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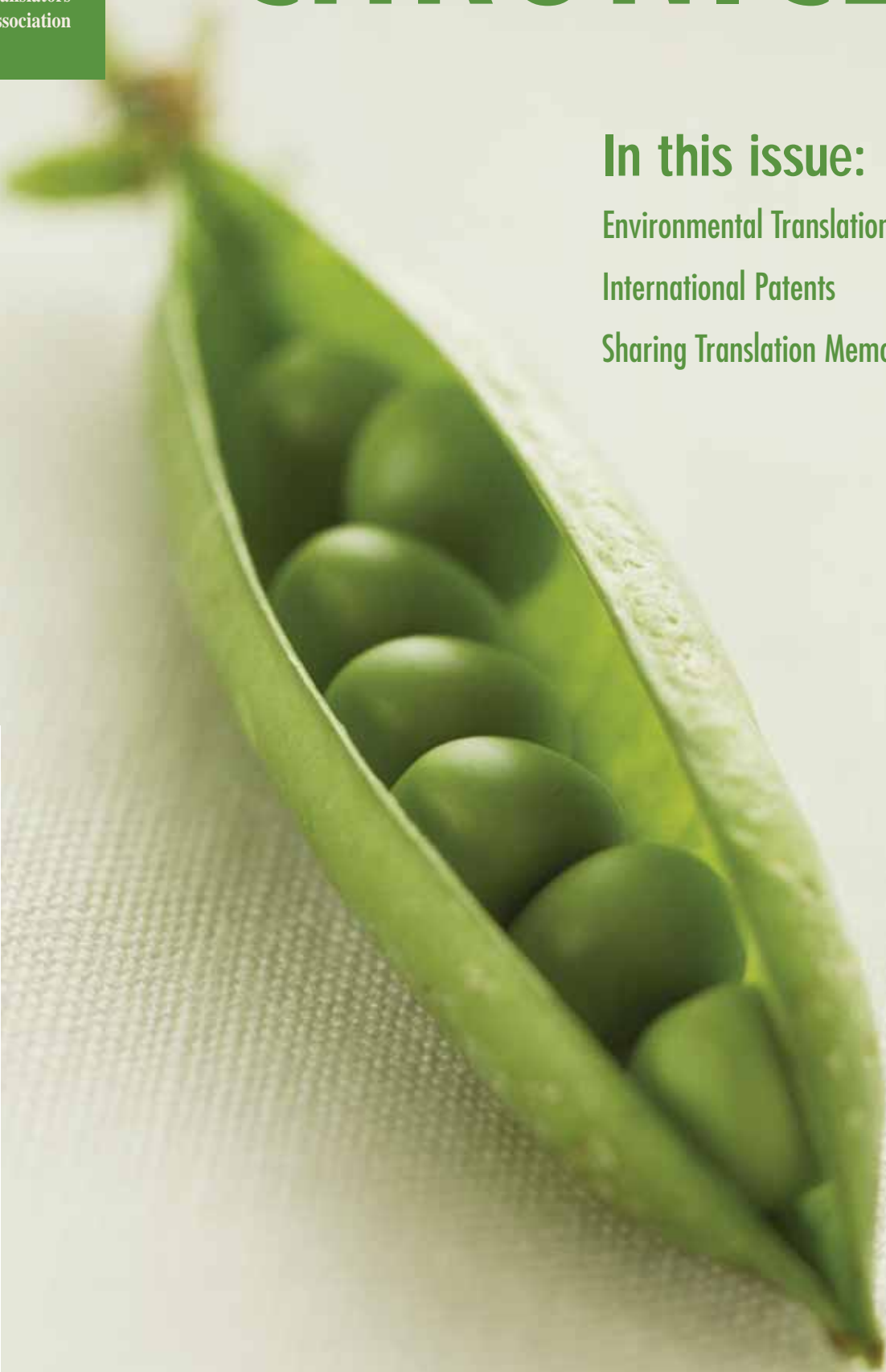
The *ata* **CHRONICLE**

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International Patents

Sharing Translation Memories



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Yves Champollion was born in Paris, France. Having started to produce computer software in the 1980s, he then entered the world of freelance translation before reconciling these two practices by programming translation tools. He is the developer of Wordfast, a translation memory engine. Contact: champollion.yves@wanadoo.fr.

Mike Collins has been active in technical translation for over 20 years. He has a master's degree in Slavic linguistics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and has studied at the university level in Germany and Yugoslavia. He is currently president of Global Translation Systems, Inc., and president of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters. Contact: mike@globaltranslation.com.

Abigail Dahlberg, a native of England, graduated from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland, with an M.A. in translation and interpreting. After moving to Germany's Black Forest region, she worked as an in-house translator and copyeditor for a small publishing house for several years. In 2005, she moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and became a freelance German→English translator specializing in environmental affairs. She is a member of ATA and the Mid-America Chapter of ATA. She is also one of the editors of *interaktiv*, the newsletter of ATA's German Language Division. Contact: info@printtranslations.com.

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T. David Reed recently retired from the Intellectual Property Division at Procter & Gamble, where he managed the international patent filing and prosecution area. He is currently a consultant for the World Intellectual Property Organization on matters relating to the Patent Cooperation Treaty. He regularly speaks on issues relating to international patent practice. He is a patent agent, registered in both the U.S. and Canada. He has a B.S. in chemical engineering from Northwestern University, and completed post-graduate studies in chemical engineering at the University of Cincinnati. Contact: david@tdrpatents.com.

Rocio Txabbarriaga is currently an independent localization and globalization consultant, as well as a professional translator (ATA-certified, English→Spanish) and voice-over talent. She is an ongoing contributor to industry standards for the fields of translation and localization. She is fluent in five languages, and has over 18 years of experience in all aspects of translation and localization. She is also a Certified Global Business Professional with the North American Small Business International Trade Educators. Contact: xldrumer@yahoo.com.

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Plan now to exhibit at ATA's 49th Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida, November 5-8, 2008. Exhibiting at ATA's Annual Conference offers the best opportunity to market your products and services face-to-face to more than 1,500 translators and interpreters in one location. Translators and interpreters are consumers of computer hardware and software, technical publications and reference books, office products, and much more.

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From the President

Jiri Stejskal

President@atanet.org

Regulation *Vel Non*

Is industry regulation a

good thing or not? In the U.S., translating and interpreting are largely unregulated activities. The notable exception is court interpreting, which usually requires state or federal certification. Many practitioners of our profession appreciate this freedom and do not feel any need for regulation. However, in the absence of regulation, anyone can proclaim himself or herself a translator or interpreter, or set up shop as a language services provider, regardless of their qualifications. If we are to elevate our status, regulation or self-regulation is advisable because it provides a barrier to entry, which is necessary for attaining professional status, respect, and recognition in any profession.

The third objective stated in our bylaws is to “formulate and maintain standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence.” Our association is doing reasonably well in this area. We do have ATA’s Code of Professional Conduct and Business Practices, which is currently under review by ATA’s Board. The Code provides basic guidelines: you shall translate or interpret the original message faithfully, and you shall not accept any assignments for which you are not fully qualified. We also have the ASTM Standard Guides for Quality Assurance in Translation and for Language Interpretation Services that ATA helped to develop. In

addition, we have our Certification Program for translators, with the possibility of developing a similar program for interpreters on the horizon. All of these serve as regulation, or rather self-regulation, of our profession.

the one and only prerequisite for our profession’s rise and glory, but it is vital to other professions and we should not ignore that fact. Consider lawyers and physicians, who enjoy considerable respect in our society. Theirs are

Our profession covers a wide spectrum of practitioners, which makes regulatory efforts in the form of applying standards and requiring certification difficult.

Our profession covers a wide spectrum of practitioners, which makes regulatory efforts in the form of applying standards and requiring certification difficult. For example, it would be foolish to insist that Edith Grossman be certified by ATA or another credentialing body before being allowed to translate *Don Quixote* from Spanish into English, or that she follow the ASTM Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation in her literary translation work. At the opposite end of the spectrum, in medical and legal settings, where lives are often on the line, the code of ethics, adherence to standards, and certification or other proof of competence are of great importance.

It is, therefore, not possible to make a sweeping statement that regulation is

highly regulated professions with stringent requirements for education, ethical behavior, and competence. Consider accountants whose Certified Public Accountant credential, established in 1917, is today widely recognized by the public.

Even though ours is a centuries-old profession, professional organizations such as ATA were formed only after World War II, and, unlike lawyers, doctors, or accountants, we are behind when it comes to standards of professional ethics, practices, and competence. It behooves us to get serious about these if we want to gain greater respect and recognition in society.

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Federal Bureau of Investigation/
National White Collar Crime Center
The Internet Crime Complaint Center
www.ic3.gov

Security Fix
Brian Krebs on Computer Security
<http://blog.washingtonpost.com/securityfix>



From the Executive Director

Walter Bacak, CAE

Walter@atanet.org

Board Meeting Highlights

The American Translators

Association's Board of Directors met May 9-10 in San Antonio, Texas. Here are some highlights from the meeting.



Honorary Membership: Muriel Jérôme-O'Keefe was elected an ATA honorary member. As stated in ATA's bylaws, "honorary membership may be conferred upon individuals who have distinguished themselves in the translation and interpretation professions by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors. The total number of living honorary members shall not exceed 15 at any one time, and not more than two may be elected in any one year."

Muriel served as ATA president from 1997 to 1999. During her ATA presidency, she worked with other language professionals to develop translation user standards under the sponsorship of the American Society of Testing and Materials. She served on ATA's Board of Directors from 1993-1999, and as chair of ATA's Ethics Committee. She led the development and adoption of a formal ATA Code of Ethics to guide the conduct and performance of professional translators and interpreters in the United States. Muriel also served as president of the National Capital Area Chapter of ATA and as president of the American Foundation of Translation and Interpretation (AFTI).

Muriel is the founder and president

of JTG inc., a localization and consulting company based in Vienna, Virginia. She currently serves on AFTI's board of directors. She was the first to sponsor an AFTI award—the JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation—which she and JTG inc. continue to support. With over 25 years of experience, Muriel has worked as an in-house translator, an in-house project manager, a full-time independent contractor, and as a translation instructor. She was a lecturer at George Mason University and an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut. A member of ATA since 1984, Muriel is an ATA-certified English into French translator.

The other honorary members are: Alison Bertsche, Henry Fischbach, Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Don Gorham, Peter Krawutschke, Ann Macfarlane, Rosemary Malia, Patricia Newman, Glenn Nordin, and Josephine Thornton.

2008-2009 Budget: The Board approved the July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009 working budget. The final version of the \$2.9-million budget will be approved at the next Board meeting.

Nominating Committee: Following up on past Board discussions regarding various governance issues, the Board established a policy regarding the instructions given to the Nominating Committee. The Board approved the revised committee "charge" to give the committee, among other aspects, the freedom to decide whether to run two

candidates for the officer positions—president-elect, secretary, and treasurer—or just one. The reason for giving the Nominating Committee leeway in the number of candidates is to prevent forcing the committee to put forward another candidate just for the sake of it when it is apparent that one candidate is strong and well qualified. The committee will still put forward a slate of preferably two candidates for each director position. The changes to the Nominating Committee's charge take effect with the 2009 election. The charge will be posted online with the other ATA committees' charges at www.atanet.org/aboutus/governance_commitees.php.

Board Communications: Similar to the issue above, the Board, following up on past discussions, revised its guidelines regarding Board communications. The action sets in place a policy that ensures that each Board member subordinates personal views and interests to the greater good of the Association and its members. This policy makes a clear distinction between stating personal views and describing the policies and actions of the Board.

The minutes of the meeting will be posted online at www.atanet.org/membership/minutes.php. Past meeting minutes are also posted on the site. The next Board meeting is set for July 12-13 in Washington, DC. As always, the meeting is open to all members.

ata

Don't Miss

July 26, 2008

ATA Translation Tools Seminar
Boston, Massachusetts

August 23, 2008

ATA Localization Seminar
Seattle, Washington

www.atanet.org/conferencesandseminars/pd.php

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.



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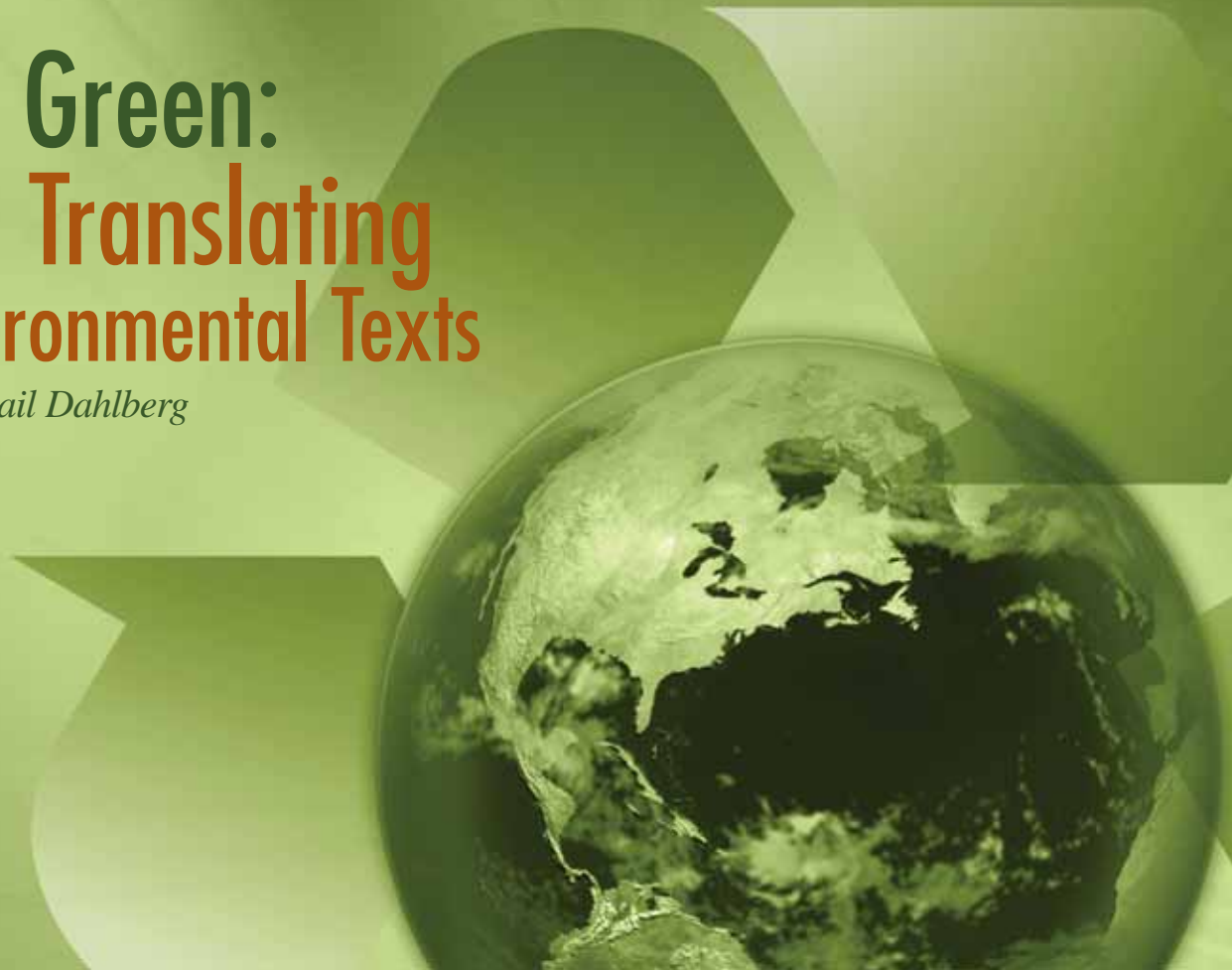
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Going Green: Translating Environmental Texts

By Abigail Dahlberg



Translators can make their work easier by specializing in areas they find interesting and are passionate about. Environmental translation adds another dimension to this by allowing translators to have a direct impact on their surroundings. The environmental translation market is currently enjoying significant growth, spurred by tougher environmental laws and an increasing awareness of the damage caused to our environment by human activity. This article looks at the reasons this sector of the translation market is growing so rapidly, and examines the opportunities and challenges environmental translators face. It also provides a list of resources that can act as a starting point for those interested in specializing in environmental issues.

Looking Back

The term “environment” covers a

The area of environmental legislation and policy is a primary source of work.

multitude of issues, including, but not limited to, air pollution, climate change, emissions, soil conservation, environmental emergencies (floods, oil spills), environmental policy and technologies, nature protection, water and wastewater treatment, and waste management. Before looking at the reasons for the recent growth in the environmental translation market, it is prudent to outline some of the historic events that have raised awareness of environmental conservation issues.

In the U.S., the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*, which looked at the environmental impact of

the indiscriminate spraying of the pesticide DDT, proved to be a turning point in awakening America’s environmental consciousness. Public concern about the impact of this practice on human health and the environment led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970, which banned the agricultural use of DDT in 1972. The book’s legacy was to create a heightened awareness of environmental issues and interest in how people affect the environment. (Years later, in 2006, former U.S. Vice President Al Gore’s documentary about global warming,

An Inconvenient Truth, would have a similar impact; it has been described by many as the new *Silent Spring*.)

The international community gradually became more aware of environmental issues in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1974, Nobel Prize winner Dr. F. Sherwood Rowland and his colleague Dr. Mario Molina concluded that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) caused damage to the stratospheric ozone layer. At that time, CFCs were being used in refrigerators, air conditioners, industrial processes, and as propellants for some aerosol products. In 1985, this research led the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to draft the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. This multilateral environmental agreement provided a framework for international efforts to protect the ozone layer without including legally binding reduction goals for the use of CFCs. The Convention served as the precursor to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, an amendment protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, a 1992 treaty aimed at reducing greenhouse gases that cause climate change.

Governments are now working together to conserve our environment and clean up the damage that has been caused over the years. Internationally, the Kyoto Protocol and its mechanisms have proven to be a springboard in terms of working toward mitigating climate change. Countries that ratify this protocol commit to working to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and five other greenhouse gases, or to engage in emissions trading if they maintain or increase emissions of these gases. (Emissions trading is an administrative approach that is used to control pollution by providing economic incentives for achieving reductions in the emissions of

pollutants.) The Kyoto Protocol now covers more than 170 countries globally, but only 60% of countries in terms of reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. As of December 2007, the U.S. and Kazakhstan are the only signatory

A Growing Market

Why is the environmental translation market growing, and is there enough work for translators to make a living in this field? Unlike finance, medical, or legal translation, very few

With increasing globalization, more large foreign environmental companies are looking to translate their websites and press releases into English.

nations not to have ratified the act.

The Protocol separates countries into two groups: “Annex I” industrialized countries, and “non-Annex I” countries, which have no greenhouse gas emission reduction obligations, but may participate in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). By 2012, Annex I countries must reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by a collective average of 5% below their 1990 levels. CDM allows Annex I countries to invest in projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries as an alternative to undertaking more expensive emission reduction initiatives in their own countries. After a relatively slow start, CDM is now gaining momentum, with more than 2,600 projects currently in the global pipeline, according to UNEP. As cited in the 2008 *UNEP Yearbook*, these projects are estimated to have a total value of over \$2.5 billion (www.unep.org). The demand for translation services that these projects generate should not be underestimated. A vast amount of paperwork is involved in such bilateral or multilateral projects between industrialized and developing countries.

translators focus on this fascinating field, creating a shortage of qualified translators. Therefore, there is plenty of work for those who choose this specialization.

One area that is a primary source of work is environmental legislation and policy. After adopting international agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol, national governments must subsequently draft guidelines and legislation to implement the environmental requirements. In doing so, they may peek over the fence and see what neighboring countries are doing in this regard, thus creating demand for translation services. Down the chain, local and regional environmental authorities have to take corresponding measures as well. In countries with large immigrant populations or more than one official language, all documents released to the public need to be translated. A similar situation exists for regional initiatives, such as European Union directives, which must be translated into multiple languages.

In an effort to meet these national targets, companies and municipalities will have to invest in environmental technologies. This is one area where native speakers of U.S. English ➡

might encounter texts for translation, as European companies, in particular, have gained a great deal of expertise in developing sophisticated technologies that could be exported to the U.S. market. For instance, as the U.S. starts to run out of landfill space, local and city governments might look to introduce new recycling technologies that can divert waste away from landfills.

With increasing globalization, more large foreign environmental companies are also looking to translate their websites and press releases into English. Within this area, corporate social responsibility reports are now very much in vogue, with count-

translators also encounter many of the difficulties facing other niche markets. One challenge is that this area produces a broad spectrum of literature for translation, ranging from simple flyers informing homeowners of new waste sorting arrangements to high-register international environmental agreements. Specialized translators not only need to be able to handle various registers, but also a wide range of text types, including annual reports, press releases, technical descriptions, research reports, and conference presentations. When specializing in a niche area, customers must view you as a one-stop shop for all of their environmental translation

bins for sorting waste: one each for paper, plastic, metal, glass, biowaste, and residual waste (everything else). In an effort to reduce the number of bin collections, one municipality considered introducing a *Zebra bin* (literally: zebra bin), whereby the gray (residual waste) and yellow (lightweight packaging) bins would be merged into a single bin, creating the image of a zebra-like striped bin. A literal translation would have left an English-language reader perplexed, so providing a description of the initiative worked best in this scenario. This is the type of problem-solving strategy that the environmental translator must employ often in an environmental policy setting.

When specializing in a niche area, customers must view you as a one-stop shop for all of their environmental translation needs.

less companies (even those that are not in the environmental business per se) providing details of their efforts to reduce their environmental impact. These reports typically contain figures about the use of recycled materials, energy savings, and water usage. Many companies also certify their plants and sites according to international ISO standards, in particular the ISO 14000 series of environmental management standards, which help organizations minimize how their operations negatively affect the environment. (To learn more, go to www.iso.org/iso/management_standards.htm.)

Challenges

On the negative side, environmental

needs. Additionally, environmental translators face a shortage of professional development opportunities. Few presentations are ever held on this topic, and continuing education courses on environmental issues are few and far between in the U.S. Therefore, the environmental translator is reliant on self-study, especially given the fast-paced nature of this field.

Environmental translators also have to deal with their fair share of weird and wonderful terminology. Furthermore, one country may have terminology or concepts that do not yet exist in another culture. For instance, many western European countries are light years ahead of the U.S. when it comes to waste recycling initiatives. Many offices in Germany have six or more different

Resources

One of the main challenges facing environmental translators is the shortage of bilingual dictionaries. Few paper dictionaries are available, and the ones that are out there usually date back a good decade and contain obsolete terminology. Before purchasing a new paper dictionary, environmental translators should test it out by selecting a term that is tricky to translate, but not so obscure that it would not be listed in the dictionary. In German, one term I search for is *Altlastensanierung*, which can be translated as “the cleanup of Brownfield sites” in U.S. English, or “the remediation of contaminated sites” in British English. If I see anything literal, like “old site sanitation,” this is the first clue that it might not be a stellar dictionary. This dearth of bilingual or multilingual resources has led specialized translators to consider compiling and publishing their own dictionaries, although time and financial constraints are preventing these projects from coming to fruition.

The good news is that a plethora of

Continued on p. 14

Online Environmental Resources

The links below are just a sampling of what is out there, including a growing number of reputable online glossaries and dictionaries.

Clean Development Mechanism
<http://cdm.unfccc.int/index.html>

Ends Europe Daily
www.endseuropedaily.com/articles/index.cfm
A Europe's environmental news service.

Environmental Protection Agency Sites
www.epa.gov/OCEPAterms
A monolingual glossary of environmental terms.

www.epa.gov/epahome/wherelive.htm
A tool to find regional and state environmental agencies.

www.epa.gov/epahome/newslett.htm
This site contains various EPA newsletters on environmental issues.

www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/recycle/ecycling/donate.htm
This page contains information on computer recycling.

European Community Biodiversity Clearing House
http://biodiversity-chm.eea.europa.eu/nyglossary_coverage

European Environment Agency
www.eea.europa.eu/all-terms

European Environment Agency's General Multilingual Environmental Thesaurus
www.eionet.europa.eu/gemet

European Pollution Registry Glossary
www.eper.ec.europa.eu/eper/glossary.asp

Google Environmental Glossary
www.webref.org/environment/environment.htm

ISO 14000 Series of Environmental Management Standards
www.iso.org/iso/management_standards.htm

Journal of Environmental Economics and Management

www.aere.org/journal/index.html
The official journal of the Association of Environmental and Resource Economics. It publishes theoretical and empirical papers devoted to specific natural resources and environmental issues.
(Published by Elsevier, www.elevier.com.)

Kyoto Protocol
http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php

Review of Environmental Economics and Policy
<http://reep.oxfordjournals.org>
Also from the Association of Environmental and Resource Economics, the Review aims to fill the gap between traditional academic journals and the general-interest press by providing a widely accessible yet scholarly source for the latest thinking on environmental economics and related policy. It publishes a range of material, including symposia, articles, and regular features. (Published by Elsevier, www.elevier.com.)

United Nations Environment Programme
www.unep.org

UNEP Yearbook (United Nations Environment Programme, 2008)
www.unep.org/geo/yearbook/yb2008/report/UNEP_YearBook2008_Full_EN.pdf

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer
www.unep.org/Ozone/pdfs/viennaconvention2002.pdf

monolingual resources is available. National Geographic has published numerous insightful books about environmental matters. For translators

working in Europe, *Ends Europe Daily* is a valuable, although expensive, resource that covers the latest national environmental policy developments. Translators

should also consider subscribing to newsletters published by environmental associations and nongovernmental organizations, which are excellent sources for harvesting terminology. Last, but not least, subscriptions to environmental trade journals in source and target languages are a must. (Please see the list of references on page 13 for other sources of information.)

One of the main challenges facing environmental translators is the shortage of bilingual dictionaries.



Tips To Reduce Your Environmental Footprint

Minimize your power consumption.

Change your light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs where possible.

Print on both sides of the paper wherever possible.

Always collect your waste paper for recycling.

Use chlorine-free, recycled paper where possible.

Repair your computer to keep it running as long as possible.

Go digital with your documents to reduce paper consumption.

Consider donating your old computer to a school, community center, or nongovernmental organization.

Recommended Reading

Carson, Rachel. *Silent Spring* (Mariner Books, 2002).

Gore, Al. *An Inconvenient Truth: The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It* (Rodale Books, 2006).

Lomborg, Bjørn. *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Rogers, Elizabeth, and Thomas M. Kostigen. *The Green Book: The Everyday Guide to Saving the Planet One Simple Step at a Time* (Three Rivers Press, 2007).

Schwartz, Debra. *Writing Green: Advocacy and Investigative Reporting about the Environment in the Early 21st Century* (Loyola College/Apprentice House, 2006).

Reducing Your Environmental Footprint

It would be remiss to conclude this article without including a few tips on how we, as translators, can do our part to reduce environmental damage.

- Minimize your power consumption. Turn off the lights when you leave a room for more than a few minutes. Plug your office equipment into a power strip with a switch, and turn it off when you are going to be away for a longer period of time.
- Change your light bulbs. Use compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulbs where possible. CFLs use only one-third of the electricity consumed by traditional light bulbs, and can last up to 10 times longer.
- Print on both sides of the paper wherever possible.
- Always collect your waste paper for recycling.
- Use chlorine-free, recycled paper where possible. Chlorine bleaching

paper mills release toxic chemicals that can pollute water, thereby harming animals and ecosystems.

- Repair your computer to keep it running as long as possible. After removing all data from defunct computers, consider donating them to schools, community centers, or nongovernmental organizations. Alternatively, many computer companies (notably Dell) will take back your old computer when you buy a new one and recycle it.

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International Patenting and the Translator: An Essential Partnership

By T. Dave Reed

The preparation, drafting, and filing of a successful patent application requires the skill, experience, and knowledge of the patent practitioner in combination with the inventor. As soon as the applicant for a patent decides to seek patents in multiple countries, this working partnership necessarily expands to include the translator. In the multilingual world of international patenting, the skill, experience, and knowledge of the translator can be a key factor to the success of each patent filing that is made in a language differing from the one used to draft the application. In the following paragraphs, we will look into some of the knowledge a patent translator should have regarding patents and the patenting process. In the absence of a basic understanding of patents and the requirements to obtain a patent, a patent application based on a translation may not be sufficient to obtain the full patent right the applicant—the translator's ultimate client—is due.

The accuracy and skill of the translator can “make or break” a patent application.

What is a Patent, Anyway?

A patent grants an intellectual property right similar to trademarks and copyrights. It gives a limited exclusive right to the patentee. A patent holder has the right to exclude others from using the invention covered by the patent. An important point to keep in mind is that a patent does not grant the right to use the invention, only the right to exclude others from using the invention. A patentee may not infringe upon the rights of others in using the patented invention. A patent right is limited. Generally, it expires 20 years from the date the patent application was filed. It may also be limited by other laws.

A patent is also a business tool. Most enterprises planning to introduce a new invention into commerce will not go to the considerable expense involved without assurance that their new invention will not be copied by the competition. Holding the exclusive patent right on the invention provides this needed assurance.

At its base, the patent right is part of an agreement, a bargain between an inventor and a country. In return for an inventor fully disclosing a new invention to the public, thereby advancing science and the state of the art, the country grants the inventor (or a successor in title) an exclusive right to use the invention for a set period of time.

It is important to note that the agreement is between an inventor and the country granting the patent. If an applicant desires to secure an exclusive patent right in several countries, the applicant must strike the bargain with each individual country. Since the applicant must fully disclose the invention to the public to complete the bargain, the invention is placed in the public domain. Anyone in a country where the exclusive patent right is not secured is free to use the invention without restriction.

What is Required to Get a Patent?

Granting a 20-year exclusive right is a significant event, and most countries set a stringent set of requirements that an invention must meet to qualify for a patent.

1. The subject matter of the invention must fall within the country's definition of "patentable matter."

What is patentable varies by country. For example, in some countries methods of treatment of the human body are patentable; in most countries they are not. Methods of doing business and computer software are patentable in some countries, but not in others.

2. The invention must be new (novel).

As part of the patent "bargain," a patentable invention must advance science, making a contribution to the state of the art. If an invention was already publicly known, the invention described and defined (claimed) in the application will not advance the state of the art and will not qualify for a patent. To be novel, many countries require that an invention not be available to the public anywhere in the world by any means prior to the date the patent application is

A patent does not grant the right to use the invention, only the right to exclude others from using the invention.

filed. In other words, the invention needs to be an absolute novelty. Other countries only consider an invention's previous exposure anywhere in the world by means of written disclosure to be "novelty destroying." Public exposure of an invention by other means will only affect the invention's novelty if the exposure was made within the country where the patent application has been filed. Many countries also have "grace periods," a set period of time (usually 6 or 12 months prior to filing) in which an invention may be publicly exposed without destroying the novelty of the invention.

3. The invention must possess an "inventive step."

The invention must not be obvious to people of ordinary skill in the relevant art. If the novel features of an invention are trivial or are obvious to people working the area of technology covering the invention, then no real advancement of the state of the art exists, and the inventor's half of the patent bargain is not being fulfilled.

4. The invention must have industrial applicability or utility.

In most countries, a patentable invention is one that has an application in industry. In the U.S., the law states that an invention must have utility, which is broader than industrial applicability.

5. The invention must be fully disclosed and unambiguously defined.

In order for the patent applicant to complete the patent bargain, the invention must be disclosed in the application in a manner that is understandable to those working in the relevant field, so that they can make and use the invention. This is referred to as an enabling disclosure. In addition to the enabling disclosure, the application must unambiguously define what the patent right will cover by giving a precise description of the invention.

What is Required in a Patent Application?

In general, a patent application for a novel, non-obvious, and industrially applicable invention contains:

- An introductory or background section describing the field of technology covering the invention, the state of the art, and the use of the invention or the problem the invention solves.
- A brief summary of the invention.
- A brief description of any drawings included in the application.
- The full and enabling disclosure of the invention, including examples of use.
- One or more claims that precisely define the invention. ➡

- A brief abstract (to aid others in searching inventions in the art).

An understanding of patent terminology and practice is critical for proper translation in two areas of the application: the examples and the claims. The examples included in a patent application serve two purposes. First, they provide information to help show how the invention is to be made and used. Second, they provide proof that the invention works and has utility. In general, working examples detail experiments that have been conducted and the results of those experiments. In some instances, however, it is not possible to conduct actual experiments, and the patent drafter must resort to using hypothetical or prophetic examples. When it is necessary for some of the examples in an application to be prophetic, it must be clear that the examples are not real. This is generally done via the tense in which the example is written.

Working (real) examples are written in the past tense while prophetic examples are written in the present or future tense. Misrepresenting a prophetic example by writing it in the past tense can (and has) resulted in invalidation of the patent. When translating the examples, it is important that the translation properly reflect the nature of the example (working or prophetic). To complicate this situation, some patent systems do not accept the inclusion of hypothetical examples in an application, and in some languages there is no easy way to distinguish between tenses. When translating a patent application with present or future tense examples, it is important for the translator to check with the client if the nature of a prophetic example cannot be properly conveyed in the target language.

The claims are a critical portion of the application as they set forth the

precise definition of the invention seeking the patent right. A patent claim is made up of a single sentence. It can be a very long, even multi-page, sentence, full of commas, colons, and semicolons, but it will have only one full stop. (A claim of more than one sentence is considered indefinite.) A claim is made up of three parts:

1. An introductory phrase or preamble.
2. The body of the claim.
3. A connecting or transitional phrase.

The preamble indicates the subject of the claim (“A widget...”; “A process for making a widget...”; “A method for using a widget...”). The body of the claim provides the precise definition of the invention. A literal translation of the preamble and the body of the claim is generally required. It is the transitional phrase that can be problematic.

The connecting or transitional phrase dictates how the parameters in the body of the claim relate to what is being claimed. The transitional phrase can be “open-ended” or “closed-ended.” In most countries, the word “comprising” is the accepted open-ended connector. When an open-ended connector is used, any article that possesses all of the features set forth in the body of the claim falls within the scope of the claim regardless of what other features the article may have. If a stool is claimed as comprising three legs, a stool having three legs would be within the scope of the claim. A stool with four, five, or six legs would also fall under the claim because stools with four, five, or six legs have “three legs.”

The generally accepted close-ended connector is “consisting of.” When a closed-ended connector is used, only articles possessing the features set

forth in the body of the claim, and nothing more, will fall within the scope of the claim. In the last example, if the stool was claimed as “consisting of” three legs, the four-, five-, or six-legged stools would not fall under the scope of the claim.

Since the connotation of the transitional phrases are not universal, when translating claims, it is important to know the accepted open-ended and closed-ended transitional phrases in both the source language and the target language and to ensure that the proper meaning is conveyed in the translation. If there is any doubt, a check with the client will provide the information needed to make the proper translation.

What Happens Next?

When the patent application is completed, it is filed in the patent office of the countries where a patent is desired. Because filing in a broad range of countries speaking a variety of languages is both expensive and difficult, most patent applicants utilize one or more international treaties to aid in the process.

The Paris Convention for the Protection of Intellectual Property allows an applicant to establish a filing date in one member state and maintain that first filing date in the other member countries, provided the application is filed in the other countries within 12 months. The filing date of the application is critical because determination of the novelty and inventive step of the invention in all member countries will be judged as of the first filing date. This system of priority is the reason translations and filings in most countries have a strict deadline of 12 months after the first filing. Missing this date means lost priority and possible loss of novelty, depending on what was made public during the priority year.

Regional patent offices also help.

In some areas, countries have banded together and formed regional patent offices. The best known is the European Patent Office, but there are four other regional offices covering parts of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and some of the former Soviet republics. An applicant can file in a regional office and seek patent protection in all member states. Since most regional office members are also members of the Paris Convention, priority to a first filing can be claimed in regional applications.

The Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), a treaty under the Paris Convention, provides an applicant with the ability to secure a filing date (with priority) in all PCT member countries (currently 138) and 4 regional offices by filing a single application in one language, generally in the applicant's home patent office. Unlike national and regional patent offices, the PCT does not grant patents. It secures a filing date and provides an applicant with time and information to help make decisions on where to seek patents. At 30 months from the priority date the "international phase" of the PCT ends. An applicant must then enter the "national or regional phase" before the local offices, and appoint agents and provide translations where necessary.

In all cases, the application will be examined in the local language by a local examiner. Working with the applicant (generally through a local patent agent), the patent examiner will determine if the disclosure is enabling and if the claimed invention is patentable under local law. If it is, a patent will be granted by the country.

Issues for Translators

The translator plays a key role in international patenting. Each application must be filed in the local lan-

For More Information

European Patent Office
www.epo.org

Japanese Patent Office
www.jpo.go.jp

Paris Convention for the Protection of Intellectual Property
www.wipo.int/treaties/en/ip/paris/trtdocs_wo020.html

Patent Cooperation Treaty
www.wipo.int/pct/en

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
www.uspto.gov

World Intellectual Property Organization
www.wipo.int

guage. Any application filed in a language differing from the original will be judged and granted or rejected based on a translation. In general, in an application directly filed in a national or regional office, no corrections can be made to the filed text. An application filed with mistranslated words may prove to be so flawed that no patent will be allowed—it has happened. For applications filed under the PCT, there may be some relief from a mistranslation. The translation of an application filed under the PCT is not due at 12 months from the priority filing, but at 30 months (31 in some countries). Since the PCT is equivalent to a national filing in all member states, the publication under the PCT is viewed as the controlling legal text by most (but not all) countries. A mistranslation can often be corrected by a reference to the PCT publication. Most PCT countries require that the national phase translation of the PCT publication be literal; polishing the text for grammar or phraseology can come later. (In the U.S., if a translation is not literal when filed, it will be considered insufficient and the application will be held "abandoned.")

When examining an application, the examiner will look at the claimed

invention and the enabling disclosure that supports the claims. It is critical that terminology be consistent throughout the translation. This may be difficult because many patent drafters like to be their own lexicographers, inventing words and terms of art to fit the invention. This is acceptable as long as the terms are clearly defined in the disclosure. Often a word will not retain its common meaning in a patent application, making contextual translation more difficult. This is why it is important for the translator to watch out for invented words.

Parting Thoughts

The translator is a key partner in the patenting process. The accuracy and skill of the translator can "make or break" a patent application. It is important that anyone translating for a patent filing be familiar with the local patent process and practice in both the originating country and the country for which they are translating. Knowing the systems and their idiosyncrasies will help the translator do the very best job for the client and maximize the applicant's chance of obtaining the full scope of patent protection due.

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Verbing

Your Way to a Better Translation

By Mike Collins

Most of the translators and interpreters I know love language the way other people love chocolate cake. We like the way it sounds and feels, and are delighted when we are in that groove and able to express things *just right*. On the flip side, who among us has not cringed at the tortured phrasing we often hear in the media and on the street? English sometimes seems to be as slippery as an eel when it comes to form and structure.

For us as translators, it is all about precise expression. The success or failure of our work is directly related to how accurately we convey the sense of any source text. Often, however, we can become so focused on the meanings of individual words that we forget to step back and look at sentences as a whole. Less experienced translators may feel uncertain about the degree to which their translation should mirror the source text at the word level.

So what does “verbing” have to do with all this? We are all familiar with verbed nouns like “to access,” “to leverage,” and “to interface.” For the purposes of this article, we will use the term “verbing” to refer to the act of changing a noun to a verbal form (gerund, infinitive, participle, etc.) of the same word as a way of improving readability. When done properly, judiciously changing nouns to their verbal forms can smooth the wrinkles out of a rough target text.

I will present a few techniques here that can be used to improve the readability of a translation. These involve identifying certain usage patterns in draft translations, typically the use of action nouns, and recognizing how to

“verb” them to achieve a smoother final product.

But is this really necessary? Is it not enough if the translation contains all the meaning of the source and is grammatically correct?

Not necessarily...

The goal of translation is to produce a text that does not read like a translation—one that conveys the sense of the source without additions or subtractions. Although it is difficult to do, practically speaking, that does not mean we should settle for the lower rungs on the ladder. Regardless of how faithful the translation is to the source at the word level, it should also strive not to distract the reader with stiff or unnatural phrasing.

In other words, it is possible to have a translation that is grammatically and semantically correct, but that still fails because it distracts the reader from the message or is so stiffly worded that the reader begins to question the text in general.

Again, why the focus on verbing? Why not “nouncing”?

In my work I have the opportunity to read a lot of technical and business text in sources other than English. My impression (completely unsupported by statistics) is that most languages tend to be much more nominal than English in their expression in these types of texts. That is, they tend to use many more nouns when presenting their ideas, where native English writers would use verbal constructions. Translations that cleave overly closely to the parts of speech from the source can result in a target text that feels a little like driving over a rumble strip.

Let us look at a few examples. These have been culled from editing work done over the past few years. In some cases the text has been modified slightly to protect confidentiality. The source languages include Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, German, and Russian.

For the purposes of this article, we will use the term “verbing” to refer to the act of changing a noun to a verbal form (gerund, infinitive, participle, etc.) of the same word as a way of improving readability.

Japanese

The first example comes from a text on export regulations translated from Japanese. The translator rendered a portion of the text as follows:

Source: “国際的な平和及び安全の維持を目的とする安全保障輸出管理を適切に実施するために、本規程を定める。”

Draft: “...for the purpose of the maintenance of international peace and security.”

The resulting noun phrase, while semantically and grammatically correct, is unwieldy. However, verbing one of the nouns yields a much smoother phrase with no loss of meaning.

Final: “...for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security.”

Not only does this one change produce a more readable sentence, but we now have the exact phrasing used for this concept in English. The reader is not distracted, so the translation succeeds.

Portuguese

This next example comes from a text on personnel recruiting that was translated from Brazilian Portuguese into English.

Source: “A avaliação de um currículo consiste na anotação de seu nível de

interesse no mesmo, segundo os seus próprios critérios.”

Draft: “The evaluation of a résumé consists of the recording of your level of interest in it, according to your own criteria.”

The nouns in this example virtually cry out to be verbed. With a little wordsmithing, we obtain:

Final: “Evaluating a résumé consists of recording your level of interest in it, according to your own criteria.”

Notice that eliminating the clunky phrasing has also gotten rid of two “of” phrases. These repeated “of” phrases, so common in Romance languages, are much rarer in English. Leaving them in a target text almost always marks it as a translation.

Here is another example:

Source: “*Você não possui atualmente autorização para a geração de novas requisições de vaga.*”

Draft: “You do not currently have authorization for the creation of new job requests.”

The meaning is clear and correct, but the text (three noun phrases in a row) distracts.



Final 1: “You do not currently have authorization to create new job requests.”

Replacing the middle noun phrase with the infinitive here improves the readability. If we give it one more tweak, the result is precisely what we would expect to read on an English-language website:

Final 2: “You are not currently authorized to create new job requests.”

Again, no meaning is lost, but the final text now no longer distracts the reader.

German

German is also a very noun-rich language in technical texts. One of the beauties of German word order is that it allows the reader to enjoy a great many nouns while waiting for the verb. Here is a typical example:

Source: “*Alternativ dazu kann der Lieferant eine E-Mail-Adresse für die Übermittlung von Fehlerberichten an den Lieferanten einrichten.*”

Draft: “Alternatively, the Supplier may set up an e-mail address for transmission of fault reports to the Supplier.”

As with our other examples, the eye is drawn to the “of” phrase near the end. Converting the “-ion” noun form to a verbal gerund cleans up the phrasing nicely.

Final: “Alternatively, the Supplier may set up an e-mail address for transmitting fault reports to the Supplier.”

Spanish

Unlike our German example, Spanish sometimes skips right to dessert, getting the key verb out of the

way immediately so all the nouns can march by undisturbed. This example comes from a list of specifications for a computer system.

Source: “*Se debe contar con procedimientos de control de cambios de reglas del firewall.*”

XXX de una concesión para la operación de una red...”

Draft: “Refers to the services needed to comply with the requirements for coverage established by the ministry for the granting of a concession for the operation of a network to XXX...”

When done properly, judiciously changing nouns to their verbal forms can smooth the wrinkles out of a rough target text.

Draft: “There should be included procedures for the control of changes to firewall rules.”

A number of things jump out at us in this example: the passive “there is/should be...” phrase; the attempt to hold to the Spanish word order; and the clumsy “of” phrase. The surgery required to fix it will be a tad more invasive this time.

Final: “Procedures must be included to control (or monitor) changes to firewall rules.”

Indeed, we could improve the sentence even more, but the key here is that the awkward passive voice has been eliminated, and what was a thoroughly distracting sentence is now far less likely to lift the eyebrow of the reader.

The next example comes from a list of definitions in a similar contract:

Source: “*Designa los servicios necesarios para cumplir con los requerimientos de cobertura establecidas por el ministerio para el otorgamiento a*

By now, we are getting the hang of this and have a good idea where to start.

Final: “Refers to the services needed to meet the coverage requirements established by the ministry for granting XXX a concession to operate a network...”

The final wording is seven words shorter than the first draft, and reads much more naturally.

Russian

Russian offers similar opportunities:

Source: “Целью настоящего исследования является проверка безопасности, эффективности и переносимости [study drug] при приеме 2 раза в день по сравнению с плацебо.”

Draft: The goal of this study is the verification of the safety, efficacy, and tolerability of [study drug] with administration 2 times per day in comparison with placebo.”

Once again, the draft matches the

source noun for noun. In my opinion, the translator even sacrificed a bit of accuracy in an attempt to stay closer to the parts of speech of the original. The root of the Russian word “прием” (translated as “administration” in our draft text) means “take.” If we free ourselves to verb a few of the nouns here, one of the benefits is that we can also return the sense of “take” to the translation in connection with the medication.

Final: The purpose of this study is to verify the safety, efficacy, and tolerability of [study drug] taken 2 times per day compared with placebo.”

Conclusions

From the examples given here, we can identify some patterns that will help us recognize candidates for “verbing” more quickly. When re-reading a translation, look for the following when you hit a sentence that “just doesn’t sound right”:

- Action words ending in “-tion,” “-ment,” which can often be

changed to “-ing” verbal constructions or infinitives.

- Phrasing (...the catching of the ball → catching the ball).
- Multiple uses of “of” (long noun phrases).
- Passive voice (Can it be turned around, would it sound better in active voice?).
- Front- or back-loaded sentences (conjugated verb at the beginning or end, with lots of noun phrases in sequence).

A word of caution: moderation. Many sentences that use lots of nouns express their ideas perfectly smoothly. Sometimes the passive is just fine. We are looking specifically for those sentences that are drawing attention to themselves, the ones that distract the reader because they do not flow naturally.

When editing, I personally find this technique is best employed during the final proofreading phase. Once all the

terminology has been checked, the omissions repaired, and the other mechanical work done, this final polish can be added to the target text. Many translators read their work aloud to themselves to check it. That is a good time to catch sentences that could benefit from “verbing.”

With practice and experience, seasoned translators can do this cleanup on the fly as they are working, spotting potential verbing candidates and testing them out quickly in their heads before they type.

Whatever the style or approach, a little verbing can go a long way in helping a translator achieve a clearer and more natural-sounding translation.

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Voice-over Fundamentals

*By Rocío Txabarriaga and
Jacopo Màdaro Moro*

This article is based on a presentation made by the authors earlier this year for the New England Translators Association (www.netaweb.org).

According to Merriam-Webster *OnLine*, the term voice-over dates back to the late 1940s, and refers to a production technique where the voice of an unseen speaker is broadcast live or pre-recorded in a variety of media. The voice-over may be spoken by someone who also appears on the screen, or it may be performed by a specialist voice actor. Voice-over is also commonly called “off camera” commentary. Voice-over can also refer to the actual voice actor who performs the recording. The terms voice actor, narrator, voice artist, and announcer are all similarly used. Regardless of the specific terminology used to describe this technique, voice-over is another form of language transfer.

Viewers of news programs are familiar with the voice-over of statements or responses made by interviewees who do not speak in the language of the viewing audience. Typically, this technique allows the first few words in the original language to be heard, and then fades them down for re-voicing of a full interpretation by the voice talent.

The voice talent is a professional who, through skill and education, has achieved breathing control, proper enunciation and tone, and the ability to convey the right feeling in the context of a recording session. All types

of voices will do for this type of work. Basses and altos seem to be preferred for training materials, news, and documentaries. Tenors and sopranos are usually chosen to voice ads and instructional materials.

Considering the partial application overlap, it is important to make a distinction between dubbing and voice-over work. The difference is lip-synchronization. Dubbing is a technique that makes the translated dialogue match the lip movements of the actors on the screen. Both voice-over and dubbing present identical extra-linguistic requirements, expecting close equivalence of several markers, including gender, age, and ethnicity. Voice-over works show greater variance from these ideal equivalences, and parity is not always maintained.

Applications

The range of applications for voice-over work is quite broad. It encompasses film, radio and television productions, multimedia presentations, interactive voice response systems (telephone prompts), video games, educational materials, and audible messages in public places (e.g., airports, train stations, and terminals).

Film: Many films and documentaries have no acting. Instead, there is an unseen narrator (e.g., the BBC's *Planet Earth* series, narrated by Sigourney Weaver). Voice-over can also be used as a character device to present the audible thoughts of a visible character in a film. (For example, the movie *The Shawshank Redemption*, where the voice of Morgan Freeman's character narrates over several scenes.)

Radio: Voice-over is applied to promotional spots or promos (a spot or a promo is an advertising industry term

If you hit a rough spot, call for a break, have a brief normal conversation, drink a glass of water, and try again.

used to designate 30- or 60-second promotional segments between scheduled programs on radio and television).

Television: Voice-over is used in every newscast, in just about every commercial, in sitcoms, and in educational programming. In short, almost every television show has a narration component done by a voice talent. In many cases, when the person on screen speaks a different language, and the broadcast is live, a voice talent (frequently a simultaneous interpreter) speaks over the foreign voice.

Multimedia: When you visit a museum, chances are you will come across an exhibit with a voice component. The visitor usually presses a button and a voice plays in the background. Corporate training videos normally have a voice component to enable learning across sensory preferences. Multimedia educational materials always include a voice component.

Interactive voice response systems (IVRs): The very nature of IVRs depends on good, clear voices. In this type of system, a caller responds to a set of prompts (spoken by a voice talent) to access a system or a person. Recent developments in the field of natural language processing have turned IVRs into very effective systems for automating services where a large exchange of information and data capturing are required. These systems

are used by utility companies, large corporations, and in clinical trials.

Video games: Even if a character in a video game just grunts, a voice talent is required to bring it to "virtual life." Not all games have voice components, but those with educational purposes always do. There is no doubt that doing the voice-over for a video game requires voice characterization (i.e., acting).

Educational materials: Many learners are auditory, that is, they favor acquiring information through their sense of hearing. If a voice component is not incorporated into educational materials, those learners are at a disadvantage. Adding voice and sound to interactive materials enriches the user experience and ensures that learning occurs at every sensory level. It also renders versatility to the materials, sometimes making it possible simply to listen to them.

Audible messages: These messages are usually playing in a loop at airports, terminals, and other public places, often in several languages. In most cases, they are recorded by professional voice talent. Visitors at many museums can also get a guided tour using an interactive device that plays a narration (through headphones). Audible messages are also used for the visually impaired at ATMs and elevators, for individuals entering a secured facility as confirmation of their ➡

credentials, and for many “talking” machines. The latter, however, are instances of screen readers, not voice-overs done by humans.

A Skill Primer

Asking the basic questions listed below will help those interested in voice-over work define the areas where more practice might be needed to improve their overall performance.

Is every voiced syllable perfectly audible? Enunciation is key for a successful message, so audibility is crucial.

Is every word pronounced with the right stress? Some words have very similar sounds. If these words are not pronounced correctly, they may sound like something else entirely. Proper pronunciation is critical.

Is every sentence pronounced with the right tone for the context? If you are reading a warning, a soft, relaxed tone will not engage the target audience. Every context has a particular tone associated with it.

Are the sibilants particularly loud in the target language, sometimes sounding like static on a telephone line? Muting these “S” sounds is one of the most difficult skills to acquire, and it takes lots of practice to master the art of pronouncing sibilants without residual noise. The other extreme should be avoided as well, that is, eschewing and sounding like you have a speech impediment. Balance is key.

Can you hear your tongue clicking loudly, like when you take a sip of a really cold liquid? This is a common occurrence. Your goal is not to eliminate clicking, as that is impossible, but to minimize it. Current audio recording technology helps eliminate clicking to a

large degree, but a well-hydrated throat is the key to minimize clicking when recording.

Can you hear yourself inhaling or exhaling? Breathing control is not about holding your breath or inhaling deeply so that you can speak for a long time without inhaling again. It is about taking in the right amount of air for every segment that you and the client or producer have agreed will be

Learn to breathe like a singer: The techniques used by singers are sure to be beneficial for voice talents. Currently, many self-study materials on singing technique include breathing techniques.

Observe news anchors from a different perspective: Study their intonation and the way they pronounce and enunciate.

Do not leave a job feeling like you should have done better. The end client might think the same.

recorded. This is not just the air that you hold in your lungs, but the kind of air that lyric singers, for example, pull from their entire abdomen so that their voice can carry through a space and hold a particular note in tune.

Do you hear noises such as jewelry jingling, hair rustling, or hands rubbing? Studio microphones are extremely sensitive and, although most have noise cancellation features, they pick up noises such as those listed above from the person speaking directly into them. To reduce background noise, wear “quiet” clothes, do not wear any jewelry, and avoid fidgeting (including touching your hair or tapping your fingers).

Skill Development Tips

Understand phonology and phonetics: For example, knowing how your voice apparatus works and the difference between the voiced and unvoiced phonemes will help you enunciate correctly.

Pay attention to the “feel” of the voice-overs for television commercials: Notice how different the voice choices and the intonation are for the various products.

Take an acting class: If you are serious about becoming a professional voice talent, this will help you stand out in a sea of voices.

Listen to others in the field: You can always learn delivery techniques by listening to professional voice talent.

The Market

The U.S. voice-over market can be organized in the segments listed below.

News organizations: Most are in New York, Atlanta, and Washington, DC. Some local cable stations might have a need for voice-over work. Please keep in mind that this work is often pro bono, but the experience these types of assignments provide is invaluable.

Ad work: Inquiries for this type of work should be directed to ad agencies, talent agencies, and recording studios.

Documentaries: Public television stations, colleges, and private television and radio stations are the most likely sources of work.

Instructional materials: Translation agencies are often in charge of localizing these materials, and will be the source of related voice-over work. They will often need voice talents in their own geographical area.

The full range of options for voice-over work often applies only to work in English. In reality, language services companies often manage foreign-language voice-overs, seeking and booking the various talent. Agencies may contact local linguists for the job first (and be willing to train those without voice-over work experience). Jobs are also advertised in the usual online boards for linguists (e.g., www.proz.com).

There are other instances in which the companies who manufacture the materials in need of foreign language voice-over hire the voice talent directly. These companies usually advertise the projects on Internet boards dealing specifically with voice-over or acting work, and invite candidates to audition for the project. To develop a sense of what these sites offer, you could start, for example, with <http://voice123.com>, <http://searchvoices.com>, or <http://voicerecruiters.com>.

A Starting Kit

The following is a simple list of what you will need to get started in this business.

Sources for Work

ATA Job Bank
www.atanet.org/jobbank

ProZ
www.proz.com

Search Voices
www.searchvoices.com

Voice123: The Voice Marketplace
www.voice123.com

Voices
www.voices.com

Voice Recruiters
www.voicerecruiters.com

Voice-over Directory
www.voiceoverdirectory.com

Voice-over LA
www.volatalent.com

Voice-over Miami
www.voiceovermiami.com

Voice-over Resource Guide
www.voiceoverresourceguide.com

Voice samples: It is a good idea to have quality voice samples of your work in MP3, CD-ROM, or .wav format. Avoid cassette tapes and videotapes, as well as cell and digital videos. Cell videos offer low bandwidth/quality, and digital recordings are distracting and too costly to produce professionally. Read only public domain texts or text you can use with the author's permission. If you choose a newsprint article, quote the paper and the journalist. Make sure you conform to international copyright laws.

Job leads: Visit the public library, consult the U.S. Yellow Pages, and search the Internet for recording studios, public television stations, (voice) talent agencies, and translation companies in your geographical area. You should cover as much ground as possible in your search for job leads (e.g., East and West Coasts). Your motto should be "have voice, will travel."

CV: Write a résumé highlighting voice-over and dubbing as objectives/goals, listing singing and acting courses or classes/experience, mother tongue (if working into foreign languages), etc.

Mailing campaign: Send your résumé and voice samples by regular mail or e-mail to the leads. Do not be discouraged: five answers in 100 is a very good score, and one solid contact out of 20 responses is a phenomenal result. (You are still unemployed, but in business!)

A Voice-over Session: Methodology

Voice-over is done in a variety of ways and settings, at times using specialized equipment with peculiar quirks. Nevertheless, the methodology, basic equipment, and pitfalls seem to be a constant. First, the methodology: ➡

Record in a controlled environment: Whether recording at a studio or recording your first voice-over sample on a home computer, a recording session must occur in a controlled environment. The first rule is: NO NOISE. We have already mentioned the example of background noise caused by rustling clothes or fidgeting, which should be avoided when recording. Recording from home will obviously not be possible if your dog is barking at a passerby. Electronic feedback can also be a problem while recording if the equipment is not handled correctly.

Have a properly prepared script: Improvisation may be adequate in certain settings, for instance, when it occurs in a recording session, because a director is present and has authorized it. In most instances, however, a script is necessary and must be followed. When scripts are long, they must be divided into workable segments, and a time cue should precede each segment. When there are multiple voice talents in the same recording session, all participants must be clearly marked on the script so that each person knows with certainty when it is his or her time to speak.

Logistics: A voice talent must be punctual. Studio time is booked for a specific schedule and the norm is to hold back-to-back sessions. It is also a costly service. Every minute lost from the original schedule of a session because a voice talent is late costs money, and may mean that a makeup session will need to be scheduled. Clients will not appreciate this.

Practice: The script must be fully read and practiced ahead of time. Preparation time is not part of a scheduled session. At the studio, once the voice talents and all other participants are properly situ-

ated, a sound test is conducted and the session begins immediately afterward.

Standard Equipment and Tips for Use
Recording booth: Make sure you can see/hear your recording technician/

should be done. Textual checking is a much more vague domain. It could be done by the producer, the project manager, or, in a multilingual event, a fellow talent waiting for his or her turn. Professional productions have

Even if a character in a video game just grunts, a voice talent is required to bring it to “virtual life.”

coach. Find a good position for the reading stand, stool, and yourself. The recording sessions can last a few hours, so you might as well be comfortable.

Microphone: During the voice level test, make sure you are not adapting to the microphone. Save your neck and put the microphone in a position that is completely comfortable. Ergonomics first!

Earphones: You are supposed to hear voices! Make sure they do not bleed into the microphone. Normally, the original voice is piped through one channel/ear, and your own through the other. Be careful when putting on your earphones and be ready to remove them fast in case of deafening feedback.

Video monitors (optional): Video monitors can be useful in providing visual clues (e.g., a timer at the bottom of the screen) that allow you to fine-tune your starting points. Conversely, not everyone can integrate two sound tracks and two visual inputs (text and monitor) on different visual planes.

Booth supervision: The recording technician is in charge of timing, and if she or he asks for a retake, a retake

real booth support. They require another talent with a similar language specialty, background, etc., who can check diction and enunciation.

A fat glass of cold water: Be prepared. Voice-over is thirsty work.

Pitfalls

Whatever can go wrong will go wrong, especially in three areas: communication, timing, and recording.

Communication: The text presents its own obstacles, mainly:

- Pronunciation (e.g., Is it pronounced *Apalæcian* or *Apalâcian*?).
- Alliteration (e.g., “I bought a box of biscuits, a box of mixed biscuits, and a biscuit mixer.”).
- Translation errors from mild to catastrophically offensive.
- Run-on passages, which are difficult to read in any language because they cause the speaker to pause in inappropriate places.

Timing: Normally, if it is not timed properly, the translation is too long when speaking into a foreign language, or too short when speaking into English. In these cases, only two options are avail-

able, and sometimes both are insufficient. In fact, it is possible to speed up/slow down your speech, or trim/expand the text. The choice depends on the assertiveness of the talent/producer and the seriousness of the timing gap. In the best-case scenario, the voice talent is also the translator, which means that the timing has already been taken into account. This also means that the talent has greater control over the final script when it comes time to do the voice-over. At the opposite end of the spectrum, there will be situations where a talking head (the person speaking to the camera) strings together a long sentence on the screen while the voice-over offers a simple “Yes.”

Recording: The problems encountered during recording include but are not limited to:

- Poor breathing.
- Slurred enunciation, especially at the end of long sentences.
- Uneven tempo. If the talking head is vivacious and bubbly, the voice-over talent should not sound like he or she is reading an accountant’s obituary.
- Missed passages. To skip a line is not acceptable, no matter where and in which language.
- Volume levels. Especially during retakes and in between scenes, it is important to maintain an even volume level. Discrepancies can be digitally corrected up to a point, but it is a matter of professional pride (and cost control) to keep the takes to a minimum.

A Few Reminders

Control your breathing! If you do not fill your lungs with air before you start, you will produce the Brenda Vaccaro effect. (Some 20 years ago, in a nationally televised ad, Brenda started with a deep aspirating groan,

Want to Learn More? Links to the Voice-over Experience

“Interview with Freelance Audiovisual Translator Anna Matamala.”
Journal of Specialised Translation (September 25, 2004),
www.jostrans.org/issue04/art_matamala.php.

Kenyon, Heather. “Getting that First Voice-over Role.”
Animation World Magazine (September 1999),
www.awn.com/mag/issue4.06/4.06pages/kenyon/voicesurvey.php3.

saying “AAAAAH Tampax.” It sounded as though she was dying of anaphylactic shock. Sales suffered and so did Brenda’s advertising career.) Count to five, take a full breath, and start on cue.

Do not get flustered. If you hit a rough spot, call for a break, have a brief normal conversation, drink a glass of water, and try again. What you cannot afford to do is act like a prima donna with a short fuse. Retake whatever needs to be re-recorded, and when mistakes are made or one of the participants is not satisfied with the quality of a sound byte, remember that communication must be clear. The point in the script where a repeat is needed must be well indicated. Many studios have the capability to replay a segment immediately after it is recorded. You should check with the studio production team to see if there is time to replay segments, since this is a very useful way to spot problems.

Do not overact. Unless you are dubbing or doing voice characterization, all you need to do is to convey the feeling of the message by reading the script as if it meant something to you.

Aim for clarity and proper tempo. Even when others check what you do, check your own work and be brutally critical. It is better if it comes from you than the final audience.

A Final Warning

To hear your own recording is a paramount component of voice-over quality control. You know best your own phrasing, pacing, parsing, and projecting. If you sound hollow, tentative, or out of breath to your own ears, consider whether that passage conforms with minimum standards and ask the opinion of others. Do not leave a job feeling like you should have done better. The end client might think the same.

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The Road toward Collaborative Translation Memories

By Yves Champollion



Looking back at the earliest translation memory (TM) tools from the late 1980s, it is evident that our expectations of TM software have evolved a great deal as these commercially available products have become more advanced. The first tentative efforts to create supporting software tools for translators saw memory systems that stored completely aligned source and target sentences in extensive databases, from which they could be recalled only when a complete (or perfect) match was discovered. The problem with this approach was that there was no guarantee that the new source-language sentence was from the same context as the original database sentence. Such tools naturally did little to automate some of the processes we now take for granted in our TM weaponry, as the translator still had to spend time reviewing all the matches for relevance and accuracy in the context of the translated document. Although cheaper than outright translation, this review still carried a cost. Therefore, the goal of reducing overhead

The highly repetitive nature of some technical texts and manuals meant that early translation memory tools, although crude, were useful in certain translation domains.

(and hence translation costs) was not fully realized at that time. However, the benefits of increased consistency in phrasing and terminology were clearly evident, and the development of TM tools was regarded as a worthwhile pursuit.

First-generation TM tools were most useful in translation domains where the occurrence of perfect matches was common, such as technical documents. Unlike more creative texts, technical documents are often comprised of a series of exact component phrases and terms (“units”) that are usually repeated throughout the text. Early TM tools had

no trouble managing these significant text units.

As readers, we would be outraged if it were suggested that all texts were not “written,” but merely constructed by ordering set units and pre-packaged blocks of meaning around to create an end product. This completely negates the idea of an original author whose word choices and painstakingly crafted sentences best convey his or her message. The advent of TMs essentially had the same effect on the work of the translator. Where once the translator’s vocation was considered akin to that of a

wordsmith—carefully re-crafting the message of a text in his or her chosen language based on linguistic knowledge and academic prowess—the automated processes of TM tools seemed to devalue that role. The elegant art of the translator was somewhat reduced to the role of a typist, chained to a computer and paid by the mile for simply reassembling pre-translated text.

This perception was due in part to a lack of sophistication in the tools themselves. Even TM tools that did start to support fuzzy, or nonexact, matches (initial examples include IBM's Translation Manager and early versions of Trados) were merely set up to offer purely statistical matches in unwieldy blocks, and there was little option but to reuse these blindly as they were presented. Thus, multiple-clause sentences proved too complex and awkward for TMs to deal with efficiently, resulting in inconsistencies in segmentation. Phrases were chopped and glued back together without any option of including a "feel" for the overall meaning of a text. The tools did not present the translator with various alternatives based on context.

The Present: "Smarter" TMs

It was the lack of satisfaction with this statistical methodology that drove the development of the more advanced TM tools we see today. Powered by robust algorithms, programs became more intelligent and acquired the ability to distinguish inexact or fuzzy matches, as well as the ability to grade the level of suitability of the match for the translated text on a continuous scale from 0 to 100%. Tools now include a linguistic analysis engine, use chunk technology to break down segments into intelligent terminological groups, and automatically generate specific glossaries. While benefiting translators as a whole, the advantages of this development were perhaps most keenly felt in the transla-

By incorporating stylistic elements and offering increased flexibility, it is evident that translation memory tools are now much more intelligent than their predecessors.

tion of creative texts, where the likelihood of exact text repetition was diminished. This was an area in which TMs had previously only been of limited value. With these new match functions, translators were again empowered to make creative choices based on the more detailed data at their disposal. Previous translations could be reviewed along with an assessment of their suitability for the source text, and then be edited according to the new context. In this way, TMs began to approach the more flexible model that was required in order for them to fulfill the translation support role. Improved consistency was assured, but this improved flexibility meant that the tools were less dogmatic than previous versions. As a result, the role of the translator was revalued.

Today, translators are offered even more flexibility in their TM arsenal. Second-generation TM engines incorporate a host of features that go much further toward accommodating contextual influences. The most significant of these is that modern TMs now accept multiple translations of the same source. For reoccurring source text, current software offers up various options that relate to the original, with the preferred translation prioritized based on an automated assessment of the context. The program effectively "reads" each segment in context in the same way a translator would, thereby helping to solve previous issues related to segmentation, which, in turn, results in a more pleasing final product.

The highly complex linguistic algorithms offer the best possible semantic match, rather than the simple statistical matches of yesteryear. This represents a key step in the quest for a linguistic tool that offers the level of flexibility required to handle a wide range of texts.

By incorporating stylistic elements and offering increased flexibility, it is evident that TMs are now much more intelligent than their predecessors. Yet, it is important for us to examine where this development is leading.

The Future: Assets for All?

Now that TM tools incorporate a wide range of functions to support translators, it seems natural that future developments should focus on the shared use of these TM assets. Currently, even though an individual translator is likely to build up hundreds of thousands of words of TM each year, the actual memories themselves are typically seen as the property of the client for whom the project is being carried out. The buyers are the initiators of the source text, and so intellectual property rights are exercised over the TM that is generated. The buyer is purchasing a translation, but also a host of TM assets for use on other projects. The current attitude toward TM files is one of property and ownership, but the Internet's tendency toward knowledge sharing modes may be changing that approach.

Server-side TMs are already gaining popularity with large ➡

corporations that seek to improve consistency in enterprise-wide localization initiatives. Such platforms allow multiple translators or teams of translators to share their TM assets with key client-side stakeholders in real-time, thus producing a continuously updated set of terminology and phrasing that aligns with a company's brand voice. All translators can then ensure that the stock verbiage they use is drawn from a central TM repository that has been established and refined by other translators on the team and approved by the relevant client contacts. Here we hit on a key point for future TM models—collaboration.

Wiki-based knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer networking tools represent important and exciting developments that now form an integral part of much Internet-based research. The ability to network with others in an open environment and work together toward an end goal of improvement and refinement has shaped many Web-based activities. What could this tendency toward collaboration mean for the translation industry?

Few translators would deny the value and increasing importance of free-for-all repositories such as the Europa terminology portal. Unlimited access to many thousands of terms and phrases, which have been standardized and approved across 23 official languages, means that any team conducting a translation project for the European Union has a head start in its efforts to maintain consistency across geographically diverse locations. Such developments constitute a boon to both clients and translators seeking consistent texts in legal or technical domains, as well as a firm and consistent corporate voice.

The European Union stands out as a key example, but what if this practice were to become standard across a

wide range of global and international bodies? If the United Nations, World Bank, World Trade Organization, and others were to engage in the same practice of releasing approved terms into the public domain, we would see the creation of a huge online terminology repository that is both open and collaborative. If continued over the coming years, this practice could help foster more streamlined communication between worldwide organizations, and we could even see this extend to the private sphere.

My own interest in this area led to the development of the Very Large Translation Memory (VLTM) project, which proposed an initial method for making blocks of TM assets available for free to online communities. Subsequent research leans toward the creation of a Web-based tool that can generate valuable TM assets automatically. As TM assets are heading toward an open model, the functionality of such a tool would need to reflect this. The next significant phase in the evolution of TM will see tools that can seek out multilingual websites in any domain chosen by the user. The tools will be able to harvest content from any of these sites, thus generating more TM options for the user. An online "TM harvesting" tool of this kind could potentially revolutionize the way translators approach translation projects.

Working within this model, TM assets would no longer be thought of as items to be hoarded, bought, sold, and traded, but more as public commodities to be shared and refined over time. The overall attitude would switch from exclusive to inclusive, and all participants would be working to free up TM content and contribute to a shared intellectual heritage. Of course, it is no coincidence that the majority of terminology released so

far has stemmed from governmental institutions such as the European Union. It is worth noting that there is likely to be a certain amount of opposition to this free-for-all methodology in the private sphere. For instance, it is hard to imagine Microsoft suddenly deciding that all terminology relating to its software applications—which has been painstakingly researched, established, and refined over time in multiple languages—should be released into the public domain. Global corporate identities are largely drawn from approved multilingual content, and are not intended to be simply "harvested" at the touch of a button. That being said, certain forward-thinking corporations may see the advantage of providing terminology for all to use as part of a corporate citizenship initiative. Microsoft remains a pertinent case study here, as sharing terminology would be particularly applicable for firms that are innovators in highly technical or specialized industries.

As examined over the course of this article, it is evident that the role of translators is reflected to a certain extent by the tools they choose to use to complete projects. Though early tools were seen as reducing the value of human input, these proposed collaborative models perform precisely the opposite function. Collaborative efforts mean that all are contributing to a communal intellectual database, which does not comprise "property" as such. In this atmosphere, the value of individual translators can be seen as collective, as they are truly part of a united global community that is committed to furthering cross-cultural communications worldwide.

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Visit the ATA Calendar Online

www.atanet.org/calendar/

for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.

Upcoming Events

July 17-20, 2008

ATA Translation Company Division
9th Annual Mid-Year Conference
Englewood, CO
www.ata-divisions.org/TCD

July 26, 2008

ATA Translation Tools Seminar
Boston, MA
www.atanet.org/conferencesandseminars/pd.php

August 4-7, 2008

International Federation of Translators
18th FIT World Congress
Shanghai, China
www.fit-ift.org

August 17-29, 2008

24th Cambridge Conference
Simultaneous Interpretation Course
Cambridge, United Kingdom
www.cciconline.net

August 23, 2008

ATA Localization Seminar
Seattle, WA
www.atanet.org/conferencesandseminars/pd.php

August 24-28, 2008

International Association of Applied Linguistics
15th AILA World Congress
Essen, Germany
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

September 11-13, 2008

British Association for Applied Linguistics
41st BAAL Annual Conference
Swansea University
Swansea, England
www.baal.org.uk/conf.htm

September 12-14, 2008

Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters and Translators
2008 Conference
Nashville, TN
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

October 10-12, 2008

International Medical Interpreters Association
2008 International Conference on Medical Interpreting
Boston, MA
www.mmia.org/conferences/default.asp

October 13-15, 2008

Global and Localization Association
12th Localization World Conference
Madison, WI
www.localizationworld.com

October 15-18, 2008

American Literary Translators Association
31st Annual Conference
Minneapolis, MN
www.literarytranslators.org

October 23-25, 2008

American Medical Writers Association
68th Annual Conference: Setting the Pace
Louisville, KY
www.amwa.org

October 29-31, 2008

Languages and the Media
7th International Conference and Exhibition
Berlin, Germany
www.languages-media.com/index.php

November 5-8, 2008

American Translators Association
49th Annual Conference
Orlando, FL
www.atanet.org/conf/2008

November 21-23, 2008

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
2008 Convention and World Languages Expo
Orlando, FL
www.actfl.org

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

December 27-30, 2008

Modern Language Association
124th Annual Convention
San Francisco, CA
www.mla.org



Business Smarts

Rejecting Contract Clauses

Keeping track of contracts is an important part of managing a small business. Freelance contractors should always read the fine print of cooperation agreements sent by agencies and other organizations, and never accept them without a thorough review.

Dear Business Smarts,

A translation agency that sends me large quantities of regular work recently asked me to sign a new independent contractor agreement. In addition to the customary clauses concerning confidentiality, not contacting the agency's clients directly, and the ownership of materials to be translated, the agreement contained the following rather confusing clause toward the end:

"The Company reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to conduct audits of Contractor's facilities, business practices, and any other matters reasonably relating to the performance of Contractor's services hereunder. Contractor acknowledges that the Company's right to conduct such audits is a condition of Contractor's engagement hereunder, and Contractor agrees to cooperate fully in such audits. Although the Company, where practicable, will endeavor to provide advance notice to Contractor of its intent to conduct an audit, the parties agree that the Company may conduct an unannounced audit."

Does that mean I may have a group of auditors invade the privacy of my cramped home office, without prior notice if I am unlucky? How would I protect the confidentiality of other client documents in such a case? Which of my "business practices" would the auditors look at? Although I like working for this company, I am so upset about this requirement to accommodate potential audits that I am contemplating not signing this agreement. Will I be denied further work assignments if I do not sign the agreement?

NO AUDITS in Texas

Dear NO AUDITS,

You are very wise to read the content of any such agreement carefully before signing. The clause in question most likely refers to dealings with much larger business entities than yours, for example, other agencies specializing in certain language groups or fields. Audits have become much more common in the corporate world, and are used to document compliance with the requirements of a variety of quality and accounting standards. Nevertheless, the agreement was sent to you as the sole proprietor of a small business, and your signature would indicate that you agree, at least in theory, to have such investigations performed at your business premises. While it seems highly unlikely that any company would spend resources

Comments?

ATA members can discuss business issues online at the following Yahoo! group: 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.

on auditing a freelance translator, your approval of the clause leaves the door open for a possible invasion of your privacy and the possible breach of confidentiality agreements you have with other clients.

Given the fact that you do not want to sign the agreement in its current form, but are interested in continuing your working relationship with the company, you have several choices. One course of action would be to communicate with the project manager who sent you the agreement, with a copy to his or her supervisor. Explain politely that you cannot accept this specific clause and ask what the company policy will be with regard to future assignments if you do not sign the agreement. Be sure to print and save any responses you receive. As an alternative, you can also clearly delete any clauses you find unacceptable, and mark the deleted sections with your initials. Write a brief and courteous explanation on a separate sheet, including your signature and the date, and ask that a counter-signed copy of the agreement be returned to you for your records. It would certainly not be inappropriate to follow up on this request if no response is forthcoming. A third alternative may be simply to ignore the agreement and continue to accept assignments from the company, although this would provide the least amount of contractual protection.

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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. Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.



The Onionskin

Chris Durban

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All at Sea in the Baltic

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.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) is a fiercely competitive field, with countries, regions, and even cities going all out to attract cross-border inflows of dollars, yen, and euros. It's not just the money, it's the jobs.

But in the final analysis, what makes a Japanese carmaker plunk for northern France instead of Poland, or a German research and development unit go for Bangalore rather than Birmingham?

Cheap labor is often less important than skilled labor. Strategic location and infrastructure for transporting goods and people can be critical. And without a stable political environment, forget it.

But language plays a role, too—not just the distinct appeal of a multilingual workforce once you get there, but also a convincing pitch in the language of the foreign investors being wooed.

Enter regional development specialists like Harold Celms, who heads the representative office of the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA) in France. His job? Promote this tiny Baltic nation (population 2.3 million) to French investors of all sizes, as *the* place to do business. LIAA representatives are at work in many foreign capitals, drumming up interest at trade fairs, investment conferences, and more.

Riga: Be There or Be Square

Latvia's official language is Latvian, but Russian, English, and German are also widely spoken, Mr. Celms told a recent meeting of profes-

sional linguists. Its well-educated, outward-looking workforce is a definite plus. And with Chinese exports to western markets soaring, it has an ace in the hole: capital Riga is the terminus of a train line running all the way from Vladivostok. Its port thus puts container-loads of Chinese goods within easy reach of European markets via Baltic shipping routes. No wonder LIAA's website is in four languages—Latvian, Russian, Chinese, and English (and excellent English at that).

But the multilingual Mr. Celms' point in addressing the assembled linguists was also to remind them of his reliance on their skills. When irresponsible, unaware, and unskilled translation vendors get involved in a promotional endeavor, the egg lands up on his face—the man in the field.

After a brief introduction, he showed the largely French audience a video clip highlighting the many advantages of setting up in Latvia. A succession of images flashed past, with bucolic landscapes steeped in tradition moving swiftly on to ultra-modern production plants and research labs, with close-ups of friendly, bright-eyed workers, all to a rousing musical accompaniment.

But then French-language captions summarizing key data scrolled across the screen, and the squirming began. For there were mistakes (style! grammar! spelling!) in virtually every phrase. Intakes of breath gave way to audible gasps and muttering. Did this poor man not realize how awful his party piece was?

As the lights came up, Mr. Celms reassured those present. He was perfectly aware that the French was deeply flawed, he said, and rated the captions "mediocre at best." He pointed out, too, that the time codes were poorly calculated: the text sped by too fast for most viewers—perhaps all for the best, given the circumstances.

The F-word: Frustration

The clip was produced by a professional translation agency that obviously had no genuine competence in French, he explained. Shoddy translation? Absolutely. "But it is also a classic example of poor communication between the sales force—me and my assistant here in Paris—and our marketing team in Riga. I did not even know it was in the pipeline until the CD arrived," Mr. Celms explained. While not a native French speaker, he speculated that the result could easily have been better if he had attempted a rough draft himself, and brought in a French reviser to work from that. Client frustration indeed.

His advice to translators: "If you receive an order like this, find out who the end user is and insist on being put in touch with him or her. If you are not aware of their requirements, there is really no point. And always translate into your native language."

A useful reminder for translators that if you are not part of the solution, you may be part of the problem.

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GeekSpeak

Jost Zetzsche

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Captain Sutter's Story

"I was sitting one afternoon, (...) just after my siesta, (...) when I was interrupted by Mr. Marshall (...) bursting hurriedly into the room. From the unusual agitation in his manner I imagined that something serious had occurred, and, as we involuntarily do in this part of the world, I at once glanced to see if my rifle was in its proper place. (...) When he had recovered himself a little, he told me that, however great my surprise might be at his unexpected reappearance, it would be much greater when I heard the intelligence he had come to bring me. 'Intelligence,' he added, 'which if properly profited by, would put both of us in possession of unheard-of-wealth—millions and millions of dollars, in fact.' (...) When I heard that I thought something had touched Marshall's brain, when suddenly all my misgivings were put at an end to by his flinging on the table a handful of scales of pure virgin gold. I was fairly thunderstruck and asked him to explain what all this meant (...). Early in the morning (...), Mr. Marshall was walking along the left Bank of the stream when he perceived something which he at first took for a piece of opal, a dark transparent stone, very common here—glittering on one of the spots laid bare by the suddenly crumbling away of the bank. He paid not attention to this, but while he was giving directions to the workmen, having observed several similar glittering fragments, his curiosity was so far excited, that he stooped down and picked one of them up. 'Do you know,' said Mr. Marshall to me, 'I positively debated within myself two or three times whether I should take the trouble to bend my back to pick up one of the pieces and had decided on not doing so when farther on, another glittering morsel caught my eye—the largest of the pieces now before you. I conde-

scended to pick it up, and to my astonishment found that it was a thin scale of what appears to be pure gold,'"

(quoted in: www.sfmuseum.net/hist2/gold2.html).

Yes, John Sutter's 1854 recollection of the discovery of gold that started the California Gold Rush is a long quote. And, no, its relationship to the *GeekSpeak* column may not be immediately apparent. But I was *thrilled* when I found it because it illustrates so well what I want to communicate.

When Sutter and James Marshall built their sawmill, they never even dreamed about finding gold, let alone changing the course of history for their part of the world. But that is what happened. News traveled fast. The influx of fortune seekers was so massive that eventually there was no place left for Marshall and Sutter, and they both died in poverty.

Well, I would like to avoid their fate, but I am here (once again) to announce that, very much like Sutter and Marshall, we are also sitting on great treasures, treasures that so far have yielded only a fraction of the riches they might contain.

Of course, I am talking about translation memories (TMs). Most of us use tools—I like to call them TEnTs (translation environment tools)—that allow us to build up TMs as we translate. We use them to leverage their gradually built-up content for fuzzy and perfect matches, and some of us also perform terminology searches in them ("concordance searches").

And yet there is so much more that we could do.

Here are the most obvious uses. You have probably heard about these, but I am betting many of you have not taken the trouble to bend down and pick up these nuggets.

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).

- **TM authoring:** Veteran readers know that this refers to using the bilingual (or polylingual) TM as a resource for the monolingual creation of new text. And why not use the content that we have assembled in TMs to author new texts in the source language? Imagine how many potential matches there would be if you based a new text on an (old) TM. Or imagine the strengthening of your position if you could offer your clients not only translation but also authoring—or at least training for their own authors.
- **Term extraction:** Despite Sue-Ellen Wright's and others' notable efforts, terminology work remains the stepchild of translation. The databases that could hold our most intelligent data (terminology databases) are often neglected or not used at all, even though they are a basic part of every TEnT. The main reason is that it is hard work to build them up. It is not like feeding a TM that grows as you translate; instead, you more or less have to manually enter the data. This is where term extraction comes into play. Rather than manually sending term pairs one by one, you can use readily available tools to extract terminology data intelligently from your existing TMs. All you have to do is say yea or nay to the proposed term pairs.
- **Shared memories:** This is the least mature, but potentially the biggest of all the missed nuggets. I predict that 10 years down the road we will look back on the way we did translation in the last decade of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century and shudder. Just as we cringe today when we look back on the pre-PC days when

there just was not enough Wite-Out to correct all the errors we made on the typewriter, we will be horrified someday soon by the thought that we all used to waste so much time building up our *little* personal TMs that we benefited from a *little*. Ten years down the road we will have

found ways to truly share data. And just as there are already tools for TM authoring and term extraction (that we tend to ignore), there are already plenty of approaches and tools for data sharing.

Happily, unlike Sutter and Marshall, we do not have to fear being pushed out by someone else. In fact, it is just the opposite: the more nuggets we share, the more we get.

Happy panning!

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It's time to start ●
planning for the



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Member News

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

- **Nataly E. Kelly** has joined Common Sense Advisory, Inc. as a senior analyst in charge of the firm's research on interpreting services.
- **McNeil Multilingual** has changed its name to Translations International, Inc. (www.TIINC.com).
- **Irina Yashkova** was interviewed by the *Moscow Times* on her work in support of NASA in Moscow in a story entitled "NASA Interpreter's Job Has Her Seeing Stars."

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Don't get hung out to dry Tips for cleaning up your online profile

A listing in ATA's online *Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services* or the *Directory of Language Services Companies* can be one of your most valuable member benefits. With more than two-million plus hits in 2007, consumers and businesses have clearly learned to look at ATA's directories first when shopping for professional translation and interpreting services.

Six Tips to Help You Make Contact

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2. Update your contact information, especially your e-mail address and phone numbers.
3. Use the "Additional Information" field, noting education and career experiences, unusual specialties, and any dialects you can handle. By using a "keyword" search, clients can find your services based on a set of very specific skills and experience.
4. List your areas of specialization.
5. Review your listing monthly to experiment with different wording or add new information that may set you apart from others.
6. List non-English-to-non-English language combinations, such as Portuguese into Spanish and French into Italian.

Make those updates online at www.atanet.org/onlinedirectories/update_profile.php.

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

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Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

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Birgit Richter
Berlin, Germany

Marie-Laure Vernier
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Founded in 1967, the British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL) is a professional association based in the U.K. that provides a forum for anyone interested in language and the applications of linguistics. BAAL is not an exclusively academic organization, and welcomes members from all areas.

BAAL is involved in:

- Defending applied linguistics as an academic subject area.
- Raising awareness of linguistic issues that affect citizens as customers of governmental services.
- Promoting the importance of linguistics in all aspects of everyday life.

BAAL has representatives on many academic and governmental bodies, and the association is consulted regularly on linguistic issues. BAAL organizes scientific meetings and publishes a newsletter and conference proceedings. BAAL also sends representatives

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- An annual conference, with discounts for members.
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- Various supporting grants to advance awareness of applied linguistics.
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- Special interest groups in a range of subjects related to applied linguistics.
- An online newsletter, *BAALNews*.

Quick Facts

- Established: 1967
- Website: www.baal.org.uk
- E-mail: lynn.erler@education.ox.ac.uk
- Contact: British Association for Applied Linguistics
P.O. Box 6688
London SE15 3WB England
Tel: (011) 845-456-8208 or (011) 207-639-0090
Fax: (011) 207-635-6014

Upcoming Events

September 11-13, 2008
41st BAAL Annual Conference
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Swansea University
Swansea, Wales, U.K.
www.baal.swan.ac.uk

Additional Information

For complete information on what BAAL has to offer, please visit www.baal.org.uk.



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.

S. Edmund Berger Prize in Excellence in Scientific and Technical Translation

ATA and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) invite nominations for the annual S. Edmund Berger Prize.

The \$1,000 prize is offered to recognize excellence in scientific and technical translation by an ATA member.

Nominations

Individual translators or translation companies wishing to nominate a translator for this award may obtain a nomination form from the AFTI website (www.afti.org) or from AFTI.

Nominations will be judged by a three-member national jury. The recipient of the award will be announced during ATA's 49th Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida (November 5-8, 2008).

Deadline: September 18, 2008

Please send nominations to:

American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation, Inc.
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Fax: (269) 387-6333
E-mail: aftiorg@aol.com
www.afti.org/award_Berger_Nomination_Form_2008.pdf



Dictionary Review

Compiled by

Peter A. Gergay

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VocabuLando: Vocabulário Prático Inglês-Português

Author:

Isa Mara Lando

Publisher:

Disal Editora

www.disaeditora.com.br

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2006

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567

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Reviewed by:

Ilka M. O. Santi

Described as a “practical English-to-Portuguese vocabulary,” Isa Mara Lando’s new *VocabuLando* (Disal Editora, 2006) is a very handy tool for professional translators, journalists, and those learning English.

Throughout a lifetime devoted to the study and teaching of English as a second language, Lando developed a long and successful career as a language professional, having started as an English teacher before moving on to work as a translator, textbook writer, and editorial assistant for a prestigious Brazilian publishing house. She has translated more than 80 books (among other works), including such award-winning authors as Salman Rushdie, Yukio Mishima, and Bernard Malamud, and plays such as Tony Kushner’s *Angels in America*. Combining her experience in all of these fields and her personal notes, she created the first edition of *VocabuLando* (the title being a blend of her name and the word “vocabulary”). The dictionary was first published independently in 1999, with a distribution of only 50 copies. It was quickly recognized as an invaluable contribution to Brazilian translators, who work in a language with few bilingual references. The dictionary was subsequently re-edited by different publishing houses, including SBS and Disal Editora, in 2000 and 2006.

Content

Comprising more than 2,000 words on 567 richly elaborated pages, and targeted mainly to a Brazilian audience, *VocabuLando* focuses on translation difficulties, including tricky words and misleading Anglicisms. There are innumerable suggestions in a single entry that reveal the forgotten meanings words can carry, which serves to preserve the target language’s richness,

fluency, and accuracy in a way that will help the translator create a text that reads like the original.

Lando has introduced many improvements since the first edition, starting with the cover and graphic design. Inside the dictionary, we find entries in blue, proposed translations in bold, and examples in italics, all in easy-to-read fonts. These design innovations make it easier for users to find what they are looking for, thus cutting down on the time required for searches.

The dictionary is a carefully chosen compilation of terms from a variety of contexts, and entries are illustrated with a broad set of examples containing in-depth analysis. Since the 1999 edition, 735 new terms have been included beyond the additions made to the existing entries. Terms are current, and most can be found in use in major newspapers and magazines. The number of examples has expanded from 3,000 in the first edition to more than 7,000 in this new volume.

From collective words such as “pool” and “board,” which are often left untranslated, through the misleading translations (or lack thereof) of words such as “approach,” “agenda,” “profile,” “built-in,” “issue,” “state-of-the-art,” “device,” “industry,” “bottom line,” “benchmark,” “facility,” and “blueprint,” the dictionary encompasses jargon from such fields as finance, business, information technology, and politics, just to mention a few. For example, you will find tricky terms such as “bull market” and its opposite, “bear market,” along with “bully pulpit,” “hidden agenda,” “jump-start,” and “establishment.”

Lando also provides us with a wide range of translations, including best-in-class Brazilian Portuguese options. For example, the entry for the term “insight” contains four different major meanings (*descoberta*, *perspicácia*,

informações úteis, and *reflexões*) and 45 secondary entries that vary according to the context, targeted register, and media. From the informal context to the specialized meanings she provides, Lando presents the reader with plenty of ideas, giving us the opportunity to brush up our English and refresh our own understanding and usage of Brazilian Portuguese.

VocabuLando includes tips on how some terms should not be translated, and signals the false friends, pitfalls, and other mistakes that might trap us when transposing texts from English into Portuguese. Lando's many years of experience as an English as a second language teacher comes through to readers, as she previews mistakes and presents alternatives to the targeted meaning. In particular, she tells the reader to watch out when using substitutes in Portuguese, since it is easy to render the contrary of what is being said. For example, hydrogen can be substituted for oil, so you should write *O hidrogênio pode substituir o petróleo, not ser substituído pelo petróleo*. She also points out linguistic uses in Portuguese that can result in a very formal idiomatic construction where none is intended. For example, in her comments on *quão* (how), Lando explains that sentences such as "They mentioned how grateful they were" are better translated as *Disseram que estão muito gratos/expressaram sua gratidão*, thus avoiding the very formal and literal version, *Mencionaram quão gratos estavam*.

In addition to idioms, false friends, and adverbs, many of which are easily mistranslated, historical and cultural references also have a place in Lando's dictionary. These entries include brief, but no less didactic, explanations, as well as suggestions for more precise and less verbose solutions. For example: for "baby

boomer," her suggestions include *cinquentão*, *sessentão*, and *da geração pós-guerra*; for catch-22 (referring to John Heller's novel *Catch-22*), *beco sem saída*, *situação kafkiana*; and for Ivy League (in reference to prestigious American schools), *de elite* and *de primeira linha*.

The dictionary's cross-referenced structure is also a plus. It brings together synonyms and their various levels of meanings according to the register. Taking "dusk" and "evening" as a simple example, Lando proposes 15 options, including *boca da noite*, *cair da tarde*, *noite*, *noitinha*, and *entardecer*.

Last but not least, I cannot end this review without mentioning adjectives (perhaps because they are my favorite). There are dozens of options for all tastes and nuances, with recommendations of usage, examples of registers, and cross-referenced synonyms and antonyms. Some good examples include "fast," "effective," "smooth," "elusive," "comfortable," and "fine." Lando supplies the reader with adjectives both old and new, thereby preserving usage while collecting new terms to capture the dynamics of the language successfully.

Overall Evaluation

The study of *corpora* is a promising area in translation studies today. Lando's work has a place among the important publication milestones for translation studies that explore the Portuguese language, its richness, and diversity of meaning. (One such work is the old *Guia Prático de Tradução Inglesa*, by Agenor Soares dos Santos, for which a new edition is also available.) The only detail that could improve the user's experience when mining for new terms or updated expressions would be to include a remissive index. This initiative would crown Lando's efforts to help transla-

tions into English sound like the original texts. Of course, this is a minor critique, considering the extent of her research efforts and the dictionary's main target audience. From my own experience, we can "mine" many terms by treating this work not as a dictionary, but as a book to be read from beginning to end. There is always something curious to learn.

Forthcoming this summer is the author's *VocabuLando Workbook—Exercícios de Tradução Inglês-Português—Português-Ingês*. This new work will contain practical exercises focusing on 70 false cognates and other tricky words selected from *VocabuLando* and addressed to translation students and anyone interested in translation. With a variety of translation exercises to/from English, this new publication will certainly fill a void in an area that lacks specific references for translation classes. We eagerly await news of this new publication from Isa Mara Lando. In the meantime, we need to ask her publisher to make a version of her *VocabuLando* available on CD. Those wishing to view a sample from *VocabuLando* can go to www.vocabulando.com.

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July 26, 2008
ATA Translation Tools Seminar
Boston, Massachusetts
www.atanet.org/conferencesandseminars/pd.php



The Translation Inquirer

John Decker

jdecker@uplink.net

Patents make up a big part of the workload for some of us in this profession. Now it can be told where the precious hardcopy originals of those patents end up—certainly the U.S. ones, and probably many of the non-American ones as well. A mammoth former limestone mine in Butler County, Pennsylvania (probably the most earthquake-free region in the U.S.) has been turned into a vast

storehouse of things secret and not so secret. It is called Iron Mountain, and you can find out more about it on the Internet than its owners probably want you to know. Security is tight, so going there and telling them you are an avid translator of patents will not get you inside. In fact, just going there is a challenge; probably most residents of Butler County do not know where the somber-looking gated entrance is.

Abbreviations used with this column

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

New Queries

(E-Po 6-08/1) No context is provided, but maybe none is needed for the term *polymicrobial disease*. Who wants to attempt the Polish?

(E-Ro 6-08/2) The conditions for a pharmaceutical trial included a phase called *triple-dummy*, and that caused problems for a member of ProZ trying to find good Romanian for the material. What is this concept, and what is a good equivalent?

(E-Sp 6-08/3) A ProZ user needed to know what a *toggling machine* is in a tannery. The source sentence was: “The new house will house a new **toggling machine** and a new show room.” The Translation Inquirer thought that tanneries were incredibly smelly places where a show room would be unlikely, but evidently not.

(E-Sp 6-08/4) *Source heads*, as in some sort of unspecified radiation source, caused problems for this ProZ member. He found this in English: “Any work on or around the **source heads** must be carried out in accordance with Local Legal Regulations.” For a correct answer, does it matter what kind of radiation is emitted?

(E-Sp 6-08/5) In information technology, what is a *dropbox*? Is it something trademarked? A frequent user of ProZ found the term to be the stumbling block in the following sentence: “We will only allow you to connect to the **dropbox** from these IP addresses.”

(F-E 6-08/6) As part of a résumé, the phrase *objectif de carrière* appeared, messing up the attempts of a Lantra-L user to make quick work of the job. What is it?

(G-E 6-08/7) This one is unique. Can a borrowed word be used incorrectly? Of course it can. But in this case, related to tourism, what is being referred to? The original was: *Noch weiß man nicht, wo man diese Naturnähe genießen soll, seinen persönlichen Lieblingsplatz für den **Sundowner** findet*. Is it some sort of cocktail?

(I-F [E] 6-08/8) One adjective, *godibile*, caused this query by a ProZer working on a project involving wines. The original phrase was: *Tutti i degustatori sono rimasti strabiliati dalla longevità di questo vino che era sempre piacevolmente **godibile** sia olfattivamente che gustativamente*. English is acceptable.

(Pt-E 6-08/9) In the world of publishing, this ProZer needed to distinguish between two types of perforation in the Portuguese text. His problem sentence was: *Estampas de selos com impressão combinada offset e calcografia com operações de acabamento como **semi-corte e ser-rilha***. Is this anything like die-cut?

(Sp-E 6-08/10) *Chascarillo* is a verb-like slangy word that was used by a native Spanish speaker with bad grammar. The speaker is male, and he is talking to two other males about women. In response to another’s statement that he is single, the man replies: *Necesitamos muy Buena para que pueda **chascarillo***. Can anyone, male or female, elucidate?

(Sp-E 6-08/11) Is *plurinacionalidad* a neologism? In any case, it made life difficult for a ProZer, and the context given does not help much: *El otro tema discutido el lunes fue la **plurinacionalidad***. Who knows, this word possibly could have seen the light of day for the first time in 2008. It has never appeared before in this column.

(Sp-E 6-08/12) There is already some English in this medical query, so per-

haps that can grease the skids. The context phrase was: ...*secuencias spin-echo potenciada en T1 en planos axial y sagital. Ese "potenciada" puede ser weighted: "spin-echo T1 weighted sequence."* A reply existed when I picked this, but the replying ProZ party was relatively unsure of her answer.

Replies to Old Queries

(E-D 4-08/1) (*downregulation*): Homa Assar used his training as a molecular biologist to steer us in the proper direction on this. Downregulation means that a gene decreases its production of a certain protein, while inhibition is a complete cessation of the production of the protein. Wikipedia states that downregulation is the process by which a cell decreases the number of a cellular component, such as RNA (ribonucleic acid) or protein, in response to an external variable. An increase of the component is called, quite naturally, upregulation.

(E-F 3-08/1) (*cusp of a tooth*): Bougouma Fall provides the first response from anywhere in Senegal to this column by stating that Termium provided this answer: *la cuspide d'une dent*, deriving from the Latin *cuspidis*. This is simply a notably pointed or rounded eminence on or near the masticating surface of a tooth. Idem provided this answer: *la cuspide: saillie conique sur la face occlusale des molaires et des prémolaires et sur la face incisive des canines*.

(E-Sp 3-08/2) (*legal entitlement*): This, says Alene Saap, is simply *derecho legal*. To give the entire sentence, she proposes: *Los agricultores se benefician mayormente de las cubiertas individuales de riesgo subsidiadas por el gobierno y tienen derecho legal a pagos relacionados a perdidas*.

(F-E 4-08/5) (*pupitragé d'un logiciel ou d'un progiciel*): Here, says Anne Bohy, *pupitragé* is an old word that described the work of a computer operator at a time when computers could not run unattended. In the context of software, she says, it means simply monitoring the performance of the software.

(G-E 3-08/4) (*PTHSP*): Ursula Baker found this to be an English abbreviation for Pre-Tender Health and Safety Plan, a British product. Kim Martin Metzger expanded the reply by providing "level of difficulty in accordance with the PTHSP" and "probability in accordance with the PTHSP"

(I-E 4-08/8) (*solo nel 1940 la Banda riesce a riprendersi la scena musicale*): Mark Herman's and Ronnie Apter's take is that around 1940 there may have been a revival of the practice of allowing *la Banda*, the local municipal band, to play onstage during an operatic performance. The practice goes back to the 19th century, when composers like Giuseppe Verdi inserted a piece into their operas that *la Banda* could play onstage. The practice permitted advance publicity and increased attendance at the performances.

Jacopo Màdaro Moro renders the phrase this way: Only in 1940 the band recaptures the limelight or reconquers its musical primacy or becomes musically dominant again. The critical verb is the reflexive form of *riprendere*, meaning "to take back something for oneself."

(Po-E 4-08/9) (*pozataryfowe*): Ziggy Sapieja says that in the context of transportation, shipping, and customs, *pozataryfowe* means "beyond the rate." To give the entire context, it is: "Limitations beyond the rates in turnover between the union and third countries."

(R-E 4-08/11) (*цветка*): For Gabe Bokor, this is synonymous with *развертка*, which is the evolvent of a curve.

(Sw-E 3-08/11) (*sakta men säkert kördes i botten*): Peter Christensen is tempted to translate this literally as "was slowly but surely run into the ground." It might be better to say "was slowly but surely depleted," because *köra i botten* means "to drain of its resources."

Well, there are numerous people to be thanked for the responses, and I am grateful as always. There is still a need to put out a request again for technical help from somebody out there who can guide me in the task of incorporating Japanese, Korean, or Chinese characters into this column. Is that somebody you, perhaps?

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), ProZ.com (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. 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.

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For information about ATA's 49th Annual Conference, please see page 49.



Humor and Translation

Those Who Can...

Mark Herman

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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.

I believe it was George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) who said that those who can, do, and those who cannot, teach. And there are also those who said and say that those who cannot write, translate. One such person was Sir John Denham (1615-1669), the subject of an article in *Translation—Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*, edited by Daniel Weissbort and Astradur Eysteinnsson (Oxford, England and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). According to the article, Denham was a “courtier, wit, and poet,” and more than half of his poetical output consisted of translations.

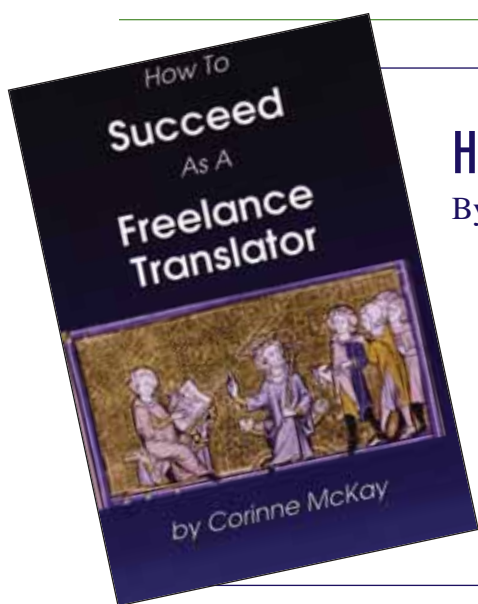
But why would someone who was a translator himself disparage translators? The answer is not Freudian self-loathing. Rather, it is apparent upon a careful reading of Denham’s words that he was not disparaging all translators, just those (all too many, alas!) who cannot write. Because those who cannot write cannot translate either. In fact, one of Denham’s poems, excerpted below, was written just to praise a fellow translator and his translation.

The object of Denham’s praise was Sir Richard Fanshaw (1608-1666), whose “vital heat,” i.e., inspiration akin to that possessed by original writers, imbued Fanshaw’s 1648 translation of *Il Pastor Fido / The Faithful Shepherd* with a “vital spirit.” Interestingly, Denham also approved of Fanshaw’s not following the “servile path” of overly literal translation. *Il Pastor Fido* itself is a famous Italian play from 1590 by Giovanni Battista Guarini (1538-1612), highly popular during the 17th century and translated into many languages. It was turned into an opera by George Frideric Handel in 1712.

Here are excerpts from Denham’s poem of praise:

Such is our Pride, our Folly, or our Fate,
That few but such as cannot write, Translate.
But what in them is want of Art, or voice,
In thee is either Modesty or Choice.
Whiles this great piece [i.e., *Il Pastor Fido*], restor’d by
thee doth stand
Free from the blemish of an Artless hand....
Nor ought a Genius less than his that writ,
Attempt Translation; for transplanted wit,
All the defects of air and soil doth share,
And colder brains like colder Climates are:
In vain they toil, since nothing can beget
A vital spirit, but a vital heat.
That servile path thou nobly dost decline
Of tracing word by word, and line by line.
Those are the labour’d births of slavish brains,
Not the effects of Poetry, but pains;
Cheap vulgar arts, whose narrowness affords
No flight for thoughts, but poorly stick at words.
A new and nobler way thou dost pursue
To make Translations and Translators too....
Wisely restoring whatsoever grace
It [the translation] lost by change of Times, or Tongues,
or Place....

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