From the President
Caitilin Walsh
president@atanet.org

Data and Stories

Fewer than 8% of college students study a foreign language, and of those, only a fraction graduate with a language degree. Only 10 states require a foreign language for high school graduation—a skill level far too low with which to work. These numbers stand in stark contrast to reality. We’ve seen 5-8% growth in translation and interpreting jobs since 2005, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics predicts 46% growth from 2012-2022. The language gap is already apparent, with 11% of employers saying they would hire bilingual employees—if they could find them—and that doesn’t even count demand for language teachers and translators and interpreters.

With these numbers in mind, I recently trekked to our nation’s capital to join other language stakeholders at the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) Language Advocacy Day: educators, business leaders, and translation and interpreting industry representatives. Our mission was to talk to our legislators about recognizing the impact of the language industry on the national interest (both commercial and in terms of national security); to preserve the flexible labor model used by the industry; and to connect the industry to federal jobs development and training programs—and that means building a solid cadre of skilled linguists.

Key for most American language students is time spent studying abroad. Chatting with fellow delegates, I noted that almost all of us—national leaders in the language industry—benefitted from exchange or foreign study programs with names like Fulbright and Foreign Language Assistance Program. We spent two days fanning out over Capitol Hill and in meetings with the Department of Education spreading our facts and figures as well as our personal stories to keep these and similar programs alive.

Because the more than 14,000 public school districts (and over 33,000 private ones) in the U.S. have complete control over their curricula, it is next to impossible for an individual or single business to effect change. It makes sense for associations to engage with government agencies, and ATA does just this:

• ATA is a member of JNCL-National Council for Languages and International Studies, the lobbying organization for the language enterprise. ATA Past President Peter Krawutschke was re-elected as treasurer of this organization, which in turn supports us in articulating and communicating our positions to governmental agencies and other stakeholders.

• Our Interpreters Division and Interpreter Policy Committee are in direct and regular contact with Homeland Security and the Department of Defense, providing ongoing input on best practices in language access policy.

• We have a long-standing relationship with U.S. intelligence agencies and the academic institutions with which they work, sharing research on language skill assessment that is directly pertinent to our own certification program.

We also support chapters and regional groups as they advocate for issues that affect interpreters and translators, like language access for limited-English-proficient individuals and legislation that affects self-employment. Similarly, divisions help identify issues that may warrant advocacy or business practices support for our members—or both.

The strength of our Association lies in creating a collective voice. Joining together, we can influence issues that affect all or some of our colleagues in the language enterprise, as well as those who benefit from our services.

Caitilin

The Opportunity Cost of Freelancing

By John Milan

Setting a “fair price” for your services based upon your own needs and desires is a useful exercise for any self-employed professional, but it’s only the first step in a larger process.

A Deliberate Practice Approach to Skill Development

By Rachel E. Herring

While we know that practice plays a key role in developing interpreting competence, we also know that practice doesn’t always pay off as much or as quickly as we might like. Here’s an overview of skill acquisition studies and deliberate practice, including recommendations for maximizing the effects of practice time for trainers, students, and practicing professionals.

A Name by Any Other Name

By Tony Beckwith

How do you handle proper names in translation?

Increasing Quality and Productivity: Utilizing the Multilingual Resources of the European Union

By Silvia D’Amico

With 24 official languages, the European Union has developed excellent multilingual resources. This is important to us as professional linguists, since retrieving official documents is key when working with high-profile financial, legal, or medical projects.

An Interview with Reading in Translation’s Lucina Schell

By Lisa Carter

The founding editor of Reading in Translation discusses how she created a forum for reviewers of literary translation.
Tony Beckwith was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, spent his formative years in Montevideo, Uruguay, then set off to see the world. He moved to Texas in 1980 and currently lives in Austin, Texas, where he works as a writer, translator, poet, and cartoonist. Contact: tony@tonybeckwith.com.

Lisa Carter is a Spanish>English translator with several book-length titles and short stories to her credit. She received ATAs Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation in 2012, and her work has been nominated for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. She offers translation, editing, and consulting services through her company, Intralingo Inc. She blogs at http://intralingo.com/posts. Contact: lisa@intralingo.com.

Silvia D’Amico is a freelance translator working from English, Greek, and Spanish into Italian. After receiving her MA in conference interpreting and translation studies from the University of Leeds (U.K.), she was selected to take part in a training program at the Italian Translation Unit of the European Parliament in Luxembourg. Since then, she has been working as a full-time translator specializing in European Union affairs and legal and business material. She is currently serving as the secretary of the Northeast Ohio Translators Association, an ATA chapter. Contact: silvia@damicotranslations.com.

Rachel E. Herring has an MA in translation and interpreting from the Monterey Institute of International Studies and a master’s of advanced studies in interpreter training from the University of Geneva, where she is currently a doctoral student. She teaches interpreting at Century College (Minnesota) and is an interpreter at Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota. She has presented on interpreting and interpreter training in a variety of venues, and is involved in the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care’s webinar series for trainers. Her academic work centers on cognitive processes and skill acquisition. Contact: reherring@gmail.com.

John M. Milan is an ATA-certified Portuguese>English translator, economist, and independent researcher, with nearly 20 years of professional experience. He was a foreign language fellow at Ohio State University, where he earned an M.Sc. in applied microeconomics. He worked for 10 years in São Paulo, Brazil, as an adjunct professor of economics at Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado University, concurrently freelancing as a translator, interpreter, researcher, and consultant. He is the president of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters, an ATA chapter. Contact: john@milanlanguageservices.com.

Our Authors
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Across Systems GmbH
www.my-across.net

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Honda Language Services, Inc.
Japanese-English Translator
Marysville, Ohio

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Cross Cultural Communications
www.thecommunityinterpreter.com

31

National Security Agency
www.nsa.gov

40

Landmark Audio Technologies
www.LandmarkFm.com

31

University of Illinois
ma.translationandinterpreting.illinois.edu

37

Honda Language Services, Inc.
Japanese-English Translator
Lincoln, Alabama

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It’s that time again to start thinking about your plans for ATA’s Annual Conference. This year’s conference is being held in Miami, Florida, November 4-7, 2015. Maybe you’ve never attended, or maybe it’s been a while, but apart from the sunny weather and warm climes of Miami in November, it’s worth considering being part of the experience for the following five reasons alone!

Expand Your Network: Past conference surveys indicate repeatedly that the opportunity to network is one of the biggest draws for attendees. For many people, this means reconnecting with old friends—the people who understand you and the challenges you face as a translator or interpreter. But there are excellent opportunities to network with both clients as well as other translators and interpreters through innovative events like Brainstorm Networking and the Résumé Exchange. As the number of translators and interpreters advertising via the Internet and social media grows, the one-on-one connections that you can make in person at the conference become increasingly valuable. For instance, staying in the conference hotel, in the center of the “action,” is one of the best ways to ensure you stay well connected.

Learn a New Skill: With over 175 sessions across 25 different topics, including various languages and specializations, the conference offers something for everyone. Veteran attendees know that the best way to get something out of the conference is to push your boundaries and attend a session or seminar that you hadn’t considered before. Sharpening existing skills and exploring new areas to grow are the key to success as a freelance translator or interpreter.

Invest in New Tools: For many attendees, the Exhibit Hall is the highlight of the conference. Here you’ll find a variety of vendors specializing in equipment, products, and programs in translation and interpreting. Products and services run the gamut from the newest and greatest CAT tool, to specialized dictionaries and databases, to headsets and other equipment for interpreters. Recruiting agencies are also included in the exciting mix.

Get Involved! ATA has nearly 10,000 members, making it one of the largest associations in the world for translators and interpreters. Attending the Annual Conference gives you the chance to understand how the organization works and how you can apply your skills to help the Association grow even larger. There are a host of different activities organized by each individual division at ATA and by representatives from local chapters. There are also a number of sessions devoted entirely to various ATA programs—everything from School Outreach to preparing for the certification exam.

Re-energize Your Career: Let’s face it. Translators and interpreters are perhaps some of the most misunderstood knowledge-professionals out there. There aren’t many people who can relate to the issues we face. We’re asked increasingly to do more, to be faster, and to be more cost efficient. It can all be quite discouraging at times. Getting out from behind the computer or interpreting booth and spending a few days at the conference to pick up ideas, knowledge, and skills is one of the best investments you can make. The time away from the office can give us a fresh perspective on old problems and leave us feeling re-energized and rewarded.

So, when the e-mail arrives in your inbox to register for ATA’s 56th Annual Conference in Miami, seize the moment. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain—including a few days in sunny Miami. Make sure to keep checking ATA’s conference website for updates (www.atanet.org/conf/2015). See you there!
Earlier this year, ATA members were surveyed to see how they value their membership. Over 20% of the membership took the survey. Overall, 70% of ATA members who responded see their membership as very valuable or valuable. This compares favorably with the 2012 membership survey, which reported 65% of respondents thought that their membership was very valuable or valuable.

The top three primary reasons for joining (you could only give one answer) were:

• To become ATA-certified (26%).
• To indicate professional affiliation (21%).
• To find translation or interpreting jobs (14%).

These results were a surprise, as the 2012 membership survey showed that the top reason for joining was to find jobs. Also, annual surveys of lapsed members since 2011 have shown that the top reason for joining was to find jobs.

The top three primary reasons for remaining a member were:

• To indicate professional affiliation (21%).
• To remain ATA-certified (18%).
• To find translation or interpreting jobs (13%).

Directory of Translators and Interpreters: Survey respondents reported that the ATA Directory of Translators and Interpreters continued to be a prime resource for finding jobs and marketing their services. 71% of
Letters to the Editor

April “Certification Forum”: Four Myths about ATA’s Certification Exam

I was pleased to see the return of the “Certification Forum” in the April issue of The ATA Chronicle. More frequent updates and increased transparency on certification will, I am sure, be of interest to many ATA members.

As the word “Forum” implies discussion, here is a question to get the ball rolling: Can the Certification Committee let us know how the revised eligibility criteria have affected pass rates? I am bringing this up for two reasons.

1) Mercedes De la Rosa-Sherman stated in the column that: “… many people who speak two or more languages believe, often mistakenly, that this alone qualifies them to be professional translators, so they apply for ATA certification.” With the criteria requiring proof of translation-related education from an approved institution and/or work experience as a professional translator, surely these types of candidates should be ineligible for the exam.

2) According to the Hamm Report (Michael Hamm & Associates, ATA Accreditation Program Report, May 2000, page 7): “… it is safe to say that most certification programmes in the U.S. with pass rates less than 20% in multiple examination categories would assume that there is some problem with the examination, with the grading process, or the fit between the candidate population and the assessment instrument.” In many of the most popular language pairs, the most recently published data indicate multiple pass rates below 20%, often well below (“Certification Forum,” The ATA Chronicle, August 2014, page 23). It would be reassuring to know that the criteria for candidates have brought these pass rates above that 20% threshold. If not, will the Certification Committee be looking to make changes to the examination itself and/or to the grading process?

Sarah Puchner
Elm Grove, WI

Response from ATA’s Certification Committee Chair

ATA introduced eligibility requirements for the certification exam in 2003. Before that, the only requirement was ATA membership. Under the new system, which remains largely in place today, you had to: 1) have existing certification from a member organization of the International Federation of Translators (FIT), or 2) have an approved degree/certificate in translation or interpreting, or 3) have a combination of non-translation/interpreting degree and translation experience, or 4) have an advanced degree in any field. There’s also an ethics requirement for certification. In the first year that this system was in place, the exam volume decreased by nearly 50%. The overall pass rate rose slightly.

A 2013 change removed “advanced degree in any field” as a guaranteed route to eligibility and also introduced language proficiency testing through the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages as another way to qualify. The intention here was to better align the eligibility requirements with the qualified candidate pool, specifically by screening out extremely low-performing candidates and admitting candidates with strong skills who don’t satisfy the education and experience requirements. So far, we don’t have enough data from this change to draw any conclusions.

Eligibility requirements are a big point of interest right now, and the Certification Committee and ATA Board welcome input and suggestions.

David Stephenson
Certification Committee Chair
ATA President Caitilin Walsh participated in a panel discussion entitled “Unity in Advocacy” as part of the International Medical Interpreters Association’s Annual Conference on Medical Interpreting in Rockville, Maryland, April 23-26, 2015. Approximately 450 people attended, primarily medical interpreters. (You can read more about the conference on Twitter: #2015IMIA).

Caitilin’s primary focus was ATA’s advocacy efforts, both alone and in terms of the Association’s activities as part of the National Interpreter Association Coalition (NIAC).

• For ATA, she noted the growth of ATA’s Interpreters Division and referred to the work done in February to provide documentation and testimony to the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Justice on language policy. This effort has led to ongoing contact with these departments.

• For NIAC, Caitilin noted that the focus has been on individuals and associations listening and helping each other when it made sense. “It is clear, at least to me, that we are much stronger together than apart,” she said.

One comment during her presentation that was particularly well received was supported by Esther Navarro-Hall, from the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, which is also a member of NIAC:

The “silos” that make up the interpreter landscape cause a great deal of duplicated effort and dilute the effectiveness of these efforts. Instead of dwelling on our differences, we would do better to concentrate on our similarities.

Caitilin added that in the end, what happens at a cognitive level in the brain of an interpreter or translator is identical, and we can benefit from learning from each other and supporting each other.

When asked what stood out to her about the conference, Caitilin explained that it was the general appreciation of all advocacy, from individuals to associations. “That ATA was welcome is an indication of ATA’s role as the national umbrella organization for interpreters,” she explained.

The International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA) is a U.S.-based international organization committed to the advancement of professional medical interpreters as the best practice to equitable language access to health care for linguistically diverse patients. To learn more, visit http://imiaweb.org.
In the March 2015 issue of The ATA Chronicle, Jonathan Hine wrote an instructive article about what he calls setting a “fair price” for translation and interpreting services. He doesn’t describe a price that is actually fair, in terms of being just compensation for services rendered. Instead, he means the amount that an independent contractor (i.e., freelancer) would be willing to accept for services, based upon the contractor’s own needs and desires. This is a useful exercise for any self-employed professional, but it is only the first step in a larger process.

Calculating Opportunity Costs

Determining one’s own “fair price” is helpful in a few ways. The most important of which, from an economic standpoint, is the ability to compare it against opportunity costs. Freelancers should analyze their opportunity costs from job to job and client to client on a regular basis to make sure that the work they are doing is financially worthwhile.

Freelancers should analyze their opportunity costs from job to job and client to client on a regular basis to make sure that the work they are doing is financially worthwhile.
the job for client Y. Some numbers here might help illustrate this point.

Let’s say that client X and client Y both need four hours of interpreting services. If an interpreter charges $300 for these four hours of work for client X, then this amount must not only cover her preparation, travel time, and cost of services rendered, but also the money that she didn’t make by not accepting a job for client Y during that same time. If client Y was willing to pay $350 for those same four hours of work, then the opportunity cost of taking the job with client X would be $50.

This calculation is important. Freelancers should analyze their opportunity costs from job to job and client to client on a regular basis to make sure that the work they are doing is financially worthwhile. They can do so by running through the following exercise.

First, freelancers need to analyze their status quo. How many hours per day, week, month, and year are they working? How much money are they making during each of these time frames? What costs and expenses are incurred with this work? Answering these questions will provide a baseline for further analysis.

Second, they should determine what the market will bear for their services. This step is the opposite of calculating a “fair price.” Rather than looking at what they would like to make (as Jonathan Hine suggests), freelancers should look to the market to find out how much they could make. This is more complicated. For the individual, it is a trial-and-error process that requires researching price information and then attempting to charge as much as the market will allow.

From a practical standpoint, this means that with each potential job that comes in, a freelancer should offer an hourly or per-word rate (depending on the type of work) that is as high as he or she thinks the client will be willing to pay. At first, this process begins with an educated guess. Perhaps the freelancer has talked to colleagues or seen rates online charged by other professionals in the same language pair. If the client accepts the estimate without hesitation, then there is a good chance that the freelancer’s price was too low. This means that for the next job offered, the freelancer should attempt to push the rate up higher.

This trial-and-error process continues until the freelancer finds that clients are either not sending work (because the rate is far beyond the market rate), or they want to negotiate because the freelancer’s rate is close enough to what the market will bear.

It’s All About the Market Price

The important thing to be aware of is that in a competitive industry like language services, individuals aren’t able to set the upper boundary of their own prices; the market sets it for them. If a translator tries to charge more than the market price for his or her services, clients will simply look elsewhere for similar services at the going rate. There is some wiggle room here, of course. The market accepts a range of prices that vary with a person’s background, experience, skill set, etc. However, there is a maximum fee beyond which no client will be willing to pay, and this top rate is what the market will bear. Thus, the freelancer’s financial goal should be to test (and try to reach) that upper limit.

Freelancers are individuals in a competitive marketplace, and as such, they have what economists call limited market power. This limited power means that any single translator or interpreter will not be able to affect the average prices charged on the market because there is too much competition. In this situation, the market determines the upper boundary, while the individual determines his or her own lower boundary. This lower boundary is the freelancer’s own opportunity cost, as described in more detail below.

Covering Opportunity Costs

Again, to maximize income, and thus ensure that the opportunity cost is covered, a freelancer needs to constantly test that upper limit of what the market will bear. Testing that limit involves another economic concept: price elasticity of demand. In simple terms, elasticity measures how much variation there is in the demand for products or services, given a change in the price for said products and services. In a market that has elastic demand, when prices are low, there will be plenty of demand, but when the market price is high, demand will fall.

This price fluctuation is not an individual’s decision, but individuals can keep track of how demand for their services changes when they adjust their own fees. By recognizing how much work they gain or lose with different prices, freelancers gain an understanding of their market’s relative elasticity.

Each language pair has its own market price. Some are higher than others. The factors that determine these prices include the number of qualified translators or interpreters available in that market, the relative demand for that language pair, and the technical nature of the work being done, among many other aspects. Thus, opportunities, and opportunity costs, will vary from one language pair to another.

In any case, through trial and error, over time, translators and inter-
Interpreters will get a sense of how much they can charge for their services. Once they have a sense of this range, then they will know roughly how much money they can make in a day, week, month, and year, given their individual productivity.4

Once freelancers are charging what the market will bear, they will be able to calculate their opportunity costs to figure out whether their current professional situation is worth it. Another example here might help to explain this concept.

Let’s say that an interpreter is currently working as a freelancer, but this interpreter might be able to get a job working in-house for an organization. This is a classic case of opportunity cost on the labor market. The in-house job will have information about hours, salary, benefits, vacations, retirement plans, etc. If the organization is run properly, the salary should be considerably lower than what a freelancer would make doing the same amount of work. This is because the in-house professional will also earn benefits, vacation time, retirement, and most importantly, have job stability.

By working in-house, a language professional is giving up the extra income that can be made by charging the market price as a freelancer. In the opposite direction, by working as a freelancer, each job taken or rejected has a cost. Working as a freelancer or in-house has a cost. Being a language services professional rather than working in another industry has a cost. And these opportunity costs vary from person to person, depending on background, skills, experience, and aversion to risk.

This same analysis can likewise be done across industries. For example, let’s say that a freelance translator might also be able to work as a foreign-language teacher. The wages (and possible benefits) that could be earned as a teacher are the opportunity cost of being a translator, and vice versa. The same analysis described above can be done to determine the opportunity cost of working in one profession compared to the other.

**Every Decision Has a Cost**

The key to this economic analysis is recognizing that every decision has a cost. Each job taken or rejected has a cost. Working as a freelancer or in-house has a cost. Being a language services professional rather than working in another industry has a cost. And these opportunity costs vary from person to person, depending on background, skills, and professional goals.

By examining their own situation, freelancers can use opportunity-cost analysis to help them decide whether they are charging enough for their services, whether they are making enough on one job compared to another, and whether their chosen profession as translators and/or interpreters is financially worth it, in comparison to other work that they might be able or interested in doing.

**Notes**


2. There might be other non-financial reasons that make a job worth it, but that is an economic discussion for another time.

3. It is the market that will determine it.

4. Whether or not they will make that amount depends on other factors, such as the quality of their work, how much time/money they spend on marketing and advertising their services, and other similar factors.
On July 1, 2013, the European Union welcomed its 28th member state, Croatia, together with its 24th official language. The motto of the European Union (EU) is “unity in diversity,” and since it was established, the EU has been committed to multilingualism. As the number of official languages grew from four in 1958 to 24 in 2013, the EU commitment (and challenge) to provide its citizens with access to legislation in multiple languages fostered the development of online resources.

Today, EU treaties, regulations, directives, public documents, and databases are available online free of charge in several languages, and they can be a mine of information and prove very useful to language professionals working on a wide range of subjects. Whether you work on medical, financial, or technical texts, you can take advantage of several inter-institutional websites and databases in almost any language combination of the 24 official languages—that’s 552 language pairs! The following provides an overview of what some of these fabulous resources have to offer.

### Inter-Active Terminology for Europe
http://iate.europa.eu

Inter-Active Terminology for Europe (IATE) is a free EU inter-institutional terminology database, where EU institutions and agencies collect and share EU-specific terminology. It currently contains about eight million entries in 24 languages, which are accessible through the IATE website and downloadable in TBX format.

The database is extremely intuitive and easy to use. (See Figure 1 on page 13.) It consists of three mandatory fields (search term, source language, and target languages) and two optional criteria (domain and type of search). You insert the term for which you are looking in the “Search Term” field, select the source and target languages, and hit “Search.” You can select 23 languages as target languages, plus “Latin” and “Any” (to select all languages).

On the results page, you will see a list of all the results found in the database for that entry in the target languages you have selected. (See Figure 2 on page 13.) On the right of the screen, you will find some additional information that can help you evaluate the suggested translation. Each result is ranked with a star system that goes from one to four stars, based on whether that term/group of terms has been verified. The @ sign provides information about the term reference, so any
associated EU directive or regulation or other material will be displayed. The other icons indicate context, notes, and the full definition. All of this information can be retrieved by simply hovering over or clicking on the icons, or by clicking on “Full Entry” on the top right. Not every term is so detailed, but it generally gives you a solid start in your search for the correct term.

What are IATE’s pros and cons?

Pros:
• Intuitive and easy to use
• Reliability (new, full entries)
• Massive database
• Numerous language combinations

Cons:
• Duplicate entries
• Old entries
• Unverified entries

EUR-Lex
http://eur-lex.europa.eu
EUR-Lex provides free online access to all EU documentation, so it’s particularly useful to retrieve information included in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, EU law (treaties, directives, regulations, decisions, consolidated legislation, etc.), preparatory acts (legislative proposals, reports, green and white papers, etc.), EU case law (judgements, orders, etc.), international agreements, European Free Trade Association documents, and other public documents. All of this material is provided in 24 official
languages, and the portal itself is in all 24 official languages.

**Why Is EUR-Lex Useful?**

Certain financial and medical texts, or other documents pertaining to highly regulated fields, might mention EU directives or regulations and use the same terminology used within those texts. Being able to access these documents is vital to ensure that your translation is consistent with approved terminology. In addition, it might save you a lot of research time and improve the final quality of your translation. In fact, those official documents are the ones that professionals in the field have to keep in mind and refer to when they draft their own reports, contracts, statements, etc., and by using the same language, you prove yourself to be an expert in the field.

**How Do You Navigate EUR-Lex?**

The best way to navigate the website is through its search functions. On the home page (http://eur-lex.europa.eu), you will immediately find the “Search” box and the “Find results by” box. (See Figure 3 above.)

The “Search” box is self-explanatory and will result in a list of documents that contain the term/group of terms. If you type more than one word and are looking for exact matches, use “” as suggested. In the “Find results by” box you can search by document type and number. For example, if your source text refers to Directive 95/46/EC, you can retrieve it here easily.

Both search types (simple and by document) take you to the results page displaying all relevant documents. After you find what you're looking for, you can view it in all languages and formats available and even with a multilingual parallel view, which displays up to three languages at the same time. (See Figure 4 on page 15.)

**What Happens If You Don’t Use Official Terminology?**

If your source text mentions or refers to an official EU document, not following or retrieving official terminology might cost you more than you think:

- You’ll waste time researching and deciding on terms or groups of terms that have already been translated and approved in the industry.
- Your target audience might find your translation vague or ambiguous (if not incorrect), since it is highly likely that they’ll be familiar with official terms in their fields.
- You will not present yourself as an expert.

**CURIA**
http://curia.europa.eu

CURIA gathers all judgments, orders, and opinions from the European Court of Justice. A search box appears on the home page where you can type in the case number and other relevant information. So, for example, if you’re working on a translation and a judgment is mentioned, this is the first place you want to go. Once you type in all of the information, you can view the document in several languages and also consult the list of connected documents. You can
hover over the html or pdf icons and view a list of languages available. By clicking on the EUR-Lex icon on the right you will be linked back to EUR-Lex, which allows you to have a parallel view of two or three languages.

EuroVoc
http://eurovoc.europa.eu

EuroVoc is a multilingual, multi-disciplinary thesaurus that covers terminology from different EU fields. Terms are available in 24 languages. Although you can use it to search for terms and their translation, EuroVoc is great for building glossaries and term bases, or for study purposes.

The database is organized by domains and subdomains, and the relationship among terms can be an associative relationship, equivalence relationship, hierarchical relationship, etc. You can use the “Simple search” field to browse the site by subject and download the whole database by domain or language pairs.

EU Style Guide
http://publications.europa.eu

The Publications Office of the European Union has developed a style guide as a result of the requirement to publish official documents in 24 languages. The guide harmonizes writing practices while keeping the specific elements of each language. By doing so, documents in all languages are comparable, and different institutions can work and publish texts while taking into consideration common guidelines.

Who Uses the Style Guide?
Authors, editors, lawyer-linguists, terminologists, translators, proof-readers, and anyone else who works on EU texts.

What Does the Style Guide Include?
The style guide consists of four parts addressing the following: 1) the official EU journal, 2) general publications, 3) conventions common to all languages, and 4) publications in a specified target language. Parts 1-3 are identical in all languages, and Part 4 is specific to each official language. Although not all parts might be relevant to us as freelance translators, it’s still a good resource.

Part 4 is particularly useful. It contains rules on punctuation, spelling, conventions of lower and upper case, etc. Unlike a grammar book, it doesn’t teach you how to use punctuation or tenses, but it covers gray areas for each target language. For example, the section about the use of upper and lower case in Italian is particularly interesting. A common mistake among inexperienced translators from English into Italian is to follow the English capitalization, producing an incorrect translation that is unpleasant to read. This section also provides explanations on correct capitalizations and relevant examples.

There is a list of annexes at the end of the style guide. Particularly useful is Annex A5 “List of Countries, Territories, and Currencies,” which provides a comprehensive list of countries with the following information (we will use Poland as an example):

- Short name: Poland
- Full name: Republic of Poland
- Country code: PL
- Capital/Administrative Center: Warsaw
- Citizen/Inhabitant: Pole
- Adjective: Polish
- Currency: zloty, pl. złotys
- Currency Code: PLN
- Currency Subunit: grosz, pl. groszy

Resources to Save Time and Improve Accuracy

In conclusion, IATE is great for specialized terms and acronyms, EUR-Lex is the place to go to retrieve EU regulations, directives, etc., while CURIA collects EU case law. To build glossaries and improve vocabulary and style, EuroVoc and the EU Style Guide are extremely useful. Once you learn to use each resource appropriately, you will turn to them automatically and save yourself time and effort while producing a more accurate translation and an excellent finished product.

Notes
1. “Croatia has become the 28th country to join the EU,” http://bit.ly/EU-Croatia.
My favorite newspaper story in recent months was about a pet parrot that went missing from his home in California. Nigel was his name and he spoke with a British accent, which he’d picked up from his owner. Nigel disappeared for four years, and when he returned, he had lost his British accent and now chatters away in Spanish, though apparently not about where he has been.

Nigel was a popular name for boys in England in the mid-1900s, derived from the Latin Nigellus, with roots that snake back a long way to Norse and Gaelic. It is an utterly English name that has no non-English equivalent that I am aware of. The story about the parrot amused me and then got me thinking about proper names in literary works and how we approach them in translation.

To me, the name Nigel suggests an Englishman of a particular type from a particular period. I can almost see him, and I can certainly hear him. I arrive at this conclusion as one who, through family circumstances, life experiences, and education, is intimately familiar with British culture, but I suspect that those from other backgrounds would not necessarily make the same assumption. Surely there are names in every language imbued with unmistakable associations that are invisible to all but the respective cognoscenti. This cultural gap underscores the challenges faced by a translator when a proper name is not just a label that identifies a particular character, but is also a vehicle for nuances that the writer intended to convey to the reader.

More Than Just a Name
Translation theory, of course, addresses the question of proper names and discusses a variety of strategies that can be used for handling them. When the name is simply an identifying label and nothing more, there are those who suggest that it should be carried over to the translated text as is, untranslated, since it has no intrinsic meaning or connotation that must be communicated. This is a fairly widely held view, though its adherents tend to make a distinction between works of fiction and nonfiction, and approach each differently. Some, in fact, hold that “foreign” names add a hint of that other reality that satisfies translators and readers alike, though not always for the same reasons.

But it’s the other kind of name—the one that is loaded with meaning—that presents the most interesting challenges to the translator.
that presents the most interesting challenges to the translator. What to do, for example, with something like the title of Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest,* in which the author uses “Earnest” as both the name of one of his characters and as a pun that hinges on the plot of his play? What will the translator do when faced with a name like “Ebenezer Scrooge” in *A Christmas Carol,* the novella in which Charles Dickens took an existing word meaning “mean or miserly” and immortalized it as the name of his unlovable character?

These are proper names, certainly, but they are infused with meanings that cannot be ignored, that must be considered and dealt with, one way or another. These are also high-profile examples, with a notoriety that not every literary name will possess. Does that notoriety matter? Is the name already famous in the target culture? Should we keep the original name in the translation, or should we try to find a viable alternative that does the same work? A rose by any other name might indeed smell as sweet, but we are concerned here with words and meanings, not with fragrance.

**Moving Names Between Cultures**

The intriguing question of how proper names are handled when they move from one language—or indeed culture—to another is obviously nothing new. It is actually something with which most of us have been familiar our entire lives.

As a child growing up in Uruguay, I and my circle of little friends in the local British-American community read comics and watched cartoons (at the movies, since television had not yet arrived in our living rooms). Some of the characters we came to know and love were Walt Disney creations such as Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and Goofy. In time, Spanish-language versions of the comics and cartoons appeared, featuring *el Ratón Mickey,* *el Pato Donald,* and *Tribilín.* Ratón means mouse and *pato* means duck, so those names made perfect sense. *Tribilín,* however, was a word none of us knew. It was not a translation of the English word “goofy” and, to the best of our knowledge was not a Spanish word at all. A made-up name? This was interesting; a strategy that suggested that rules in this area were flexible and, in fact, could possibly be made up as one went along.

A search of the Walt Disney archives reveals that Goofy went by a variety of names. He was called *Dingo* in France, which is a good choice in French, but one that would have conjured up questionable allusions in the English-speaking world, especially in Australia. In Germany he used no alias at all and was known as Goofy. Slovenian children knew him as *Pepe,* which in Spanish is a widely used nickname for men called *José* (Joseph), and was probably far too common to have been considered as an option for the Disney character. Interestingly, he was called *Gufi* in Indonesia, which would have been phonetically ideal in Spanish. Much better than *Tribilín.*

**The Art of Name-Calling**

My earliest exposure to the concept of translated names occurred very shortly after I was born. This was in Argentina in the mid-1940s, when the State still insisted that babies could only be registered with “appropriate” Spanish names. My parents wanted to give me two English family names—Anthony Grenfell—but were prohibited from doing so by the laws of the land. Anthony could be translated into Spanish but Grenfell could not, so they eventually settled on an acceptable alternative and agreed to register me as Antonio Hugo in the Argentine registry of births, and then registered me with the British Consulate in Buenos Aires as Anthony Hugh. I thus began life endowed with dual identity as well as dual nationality. Interestingly, both Anthony and Hugh (but not Grenfell) now appear on the list of 9,817 names that are accepted by the Argentine authorities. Nigel is also on that list, which is a clear testimony to Britain’s deep roots in Argentina, dating back to the mid-19th century. The current policy states:

If a child is born in Argentina, their name must conform to a national list. The list of names permitted is extensive and if the desired name is absent from the list, it is possible to petition for it to be included. The main purpose of the list is to ensure appropriate names are chosen for children. Parents working for an embassy or with diplomatic status are exempt from this rule.²

Another childhood experience involved the nursery rhyme: “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me.” This was an early form of instruction and encouragement for victims of bullying, and the “words” in this context refer to the names children call each other. Name-calling doesn’t end with childhood, of course, and here again the cruel or affectionate epithets people use to refer to each other in literary works can be a challenge for the translator, since they often carry a great deal of cultural baggage. “Limey,” for example, is a mild nickname for the British that has been used widely in several contexts, notably by American soldiers during World War II. The name originally referred to British sailors and...
was derived from the Royal Navy’s custom of adding lime juice to their daily ration of rum as a way to prevent scurvy. It would behoove a translator to be aware of that backstory before deciding what to do with the term in, say, a chronicle of the Allied invasion of Normandy on D-Day. But I digress.

Getting back to the matter at hand, some of my early assignments in the field of translation came from agencies in New York whose clients were in the advertising business. They sent me long lists of words that were intended as possible brand names for products to be sold in Spanish-speaking countries, and my job was to decide if any of those names could be considered politically or socially incorrect, tasteless or obscene, or otherwise unacceptable by any stretch of the imagination in Latin American markets. Many translators have no doubt had similar assignments. I found that this work not only reminded me yet again of just how much meaning can lurk behind a seemingly innocuous assortment of letters. It also sharpened my sense of what a name could be in my two languages, and showed me how much humor one could find in one’s work if one were given this sort of leeway.

Today, thanks to a very different type of humor, a particular name has once again exploded beyond its linguistic and cultural borders and taken on an international life of its own in a way that can be neither planned nor forced, a result of random circumstances and—more so today than ever before—the inextricably interconnected nature of our global society. As I write, millions of people are marching through the streets of Paris and other world capitals with signs bearing a brief message: Je suis Charlie. We have used that name in many different contexts: Good-time Charlie, Checkpoint Charlie, Charlie Horse, and so on. Each version would normally prompt a translator to consider cultural contexts and connotations before deciding precisely how to handle it in another language. But in this case, there is no need to search for any alternatives; the Charlie referred to on the placards has acquired a universal meaning of its own, one that we all understand and that needs neither explanation nor translation.

All these ruminations underscore the crucial importance of our cultural awareness over and above our intimate knowledge of a pair of languages. They also remind us that the cultures and languages in which we work and which are so familiar to us are in a constant state of flux, and we must not fall behind. Myriad factors are constantly at play, from migrations of people that import new words, to technologies that create new terminology, to the ever-evolving languages of the young. As a translator, I must keep my ear attuned to all those subtle changes of meaning if I wish to remain competitive in my field. With all that in mind, I’m off to Buenos Aires tomorrow, to be Antonio again for a while and see how that feels. ■

Notes
Interpreting is a performance skill that requires the interpreter to balance a number of competing demands for attention. This involves quickly and accurately carrying out the cognitive processes of interpreting (listening, comprehension, analysis, language transfer, and production) while concomitantly managing internal and external factors such as personal reactions to the speakers and the content of the interaction, fatigue, noise, speed, and the behavior of others. It also requires intense concentration, stamina, self-monitoring skills, and the ability to make quick and effective decisions related to both linguistic and non-linguistic issues.

Given the complex nature of interpreting, it is not surprising that learning to interpret—as well as refining one’s skills over time—requires dedication and practice. Indeed, the need for ongoing skill improvement is a common theme in the codes of ethics for translators and interpreters, including ATA’s. The following provides a brief overview of skill acquisition and expertise, which is the subject of a growing body of scholarly literature, and introduces the principles of deliberate practice. Please refer to the resources listed on page 23 for a more in-depth exploration of these topics with regard to both translation and interpreting.
Acquisition of Performance Skills
Research into skill acquisition and expertise suggests that asking learners to perform a complex skill immediately may not be the most effective approach. Indeed, if you think about how people achieve and maintain competence of a complex skill, especially a performance skill, you’ll realize that they don’t just practice the skill itself. Tennis players don’t only play games of tennis; they practice serving, refine their stroke, and engage in conditioning activities. Similarly, musicians practice scales, arpeggios, and sight-reading in addition to performing entire works.

Acquiring and maintaining competence at complex performance skills tends to be more efficient when the task is broken down into smaller units that can be addressed separately during training (and subsequently through ongoing professional development). That is, we identify sub-skills within the larger skill—in our case, interpreting—that need to be developed in order to perform competently or improve performance. These sub-skills are smaller, more manageable tasks that students can develop systematically in (relative) isolation before combining them during performance. In the case of advanced students or practitioners, such an approach can help trainers identify areas of weakness more effectively and focus on them during practice.

Some skills lend themselves easily to such an approach (e.g., talking about decision-making separately from interpreting skills). Other sub-skills—especially the cognitive processes of interpreting—may seem more difficult to isolate, but it is possible to do so as part of a systematic approach to learning and practice.

Performance Improvement through Deliberate Practice
While we know that practice plays a key role in developing interpreting competence, we also know that practice doesn’t always pay off as much or as quickly as we might like. In fact, research has shown that while time on task is important, quality of practice tends to be a better predictor of performance improvement than quantity.²

What makes for quality practice? K. Anders Ericsson, a well-known researcher of expertise and skill acquisition, argues that skill improvement is more likely to take place when “individuals, who [are] motivated to improve their performance, [are] given well-defined tasks, [are] provided with feedback, and [have] ample opportunities for repetition.”³ This type of practice is known as deliberate practice approach to skill development.

Goals and Goal-Setting as Part of a Deliberate Practice Approach
We often think of goals and goal-setting in terms of personal goals, such as exercising more or procrastinating less. Educators and students are also familiar with the idea of goals in the sense of setting learning objectives for an individual class session or an entire course. In order to talk about goals within the context of skill acquisition and deliberate practice, however, we need to define the concept somewhat differently.

In this context we are referring to specific, attainable, measurable, and progressive performance goals that underlie and are the focus of a given activity or practice session. These characteristics of performance goals for practice are described further in the box on page 21.

Goals can operate at a number of levels and can be set for individuals or groups. They may also be set both by students and instructors. Students are generally able to set higher-level goals for themselves (such as “complete the course with a good grade” or “get better at interpreting”), but as novices they need the instructor’s knowledge of the skill to help them

One of the main jobs as an instructor is to identify goals clearly for students and to design activities to facilitate their progress toward each one in turn.
identify and work on performance goals as part of the skill acquisition process. It is the instructor who understands how the skill is acquired and must lay out a coherent skill progression and prioritize different goals at different stages of training.

Novice performers also tend to become overwhelmed in the absence of clearly identified performance goals. They do not yet know how the skill should look and feel as they carry it out, and are not yet able to identify successfully areas to focus on during practice or performance. As a result, they might not focus on any particular aspect or, alternately, focus on an aspect of their performance that may not be particularly helpful to them in their skill development.

One of the main jobs as an instructor is to identify goals clearly for students and to design activities to facilitate their progress toward each one in turn. Practicing professionals, for their part, may identify their own goals through reflective practice or may call on peers to help them identify areas for improvement.

**Goals Should Be:**

**Specific:**
What precisely is it that we are talking about? One salient characteristic of novices is that they do not know where to focus their attention. This is why it is important for trainers to focus learners’ attention on specific aspects of performance, especially in the beginning stages. For example, telling students to “do a good job” is not a specific goal. Instructing them to “re-direct parties consistently and smoothly to use the first person and talk directly to each other” is specific, as it tells students which aspect of performance should be the focus of this particular exercise.

**Attainable:**
Does the goal lie at the edge of the students’ current skill level? While focusing one’s efforts on something that one can already do well is not an efficient use of class or practice time, attempting something that is too far above one’s current level can be discouraging and demotivating. For example, telling students to “use appropriate strategies to manage the flow of communication” is probably attainable for beginners who have learned about dialogue interpreting standards of practice. “Successfully use note-taking strategies in support of accuracy and completeness during a three-minute utterance” is probably not an attainable goal for the same group of students if they have not yet had any training in note-taking.

**Measurable:**
How will the trainer and the student know whether the goal was met? Telling students to “produce a good target-language utterance” is not measurable, but telling them to “produce grammatically-correct target language utterances” is more specific, and therefore measurable.

**Progressive:**
How does the goal fit in with previous and future goals? The goals we set should fit together coherently, like pieces of a puzzle. They should build on existing skills and allow room for adaptation and increasing difficulty based on individual needs.

**While time on task is important, quality of practice tends to be a better predictor of performance improvement than quantity.**

**A Few Thoughts on Choosing Material and Exercises**
Goal-setting and the selection of training material go hand-in-hand. Material and exercises are not necessarily “good” or “recommended” in and of themselves. Rather, their usefulness is a function of how well they target the skills being worked on at the current level of skill acquisition. Instructors are well advised to outline clearly a skill progression for their students and identify performance goals within that skill progression before selecting, modifying, or creating material and exercises. The box on page 22 lists some questions trainers can ask themselves when identifying material and exercises that will serve their purposes, whether as part of a training program or for individual practice.

**Concluding Thoughts: The Benefits of Studying Skill Acquisition and Expertise**
The purpose of exploring the differences between novice and expert performance is not to pass judgment, to categorize interpreters into different skill levels, or to identify “better” and “worse” performers. Rather,
research into cognitive and performance differences provides insight into how novices become competent performers and how competent performers may continue to improve their skills over time. This knowledge, in turn, informs our approach to training and practice.4

Understanding the complexity of the interpreting task and the mechanisms of skill acquisition is reassuring to students and trainers alike. For trainers, the ability to predict some of the problems that students will face allows them to highlight these issues through their choice of classroom exercises or, alternately, to prepare students to deal with them successfully. It is also helpful for students to understand that some of the difficulties they face are in fact normal parts of the learning process. There are certain behaviors we expect of novices because they are novices, and other behaviors we expect of intermediate students or newly-practicing professionals. For example, the fact that a student gets stuck on words or stops listening when asked to take notes does not mean that he or she is a bad interpreter or cannot learn to interpret well. These behaviors are characteristic of novices and understanding them as such can normalize them for students so that they do not jump to the conclusion that they are bad or incapable interpreters just because they face a given difficulty.

Approaching training and practice through a skill acquisition framework and implementing a deliberate practice approach to skill development can help learners, trainers, and practicing professionals take a structured, rational approach to analyzing and improving interpreting performance.5

Notes

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Sample Questions for Activity Planning

1. What skill or subskill is this activity intended to train? What is the performance goal for the activity?
2. Is the material relevant? We make better use of our time if the material is related to the kind of work we do or are training to do.
3. What do I need to make the material appropriate for working on this goal? For example, if I am targeting delivery skills I might avoid using technical terminology.
4. Is the combination of a goal and (adapted) material within the range of what the students can do? Will the exercise be challenging but not impossible or overwhelming?
5. Is there content that needs to be taught before doing the exercise? Do my students have the knowledge and skills necessary to do what I am asking them to do? For example, students need to have been taught the basic principles of note-taking before I ask them to focus on note-taking during practice. Or, if I expect them to implement strategies for asking for clarification, then I must first teach them about such strategies.
6. What do I need to tell my students? Have I let them know what aspect of performance I want them to focus on, and how I expect them to do so? For example, if I want to ensure that students’ first exposure to simultaneous interpreting leaves them feeling capable and motivated, I might ask them to focus on producing complete, grammatical sentences rather than on achieving 100% accuracy.
7. How will my students and I recognize a successful performance? What are the concrete, measurable criteria by which I will judge success? Are these criteria clear to the students? The answers to these questions must take into account the students’ current skill level. For example, criteria for a successful performance will be different for a group of rank novices than for a group of practicing professionals.
2. For more information, see:


4. For more information, see:


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**Related Information on Skill Acquisition and Expertise**


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Lucina Schell translates poetry from Spanish into English and is the founding editor of the blog Reading in Translation, where translators review translated works. Her translations of Argentine poet Miguel Ángel Bustos appear or are forthcoming in Ezra Translation Journal, The Bitter Oleander, and Drunken Boat, and her literary reviews have been published in Ezra and in Zoland Poetry. Currently, she is completing an MA in writing and publishing at DePaul University. Lucina took the time to share more about Reading in Translation and its goals with me.

You were inspired by the PEN American Center Translation Committee’s work and Words Without Borders’ series “On

My purpose is to give translators a forum and a voice to be our own advocates when it comes to getting the type of reviews we’d like to see.

Reviewing Translations.” When was the moment you decided to create Reading in Translation?

A number of things came together to inspire Reading in Translation, which is now two years old. In 2012, I went to a panel on reviewing translations, held at my alma mater The New School, as part of the PEN World Voices Festival, which included translators, publishers, and reviewers from major publications. The translators complained that they were rarely mentioned in reviews except critically or in ubiquitous phrases such as “ably translated by ___.” The reviewers complained about the challenges of evaluating a translation from a language they don’t know or fitting commentary on the translation into strict word count limits. The publishers complained
that American readers don’t want to read translations as a justification for not mentioning translators in publicity material or reviews. We’ve come a little ways since then, thanks in large part to the advocacy work of the PEN American Center Translation Committee, but these conversations remain pertinent.

Around the same time, I had the opportunity to participate in an intimate course taught by Edith Grossman at the 92nd St Y, a nonprofit cultural and community center in New York City called “Reading Translations.” The course focused on comparative analysis of translations from a range of languages—from The Bible and Beowulf, to Eliot Weinberger and Octavio Paz’s much cited 19 Ways of Looking at Wang Wei, to Spanish and German poetry. The class gave me the confidence to evaluate translations from languages I don’t know and engaged my training as a comparative literature major. As a young translator starting out in the field, I thought that the challenges associated with providing reviews that evaluate the quality of the translation while acknowledging the translator’s contribution was an area where I have unique skills to contribute.

Later on, I learned about Words Without Borders’ series “On Reviewing Translations.” This in part inspired my own series “Tips for Reviewers,” where I reflect on insights gained in the practice of reviewing different types of translations. I plan to continue and expand this series in the next year.

Who did you want to reach when you created Reading in Translation?

Reaching the tight-knit literary translation community is the easy part, as you know. Every contributing reviewer at Reading in Translation is an active literary translator who brings his or her own network of readers within the industry.

With Reading in Translation, I want to reach the average engaged reader who is not particularly aware of translation or what it contributes to the work being read. I want to make readers think about how the translator shapes their reading experience, or simply expose the average reader to literature he or she might enjoy from other cultures.

Beyond that, I would like Reading in Translation to reach mainstream literary critics and to demonstrate that critiquing the translation doesn’t have to be difficult for the reviewer or boring for the reader. Ultimately, literary translation is a form of literary criticism that adds layers of complexity to a reader’s understanding of the text, rather than taking away from its wholeness.

How do you make sure that these reviews reach the wider public, not just those already interested in translation?

I am always eager to review translations that have been critically neglected, in addition to offering a different or more thorough spin on celebrated translations. The result of this is that Reading in Translation will often have the first or only review of a particular book, which means we come up readily in searches for that title or author. Indeed, because the book title and the names of the author and translator are included in every post title, it’s easy to find Reading in Translation’s reviews on the web. This is an asset for a new website building an audience. Many readers find Reading in Translation through Google searches, and I’ve also been heartened to see searches for things like “book title X interpretation” or “analysis,” which indicates to me that students use Reading in Translation to gain a better understanding of the books they’re reading for class.

My Twitter account also ensures that the reviews reach a wide audience. The literary translation and wider literary/writing communities have a lot of cross pollination, and publishers typically have huge Twitter networks, so the reviews get out there. People read Reading in Translation all over the world, which is wonderful to see.

How do you select the books you review?

I read publishers’ catalogs and look ahead at the forthcoming titles (e.g., Typographical Era maintains an excellent monthly and yearly “New in Translation” listing). I seek out a diversity of languages/countries and a balance of genres (poetry, fiction and literary nonfiction). Of course, I follow certain translators whose work I admire and whose taste I am confident, but I am also especially interested in providing exposure to very new or new presses. Many publishers for which I’ve reviewed send me unsolicited review copies for consideration. And, of course, some of our coverage reflects my personal taste and gravitation toward texts that probe the darker sides of the human experience or push the boundaries of acceptability, and writerly or experimental texts, such as those of the Oulipo or surrealism movements. Texts that do innovative things with language are the most interesting to discuss from a translation standpoint. From there, it’s a matter of finding a reviewer who is interested in the text. I am always happy to take suggestions from my contributors as well. So, conversely, the only reason a book doesn’t get reviewed, if I’m interested in it, is due to the absence of a qualified or interested reviewer.

How does reviewing books help a literary translator? What do you think they learn? Indeed, what do you learn from reviewing?

One of my favorite statements on reviewing comes from Hebrew tran-
lator Aviya Kushner, who calls it “literary service.” Basically, if you want good reviews, reviewing others you admire is good karma. Many of my contributors have received very warm responses to their reviews from the translators and have even established ongoing communication with them.

Translators and publishers are desperate to be reviewed, so if you’re looking for more publication credits to add to your CV, reviewing is an easy way to get published. It’s also a great way to build good will and make connections with publishers who might be interested in your own translation work down the line. Finally, it’s a way to demonstrate your expertise in the language(s) and cultural contexts from which you translate.

Moreover, I think reviewing has made me a better and more confident translator. Getting inside a translation you admire to really see how it’s working is fascinating. It has expanded my toolbox in my own work and encouraged me to take (calculated) risks.

What do you look for in contributors?

First and foremost, all contributors to Reading in Translation are active literary translators themselves, whether published or not. My purpose is to give translators a forum and a voice to be our own advocates when it comes to getting the type of reviews we’d like to see. Beyond that, I look for good writers (and most literary translators are, or should be) and encourage them to analyze the text closely and avoid summary. Often the translators have a background in the source language of the text they’re reviewing, but not always. I try to encourage the contributors, once they’ve gotten a few reviews under their belts, to try reviewing a text from a language they don’t know. Translators are naturally attuned to the nuances of language and can often perceive the challenges another translator faced, even in a language with which they’re not familiar.

What has the reaction been to Reading in Translation?

The reaction has been overwhelmingly positive, and I’m grateful for the support the site has received from the literary translation community.

What are your plans for the future of Reading in Translation?

I am invested in continuing to grow Reading in Translation to cover a greater diversity of languages, countries, and cultures. Now that I happily have many regular contributors, my goal for this year is to post content more consistently. To be able to plan far ahead is a wonderful luxury! I also hope to partner with other literary translation organizations for some new series, so stay tuned for that.

Notes


ATA Certification Exam Information

Upcoming Exams

- **Michigan**
  - Novi
  - August 1, 2015
  - Registration Deadline: July 17, 2015

- **Nebraska**
  - Omaha
  - August 1, 2015
  - Registration Deadline: July 17, 2015

- **Oregon**
  - Portland
  - October 11, 2015
  - Registration Deadline: September 25, 2015

- **Texas**
  - Austin
  - August 22, 2015
  - Registration Deadline: August 7, 2015

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

New Certified Members

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

- **English into Japanese**
  - Chie Okada
  - Elmhurst, NY

- **French into English**
  - Aparna Gullapalli
  - Asheboro, NC

- **Portuguese into English**
  - Elizabeth K. Best
  - Summerville, SC

- **Spanish into English**
  - Aparna Gullapalli
  - Asheboro, NC
  - Danielle Maxson
  - New Windsor, NY
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I frequently have the pleasure of giving workshops both in the U.S. and abroad, and it’s absolutely fantastic to meet new colleagues and future friends. I leave these workshops reenergized by our collective passion for the industry and the knowledge we share.

When I think about the questions and comments I get the most during these workshops, one thing often stands out: complaints about clients, colleagues, and everything in between. While I think venting about issues in moderation is important and healthy, in my humble opinion, there is only one catch with that strategy: the only behavior you can control is your own. Allow me to elaborate.

There will always be people who are less than professional and have a detrimental effect on the industry. Just like with any unregulated industry that has no barriers to entry, our industry attracts people who are either not qualified or not professional. Is there anything we can do about it? Rarely, but if the person happens to be in your area, it might be time for an invitation to coffee to chat and see if you can talk him or her into adopting a more professional approach. It’s surprising that many times people are willing to listen if you just reach out to them. Who knows, maybe the person is completely unaware of what she or he is doing, or is in dire financial straits. Colleagues, professional or not, may face difficult situations, and sometimes they need a sympathetic ear. Try to educate them without wagging your finger and see what happens. Sometimes acts of kindness like this go a long way. Oftentimes they don’t, and then you just have to congratulate yourself for having tried.

The perfect client doesn’t exist. We’re all human, and humans have faults. Clients aren’t perfect, and neither are we. You can’t change how the client reacts or behaves because you have absolutely no control over others’ behavior, but you can control your own reaction. If the client is just too aggravating, perhaps it’s time to look for better clients. It’s tough to walk away from business, but if you’re not happy with the situation, you might have to change something, even if it’s initially quite painful.

Get involved. The best way to change things in our industry, and in any industry, is to get involved and do it yourself. Many national non-profit associations like ATA are usually largely volunteer-driven, with local chapters and affiliated groups made up exclusively of volunteers. So, if you don’t like your state court’s decision to lower the rate for certified court interpreters, reach out to your local chapter to form an advocacy committee and do some lobbying, even if it’s scary. If you feel that local businesses don’t understand the value of using professional translators and interpreters, form an outreach committee, use the fantastic ATA client education material available on its website, and volunteer your time to give presentations and workshops to educate and inform. It all sounds time-consuming, and it is, but there is strength in numbers and you can always ask your friends to join you in your efforts.

Finally, I like to keep in mind anthropologist Margaret Mead’s famous quote: “Never believe that a few caring people cannot change the world. For, indeed, that’s all who ever have.” We don’t need to change the world, but by working together to make small changes, we can all contribute to an even better industry in the long run. Are you ready to join me?
For translators and interpreters, the question of volunteering can be a difficult one. There are always many (too many?) volunteering options available, but doing it simply to give back, without any further consideration, can put us in a vulnerable position. We need to ensure that volunteering is worthwhile for us in terms of gaining professional experience, and that’s not something for which an organization should be paying.

The best option can be to volunteer through official channels, such as United Nations Volunteers or Translators without Borders, which will mean the validity of the need for a volunteer will have already been checked and approved. This means you’re not providing a free service for an organization that will make a profit from your service, and also ensures that you’ll receive official recognition for your collaboration, which will look good on your CV or when applying for membership with professional bodies.

Of course, deciding to take on pro-bono projects is always at our own discretion, so if a project comes along that really appeals, in terms of experience or networking, it can also be worthwhile.

Here are three reasons to volunteer:

**The Warm, Fuzzy Feeling:** We’re very privileged to have the choice to work as freelancers and in a profession about which we’re passionate. For me, volunteering is a way of being thankful for the fortunate circumstances that have allowed me the education and opportunities that got me here.

**Fantastic Experience:** As a translator, it can give you the opportunity to develop your specialization(s), and usually you receive great communication and feedback from the organization for which you are working. For interpreters, it can even include free travel to an exotic location.

**Networking:** It also helps to build a larger network, and you never know from where your next referral may come.

Here are three rules for volunteering:

**Have a Strategy:** Assess how much time you can afford to dedicate to it and stick to that. Think about the areas and language combinations for which you’re looking. Decide what sort of organizations are most appealing and focus on a few. Taking on thousands of words on various topics and in five different language combinations will be much more work and will not help you focus on your specializations.

**Communicate:** One of the best parts of working pro-bono is that the receiver of your work is usually grateful for your collaboration and respectful of the professional job you’re doing, so they’ll be open to questions and suggestions with regard to the project (more like working with direct clients than agencies, we could say). Personally, I’ve established some great relationships through volunteer work.

**Be Professional:** It goes without saying, but just because you’re not issuing an invoice, there’s no reason for volunteer work to be anything but your usual high standard. Stick to workloads that can coexist reasonably with your paid work. There can often be more room to negotiate delivery dates at the beginning of the project, as the organization may not have worked with a translator before. But when the details are agreed upon, a deadline is a deadline.
Here are some tips and tricks for how to share some love with your computer. I assume that you’re well-equipped with tools such as antivirus programs and the like, but there are other helpful programs that will make things run smoothly. Most of you will be familiar with some of these (in fact, you might have heard me mention some previously), but I would be surprised if you don’t discover something new to put in your tool belt (if you use Windows computers…).

First, you might want to find out what you actually have installed on your computer and whether it is the most current version. The little free-ware download Belarc Advisor (www.belarc.com) is an awesome tool that gives you a helpful and detailed report of all the hardware and software on your computer. This includes information on the operating system, processor speed and memory, printers, controllers, displays, the system serial number, and even passwords for many installed programs and applications that you might otherwise forget. I’ve found the last item especially helpful. (Who remembers where those pesky installation codes are kept anyway, right?) Belarc Advisor will also provide you with good insights—and possibly surprises—about what you installed long ago on your computer and what should probably have been removed long ago (or put to use again).

We all know now that true security in the Internet age may be an illusion. One way to stay a little bit safer, though, is by making sure that your applications are up to date, especially when it comes to security patches. Like you, I hate it when I have all kinds of programs bugging me with update reminders all the time. So I often disable those reminders—but the problem with this is that I’m no longer reminded (duh!). The most well-known software that takes care of this in one fell swoop is Secunia PSI (secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal), a free product that detects all kinds of obsolete versions of your software, actually downloads most of the new versions, and asks you only to click to install (you can also ask it only to show you a link to the update site). This includes Windows updates as well as those pesky Adobe and Apple updates, although translation environment tools are overlooked (looks like we still haven’t made it to the pinnacle of software development).

Of course, it’s important to remember that there is never a guarantee that the most current version is the best choice. So, if you’ve updated to a new version of a program and would like to go back, what do you do? FileHippo.com is a great place to find downloads of old versions of software.

If you need to do some general computer housecleaning, Ccleaner (www.piriform.com/ccleaner) is the tool of the moment. A few years back, these kinds of tools were all dominated by Finnish developers, but this seems to have changed—the company behind Ccleaner is from Cyprus. Be that as it may, the tool appears to be safe and does a very thorough job of cleaning out your registry, deleting temporary files, uninstalling programs, etc.

A little tip: if you don’t use Internet Explorer as your main browser, be sure to open the Applications tab on Ccleaner’s main screen to adjust what kind of browser-related files should be deleted and what should be left intact for the browser of your preference. For instance, it might be helpful to keep the “internet history” or “saved passwords.”

If you still need assistance despite all of your efforts to keep everything operating efficiently, there’s also help for that. Unless you take your computer into a computer shop when you encounter problems, it can be very hard to explain what went wrong to someone on a phone help line. Of course, there are ways to share your computer screen with someone else, but another helpful method is to record your problems and send the recording to someone. Many third-
party products do this, along with an in-house tool in Windows 7 and 8 called the Problem Steps Recorder (in Windows 8/8.1, this is called Steps Recorder). This tool allows you to record everything on your screen (with the exception of text that you enter). When the recording is finished, it is not saved as a movie file but as an MHT archive file and zipped up. Once unzipped, the MHT file can be opened with most Internet browsers. (If your computer geek assistant doesn’t know how to open it, he might not be worth his job title.) This file gives you a screen-by-screen description of what just happened on your computer as well as a narration of the process and operating-specific information.

There they are—tips and tricks to share the love, guaranteed to enhance and improve your most important working relationship.

The respondents said their listing in the Directory was very valuable or valuable. Less than half of 1% said it was not at all valuable.

Directory listings are open to all individual members (except students). 72% of those using the Directory said they have received work from their listing, while 62% of those who received income from their Directory profile said it covered the cost of ATA dues.

ATA Certification: Of the survey respondents who are ATA-certified translators, 80% felt their ATA certification had increased their business or improved the quality of their clients. In addition, 84% of ATA-certified translators participating in the survey rated the overall value of their ATA certification as very valuable or valuable. It’s worth noting that no one said it was not at all valuable.

ATA Annual Conference: Over 55% of the survey respondents have attended at least one ATA Annual Conference, with 16% having attended five or more. Those who have attended rated networking (78%) and educational sessions (79%) as the most important factors in their decision to attend, and 69% rated the overall value of the conference as very valuable or valuable. Only 1% said it was not at all valuable.

ATA Webinars: Most survey respondents have never attended an ATA webinar. Of those who have attended an ATA webinar, 65% rated the overall value as very valuable or valuable and, in parallel with ATA Annual Conferences, only 1% said ATA webinars were not at all valuable.

How to Improve the Value of ATA Membership: Finally, respondents were asked the open-ended question of how to improve the value of ATA membership. There were nearly a thousand responses. While there was no clear consensus, the majority of the suggestions addressed four topics: the Certification Program, The ATA Chronicle, public relations, and advocacy—in terms of doing more for translators and interpreters.

The survey results have been shared with ATA’s Board and Headquarters staff, and should help guide them in focusing their efforts. Thank you to those who took the time to complete the survey. And, thank you for being an ATA member.
More and more interpreters discover in themselves that they have a gift for being able to conduct successful conference interpreting. It is only natural that they would begin to wonder if the pioneers in this field encountered some of the things that they experience. A particularly riveting work on conference interpreting is reviewed here by Kornelia DeKorne, who serves on ATA’s Dictionary Review Committee.

—Peter A. Gergay

Jesús Baigorri-Jalón’s From Paris to Nuremberg: The Birth of Conference Interpreting is a painstakingly researched book that traces the dawn and coming of age of conference interpreting. Chapters are structured as in a textbook, with bulleted subsections and short summaries at the end of each, and they are bulging with footnotes. Apart from continuing the arguments presented in the main text, these footnotes also serve as the author’s asides, supplying dramatic tension to otherwise seemingly dry data, such as explanations of administrative structures or who’s-who-style biographies of interpreters whose names are only familiar to a small circle of aficionados.

Baigorri-Jalón has dug deep into memoirs, monographs, and unpublished archives, in addition to drawing on his own interviews with Nuremberg interpreters, to reconstruct the story of the larger-than-life feats of people who invented the conference interpreting profession in a baptism by fire. Witnessing the battles for recognition of those who came before us is liberating, reading their candid expressions is cathartic, and their opinions, from their own mouths and pens, about what makes a good interpreter are invaluable to professionals following in their footsteps today. These figures of the heyday of consecutive interpreting played surprisingly consequential roles of diplomacy that we, their descendants by vocation, could never dream of. They were at liberty to summarize, emphasize, and at times tone down the rhetoric of the statesmen they shadowed. Against the tapestry of geopolitical maneuvering and practical demands imposed by an accelerating, multipolar world, many of our professional forebears were thrust into their roles solely by virtue of being multilingual, making up the rules as they went along while accomplishing stupendous feats. This history shows us that without their interpreters, the movers and shakers of the newly global world of the 20th century would not have been able to accomplish their great deeds.

Conference interpreting, a young profession even by New World standards, hastened the end of an era when diplomatic relations were dominated by a single language, and played a critical role in the birth of a new multilingual model of diplomacy that continues to this day. In five chapters, Baigorri-Jalón details how this very modern profession was born in the crucible of history at the dawn of the 20th century. He traces its roots back to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, subsequently following it through its development at the League of Nations and the International Labor Organization, its use by the Allied and Axis powers as they decided the fate of nations in the years prior to and during World War II, all the way to the debut of simultaneous interpreting on the world stage in 1945 at the Nuremberg Trials.

Emergence

Chapter 1 deals with the begin-
nings of the profession: the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. It includes a short introduction to the historical background and outcome of the conference, the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Treaty of Versailles, and the subsequent ancillary treaties. It then discusses general procedural aspects, such as the touchy question, in light of geopolitical sensibilities, of what the language(s) of diplomacy should be (at that time, English or French).

Baigorri-Jalón discusses how the need for spontaneous interpreters arose during World War I. We learn that in the absence of formal training, their educational and cultural backgrounds aided people like Paul Mantoux, Gustave Camerlynck, Stephen Bonsal, and numerous others in rising to the challenge of becoming the first professionals of this new métier.

The insightful bios of these figures are followed by a discussion of their interpreting methods, such as providing consecutive summaries (with or without note-taking) of speeches short and long delivered before plenary sessions. (They also had to dictate them into the record with the help of their notes.) We also learn about whispered interpreting or chuchotage in committee settings. Baigorri-Jalón touches upon the arduous requirements of working in both directions between the two adopted official languages for long stretches of time. We get a sense of the diplomatic significance of, and trust placed in, these first, and very visible, personages who were bona fide actors on the international stage along with the principals whose communications they were facilitating.

**The Heroic Age of Consecutive**

Chapter 2 covers the interwar period and the coming of age of consecutive interpreting, revisiting the uneasy question of official languages that at times sharpened into a battle as more and more countries demanded to be heard. (At one point, Esperanto was proposed as a neutral solution, but it did not pan out.) During this time, the selection, testing, and evaluation of interpreters became increasingly concrete, summarized here in a listing of the aptitudes needed in a good interpreter: good health, a balanced nervous system, good breathing, good eyesight, a musical ear to modulate delivery, intuition, quick association of ideas, the ability to resist distractions, poise, dignity, discretion, the creative ability to make repairs, and the courage to interrupt in the event of detecting a misunderstanding. This section is a goldmine of insight for today’s students of the profession. The qualities listed are worth emulating no matter the historical moment, for they describe well-rounded, compassionate, and excellent human beings capable of living up to the task of fostering understanding in any age of the world. Striving for this ideal eminently fulfills the definition of rightful employment.

The problems inherent in consecutive interpreting are also discussed at length. Such challenges included acoustics, difficult accents, and lengthy meetings where delegates had to sit through long speeches or their recapitulations in languages they did not understand, giving rise to unrest and side conversations that made the job of interpreters more difficult. Having to wait for speeches to be understood by a segment of the audience often resulted in delayed reactions that sometimes caused pique in diplomats when their bons mots were not applauded at the time they themselves delivered them. Interpreters also had to deal with interference by diplomats with good enough language skills to criticize an interpreter’s rendering, but not necessarily good enough to be actually correct about it. The chapter also touches upon scape-goating, posturing, excesses, sexism, labor disputes—the whole glorious mess of a heroic age.

**Experiments with “Telephonic” Interpreting: The Birth of Simultaneous**

Chapter 3 recounts how the issues associated with consecutive interpreting (e.g., the inordinate length of sessions) led enterprising figures like Edward Filene, a Boston businessman, and British electrical engineer A. Gordon-Finlay to envision and put together a new telephonic system for conveying information in different languages along many channels, simultaneously with speeches as they were being given. We are treated to a detailed description of the technical ins and outs of the system, and to the story of how it met resistance from interpreters at the League of Nations. Fortunately, the new technology was greeted with a more enterprising spirit by the International Labour Organization (ILO), which led to tests at its conferences, beginning in 1925. The chapter details the formation of a school for interpreters, the selection of candidates, the methods applied in the first training course in 1928, followed by the first full-scale test of the simultaneous equipment at the 1928 ILO Conference. Finding themselves in situations no doubt familiar to many conference interpreters today, our valiant colleagues of the day had to work under the gun, with everything coming together at the last minute.

Since simultaneous interpreters worked more in the background, the need for adequate preparation material, rates of speech that could be reasonably followed, physical conditions that excluded noise or other distractions, as well as being placed close enough to the speakers to allow interpreters to see body language, would not necessarily be apparent to those who demanded so much of them. The issue of the interpreter’s own ability to speak, and at times whisper, articulately and with good diction also emerged as a key factor necessary for good results. The quotes illuminating various reactions to the introduction of simultaneous interpreting from both the receiving and the delivering end provide much interesting food for thought.

**Interpreters of the Dictators**

Chapter 4 stands out by providing glimpses into the more secretive back-room diplomacy, with its concomitant ethical dilemmas for
the interpreters whose undefined roles flowed freely between those of technician, confidant, and occasionally even parlor maid. Surprising snapshots of historical figures, taken from their interpreters’ unique points of view, reveal flavors of humanity. For example, we learn:

- How Mussolini spoke French, English, and German and even acted as interpreter despite his variable levels of expertise.
- How a considerate Stalin chunked his utterances to make it easier on his interpreter.
- How Churchill would press his interpreter, who had the daunting task of reflecting his highly architectural oratory: “And did you tell him this? Did you tell him that?”

We get a first-row look at the grueling schedules to which these personal secretary-style interpreters were subjected. We get peppered with anecdotes of how colloquialisms and humor can cause awkward moments. In a vivid scene, for example, after Churchill expresses some trepidation about perhaps having said something compromising during the previous night of drinking, Stalin tells him not to worry because he had the interpreter shot. Compared to more technical sections of the book, this most entertaining chapter broadens the book’s appeal to historically-minded readers.

Nuremberg

The final chapter recounts the vindication of simultaneous interpreting, which presented a perfect solution to the temporal challenges of facilitating intercommunication in all directions among the languages of the Allies and of the defeated Axis powers that consecutive would never have been able to tackle. The chapter also paints the backdrop to this dramatic moment constituted by the judicial challenges that the various legal systems of the participating countries posed. We also get a sense of the pressures imposed by the scrutiny of the press and the public, which inevitably speeded up the pace of producing publication-ready versions of everything that was being uttered and interpreted.

Reading this section we find out that the ranks of the interpreters at Nuremberg came not from the already-ensconced professionals of the League of Nations, who were reluctant to suspend their safe positions of prestige for a passing gig, however glamorous, but from a new generation of young people displaced by the upheavals of the two world wars and the Russian Revolution. Many of these individuals did not go on to become professional interpreters, despite their heroic performance during the year-long proceedings. We also get a good idea of the conditions under which they had to work after very little preparation. For instance, interpreters frequently had to share microphones and work in booths that were not completely sound-proof and from where they often could not see the witness stand. In one account, we learn how a Holocaust-survivor-turned-interpreter was subjected to the shock of having to render the words of those responsible for the deaths of members of her family.

This chapter also covers ingenious safety mechanisms introduced, such as a monitor who would signal speakers when their interpreters lost the thread of their too-rapid speeches. The takeaway from this chapter is that the gravitas of the occasion was duly met by the interpreters called to serve.

Overall Evaluation

There is no question that this well-researched and valuable book will prove to be an excellent guide for new generations of interpreters (and translators) by bringing to life, through the words of the participants themselves, this historical moment when their specializations were not yet demarcated so clearly.

One criticism that could be raised is that sometimes relevant information is provided in footnotes where it is liable to be overlooked (e.g., the quick comparison of British common law and European civil law that presented an issue for designing the Nuremberg Trials). The translators’ introduction states that they chose to present the contents of some of the footnotes in brackets in the main text, in an attempt at simplification, highlighting how daunting it must have been to process the bountiful source material. The translators’ work, by the way, is impeccable, reflecting their respect for the author’s achievement that is well deserved. The wording of Baigorri-Jalón’s reflections is at times less clear or skillful than one would desire but such small flaws are eminently forgivable in light of how he brings to life this complex period for us.

Though this volume is a bit pricey, it is a worthwhile investment for lovers of language, communication, and history. It is especially recommended for conference interpreters, but its appeal extends to anyone interested in how we can find our way through crisis to cooperation and peaceful coexistence by skillfully entwining the diverse threads of language.
**Member News**

**Barry S. Olsen** and **Katharine Allen**, co-presidents of InterpretAmerica!, announced that the organization has launched a revamped website. The new site includes links to the updated InterpretAmerica Blog and Interpreting the News. You can find the site at InterpretAmerica.com.

**Anne Milano Appel’s** translation of Vito Bruschini’s *The Prince* was published in March (Atria/Simon and Schuster).

**Sharon Heller** recently translated *Ænigma* by Erus Ludus (Erus Ludus LLC), a historical fantasy novel for the young adult market. A trailer for the book can be found on YouTube: bit.ly/ludus-trailer.

**LanguageWorks**, of New York City, was recently acquired by Ubiqus, a global supplier of language services and event services with offices in New York and California.

**Lydia Razran Stone’s** 2,500+ line rhymed metric translation of Pyotr Yershov’s *The Little Humpbacked Horse* was published in 2014 by Russian Life Books. This fairy tale for adults and children, written in 1831, was considered so brilliant that many believed and continue to believe that it was written by Aleksandr Pushkin.

**Christopher Tauchen’s** translation of Jochen Hellbeck’s *Stalingrad: The City that Defeated the Third Reich* has been published by PublicAffairs.

**Jesse Tomlinson’s** translation of Mexican author Guillermo Schmidhuber’s short story, “Tranquilino’s Burial” was published in September 2014 by KIN, the Literary Magazine of the University of Ottawa (http://tinyurl.com/GuillermoS).

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**We’d Love to Hear from You**

Did you receive a promotion or start a new job? Were you published? Why not let your colleagues know about your achievements and adventures? Submit your Member News today! Just send 50 words or less to jeff@atanet.org.
As I am writing this, I am aware that today is Cinco de Mayo. For many readers, this is a date of significance, and of celebration. If this includes you, I hope that Cinco de Mayo 2015 is one that you’ll remember fondly!

New Queries
(Danish>Swedish [English] 6-15.1) This query concerns a marketing text in which webroden caused problems. Try unraveling the following: Peg domænet ned i webroden på %domain og vis same indhold. What is webroden?

(English>German 6-15.2) In a list of things needed for computer network planning, one of the components was “generation of configurations DB and NE datafill for concerned network elements.” The “DB” might stand for “database,” but the rest of this is quite opaque. Any ideas?

(English>Portuguese 6-15.3) The term “power rails” in the sentence below has nothing to do with electrified railways, but computers. The original text advises: “Motherboards require 6MB flash and M3 power rails. Consult your system manufacturer.” What are they?

(English>Russian 6-15.4) Legal eagles, what do you make of “without bond or security on a bond?” This appeared in a power-of-attorney-type document. The full sentence reads: “If a guardian of my estate is to be appointed, I nominate and direct that the agents named in this power of attorney be appointed as such guardian to serve singly and in the order named, without bond or security on a bond.”

(German>Hungarian [English] 6-15.5) The final word of this chemical text proved difficult for one of our colleagues trying to go into Hungarian: In den RC1-Reaktor wurden bei 20°C 455,8 g Toluol, 60 g (0,104 mol, 1 eq) xxx, 1,73 g (0,0005 mol, 0,05 eq) Natriumwolframat, ... und 0,835 g (0,005 mol, 0,05 eq) Phenylphosphorsäure vorgelegt. Try it, if necessary, into English.

(German>Italian [English] 6-15.6) We rarely receive queries regarding archaeology, so here goes: Im Repräsentationsbau, wie auch in der gesamten übrigen Siedlung, fanden sich starke Zerstörungs- und Brandspuren, die nach den Ausgräbern mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit der Abessiner gegen Ende des 3. Js. n. Chr. in Verbindung zu bringen sind.

Die Siedlung wurde nicht wieder aufgebaut. Hier und dort konnten eine Nachsiedlung des 5. und 6. Jh. n. Chr., außerdem einzelne Gräber sowie neuzeitliche Siedlungsspuren festgestellt werden. What is the word in bold?

(Italian>English 6-15.7) Is there a semantic difference between disegna and progetta, such that one could possibly be rendered as “drawn” and the other as “designed?” The website of a furniture manufacturer states: un’azienda italiana che dal 1947 disegna, progetta e realizza arredamenti su misura per architetti e private in Italia e nel mondo. Could it be “drawn, designed, and manufactured?”

(Spanish>English 6-15.8) It’s mere child’s play to say that leche maternizada is “infant formula.” Leche medicamentosa, which appeared in a patent, is something else again, being a specialized formula for those children suffering from a milk allergy. What’s the English equivalent?

Replies to Old Queries
(English>Spanish 3-15.6) (non-faith-based organization): There are plenty of opinions about this one. Clayton Causey likes organización no religiosa or organización seglar for this. Margaret Schroeder suggests organización no confesional or sociedad no confesional. In the latter case, it’s clear that sociedad means “organization” and not “society,” which is frequently the case in Spanish. Jean-Pierre A. Maldonado weighed in with organización no religiosamente afiliada.
According to Christelle Maginot, these are also known as “pseudonits” in English; they are called vainas peripilares or sedoliendres in Spanish. Both terms are rather medical in nature, so they may not be commonly recognized. Christelle says it is likely that, in everyday speech, “hair casts” will be called caspa (“dandruff”). Jean-Pierre A. Maldonado calls these cabellos desechados (desprendidos).

Christelle Maginot states that this refers to the zinc lining of the roof valley, and she proposes chapa de zinc de la limahoya, where chapa de zinc is the translation for zinguerie. But chapa may also be known as recubrimiento, cubierta, or revestimento.

Christelle Maginot believes that this text refers to the pathway used to visualize the artery through injection of contrast material. Doing so via anterograde perfusion, which is her answer to the query, means that the contrast solution is delivered to the heart in the normal direction of the blood flow (as opposed to via retrograde perfusion, where the contrast solution is delivered in the reverse direction of normal blood flow).

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Humor and Translation
Mark Herman

Everything Is Illuminated

In the second sentence of *Everything Is Illuminated* by Jonathan Safran Foer (Harper Perennial, 2002), Alexander Perchov, one of the main characters, says that “my many friends dub me Alex, because that is a more flaccid-to-utter version” of Alexander. Alex is a Ukrainian translator and interpreter, a tour guide whose use of English is comically imperfect. His principal client in the novel is the American Jonathan Safran Foer, a fictional version of the novel’s author. Foer makes a trip to Ukraine to try to find the woman reputed to have saved his grandfather from the Nazis in 1942, when the Nazis destroyed the grandfather’s village of Trachimbrod on the Polish-Ukrainian border, leveling it and killing every Jew they could find, together with a few non-Jews for good measure. Ironically, after surviving the Holocaust, the grandfather died almost immediately after arriving in America. The story of the search for the grandfather’s savior is interwoven with three other stories: a fanciful and amusing history of Trachimbrod from 1791 until its destruction in 1942, the coming of age of Alex, and the slow revelation of the part that Alex’s own grandfather, a tour-car driver, played in the Trachimbrod murders.

The title of the book is ironic. The woman who saved Jonathan’s grandfather is never found. The woman they do find may or may not have known her, or be related to her, or even be her. Many of the historical “facts” regarding the village of Trachimbrod are impossible or at least extremely unlikely, starting with the newborn baby girl, the fictional author’s great-great-great-great-grandmother, bobbing up out of the river in 1791, with no mother or father anywhere to be found. Only the role of Alex’s grandfather is fully explained, but this illuminates little. The grandfather’s behavior is understandable, but the Holocaust itself remains inexplicable.

A further irony is that Alex’s imperfect English is illuminating in that it is completely comprehensible once the reader gets used to it. His odd use of words, supposedly arising from his usually choosing the wrong one from a list in a thesaurus, frequently communicates more than perfect English would. Here are a couple of sentences from his first-person narrative that begins the novel:

I dig to disseminate very much currency at famous nightclubs in Odessa. Lamborghini Countaches are excellent, and so are cappucinos. Many girls want to be carnal with me in many good arrangements, notwithstanding the Inebriated Kangaroo, the Gorky Tickle, and the Unyielding Zookeeper.

I personally recommend the Inebriated Kangaroo!

In contrast to Alex, who struggles to express himself in imperfect English, the inhabitants of Trachimbrod, as recounted in the fanciful history, use perfect language to reveal or conceal the inexplicable, and the sometimes hazy line between truth and fiction. For example, Alex wants Jonathan to make his account of his (Jonathan’s) grandfather’s life more romantic. The tale of Jonathan’s quintuple great-grandmother is most unlikely, but, at least within the terms of the novel’s fiction, she must have existed, lived a life, and had children.

We know the truth of the Holocaust. Perhaps only through fiction will we ever, some day, come to understand it. In the meantime, as Alex says in his letter to Jonathan that ends the book, “Try to live so that you can always tell the truth.”

Information and Contacts

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