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The  
*ata*

# CHRONICLE

## In this issue:

ISO Certification

Translating Fact Sheets

Dealing with  
Information Overload





## Sharing knowledge and experience

### Dynamic teaching and learning – vivid communication of content

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## We Want You!

*The ATA Chronicle* enthusiastically encourages members and nonmembers to submit articles of interest. For *Submission Guidelines*, log onto [www.atanet.org/chronicle](http://www.atanet.org/chronicle). *The ATA Chronicle* is published 11 times per year, with a combined November/December issue. Submission deadlines are two months prior to publication date.



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## Our Authors | May 2008



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### Call for Speakers and Readers

## Binghamton University Translators Festival

*"Translation: Empowerment, Employment, Enjoyment"*

June 20-21, 2008 | Binghamton, New York

Binghamton University's Translation Research and Instruction Program invites translators to a festival at the College of Community and Professional Affairs, the University's new downtown campus. Those wishing to present or read should get in touch with either Carrol F. Coates ([ccoates@binghamton.edu](mailto:ccoates@binghamton.edu); 607-777-4632) or Marilyn Gaddis Rose ([mgrose@binghamton.edu](mailto:mgrose@binghamton.edu); 607-777-6726). There will be no registration fees.





## From the President

Jiri Stejskal

President@atanet.org

## Republic of Letters

**In the 14th century,** the focus of intellectual life shifted from the traditional university centers to the dissemination of knowledge across a much greater geographical and social spectrum. The invention of the printing press radically changed the way in which knowledge was distributed, and it led to the move away from the communication of knowledge at local levels and toward truly international communication via what became known as the Republic of Letters.

The Republic of Letters began as a network of private correspondence among influential thinkers during the Age of Enlightenment, and eventually evolved into a network of academic journals and other periodicals, such as the one you are currently reading. Knowledge disseminated in this manner is typically mediated through an editor or another controlling figure. In recent history, the population of this imaginary Republic has embraced new communication channels that do not require a mediator, such as Internet forums, blogs, and similar discussion groups.

In the 18th century, the Republic was limited to those who spoke a common language. In the 21st century, the Republic spans the globe. Through our work as translators and interpreters, we make this possible. We facilitate the communication and dissemination of knowledge around the world.

In the last issue, we looked at how we can promote the recognition of the translation and interpreting professions to those outside of our industry. Let us now look at the second objective stated in ATA's bylaws; namely, to promote the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of translators and interpreters.

This objective is not as clear-cut as

the first one, as it is not obvious what kind of knowledge is to be communicated, or whether it should be shared with the outside world, among translators and interpreters, or both. The one thing that is clear is that translators and interpreters are to benefit from it. What kind of knowledge would benefit us, and how do we go about communicating it? The bylaws

7. Conducting any and all other activities designed to further its objectives and promote the general welfare of the Association and its members.

As members of ATA, we benefit from the knowledge that is communicated and disseminated by our peers via *The ATA Chronicle*, ATA's website, *ATA's Newsbriefs* (our monthly

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## We facilitate the communication and dissemination of knowledge around the world.

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provide some guidance. Article II b tells us that we shall strive to meet the Association's objectives by:

1. Publishing periodicals, bulletins, notices, glossaries, dictionaries, reports, and any other publications that may further its objectives.
2. Holding periodic meetings.
3. Supporting programs of accreditation and certification for translators and interpreters who meet specific standards of competence.
4. Maintaining membership in professional organizations in related fields.
5. Working actively with universities, foundations, government agencies, and other organizations in such matters as the training and continuing education of translators and interpreters.
6. Supporting a system of mutual assistance for its members, including a reference library, a consultation service, and the like.

e-newsletter), *ATA News and Notes* (our weekly e-mail about upcoming activities), as well as through educational events such as the Annual Conference, professional development seminars, and ATA's Mentoring Program. On the division level, we benefit from the highly specialized knowledge of our colleagues via division newsletters, conferences, and electronic forums.

We also communicate our knowledge to the buyers of our services, which benefits us as well as the buyers. Consider Chris Durban's brochure *Translation: Getting it Right* and its sequel, *Translation: Buying a Non-commodity*, co-authored by Chris Durban and Alan Melby. These publications help buyers make informed decisions, and we benefit by working with an educated client. Clearly, the benefits do not come just from being at the receiving end of this knowledge. We will achieve the greatest benefit when we also contribute to the knowledge that is shared among the citizens of the Republic of Letters.

*ata*



## From the Executive Director

**Walter Bacak, CAE**

Walter@atanet.org

## Court Interpreter Legislation and More

### Court Interpreter Legislation

**Moves Forward:** In late April, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved Senator Herbert Kohl's (Democrat-Wisconsin) legislation to create a federal grant program to ensure that state court interpreter services are made available to individuals testifying in court. A release from Senator Kohl's office reads: "The shortage of qualified interpreters has become a national problem, and it has serious

consequences that can unfairly alter legal decisions and affect lives.... Court interpreting services vary greatly by state—some states have highly developed programs, others are trying to get programs running but lack adequate funds, and still others have no program at all." ATA will continue to monitor this legislation. For more information, please see [www.kohl.senate.gov/~kohl/press/08/04/2008424556.html](http://www.kohl.senate.gov/~kohl/press/08/04/2008424556.html).

**Recognizing *The ATA Chronicle's* Columnists:** In last month's edition, John Decker, The Translation Inquirer columnist, noted that he has been writing his column for the past 15 years. His note underscores the extraordinary commitment of some ATA members. ATA columnists and authors are not compensated, and many of them, like John, crank out

Continued on p. 10

## Job Outlook for Translators and Interpreters in the U.S.

"Employment of interpreters and translators is projected to increase 24% over the 2006-2016 decade..."

Following an analysis of economic trends that are expected to impact job growth, the U.S. Department of Labor contends that: "Employment of interpreters and translators is projected to increase 24% over the 2006-2016 decade, much faster than the average for all occupations."

The department's forecast bases the higher demand for translators and interpreters directly on the broadening of international ties, the increase in the number of foreign language speakers in the U.S., and the growing need in health care settings. All of these trends are expected to continue, contributing to relatively rapid growth in the number of jobs for interpreters and translators.

Taking future innovation and technology into account, the report notes that while technology has made the work of interpreters and translators easier, it is not likely to have a negative impact on the employment of interpreters and translators. This is because such innovations are incapable of producing work comparable with work produced by these professionals.

This assessment and similar employment projections are developed by government economists and published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Updated every two years, the *Handbook* describes the job duties, working conditions, education and training requirements, earnings levels, employment levels, projected employment changes, and employment prospects for hundreds of occupations. It is a widely used reference for students, job seekers, and career counselors.

To read the complete *Interpreters and Translators Career Outlook Report* prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Department of Labor, go to [www.bls.gov/oco/ocos175.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos175.htm).



## In Memoriam

**Donald T. Crump**  
**1939-2008**



By William B. Cramer

Our longstanding friend and colleague, Ted Crump, an ATA honorary member, passed away on March 29, 2008, at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC, after a valiant five-year bout with cancer. He was 68.

Ted was born in 1939 in McCammon, Idaho, in the Big Sky Country. He received a B.A. in political science from Idaho State University, and then enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he completed a 75-week Russian-language course. Ted received an M.A. in Russian from the University of Utah, and later enrolled in a Ph.D. program in Russian at Bryn Mawr College.

Ted worked as a translator for Biosciences Information Services in Philadelphia from 1976 to 1980. He was head of the Translation Unit at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, from 1980 until his death. He worked in several languages, primarily Russian, German, and Serbo-Croatian.

Ted was one of the founders of the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Translators Association (NCATA) in Washington, DC. He was the first editor of NCATA's newsletter, the *Capital Translator*, a position he held for well over a decade.

Ted joined ATA in 1981. He served on ATA's Board of Directors from 1983 to 1986. He was editor of *The ATA Chronicle* from 1987 to 1989. He was a member of the German Language Division, Slavic Languages Division, Medical Division, and the former Science and Technology Division. Ted was also a frequent presenter at ATA Annual Conferences. He was an ATA-certified Russian→English and German→English translator.

In 2001, Ted compiled the ATA publication *Translating and Interpreting in the Federal Government*, a comprehensive survey of the language needs, resources, and missions of over 80 federal agencies and offices. In 2003, Ted was granted honorary member status for his many contributions to ATA.

Ted was also an accomplished bass-baritone. He sang in a recital in Maryland in 2005, performing a number of arias in several languages. He was also active in a community theater group.

He is survived by his wife, Natasha, and three sisters, Jeanne, Donna, and Colleen.

A memorial service was held at Joseph Gawler's Sons, Inc., Funeral Home in Washington, DC, on April 19, followed by interment in Parklawn Memorial Park and Menorah Gardens in Rockville, Maryland. Contributions may be made in Ted's memory to The Carcinoid Cancer Foundation, Inc., 333 Mamaroneck Ave., #492, White Plains, NY 10605.

We express our sincere condolences to Ted's family and friends. He will be missed.

copy for every issue. They are giving their time to share their knowledge and expertise with you. Please join me in thanking our columnists: Chris Durban (The Onionskin); John Decker (The Translation Inquirer); Peter Gergay and his predecessor Boris Silversteyn (Dictionary Review); Mark Herman (Humor and Translation); Dorothee Racette and the Business Practices Education Committee (Business Smarts); and Jost Zetzsche (GeekSpeak).

**ATA Staff Milestones.** Membership Services Manager Maggie Rowe and Information Systems Manager Roshan Pokharel both celebrated their 15th anniversary with ATA this spring. In

their 15 years, ATA has gone from almost 4,000 members with literally a file-card membership tracking system, to over 10,000 members with an online database, web-based professional services directories, and an information-packed website. Thanks to both for helping to make ATA what it is today. ATA is fortunate to have these two hard-working, dedicated, and good-natured individuals.

**More ATA Staff News.** Roshan, whom many of you have seen working the onsite registration counter at ATA Annual Conferences, has a new addition to his family. His son, Ritesh, was born April 17, 2008.

Congratulations to Roshan, his wife Pinky, and Ritesh's sister, Rishika.

**Another Reason to be an ATA Member.** ATA Treasurer and Past President Peter Krawutschke shared with me a *USA Today* blurb reporting recent survey results that joining a business association—such as ATA—has its privileges. According to this survey, members of business associations make nearly 50% more than nonmembers, and are more satisfied with their jobs by the same margin when compared with nonmembers.

Thank you for being a part of ATA.

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## Do You Remember?

# ATA's 50th Anniversary History Project



**The year was 1959.** The race for space was seriously under way as the Soviet Union's Luna 3 sent back the first photos of the moon's dark side and the U.S. announced the selection of its first seven astronauts. The United Nations responded by establishing a committee for the Peaceful Use of Outer Space. And in New York City a small group of translators and interpreters founded the **American Translators Association**.

**Now, almost 50 years later,** ATA is putting together a history of member memories and photos as part of a year-long celebration in 2009. Anyone can take part in this trip down memory lane. Just e-mail your "remember when" story or "way back" picture to the ATA History Project.

**For more information,** contact Mary David, member benefits and project development manager, at [mary@atanet.org](mailto:mary@atanet.org).

# ATA/MATI Court Interpreting Seminar

Professional Development for Translators and Interpreters

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**Saturday, June 21** ATA will provide a **full day of sessions**, including a continental breakfast, a **Job Marketplace**, and a **Networking Session**.

**Sunday, June 22** MATI will provide a **half day of sessions**, including a continental breakfast.

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Call the Embassy Suites O'Hare at **1 (800) EMBASSY** and be sure to ask for the ATA rate.

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To learn more about the ATA/MATI Court Interpreting Seminar, visit [www.atanet.org/pd/court](http://www.atanet.org/pd/court) or contact ATA at +1-703-683-6100 or [ata@atanet.org](mailto:ata@atanet.org).





# ISO Certification: Helping Build Stronger Business Relationships

## Why it Matters for Translators, Editors, Clients, and Agencies

*By Dagmar Dolatschko and Bernard J. Putz*

**Today's translation** agency, whether small or large, is continuously challenged by competitive pressures and market demands. First, customers expect faster, higher-quality deliverables, always at a lower cost. Second, increasingly fierce global competition makes it harder to differentiate one's services. In addition, it is difficult to maintain a core staff of qualified individuals who understand the importance of customer service and do all they can to ensure it. Finding qualified vendors is even more challenging today due to a seemingly unlimited supply of translators and other language vendors offering their services through the Internet.

These factors are certainly indicative of modern commerce in a world where transactions occur anytime and anywhere without so much as a face-to-face encounter between the parties. Moreover, these factors are inherent in

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### Increasingly fierce global competition makes it harder to differentiate one's services.

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the uniquely human mode of doing business, in which split-second decisions go hand in hand with long-range planning. Thus, translation agency leadership is always under pressure to address these challenges and build a high-performance organization that can—and will—deliver the requested services at or above the required level of quality. The pressure, of course, is to do that each and every time one is called upon.

#### **A Level Playing Field**

The challenge for a small business

is that larger companies often believe that large suppliers are better at providing consistent and predictable performance. A potential major customer will often prefer to choose a supplier of equally significant size because there is a sense that the provider will have the work processes, procedures, and resources needed to handle any foreseeable increase in volume or complexity. This often comes at the expense of personal service and flexibility. However, for the agency in search of growth it becomes necessary to serve larger customers. The agency

that can provide its customers with deliverables of uniformly high quality—as well as personalized service—will stand out from the competition and win the trust of its clients and vendors alike. Achieving this on both sides of the value chain is a challenge and an opportunity. One possible route for companies looking to maintain consistency in terms of quality and work processes is to adopt national standards of practice. ISO certification, if approached and implemented correctly, can be a strong foundation for such growth.

### What is ISO?

The International Organization for Standardization is the world's largest developer and publisher of international standards. The organization was established in Switzerland in 1947 to

name. This, in itself, reflects the aim of the organization: to equalize and standardize across cultures.

The organization published a family of international standards, often referred to collectively as the ISO 9000 series. ISO 9001:2000 is a standard within the ISO 9000 family that gives requirements for an organization's quality management system. ISO 9001:2000 is the only standard that can be used for the purpose of conformity assessment. Unlike many other standards, ISO 9001:2000 is a fairly generic standard, which means that it can be applied to any organization regardless of size, products, or services. It is a management system dealing with the work processes and the related quality management.

Having consistent procedures in place benefits an organization as it

improve results continuously in a manner that is appropriately controlled and well-focused.

### A Logical Process

To gain ISO 9000 certification, a company must have:

- A set of procedures covering all key work processes.
- Clear documentation of such procedures.
- A method by which to identify non-conformances to these procedures, and appropriate corrective action when non-conformances are identified.
- A way to monitor the effectiveness not only of these aforementioned processes, but also the quality system as a whole.

This system of regular reviews allows the organization to adapt the quality system to changing business conditions. The company will be in a better position to implement preventive actions and ensure that the quality system continues to improve performance.

To see how this is valuable, let us step back for a moment and consider what happens to an organization that has few standards in place. Imagine a company that has different procedures and forms for each customer. Under this system, project managers write slightly different e-mails to each translator to assign work and generate work contracts. Consequently, the project manager has no way of verifying or comparing the quality received or the quality delivered to the end client. Every day is an exercise in firefighting, and every new fire is different from the previous one. Given that degree of variability, it becomes exceedingly tough to control quality and achieve growth. A small business can find that the situation deteri- ➔

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## ISO certification, if approached and implemented correctly, can be a strong foundation for growth.

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develop common international standards for organizations seeking ways to use more advanced methods of quality management. The organization's logos in its two official languages, American English and French, include the letters ISO, and it is usually referred to by these letters. ISO is not, however, an acronym or initialism for the organization's full name in either official language. Rather, the organization adopted ISO based on the Greek word ἴσος (*isos*), which means equal. Recognizing that the organization's initials would be different in different languages, its founders chose ISO as the universal short form of its

grows and helps it become more efficient and effective. ISO-based quality management is built on three pillars:

- 1) Build a common structure based upon standard processes.
- 2) Create a system and methods to ensure customer satisfaction and continuous improvement.
- 3) Develop metrics to measure efficiency and effectiveness and to determine the extent to which internal processes are working.

The fundamental premise is to

orates very quickly as the battle continues on two fronts: quality and verification on the one, and time management and economics on the other.

In a situation like this, the ISO 9001:2000 standard can help because it is structured to accommodate the natural conduct of business irrespective of the size or influence of an individual company.

### Growing Pains Force Change: Crisis or Opportunity

Research in the dynamics of business growth has shown that businesses face different crises in different

is to put an ISO program to work “correctly.” Unfortunately, ISO certification is often perceived as having no direct correlation to performance. Instead, it is seen as an added cost in exchange for a mountain of paperwork and an eventual, inescapable process overload. In other words, ISO certification is prejudicially associated with bureaucracy. This may very well be true if a company goes through the paces of certification and management half-heartedly, without truly understanding and integrating the benefits the ISO system offers to service providers and customers. If a company introduces ISO grudgingly, considering it as a necessary evil and being blind to

flexibility, as well as potentially generate higher costs and setbacks in delivery.

### ISO Benefits for Clients, Vendors, and Agencies

First, remember that ISO is a tool. Each organization is in control of how rigid or flexible it makes its quality management system. In a flexible quality management system that is continuously improved, the pros will definitely outweigh the cons.

The benefits for clients are significant:

- Increased customer confidence in the supplier’s quality and delivery commitments.
- Improved service performance and reduced uncertainty.
- Regular assessments ensuring that the organization continuously uses, monitors, and improves its processes.
- Compliance with a client’s own ISO requirement to use a certified vendor.
- Recognition of the ISO 9000 quality management system, which is a truly global standard that is easily recognized across borders.
- Procedures for corrective action (“warranty for performance”) to ensure that the client has recourse in the event of non-conformance.

The benefits for language service vendors (translators, editors, proofreaders, copyeditors, and graphic designers) include:

- More specific instructions and clearer procedures and processes.
- Clarity regarding roles, responsibilities, and authorities.
- Recruitment and ongoing evaluations (translators and editors).
- Constructive feedback to further growth and development.
- Enhanced reputation (an effective

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**ISO 9001:2000 is a fairly generic standard, which means that it can be applied to any organization regardless of size, products, or services.**

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phases of their life cycle. The particular kind of crisis addressed in this article is the need to establish internal systems that allow for increased delegation, standardization, and repeatability. A well-managed quality system can help overcome obstacles to healthy growth.

For example, Eric Flamholtz, an expert on business growth, writes: “When an organization has not been fully successful in developing internal systems it needs at a given stage of growth, it begins to experience growing pains. Growing pains are a symptom indicating that an organization needs to make a transition” (<http://entrepreneurs.about.com/cs/beyondstartup/a/uc070903.htm>).

Part of managing these growing pains and developing internal systems

its values, it will just create an additional layer of bureaucracy, scaring away vendors and clients alike. However, if a company accepts the challenge and is willing to change, it will be able to reap the benefits.

The successful implementation of an ISO quality management system by a translation agency requires the participation of leadership and all staff. It also requires the participation of translators and other language service vendors who show a willingness to be evaluated, to evaluate others, and to follow a series of defined procedures. The client, on the other hand, may worry that the agency will excessively document its practices and clutter and complicate work with unnecessary steps. The assumption is that the system will reduce



marketing tool for language service vendors who frequently work with ISO-certified firms).

The benefits for agencies include:

- Increased productivity through streamlined data, equipment, tools, and documentation.
- Decreased operating costs due to fewer problems and reduced re-work.
- Increased employee responsiveness to customer needs and requirements.
- Improved employee understanding of how ISO efforts, quality management systems, and business strategy are aligned for organizational improvement.
- Clear procedures and processes allowing for faster training time and improved performance management by setting and following standards and metrics.
- Enhanced marketplace recognition.
- Improved customer satisfaction.

The more explicit the processes and the more open the communication, the easier it is to build trust along the value chain (client, agency, supplier).

### Seven Steps to Successful Implementation of ISO

So how is ISO implemented correctly? There are several factors to keep in mind. First of all, it is essential to adopt the mindset of achieving superior quality for every customer, every day. That mindset is manifested in the way one works with clients, translators, and staff. It means that leadership accepts accountability for creating a culture of continuous improvement where people are comfortable voicing their opinions, using their initiative, and working together in accordance with established procedures. It also means that all those

## Seven Lessons for Company Leadership

1. **Realize it is a "mindset":** Help people understand that quality is a mindset and consists of a set of core values (e.g., culture).
2. **Understand that a few processes drive the business:** Identify the key business processes that drive results and make it relevant to people's day-to-day jobs.
3. **Document procedures:** Implement documented procedures and standards for these key business processes.
4. **Encourage the use of standards:** Motivate all stakeholders to follow the procedures and standards continuously.
5. **Manage with metrics:** Develop a short list of metrics that will be tracked on a regular basis in order to document progress.
6. **Discipline is not a four-letter word:** Create a disciplined rhythm of reviewing metrics, obtaining feedback, and reviewing the quality system. Leaders must ask the hard questions, reinforce accountability, and be willing to confront performance gaps.
7. **Be on the lookout for unnecessary bureaucracy:** Continuously review the quality system as you encourage those involved to simplify and improve the processes.

## ISO and quality management are not a guarantee for success. They are simply tools to create a mindset on which one can build a foundation for consistent, verifiable growth.

involved take pride in their work and continuously strive to do a bit better than before. The achievement of this mindset means that one shares a common understanding of the ISO quality management system. ISO is about enhanced performance, not just for the organization but on an individual level as well. It is about creating a standardized, repeatable way

of working, based on the core principles of high customer satisfaction, improved internal efficiency and effectiveness, vendor and client partnerships, and financial performance.

ISO is a culture, an ethos, and a value system that needs to be created, implemented, and maintained. It is not a natural process, but requires ➡

continuous efforts to strive for high values. A vital prerequisite is that leadership believe in the value of a quality management system and be willing to focus on the seven key steps listed in the box on page 15. If followed by all participants, these steps will help build a safe, solid foundation for growth.

### Quality: Corporate Goal and Daily Commitment

Quality management under ISO requires a willingness by people throughout the organization to manage the transition to an ISO system, work through the growing pains, and then focus on continuous improvement. Despite the standards of adherence, which at first glance may seem bureaucratic, it is up to the individual firm to decide the depth of its standards and procedures. These are the standards the company will live by on a daily basis, and they should be clearly relevant to improving performance.

Once a company has achieved the first or several successful audits indicating that they conform to given standards, there is a temptation to rest on one's laurels after having implemented the recommendations of the auditor. Audits are great milestones. They present a deadline by which certain processes, forms, and documentation have to be in place. Audit preparation requires a lot of internal communication and a commitment to achieving action items by a set date. Given that most agencies are quite busy with daily project management, it is very important to have a fixed audit date—otherwise internal goals may be delayed endlessly. Audit preparation requires a lot of effort, but if done right, the effect can be felt for months after by a smoother running system. It is comparable to having

one's car serviced at regular intervals for optimum performance.

However, true implementation of ISO quality principles goes beyond the auditor's recommendations. Audits are a tool and help pinpoint certain areas for improvement. It is up to the individuals working with the processes and procedures to be open-minded and to help shape and improve the organization. It is important to reconfirm a daily commitment to continuous improvement by learning that:

- It is important to streamline and simplify while being self-critical on an ongoing basis.
- Mistakes and errors are not a nuisance, but an opportunity to learn about weaknesses and improve.
- Errors are not made to satisfy the need for finger-pointing, but to embrace the opportunities inherent in each error.

This requires self-awareness in a business and personal sense, as well as honesty and directness. It consists of fair, factual, and constructive feedback. The process also takes a willingness to step back and reflect in order to determine how to improve for the sake of preventing future errors.

The ISO program has always made it possible for companies and service providers to work cooperatively to meet a higher standard. Today, with the globalization of business in every field, the ISO quality management system is more meaningful than ever. Yet, ISO and quality management are not a guarantee for success. They are simply tools to create a mindset on which one can build a foundation for consistent, verifiable growth. Business relationships are built on predictability, integrity, and delivering on promises. ISO certification can help, if done correctly.

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## More Information on ISO Certification

International Organization  
for Standardization  
[www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

ISO 9001:2000  
[www.iso.org/iso/iso900014000/  
explore/9001supchain.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/iso900014000/explore/9001supchain.html)

9000World.com  
[www.9000world.com/index.php](http://www.9000world.com/index.php)

American National Standards  
Institute/American Society for Quality  
National Accreditation Board  
[www.anab.org](http://www.anab.org)

American Society for Quality  
[www.asq.org](http://www.asq.org)

ASTM International  
[www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org)

Quality Systems Update  
Publishing Company  
[www.qsuonline.com](http://www.qsuonline.com)

TÜV SÜD Academy Training  
[www.TUVtraining.com](http://www.TUVtraining.com)

# Translating for the Asset Management Industry: Fact Sheets

By Eugenio Virguti

## What is a fact sheet?

In general, a fact sheet is a compilation of data on a given subject presented in a minimalist format that conveys the most relevant information in the least amount of space. In the asset management industry, fact sheets are a quick way to provide investors with a brief review of their investment portfolio from a given mutual fund house. Because of their widespread use, fact sheets also happen to be among the most common documents financial translators encounter. This is why it is imperative for translators in this field to have an understanding of the sometimes-obscure terminology to be found on such sheets. The following overview should give translators a better sense of the type of information

of making investments. A mutual fund gets its capital stock from private individual investors, who, in effect, allow the mutual fund to decide where to invest their money. The mutual fund continually offers new shares and buys existing shares back at the request of investors, and uses its capital to invest in the diversified securities of other companies. Simply put, a mutual fund may be defined as a box into which fund managers place their merchandise from investors, such as stocks, bonds, and T-bills. Fund investors expect a return on their investments, and fund managers make their living from the fees that investors pay for the investing services provided. The fund is generally named after the type of goods the fund manager puts into the

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**Most fact sheets provide information to indicate who should invest in the mutual fund.**

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that is presented on such sheets and how it is organized to help investors make sense of complex financial data.

## Who Uses Fact Sheets?

Before we go on, it is important to understand how a fact sheet is organized and its usefulness as a tool in asset management. Let's start with a few basics. A mutual fund is a company that is established for the purpose

of making investments. The money he or she manages comes from the savings of people who do not want their cash to lie in their checking accounts.

How are investors kept abreast of where their money is going? This is where the fact sheet comes in. The fact sheet normally tells investors what the fund manager is doing with their money and whether their cash was better off where it was before. It reveals the





most important information about the fund, and provides a way for investors to evaluate their mutual fund investment quickly.

While the law requires fact sheets for the purpose of disclosing portfolios, the fact sheet often acts as a vehicle for the asset management company as well. The asset management company's view on the markets, its future course of action, and strategies are some of the points investors can expect to find in the fact sheet. From the investor's perspective, the key lies in being able to identify the most relevant bits and to read between the lines.

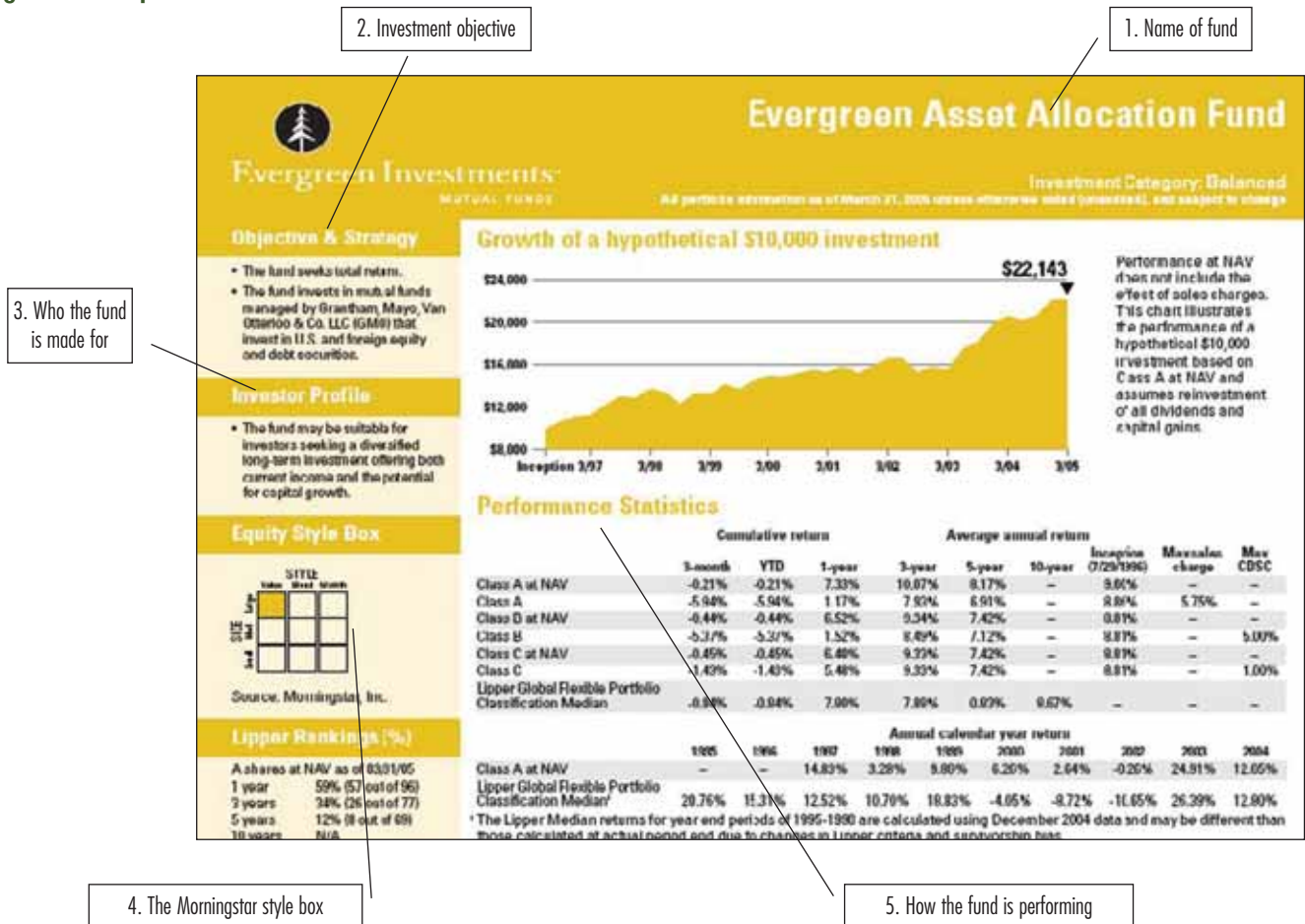
### How Does It Work?

As a brief illustration, I would like to present one example of a fact sheet and describe what is in it. Fact sheets may vary in structure and in how relevant information is provided, but the content does not change much. The fact sheet provided here is related to the Asset Allocation Fund by Evergreen Investments, a U.S.-based investment house in Boston, Massachusetts. The section numbers correspond to the boxes provided in Figure 1.

**1. Name of fund:** There is a saying in Latin, *nomen omen*, meaning "in the name there is a destiny." The fund

name usually tells you what the fund manager intends to do with the money he or she manages. Therefore, you would typically see different asset classifications, such as stock funds, bond funds, cash funds, and balanced funds. The fund prospectus, which is another document that many financial translators often deal with, sets the rules for how the fund will be managed. For instance, a fund named U.S. Stock Fund will typically invest in U.S. stocks up to 75%-80% of the managed portfolio. According to the rules set forth in the prospectus, the amount invested cannot exceed that proportion, nor can it be invested elsewhere in the world.

Figure 1: Sample Fact Sheet



The name Evergreen Asset Allocation fund tells us that the fund manager is allowed to invest money in any asset class (meaning bonds, stocks, or cash) according to his or her own perception of how the markets will perform. Therefore, the fund manager is allowed to shift from equities to bonds without the constraints that are usually set on other types of funds. The words “asset allocation” in the name of the fund reflect this investment strategy.

**2. Investment objective:** The fund’s investment objective lays out its area of operations, management style, and what the fund aims to achieve. The wording

Asset allocation funds are classified as new-generation funds that should provide investors with higher return opportunities, given their specific nature. Traditional funds are normally split into investment sectors, such as equity funds, bond funds, money market or cash funds, and balanced funds (which are a blend of equity and bond funds). Traditional funds can also be invested in different geographic regions, in which case the fund names will typically also include the area in which the fund specializes.

A diversified equity fund is expected to invest across various sectors, thereby granting investors the benefits of diversification, implying

increase their capital and have a long-term investment horizon (which is the amount of time that the money can remain invested in a specific financial instrument) can opt for stock funds, which in the long run happen to be the most profitable.

In our example, the Evergreen Asset Allocation Fund reads: “The fund may be suitable for investors seeking a diversified long-term investment offering both current income and the potential for capital growth.” This means that the investment house thinks that the fund should be invested in by people who need regular cash flow and who may stay invested for long periods potentially to increase their capital.

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## Fact sheets present returns by the investment pattern across periods of time.

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in the investment objective helps investors check to see if the fund managers have adhered to their mandate. Understanding this “philosophy” will help the translator focus on the terminology and choose the words that best reflect the fund’s goals and strategy.

In our example, the objective of the investment is to search for a total return on the investment. What do we mean by total return? It usually means the highest return for the investment house. The total return objective is typical of asset allocation type funds. In these funds, fund managers are free to pick any stock or bond that maximizes yields in terms of capital gains or losses (from price appreciations or depreciations), dividends, or interests paid. The word “total” refers to the total income to be earned from stocks or bonds.

lower risks but very often also lower returns. A concentrated portfolio spread across a few sectors enhances the fund’s risk profile and makes it prone to volatility, which is a measure of how much money investors can lose or earn over a certain period of time. For instance, a 15% one-year volatility means that investors could lose or earn 15% of their savings in one year if the fund behaves as it did in the past. At times, funds tend to have allocations as high as 25% in a single sector.

**3. Who the fund is made for:** Most fact sheets provide information to indicate who should invest in the mutual fund. This is because funds do not meet all specific investment needs. Investors who need income should probably turn to bonds or, even better, cash funds. Those who wish to

### 4. The Morningstar style box:

Morningstar is one of the most important mutual fund analysis firms in the world. Its goal is to provide unbiased information about mutual funds, including fund comparisons, risk assessments, and other analyses. Its analysts are quoted widely in the popular press, and their star system for rating funds is closely watched by investors, the fund industry, and the media. Morningstar’s main competitor is Lipper, which also ranks mutual funds.

The Morningstar style box is used to identify quickly the type of equity fund investors are purchasing. The Evergreen fund is a large-value fund, meaning that the fund manager buys stocks and bonds from large corporations (like Citigroup, Merck, etc.) that also distribute strong dividends and/or coupons. The term “value” implies that the fund manager sees potential for price appreciation, and it usually refers to a certain level of the Price/Earnings Ratio.

In case of bond funds, the identifying parameters are duration and quality. Duration is different ➡

from maturity, and is used to provide an indication of risk. Unless translators have the exact translation in the other language, they should leave the term in English.

**5. How the fund is performing:** Fact sheets present returns by the investment pattern across periods of time, for example, one year, three years, and since inception. Investors should focus their attention on the fund's performance over a longer timeframe, such as three years or more. The fund's ability to register impressive returns consistently over a longer period is a true indicator of its worthiness. Impressive performance over shorter timeframes could be a "flash in the pan," and one should not draw conclusions or make investment decisions based on it.

### Determining Performance

Fund returns reported in fact sheets do not necessarily imply that you will get the same returns if you invest money in the fund. It very much depends on when you purchased the fund. The Evergreen Fund in Figure 1 has three different types of shares that you can buy: Class A, Class B, and Class C, differentiated based on the fee structure. The net asset value is the value of a share at a certain point in time.

Most fund fact sheets also report the top 10 stock picks. The share of net assets accounted for by the top 10 stock holdings can reveal how well diversified the fund is. For example, a fund might hold a large number of stocks (say 50-60 stocks) in its portfolio; however, if the top 10 stock picks account for 60% of the net assets, the fund would qualify as a top-heavy and concentrated one. Such a fund could be a candidate for volatility thanks to the high concentration levels. Similarly, consistency in the top stock holdings can also

reveal a lot about the fund's management style. For example, a high churn would be indicative of an aggressive fund with a high risk profile. "Churn" means high turnover, that is, buying and selling stocks in a relatively short timeframe to try and seize all market opportunities as they occur.

In determining fund returns, you cannot ignore how much you are paying in fees, because in some cases they take away a good amount of your overall return. Therefore, a responsive fund house will inform its investors of the fund's expense ratio and other factors, which have a vital bearing on the

### Other Measures

Other measures, such as standard deviation and Sharpe Ratio, which are not required to be declared by law, can reveal a lot about the fund.

**Standard Deviation:** Measures the degree of volatility (i.e., risk) of a fund and is used to determine a percentage volatility.

**Sharpe Ratio:** Measures excess returns provided by the fund versus a totally risk-free investment—normally U.S. short-term T-bills—per unit of risk borne. For example, if Fund A and

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## Fund returns reported in fact sheets do not necessarily imply that you will get the same returns if you invest money in the fund.

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fund's performance. High expenses for the fund eat into investors' returns. Similarly, the "load structure," which is the fee structure that impacts the fund's returns and may differ considerably from one fund to the other, represents the price an investor pays to participate in the fund. For instance, most funds are "front-" and "back-loaded" (also called "entry-" and "exit-loaded"), which means that investors pay fees when they purchase fund shares and when they sell them. Like expenses, loads also have a direct bearing on the returns. Fund fact sheets usually also include a Total Expense Ratio, which provides a percentage indication of the overall amount of fees that the investor is paying.

Fund B have Sharpe Ratios of 0.35 and 0.50 respectively, this indicates that Fund B has been better managed. This is because Fund B ensured 0.50 percentage points (usually over a certain period) more than a risk-free investment, while Fund A only provided 0.35 percentage points more than the risk-free investment with the same amount of risk bought by the fund manager.

**Beta of a Fund:** Indicates how well the fund manager was able to replicate the market. Traditional funds usually have benchmarks against which they mark their performance. This is because regulators require investment houses to declare in advance what they intend to do with the fund in terms of yields, geographic markets, investment style, etc. If the investment man-





## Internet Websites for Glossaries

**American Century Investments**  
[www.americancentury.com](http://www.americancentury.com)

**Charles Schwab**  
[www.charlesschwab.com](http://www.charlesschwab.com)

**CIGNA**  
[www.cigna.com](http://www.cigna.com)

**Financial Topics on Answers.com**  
[www.answers.com/topic/list-of-finance-topics](http://www.answers.com/topic/list-of-finance-topics)

**Global Investor Glossary**  
[www.finance-glossary.com](http://www.finance-glossary.com)

**Glossarist**  
[www.glossarist.com/glossaries/economy-finance](http://www.glossarist.com/glossaries/economy-finance)

**Investopedia**  
[www.investopedia.com](http://www.investopedia.com)

**InvestorWords**  
[www.investorwords.com](http://www.investorwords.com)

**Julius Baer Group**  
[www.juliusbaer.com](http://www.juliusbaer.com)

**New York Stock Exchange Euronext**  
[www.euronext.com](http://www.euronext.com)

**Putnam Investments**  
[www.putnam.com](http://www.putnam.com)

**Wachovia**  
[www.wachovia.com](http://www.wachovia.com)

ager chooses the Dow Jones Industrial Average as a benchmark, and has a beta of 1.00, the manager is telling investors that he or she is replicating the index exactly.

**Alpha of a Fund:** Why could investors not purchase an exchange-traded fund, which is a collection or “basket” of assets such as stocks, bonds, or futures that trades on a securities exchange at prices closely related to its net asset value? Would this not enable investors to replicate the index performance without paying the high fees? To help

answers these questions, it is important to remember that fund managers also provide investors with another indicator, called Alpha. (Incidentally, Alpha is almost never translated into other languages except for using the Greek or Latin notation.) The Alpha tells investors how well the fund manager replicated the benchmark (i.e., in this case, the Dow Jones Industrial Average), but also if there was an extra yield stemming from the fund manager’s ability to pick the right stocks at the right time.

### Want to Learn More?

The websites listed above provide glossaries and fairly good translations of fact sheets. In particular, the Julius Baer website, a Swiss investment firm, produces all its literature, including fact sheets, in four languages: French, Italian, German, and English.

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# Translation and Corporate Governance in Russia

By Megan Lehmann

**When I was** preparing my presentation for ATA's Annual Conference in San Francisco last year, I got a lot of questions from family and friends. The lengthy title of the presentation (Translation and Corporate Governance in Russia) was more than a mouthful; it was also somewhat opaque. Most of the time, I found I had to explain a little about just what corporate governance involves, since it is not exactly the sort of thing most people discuss over a refreshing beverage.

tions that achieved new lows in corporate governance practices (and ethics!), ultimately inspiring regulatory bodies to draft today's much-loathed and much stricter regulations, such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (SOX).

Corporate governance is essentially a system implemented to manage a company's management team and oversee company operations from a strategic viewpoint. Most corporate governance systems have a number of key internal

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**Corporate governance is one of those things that, when performed well, goes mostly unnoticed by the general public.**

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In this article, I will attempt to present a very general overview of the corporate governance system in Russia in order to help translators who work with texts related to corporate governance gain a stronger understanding of the basic processes involved.

## Corporate What?

So what is it, anyway? Corporate governance is one of those things that, when performed well, goes mostly unnoticed by the general public. On the other hand, when it is implemented poorly or not at all, the result can be a far-reaching disaster the likes of Enron, WorldCom, and Arthur Andersen. These are three corpora-

and external players. Internal players include the shareholders, the board of directors and the chairman of the board, a number of committees that operate under the board of directors, the corporate secretary and the board's support staff, and the management board.

There are some differences between Russian (and actually most European) governance structures and U.S. governance structures. In Russian companies, the chief executive officer (CEO) is almost never the same person as the chairman of the board of directors. Instead, the CEO will serve as the chair of the management board, a management body that is separate from the board of

directors and reports to the board of directors. Generally speaking, most U.S. companies do not have a management board, and quite often the CEO and the chairman of the board is one and the same person.

External players include international rating agencies (which issue corporate governance scores in addition to credit and other ratings) and regulatory bodies. This includes the Securities and Exchange Commission in the U.S., and the Federal Financial Market Service in Russia. Legislation and financial and accounting standards also play a considerable role. External players oversee a corporation's compliance with national and/or industrial regulations, and corporate governance is in place to make sure that compliance issues do not get left by the wayside (mostly to avoid hefty fines, rather than for the sake of lofty ethical ideals).

Corporate governance may seem like a silly bureaucratic system. Someone makes up the rules, and then everyone (well, almost everyone) scurries around trying to make sure they are following the rules and producing reports demonstrating how obedient they are. However, following this system essentially protects and nurtures a shareholder's investments: the company's assets. It also protects the interests and rights of stakeholders by promoting transparency and diligent information disclosure.

### How Does It Work?

At the top of the corporate governance hierarchy, we have the shareholders. I should note that this is one of two common ways of looking at corporate governance. This model—the managerial theory—describes the general trend in Russia today better than the stakeholder theory, under which priority is given to all of a company's

stakeholders (i.e., all parties that hold an interest or are in any way affected by the company and its operations, including clients, counter parties, and the public). Because of the relatively recent transition to a market economy, the ownership structures of companies in Russia are somewhat different from that of U.S. companies. Russian companies tend to have very concentrated ownership structures, that is, only a handful of shareholders.

When Russian companies were privatized in the early 1990s, the ownership of company stock was officially

general meeting is called. Special general meetings may be called by the board of directors or another party. Usually a company's charter and bylaws will set out the parties entitled to call, attend, and vote at general meetings. In Russia, general meetings are called to address specific issues. Shareholders appoint the board of directors at the annual meeting, and they approve amendments to the charter and other internal regulatory documents. They may also approve transactions with interest, restructuring (mergers and acquisitions), or an

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## Russian corporations have become more interested in adopting and adhering to international best practices in corporate governance.

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transferred from the government to company managers, company employees, and federal and local government agencies. A power struggle followed, in which managers would pressure employees either to sell them their shares, or to use those shares to vote a certain way. Managers became the owners, creating conflicts of interest. Instead of making decisions that would best serve the company, these shareholding managers would often drive a company into the ground for their own profit. The financial crisis of 1998 leveled the playing field in the post-privatization economy, and corporate governance ideals slowly but surely began to take root.

In the corporate governance system, shareholders meet at least once a year at a general shareholders meeting. Shareholders may meet more than once if a special (or extraordinary)

increase or decrease in the company's authorized capital.

Next is the board of directors. Directors are appointed to serve as a fiduciary for the shareholders (i.e., a trustee who makes decisions on behalf of the shareholders in the interests of the shareholders). Directors have a duty of prudent care and loyalty in addition to their fiduciary function. There is usually a requirement that a certain number of directors on the board be independent, including the chairman of the board of directors. The number of directors who must be independent will be set out in the charter or the board regulations. There are several requirements that must be met in order to obtain independent status. Very broadly, an independent director must not have any affiliation—financial or other—with any of the company's related parties. ➡



Table 1

Resource	What you will find	Website
International Financial Corporation's <i>Russia Corporate Governance Manual</i>	A very useful English-into-Russian corporate governance glossary containing sample regulations, bylaws, and other internal regulatory documents (in English). Available from the International Trade Administration.	<a href="http://trade.gov/goodgovernance/CorpGovManual.asp">http://trade.gov/goodgovernance/CorpGovManual.asp</a>
Ernst & Young's English translations of Russian legislation	A searchable database of English translations of Russian legislation.	<a href="http://tax.eycis.info">http://tax.eycis.info</a> (registration required)
<i>Aktsionernoye obshchestvo Journal</i>	A Russia-based trade journal covering the latest developments in Russian corporate law.	<a href="http://www.ao-journal.ru">www.ao-journal.ru</a>
Institute of Corporate Law & Governance	A resource for recent developments in legislation and corporate governance, with links to useful reference information and documents.	<a href="http://www.iclg.ru">www.iclg.ru</a>
Corporate Governance in Russia	This website is sponsored by the World Bank/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Russian Corporate Governance Roundtable, and features message boards, current events, and databases, including a database of Russian laws in English.	<a href="http://www.corp-gov.org">www.corp-gov.org</a>
National Council for Corporate Governance	The NCCG publishes a trade journal and white papers, in addition to sponsoring events to promulgate and recognize excellent corporate governance practices among Russian companies.	<a href="http://www.nccg.ru">www.nccg.ru</a>
Independent Directors Association	A trade association for members and chairmen of boards of directors and corporate secretaries that offers information and documents on standards, best practices, as well as seminars.	<a href="http://www.nand.ru/eng/index.php">www.nand.ru/eng/index.php</a>
Russia's Federal Financial Market Service	This federal executive body is sort of like the Russian equivalent to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Their website has a section on corporate governance in Russia. Russian and English versions are available.	<a href="http://www.frcsm.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=3604">www.frcsm.ru/catalog.asp?ob_no=3604</a>
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Contains the <i>Principles of Corporate Governance</i> (official document).	<a href="http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/18/31557724.pdf">www.oecd.org/dataoecd/32/18/31557724.pdf</a>
Sarbanes-Oxley Act	SOX, in all its glory.	<a href="http://www.pcaobus.org/About_the_PCAOB/Sarbanes_Oxley_Act_of_2002.pdf">www.pcaobus.org/About_the_PCAOB/Sarbanes_Oxley_Act_of_2002.pdf</a>
Combined Code on Corporate Governance	These are the official U.K. guidelines for corporate governance.	<a href="http://www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/ukla/lr_comcode2003.pdf">www.fsa.gov.uk/pubs/ukla/lr_comcode2003.pdf</a>

In the U.S., it is traditional for a company's CEO to also serve as the chairman of the board of directors. In theory (and abundantly in practice) this leads to any number of conflicts

of interest. Since it is the board of directors' job to hire and dismiss the CEO, as well as other members of senior management, and to determine the levels of remuneration for upper

management (including the CEO), it is not difficult to imagine cases in which a CEO with very poor performance indicators retains his position and even gives himself a raise.

In contrast, in Russia (and in many European countries), this conflict of interest is dealt with by separating the board of directors from management. The CEO is the chairman of the management board, which acts as an entity separate from the board of directors. The management board's members will include a number of key members of senior management, but not all of them. In Russia's banking sector, for example, the Central Bank of Russia (sort of like the U.S. Federal Reserve) must first approve a manager's candidacy before the company may officially appoint him to sit on the management board.

The board of directors acts as a liaison between the shareholders and management. It oversees management, key strategies, and makes decisions on a variety of issues that are clearly defined as the responsibilities of the board of directors in the company's charter and/or bylaws. The board will form a number of different committees to deal with specific fields, such as audit, risk management, strategy, compensation, and others. These committees contribute to the board's efficiency by discussing issues and working out all of the bumps before the issues are submitted for review by the board of directors.

### Meetings!

There are lots of other meetings in addition to the annual general shareholder meeting and various other special shareholder meetings. While there are no hard and fast rules, an active management board will meet every week or once every two weeks. The board of directors will meet generally once a month, sometimes less, depending on a company's stage of development, and often board committees will meet before the board of directors.

In my experience, an unfathomable

quantity of documents is created for all of these meetings. That means a lot of translation work for companies that have bilingual boards. Management will prepare documents, reports, and presentations for items that are discussed at all of the different levels of meetings. These must be translated for directors who do not speak Russian. Meeting secretaries must also produce minutes, detailing meeting attendance, discussions, and the decisions made at each meeting. These also end up in a translator's inbox.

It can add up to an awful lot of translation to be done in a very short period of time. This is one particularly frustrating aspect of corporate translation work. There is a very high demand for enormous volumes by remarkably short deadlines. After slaving away for hours on a long development strategy or incentives policy, I have to admit it was a little demoralizing when one director would visit my desk after monthly meetings

rate governance. As a result, the structure of board membership has been gradually changing. The need for directors with independent status and expertise in audit, strategy, risk management, and other major fields that play a part in the corporate governance system has led many Russian companies to appoint foreign directors to their boards. Some of these foreign directors speak Russian, but often they do not. This is where translation comes in. Directors have a duty of care, which means that they must take all reasonable measures to be as well informed as possible about the company they work for. This helps ensure their ability to make sound decisions on behalf of the shareholders.

I suspect that my experience as an in-house translator working under the corporate secretary is not a very common one. All the same, freelance translators frequently deal with any number of different documents that are all somehow part of the corporate

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## Translators working with corporate documents need to have a strong grasp of general financial and general legal terms.

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with a huge stack of translated documents marked for the shredder. All of that hard work went right into the garbage the very next day!

### Documents and Translation

The need to translate all of these many documents is relatively new. Over the past few years, Russian corporations have become more interested in adopting and adhering to international best practices in corpo-

governance system. You may run into anything from accounting policies to human resources policies. Many of us have seen annual reports, financial reports, auditor statements, memos, contracts, internal correspondence, budgets, and strategies—the list goes on and on.

This wide variety of documents means that translators working with corporate documents need to have a strong grasp of general financial and gen- ➔

eral legal terms. When translating for a regular client, either directly or through an agency, a translator will also benefit from preparing a glossary of terms specific to the company's sector: banking, oil and gas, mining, energy, etc. It is also ideal if you are able to get feedback and terminology support directly from your client.

Attending board committee meetings as a meeting secretary was invaluable to me, as it provided an opportunity to observe firsthand new terms and corporate buzzwords in use. However, given the confidential nature of most corporate documents, freelancers rarely have that kind of access. It is not uncommon for freelancers to be asked to sign a nondisclosure agreement for ongoing work of this kind.

### Translating Corporates: Resources

Although corporate governance as we know it in the West is a relatively new field in Russia, there are several resources that translators can take advantage of, including official U.S. and U.K. documents in the field. In addition to the resources listed in Table 1 on page 24, I highly recommend using abridged CGS Reports (Corporate Governance Score Reports) published by Standard & Poor's (S&P) as parallel texts—S&P provides its own official translations. You may have to dig around a bit to find the English version, but they are usually available. Visit: [www.standardandpoors.ru](http://www.standardandpoors.ru) (you must register to gain access to their materials).

### Sign Me Up?

U.S. citizens (and other non-Russians) looking to live and work in Russia should be aware of the many recent changes in visa and work permit regulations for foreigners. The rules

have become stricter, and honest-to-goodness work permits are gradually becoming the norm. These days, people who hold business visas may not stay in the country for more than 90 days at a time, and you must hold a business visa in order to obtain a work visa. You must undergo medical exams (including for leprosy) and blood work—including drug testing—and submit the test results. Many companies will not accept test results issued by medical institutions located outside of Russia. Before

you apply for a work visa, your company must obtain permission to hire a foreigner. If your company is granted a permit to officially hire you full-time, then you may work legally—for that company only. It is a formidable and costly process, and not all companies are willing to make the effort. The regulations change so often that companies themselves frequently do not know the proper procedures du jour.

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## Want to Learn More?

### Central Bank of Russia

[www.cbr.ru/eng](http://www.cbr.ru/eng)

### Corporate Governance Score Reports—Standard & Poor's

[www.standardandpoors.ru/page.php?path=enggovlist](http://www.standardandpoors.ru/page.php?path=enggovlist)

[www2.standardandpoors.com/spf/pdf/products/CGSCriteria.pdf](http://www2.standardandpoors.com/spf/pdf/products/CGSCriteria.pdf)

### Federal Financial Market Service

[www.fcsm.ru/eng](http://www.fcsm.ru/eng)

### Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002

[www.sec.gov/about/laws.shtml](http://www.sec.gov/about/laws.shtml)

[www.sec.gov/news/studies/principlesbasedstand.htm](http://www.sec.gov/news/studies/principlesbasedstand.htm)

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# The Process and Paperwork of International Adoption

*By Martha Edwards*

**An abbreviated** explanation for the existence of international adoption is that most developed countries have many more adults wanting to adopt than they have children available for adoption, while in many developing countries the situation is reversed. In this process, affluent first-world parents adopt children from less affluent parts of the world. International adoption is also known as “foreign” or “intercountry” adoption. Regardless of what the process is called, however, international adoptions generate an abundance of paperwork in need of translation. While this article is specific to the adoption of Latin American children by U.S. couples, the process outlined here is similar for many countries. Understanding the process behind international adoption can be very helpful in deciphering its specialized terminology.

## A Host of Regulators

International adoption is regulated by a large number of authorities in both the children’s countries of origin and the countries of their destination (known as the “sending” and “receiving” countries): prominent among them are social service agencies, the courts, and immigration authorities. The main authority on international adoption is the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention). The Hague Adoption Convention is a multilateral treaty that was approved by 66 nations on May 29, 1993 at The Hague. The Convention covers adoptions among countries that become parties to it and sets out for such adoptions certain internationally agreed-upon minimum regulations and procedures. Its main goals are to:

- Protect the best interests of adopted children.
- Standardize processes between countries.
- Prevent child abuse, such as trafficking in children.

Currently, 68 countries have joined the Hague Adoption Convention. (The U.S. signed the Convention on March 31, 1994.) Countries party to the Convention also have a designated Central Adoption Authority that gives the final green light to each adoption. In the U.S., the Central Authority is the Department of State.

Internationally adopted children coming to the U.S. today from Latin America often have access to birth family and hospital records, which may be a prominent part of the process. Most Latin American countries do not allow single-parent adop-

tion or adoption by those who have birth children, so my terminology is a reflection of these facts, and will assume, for simplicity's sake, that the adoption is that of a single infant by a childless couple. The terminology provided here is a sample, as there are variations between countries.

### The Process

An international adoption has three distinct phases, each involving a set of documents needing translation: the parents' papers into Spanish (for Latin American cases) for the authorities in the child's country of origin, and the child's papers into English for the American parents and authorities. These documents are socioeconomic, legal, and medical in nature.

### Phase One

The first phase of an adoption is the qualification of the prospective parents. No adoption authority, domestic or international, will consider foster or adoptive placement of a child in a home that has not been thoroughly investigated and pre-approved. The process of that investigation and the narrative report generated from it are both known as a "home study." In many countries, the home study and other aspects of the adoption are handled by government entities, at no charge to the adopting parents. In the U.S., however, government social service agencies will only conduct home studies for people interested in adopting children from public foster care. International adoption home studies are conducted by private, nonprofit agencies that charge for the services they render. Sometimes this fee assessment is done on a sliding scale, according to the applicants' income level, but more often on a flat-fee basis. It is often quite a significant expense, although part of it is tax-deductible (up to \$11,390 for tax year 2007).

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## No adoption authority, domestic or international, will consider foster or adoptive placement of a child in a home that has not been thoroughly investigated and pre-approved.

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In addition to the expense, adopting abroad involves a great deal of work on the part of would-be adoptive parents, who must collect the following, at a minimum, to submit to a licensed adoption agency:

- Verifications of employment and income;
- Police record clearances (including an FBI fingerprint check);
- Child abuse clearances;
- Letters of recommendation;
- Birth certificates;
- Marriage certificate;
- Letter from a physician stating that the applicants are in good health;
- Proof of infertility;
- Psychological evaluation; and
- Verification of a bank account in good standing.

After a series of interviews with the applicants separately and together, including at least one at the applicants' home—where the child is expected to live with them—the social worker writes the home study report. The home study report includes biographical data on the applicants, an assessment of the soundness of their relationship and ability to be good parents, an evaluation of the documentation submitted, and a physical description of the prospective parents and their home.

All of the documents listed,

including the home study, must bear original signatures witnessed by a notary public. The notary's signature is then verified by the state's secretary of state, whose signature, in turn, is verified by the U.S. Department of State's Authentication Office. This process is called (depending on the international treaty governing the relationship between the two countries) either an "authentication" or an "apostille." All documents go through a similar chain of verifications once they are sent to the child's country of origin. Once the documents bear all of these seals, signatures, and ribbons, the documents are considered legally valid to submit to the foreign court as evidence of the applicants' fitness to adopt.

### Phase Two

The second phase of an international adoption process is the referral. This is when a child becomes available for foreign adoption and his or her information is referred to the approved, waiting couple. The information provided usually includes some combination of the following:

- A photograph;
- Birth certificate;
- Medical information; and
- A social summary.

Assuming the child was born in a hospital, medical information will typi- ➔



cally include such basics as: birth weight; length; Apgar score (a numerical measure, 1 through 10, of newborn health indicators such as heart rate, muscle tone, color, and respiratory response); length of gestation; head circumference; whether the child was delivered vaginally or by Cesarean section; plus any available information about complications or treatments for jaundice and vaccinations administered. If there is no birth record, the medical information will be obtained from the baby's first visit to a pediatrician. The social summary is information about how and why the child became available for adoption, and usually provides some information about the birth parents, including a physical description and their socioeconomic circumstances, and whether there are any biological siblings. It may also contain information about the foster home where the child is being cared for while the adoption is processed.

### Phase Three

Once the future adoptive parents accept the referral, the third phase of the adoption begins: the placement. This is when the child actually arrives

tually issue either a pre-adoptive guardianship order or an adoption decree, formalizing the parent/child relationship between the U.S. couple and the foreign-born baby. If the

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**It is important to keep in mind that there is a politically correct way of referring to adoption and the relationships it kindles and severs.**

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in the adoptive parents' home. Placement begins when the parents' home study documents and the child's referral documents are submitted to a court in the sending country, along with a petition for adoption. If everything is in order, that court will even-

adoption is not finalized abroad, immigration law and social service policy stipulate that it must be finalized in the U.S. as soon as practicable.

When the adoption or guardianship is granted, the home study, referral, and adoption documents, plus their translations, are submitted to the sending country's passport office for issuance of a passport to the child. They are also submitted to U.S. immigration authorities along with an I-600 "Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative." Assuming all is in order, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will issue an approval of that petition. The petition is then forwarded to the U.S. Department of State for immigrant visa processing at the U.S. embassy in the sending country so the child may travel to the U.S. with his or her adoptive parents. The adoptive parents travel to pick up their child and are interviewed at the U.S. embassy, which will again review all documents to ensure that they are in order before issuing an immigrant visa to the child. In some cases, the embassy will also interview the child's biological mother to ensure that she has given her consent to the adoption and knows that the

## Links of Interest

### Apgar Score

[http://kidshealth.org/parent/newborn/first\\_days/apgar.html](http://kidshealth.org/parent/newborn/first_days/apgar.html)

### Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption

[http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/convention/convention\\_2290.html](http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/convention/convention_2290.html)

### I-600 Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative

[www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-600.pdf](http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-600.pdf)

### U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis)

### U.S. Department of State's Authentication Office

[www.state.gov/m/a/auth](http://www.state.gov/m/a/auth)

### U.S. Department of State's Office of Language Services

<http://oig.state.gov/oig/lbry/reporthighlights/72230.htm>

## International Adoption Terminology

English	Spanish
abandonment	<i>abandono</i>
adoptive parents/children	<i>padres/hijos adoptivos</i>
affidavit	<i>declaración jurada</i>
Apgar (score)	<i>Apgar</i>
apostille	<i>apostilla</i>
appearance (at a hearing)	<i>comparecencia</i>
authentication/legalization (of documents)	<i>autenticación/legalización</i>
BCG (newborn tuberculosis vaccine)	<i>BCG</i>
birth certificate	<i>certificado/partida de nacimiento</i>
birth record	<i>acta/registro de nacimiento</i>
birth/biological parents	<i>padres biológicos</i>
child support	<i>pensión alimenticia</i>
DNA test	<i>prueba ADN</i>
family background	<i>antecedentes familiares</i>
father or mother who has not come forward to recognize a child and therefore has no parental rights	<i>padre o madre no compareciente</i>
finalization (of an adoption)	<i>ejecutoria, sentencia final de adopción</i>
foster care	<i>colocación familiar, hogar sustituto</i>
full adoption	<i>adopción plena</i>
guardian (legal)	<i>tutor</i>
guardianship	<i>tución, tutela, tutoría</i>
home study	<i>informe social, evaluación socioeconómica, informe del hogar</i>

English	Spanish
head circumference	<i>perímetro cefálico</i>
infant	<i>lactante</i>
jaundice	<i>ictericia</i>
kinship	<i>filación</i>
length (of a newborn)	<i>talla</i>
Mongolian spot	<i>mancha mongólica, callana</i>
parental rights	<i>patria potestad</i>
placement (of a child)	<i>colocación (de un menor)</i>
police record clearance	<i>certificado de buena conducta, antecedentes policiales</i>
post-placement visit/report	<i>visita/informe de seguimiento</i>
prospective parents	<i>padres putativos</i>
referral (of a child for adoption)	<i>asignación/oferta</i>
relinquishment (of a child, of parental rights)	<i>entrega (de un menor), renuncia (de la patria potestad)</i>
simple adoption (does not confer certain rights, among them the right of inheritance)	<i>adopción sencilla</i>
social summary	<i>informe socioeconómico</i>
social worker	<i>asistente social, trabajador(a) social</i>
term newborn – TN adequate to gestational age	<i>recién nacido adecuado a edad gestacional – RNAEG</i>
toddler	<i>párvulo</i>
well child checkup	<i>control del menor sano</i>

child will leave her country permanently. The embassy may also require DNA tests to ensure that the child is not being relinquished by someone other than the actual birth parent.

There is a peculiarity to the definition of “orphan” and “adoptable” in the U.S. immigration context, which applies neither to any other definition of orphan, nor to most definitions of adoptable. Thus, an orphan, for immigration purposes, may have no parents

or only one parent who has relinquished the child for adoption (this parent is known as the “sole or surviving parent,” the other parent being deceased or otherwise absent). However, in order to secure an orphan visa, a child may not have two parents who consent to the adoption, even though this is perfectly legal in most countries and in the context of a within-the-U.S. or “domestic” adoption. The only exception is if those

parents can be proven not to be able to care for the child. Neither will the adopted child be granted an “orphan visa” if he or she is mentally handicapped or over the age of 16, which is another exclusion not present in most foreign and domestic adoption law. There are many and complicated rationales for these exclusions, which I will not go into here. The point is that would-be parents, agencies, and overseas counterparts must be ➡

## The Process and Paperwork of International Adoption Continued

aware of these restrictions, or they could face major disappointment—and on many occasions have—when, after a perfectly legal adoption, the child’s visa is denied.

### Post-Placement

Once back in the U.S. with their foreign-born child, the newly-formed family usually goes through six months of post-placement supervision, which involves three visits by a social worker who will look at medical records and observe and interview the family regarding their adjustment. Reports of those visits, along with photographs and pediatric evaluations, are translated and sent back to the orphanage, court, or other relevant authority in the sending country, along with proof of U.S. citizenship. Citizenship is conferred automatically

upon the child’s entry into the U.S., if adopted abroad, or after the adoption is finalized, if the adoption takes place in this country.

### Semantics

In terms of the translation of the documents associated with international adoption, it is important to keep in mind that there is a politically correct way of referring to adoption and the relationships it kindles and severs. Probably the biggest linguistic *faux pas* committed by those unfamiliar with the adoption process is to refer to children born into the family as “real” children, as opposed to those who are adopted (and who are therefore “unreal?”). The correct way to distinguish between them is “adoptive” and “biological” (or “birth”) children. Similarly, parents and siblings are not

“real,” but “birth” or “adoptive” parents or siblings. Likewise, birth parents do not “give up” or “give away” their children, they “place them” with an adoptive family, welfare institution, or court. (Please see the glossary list on page 31 for other frequently encountered terms.)

### Serving the Family

There are so many rules and regulations involved in an international adoption—and so many authorities at every level of government in both countries—that it is a wonder these things work out at all! But they do, and there are many thousands of fortunate parents and children who have found one another and become a family through this tortuous but ultimately worthwhile maze.

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# A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place: How to Deal with Information Overload

*By Naomi J. Sutcliffe de Moraes*

**Like all of us,** I have been overwhelmed by information in the past decade. It is hard to imagine going one day without turning on my computer, and yet I lived the first decades of my life without one. I used to keep my contacts in a section of a paper planner. Now the sheer number of contacts I need to have at my fingertips requires a computer program to manage.

Since I cannot turn back the clock, I have experimented over the years with different methods to keep track of things. Often, I would create a new Microsoft Word document, try to name it something obvious, put the information in it, and then try to place it in an obvious folder. This is not so easy with 160G of space and

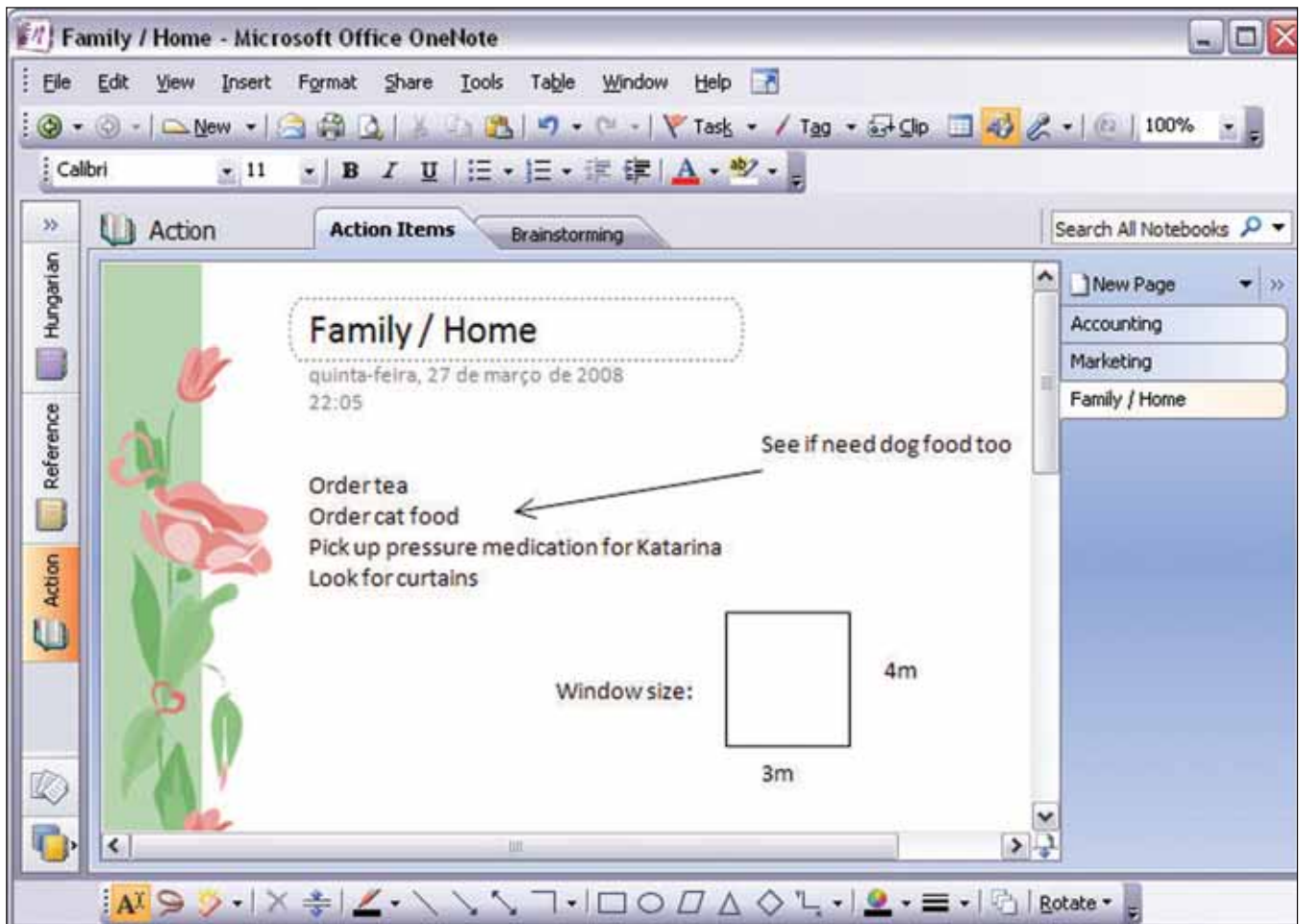
thousands of folders. To make matters worse, searching for text inside a file in Windows is ridiculously slow. Personal information management (PIM) programs like Microsoft Outlook require you to put data in a special format, or not at all, and are oriented toward calendar, to-do, and contact information. What do you do with all the other information? By this I mean:

- Jobs invoiced and paid/due;
- List of clients and potential clients, or agencies to avoid and agencies to contact;
- Bank websites, account numbers, passwords;
- Site links, user names, and pass-

words (Amazon, Yahoo! mail, etc.);

- Software license numbers;
- To-do items that are on the back burner;
- Results of brainstorming sessions;
- Meeting agendas or notes;
- Schedules (daily or long-term planning);
- Miscellaneous lists (presents, anniversaries, books);
- Research notes (translation or area-specific);
- Tax information (tax-deductible expenses, deadlines);
- Checklists (trip packing list, shopping list);
- Computer tips or instructions from manuals, articles, or technical support; and

Figure 1: Microsoft OneNote 2007 Screen



- Notes on how to do something (on the computer or otherwise).

Some people keep their information in a paper planner, on scraps of paper, Post-its, or a white board. At the opposite end of the spectrum, other people keep all their information online in

and there appears to be a relationship between how information is visualized and how well it is remembered or accessed. Last year, I began experimenting with the personal wiki concept as a way to deal with the multi-dimensionality of the information I must track. The concept can be

Wikipedia is based. As a reminder, a wiki is software that allows users to collaboratively create, edit, link, and organize the content of a website, usually for reference material. Similar to community wikis, a personal wiki is a wiki in which you put your own knowledge and notes, creating meaningful links between them. It is like having all of your notes on a personal website, but without the need to work with HTML. Wikis are not the same as PIMs like Microsoft Outlook and similar programs because they let you organize information any way you choose (within the software's limitations). You decide how to organize your information, and then access it through hierarchical trees, mind maps, or search tools (depending on the software chosen). Note that many programs that allow you to do this, including those mentioned in this article, do not call themselves personal wiki programs, but infor- ➔

## Individuals must use what works best for them.

Google Calendar, Google Docs, or another program. Individuals must use what works best for them, which is why this article mentions several software products with different approaches for managing information.

I have always been fascinated by how the brain works when it is learning and organizing information,

implemented in a variety of ways, but the basic idea is to be able to create notes on separate pages and link them in a way that is meaningful for you. Search capabilities are essential, since it can be hard to remember where you put things months or years later.

Almost all readers will be familiar with the wiki concept on which

mation managers, note takers, and mind-mapping programs, among others.

### Microsoft OneNote 2007

Microsoft OneNote 2007 is a personal wiki solution that allows you to create links to files, Web pages, and other OneNote pages, and insert, for example, images, audio, video, and digital handwriting. The screen shown in Figure 1 on page 35 is my Family/Home page in the Action Items section of the Action notebook.

At first glance, Figure 1 looks like Microsoft Word with three levels of tabs. Notebooks, shown along the left side of the screen, contain Sections, shown along the top of the editing area, which contain pages, shown along the right side. Sub-sections and

sub-pages can also be created for additional levels of complexity. The editing area, however, is more like a whiteboard or bulletin board than Microsoft Word. You can put text anywhere on the screen. Using the drawing tools shown at the bottom of the screen in Figure 1, you can draw various shapes and figures. Images can be inserted either as floating objects or as a fixed background. It is very easy to learn because the menus and tools work like those in other Microsoft Office products.

One of my favorite features is the ability to use decorative backgrounds. The hearts and flowers background shown in Figure 1 is one of about 50 that come with the program, and you can make templates yourself with your own images and text. Plain white

just gets boring sometimes.

The notebooks shown in Figure 1 were created based on the principles of the book *Getting Things Done* (see the references at the end of this article), according to which reference material and action items should be organized separately so that you can see at a glance what your priorities are at any given time. I also like to have pages in the reference section for brainstorming, where I can write down whatever comes to mind without worrying about where to put it until later (like electronic scrap paper). I also have a page with links to the files I use most, so I can access them through OneNote rather than through menus or the Windows directory structure. I keep OneNote open on my PC all day.

Table 1: Other Personal Wiki Programs

Program	Features	Cost	Accessibility / Portability	Operating System
Compendium 1.5.2	Text and links. Visual mapping interface.	Free	Allows sharing and collaboration online.	Windows / Mac / Linux
EverNote 2.2	Text and links. Imports files as images. Works with handwritten text.	\$50, 60-day free trial	EverNote Portable runs directly off a Universal Serial Bus (USB) drive. A new version (currently in beta) will have integrated PC, mobile phone, and Web modules.	Windows/Mac
Microsoft OneNote 2007	Text, handwriting, images. Links to video, audio, files, the Internet. Can share/synch between PCs.	\$100, 60-day free trial. Available in some Microsoft Office suites.	Notebooks can be shared on a server, and can be synchronized between computers. Pages can be exported as non-editable Web pages or as images, or converted into Microsoft Word format.	Windows
MindManager	Mind maps, text, and links. Can create Microsoft Outlook tasks and appointments.	Pro 7: \$349; Lite 7 : \$99; Mac 7: \$129, 20-day free trial	Maps can be exported and shared, but can only be edited from within the program.	Windows / Mac
Zim	Text and links only. Very easy to use, and files are stored as simple text.	Free	Since files are in text format, they are easily portable, but this must be done manually.	Linux / Windows (if you install Perl, Gtk+)



Some other OneNote features include:

- Sharing notes with other people and synching with other computers.
- Searching for words in images (using optical character recognition).
- Searching in all notebooks with one interface.
- Creating Microsoft Outlook tasks from OneNote. (When a task is marked as complete in Outlook, it is marked as complete in OneNote, too.)
- Creating passwords for specific pages.
- Opening the program with Windows Key + Shift + N.
- Having a storage structure (folders and files, not a database) that is easy to back up and restore.
- Marking pages and text with tags, like in blogs.

### Other Programs

OneNote is just one of many personal wiki programs. For an overview, see the Wikipedia personal wiki page (see references). I took a look at some other interesting programs, which are listed in Table 1 on page 36.

Some of the information management systems listed in Table 1 are more limited in the kinds of information they can incorporate, but may work better on your system or be less expensive. Some, like MindManager and Compendium, are more visual, while OneNote, EverNote, and Zim are more linear.

### Zim

Zim is the simplest program, and was written to run on Linux. It can also run on Windows if you install Perl and Gtk+. If you have no idea what I am talking about, and you have Windows, you should probably try another tool. Otherwise, the Zim site explains how to install these programming pack- ➡

Figure 2: Zim Screen

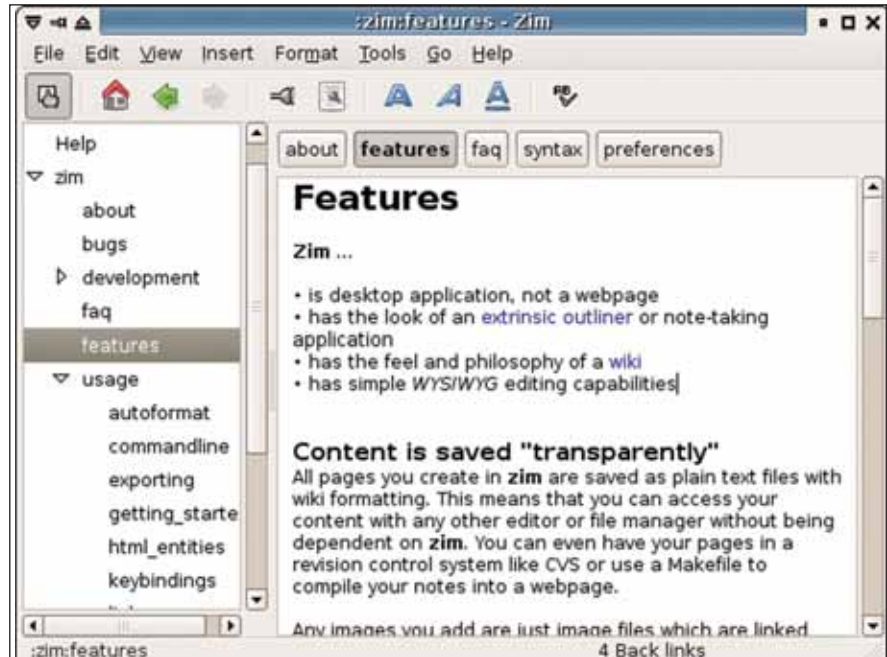
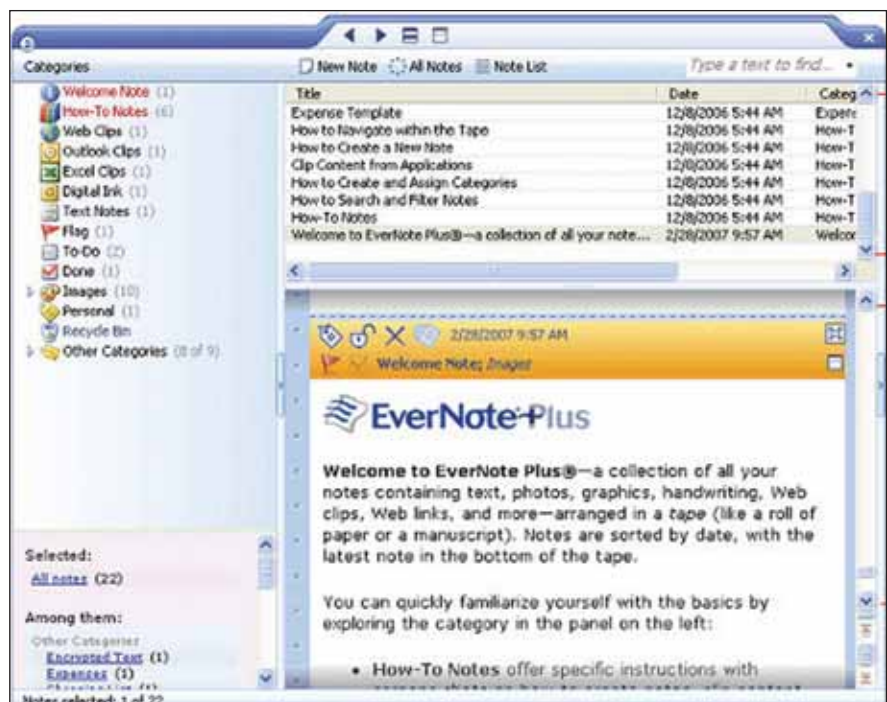


Figure 3: EverNote 2.2 Screenshot





ages. Zim is easy to use and may be all you need if you do not want to work with diagrams or images. It stores files in text format, so they can be easily read outside of Zim and shared between different computers or devices. You can use it to link to files of any type. (See Figure 2 on page 37 for an example.)

### EverNote

EverNote is oriented toward Tablet PCs and handwriting, and is very strong at working with images. Searches include handwritten words

and words in images, which OneNote also does. Notes are organized internally by date, and can be tagged or labeled with multiple categories. (See Figure 3 on page 37 for an example.) The new version, currently available in beta, has integrated online, mobile phone, and PC/Mac versions so you can search your notes taken at home from your mobile phone or online. Images captured on your mobile phone or notes you take while away from the computer are added to your overall set of notes.

### Compendium and MindManager

Compendium and MindManager have a visual approach to organizing information and relationships. The drawback is that you are forced to put things in a visual format, and cannot just draw or type freestyle like on a whiteboard, as OneNote allows you to do. These programs work on the top-down principle, where you begin with general concepts and work down to the details. Compendium is slightly more difficult to use than MindManager, but it has extensive

Figure 4: MindManager Screenshot

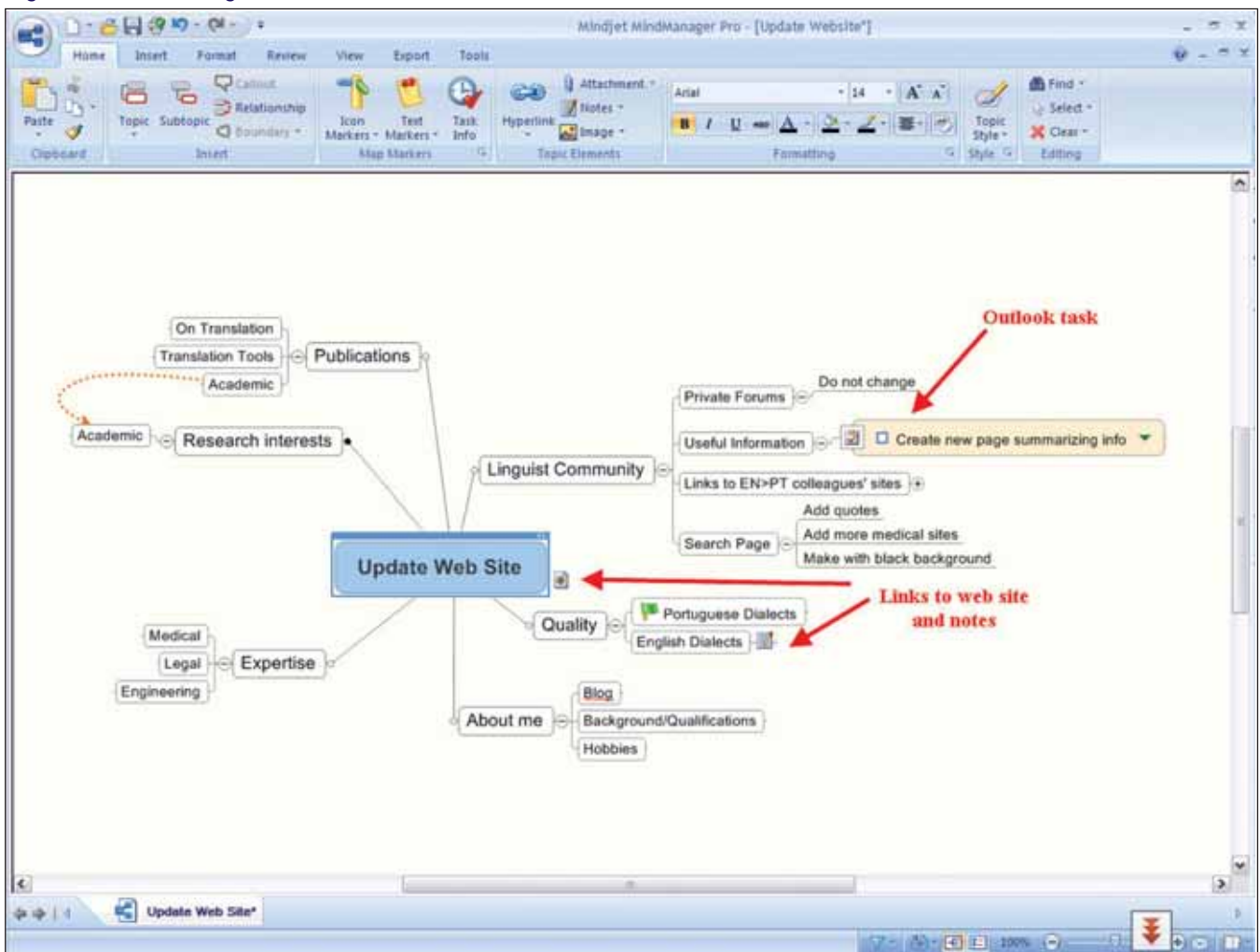
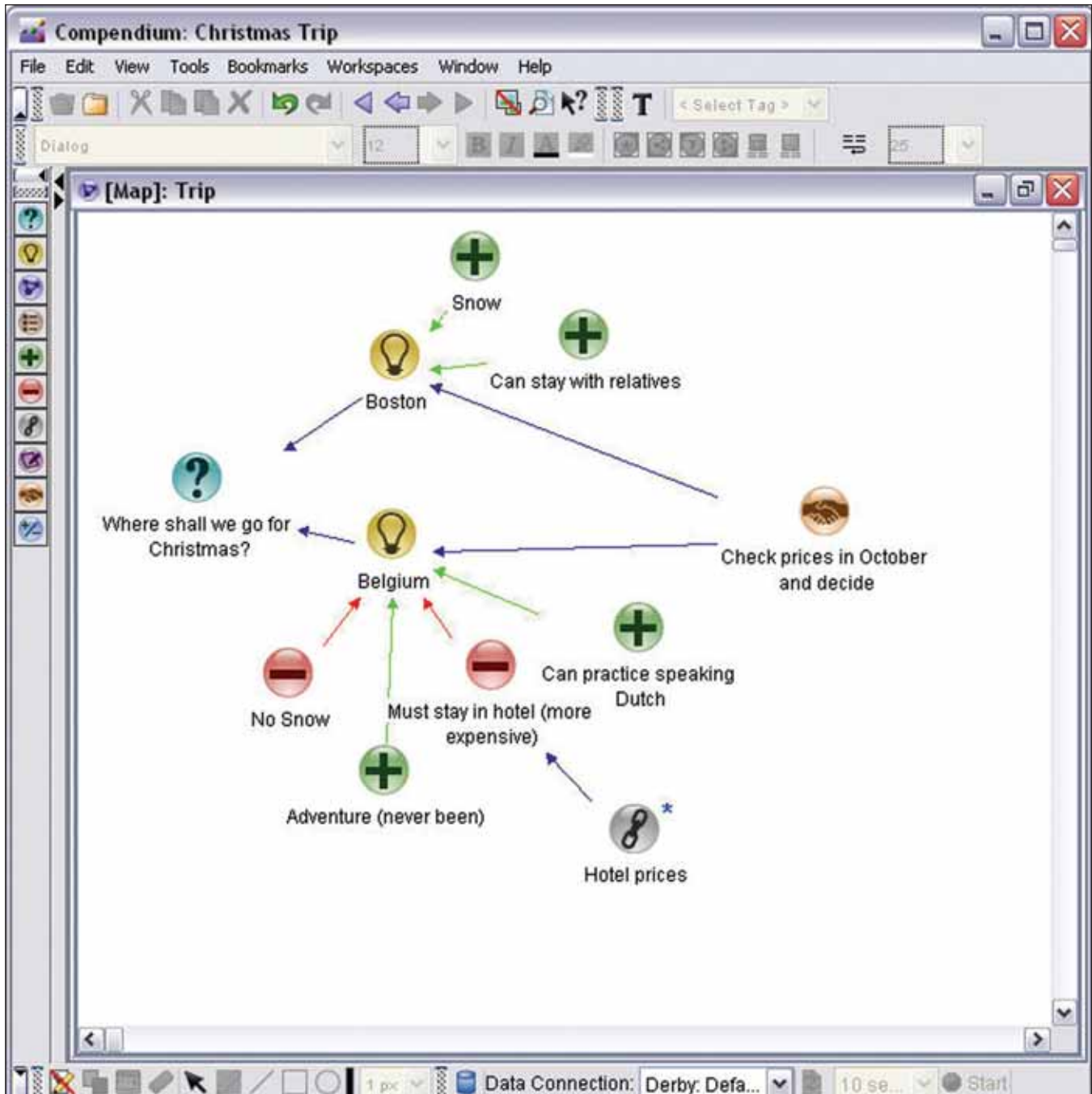


Figure 5: Compendium Screenshot



documentation, and it is free! (See Figure 4 on page 38 for a MindManager screenshot showing a map of tasks for updating a website.) Like OneNote, MindManager is integrated with Microsoft Outlook, and Outlook tasks and appointments can be created from within the tool. You can take notes within the program, attaching them to a topic in a mind map, and you can create links to Web pages, documents, or other mind

maps. The program can also automatically convert maps into Outline form and vice-versa.

Figure 5 shows a screenshot of Compendium detailing plans for a Christmas trip. I think visual maps are better for planning, organizing, and brainstorming, but I would not want to be forced to put all of my notes in this format. I prefer to create maps in map programs, and then import them into a tool like OneNote or EverNote.

## What I Use

Now you are probably wondering what I use, since no one would use all the programs discussed here. I use Microsoft Outlook for e-mail and contacts because it synchronizes with my smartphone. I hate Outlook, but I have no desire to insert all of my contacts into my mobile phone manually. PocoMail is a much better program, and that is what I use for my personal mail accounts. I have a paper ➡

planner for keeping track of appointments, and use only the month-at-a-glance pages. I have few appointments, and I carry the paper planner with me. I also put my basic schedule into Google Calendar, which I share with my husband, so we each know where the other person is during the day and who needs to take the car/subway on a given day.

I have blank pages in my paper planner that I use to write down anything I think of while I am away from the office or when the computer is turned off. When the computer is on, I transfer this information to the appro-

priate location. I use TO3000 for keeping track of clients, jobs, invoices, and payments. I use OneNote for everything else. My husband uses Zim (instead of OneNote)

on the Linux OS, and is very happy with it. I draw mind maps and other graphics using Inspiration, and then import them into OneNote.

*ata*

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**There appears to be a relationship between how information is visualized and how well it is remembered or accessed.**

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## References

### Personal Wiki Tools

#### Compendium

<http://compendium.open.ac.uk/institute/index.htm>

#### EverNote

<http://evernote.com>

#### Microsoft OneNote 2007

[office.microsoft.com/onenote](http://office.microsoft.com/onenote)

#### MindManager

[www.mindjet.com/us](http://www.mindjet.com/us)

#### Wikipedia Personal Wiki Page

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal\\_wiki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_wiki)

#### Zim

<http://pardus-larus.student.utwente.nl/~pardus/projects/zim/index.shtml>

## Other References

#### Getting Things Done

[www.davidco.com](http://www.davidco.com)

#### Inspiration

[www.inspiration.com](http://www.inspiration.com)

#### PocoMail

[www.pocomail.com](http://www.pocomail.com)

#### TO3000

[www.to3000.com](http://www.to3000.com)

Visit the ATA Calendar Online

[www.atanet.org/calendar/](http://www.atanet.org/calendar/)

for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.

# Upcoming Events

## June 2-4, 2008

Society for Technical Communication  
55th Annual Conference and Expo  
Philadelphia, PA  
[www.stc.org/55thConf](http://www.stc.org/55thConf)

## June 6-7, 2008

Medical Interpreter Network of Georgia  
Southeast Regional Medical  
Interpreter Conference  
Atlanta, GA  
[www.mingweb.org](http://www.mingweb.org)

## June 10-14, 2008

Linguistic Association of Canada  
& the United States  
34th LACUS Forum: Language and  
Linguistics in North America 1608-2008  
Diversity and Convergence  
Laval University  
Quebec, Canada  
<http://homepages.utoledo.edu/dcolega/lacus/conferences.html>

## June 21-22, 2008

American Translators Association  
Court Interpreting Seminar  
Chicago, IL  
[www.atanet.org/pd/court](http://www.atanet.org/pd/court)

## June 23-27, 2008

The Localization Industry  
Standards Association  
LISA Forum 2008  
San Francisco, CA  
[www.lisa.org](http://www.lisa.org)

## July 17-20, 2008

ATA Translation Company Division  
9th Annual Mid-Year Conference  
Englewood, CO  
[www.ata-divisions.org/TCD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/TCD)

## August 4-7, 2008

International Federation of Translators  
18<sup>th</sup> FIT World Congress  
Shanghai, China  
[www.fit-ift.org](http://www.fit-ift.org)

## August 17-29, 2008

24th Cambridge Conference  
Simultaneous Interpretation Course  
Cambridge, United Kingdom  
[www.cciconline.net](http://www.cciconline.net)

## August 24-28, 2008

International Association of  
Applied Linguistics  
15th AILA World Congress  
Essen, Germany  
[www.aila2008.org](http://www.aila2008.org)

## September 11-13, 2008

Mediterranean Editors and  
Translators Meeting  
"Communication Support Across  
the Disciplines"  
University of Split  
Split, Croatia  
[www.metmeetings.org/?section=metm08\\_program](http://www.metmeetings.org/?section=metm08_program)

## September 11-13, 2008

British Association for Applied Linguistics  
41st BAAL Annual Conference  
Swansea University  
Swansea, England  
[www.baal.org.uk/conf.htm](http://www.baal.org.uk/conf.htm)

## September 12-14, 2008

Tennessee Association of Professional  
Interpreters and Translators  
2008 Conference  
Nashville, TN  
[www.tapit.org](http://www.tapit.org)

## September 27-28, 2008

Atlanta Association of Interpreters and  
Translators  
2nd Annual Conference  
"International Year of Languages"  
Atlanta, GA  
[www.aait.org/events.htm](http://www.aait.org/events.htm)

## October 10-12, 2008

International Medical  
Interpreters Association  
2008 International Conference on  
Medical Interpreting  
Boston, MA  
[www.mmia.org/conferences/default.asp](http://www.mmia.org/conferences/default.asp)

## October 15-18, 2008

American Literary Translators Association  
31st Annual Conference  
Minneapolis, MN  
[www.literarytranslators.org](http://www.literarytranslators.org)

## November 5-8, 2008

American Translators Association  
49th Annual Conference  
Orlando, FL  
[www.atanet.org/conf/2008](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008)

## November 29-30, 2008

Organización Mexicana de Traductores  
XII International Congress of Translation  
and Interpretation  
San Jerónimo 2008  
Guadalajara, Mexico  
[www.omt.org.mx/general.htm](http://www.omt.org.mx/general.htm)





## Business Smarts     Appropriate Pricing for Services

*Finding appropriate pricing for a service is one of the first challenges of establishing a business. Many factors contribute to finding a price that is attractive to clients, includes room to grow, and appropriately reflects the level of service provided.*

### Dear Business Smarts,

I would like to supplement my income by doing translation work on the side. I called a few people listed on ATA's website, but nobody would give me any information about the going rates. How much can I charge for translations?

*PRICING, by e-mail*

### Dear PRICING,

The American Translators Association does not itself issue price recommendations and, for legal reasons, discourages any such discussion by its members. This is why you were unable to gather specific information by phone. In addition, there is no such thing as standard "going rates," since market prices vary by language combination and the technical difficulty of texts.

To arrive at an appropriate price for your translation services, you will need to analyze a number of factors. These include your professional qualifications, your expertise in specific fields, the market you would like to target, and, of course, your cost of doing business.

Starting with the latter: you will

need, at a minimum, an up-to-date computer, a basic set of dictionaries, the fastest Internet connection you can afford, and possibly specific software such as a spellchecker program for your language combination. You will also pay approximately 15% self-employment tax on your translation earnings. Your translation price needs to include a sufficient allowance to cover all these fixed expenses, since you may end up losing money otherwise. Your overhead should also account for the time you spent marketing your services, communicating with clients, administrative tasks, and bookkeeping.

Regardless of your language combination, linguistic background, and expertise, you must be fully qualified to do translation work even on a part-time basis, and be aware of the various expectations of translation buyers. It might be useful to "inventory" your qualifications, including degrees, other credentials (including ATA certification), language skills, expertise in specific subject fields, residence or other experience outside the U.S., and actual translation work performed. Take a look at the online profiles of colleagues with similar qualifications, for example, in ATA's *Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services* ([www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories](http://www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories)) or other translator portals, such as ProZ.com ([www.proz.com](http://www.proz.com)) or Translators Café (<http://translatorscafe.com>). These sites also include extensive discussion

forums with helpful information. You can also browse past job offers in your language combination and area of specialization to view price offers. While prices may be on the low end on auction websites, they at least provide a guideline for price calculations. In addition, ATA produces a comprehensive compensation survey that features the most complete, accurate, and up-to-date income data for translation and interpreting professions (For further information on the 2007 edition, visit [www.atanet.org/publications/index.php](http://www.atanet.org/publications/index.php)).

The best mathematical approach to arriving at a suitable price would be to define a gross hourly income (including overhead and taxes) that would make it worthwhile for you to work as a translator rather than, say, at a part-time retail job. Seasoned professional translators can produce about 300-400 words of finished text in an hour, meaning that the text is thoroughly researched, correctly translated, and fully edited. Divide your desired hourly net income by this word count to arrive at the price you would need to charge per word.

### Further recommended reading:

Hine, Jonathan T. "Is This Worth It?" *The ATA Chronicle* (February 1998), 23.

Durban, Chris, and Alan Melby. *Translation: Buying a Non-commodity, How Translation* ➤

### Comments?

ATA members can discuss business issues online at the following Yahoo group: [http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/ata\\_business\\_practices](http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/ata_business_practices). You will need to register with Yahoo (at no charge) if you have not already done so, and provide your full name and ATA member number in order to join the group.

*The information in this column was compiled by members of ATA's Business Practices Education Committee for the benefit of ATA members. This column is not intended to constitute legal, financial, or other business advice. Each individual or company should make its own independent business decisions and consult its own legal, financial, or other advisors as appropriate. The views expressed here are not necessarily those of ATA or its Board of Directors. Send your questions about the business of translation and interpretation to The ATA Chronicle—BPEC Q&A; 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314 USA; Fax: +1-703-683-6122; E-mail: [businesspractices@atanet.org](mailto:businesspractices@atanet.org). Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.*



## The Onionskin

Chris Durban

chrisdurban@noos.fr

### Crossed Wires in the Gulf of Tonkin

The Onionskin offers a behind-the-scenes look at translations in the public domain—kudos for best practice and advice for perpetrators who could surely do better. Comments and leads for future columns are welcome (please include full contact details).  
Contact: chrisdurban@noos.fr.

#### Translation Breakdowns Under the Pressure of Military Conflict Can Have Dire Consequences

The plight of translators and interpreters in Iraq has been in the spotlight in recent months, including a Best Radio Story award from the Foreign Press Association for “Lost in Translation,” broadcast by BBC Radio 4’s *Face the Facts* in November 2007.

But linguists have always played an essential role in facilitating the exchange of information in war zones. When expertise is lacking, the consequences can be tragic, with messages mangled, massacred, and/or massaged.

The problem emerges clearly from a review of documents recently declassified by the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) concerning the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin incident. This pitted North Vietnamese patrol boats against a U.S. destroyer in a clash that was the starting point for military escalation in Southeast Asia, and ultimately led to the Vietnam War.

As reported by NSA historian Robert Hanyok, the initial North Vietnamese attack on the USS Maddox took place off the northeastern coast of Vietnam on August 2, 1964. It led U.S. President Lyndon Johnson to warn the North Vietnamese of “grave consequences” in the event of further aggression. Sure enough, two days later, President Johnson informed Congress that a second attack had occurred and asked for authorization to respond. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was voted on August 7, and became the legal foundation for spiraling military intervention.

#### Smoking Gun?

But even at the time, says Hanyok, there were doubters: had there really been a second attack? In presenting its case, the Johnson administration produced the English translation of what it claimed was an intercept of an after-action report by the North Vietnamese navy. This seemed to be about a battle on August 4, 1964.

Years later, however, analysis of these signal intercepts confirmed a mistranslation and thus misinterpretation: in Vietnamese, the term for military operations, *hanh quan*, can also mean “forced or long march or movement.” According to the new analysis, this “second message” was nothing more or less than a second translation of the first intercept by a different relay. It thus referred not to a new attack, but to the towing of two torpedo boats damaged in the first attack—on August 2—to a distant island for repairs.

In a detailed analysis published in *Cryptologic Quarterly*, Hanyok acknowledges that NSA staffers were probably under considerable pressure to produce “proof.”

He also cites “environmental pressures” familiar to all translators in deadline situations: NSA linguists found themselves in “a crisis atmosphere surrounding everyone and everything, which, combined with 12- to 16-hour days, probably led to serious problems of pressure and fatigue.”

Last but not least, says Hanyok, the linguists on hand were “relatively inexperienced, some [...] barely a year or two removed from language school.” The pressure was on: was this

or was this not an attack? Senior analysts were away, and decisions were made by mid-management.

“On such small things as a mental ‘coin toss,’ does history often turn,” muses the historian.

Political agendas and language errors aside, at least one provider of professional language services has a slightly different take. “This story will probably go down in the collective memory as another translation error,” says John Smellie, president of E-Files, Inc. “But it seems that it was more of a project management issue than a bad translation. In the general frenzy, two translations of the same signal intercept were ordered, and the NSA jumped to the conclusion that they referred to two separate incidents. They compiled these two translations of the same intercept into one report that was instrumental in the congressional process of endorsing the military escalation.”

The bottom line for this observer: “In our line of business, high-quality project management can be just as important as high-quality translation.”

*The NSA history of signals intelligence during the Vietnam conflict, “Spartans in Darkness: American SIGINT and the Indochina War, 1945-1975,” was written in 2002 and can be downloaded from the website of the Federation of American Scientists Project on Government Secrecy at [www.fas.org/irp/nsa/spartans/index.html](http://www.fas.org/irp/nsa/spartans/index.html).*

*ata*

#### Business Smarts Continued

*Standards Can Help Buyers and Sellers.* [www.atanet.org/docs/translation\\_buying\\_guide.pdf](http://www.atanet.org/docs/translation_buying_guide.pdf).

Six, Shawn. “Summary of ATA’s Latest Translation and Interpreting Compensation Survey.” *The ATA Chronicle* (February 2008), 12.

*Getting Started: A Newcomer’s Guide to Translation and Interpretation* (American Translators Association, 2001).

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### Windows Only . . . Windows Only . . . Windows Only . . .

Here are a couple of quickies that will make Windows just a little less mouse-heavy.

All of you probably know that you can use **Alt+Tab** to cycle between applications that are open—just hold down the **Alt** key and then hit **Tab** to view the different applications. If you are not using Windows Vista, I would recommend downloading the little **Alt-Tab Replacement** from Microsoft (<http://tinyurl.com/2meyw>) that gives you an image of the application you are switching to. This is helpful if you have several browser instances open and want to actually peek at the open pages. If you have Vista and a strong enough video card, you will probably use **WinKey+Tab** to cycle through the different applications in 3-D view (on most keyboards, the **WinKey** is the key to the left of the spacebar with the **Windows** icon). Again, just hold down the **WinKey** as you click the **Tab** key to browse. What many of you may not know is that the same keyboard shortcut is also available in earlier versions of Windows, but here it will simply go through the different applications on the task bar. This would be helpful, for example, if you

are giving a presentation and you do not want everyone in the audience to look at all your applications in detail.

In Vista there is also a helpful shortcut to open applications directly from the **Quick Access** bar (the toolbar to the right of the **Windows Start** button). To access the icons listed in your toolbar, press **WinKey** plus the number representing the order in which the applications are displayed. For example, if Windows Explorer is the first icon displayed, **WinKey+1** will open Windows Explorer. (This can also be opened with **WinKey+E**—see below.) **WinKey+2** will open MS Word if that is the next icon displayed, and so on, all depending on the order of your shortcuts. Unfortunately, with earlier versions of Windows there is no easy way to access the **Quick Access** bar with the keyboard unless you find the successive combination of **WinKey, Esc, Tab** easier than using your mouse.

While we are talking about the **WinKey**, it is good to know that this is a key that can be quite useful in other ways as well. Most people are aware that it can be used to open the **Windows Start** menu, but few are

aware that the **WinKey** can also be used in combination with other keys to perform a number of actions. My favorite combinations are:

**WinKey+E**: Display **Windows Explorer**

**WinKey+D**: Minimize or restore all windows

**WinKey+R**: Display **Run** dialog box

The **Run** dialog can be used for a number of things, including a quick way to enter a URL (Web address) without opening a browser first. Once the URL is finished, hit **Enter** and your favorite Web browser will open.

*ata*

The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost also publishes a free technical newsletter for translators ([www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit](http://www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit)).

### ATA-sponsored Business Service

### Organization of American States Staff Federal Credit Union

Individual ATA members can join the OAS Staff Federal Credit Union and benefit from a wide range of banking services, typically with lower fees and better interest rates. Services include: interest-bearing checking accounts; more than 25,000 worldwide surcharge-free ATMs; discounted wire transfer fees; auto, mortgage, and personal loans; home equity line of credit; free identity theft protection; annual loyalty bonus; and bilingual customer service.

For more information: [www.atanet.org/membership/sponsored\\_services\\_creditunion.php](http://www.atanet.org/membership/sponsored_services_creditunion.php)

## Member News

Send your news to Jeff Sanfacon at [jeff@atanet.org](mailto:jeff@atanet.org) or American Translators Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590, Alexandria, VA 22314.

- **Alison Anderson** was nominated for a Northern California Book Award for her translation from French of Selim Nassib's *The Palestinian Lover* (Europa Editions). The 2008 Awards are presented by Northern California Book Reviewers, Poetry Flash, the Center for the Art of Translation, Mechanics' Institute, PEN West, the San Francisco Public Library, and the Friends of the San Francisco Public Library.
- **Katherine L. Stewart**, a Georgian into English translator and interpreter at Camp Delta, Iraq,

received a Multi-National Force-Iraq Medallion for Excellent Service. The award was presented by Major General Rich Lynch, commanding general of the Multi-National Division-Center and U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Division.

- **David Utrilla**, the president of **U.S. Translation Company**, received Utah's Small Business Person of the Year award from the Small Business Administration.

*ata*



Major General Rich Lynch and Katherine Stewart

### ATA Translation Company Division

### 9th Annual Conference

July 17-20, 2008

The Inverness Hotel and  
Conference Center

Englewood, Colorado

#### Highlights:

- Thursday evening reception and banquet.
- Two days (Friday and Saturday) of educational sessions tailored to the needs and concerns of translation company owners and managers.
- Topics will focus on industry trends, workflow tools, project management, sales, marketing, behavioral interviewing, and more.
- Plenty of time and opportunity for networking, networking, and more networking!
- Optional Friday or Saturday evening activity in Denver ([www.denver.org](http://www.denver.org)).
- Sunday morning buffet breakfast.

Advertising, exhibit, and sponsorship opportunities available.

Stay tuned to [www.ata-divisions.org/TCD](http://www.ata-divisions.org/TCD) for more information!

Kim Vitray  
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## ATA Certification Exam Information

### Upcoming Exams

#### California

San Diego  
September 6, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
August 22, 2008

#### Georgia

Atlanta  
September 27, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
September 12, 2008

#### Michigan

Novi  
August 9, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
July 25, 2008

#### Colorado

Denver  
October 4, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
September 19, 2008

#### Illinois

Chicago  
June 22, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
June 6, 2008

#### New Mexico

Albuquerque  
July 26, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
July 11, 2008

#### Florida

Orlando  
November 8, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
October 24, 2008

#### Massachusetts

Somerville  
September 14, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
August 29, 2008

#### New York

New York City  
June 21, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
June 6, 2008

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.

#### Tennessee

Nashville  
September 14, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
September 5, 2008

#### Ecuador

Quito  
June 28, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
June 13, 2008

## New Certified Members

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

#### English into Spanish

Alejandro Alvarez  
*Salamanca, Spain*

Oswaldo Mesias  
*Quito, Ecuador*

Heidi Cazes de Sevilla  
*Guaynabo, PR*

#### Russian into English

Dawn Alee Yerkes  
*Alexandria, VA*

#### Spanish into English

Patrick J. O'Connor  
*Tucson, AZ*

## Active Membership Review

Congratulations The Membership Review Committee is pleased to grant active status to:

Ericka L. Espinosa  
*Houston, TX*

Ninfa I. Redmond  
*Kansas City, MO*

Di Wu  
*Kokomo, IN*

Jasmine Jong  
*Sunnyvale, CA*

Ursula Weide  
*Alexandria, VA*

**The American** Literary Translators Association (ALTA) was founded in 1978 to provide essential services to literary translators from all languages and to create a professional forum for the exchange of ideas on the art and craft of literary translation. ALTA's national offices are located at the Center for Translation Studies at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Through its annual conference, its publications, and collaboration with other professional organizations, ALTA works to enhance the quality and status of literary translation and to improve the market for the publication of literary translation. ALTA services are currently supported by members, occasional grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and the University of Texas at Dallas.

## Benefits

- **Translation Review:** Content includes: interviews with translators; articles on translation theory and practice; teaching translation in colleges and universities; the application of translation methodologies for the interpretation of literary works; profiles on publishers and developing trends in publishing literary translations; and reviews focusing on the translation process and the evaluation of translations.

## Quick Facts

- Established: 1978
- Website: [www.literarytranslators.org](http://www.literarytranslators.org)
- E-mail: [lindy.jolly@utdallas.edu](mailto:lindy.jolly@utdallas.edu)
- Contact: American Literary Translators Association  
University of Texas at Dallas  
800 W Campbell Rd.  
Mail Station J051  
Richardson, TX 75080-3021  
Voice: (972) 883-2093  
Fax: (972) 883-6303

- **Annotated Books Received:** Lists recent translations together with an annotation for each entry.
- **ALTA Newsletter:** Contains current information on membership, grants, conferences, prizes, and other matters of interest to the profession.
- **ALTA Guides to Literary Translation:** Offers practical advice for both beginning and experienced translators.
- Inclusion in and access to ALTA's *Member Directory*.

## Events

October 15-18, 2008  
31st Annual Conference  
Minneapolis, MN  
[www.literarytranslators.org](http://www.literarytranslators.org)

ALTA hosts an annual conference, which serves as a forum for discussion and recognition of current work in the profession. ALTA awards fellowships to beginning translators to travel to and participate in the conference. Each year at the conference, ALTA also presents the National Translation Award in recognition of outstanding achievement in literary translation.

## Additional Information

For complete information on what ALTA has to offer, please visit [www.literarytranslators.org](http://www.literarytranslators.org).



*ATA's chapters and its affiliates, along with other groups, serve translators and interpreters, providing them with industry information, networking opportunities, and support services. This column is designed to serve as a quick resource highlighting the valuable contributions these organizations are making to the profession.*

## Beacons 10 — Now Online

**Members of ATA's Literary Division** have collaborated in an online publication of collected literary translations, under the editorial direction of Michele Aynesworth. This issue features a broad collection of works from Europe and Latin America, and a good bit from Asia. *Beacons* was first published in 1992, and what started out as a one-time project quickly became a tradition.

Go to [www.atanet.org/publications/beacons\\_10.php](http://www.atanet.org/publications/beacons_10.php) to begin reading now



## Dictionary Review

Compiled by  
**Peter A. Gergay**

PGergay@aol.com

### *Dictionnaire de l'Afrique: Histoire, Civilisation, Actualité*

**Author:**  
Bernard Nantet

**Publisher:**  
Larousse

**Publication date:**  
2006

**ISBN:**  
2-03-582658-6

**Price:**  
20€ (\$31.00)

**Available from:**  
www.fnac.com

**Reviewed by:**  
Françoise Herrmann

**Bernard Nantet's** *Dictionnaire de l'Afrique* is long overdue. Africa is the world's second largest continent, and the second most populated after Asia. By way of comparison, Africa is three times the size of the U.S., with a population of 906 million (in 2005). Yet, in the overwhelmingly white, industrial and post industrial world, what is really common knowledge about Africa? Even if Darfur, Kenya, and the plight of Somalian refugees periodically make waves in the news, or via the big screens from Hollywood, is it possible to pinpoint where these countries are actually located on the African continent? What languages are spoken? Who governs and under what political systems? What events have thrust these countries into the limelight? Who the poets, novelists, and playwrights are? Perhaps not without the assistance of Google or Wikipedia! And certainly not with the same degree of scholarly insight and experience as Bernard Nantet, a journalist, writer, and professor specialized in the history and archeology of Africa.

### **Africa Past and Present**

Nantet's *Dictionnaire de l'Afrique* seeks to gloss both those terms that refer to the deep cultural traditions of Africa and those that refer to the present diversified socio-economic and political context. Thus, you will find included in the dictionary articles about *ancêtres* (ancestors), *masques* (masks), *initiation* (initiation), and *cauries* (cowries), next to articles about *micro-crédit* (micro-credit), Nelson Mandela, and *Indépendances* (the plural form of Independence). You will also find at the end of the dictionary an atlas with maps of the geography, populations, and history of Africa, spanning 9500BC to the present, via pre-colonial and colonial

eras. The dictionary, written in a small-size font in a two-column format, is packed with 700 headwords. It contains an index of entries and 300 pages, in addition to the atlases.

### **A Dictionary that Reads Like a Novel**

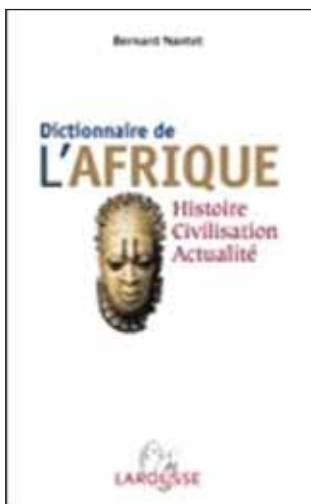
Nantet's *Dictionnaire de l'Afrique* would no doubt be a great reference for the translation of news bulletins from Haiti, or the translation of labels for an exhibit showcasing tribal art from one of the great regions of Africa. However, it is also the kind of dictionary that you may enjoy reading just like a novel, especially if you only have small snippets of time in your busy day. The articles under each headword are brief, but are packed with information and a scholarly perspective that will give you an understanding beyond the factual. Nantet draws parallels between past rituals and present situations; explains the differences between Western and African conceptual systems surrounding such phenomena as art and the mundane rituals of funerals; outlines the significance of such items as shells, masks, and calabashes; and traces the history and ethnology of such crops as cocoa and coffee. The result is dense, pleasant, and illuminated reading.

### **Sample Entries**

Among the 700 articles contained in this dictionary, there are three that truly impressed me.

#### **1. *Enfants-soldats***

The first is an article about the *enfants-soldats* (child-soldiers) of modern day terrorism in Africa. The definition reads: "*Enfants capturés par des mouvements insurrectionnels et conditionnés pour devenir combattants*" ("Children captured and trained



by rebel groups for combat”), following which the article draws striking parallels between the ancient African traditions of initiation and this present-day perversion. For example, Nantet explains how the drama of ritualized initiation, which involves symbolically removing children from their mothers for the purpose of bestowing upon them the knowledge needed to uphold the village’s way of life, is co-opted by rebels, who steal children and condition them to kill and plunder their own villages. As a consequence, these children become forever banished from their villages, and are at the sole mercy of their surrogate “father” and commander-in-chief. Furthermore, Nantet explains how efforts subsequently to rehabilitate these children become quite problematic, since it is difficult to erase the damage done by drugs, depravation, and the violence of the methods used by the rebels.

## 2. *Gastronomie*

The second article that I found quite fascinating concerned *gastronomie* (culinary arts). In this article, Nantet offers an anthropological perspective on the birth of gastronomy during the Neolithic age (circa 8500BC!). Gastronomy is linked to the invention of pottery, and the resulting change toward a more sedentary lifestyle. (It is assumed that pottery finally allowed food to blend and simmer for a certain amount of time, which differs significantly from the methods of grilling and heating it in the ashes of a fire.) The article also includes an overview of the history and diversification of available staples: yams, with evidence of cultiva-

tion dating as far back as the fifth century BC in Western Africa; *mil* (millet) in the second century BC; a type of *orge* (barley) found only in Ethiopia and the Nile Valley; and rice and spices on the Eastern coast of Africa, imported from Asia by Indian sailors in the fifth century BC, which took several more centuries to penetrate inside the African continent. Also covered is the important discovery of the Americas, during which many new staples (corn, cassava, potatoes, avocados, groundnuts, peppers, pumpkins, tomatoes) and spices (nutmeg, cinnamon, ginger) were eventually brought to the Western coast of Africa via Europe. These were then fused with local cereals, fish, and meat to create a more diversified and healthier diet.

## 3. *Micro-crédit*

The article on micro-credit as a viable form of development, with a specific focus on the economic activity of women, was another entry of particular interest. Micro-credit in Africa, as elsewhere in Asia (and Bangladesh in particular), involves loaning small amounts of money (usually not exceeding a few hundred dollars) for trade purposes, tools, or supplies needed for viable economic activity. In Africa, micro-credits are mostly awarded to women, who form small cooperative groups that benefit from the credits and from pooling their savings. The small amounts of money loaned empower women, for example, to buy products directly from producers and to sell their goods on the market without relying on middle persons or having to pay any added daily interest

rates. Money is paid back on a daily basis and loaned out in progressively larger amounts in exchange for the deposit of a small savings amount. In 2003, the Central Bank of West Africa estimated that 3.7 million people in Africa benefitted from micro-credit.

## Overall Evaluation

There are many more of these articles left for you to discover Africa. Each of these contains a treasure of information, presented from a perspective that is both scholarly and captivating. Whether you need this information as a reference for translating material from or related to an African country, or whether you are reading the *Dictionnaire de l’Afrique* for your own reference and pleasure, you will gain much insight into these faraway and exotic countries that from time to time take center stage in newscasts worldwide, movies, and great sporting, music, and political events. In any event, Nantet’s *Dictionnaire de l’Afrique* deserves a prominent space in your library of dictionaries. So grab a copy and enjoy!

*ata*

Françoise Herrmann is a freelance translator and interpreter for French and English (sometimes Spanish) based in San Francisco, California. She occasionally teaches scientific and technical translation at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and the Institut Supérieur d’Interprétation et de Traduction in France. Contact: fherrmann@igc.org or www.fhphd.org.

## Don’t Miss

For more information, visit  
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June 21-22, 2008  
American Translators Association  
Court Interpreting Seminar  
Chicago, IL

November 5-8, 2008  
American Translators Association  
49th Annual Conference  
Orlando, FL





# The Translation Inquirer

# John Decker

jdecker@uplink.net

**The Translation** Inquirer was left speechless by a turnaround question from a preschooler. He had just shown her a letter not taught in her two-days-a-week preschool, namely the Russian Ж. “It looks like a spider, with all those legs, but it has no body,” I explained. I knew she would not be confused by this letter, because there

is nothing in English to unlearn before learning it. I told her how it was pronounced. All right, fine. Nothing prepared me for her response to this new bit of learning: “What is the sign language for that?” Didn’t Art Linkletter of television fame make a whole career out of recording and broadcasting such moments?

## New Queries

**(Ca-E 5-08/1)** Catalan is a very rare language for this column, so let’s go for it. The problem word, *presa*, is some sort of equipment related to receiving signals and distributing them to an entire building in an apartment block. Here is how it appears: *Subministra i instal·lació de presa per TV i FM col·locades de la marca Simon sèrie 75, comprenent mecanisme, caixa emportada per a mecanisme, placa central, marc o equipament similar.*

**(E-Po 5-08/2)** Who among our members might know what, in the pharmaceutical world, a “cap and ring system” is? Perhaps it is something quite easy and straightforward, but the context sentence affords no clue: “Pressurized container (an aluminum can, a bag on valve system with a polypropylene bag, a vapor spray, a **cap and ring system**): 100 g.” And what about the Polish?

**(E-R 5-08/3)** The Russian term wanted by this member of ProZ is “private pay patient,” with a context sentence sounding like this: “Also, if before you get a service, you agree to be a **private pay patient**, you will have to pay for the service.” Such a patient has no third-party coverage to pay for this particular charge under his or her health plan.

**(E-Sp 5-08/4)** Well, no query from a ProZer would have been necessary if one little abbreviation, AE, had been spelled out. Here is what was written: “It should be noted that given that the taxable profits of **AEs**, foreign companies and joint ventures formed among them are computed on the basis of their accounting profits, the corporate income tax impact of the assignment vis-à-vis the subcontract is neutral, unless issues of rejection of books are raised.” What sort of entity are AEs?

**(F-Sp [E] 5-08/5)** The following material is from a French tribunal, and one of the items listed (shown in bold) caused confusion for a ProZ denizen: *Parties en cause devant la Cour; - Rappel de la procedure; - Déroutement des débats; - Décision; - **Sur quoi la Cour**; - Par ces motifs.* Let us hope that enough of this list was included to allow for at least a guess, be it in Spanish or English, as to what the four words in bold mean.

**(G-E 5-08/6)** Not satisfied with her tentative English translation of the very end of a secondary school diploma, this ProZer needed help with a note placed beneath a grade-conversion statement on the Zeugnis. It read (with the problematic three words in bold print): *Die Umrechnung der Punktzahl der Gesamtqualifikation in die Gesamtnote*

## Abbreviations used with this column

Ca-Catalan	G-German
E-English	I-Italian
[E]-English	N-Norwegian
acceptable as an answer, the original query did not involve English	Po-Polish
F-French	Pt-Portuguese
	R-Russian
	Sp-Spanish
	Sw-Swedish

*liegt Anlage 3 No. 1 der Verordnung über die zentrale Vergabe von Studienplätzen und die Durchführung eines Feststellungsverfahrens vom 13. Mai 1980 (GVBl S. 223) in der zum Zeitpunkt der Zeugnisverteilung jeweils geltenden Fassung zugrunde.* What is it all about?

**(G-E 5-08/7)** An orthopedic surgery training course was held, and this ProZ translator had to deal with the surgeon’s transcribed comments. These comments were loaded with within-the-field jargon, including the verb *pedikulieren*, which was unknown. Here is the comment: *Wirklich ein toller Kurs. Die Möglichkeit, in aller Ruhe an der gesamten Wirbelsäule von thorakal bis lumbar zu pedikulieren, ist einzigartig.*

**(I-F [E] 5-08/8)** It looks like a corporate merger by absorption produced the financial term *perimetro societario omogeneo* in this context sentence: *A perimetro societario omogeneo, ovvero considerando i ricavi di XXXX del 2005, si evidenzia invece una riduzione dell’20%.* What could it be? English is acceptable.

**(N-E 5-08/9)** Reading a collection of

histories of people who sailed in the area of Finnmark, a ProZer came upon *sist på fall sjø*, and could not understand it within the following context: *Fiskerne i Gandvik hadde kunnet fortelle at slik som de var nå, med vinden innover fjorden og strømmen ut, og især sist på falla sjø, var strømmen et uhyre til å kommandere båten.* What does it mean?

**(Pt-E 5-08/10)** In dentistry, what does the following bold-print phrase mean? *A falta de profissionais e a ausência de estruturas que permitam formar médicos dentistas em Macau são os principais problemas levantados durante o Congresso.*

**(Sp-E 5-08/11)** The ProZer working on this statement by an artist for his or her art exhibit stumbled over the six words in bold print in the following quote: *Su voluptuosa plástica y refracción artificial, me estuvieron persiguiendo por no sé qué, por algo, durante un tiempo, como suele sucederme en mis procesos. La noche es permisiva, en ella ocurren hechos que no se le permiten al día...* There was more, but probably what has been provided is enough.

### Replies to Old Queries

**(E-Sp 3-08/2)** (*legal entitlement*): Gonzalo Ordóñez calls this a straightforward query, and provides *derecho legal* as the equivalent.

**(R-E 3-08/7)** (об(ектов социальной сферы): Igor Vorobyoff calls this an easy one. It means revenues and expenditures from the operation of social service facilities.

**(Sp-E 3-08/9)** (*infiltrado parenquimatoso alveolar a focus multiples peri-hiliar e hilio-basal*): For Gonzalo Ordóñez, the corresponding words in English are very similar because the roots are Greek and Latin. The phrase could be *multifocal perihilum and basal hilum alveolar parenchymatous infiltrate*. The Spanish in the context paragraph is poor.

**(Sp-E 3-08/10)** (*murros corridos*): Alan Clarke calls these *continuous walls*. To that, Gonzalo Ordóñez adds that it is a wall that goes without interruption from one structural element, such as a pillar, to another one. Patricia Barker says it might refer to *footings*, not a continuous wall. *Massa de tierra* means mud, a slang term for mortar or wet concrete. The whole problem may result from the fact that the original writer did not know or use the term *zapato* for this. The term *cimientos* is often used for footing, but *cimientos de terra*, shortened to *cimientos*, is also used to describe the blocks that are used to build foundations. There are actually many parts to a foundation: footings, possibly a stem wall, possibly backfill, and a slab. Barker's husband wrote a book entitled *Everybody's Building Code*, thus pro-

viding her with excellent qualifications to answer this query.

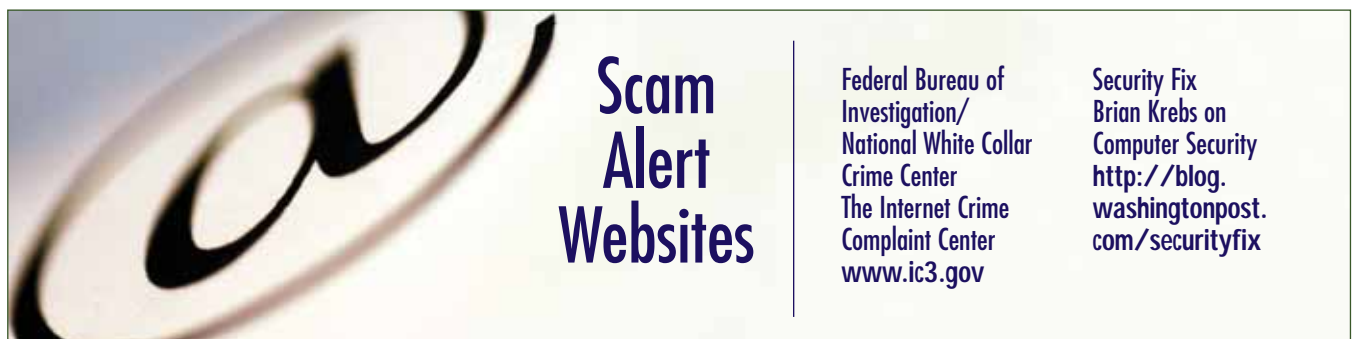
**(Sw-E 3-08/11)** (*sakta men säkert kördes i botten*): Paul Norlen states that this means to mismanage or take poor care of something so that it is no longer usable. He proposes *slowly but surely ran it into the ground* or *slowly but surely it went downhill*.

*Thanks to those who contributed answers; regrettably I can't say "all" because there weren't many replies. A mitigating circumstance is that our entire profession seems wildly busy, and that is good.*

This column is solely intended as a means of facilitating a general discussion regarding terminology choices. For feedback regarding pressing terminology questions, please try one of these online forums: Lantra-L ([www.geocities.com/athens/7110/lantra.htm](http://www.geocities.com/athens/7110/lantra.htm)), ProZ.com ([www.proz.com](http://www.proz.com)), or Translators Café (<http://translatorscafe.com>).

Address your queries and responses to The Translation Inquirer, 112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821, or fax them to (570) 275-1477. E-mail address: [jdecker@uplink.net](mailto:jdecker@uplink.net). Please make your submissions by the first of each month to be included in the next issue. Generous assistance from Per Dohler, proofreader, is gratefully acknowledged.

*ata*



The banner features a stylized 'a' logo on the left. The text 'Scam Alert Websites' is prominently displayed in the center. To the right, there are two columns of text listing organizations and their websites.

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## Humor and Translation

Mark Herman

hermanapter@cmsinter.net

## Gothic Novels

**Last month this** column discussed the translation of great works of sacred literature as recounted in *Translators through History*, edited by Jean Delisle and Judith Woodsworth and published by John Benjamins in 1995. This book also recounts the experiences of translators with another type of literature, the Gothic novel, at a time when translation was so esteemed that translators were listed as authors, and original authors falsely stated that their works were translations in order to give them more prestige. The translations in question were mainly from English, and the literature in question was largely junk.

By the end of the 18th century, Romanticism was sweeping Europe, and with it flourished the lurid unrealistic romance known as the Gothic novel. A few great books were produced, such as Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, but most were filled with demonic violence, hints of sadism and incest, crumbling castles, and damsels in unspeakable distress. Some of the best known examples are M.G. Lewis's *The Monk*, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, and the novels of Ann Radcliffe. All of these authors were British, and, despite the hostility between England and France, the craze for Gothic novels

spread across the English Channel. Hence, the need for translations.

Ronnie Apter and I first came across the French craze when we translated an 1803 operetta that satirized it, François Boieldieu's *Ma tante Aurore/My Aunt Aurore*. The plot concerns a middle-aged woman who refuses to consent to her niece's marriage to anyone other than a hero who has saved her (the niece) from death, or preferably a fate even worse. This is a difficult criterion to meet, since the niece is the early 19th-century French equivalent of today's upper-middle-class suburbanite.

But I digress. According to *Translators through History*, the craze was such that French translations sometimes appeared within a year of the publication of the British originals, sometimes in different translations for different publishers (211). The tide of literalism that was overtaking Europe had no influence on this particular genre. Instead, the French translators "did not hesitate to change titles, delete entire pages, and introduce new elements with a view to pleasing the reader and conforming to sensibilities that were dominant at the time" (212). "Their work bordered on rewriting the original" (213). But the originality or lack of it in a translation was a moot point. Because "English texts, in particular, enjoyed special prestige in

France" (213) at that time, even truly original works were called translations, since that would help get them into print (214). Sometimes, an original French work was translated into English and published in England, and then re-translated back into French and republished in France (214).

Eventually, the French craze for Gothics waned. *Translators through History* attributes this mainly to the poor quality of the translations and the increasing popularity of genres other than the Gothic novel (214-15).

Perhaps some day, translators of good literature will enjoy prestige similar to that enjoyed by the translators of Gothic romances.

*ata*

Herman is a librettist and translator. Submit items for future columns via e-mail to hermanapter@cmsinter.net or via snail mail to Mark Herman, 1409 E Gaylord Street, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858-3626. 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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