sense Advisory—the frequently cited “Can’t Read, Won’t Buy: 2014” research study (e.g., “60% of shoppers from non-English-speaking countries ‘rarely or never’ bought from English-only websites”).

A blog on the PhraseApp website (a translation management platform) also provides some suggestions on measuring return on investment for translation management:

Translated websites and landing pages lead to higher conversion rates, and translated ads will result in better click-rates, which can be measured and compared easily. PhraseApp, for example, noticed that the average time spent conversion rate for landing pages increased by +17% after localization.19

There are also case studies that show how localization or translation fit into organizational strategy as a whole, such as how the Starwood hotel chain was able to focus translation efforts on underserved languages and avoid overspending on translation. In this particular case, Starwood hired a mathematician to create a model that would predict how much adding a translation into a specific language would boost the number of bookings (and conversely, of how not adding a translation—and saving money)—would affect the number of bookings). This tactic resulted in a more strategic approach.20

Presenting case studies might not be applicable to all industries and sectors in which translators and interpreters work, but couldn’t one argue, for example, that better interpreting in a hospital leads to greater customer satisfaction? I assume yes. Would this be important to the Powers that Be in a hospital? I would think so. But is there anything else that prospective clients could possibly care even more about? Unless we get out of our Facebook groups and “translation bubbles,” we won’t know. And unless we find out, we won’t be able to get past the “So what?”

It would seem that in some cases even translators are not clear on the value they provide (or uncertain that they add value).

NOTES


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Designing a Competency-Based Translator Training Program: Progress, Challenges, and Next Steps

Here is an update on a collaborative effort to design a competency-based translator training program. Read on to learn about the group’s progress to date, insights gained, challenges faced, and next steps.

This is an update on a project I proposed in an article on this topic published in the July–August 2017 issue of The ATA Chronicle. In that article, I discussed two common pathways into the profession: proficiency plus circumstances and formal training.

Graduates of the “proficiency plus circumstances” pathway are individuals with advanced proficiency in two languages—often bilingual immigrants or heritage speakers—who at some point decide to try their hand at translating or interpreting. What begins as a couple of favors or sporadic jobs develops into regular freelance work, a new source of income, and an expanding professional network. Although “proficiency plus circumstances” translators bypass formal training, they nonetheless learn through on-the-job experience and professional development programs.

By contrast, graduates of the “formal training” or academic pathway undergo a good deal of classroom training. They typically start out as college students who decide to major in a foreign language. Some of these students take a few translation courses, while others—perhaps concerned about post-college work prospects—complete minors or undergraduate certificates in translation. A handful go on to complete master’s degrees in translation or translation studies. At various points along the way, these academic-track translators-in-training begin the process of professionalization, mixing paid jobs in with class projects. While some end up in careers unrelated to languages, others join the ranks of the language services industry, putting the quality of their academic preparation to the test.

In my 2017 article, I pointed out several weaknesses of traditional academic translation programs, such as:

- Including too many courses that have nothing to do with translation or translation-related issues.
- Overemphasizing theoretical aspects and literary translation while neglecting real-world domains (e.g., medicine, law, business, and technology).
- Failing to recognize the skills candidates already possess, or not granting credit for prior learning.

I also summarized the basic elements of competency-based education, including:

- Involving industry professionals in the development of competencies to ensure that what programs emphasize are up to date.
- Using rigorous assessments to reliably determine what candidates are able to do in real-world contexts.
- Recognizing skills incoming candidates have already mastered to reduce the time it takes to complete the program.

I argued that a well-designed competency-based translator training program could be an effective and affordable means of meeting the growing need for qualified translators.

I concluded by asking that volunteers who might be interested in collaborating to design such a program contact me directly. I was extremely pleased with the response: more than 15 readers came forward and offered to help. These volunteers included an ATA Board member, other university educators and researchers, and several experienced freelance translators.
After hearing from them, I started the proverbial ball rolling by setting up a virtual workspace on the Google Drive platform. I then created a Google Doc encouraging participants to get to know each other by sharing their contact information and professional bios. We then began working more or less simultaneously—using a combination of email and Google Docs—on a series of interrelated tasks. We determined the project’s ultimate goal, mapped out its phases and steps, defined key concepts, identified translator competencies, and created a bibliography of resources relating to competency-based education and translator training.

The pace of our work has been slower than I expected, mostly because we’re all extremely busy with our day jobs, but also because collaboration, research, and consensus-building take time and effort. We’ve made progress in certain areas, while in others our momentum has slowed to a crawl as we’ve debated the most appropriate ways to frame or define key constructs.

DEFINING GOALS

One relatively simple task we were able to accomplish was to determine the overall goal of our project. We decided our goal would be to work collaboratively to develop an entry-level competency-based training program by translators for translators. Our designation of the targeted level of competency as entry-level will require us to carefully define what that means, perhaps relying on established performance standards, such as the Interagency Language Roundtable Skill Level Descriptions for Translators.

Another area in which we’ve made progress has been mapping out the phases and steps of our project. To provide the group with a starting point, I proposed the following three phases aligned with the backward design model I outlined in my original article in The ATA Chronicle:

1. Identify the broad competency clusters and specific competencies candidates must demonstrate to receive a credential.
2. Identify or create assessments to evaluate mastery of the desired competencies.
3. Identify learning experiences and instructional resources that prepare candidates for the assessments.

As our work has progressed, this admittedly broad model has been refined and expanded by team members.

Several of the steps we’ve added relate to accomplishing the first phase. I had initially—and very naively—assumed that we could identify competency clusters and specific competencies for our project using a guided brainstorming procedure involving project members and other translation and interpreting professionals who might be consulted at regional and national conferences. However, a few more experienced colleagues challenged this informal “let’s just brainstorm” approach. Instead, they proposed we adopt a more research-based approach and carefully define what we mean by “competencies” and consider previous work done in this area, including results of a job task analysis conducted by ATA (more on this below).

COMPETENCE, COMPETENCY, AND COMPETENCIES

Realizing the importance of getting this part of the project right, the team has spent considerable time wrestling with questions such as:

- What are competencies?
- What view on competencies should guide the design of a competency-based translator training program?
- What is the best way to determine which competencies to include in such a program?

Although I was familiar with how competencies are defined in U.S.-based approaches to competency-based education (CBE), I was somewhat surprised to learn that there are several competing conceptualizations or definitions of professional competencies, particularly in the literature on vocational training. The team has fellow volunteer Heather Glass to thank for this insight. Heather is something of a specialist on this topic, having written her master’s thesis on efforts by the Australian government to develop competency standards to underpin CBE training programs for translators and interpreters. Heather shared her thesis with the group and recommended other research articles that explore various takes on ideas such as competence, competency, and competencies.

One such article was written by Terrence Hoffman, a researcher in instructional design, for the Journal of European Industrial Training. Hoffman contends that competency has not been clearly defined. His survey of previous literature on the topic shows that competencies tend to be defined in one of three ways: 1) as observable performances, where the “focus is on the output, or tasks, to be completed,” 2) as “a standard, or quality of outcome,” or 3) as “the underlying attributes of the person, such as their knowledge, skills, or abilities.” These conceptualizations place the most emphasis on the tasks people are supposed to do, how well they are expected to do them, and the personal attributes required for competent performance.

According to Hoffman, since the first two approaches are task- and output-focused, they’re best suited for performance assessment, whereas the third approach, with its emphasis on input, lends itself to the development of instructional programs. Hoffman reiterates this latter point in a statement that very aptly describes the attributes-based focus of CBE programs in the U.S.: “By describing the existing knowledge, skills, or attitudes of competent performers, the inputs needed for the development of a learning program can be defined.”

A compelling alternative to this task-based versus attributes-based dichotomy is the integrated view put forth by Paul Hager, professor emeritus of the arts and social sciences at the University of Technology Sydney, who stresses the importance of context. He writes that “competence can be summarized as contextualized capability involving an integration of assorted practitioner attributes.” In such a model, “an occupation can be represented as a set of competency standards in which key occupational tasks are integrated with the attributes required for their performance.” An integrated view on competencies suggests that although the instructional
focus of CBE programs should be on inputs or attributes—commonly referred to as knowledge, skills, and dispositions (KSDs)—it’s important to consider essential occupational tasks and relevant professional standards when defining, assessing, and teaching them.

Consistent with this view that integrates tasks, standards, and attributes, I’ve proposed the following definition to my fellow team members: competencies are the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable a practitioner to perform a set of key occupational tasks with a specified degree of competence. For our purpose, this definition raises a series of related questions, such as:

■ What are the key occupational tasks performed by translators?
■ What KSDs are needed to perform these tasks?
■ What constitutes entry-level mastery of these KSDs?

Answering the first two questions suggests the need to consider the results from an appropriately focused job task analysis. ATA Past President Caitilin Walsh, who chairs ATA’s Education and Pedagogy Committee, reminded our group early on that ATA conducted a job task analysis from 2009 to 2011 that produced data that might be useful to our efforts. The focus of that study, as stated by researchers Geoff Koby and Alan Melby in a 2013 article, was to “define the job of a professional translator by identifying the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed to perform professional translation services competently” in an effort to “strengthen the validity of [ATA’s] certification exam.” The procedures used by the researchers to gather information (focus groups and a survey) yielded 36 KSAs, as well as 16 personal attributes (e.g., being “open-minded” and “culturally sensitive”)—far too many items for a single exam to assess.

Arguably, the results uncovered in ATA’s job task analysis are most useful when viewed as a preliminary roadmap for designing an instructional program. I say preliminary because I see them as informing a new job task analysis whose purposes would be to identify the essential tasks and related competencies for a training program targeting entry-level competence. Given the high number of items ATA’s job task analysis yielded, an important issue researchers would need to consider when designing the study would be the degree of detail to encourage when eliciting input regarding essential tasks and related KSDs.

**Collaboration, research, and consensus-building take time and effort.**

**NEXT STEPS AND A RENEWED CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

I would like to conclude by summarizing the outcomes attained by the project team thus far. In the year or so since we began working together, we have:

■ Clarified our project goal.
■ Revised and expanded its phases and steps.
■ Identified previous research that has and will continue to inform our actions.
■ Settled on a definition of competencies that is consistent with CBE program design.
■ Identified possible steps in a protocol for developing competencies.
■ Shared initial findings with and sought input from translation and interpreting professionals.

Our next steps include conducting a job task analysis to identify the essential tasks translators perform and the KSDs needed to carry them out with entry-level competence, developing or identifying translation standards consistent with that level of competence, and deciding on a philosophy to guide our approach to assessment.

Despite the slow pace of our work and the challenges inherent in collaborating on a large-scale project, I remain convinced—and this experience has so far demonstrated—that many heads are indeed better than one. It’s in that spirit that I would like to renew my original call for volunteers. If you’ve just read sounds interesting and you would like to contribute to our ongoing effort, or if you simply have some input or information to share, please feel free to contact me at jasjol71@gmail.com. I look forward to collaborating with more of you!

**NOTES**

3. Competency-based education (CBE) is an innovative approach to teaching and learning that has been gaining traction in universities throughout the U.S. and beyond. It differs markedly from traditional approaches in higher education. Instead of measuring learning in terms of credit hours and letter grades, CBE programs focus on student mastery of specific competencies.

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Translate Differently and Don’t Fear

Translators always say their translations are “better” than machine translation, but what does “better” mean for your clients? How do they judge?

Early this year, a post popped up on my Facebook feed: a Russian professor of philosophy at a German university was very excited about DeepL, a machine translation (MT) service he recently discovered. He wrote: “It’s hard to beat, especially in comparison to Google Translate. Extraordinary!” Most comments under his post were just as euphoric: “I moonlight as a translator, wrote one philosophy student, but now I guess I can pack up and go home.” Well, I personally have been making a decent living off my translations for more than two decades. I’ve also been familiar with DeepL for quite a while now and haven’t felt threatened.

I usually don’t let myself get dragged into discussions concerning MT with “laypeople,” but this time I felt differently. So, I went ahead and replied to the philosophers on that Facebook thread.

A SHORT TRIP THROUGH TIME

Whenever someone compares human translation to MT, another comparison occurs to me: drawing or painting versus taking photographs.

The birth of photography must have been a revolution for its day. Suddenly, it became possible to get a photo of yourself without having to sit in a particular posture for hours, spending a fortune while you waited for someone to paint a portrait. In addition, the new photographic technology promised a more accurate, lifelike representation, free from an artist’s fancies and whims.

Visual representation is always secondary; it requires and assumes some primary reality. For a painter, a draftsman, or a photographer, this might be a landscape, a street scene, a model, or objects for still life. In the same way, translation can only be secondary, meaning that a translator’s primary reality is the source text. Like drawing and painting, human translation takes effort and time. The outcome is largely contingent on the translator’s mastery of the subject matter and linguistic competence, but also, at least to a certain extent, on their preferences and writing style.

Machine translation, on the other hand, is not only cheaper or even free of charge, but delivers a quick on-the-spot-result. What’s more, it’s devoid of the individual subjectivity of human translators, which, from the perspective of the author of the source document, may be a good thing. But is it really?

WHAT IS “NEUTRAL” AND “OBJECTIVE”?

Fast forward through 180 years of photography and now anyone anywhere can take a photo at any time. To capture our primary reality through a photo, you don’t have to go to a professional photographer or be one. Nonetheless, corporate clients still rely on professional photography services (e.g., in the area of product photography), although it might make more sense economically for them to invest in pro-grade photo equipment and do it themselves rather than pay higher fees for a service each time. So, why do these clients spend a lot of money on something they could potentially do themselves?

In my opinion, there are two reasons. Let’s assume that technical skills are not a differentiator, that this factor is actually a given, and safely set it aside. If technology matters at all, it’s because of what it isn’t capable of. In other words, there are no cameras or gadgets that can read your client’s mind. Only human beings have the ability to listen to and accurately understand a client’s needs. I believe that every professional who interacts directly with their clients must possess this skill if they want to be successful. In this sense, product photographers and translators are very much alike.
Taking photos of products (or writing or translating the copy pertaining to them) is, in the broadest sense, producing materials for customer communication. Therefore, translators, especially in the field of verbal corporate communication, can learn a lot from the effective strategies used in visual communication and design, especially when it comes to customer orientation. Employing techniques derived from design theory and practice will help us recognize our clients’ needs, deliver noticeably better translations, and, ultimately, become more visible and successful as translators.

**PROFESSIONALISM ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH**

One of the main reasons product photographers are still used is their talent for listening to their customers’ needs and “translating” them into visual results. This is what makes them professionals. Another main reason why people still hire product photographers is that they’re seeking a particular creative solution or “personal touch.” Stick 20 photographers in a room with one product and you get 20 different perspectives, some of which might be real attention-grabbers.

Ming Thein, one of the most influential commercial photographers (and writers on photography) today states:

> The expectation of a photograph is that it is an unmodified accurate and complete representation of what we’d see if we were there. There’s a problem with this, however: what two observers see might be the same, but what they notice is probably going to be very different.

In my opinion, this also applies to our profession. And that’s a good thing because it’s how we can stand out, both from our human competitors and from MT.

**SAME BUT DIFFERENT**

A photographer has one product and takes different photos of it, each worth a thousand words. Likewise, if you take a thousand words of source text and compare a number of translations, I’ll bet each would be different. Why? Like photography, it’s about the framing.

Some might find it surprising that their choice of words can influence (frame) how they’re perceived, for better or worse. However, for translators like us, choosing words carefully is simply how we work. Of course, it’s not a matter of choosing just words, but choosing different ways to phrase and transform the client’s source text to get the message across in a more purposeful and targeted way. These differences, or frames, are not only black or white, positive or negative, but may include many other shades and connotations, depending on the subject and situation.

You can refer to this loosely as writing skills or, more precisely, the rhetorical competence of a translator. They say that translators are the most attentive readers of all. Therefore, good translators try to make a silk purse out of their source texts. They rectify the author’s minor errors, clarify and resolve ambiguities, and rework the message to make it more palatable to the target group. I know clients who occasionally even change their own source text after it’s translated to match the (better written) translation. Ultimately, it’s not the means (e.g., different phrasing, etc.) that matter, but the effect of the words that will determine whether or not the translation achieves the communicative purpose. And you can only achieve the right effect through an intimate understanding of the client’s needs, which is something MT can’t do.

**TALKING TO THE CLIENT**

I remember a conversation I had with one of my clients, an executive assistant to the chief executive officer of a large international corporation. Once, while having dinner after a conference, he told me his job seemed quite similar to mine. Like me, he gets his “source texts” from his boss and has to “translate” them for the target audience. The only difference is that he does all this within the same language.

I’m well aware that this type of translation is not applicable to every situation. There is a concept in translation studies called “Skopos Theory,” which emphasizes the purpose first and foremost. According to Wikipedia:

> To translate means to produce a target text in a target setting for a target purpose to target addressees in target circumstances. In Skopos Theory, the status of the source text is lower than it is in equivalence-based theories of translation. The source is an ‘offer of information,’ which the translator in turn remodels into an ‘offer of information for the target audience.’

Nothing against translatology, but I think that as a translator, you can almost learn situational awareness, to use a military term, and client orientation better from the viewpoint and experience of a designer than you can from academic theory.

**BACK TO PHOTOGRAPHY**

What does all this have to do with photography and DeepL, having meandered as far as we have from my introductory thoughts? Well, those who want their photos taken are not necessarily interested in an ultra-realistic, “no-filters” outcome. A true portrait will always be different from a neutral view stripped of involvement, or a casual snapshot taken without thinking. Also, a good photographer or designer doesn’t just blandly accept their client’s drafts and ideas as they are, but clarifies the client’s purpose and intent with their own vision.

My experience is that the majority of my clients are not necessarily interested in translations “for their own sake.” They expect me to transmute their source text into something different in another language. There are even situations where a conventional translator’s accuracy might be counterproductive.

**CRISIS OR OPPORTUNITY**

However, this kind of accuracy, or “foolish consistency,” as Ralph Waldo Emerson would have put it, is pretty much the best that MT can achieve. This is because software, as is the case with hardware or any technical device like a camera, can’t read the client’s mind, and this is where we have an edge over MT.

If we take the three dimensions of the so-called magical triangle (time, cost, and quality), the third factor is the only thing we humans can turn to our advantage, but only if we deliver different results.
And on that fateful day when MT is declared to have lived up to the claims of software engineers and achieved a level of development and sophistication so that all doubts and embarrassments evaporate, we’ll have to offer something entirely new.

The product of a human translator will always be different—from MT output, from some other translator’s rendering, and possibly from the source text. This difference can be leveraged for better competitive advantage. We can avoid becoming obsolete by exploiting it. Last year, Heike Leinhäuser, president of the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies, wrote on LinkedIn:

For certain types of content, MT is an incredibly useful tool. But if companies buy into the popular belief that translation can be done by anyone (or any one machine), they run the risk of overlooking the very thing that sets them apart from their competition: the way they communicate. If a company aims to capture the hearts and minds of its customers, communicating with a voice that speaks to those customers is key.³

It’s not enough to be professional and good at what you do. Having that unique voice may be crucial. Product photographers still manage to get paying work despite the fact that the client’s own employees can take photos. This situation is not actually dissimilar to, for example, English translators in Germany. Much of the work they manage to pick up could have been done by the clients themselves. However, professional into-English translators still get jobs, primarily because their clients want them to deliver a translation with a difference.

IN OUR DIGITAL PHOTO LAB

Below is my response to the conversation started by my friend, the philosopher, on Facebook.

DeepL is certainly a good tool. However, it depends on who is operating it and how. For comparison, photos are taken with a camera, but not by the camera itself. To extrapolate the example a bit more, let’s say MT can, at best, shoot images in RAW (unprocessed) format or, in Adobe’s language, DNG (digital negative).

This kind of RAW translation is often sufficient “for information purposes only.” However, when it needs to do more than just inform—when it needs to do something like persuade, for instance—RAW certainly won’t be enough.

Software, as is the case with hardware or any technical device like a camera, can’t read the client’s mind, and this is where we have an edge over MT.

In photography, RAW images look flat, “off,” and very much in need of enhancement. It takes a specialist to create something more desirable out of them using RAW image editing software. This is also the case with translation. Image and language are the same that way. And in particular, when we’re dealing with human communication, without even mentioning the power of framing, a tool such as DeepL, or anything else, is better left to the hands of a professional. Well, just as long as that person has a mastery of the subject matter, an excellent level in both languages, rhetorical competence, and writing skills.

DON’T BE AFRAID TO BE DIFFERENT

Interestingly, many agreed with my comment on Facebook. However, what I didn’t point out in that thread is the following.

We can’t translate faster than MT, and we can never be that cheap either. The only thing we have left is the quality of our writing (or re-writing). Translators always say their translations are “better” than MT, but what does “better” mean for your clients? How do they judge?

“If you don’t want to be replaced by a machine, don’t act like one,” as the adage goes. Growing to meet clients’ needs that cannot be met with MT, we don’t have to be afraid to translate differently. I find the advice of Chase Jarvis, another professional photographer, actually quite helpful: “Don’t aim for ‘better,’ aim for ‘different.’ It’s funny how related ‘better’ and ‘different’ are.”⁴ To put it bluntly: if you don’t want to be replaced by DeepL, translate differently. To slightly paraphrase Chase Jarvis, “add value, don’t be a monkey with a tool.”

As a sidenote, I originally wrote this article in German. To give DeepL a field test, I installed the DeepL Pro plugin and let it process the entire piece. Apart from a number of clear-cut mistakes and misinterpretations, I found the outcome readable overall, but only for the purposes of information. As an author, I could never live with such a translation. So, I had to retranslate this article from scratch myself. I had never felt too threatened by the arrival of DeepL before, but now, having actually tried it, I fear something else: my own overconfidence.

NOTES


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Three Myths about Who Should Edit Your Translation
(The following originally appeared on The Savvy Newcomer blog, https://atasavvynewcomer.org.)

Some translation projects involve a lone translator, while others allow the translator to choose an editor. My own experience comes from working for direct clients, where I almost always choose an editor to work closely on a translation with me, or we switch roles and I’m the one who edits my colleague’s translation. Even if you don’t work for direct clients, it’s useful to be prepared to find the right collaborator when the time comes.

Some agencies will pay you a rate that includes both translation and editing so you can hire your own editor. Although not all that common, this is not unheard of, so it’s good to be prepared.

Reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of your colleagues could also come in handy when choosing a practice partner. If you’re a beginner looking to hone your skills, it can be helpful to find a colleague to give you feedback.³

To really master the art of finding the right editor for each project, you’ll need to keep an open mind and break free from some common misconceptions you may have inherited from the way translators usually work with translation agencies.

**MYTH 1: BOTH THE TRANSLATOR AND EDITOR MUST BE NATIVE SPEAKERS OF THE TARGET LANGUAGE**

Many in the translation industry believe they should only translate into their native language. Others assert that they are competent to translate in both directions. Whatever one’s position on this debate, it seems to be predicated on the paradigm of working alone.

However, it’s only natural that a translator will excel when paired with an editor with complementary strengths and weaknesses. Sure, there are some projects where it makes sense to have two native speakers of the target language. But if you carefully consider each project, I believe you’ll find there are some instances when you would be better off pairing a native speaker of the source language and a native speaker of the target language.

I’m not saying that any old native speaker of the source language will do. I’m referring to someone who masters their source language (the project’s target language) at a high level. It’s commonly assumed that native speakers of the source language will stick close to the source and produce a translation that is not well adapted to the target language. However, I’ve found that the opposite can be true.

In fact, I’ve found that translations that stick close to the source are more likely to come from translators who are native speakers of the target language who are unable to fully comprehend the source. This sometimes leads them to translate word for word out of fear of getting the meaning wrong. On the other hand, native speakers of the source language tend to be well aware of the deeper meaning behind the source text and of subtleties that are difficult to translate. This allows them to explain the meaning and make pertinent suggestions to their colleague who is a native speaker of the target language.

I’ve also noticed that pairing a translator living in the target-language country with a translator in the source-language country can be of merit. In a certain sense, this bears similarities to the “native of source” and “native of target” pairing, as one colleague is more in tune with the source language and the other is more in tune with the target language. For practical reasons, it can also be helpful to have someone on the ground in the source-language country, where more of the demand tends to be. This person can help handle contact with the client in the source language.

Business Practices will alternate in this space with “The Entrepreneurial Linguist.” This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors.
Another factor that speaks in favor of working with a native speaker of the source language is when some specific combination of subject-matter expertise, text-type familiarity, and client-specific terminology is required. Sometimes you simply cannot find two native speakers of the target language with the right combination of skills, but adding a native speaker of the source language can be the missing puzzle piece.

**Even if you don’t work for direct clients, it’s useful to be prepared to find the right collaborator when the time comes.**

**MYTH 2: THE TRANSLATOR AND EDITOR SHOULD HAVE SIMILAR EXPERTISE**

Sometimes translation projects are categorized in very broad terms, such as technical, medical, legal, financial, or marketing. These are five of the most common specializations, when looking at how translation agencies assign projects and how translators tend to position themselves. According to this logic, you just need to find two legal translators to work on a legal project or two marketing translators to work on a project loosely classified as marketing.

However, the reality is that many projects are far more complex if you dig deeper. A website about a technical product may require both someone with strong expertise related to that particular type of product and someone with a knack for web copy. Although clients may be able to find both these skills in one person, that will not always be the case.

In fact, the search for the right subject matter expertise is exactly the reason I sometimes hire a native speaker of the source language to edit my translations, and also why I recently tried being the native speaker of the source language to edit my translations, sometimes hire a native speaker of the source language for the first time.

In the project where I tried getting my feet wet as a native speaker of the source language, a regular client of mine needed a translation in the opposite direction, but I was unable to find a native speaker with expertise in the subject matter. I was able to offer my knowledge of the client’s terminology and preferences along with the required subject matter expertise and called upon a native speaker of the target language to help ensure everything was well formulated and readable.

**MYTH 3: THE EDITOR MUST HAVE A BACKGROUND IN TRANSLATION**

It’s also relatively standard that a translator will be asked to edit another translator’s work. However, on some projects I’ve found it effective to work with a copy editor who is not a translator. They are usually especially good at suggesting improvements for flow and style and picking up on any traces of source-language interference in the target-language wording.

I’ve worked quite a lot with an editor trained as a copy editor who is a native speaker of the target language, but who still has a working knowledge of the source language. This person has more of a copy editor’s approach than a translator’s, but would still notice if I accidentally omitted something from the source language.

In other cases, it’s perfectly fine to work with a monolingual copy editor. In these cases, I serve as the link between the source and target to make sure the copy editor doesn’t change the meaning.

I’ve even experimented successfully with pairing a translator who is a native speaker of the source language with a monolingual copy editor who is a native speaker of the target language to take it to the extreme.

In addition, there are professionals other than copy editors whom you might want to have review your translation. For example, some cases call for a true subject matter expert, such as a practicing physician or attorney.

**THE RIGHT COMBINATION OF EXPERTISE BENEFITS EVERYONE**

I hope these reflections have helped clear up some misconceptions and open your mind to new possibilities. Above all, think carefully about each project and keep in mind that the right combination benefits everyone. You’ll learn more from working with someone who has skills that complement your own than with someone who has similar strengths and weaknesses, and the final translation will be more effective and accurate.

**NOTE**


David Friedman is a Swedish>English translator, copy editor, and copywriter specializing in finance and information technology. He was born and raised in Miami and moved to Sweden in 2007 to study language at Lund University. His translation career began in 2009. He has served on several committees of the Swedish Association of Professional Translators over the years. He is also a member of ATA’s Business Practices Education Committee.

Contact: david@friedmanstrategiccopy.com.
Interpreting and the Power of Now

Philosophers and spiritual leaders around the world have been talking about the importance of living in the NOW. Dredging up the past can be depressing. Excessive anticipation of the future causes anxiety. According to these sages, living in the moment is the key to happiness.

Interpreting, especially simultaneously, brings us into the NOW more effectively than many other activities. You can’t be in the booth interpreting while thinking about past events, future assignments, or current problems elsewhere. Unless you’re willing to be a mediocre interpreter, you must summon every cell of your body to engage in the task at hand. You’re listening to a speech, processing it, interpreting the words, making cultural adaptations, and modulating your voice accordingly—all at the same time. You must also be able to look up unknown terms online while doing all that! An easy task? Not at all! Addictive? Absolutely!

When you’re in the flow, you become one with the speaker and you can almost predict the next words.

High performance athletes also experience this adrenaline rush. Psychologists call it “being in the zone” or “in the flow.” That moment when a 120-mph tennis ball is served and the opponent is so hyper-focused that the ball seems to be in slow motion. When interpreting in the Zone, even a 200-words-per-minute speaker feels like a stroll in the park. Your entire nervous system is engaged in the task. There’s nothing except that moment. It doesn’t matter if there are 10,000 people listening to you, if the room is too hot or too cold, or there are people walking in front of the booth. When you’re in the flow, you become one with the speaker and you can almost predict the next words. There’s no space for depression, anxiety, frustration, or disappointment. Bliss is all there is. Magic is in the air!

When we reach the Zone, our brain activity shifts from the limbic system to the prefrontal cortex. When our brain’s activity is in the limbic system, we’re in fight-or-flight mode. In other words, we’re stressed out because we’re in survival mode and intelligence can’t perform to full potential. On the other hand, when our brain’s activity is in the prefrontal cortex, we’re at our most intelligent, creative, and have the most expanded consciousness. This phenomenon clearly explains why interpreters, like artists, musicians, and athletes, are so passionate about their crafts. The pay is much needed, of course, but it’s definitely not the main driver for what we do. We interpreters are all positively addicted to being in a booth because it’s our time machine: one that leads us only into the present, activating the feel-good area of the brain.

There’s a caveat to it, though. This blissful state is only achieved when there’s a balance between skills and challenge. If you don’t have the necessary skills, you won’t reach it because you’ll be struggling. If you do have the skills, but aren’t faced with a worthy challenge, you won’t reach it either because you’ll be bored out of your mind. You’ll also need the proper tools, such as water, wifi, and a crystal-clear audio feed (if you can’t hear well, you’ll only be flowing into frustration). But assuming you have the proper skills and tools and you still can’t get into this super-productivity state, then ask yourself: “What am I missing here: interest, skills, or a worthy challenge?”

Do you often feel you’re in the Zone when interpreting? Share your thoughts with me via email.

Roberta Barroca has a BA in journalism, but interpreting is her true passion. She has been a Brazilian Portuguese<>English interpreter since 2007 and certified by the International Association of Conference Interpreters since 2014. Contact: rbbinterpreter@gmail.com.

Interpreters are a vital part of ATA. This column is designed to offer insights and perspectives from professional interpreters.
Fake News

Yes, I hate this buzzword as much as you do, at least as it’s used in the present political climate. But it did capture your attention, and, like it or not, there actually is some meaning associated with the concept of “fake news” in a more traditional sense.

I believe we’re dealing with several “fake news” items when it comes to translation, especially translation technology. I would like to talk about two of these items. The first is something I’ve discussed before at length, though my explanation must have been less than effective since it still dominates the thinking of many. The second item is something we might all be guilty of in some way.

MISCONCEPTION #1: WORKING WITH MACHINE TRANSLATION IS THE SAME AS POST-EDITING

The first conceptual misunderstanding is that working with machine translation (MT) is essentially the same as post-editing translation. Most of us translators know this is not true, but not because we were told so or taught that way.

It’s because we know that MT really is only one of many resources (alongside translation memories, termbases, corpora, dictionaries, and other online and offline resources) that can be used in the translation processes. We also know that most translation environment tools allow us to dynamically use (or not use) the content that comes from MT engines. Our proven experience stands in sharp contrast to the idea that post-editing (i.e., the correction of raw MT content) is the only way to use that technology.

Of course, we could say, “well, let others believe what they want to believe and let me do what I know is best for my business,” but I think there’s a problem with that kind of thinking. I’ve noticed how very difficult it is to talk about MT with anyone outside those who have some practical experience with it. That includes MT researchers and developers and, maybe more importantly, clients of ours who (are trying to) use MT. Typically, these individuals share the assumption that MT can be used by the translator only in the reactive way: the translator reacting to suggestions coming from the MT engine (i.e., post-editing). If that’s the assumption, then the projects offered to translators will be structured so only that kind of work with MT is possible, and the research and development into working with MT will look only into that avenue.

And this is not because of evil intent. Wordsmiths like us understand the power of words and language. If I have a concept in mind (such as how to work with MT), and the only language I have to apply to it is that of post-editing, it’s just very, very hard to change that. This is why we have to be patient, insistent, and strong in our communication that while there is this one way of working with MT output (in some cases, productively), in more cases than not there are other and better ways to work with that technology. Only then will we be sent a different kind of project and the research will look more deeply into other kinds of approaches.

MISCONCEPTION #2: AI EMULATES FUNCTIONS OF THE HUMAN BRAIN

This brings us to another topic, one where we ourselves might be helping to communicate something erroneous with unfortunate consequences. I’m talking about artificial intelligence (AI). There has been a lot of writing in this column and elsewhere about AI and its effects on the world of translation. Not only via neural MT, but as we discussed a few months ago, on a whole host of other kinds of technology that have an impact on the translation and translation management processes.

Clearly, we need to talk about and understand AI. Not like an AI researcher or developer would, but so we can have a healthy estimation of how much it supports our work now and in the future. But we’ve been led astray on a path littered with our own words and our own imagination. Terms like “neural MT,” “artificial intelligence,” and “deep learning” all seem to suggest that these are processes that emulate functions of
the human brain. And this is exactly what pop culture and news outlets also want us to believe.

**I believe we’re dealing with several “fake news” items when it comes to translation, especially translation technology.**

The fact? It isn’t true. How do I know? Because we don’t understand our brains. We don’t know how memories are stored. We don’t know why some parts of the brain are responsible for some functions but can also be completely reconfigured. We don’t even know whether brain activity is actually a matter of computation or a completely different kind of process. We don’t know what causes moods, creativity, intelligence, wit, and emotions. And we certainly don’t know what “mind” and “consciousness” are. We do know some impressive numbers (100 billion neurons, 10 trillion synapses, etc.), and lots of people are working very hard and making good progress on understanding more and more about the human (or really any) brain. But we’re still very far from having a good grasp on this most elusive of realms.

So, is there no artificial intelligence? Well, yes, there is, but it’s just that it doesn’t work like the human brain. In fact, the term “artificial intelligence” is incomplete. We should always refer to its full and technically correct moniker, which is “narrow AI.” (That already sounds a lot better, doesn’t it?)

Narrow AI is the ability of a machine to non-concurrently process large amounts of data and make predictions exclusively on the basis of that data. That’s what we have today, and computers are incredibly good at it. Much better than we are.

General AI (also referred to as “Artificial General Intelligence,” or AGI), on the other hand, may never actually be achieved. We don’t even know whether AGI will be built on the basis of narrow AIs’ current technology. If we ever reach true AGI, machines will be able to reason, use strategy, make judgments, learn, communicate in natural language, and integrate all of this toward common goals. (And, yes, also likely do a good job with translation and pretty much everything else.)

A few weeks ago I did a presentation for a class taught by a super-smart developer who also works for a large technology developer. I explained the differences between narrow AI and AGI, emphasizing as I did here that we don’t understand how our brain works and that it isn’t a model for our current state of AI. At the end of my talk a number of questions were raised, to which my developer acquaintance responded by explaining that our current form of AI is modeled on the human brain. This was exactly the opposite of what I had just said, though I think he didn’t realize it. If we’ve been taught a certain concept over and over and over again, it’s not a matter of hearing the opposite once and being able to replace it easily. It takes a lot of patience and time.

**KEEP WORKING TO CHANGE PERCEPTIONS**

Let’s teach ourselves and others that today’s artificial intelligence doesn’t emulate the human brain (and it’s entirely possible that it will never be able to do so). Let’s keep on repeating to the rest of the world that there are many ways to use MT, sometimes better than those that are assumed by default. We might just be able to turn that “fake news” into real and helpful news. ☺

**FURTHER READING**


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Regular expressions (also known as RegEx) are a very powerful resource and open a full range of possibilities in different programs, including some computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. You can think of regular expressions as a search-and-replace function on steroids. Regular expressions can assist our translation work by allowing us to search, replace, and filter text in ways that would otherwise be impossible in our software tools.

Have you ever wondered how much easier it would be if you could:

- Perform two or more separate searches at the same time (e.g., searching for different forms of the same term, or perhaps for different words altogether)?
- Filter text in your CAT tool to display only those segments that are capitalized differently between the source and target?
- Search a glossary for all capitalized headwords and change them to lowercase while leaving acronyms and other terms that are in all uppercase unchanged—and do all this in a single operation?
- Filter text in your CAT tool to find the segments where the end punctuation differs between the source and target?
- Filter text in your CAT tool to display only the segments that contain certain words in the source, or the segments that don’t contain a specific word in the target?

In short, have you ever wondered how much easier it would be if you could do something beyond what the normal search-and-replace function can do? If yes, then regular expressions may help you.

At first, regular expressions may appear cryptic, but once you’ve learned the basics and seen how useful they can be, you’ll be able to decide how much time you want to invest to become more proficient at using them. The following will focus on using regular expressions for searching, replacing, and filtering text in CAT tools such as SDL Trados Studio, memoQ, or Xbench. CAT tools also use regular expressions for creating segmentation and auto-translation rules, or for protecting tags.

**WHAT ARE REGULAR EXPRESSIONS AND HOW CAN THEY HELP TRANSLATORS?**

A regular expression is a special sequence of characters or symbols that define a search pattern. This pattern is then used to search for (or replace) specific instances of words or phrases in a text. Regular expressions are used by search engines, text editors, text processing utilities, and for lexical analysis.

The simplest regular expressions use no symbols, just normal characters. For example, to find all instances of words that contain “able,” you would use the regular expression comprising the search string “able,” which would not only find the word “able,” but also “enable,” “able-bodied,” and “agreeable.” But if this was all that regular expressions could do, they wouldn’t be interesting, or particularly useful, or challenging to learn.

As we’ll see from the examples that follow, what makes regular expressions powerful are the various symbols and characters you can use with them. (Please note that the regular expressions appear in red in the examples.)

**WAYS TO USE REGULAR EXPRESSIONS**

**Finding Different Forms of the Same Term:** Here is how you can use a regular expression to ensure that the terms “gray” and “preamplifier” are spelled consistently in your translation:

- gr(a|e)y or gr\[ae\]y: Finds the word “gray” spelled both with an “a” (“gray”) and with an “e” (“grey”).
- pre[- ]?amplifier: Finds instances of “pre amplifier,” “pre-amplifier,” and “preamplifier.” (See Figure 1.)

Let’s see how these regular expressions work.

- gr(a|e)ly: This regular expression searches for the letters “gr” followed by a group (enclosed in parentheses) that contains an alternative spelling (marked by the pipe symbol “|”): either the letter “a” or “e.”
- gr[a|e]ly: Here we do the same, but this time using a set (enclosed in brackets) of the characters possible in that position: the letters “a” or “e.” (Note: both the group and the set in these examples represent searches for only one letter, but provide alternatives for which letter that could be.)
■ Pre[-\-]amplifier: This expression uses a set (enclosed in brackets) of a space or a hyphen to match “Pre amplifier” or “Pre-amplifier,” followed by a question mark. The question mark symbol is a quantifier that tells the regular expression how many times the preceding element or character should be matched. The question mark quantifier means “0 or 1” times. So, this regular expression searches for words containing “Pre,” followed either by a space, hyphen, or by nothing at all (this is where the “zero times” comes into play), followed by “amplifier.” (Note: In Xbench, this regular expression would need to be changed to Pre\[-\-\]amplifier.)

Searching for Multiple Words at the Same Time: Let’s say you've just received a long translation to edit. Since it was done by translators from different countries, you notice that they used different words for the same term. You want to filter the target text to see all the segments that contain either the words “melocotón” or “durazno,” two alternative translations for the word “peach.” Using the simple regular expression (melocotón|durazno) does the trick. (Note that searching for alternatives is not limited to only two terms.)

Finding All Segments Where Target Capitalization Doesn’t Match the Source: The following pair of regular expressions can be used to ensure that capitalization in your target document matches capitalization in your source:

■ ^[A-Z] (capitalization in the source)
■ ^[a-z] (capitalization in the target)

This works in the text filter of tools like memoQ, Studio 2017, or Xbench to find segments that are capitalized in the source text but not in the target. (In these tools, you would use the regular expression search mode and select “match case” or “case sensitive.” See Figure 2.) In the examples above, the caret symbol (^) at the beginning of the regular expression signals the beginning of a string or segment. This is followed by two sets of letters in brackets. Each set contains ranges: the hyphen between the letters marks the range within the set. The first set is the range of all uppercase letters and the second set marks the range of all lowercase letters. You can specify different ranges as necessary and have several ranges in a set. For example, you can use [A–G] to designate the range of all uppercase letters from “A” through “G,” and [0-9A-Za-z] to designate the range of all digits and all capital or lowercase letters.

Normalize Capitalization of Headwords in a Glossary: Let's say you have a glossary in a tab-delimited format and it’s a mess: some headwords are capitalized, some are not, and some are acronyms in all uppercase. When preparing to import the glossary into your termbase, you decide you want to find all the capitalized headwords and replace them with lowercase while leaving the terms that are all in capital letters untouched. That is, you want to change this:

| Acción correctiva | Corrective action |
| ácido nitrilotriacético | NTA, Nitrolotriacetic Acid |
| ADN recombinante | Recombinant DNA |
| bajada del nivel de agua | drawdown |
| Datos EMAP | EMAP data |
| DDT | DDT |
| Desperdicios domésticos | Household waste |
| Empaque a prueba de niños | CRP, Child-Resistant Packaging |

into this:

| acción correctiva | corrective action |
| ácido nitrilotriacético | NTA, Nitrolotriacetic Acid |
| ADN recombinante | recombinant DNA |
| bajada del nivel de agua | drawdown |
| datos EMAP | EMAP data |
| DDT | DDT |
| desperdicios domésticos | household waste |
| empaque a prueba de niños | CRP, child-resistant packaging |

You can do this in a text editor like Notepad++ using a pair of regular expressions: (^M)([A–Z])[0–9A-Za-z]) in the search field, and $1$ in the “Replace” field. (See Figure 3.) Let's walk through the process.

In the first highlighted box in the “Find what” section in Figure 3, we start by telling Notepad++ to search for the beginning of a line (represented by the symbol “^”) or a tab character (\t), and then for a
word that begins with any capital letter ([A–Z]) followed by any lowercase letter ([a–z]). Each of these items is enclosed in parentheses to form its own group. In the second highlighted box in the “Replace with” section, we tell Notepad++ to replace the beginning of the line or tab character (^\t) in the first group—in Figure 3, ($1$) indicates the first group—with the same character. We then tell Notepad++ to replace each initial capital letter (L) in the second group with the same letter, but lowercase ($2$), and to leave the third group unchanged ($3$). The end result: Notepad++ will search for words consisting of a capital letter followed by a lowercase one and skip any acronyms that are all uppercase.

Finding All Segments Where the End Punctuation Doesn’t Match the Source: Here are two regular expressions you can use to ensure that punctuation in your target text matches the punctuation in the source:

- \$ (punctuation in the source)
- \[^].$ (punctuation in the target)

These expressions find all segment pairs that end with a period in the source text but not in the target. In the first expression, the “$” signals the end of a string or segment, and the backslash (\) followed by the “.” signals the period.

(The backslash is the escape character.)
This tells the regular expression to find all segments that end in a period. In the second expression, the caret inside the set marks negation, so [^.] indicates “any character that is not a period.” Therefore, [^.]$ will find all the segments that don’t end in a period. (See Figure 4 on page 28.) You can modify this expression to search for other punctuation marks (e.g., \$ and \[?\]$ would find all segments ending with a question mark in the source but not in the target).

Regular expressions are difficult, but they can help you filter and search text in CAT tools such as Studio, memoQ, or Xbench in ways that would be impossible without them.

Finding All Terms Enclosed in Double Quotes: You can use these regular expressions to find all quoted terms in a document so you can add them to your termbase:

- (“”).*?(“”): This finds all items enclosed in double quotes—both straight and curly quotes. First, the regular expression finds the opening double quotes—either straight or curly. Then it finds the content enclosed in the quotes, ending with the closing double quotes. In this expression the “.” means “any character that is not a paragraph mark (new line).” The asterisk “*” is another quantifier that means “between zero and any number of times,” while the question mark “?” here means “but only until you find the first of the following character.” Without the question mark, the regular expression would find matches until the last closing double quotes in the segment. This regular expression works in both memoQ and Studio. (See Figure 5.)

- (“”).[^”]*?(“”): The [^”]* means “any content that is not a closing quote.” This regular expression is similar to the one above, but also works in Xbench (the first one doesn’t). Remember, not all tools use the same regular expression search engine, so what works in one tool may not work the same way in another.  

**HOW DO YOU LEARN REGULAR EXPRESSIONS?**

A good way is to start with a tutorial. The best I know is online at Regular-Expressions.info (www.regular-expressions.info). Next, get into the habit of expressing in words what you want to do and try to see how to convert that in regular expressions. There are also several tools and websites that can help you build and test regular expressions.

**Expresso**

www.ultrapico.com/expresso.htm

Expresso is free for use with .NET regular expressions only (i.e., with the regular expressions used in Studio and memoQ).
## REGULAR EXPRESSION CHEAT SHEET
(Note: These are some of the more important RegEx symbols. See the references on page 31, or your CAT tool help file, for more.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RegEx Symbol</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>Set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Any character that is not a paragraph mark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Quantifier: matches the previous character one or more times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Quantifier: matches the previous character between zero and more times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{n}</td>
<td>Exact quantifier: matches the previous character exactly n times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{n,m}</td>
<td>Exact range quantifier: matches the previous character between n and m times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^</td>
<td>Designated the beginning of a string or segment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$</td>
<td>Designated the end of a string or segment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Range operator: for example, [A–D] is the range of all capital letters between A and D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\t</td>
<td>Tab character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\d</td>
<td>The class of all digits, so any digit. The same as [0–9].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\s</td>
<td>The class of all white space, so space, non-breaking space, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[^0-5]</td>
<td>Negated class: this means “no digit between 0 and 5”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\</td>
<td>Escape character: used to search for a character that otherwise would mean something else in a regular expression. For example, to search for a question mark, we must escape it: ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1, $2, etc.</td>
<td>In a replacement operation, these represent the first group, the second group, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\L</td>
<td>In a replacement operation, this means to change the letter following the “&quot; to lowercase. Note that this will not work with accented characters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\U</td>
<td>In a replacement operation, this means to change the letter following the “&quot; to uppercase. This will not work with accented characters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RegEx Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RegEx Example</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre[- ]?amplifier</td>
<td>Finds “amplifier,” “pre-amplifier,” and “preamplifier” (Studio and memoQ).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre[\ ]?amplifier</td>
<td>Finds “pre amplifier,” “pre-amplifier,” and “preamplifier” (Xbench).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(apple</td>
<td>orange)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&quot;.*?&quot;)</td>
<td>Finds all items enclosed in double quotes (both straight quotes and curly quotes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>([&quot;&quot;«&quot;&quot;]).*?([&quot;&quot;»&quot;&quot;])</td>
<td>Finds all items enclosed in double quotes (both straight quotes and curly quotes), but this will also find three different types of double quotes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>([&quot;&quot;.&quot;&quot;]).*?([&quot;&quot;→&quot;&quot;])</td>
<td>Finds all items enclosed in double quotes (both straight quotes and curly quotes), and it finds them even when mismatched (e.g., opening straight quotes and closing curly quotes, and vice versa). Note that ([&quot;&quot;.&quot;&quot;]).*?([&quot;&quot;→&quot;&quot;]) without the question mark will find items from the first opening quote to the last closing quote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>((?&lt;=\s)</td>
<td>^)[-+(]\d+(,\d{3})*\d+)?)?((?=$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^([^\s]\s.)*$</td>
<td>Finds all segments that don’t contain the search string (works for memoQ and Studio, not for Xbench).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-&quot;search string&quot;</td>
<td>Same as above, but works for Xbench (with Power Search on).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Regular Expression Cheat Sheet cont.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RegEx (Source)</th>
<th>RegEx (Target)</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^[A-Z]</td>
<td>^[a-z]</td>
<td>This works in the text filter of a tool like memoQ, Studio 2017, and Xbench—together with the selection of “Regular Expressions” and “Case sensitive”—to find the segments that are capitalized in the source but not in the target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>^[^.]$</td>
<td>Finds mismatched closing punctuation (in this case, the period, but the same regular expression can be adapted to search for other punctuation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;((\?!,:;)$=1&quot;</td>
<td>-@1$</td>
<td>(Xbench, with Power search on) Finds mismatch in closing punctuation between the source and target. This is for several marks at a time. (Thanks to Oscar Martin of ApSIC for suggesting this pattern.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Search Field</th>
<th>Replace Field</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>^([A-Z])([a-z])</td>
<td>\L$1$2</td>
<td>(At the beginning of a line, with match case on) Searches for all strings at the beginning of a segment that begin with an uppercase letter followed by a lowercase letter and replaces them with all lowercase. This skips words (such as acronyms) that are all uppercase.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(?t)([A-Z])([a-z])</td>
<td>$1\L$2$3</td>
<td>(After a tab) Same as above, but after a tab, instead of at the beginning of a line. These two RegEx search and replace strings are useful for converting to lowercase glossaries that were written with capitalized entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(^</td>
<td>\t)([A-Z])([a-z])</td>
<td>$1\L$2$3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Regular Expressions 101
**https://regex101.com**
A free online tool that explains what each element of your regular expression does.

### Regex Buddy
**www.regexbuddy.com**
Regex Buddy is a commercial tool that will integrate with your favorite searching and editing tools for instant access. It will also help you collect and document libraries of regular expressions for future reuse.

Regardless of the tool you use, a general suggestion is to keep a list of the regular expressions you use and write a brief description to remember what each does. No need for anything fancy, a simple text file will do. (See Figure 6 on page 29 for an example.)

### Notes
1. Based on the definition provided by Wikipedia.
2. This, unfortunately, doesn’t work for accented letters, which are left unchanged.
3. The backslash is used because the dot has a special meaning in regular expressions. When you need to search for the period itself, you need to escape it. For certain regular expression engines, when within a set (but not elsewhere), the dot just indicates the period character.
4. My thanks to Josep Condal of ApSIC for suggesting this regular expression for Xbench.

### Additional References
- **Multifarious**
  **https://multifarious.filkin.com**
  Paul Filkin’s blog; he often writes about how to use regular expressions in Studio.

- **Translation Tribulations**
  **http://www.translationtribulations.com/**
  Kevin Lossner’s blog is a great resource for memoQ, with various posts that explain how to use regular expressions to fine-tune memoQ.

- **Regular-Expressions.info**
  **www.regular-expressions.info**
  A great tutorial and reference site that covers regular expressions in depth.

- **RegExLib.com**
  **www.regexlib.com/Default.aspx**
  The internet’s first regular expression library.
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Interpreters: Proof of a degree or certificate in interpreting (acceptable programs to be determined by ATA’s Education and Pedagogy Committee) and one letter of reference from a client or supervisor.

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• Copies of records of business activity, such as Schedule C, corporate tax returns, 1099s, invoices, or work orders.

Persons Professionally Engaged in Work Closely Related to Translation and/or Interpreting: Evidence of at least three years of work in a closely related field, which may include either of the following:

• Teaching appointment letters; or
• Terminology/lexicography research studies.

Why Become an ATA Voting Member?

ATA voting membership opens doors to participation in the association—take part in ATA elections, volunteer for division and committee roles, and increase your professional networking possibilities. It’s your opportunity to help shape the future of the Association.

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The application to become a voting member is free and online. No paperwork is required at the time the request is submitted, but the member must agree to provide the necessary documentation if audited.

To submit your request to become an ATA voting member, visit: http://bit.ly/ATA-Active-Member-Review today!
ATA Certification Exam Preparation Workshops

In recent years, ATA has focused on providing those individuals who are interested in becoming ATA-certified with opportunities to learn more about the exam and hone their skills. Besides informational updates on ATA’s website, regular columns by members of the Certification Committee in *The ATA Chronicle*, and a variety of sessions at ATA’s Annual Conference, ATA has also explored options for holding regional exam preparation workshops for candidates. The first workshop, held in Boston in January 2018, was well attended and well received.

Participants left with a very good sense of whether they were ready for the exam.

The second workshop in this series took place in mid-April in Alexandria, Virginia. That same weekend, ATA’s Board of Directors met in conjunction with the Certification Committee and Language Chairs meetings. (Each exam language combination has a language chair administering the passage selection and graders. ATA currently offers testing in 30 language combinations.) Scheduling the workshop to coincide with these meetings, which also took place in Alexandria, certainly made the logistics easier.

The April workshop was for Spanish only: an English into Spanish session in the morning, and a Spanish into English session in the afternoon. Each session was presented by two veteran graders working in the respective language pairs. Below are some highlights from these sessions, which are similar to those offered in recent years during ATA’s Advanced Skills and Training (AST) Day, which takes place the day before the ATA Annual Conference.

Two Graders for Each Practice Test: Those who registered for the April workshop were sent a sample ATA practice test to translate and submit to the two presenters before the workshop. Participants were instructed to try to simulate actual exam conditions when working on the test (e.g., only using approved software and reference materials, and completing their work within 90 minutes). These tests were graded exactly the same way as a regular practice test, with the grader supplying brief explanations of errors and acceptable solutions, as well as some overall comments to the translator. However, the advantage of participating in this workshop was that the two presenters from each session graded the practice tests in the respective language pairs. (A regular practice test is only graded by one grader.) After grading the practice tests, the presenters selected typical errors to include as examples in the workshop. If participants returned their practice tests by the deadline, they got the graded tests.
back at the end of the workshop. Those who did not return their practice test by the deadline received marked tests later.

**More Time Spent Discussing Translation:** In some earlier iterations of the workshop, a substantial amount of valuable time was spent discussing the mechanics of taking the exam and the grading process. For the April workshop, once they registered, participants received reading materials and a video link where they could review all that information in advance so that the actual workshop could focus exclusively on translation activities.

*As in previous instances, the workshop was very well received. Participants were especially appreciative of the detailed feedback, and the hands-on approach of using the participants’ own work was considered especially effective.*

**Dispelling Myths about the Exam:** Following a discussion of the common reasons why people fail the exam, the various error categories were reviewed, including specific examples taken from actual exam passages used in the past. This was an opportunity to dispel some common myths: that punctuation rules are the same in English and Spanish (they actually differ substantially, and error points on that account can mount rapidly), or that the syntax of the original must be preserved in the translation (this is not the case if the result will sound awkward or unnatural). The English into Spanish presenters addressed the misconception that candidates should write in a particular “flavor” of Spanish. They reassured participants that as long as they’re consistent in the variety chosen and avoid obscure localisms, they will be fine.

**Detailed Error Review:** In the second part of each session, the presenters reviewed the submitted practice tests. Each sentence was discussed in detail, looking at typical errors as well as acceptable solutions. In some cases, the participants themselves were invited to use the Certification Program’s own grading tools to assess each rendition and compare notes. The presenters then offered their assessment, along with the rationale behind each grading decision, which prompted additional discussion. Participants were encouraged to ask specific questions about anything not covered or to request further explanation or clarification as needed. For example, at the end of the Spanish into English session, the presenters demonstrated how the Corpus of Contemporary American English\(^1\) can be used by translators to verify the usage of terms and collocations.

**MAXIMIZING CANDIDATE POTENTIAL ON THE EXAM**

As in previous instances, the workshop was very well received. Participants were especially appreciative of the detailed feedback, and the hands-on approach of using the participants’ own work was considered especially effective. Participants left with a very good sense of whether they were ready for the exam, with some deciding that they needed more time and study.

ATA plans to continue offering these workshops at various locations and hopes to expand them to other language pairs in the future. Both Spanish sessions will also be offered at this year’s AST Day during ATA’s Annual Conference in Palm Springs, October 23–26.

**NOTE**

1. Information on the Corpus of Contemporary American English can be found at www.english-corpora.org/coca.

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