

July 2008  
Volume XXXVII  
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American  
Translators  
Association

# The *ata* CHRONICLE

## In this issue:

Working Efficiently with Agencies

IntelliWebSearch

ATA in the Nation's Capital

With this issue:



49<sup>th</sup>  
Annual  
Conference

American Translators Association  
Orlando, Florida  
November 5-8, 2008

Preliminary Program



**SDL TRADOS - The world leader in Global Information Management**

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**T E C H N O L O G I E S**

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### American Translators Association

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## Our Authors July 2008



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## We Want You!

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





## From the President

**Jiri Stejskal**

President@atanet.org

## Ornament in Prosperity and Refuge in Adversity

### The cryptic-looking title

above is Aristotle's description of education; education is also the subject of this column. As you may have noticed, my past three columns discussed the first three objectives stated in ATA's bylaws. It is a timely coincidence that we review the fourth objective now, because it dovetails nicely with Nick Hartmann's column in this issue in which he gives a preview of ATA's 49th Annual Conference, November 5-8 at the Hilton in the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. The fourth objective is "to stimulate and support the training of translators and interpreters." Our Annual Conference does just that, with up to 17 concurrent sessions running for three days, covering a great variety of topics—see for yourself in the *Preliminary Program* enclosed with this issue.

This particular objective was a subject of discussion by the Board at the January Annual Planning Day. Are we really talking about "training," or do we mean "education?" As members of a language organization, we are sensitive to semantic differences, and while the intent of the objective has not changed, we should make sure that what we say is what we mean. The two terms are not interchangeable, even though they are often used as synonyms. In general, education is about *knowledge*, while training is about *skills*. For example, you might want your adolescent children to get sex education at school, but probably not sex training. More succinctly, "education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten" (B.F. Skinner). Changing the word "training" to "education" throughout ATA's bylaws is likely to be one among many proposed changes presented to you for adoption at the Annual Conference in Orlando.

This is not to say that our Association's objective is to impart knowledge exclusively to the detriment of skill development. Many sessions at the Annual Conference are hands-on, and our professional development seminars also lean toward training. It is the Board's opinion, however, that the stress should be on education, because it

doing their jobs. At the same time, most of us consider it perfectly normal that translators and interpreters can acquire their knowledge and skills on the job, and many of us are competent translators and interpreters who did exactly that. However, for the public to view us as professionals, we need to have a solid educational base with strong programs,

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**In general, education is about *knowledge*,  
while training is about *skills*.**

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is not only about conference sessions and seminars, it is also about stimulating and supporting educational programs both within and outside of our organization. Several of ATA's institutional members offer courses in translation and interpreting ("interpreting" also being a candidate to replace "interpretation" in the bylaws). Notably, two of these offer doctoral programs—Binghamton University in New York and Kent State University in Ohio. ATA offers a comprehensive online list of its institutional members who offer translation and interpreting programs. (See [www.atanet.org/careers/T\\_I\\_programs.php](http://www.atanet.org/careers/T_I_programs.php).) In addition, an international list is maintained online by Anthony Pym's Intercultural Studies Group under the auspices of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs. (See <http://isg.urv.es/tti/tti.htm>.)

Education is also a critical component of the status of our profession. Last month, we looked at regulation and how it relates to the way the public perceives translators and interpreters. We can once again look at physicians and lawyers for whom education in their respective fields is a prerequisite for

career opportunities, and public awareness. As the leading translators and interpreters association in the U.S., we need to provide educational opportunities, encourage future generations of translators and interpreters to equip themselves with the requisite knowledge before entering the profession, and maintain solid and mutually beneficial relationships with institutions offering translation and interpreting programs. As the title of this column suggests, education can be just a feather in one's cap when times are favorable to us. However, today we are competing on a global scale. Without education, we will have a hard time coming out on top.



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For information about ATA's 49th Annual Conference, please see the *Preliminary Program*.



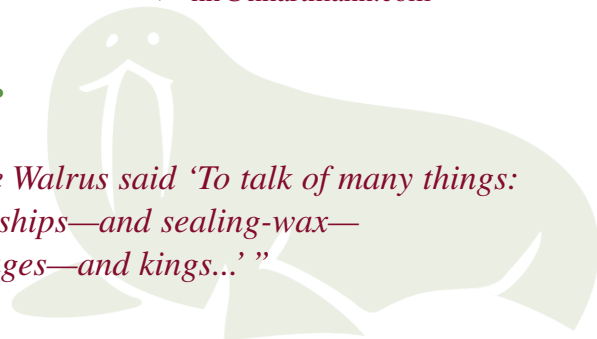
## From the President-elect

**Nicholas Hartmann**

nh@nhartmann.com

### The Time Has Come...

*“ ‘The time has come,’ the Walrus said ‘To talk of many things:  
Of shoes—and ships—and sealing-wax—  
Of cabbages—and kings...’ ”*



### With apologies

to Lewis Carroll, these will probably not be among the topics addressed at ATA’s 49th Annual Conference, to be held November 5-8, 2008 at the Hilton in the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. But there will be over 175 educational presentations on a wide variety of other subjects of more direct interest to translators and interpreters. A *Preliminary Program* for the conference is enclosed with this issue, and here are some highlights:

**Break/Session Length:** The logistics of the conference have been tweaked for (we hope) the better. Breaks between sessions will last 30 minutes to allow plenty of time for navigation, refueling, and other necessities. By popular demand, sessions will last either 60 or 90 minutes, with a mix of session lengths through each working day. The Exhibit Hall will also open earlier, at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday morning.

**Easy to Navigate:** The layout of the hotel should be ideal for our purposes. The meeting rooms are on only two

levels, with a fairly simple layout. The two (!) swimming pools are surrounded by an expansive outdoor seating and meeting area that will be used for social functions, and this area is also available for ‘round-the-clock networking and as an opportunity to enjoy the lovely Florida weather. As of this writing, smoking is even permitted outdoors.

**A Diversified Program:** Every effort has been made to develop a program of educational sessions that will instruct and inspire you, and make your trip to Orlando worthwhile. All the usual suspects are represented when it comes to languages: Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, the Scandinavian languages, and Spanish. Less-familiar representatives from southern and western Asia include Farsi, Dari, and Sanskrit; and indigenous languages of the Americas will also be discussed. The range of subject areas is equally broad, embracing literary, technical, and financial translation, legal and medical translation and interpreting, a very wide selection of

papers about business methods, translation tools, and language technology, and much more. Many of the speakers are ATA members sharing their expertise, but leaders in other fields will also be providing new viewpoints.

**Special Sessions:** Numerous special sessions are also scheduled. Every division will hold its annual business meeting, committees and working groups will meet, new ATA directors will be elected, and other Association business will be conducted. Additional special topics include a proposed English-to-Arabic certification exam, a proposed legal translation handbook, and public relations techniques for translators and interpreters, imparted by a real live PR professional.

It is not too early to register for the conference and make travel plans ([www.atanet.org/conf/2008/register.htm](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008/register.htm)). Come to meet your colleagues, come to share, come for the sunshine, and come to learn!

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## Click Your Way to ATA’s 49th Annual Conference!

November 5-8, 2008 | Hilton in the Walt Disney World Resort | Orlando, Florida

Read the most **up-to-date information** on sessions and other activities: [www.atanet.org/conf/2008](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008)

Make **hotel reservations** online: [www.atanet.org/conf/2008/hotel.htm](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008/hotel.htm)

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## From the Executive Director

**Walter Bacak, CAE**

Walter@atanet.org

## ATA Annual Conference and Jobs

**Annual Conference:** The July issue of *The ATA Chronicle* really kicks off the efforts to promote ATA's Annual Conferences. In addition to the *Preliminary Program*, which was mailed with this issue, ATA President-elect and Conference Organizer Nicholas Hartmann spotlights this year's 49th Annual Conference, November 5-8 at the Hilton in the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. (Please see From the President-elect on page 8.)

Nick works with literally hundreds of volunteers to pull off ATA's top event. The educational session presenters alone total over 150 individuals. These speakers, who are not compensated, willingly share their knowledge and experience. It never fails that a first-time attendee notes on the conference survey her pleasant surprise as to how willing the presenters—perfect strangers and most likely competitors—were to share their know-how. Other volunteers include: division administrators, who review presentation proposals, conduct the annual division meetings, and coordinate division receptions and dinners; committee chairs, such as

Certification Committee Chair Jutta Diel-Dominique, who oversees several grader training programs at the conference; and special event coordinators, such as Rob Croese, who coordinates the annual tennis outing held in conjunction with the conference.

In addition to the volunteers, Nick works with ATA staff, especially ATA's outstanding Meeting Planner and Administrative Coordinator Teresa Kelly. Teresa, who has been with ATA for seven years, compiled and designed the *Preliminary Program* and the conference website ([www.atanet.org/conf/2008](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008)). Teresa is not alone; every staff member is responsible for a piece of the conference. Some pieces may be much bigger than others, but nonetheless all 11 employees are involved.

There will be a lot more conference information coming your way over the next few months. For the most up-to-date listings of educational seminars, exhibitors, and sponsors, please visit [www.atanet.org/conf/2008](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008). Please register today for ATA's 49th Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida, November 5-8.


**Jobs:** One of the most valuable reasons to attend the conference is to network and learn about job opportunities. If you are on the fence about attending, keep in mind that one or two jobs garnered from connections at the conference will cover the cost of attending. Also, conference attendees are encouraged to display their résumés and business cards at the Job Marketplace where company owners and others look for future contractors and employees.

Speaking of jobs, be sure to check out ATA's Job Bank at [www.atanet.org/jb](http://www.atanet.org/jb). As of late June, there were 85 job postings. You can make your search as general or as specific as you like. You can also set up a "Job Alert" so that you are notified by e-mail when jobs are posted.

If you are a company owner or in a position to hire contractors and employees, please post your project or opening on ATA's Job Bank. The listings are free to those posting jobs. For those seeking work, the listings are available to all, but the details and contact information are only available to ATA members—another benefit of your ATA membership at work.

Thank you for being an ATA member.

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**49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
**American Translators Association**  
 Orlando, Florida  
 November 5 – 8, 2008

## Attention Exhibitors

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.

For additional information, please contact Matt Hicks, McNeill Group Inc.; [mhicks@mcneill-group.com](mailto:mhicks@mcneill-group.com); (215) 321-9662, ext. 19.

### ASTM F2575: A Guide for Quality Assurance

**Many companies** follow standards to ensure that the customer receives a final product of the highest quality. Professional language services providers are no different in this respect. Standards are a way to build bridges of communication and understanding between the many layers of personnel involved in a translation project so that everyone stays on the same page and produces the same quality product.

#### ASTM F2575

Translation standard ASTM F2575, entitled “Standard Guide for Quality Assurance in Translation,” is supported by ATA, translation agency members of ATA, and many freelancers, myself included.

The chief goal of ASTM F2575 is to guarantee quality. In my opinion, quality is nothing short of identifying and meeting a client’s needs for a reasonable fee. This is a bit more straightforward for the freelance translator working alone as his or her own boss. The process of ensuring quality is more complicated for a translation agency, since a project manager must effectively communicate project specifications to a team of translators, editors, and proofreaders before translation can begin. Project managers also need to ensure that all members conform to these specifications throughout the life cycle of the project.

In November 2004, *The ATA Chronicle* published an excellent article entitled “Putting the Professional in Professional Translation,” where the author stated that: “Translation quality is the Achilles heel of any multilingual services provider...because the agency depends on individual subcontractors to provide this quality.” Freelancers, on the other

hand, tend to be impervious to this communication nightmare. Their Achilles heel is too much isolation.

I support the goals of the ASTM F2575 standard. Yet some freelance translators feel threatened by the increasing pressure from big agencies to follow this standard. They argue that the push for ASTM F2575 is some kind of dark conspiracy devised to put them out of business, but I do not believe this to be the case.

Most freelancers have just one type of client: the translation agency. For those of us who are lucky enough to work directly for corporate clients, ASTM F2575 is but one more golden opportunity to showcase our professional abilities and our commitment to quality.

#### A Tool for All

Both translation agencies and freelancers have a unique role to play in the language services industry.

**Translation agencies:** In my view, translation agencies can do the kind of work that freelancers might find difficult (e.g., handle complex, big volume, multi-language projects requiring a staff). Among other things, translation agencies have the unique ability to:

- Provide language services in almost any language.
- Hire in-country talent.
- Assemble teams of experts from different translation disciplines to look at every angle of a complex project and come up with detailed solutions to any challenge.

**Freelancers:** Among other highly personalized services, freelancers are able to:

- Personally answer the phone and provide real-time answers without having to transfer the call or delay a reply until after the “boss” has been consulted.
- Stay up all night to finish the “impossible” next-day deadline, even if the call or e-mail for service came in at 7:00 p.m. the previous evening.
- Invest the kind of dedication, vested interest, and full heart and soul to serving the client that only the “owner” of a company knows and is willing to provide.

Clients must be able to make informed decisions when choosing a translation service provider. They need to know that they are going to get a high quality product. To this end, the ASTM F2575 translation standard serves as a critical tool for both translation agencies and freelancers to communicate their dedication to high quality to their clients.

*Martin Alianelli*

*Note: For more information on standards, please download a copy of ATA’s new brochure, Translation Buying a Non-Commodity: How Translation Standards Can Help Buyers and Sellers, at [www.atanet.org/docs/translation\\_buying\\_guide.pdf](http://www.atanet.org/docs/translation_buying_guide.pdf).*

*Information on the ASTM F2575 standard is available from ASTM International at [www.astm.org/Standards/F2575.htm](http://www.astm.org/Standards/F2575.htm).*

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# SDL TRADOS

## TECHNOLOGIES

# SDL TRADOS 2007

## the world's most popular translation memory software

**SDL TRADOS 2007** Freelance is the newest version of the world's leading translation memory software, delivering industry standard technology to accelerate translation projects creation, editing, review and delivery. Translation jobs can now be completed faster, allowing you to earn more business than ever before.

### Who is SDL TRADOS and what is translation memory?

SDL TRADOS Technologies develops Computer Aided Translation (CAT) software Tools. CAT is a form of translation where a human translator translates texts using computer software designed to support and facilitate the translation process. Translation memory is at the heart of our technology.

Translation memories can aid the localization process by storing all of your previous translations for future reuse. The result is that the same sentence never needs to be translated twice, improving efficiency and allowing you to accept more work and increase your revenue.

In order to see the value of translation memory and how much it could be worth to you, we have created a Return on Investment (ROI). Visit our exclusive page for *The ATA Chronicle* readers, [www.sdl.com/atachronicle](http://www.sdl.com/atachronicle), where you can find a link to the 'ROI Calculator'. In few clicks you will receive an estimate of how much SDL TRADOS could be worth.

### What is SDL TRADOS 2007 Freelance?

SDL TRADOS 2007 is the world's most popular CAT Tool and translation project management solution. It is the de-facto industry standard supporting 170,000 translators worldwide representing 80% of the translation supply chain.

Our powerful technology, which has been developed for over 20 years, allows to accept and work on projects in virtually any file type. It guarantees you compatibility with the largest number of corporations, translation agencies and other freelancers world-wide.

SDL TRADOS 2007, which incorporates both TRADOS technology and SDLX, offers amongst other components, multiple editing environments, a leading terminology management software—SDL MultiTerm—and the most comprehensive integrated Quality Assurance tools available.

### NEW! Project preparation, management and tracking made easy

SDL TRADOS 2007 includes the new SDL TRADOS Synergy dashboard which helps automating project tasks and control deadlines.

The dashboard is a powerful application beneficial to both translators and project managers. It considerably reduces translation project preparation time, file review and project scheduling.

With the new SDL TRADOS Synergy dashboard all projects, languages, files, and deadlines can be managed from one centralized location.

Some of the key innovations include:

- The automated preparation of projects with multiple files and languages processed simultaneously via a quick and easy to use wizard, cutting the time it takes to set-up new projects
- A comprehensive dashboard displaying up-to-the-minute information on customer projects, including key milestones and current project status information, allowing you to deliver your projects on time
- Automated quality assurance checks on batch of files
- Sequencing multiple Translation Memories to increase flexibility, performance and quality of your translation projects

SDL TRADOS Synergy, through SDL Package technology brings the ability to work seamlessly within the Translation Supply Chain. Additionally, full support for SDL TMS also guarantees compatibility with the Translation Supply Chain of over 170,000 users without the risk of losing any information, leveraging of translation assets, tagging or formatting.

### How SDL TRADOS 2007 Freelance Works

As well as the central dashboard, SDL TRADOS 2007 Freelance combines the latest versions of SDL TRADOS applications and includes multiple components operating together



**SUBMIT**  
your product  
idea



**PROMOTE**  
the ideas you  
want to see  
developed



**DISCUSS**  
with SDL TRADOS  
Technologies  
and other  
users



**SEE**  
what we  
are planning  
to deliver

to create a flexible and powerful translation environment.

**Translator's Workbench**—20 years of experience in providing advanced translation memory technology that maximizes efficiency. Translator's Workbench compiles the translation memory or "TM" that captures translations.

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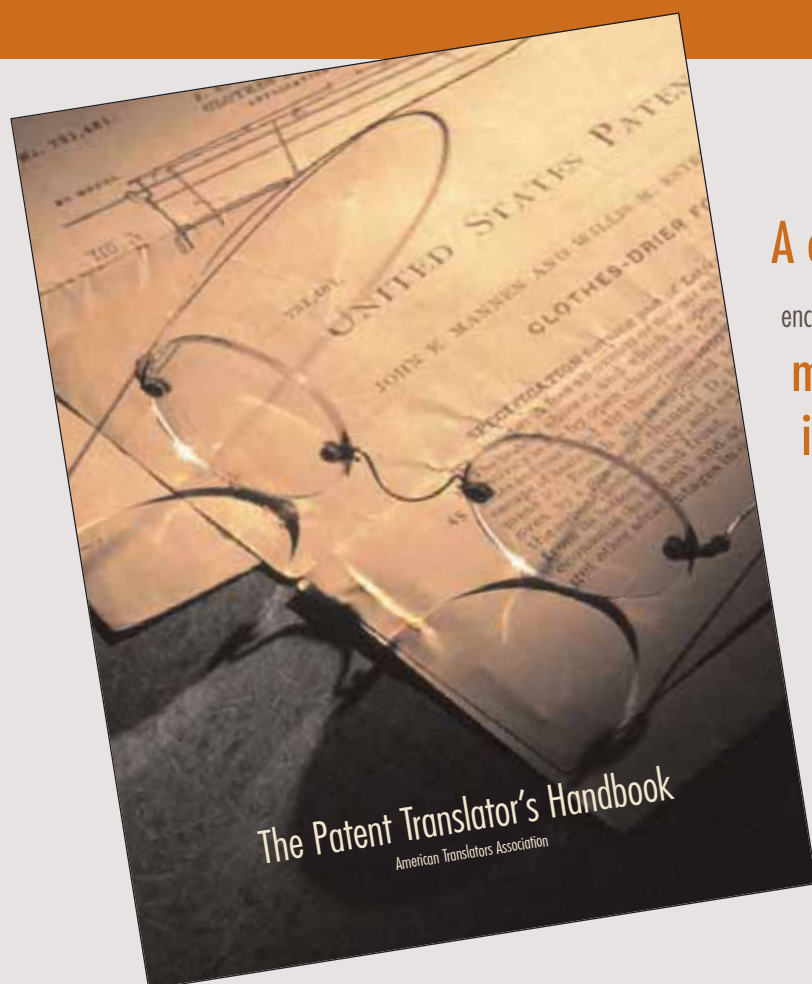
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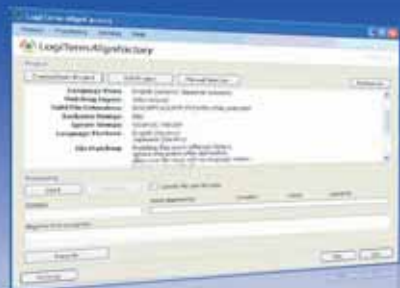
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# How to Work Efficiently with an Agency: Freelancing Tips for Newcomers

*By Cristina Jaouen*

**As everyone** in this industry knows, both translation and interpreting refer to the rendering of meaning from one language into another, the main difference being that translation is written and interpreting is spoken. As a newcomer, you may wonder how the actual practice of translation and interpreting differ from each other, whether they are compatible, or which of the disciplines might be right for you. As a freelance translator and interpreter turned small company owner, I have faced these questions.

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**Whatever the work setting, you need to remain professional and courteous.**

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On April 12, 2008, my company held its first “Introduction to Interpreting Skills Seminar” in collaboration with the Hispanic Institute at La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The seminar was designed for individuals fluent in both

English and Spanish with an interest in becoming professional interpreters. Participants included professional translators wanting to expand their service portfolios, professional interpreters wishing to test their abilities in other interpreting modalities, individ-



uals with experience interpreting in a non-professional setting with an interest in learning how to become a professional interpreter, and those with a general interest in the interpreting profession.

The main goal of the seminar was

### **Working as a Freelance Translator/Interpreter**

Although translators and interpreters do share a passion for languages, the training, the techniques, and the actual work differ considerably. If you are considering entering

lasting five hours. This may become a problem if you have accepted another assignment for the same day or have another commitment.

### **Working Environment**

As a freelance translator, you tend to have more physical control over the working environment. You might have the option of working from a home office or another location of your choice, usually on your own computer, which is generally equipped with the programs that you find most useful. You will most likely have easy access to resources such as dictionaries and other reference materials, whether physical or online. If you stumble upon a particularly complex translation problem, you can discuss this with a colleague or submit your query to one of the many reliable online professional forums, such as [www.translatorscafe.com](http://www.translatorscafe.com) or [www.proz.com](http://www.proz.com).

As a freelance interpreter, things may not be so easy to control. Even if you specialize in telephone interpreting, which might also give you the ability to work from home, interpreters need to be ready for the unexpected. You may work at different locations, even different cities, on a regular basis. You will most likely spend a lot of time traveling to and from the assignment location, so you need to allow for unexpected traffic or weather conditions (getting a reliable GPS navigator may be a sound investment). If you require equipment to perform your job (e.g., a microphone, interpreting booth, etc.), keep in mind that technical difficulties can arise at any time. You will need to adapt to any situations quickly in order to perform at your best at all times. Finally, the live nature of interpreting implies a certain degree of uncertainty, which makes it stressful and exciting at the same time. Even if you are lucky ➡

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## **The live nature of interpreting implies a certain degree of uncertainty, which makes it stressful and exciting at the same time.**

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to help participants find out how they would fit into the professional interpreting world. The interactive program gave attendees the chance to test their natural language skills and learn about the different interpreting modes (consecutive, simultaneous, etc.), types (court, medical, escort, etc.), and techniques. In addition, the ethical, human, and confidentiality issues surrounding the profession were reviewed.

As organizers of the seminar, it was important for us to have participants leave the event with a basic understanding of the interpreting profession and how translation and interpreting are two complementary but different professions. My presentation, entitled “Freelancing and Agency Guidelines for Interpreters,” reviewed some basic professional tips that could benefit both freelance translators and interpreters. I then offered some advice specifically geared toward aspiring interpreters. This article summarizes the main points of that presentation.

the translation or interpreting fields, or perhaps expanding your service portfolio, there are a few basic issues to keep in mind.

### **Working Pace**

As a freelance translator, you work at your own pace. Different people are more productive at different times of the day. Some people like to have set working hours while others prefer breaking their workday into several shorter periods. As a freelancer translator, you usually have a lot of freedom in the way you organize your day.

As a freelance interpreter, you work at the client’s pace. You may choose to accept or decline an assignment, but once you accept, it is the client who dictates the working hours. Whether working in a hospital as a medical interpreter, in the courtroom as a court interpreter, or as an escort interpreter for a corporate client, you will need to schedule around the client’s needs. Another thing to keep in mind is that, although assignments have a set start time, you are never completely sure of when they will end. You may be hired for a two-hour meeting that ends up

enough to be provided with a written copy of a speech, the speaker may decide to improvise or add some last-minute changes. As a freelance interpreter, you can only prepare as best as you can before the assignment, and then rely on your skills. Formal training and lots of practice will definitely help you feel more confident and perform better.

### Interacting with People

As a freelance translator, most of your interaction with clients and colleagues will probably be *virtual* (telephone, e-mail, online chat), which may cause a sense of isolation. There are still plenty of opportunities to connect with colleagues and to network (e.g., professional development events, social gatherings, ATA Annual Conferences), but you need to consider whether you feel comfortable working alone or if you need *live* interaction with people as part of your daily routine.

As a freelance interpreter, you need to develop your people skills, as you will be working side-by-side with very different people on a daily basis, whether it be your client, the client's client, a fellow interpreter, or a civil servant. You may have to work with people who are sick or interpret in situations with a strong emotional component. Whatever the setting, you need to remain professional and courteous. Last but not least, physical appearance is important, as interpreters cannot afford to draw attention because of inappropriate attire or poor personal hygiene.

It seems clear that translation or interpreting appeals to different people. Most professionals end up specializing in one discipline or the other, whichever suits their personality and lifestyle best. However, there are advantages to combining both profes-

sions. First, the job becomes a lot more varied. For translators, interpreting may help them connect with other professionals and fight feelings of isolation. For interpreters, it may be nice to have the option of working from home from time to time. Also, combining

information about some of the institutions offering translation and interpreting courses in the U.S. in the Careers section of ATA's website ([www.atanet.org/careers/T\\_I\\_programs.php](http://www.atanet.org/careers/T_I_programs.php)). Getting certified is also an important step, as it shows professional

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## Combining both translation and interpreting is a great way of reusing existing knowledge and/or gaining new expertise.

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both translation and interpreting is a great way of reusing existing knowledge and/or gaining new expertise. Finally, expanding your service portfolio will most likely increase your client base, which usually translates into a steadier flow of income.

### Being Your Own Boss

Something that should be carefully considered before jumping into becoming a freelance translator or interpreter is that a freelancer is an *independent contractor*, meaning that you are responsible for your income, health insurance, retirement plan, and self-employment taxes, among other things. Although it is not required, as a freelancer you will probably be advised to invest in some professional liability insurance in case things get ugly. It is great to be your own boss, but some people are just not made for it, so be honest with yourself before taking the plunge.

### Entering the Profession

The most obvious way to enter the profession is by pursuing a translation/interpreting degree. You can find

commitment and language- or subject-specific proficiency, and it may be especially relevant if you do not have an academic background in translation and interpreting. ATA offers certification for translation proficiency to and from over a dozen languages. For medical interpreters, various resources are available, such as membership in the International Medical Interpreters Association, as well as training programs through various colleges, universities, and organizations (e.g., Cross Cultural Health Care Program's "Bridging the Gap" course). Several states have passed bills requiring that court interpreters pass a state-approved certification test before they are allowed to work in the courtroom. Those interested in becoming federally certified can pursue the certification administered by the Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination program ([www.ncsconline.org/d\\_research/Consort-interp/fcice\\_exam/index.htm](http://www.ncsconline.org/d_research/Consort-interp/fcice_exam/index.htm)). In addition, an excellent source of information for all things judicial is the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators ([www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org)).

Joining associations and attending professional development events are great ways to enter the profession, connect with other professionals, and maybe even get some job referrals. It also shows that you are serious about the profession and that you are willing to invest time and resources in developing your skills as a freelance translator or interpreter. When contacting an agency to offer your services, be sure to list your certifications as well as memberships in local or national professional associations.

### **Working Efficiently with an Agency**

The first step in working efficiently with an agency is to keep your résumé current and follow the agency's application procedures. As a freelancer, you will be dealing mostly with busy project

managers who rely on the company's freelance database to match your profile with the project at hand. The easier it is for the project manager to determine whether your profile meets the project requirements in terms of expertise and budget, the higher your chances of getting the job. Therefore, it is essential that your résumé clearly highlight your areas of expertise by including relevant education and certifications as well as concrete experience.

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**Expanding your service portfolio will most likely increase your client base, which usually translates into a steadier flow of income.**

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### **Tailor Résumé Content to the Position**

If you are seeking interpreting jobs, give priority to the information supporting your actual experience as an interpreter. If relevant, you may mention that you also have experience in translation or in any other field. If you have enough experience, you may want to create two different résumés, one for translation and one for interpreting. Do not forget to include ➡

## For more information

### **ATA Job Bank**

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

### **ATA Career Link**

[www.atanet.org/careers/T\\_I\\_programs.php](http://www.atanet.org/careers/T_I_programs.php)

### **ATA Certification for Translators**

[www.atanet.org/certification/index.php](http://www.atanet.org/certification/index.php)

### **Cross Cultural Health Care Program "Bridging the Gap"**

[www.xculture.org](http://www.xculture.org)

### **International Medical Interpreters Association**

[www.imiaweb.org](http://www.imiaweb.org)

### **Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination Program**

[www.ncsconline.org/d\\_research/  
Consort-interp/fcice\\_exam/index.htm](http://www.ncsconline.org/d_research/Consort-interp/fcice_exam/index.htm)

### **National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators**

[www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org)

### **ProZ.com**

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

### **Translators Café**

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

your rates and general availability. Interpreters should also indicate whether they are willing to travel locally or nationally. Needless to say, your contact information should be complete and up to date.

### Follow Application Procedures

As for following the agency's application procedures, spending a

owned website ProZ.com ([www.proz.com/blueboard](http://www.proz.com/blueboard)).

### Be a Professional Before, During, and After the Assignment

Translators and interpreters should always strive for the highest degree of professionalism. The following tips are for aspiring interpreters, although freelance translators can also benefit

- Ask the project manager about the company's payment terms and invoicing procedures before accepting the assignment, and get everything in writing. Make sure you follow instructions to the letter.
- Do not accept jobs for which you do not feel qualified. It will hurt your credibility and that of the profession.

### During the assignment:

- Dress appropriately. Invest in a couple of professional-looking suits. When in doubt, ask the project manager about the most appropriate attire for the specific assignment.
- Be on time, or better yet, get there a bit early. It will help you become familiar with the setting and the participants. When planning your trip to the location, keep in mind unexpected traffic or weather conditions. If you are going to be late, call the agency (and your onsite contact person, if any) to let them know as soon as possible.
- Introduce yourself as the interpreter and make the scope of your job clear. If you are working for an agency, you may hand out the agency's business cards, as it is not appropriate to hand out your own.
- Turn off your cellphone and let voicemail do its job.
- Remain neutral. You are not there to provide advice or express your opinion, but to allow effective communication. If for some reason you cannot remain neutral, it is best that you decline the assignment.
- Call the agency immediately if any problems arise.

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**If you have enough experience, you may want to create two different résumés, one for translation and one for interpreting.**

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little time doing some research about the company usually goes a long way. If you specialize in the English↔Spanish combination, do not waste your time, or the company's, by submitting your application to a Russian↔German agency. Mass e-mails do not look good in the eyes of the agency, either, so try to avoid sending your résumé to an endless list of e-mail addresses. (If you still choose to use this method, at least be sure to use the "blind carbon copy" (BCC) option in your e-mail program so that the agency does not have to scroll through a long list of recipients in the message header.) You may also want to check out the agency's reputation before submitting your application. Your more experienced peers can probably provide advice on those agencies that should definitely be avoided, but there are other resources available, such as the Better Business Bureau ([www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)) or the Blue Board listing found in the privately-

owned website ProZ.com ([www.proz.com/blueboard](http://www.proz.com/blueboard)).

from most of them. Following these tips when working with an agency will help you look more professional and will make your job, and the agency's, easier and more productive.

### Before the assignment:

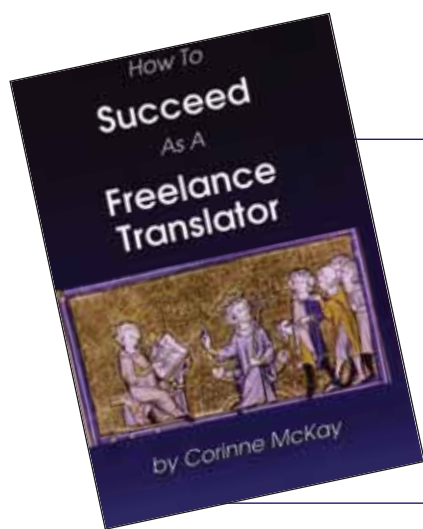
- Be easy to reach. Keep your contact details current and professional. Funny e-mail addresses or voicemail messages may not be that funny when you are trying to get a job.
- Reply promptly to availability requests. It is a sign of professionalism. You may consider getting a BlackBerry or similar device so that you can check e-mails on the go.
- Review the project specifications before accepting the job. Double check the address, the date, and the time of the assignment, and clear up any questions with the project manager before accepting the job.

**After the assignment:**

- Confirm that the assignment went well. A short call or e-mail to your project manager will suffice. Make sure to mention things such as a change of location or a different starting time.
- Submit your invoice promptly. Again, just like you did before accepting the assignment, confirm the company's payment terms and invoicing procedures with the project manager, and follow them. Maintaining a project/invoice filing system is an advisable business practice.
- Keep your contact details current so that the checks will make it to the right address. Remember, late payments should be handled in a courteous but firm manner.

**Still More to Learn**

There is always more to learn. For more information, please check out the websites listed in the box on page 19.



**How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator**

*ata*

By Corinne McKay

The road to a successful translation business is often much harder than it has to be. In this guide to setting up shop, freelancer Corinne McKay offers lessons learned and shows you how to avoid the most common mistakes—from finding clients to collecting payment. This how-to is great for translators and interpreters just entering the field as well as for old hands who want to make their businesses run better.

How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator (members \$20, nonmembers \$30) is available from ATA's website. Look for the online order form at [www.atanet.org/publications](http://www.atanet.org/publications) or call +01-703-683-6100.



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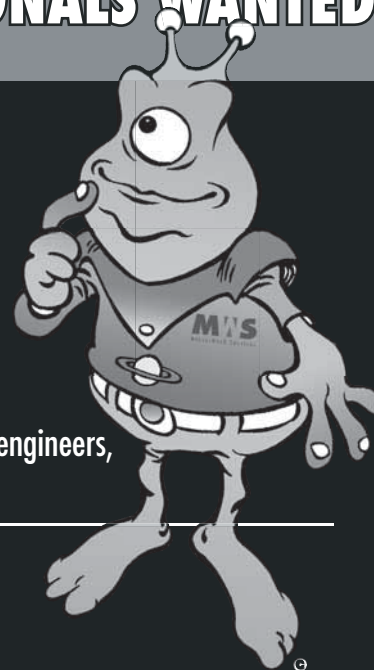
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# Being Bilingual Is Not Enough

By Frank Johnson



**Many people** consider bilingualism a requirement of any good translator. For instance, Roger Chriss states, “A good translator is by definition bilingual.”<sup>1</sup> Some persons go even further and counsel that the “best translators are those who were raised bilingual or multilingual.”<sup>2</sup> Many good translators, including some who do not consider themselves bilingual, probably would disagree with both of these statements. When we consider bilingualism in relation to translation and interpreting, the issue is usually whether being bilingual is enough to be a good translator or interpreter. Can almost anyone with high-level bilingual skills do a good job of translating or interpreting? The natural assumption of many people is that translation and interpreting are inherently bilingual activities. After all,

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**For translators, bilingualism is not the basic skill that it is for interpreters.**

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both activities involve communicating in two languages; therefore, the persons who engage in the activities must be bilingual. Thus, the implied question asks whether bilingualism *by itself* is enough.

## **Two Distinct Tasks**

Including both translation and interpreting in a discussion of bilingualism can be confusing. Although some translators interpret and some interpreters translate, the two activi-

ties are distinct. When we speak of bilingualism, we are usually making a judgment about some perceived level of oral fluency in two languages. Since interpreting is an oral activity, most people would agree that a certain degree of bilingualism is a requirement for an interpreter. However, when we discuss bilingualism in relation to translation, we might want to rephrase the question. Instead of asking whether being bilingual by itself is enough to be a good trans-

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## Although some translators interpret and some interpreters translate, the two activities are distinct.

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lator, we should ask how important being bilingual is for a translator.

At first glance, defining bilingualism seems like an easy task. A simple definition is that bilingualism is “using or being able to use two languages, especially with equal fluency.”<sup>3</sup> Another definition that adds the oral element is “the ability to use either one of two languages, especially when speaking.”<sup>4</sup> This last definition opens the door to acquiring bilingualism at just about any stage of life by eliminating the requirement that one’s speaking ability be the same in both languages. On the other hand, true bilingualism can be described as a skill that relatively few people possess. “[A] true bilingual is someone who is taken to be one of them by the members of two different linguistic communities, at roughly the same social and cultural level.”<sup>5</sup> In other words, when among native speakers, a true bilingual can “pass” as a native speaker in either language. This degree of bilingualism is usually obtainable only by people raised in a bilingual household in which both languages and cultures are active.

These definitions of bilingualism are not very helpful in discussing the bilingual skills of interpreters and translators. The first two are not specific enough and the third is too restrictive. In assessing student readiness to take my introduction to interpreting course, I have found the following definition helpful as a minimum acceptable level of bilin-

gualism. For the beginning interpreting student, at a minimum, a person who is bilingual is able to carry on (to understand and be understood) “adult” conversations (conversations about matters of daily living using language normally used by adult speakers) in a second language with a monolingual adult speaker of the second language.

### Bilingualism No Guarantee

Students who enter my course with this bare minimum level of bilingualism quickly discover that being bilingual does not guarantee success. In fact, even students who enter with a higher level of bilingualism eventually discover that being bilingual *by itself* is not enough. “Generic bilingualism” is not enough because interpreting is not a generic activity. Interpreters work in specific contexts and use specific vocabularies whose meanings and usage change from context to context, both between subject areas (medical, legal, etc.) and within subject areas (folk medicine, advanced cancer treatment, etc.). The specific advantage the interpreting student with a higher level of bilingualism has over a lower-level student is that the higher-level student can more readily acquire necessary vocabulary and cultural understanding. That acquisition is more of a struggle for the lower-level student.

Even the acquisition of vocabulary and cultural understanding is not enough to turn a beginning inter-

preting student into a skilled interpreter because bilingualism alone does not address communication between languages. Bilingualism is usually defined in terms of communication *in* two languages, not as the ability to communicate *between* two languages.<sup>6</sup> A bilingual person is able to express his or her own ideas in either of two languages. Sometimes he or she will prefer one language to another in specific contexts, but in any case, the ideas expressed are the person’s own ideas. An interpreter or a translator, on the other hand, has to take someone else’s ideas, often expressed in terms that the interpreter or translator would not use to express the same ideas, and relay those ideas in a second language in a way that is faithful to the original message. This ability to take another person’s ideas, which are expressed in that person’s own idiolect, and transfer those ideas to another language while faithfully communicating the message in all its aspects is the crucial element that separates translation and interpreting skills from mere bilingual skills.

### Oral Communication

When we turn from interpreting to translation, we face a significantly different situation. In addition to the inter-linguistic communication skills that are common to translation and interpreting, interpreters have to be able to communicate orally in both languages at the level required by the interpreted context. For bilateral interpreters, their source and target languages are constantly changing. This demands a high level of oral productive ability in both languages. Translators, on the other hand, usually only translate into their native or dominant language, and do not need written or spoken skills in their source language.<sup>7</sup> Thus, even if we ➡

expand bilingualism to include reading and writing skills as well as listening and speaking skills in both languages, complete functional bilingualism is not a basic skill for translators.

### Reading Skills

The one part of an expanded definition of bilingualism that is a required basic skill for translators is a high-level reading skill in the source language. However, this linguistic skill must be combined with subject area expertise in the target language.

The best translator for a specific text would be one who is an expert in the subject matter and who knows the source language well enough to know when the foreign text says something other than what the individual's expertise would lead him or her to expect it to say.<sup>8</sup>

I have heard it said that a good translator must know his or her specialty well and be a good writer in the target language, and that it is also helpful to know the source language.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps this is a bit of hyperbole because in-depth knowledge of the source language within the context of the subject area and source text is very valuable for a translator. Many times regional differences and nuances in how matters are expressed in the source language can change considerably how a statement should be translated. A translator needs to be a very good reader in the source language in his or her field.

### Basic Skill Level Differences

For translators, bilingualism is not the basic skill that it is for interpreters. The basic foreign language skill for translators is the ability to read and understand the source language in the

specific translation context to the extent required to be able to render faithfully the message of the source text into the target language. Just as oral bilingualism implies a degree of biculturalism since language and culture go hand-in-hand, the translator's foreign language skill requires a degree of biculturalism. However, the translator's biculturalism is a focused biculturalism because it refers specifically to the translator's specialty area. Thus, a translator who specializes in legal translations from Spanish into English in the

target language with far better fluency than the average native speaker. Whereas the native speaker or writer needs to express only his own thoughts in his own language, the translator is expected to render in the target language any idea that anyone can formulate in any of the languages he translates.<sup>10</sup>

Above all else, a good translator is a good writer. It does not matter how much subject expertise or high-level foreign language reading skill a trans-

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**Instead of asking whether being bilingual by itself is enough to be a good translator, we should ask how important being bilingual is for a translator.**

---

U.S. must be culturally literate in the legal systems of different Spanish-speaking countries, for the most part civil law systems, in contrast to the common law system of the U.S.

Even when there is an acceptable level of bilingualism on the part of the interpreter or high-level reading skills on the part of the translator, along with the development of bicultural competencies and inter-language communication skills, the professional skills of translation and interpreting (including technical skills) still have to be developed. For the translator, the most important professional skill is to be able to write well in the target language.

Aside from the obvious requirement that the translator be able to read and understand the source language, the most important prerequisite is the ability to write the

lator has if the translator cannot express the message well in the target language. We could say that just as an acceptable level of bilingualism is a basic requirement and a starting point for an interpreter, an acceptable level of writing skill in the target language is a basic requirement and a starting point for a translator.

### A Starting Point

Being bilingual is not enough. For interpreters, bilingualism is a start and a requisite skill, but by itself, bilingualism is not enough for interpreters to be good interpreters. For translators, bilingualism is helpful. For one thing, it enables translators to communicate better with direct clients who may be reluctant to entrust a job to a translator who cannot speak their language.<sup>11</sup> However, it is not a requisite skill and its importance is far overshadowed by the importance of



# For more information

## “Professional Language Translators”

by Roger Chriss (Kwintessential Cross Cultural Solutions) [www.kwintessential.co.uk/translation/articles/professional-language-translators.html](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/translation/articles/professional-language-translators.html)

## “Preserving Your Words in Translation”

by Jennifer Hutchins  
[www.writing-world.com/international/hutchins.shtml](http://www.writing-world.com/international/hutchins.shtml)

## Merriam-Webster OnLine Search

<http://mw4.m-w.com/dictionary/bilingual>

## U.S. Department of State

<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/geography/glossary.htm>

having a combination of subject area expertise, high-level reading skills in the source language, and excellent writing skills in the target language.

### Notes

1. Chriss, Roger. “Professional Language Translators” (Kwintessential Cross Cultural Solutions), [www.kwintessential.co.uk/translation/articles/professional-language-translators.html](http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/translation/articles/professional-language-translators.html).
2. Hutchins, Jennifer. “Preserving Your Words in Translation,” [www.writing-world.com/international/hutchins.shtml](http://www.writing-world.com/international/hutchins.shtml).
3. *Merriam-Webster OnLine Search*, <http://mw4.m-w.com/dictionary/bilingual>.
4. U.S. Department of State, <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/geography/glossary.htm>.
5. Thiery, Christopher. “True Bilingualism and Second Language Learning,” quoted in Burce, Kaya. “The Role of Bilingualism in Translation Activity.” *Translation Journal* (January 2007).
6. For instance, Lam discusses bilingualism as “competence and communication **in** two languages [emphasis added] (93).” Lam, Agnes. “Bilingualism,” in *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*. Edited by R. Carter and D. Nunan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 93-100.
7. Conference interpreters who primarily interpret from their second acquired language (L2) to their first language (L1) probably fall somewhere between bilateral interpreters and translators. That is, they primarily need to understand spoken L2 in order to be able to produce spoken L1.
8. Tinsley, Royal L., Jr. “Translation as a Career Option for Foreign Language Majors,” [www.mla.org/udfl/bulletin/V07N4/074025.htm](http://www.mla.org/udfl/bulletin/V07N4/074025.htm), quoted in Wanwei, Wu. “Productive Bilingualism and Translator Education,” [www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive\\_bilingualism3.shtml](http://www.translation-services-usa.com/articles/productive_bilingualism3.shtml).
9. This is my paraphrase of a statement made by ATA President-elect Nicholas Hartmann during a conference session I presented at the 2008 Annual Education Symposium of the Mid-America Chapter of ATA at Southern Nazarene University, March 29, 2008.
10. Tinsley, op. cit.
11. McKay, Corinne. “Keeping Up Your Source Language Skills,” <http://thoughtsontranslation.com/2008/04/01/keeping-up-your-source-language-skills>.

*ata*



# IntelliWebSearch: A Configurable Search Tool for Translators

*By Naomi J. Sutcliffe de Moraes*

**IntelliWebSearch**, a small AutoHotKey script created by Italian into English translator Mike Farrell, can be downloaded for free at [www.intelliwebsearch.com](http://www.intelliwebsearch.com). This terminology search tool is designed to save time when browsing the Web, and it works on Windows XP, NT+SP6, 2000, and Vista. (See the last section of this article for alternatives for other operating systems.)

## IntelliWebSearch Search Options

IntelliWebSearch must be installed on your hard drive and be configured to search the sites or dictionaries you use. If you configure it to load when your PC is booted, it will sit in your system tray waiting to be called through preconfigured key combinations.

Searches can be performed in two ways.

1. A shortcut key combination (CTRL+ALT+B by default) copies the text highlighted in any Windows application and sends it to the IntelliWebSearch window, as shown in Figure 1 on page 27. The text in the search field can be modified by the user and is sent to the desired search site by clicking on one of the labeled buttons or by using the Alt key plus the number assigned to the search. There are 5 groups of 10 configured searches, for a total of 50 possible searches.
2. A special shortcut can be created for each individual search. Using it will let you bypass the IntelliWebSearch search window and send the selected string directly to the search engine.

There is also one preset search, called PluriSearch, which can search more than one site at the same time.

**Figure 1: IntelliWebSearch Search Window**



One feature that is new in the latest version of IntelliWebSearch is the ability to search dictionaries installed on your hard drive. How the program does this is beyond the scope of this review, but the documentation provides guidance. If you use the program dtSearch, IntelliWebSearch can interact with it, and a preset search for dtSearch is included as one of the sample searches.

### Configuration of Internet Searches

The program provides a list of sample searches for different languages, but in order to make the tool useful for your language combinations you will need to add the searches you use most often. One of the recent improvements in IntelliWebSearch is a Wizard that guides you through the search setup process and does some processing

behind the scenes. Figure 2 on page 28 shows the Search Setup Wizard's first screen.

After you provide this information, the program opens your default browser and tries to run a search based on the data entered. Figure 3 on page 29 shows the next step, where you must place your cursor in the search field of the site. IntelliWebSearch does the rest.

In some cases, the Wizard does not work because of how a site is coded, but if you understand how it works you can configure searches manually without the Wizard. For example, search engines, online dictionaries, and online encyclopedias use one of two methods to submit the search terms you input: GET or POST. It is very easy to tell which method is used. With the GET method, the search terms are visible somewhere in the result page address string (URL). If the POST method is used, they are hidden. Let's take the *Alexandria Multilingual Dictionary* in Figure 4 on page 29 as an example.

The first step is to set the source and target languages, enter a search term (*contato* in Figure 4), and click on OK. The result of the search is not shown in Figure 4 because right now we are only interested in the URL (the address shown in the field just under the menus at the top of the window). In this case, the URL is:

<http://synoniemen.net/alexandria.php?word=contato&submit=OK&source=pt&target=en>

To set up a general search in IntelliWebSearch, we need to separate out the part of the URL address that appears before the search word (shown in blue above) and the part after the search word (shown in green



above). This process is shown in Figure 5 on page 30.

The example in Figure 5 was for a search engine using the GET method. Searches using the POST method are a little more complicated to configure manually, but IntelliWebSearch's configuration Wizard also works for

to other copies of IntelliWebSearch on other computers, so your work is not lost.

### An Alternative to IntelliWebSearch for All Operating Systems

I think the program is very good, and many people will find it extremely

pected ways. (See my article in the February 2008 issue for information on how to change the layout of your keyboard to increase typing speed and decrease wrist pain.)

Another small limitation of the program is that you can choose searches one by one or you can choose one preset group of searches. I have several different search approaches that require different sets or types of searches:

1. **The “what the heck does that mean” method:** I encounter an unfamiliar Portuguese word or term and I check monolingual online Portuguese dictionaries to find a definition that fits my context.
2. **The “guess and check” method:** I guess what the term is in English and then check several monolingual English online dictionaries to see if the definition matches the Portuguese definition of my source word. When the term is medical, I use the same method, but I look in medical or pharmaceutical sources.
3. **The “find translation” method:** I look in several bilingual online dictionaries to see if a standard translation of a term exists, or to find alternative translations that might fit my context.
4. **The “find usage” method:** I look for how a word is used in search engines and online corpora to see what words go with the word in question.
5. **The “find legislation” method:** I look for specific legislation to check wording or definitions of terms.

## One feature that is new in the latest version of IntelliWebSearch is the ability to search dictionaries installed on your hard drive.

POST sites. The documentation available on the IntelliWebSearch site explains how to configure POST searches by hand.

After your searches are set up you can export them and then import them

useful, especially if they use Windows XP or Vista. I have some problems with the underlying AutoHotKey program and my modified keyboard. Basically, AutoHotKey does not work well with remapped keyboards or acts in unex-

Figure 2: Search Setup Wizard—Step 1



Figure 3: Search Setup Wizard—Step 2



Figure 4: Alexandria Multilingual Dictionary Screen After a Search

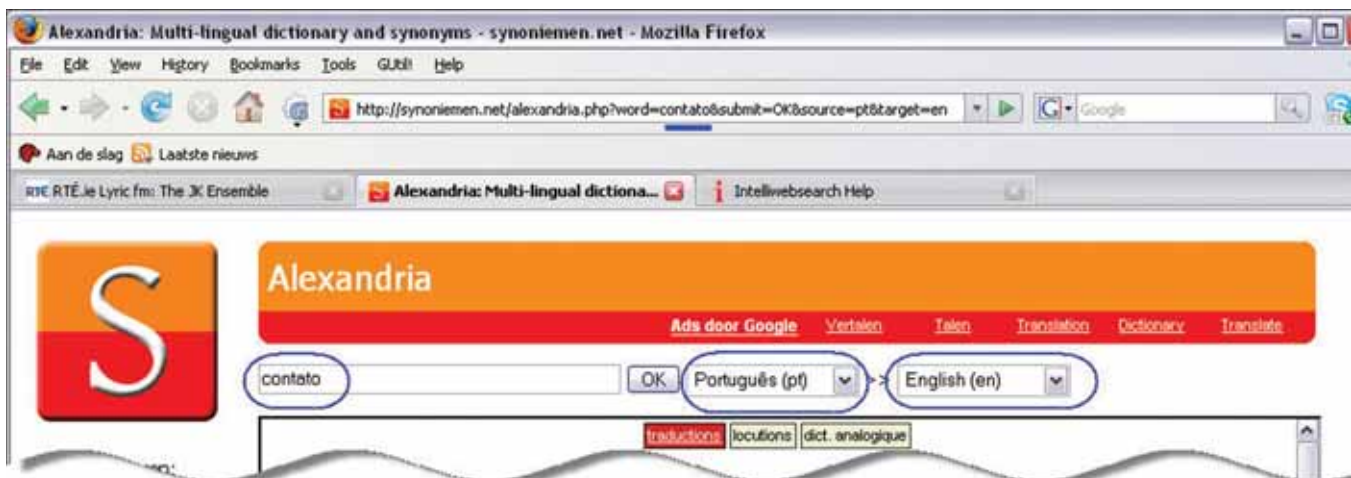
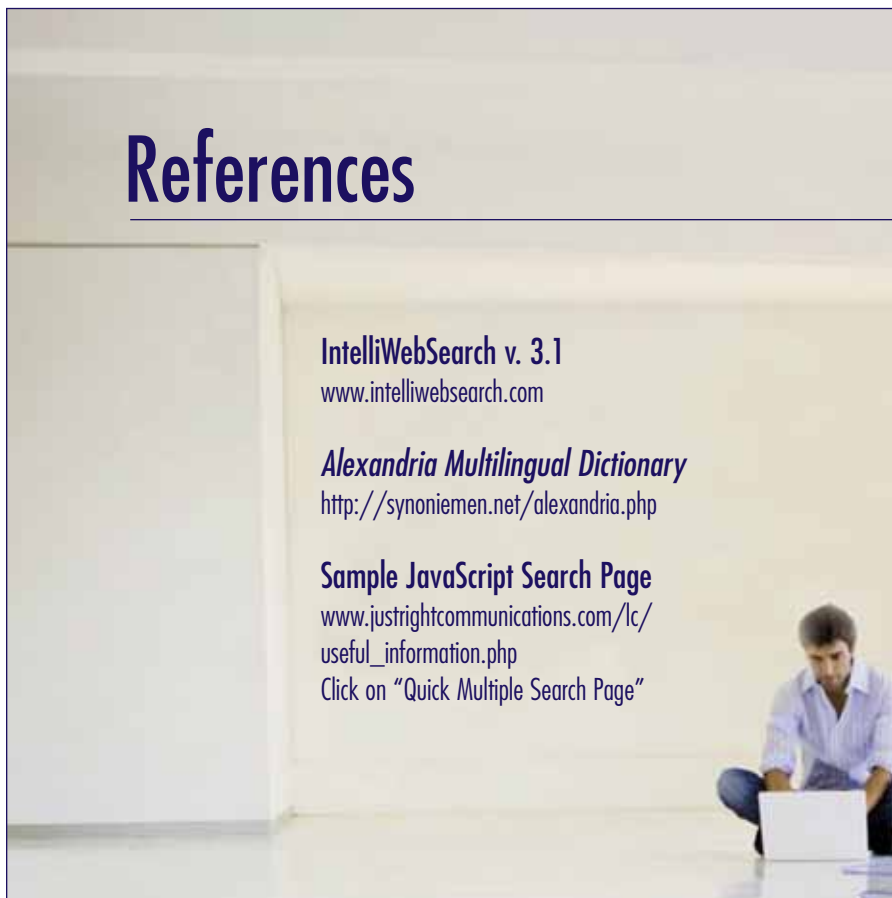
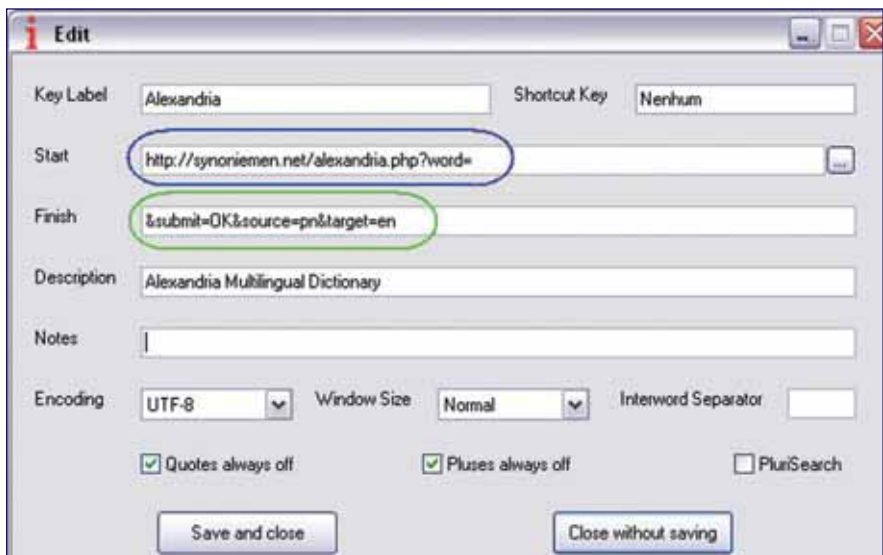


Figure 5: IntelliWebSearch Edit Window



6. The “matching image” method: I do an image search using Google to make sure the target term I want to use matches the source term. This is good for everyday items and for engineering components.

I have a search page I created over a year ago in JavaScript, based on the same concepts as IntelliWebSearch, but with the different searches available as check boxes in a Web page. (See the Sample JavaScript Search Page in the references.) Just fill in the search term, check the boxes corresponding to the various searches you want to perform, and click on Search. Each search is performed simultaneously in a different window so you can click through them to see which results are useful. The sample page listed in the references is for my language combination, Portuguese-English, but readers who are familiar with JavaScript (or any programming language, since JavaScript is not hard to learn) can download the page, alter the code slightly, add their favorite sites, and have a personalized search engine. Needless to say, this involves much more work than using IntelliWebSearch, but I wanted to provide an alternative for readers who cannot use the program for one reason or another. IntelliWebSearch could actually be used in conjunction with a JavaScript page similar to that shown in the sample page I created by sending a search string directly to it using a keyboard shortcut.

I would like to thank Mike Farrell for his contribution to the translator community with his excellent, well documented program.

*ata*

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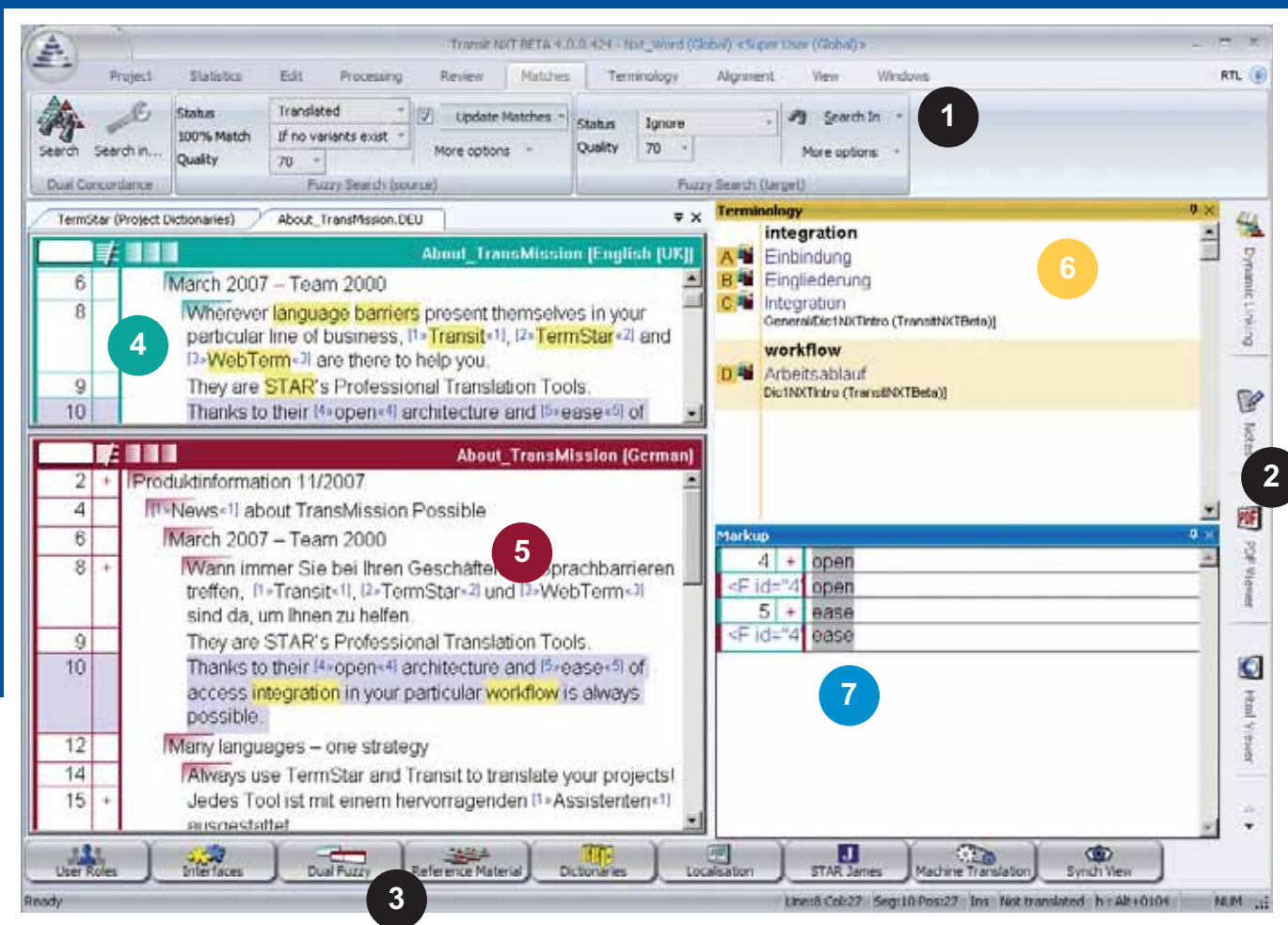
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# ATA in the Nation's Capital

*By Barbara  
Oldroyd*

**ATA's Government** Seminar, held April 5-6 at the L'Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC, drew more than 100 attendees, some from as far away as Puerto Rico and Brazil! The seminar targeted translators and interpreters seeking advanced-level continuing education. Featuring eight in-depth presentations and 12 speakers, the weekend was packed with information about career opportunities and training requirements for interpreters and translators hoping to find work with the federal government. The event also provided opportunities to network during coffee breaks, over lunch, at the Job Marketplace, and at the Saturday night networking session. There is simply not enough space to cover all the excellent material presented to attendees during this intense two-day event, but if the highlights that follow pique your curiosity, you can always peruse some of the links provided in this article for more information.

## **Promoting Excellence in Language Services**

No matter what your role in the language profession may be—staffer or freelancer, translator or interpreter, linguist or project manager—your career should be spent in the pursuit of excellence. How does the U.S. government achieve professional excellence through recruiting, testing, and training, as well as in the actual delivery of services? How does it reconcile the need for excellence in language work with the realities of the assignments it handles?

## **The Department of State's Office of Language Services**

The U.S. Department of State's Office of Language Services (LS) has been providing answers to the questions above for over 200 years, and



the three LS panelists to take the podium for the first session certainly did not disappoint their audience.

**Translating Division:** Joseph Mazza, the chief of the State Department's Translating Division, emphasized that at the State Department, the world watches what you translate. Translators and interpreters spend entire careers preparing themselves for important moments, knowing that their work will be scrutinized not only at the time, but also later by historians and policymakers. In spite of tight deadlines and many nerve-wracking moments, Mazza feels that the work is extremely rewarding.

To illustrate the urgency with which State Department documents must often be translated and the work environment for doing so, Mazza provided attendees with a brief communication from a Minister of Foreign Affairs written during World War I, and asked us to translate it into English. With visuals, he transported us back in time to 1914 (when sophisticated translation tools did not yet exist), and although we were permitted to consult with colleagues, our

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## At the State Department, the world watches what you translate.


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only language tool was a limited vocabulary list. During the few minutes we were given to complete the task, Mazza interrupted several times to remind us of the impending deadline. The exercise certainly impressed upon us the importance of the work that has been undertaken by generations of State Department linguists, and we were ready to learn more about its current activities.

Today, the Translating Division can handle almost every language used in international diplomacy, but regularly deals with more than 100 language pairs, the highest volume being into Spanish and into Arabic. Duties include translating, reviewing, writing short and in-depth summaries, transcribing, and comparing and certifying treaty texts. Text types range from treaties and other international agreements, laws and regulations, VIP

correspondence, speeches, policy statements, reports, vital records, and court records, to foreign-language mail from private citizens. (One unusual translation request involved a quilt embroidered in Arabic!)

Striving to provide excellence in human resources, the Translating Division devotes considerable time to the continuous cycle of needs analysis and recruiting, testing, contracting, training, and maintaining its resources. High standards are required throughout the workflow cycle, including project management, translation, reviewing, and incorporating feedback and lessons learned.

Mazza gave an overview of the LS translation test and some tips. Applicants can prepare for the exam by reading current foreign language texts as often as possible, staying abreast of national and international current 

events, translating as much as possible, finding a mentor, and reviewing style and usage rules in their target language. Mazza mentioned that common mistakes on the exam include mis-translating and/or omitting text, slavishly adhering to the original, following the source text punctuation

inferior work, skill testing must yield quantifiable measurements and the government must demand quality from its contractors up front. There have also been discussions among federal departments and agencies participating at meetings of the Interagency Language Roundtable about using

conference interpreting in that direct interaction with the listeners is permitted if clarification is required. English-language officers assist with travel, logistics, and cultural adaptation for participants in various visitors programs who speak some English. Assignments range from three to six weeks.

Recruiting, testing, and assessing interpreters is a time-consuming and ongoing process. Fallow gave some additional information and advice about interpreter testing, explaining that applicants are tested for linguistic ability, public speaking skills, general background knowledge, cross-cultural empathy/understanding, and personal/political adroitness. The best way to prepare for the test, he said, is to practice interpreting every chance you get and to read, read, read.

---

## The best way to prepare for an interpreting test is to read, read, read.

---

rather than the rules of the target language, and failing to proofread.

Mazza closed his presentation by asking us not to forget the reason many of us chose to work with languages in the first place—our love of words, language, and another culture.

**Procurement/Performance Standards:** Brenda Sprague, the director of the State Department's Office of Language Services, spoke about the State Department's and attendees' shared commitment to professionalism and excellence. She also discussed the procurement policy and quality/performance standards.

Sprague explained that the government has various requirements to obtain language support, but sometimes the agencies procuring the services have difficulty defining those requirements or knowing how to fill them. The LS office has a relatively small in-house staff, so it uses mostly subcontractors to meet its needs. As such, quality assurance is a constant area of concern, since there are always people who promise to deliver anything and are willing to work for nothing. To guard against receiving

translation memory and other tools to maintain quality and consistency.

In terms of the procedure for evaluating the qualifications of its applicants, Sprague described the State Department's interpreting test. First, a screening test, including an assessment of U.S.-related knowledge, is conducted over the telephone. If the applicant passes this test, a consecutive interpreting test is given by a video presenter and taped for evaluation later.

**Interpreter Assigning Unit:** Marc Fallow, chief of the Interpreter Assigning Unit, oversees assigning interpreters in some 50 languages to a variety of U.S. government-sponsored programs. The languages needed most frequently are Arabic, Russian, Spanish, French, and Chinese.

Conference-level consecutive and simultaneous interpreting services are provided for public diplomacy assignments. Both consecutive (formerly "escort") and simultaneous seminar interpreting are provided for public diplomacy assignments involving foreign visitors to the U.S. Although seminar interpreting is conducted in the simultaneous mode, it differs from

### Translating and Interpreting for the Federal Bureau of Investigation

Margaret Gulotta, the chief of Language Services at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the bureau's senior language authority, gave attendees a glimpse into the FBI's Foreign Language Program.

Critical to the FBI's success in protecting national security is its ability to prioritize, translate, and understand in a timely fashion the information to which it has access. In this regard, the Foreign Language Program's support to the FBI's law enforcement function is substantial. In addition to supporting the FBI's two highest priorities of counterterrorism and counterintelligence, increasing demands have been placed on the Foreign Language Program to support the FBI's criminal and cyber-crimes programs, international training, international deployments, and interpreting/interviewing assignments.

Linguists are the first line of analysis for information collected in a

language other than English. Approximately 100 languages are covered in the program, and the volume of work is extremely high. More than 1.5 million pages of text on a wide variety of topics are translated annually, and unrealistic deadlines are the norm. All text is reviewed for its intelligence value, and significant materials are then summarized. Since 98% of the work is classified, the majority of work is done onsite for security reasons.

There is a strong quality control system in place. To ensure consistency and accuracy, a manual of translation standards has been created for internal use, and everything that is translated into a foreign language is reviewed. Additionally, the program is under continuous internal supervision, as well as external supervision by the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, and the U.S. Congress.

Besides translating documents, the FBI also reviews approximately 2,000 hours of audio material per day. In FY 2007, FBI linguists spent more than 22,000 hours doing simultaneous/consecutive interpreting. The FBI also receives many unsolicited requests, including one involving a “suspicious” cassette tape that was turned over to the New York Police Department after being found in Grand Central Station.

Linguists can apply for employee positions as special agent linguists or for contractor positions as contract linguists, language monitors, or testers. Those who pass the initial screening then take the foreign language test battery—a combination of listening and reading comprehension tests, translation or English composition tests, and speaking tests. Components vary depending on the position being applied for and the languages involved. In

addition, thorough background investigations are conducted. The FBI’s standards are very high: of the approximately 10,000 language tests administered per year, the FBI hires only one out of 10 applicants.

### **Translating for the National Virtual Translation Center**

Jeffrey Robinson, the director of the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC), discussed the organization’s mission and possible job opportunities.

Established by law in 2003 under the U.S. Patriot Act and the Intelligence Authorization Act for the purpose of providing timely and accurate translations of foreign intelligence, the NVTC’s goal is to augment existing government translation capabilities by:

- Acting as a clearinghouse for facilitating interagency use of translators.
- Partnering with elements of the U.S. government, academia, and private industry to identify translator resources and engage their services.
- Building a nationwide team of highly qualified, motivated linguists and translators connected virtually to the program office in Washington, DC.
- Applying state-of-the-art technology to maximize translator efficiency.

The NVTC is a virtual workplace, which means that personnel and linguists are located throughout the U.S. and connect via various networks into and out of the main program office to perform their work. There is a staff of 25 to 30 in the main headquarters program office in Washington, DC, in addition to some 500 vetted U.S. citizen independent contract linguists

(ICLs), and another 1,300 self-identified U.S.-based ICLs, all drawn from a wide range of resources. In addition to proficiency in a second language, linguists must also have subject matter expertise.

Those who work on classified materials receive their assignments via secure channels through arrangements with other government facilities. Linguists who work on unclassified projects can work from many different work sites (including home), provided they have sufficient connectivity and the necessary hardware and software to complete the job. Linguists work for the NVTC on a flexible, on-demand basis. Because the NVTC is Web-based, virtual translation allows linguists across the U.S. more flexibility and is cost-effective for the government.

The NVTC handles many types of requirements into and from English, 75% of which are unclassified. Classified information is handled by the NVTC ICLs who hold top-secret clearance. Languages and dialects used are driven by demand, and the workload is growing. The NVTC handled 23 jobs in 2003, and that number had risen to over 7,000 by 2007.

Robinson predicts that, in the future, translation will no longer be considered a commodity and translators will be called internationalists. The trend is toward hiring language analysts—people who have language capability and the ability to summarize and analyze content.

### **Interpreting for the Federal and State Courts**

James Plunkett is the foreign language court interpreter coordinator for the District of Columbia Superior Court. Plunkett explained that everything on the record in court must be interpreted, word-for-word, usu- ➤

ally simultaneously but sometimes consecutively. Occasionally, a court interpreter may be asked to do a

venues include: prosecutors' and public defenders' offices; mental health units; investigative, enforce-

included ways of finding work (contracts and full-time jobs) and letting the government know about your translation/interpreting work. Each of these was described in considerable detail, and DeCamp made navigating the systems seem a little less onerous. Several resources and suggestions from her presentation are provided below.

DeCamp also touched on the catch-22 regarding obtaining a security clearance: you cannot get a security clearance unless you do classified work, but you cannot do classified work unless you have a security clearance.

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## The federal government's post-9/11 critical language needs have been overwhelming, and it has been difficult for the language industry to meet the demand.

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verbal sight translation at the last minute (e.g., court forms, marriage certificates, etc.).

In addition to being fluent in both languages, interpreters must recognize and convey nuances, as well as be familiar with legalese and slang. Ideally, they should also be familiar with the case, the client's speech patterns, and any relevant names and numbers. Although the client's emotions need to be mirrored, Plunkett feels that if the client is very emotional it is best for interpreters to maintain a neutral tone to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

Interpreters should devise their own symbols for note-taking in the consecutive mode. When in the simultaneous mode, interpreters should resort to chunking or queuing (mentally storing) information for use during a pause. Plunkett emphasized that interpreters must acknowledge their limitations. In general, an interpreter's stamina drops drastically after interpreting for 30 minutes, which is why it is important to work with another interpreter who can take over when a break is necessary.

A court interpreter is not restricted to working in a court of law. Other

ment, probation, and court reporting offices; jails; and the offices of private companies. Interpreting can be done in person or over the telephone.

Federal Court Interpreter Certification is available in Spanish. Tests are given every other year and consist of a written portion (both languages, with multiple-choice questions) and an oral exam (five parts involving simulations). The oral test is difficult, and only 10% of applicants pass. Each state court has its own requirements, but most states participate in a consortium to allow certification reciprocity among states.

Plunkett considers court interpreting a service to society because it puts the limited English-proficient individuals in the courtroom on an equal footing from a language standpoint.

### Working with the Federal Government: Information Resources

Jennifer DeCamp, human language technology chief scientist for MITRE, a corporation with three federally funded research and development centers and a homeland security center, provided attendees with numerous resources related to translating and interpreting for the federal government. These resources

### Resources/Suggestions for Translation/Interpreting Opportunities with the Federal Government

#### American FactFinder

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

This is an interesting link for information about language demographics.

#### BuyUSA

[www.buyusa.com/page/mygtn/splash.asp](http://www.buyusa.com/page/mygtn/splash.asp)

#### Crump, Ted. *Translating and Interpreting in the Federal Government* (American Translators Association, 2001)

[www.atanet.org/kiosk/ATA\\_PubWare.pl](http://www.atanet.org/kiosk/ATA_PubWare.pl)

This book contains information on more than 70 organizations that employ translators and interpreters.

#### Federal Business Opportunities

[www.fedbizopps.gov](http://www.fedbizopps.gov)

This single procurement site replaced the *Commerce Business Daily*, and allows the user to search on active bids.



**Defense Security  
Cooperation Agency**

[www.dsca.mil](http://www.dsca.mil)

**Government Services Administration**

[www.gsa.gov/language](http://www.gsa.gov/language)

**International Trade Administration**

[www.commerce.gov/Services/DEV01\\_005463](http://www.commerce.gov/Services/DEV01_005463)

**Minority Business  
Development Center**

[www.mbda.gov](http://www.mbda.gov)

**MITRE's Foreign  
Language Resource Center**

<http://flrc.mitre.org>

**National Virtual Translation Center**

[www.nvtc.gov](http://www.nvtc.gov)

**North American Industry  
Classification System Code 541930  
for Translation and Interpretation**

[www.census.gov/epcd/ec97/def/541930.HTM](http://www.census.gov/epcd/ec97/def/541930.HTM)

The NAICS replaces Product/Service Classification (PSC) codes.

**Office of the Director of National  
Intelligence Technology Forum**

[www.techforum.odniflpo.tswg.gov](http://www.techforum.odniflpo.tswg.gov)

**Government Outsourcing  
Equals Opportunities**

I had never given much thought to what went on behind the scenes at the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) until this presentation by Flori Berrocal McClung, an international postal affairs specialist. I found it fascinating that so many different areas and departments collaborate to deliver the mail nationally and internationally.

McClung explained that the Universal Postal Union (UPU) is a specialized agency within the United Nations (UN). The USPS's Interna-

tional Postal Affairs (IPA) office works with postal counterparts of the 191 UPU member countries to set policy for smooth international mail delivery. The UPU's Congress meets every four years to set the world postal strategy for the next four-year cycle.

The UPU comprises the Council of Administration (CA), the Postal Operations Council (POC), and the International Bureau, which acts as a *secretariat* for the two councils. The councils have 40 member countries, each with numerous committees and work groups. Although not all member countries are on all committees, they can and do provide input at plenary sessions held twice a year. Headquartered in Bern, Switzerland, the UPU's official language is French; working languages include Arabic, English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian.

Anything related to international matters goes to IPA first before being forwarded to its intended destination. This includes official and unofficial correspondence from all over the world addressed to the postmaster general that needs to be translated. Other areas requiring translation and interpreting are the Visitors Program, which handles guests from postal-related organizations, and making official travel arrangements for USPS representatives participating in postal meetings. The USPS is also involved in training and capacity building to assist developing countries in bringing their postal systems up to date.

The international affairs office that coordinates an agency's participation in the relevant international organization to which it belongs may employ only one or a few in-house language specialists to handle the language needs that arise. They may have to outsource work for translation because the in-house specialists do not work in that specific language, because of a pressing deadline,

or simply because it is more efficient to do so. McClung included in her presentation the names of some other agencies that use language professionals in this sector:

- The Labor Department's Bureau of International Labor Affairs works with the International Labor Organization.
- The Commerce Department's International Trade Administration collaborates with the World Trade Organization.
- The Treasury Department has a large international affairs office and counterparts in many international organizations and agencies.
- The Department of Agriculture works with the Foreign Agricultural Service.
- Homeland Security Department experts work with the World Customs Organization and the UPU.
- The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative works with the World Trade Organization and the UPU.

**Maintaining Successful Client  
Relationships with U.S.  
Government Agencies**

When Muriel Jérôme-O'Keeffe, president of JTG inc., formed the company in 1991, she was surprised to discover that, in government circles, her translating expertise and ATA certification mattered less than she expected. This is because the world of procuring language services for the military and intelligence communities is a separate culture, with separate values and a separate lingo.

Jérôme-O'Keeffe, speaking as a language services provider, stated that a "culture clash" exists between ➡

the private sector and the federal government. For the former, a professional translator has a college degree and translates into his or her native language. Translation is a mirror image of the original. For the federal government, a college degree may not be required. The linguist translates in either or both directions, and “native” means a foreign-born person who is asked to translate into English. An acceptable translation is rated 2 to 3 on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale (lower than commercially acceptable).

The U.S. military has been training 2,000 linguists a year since World War II, and in general, having an in-depth knowledge of narrow categories of terminology has been sufficient. Most linguists have not been required to use these terms in sentences, paragraphs, or conversation, or to consider the cultural impact those words might have.

The federal government's post-9/11 critical language needs have been overwhelming, however, and unfortunately it has been difficult for the language industry to meet the demand. In response, translation companies have flooded the market, and large and small government and defense contractors have stepped in as well. Linguists whose level of expertise is lower than ATA standards are often assigned tasks they are not prepared to do. Companies can build on linguists' experience, though, by training them on ways of producing a better translation.

Sometimes, however, those in charge do not understand what the foreign language requirement entails. At times, because contractors need to support requests for individuals who know a second language but have little training in translation, those with a security clearance and knowledge of a second language are given prefer-

ence over those with a higher skill level but no clearance.

Decision makers must realize that translation is a highly specialized career and that professionals provide a “full context translation”—a value-added, quality product. Attendees also learned that a translator's ATA certification becomes more relevant when tied to ILR or Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) scores.

Jérôme-O'Keeffe has learned to speak the government's language. She says that giving customers what they want without lecturing or trying to “educate” them, responding with language they can understand, breaking down the requirements into manageable pieces of information and getting clarification on those requirements, and working together are all key to maintaining a successful customer relationship.

### Language Consulting at the Internal Revenue Service

Verónica Coon, John Vázquez, and Carmen Gómez—the consulting team providing onsite language technical assistance and advisory services to the Virtual Translation Office (VTO) of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)—gave the final presentation.

The VTO supports the Tax Forms and Publications Division, serving as a central office producing, reviewing, and managing official IRS translations of vital documents. Further, it facilitates compliance with Presidential Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, issued in August 2000. Some 70 tax documents have been translated into Spanish, and a limited number are in French. The VTO will produce documents in Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese in the future.

Verónica Coon provided an overview of the various language activities conducted daily to produce translations of tax documents. These range from translation and review workflow procedures to quality assurance, terminology management, and the promotion of cutting-edge language technologies.

John Vázquez explained that the workflow process involves a program manager, a translation coordinator/translator, four bilingual tax law specialists (who translate the documents), a reviewer, a tax analyst, and the language consulting team (who do additional quality assurance). Teams of two always work together comparing the original document to its translation. Vázquez also explained that for legal, not linguistic, reasons there are two versions of some Spanish documents. There is one document for Puerto Rico and another for other Spanish-speaking people in the Continental U.S., since tax laws in some instances are different for Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories. (The Puerto Rican versions have been localized.)

Coon then spoke about the various technologies the team uses. These include Idiom's WorldServer 9.0 (which includes translation memory and an extensive terminology database), as well as SGML/XML authoring tools, document repositories, and network programs such as Sharepoint. She explained that text can be changed for stylistic reasons or because of a tax law change, but the high level of accountability requires that all text revisions be documented on paper, indicating what change was made and why.

Carmen Gómez spoke last, describing some of the challenges the team has encountered along the way. Topics discussed included the learning curve and the trial-and-error

## Check These Out!

**Executive Order 13166**  
"Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency"  
[www.LEP.gov](http://www.LEP.gov)

**Federal Bureau of Investigation**  
[www.fbi.gov/employment/employ.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/employment/employ.htm)

**Federal Bureau of Investigation Foreign Language Program**  
[www.fas.org/irp/agency/doj/oig/translation.pdf](http://www.fas.org/irp/agency/doj/oig/translation.pdf)

**Federal Court Interpreter Program**  
[www.uscourts.gov/interpretprog/interp\\_prog.html](http://www.uscourts.gov/interpretprog/interp_prog.html)

**JTG inc.**  
[www.jtg-inc.com/JTGEmployment.html](http://www.jtg-inc.com/JTGEmployment.html)

**Interagency Language Roundtable**  
[www.govtilr.org](http://www.govtilr.org)

**Internal Revenue Service**  
[www.jobs.irs.gov/home.html](http://www.jobs.irs.gov/home.html)

**MITRE**  
[www.mitre.org/employment/index.html](http://www.mitre.org/employment/index.html)

**National Virtual Translation Center**  
[www.nvtc.gov/employment.html](http://www.nvtc.gov/employment.html)

**USAJOBS**  
[www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov)

**U.S. Department of State Careers**  
[www.careers.state.gov](http://www.careers.state.gov)

**U.S. Department of State Office of Language Services**  
[www.oig.state.gov/documents/organization/72300.pdf](http://www.oig.state.gov/documents/organization/72300.pdf)

**U.S. Postal Service**  
[www.usps.com/employment](http://www.usps.com/employment)

steps that take place as new technologies are learned; regrouping to reassess a procedure if the results are unsuccessful (e.g., alignment of documents with a translation memory tool); and overcoming workflow procedures as in-house employees and outside consultants merge activities to work together. Gómez explained that using WorldServer has presented its own challenges, but that the newer version of the Web-based software has more capabilities for tracking changes electronically. WorldServer also provides a way of recording and

managing vendor/project actions while allowing work to be done in a virtual environment.

The VTO team has accomplished a lot in two and a half years. It has built capacity, created style guidelines, streamlined workflow, improved the use of language technologies, and conducted more in-depth research of terminology. The team has achieved the level of trust and collaboration needed for success and balance between the two very different worlds of taxes and translation.

### Learning

Seminar attendees received an abundance of useful information covering many different areas. Attendees were also given several opportunities to talk individually with the speakers about their presentations and their work. The insight gained from experts in their respective fields proved invaluable for all those who attended.

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**For additional information: [www.atanet.org/creditunion.php](http://www.atanet.org/creditunion.php)**



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## Business Smarts

## Cultivating Clients

### Comments?

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

**Not every** project offer is equally attractive, and business owners are well advised to be selective among the project offers they receive. This is the best way to ensure that work continues to be interesting, rewarding, and open to further growth.

### Dear Business Smarts,

Recently, I have been receiving many requests to lower my regular rates for specific projects. One agency wrote: "Also, as we are working on a budget, do you think you could lower your rate to xx per word?" What if I went into a grocery store, loaded up a cart, and then asked for a discount because I "am working on a budget?"

Is it not an agency's job to calculate a budget that will allow for covering all the work phases involved?

*No Discount*

### Dear No Discount,

While we understand your dismay at the request for a discount, negotiations are very much a part of doing business. In the U.S., we tend to accept prices without question, but

this attitude is changing. According to a *Consumer Reports* survey of 2,167 people in November 2007, "90% of those who haggled over furniture, electronics, appliances, and even medical bills had received a lower price on at least one purchase in the last three years."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the strategy of asking for discounts seems to be successful, and the "budget" that is being mentioned probably allows for full coverage of everyone's work and the owner's profit, or else it would not be worth anyone's time.

That being said, you are under no obligation whatsoever to grant a discount for the work you provide, particularly if the company is offering no special benefits in return. Remember that you are not selling groceries. You are being asked to provide a specialized service for which you have developed, based on your own criteria, a particular price. If a potential customer offers you less than that price, you can simply decline it without spending any more time on the matter. Moreover, it is actually a much better strategy to pick and choose among the

project offers you receive. It is a common misperception among small business owners that you have to accept whatever work comes along. While this may be true in the initial phase of establishing your practice, a business owner should become increasingly selective over time. Do not be afraid to turn down work that looks boring or tedious, especially if that response makes you available for new and more exciting material. The same applies to projects offered under unappealing conditions, such as expectations of discounts, long payment terms, or poor project management. Instead of stewing over offers that do not seem respectful of your professional expertise, cultivate a group of clients who are glad to place their projects with you and appreciate the value you provide.

### Note

<sup>1</sup> As reported in *The New York Times* on January 19, 2008 ([www.nytimes.com/2008/01/19/business/smallbusiness/19shortcuts.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/19/business/smallbusiness/19shortcuts.html)).

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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](mailto:businesspractices@atanet.org). Questions must be accompanied by a complete name and address, but will be published anonymously or pseudonymously upon request.*



## Scam Alert Websites

Federal Bureau of Investigation/  
National White Collar  
Crime Center  
The Internet Crime  
Complaint Center  
[www.ic3.gov](http://www.ic3.gov)

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



## GeekSpeak

Jost Zetzsche

jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com

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

## A Maze of TEnTs

### Mazes of tents?

Of course, I am not talking about tents made of fabric, poles, ropes, and pegs. Instead, I am referring to translation environment tools (TEnTs). As the name suggests, these TEnTs provide translators with an environment that allows them to work productively. This environment includes a translation memory and a terminology database, but it also provides features for quality assurance, spell-checking, workflow management, project management, analysis, support for complex file formats, and so forth. Anyone who has even glanced into the market of commercially available TEnTs will know about tools like Trados, Star Transit, Déjà Vu, and across, and it would be hard enough to make a choice among those. However, it becomes exponentially harder when you look more closely and find more than a dozen tools!

What can be done to find your way through this labyrinth of tools? Buy several or all the more common ones, or just use what your clients use? Maybe. But we are in an interesting age for tools. Surprisingly, we are observing the quasi-monopolization of TEnTs grinding into reverse (there truly is a greater variety of tools being used by all segments of our industry). At the same time, exchange formats (TMX for translation memories, TBX for terminology databases, XLIFF for translation files, and even Trados .ttx and bilingual RTF files) have made it possible to work together while still using separate tools.

Choices, choices! Here are a few strategies that may help you make a good choice for one (or maybe several) of the tools.

First, look at the differentiators and how they relate to you. There are many distinguishing characteristics, including price, availability of translated user interfaces and documentation into your

preferred language, or the familiarity of the translation interface. For me, however, these proved to be secondary concerns. It was the following ones that finally helped me select my preferred tool:

- **Supported operating system:** This criterion used to be “hushed over” because there were hardly any non-Windows tools, but things have changed on that front.
- **Supported file formats:** This factor is obsolete if you work only in the more common file formats that are supported by virtually all the tools (MS Office, HTML, or XML). However, it is essential to consider if you work with text in formats such as Quark or InDesign or database content.
- **Exchange formats:** Exactly what exchange formats are supported? Do they match those used by your colleagues or clients?
- **Processing mode:** Does the tool process files on a one-by-one basis or in a batch mode (many files at once)? What is your preferred mode?
- **Support:** What kind of support does the vendor provide and how much does it cost? What kind of support does the user community provide?

While we are talking about user community support, another strategy is to ask colleagues or go to the user groups. User groups for most tools can be found on Yahoo! Groups. Just type in the name of the tool at [www.groups.yahoo.com](http://www.groups.yahoo.com) and you will find a link to the group. Do not look only for the experienced users in those groups, but check out the newbies as well and try to find out how their needs are being met.

Also, most tool vendors offer freely downloadable trial versions of their programs, some of which have a limited time use and others a limited functionality. This can be a good step to take if you have already narrowed your choice down to only two or three tools and now really want to dig in and find out about the ins and outs of those tools. Do not attempt this step too early, though. Trying to download, install, and test 15 different tools may very well cause you to lose your mind!

And then there are two ways that are both close to my heart.

Every year at ATA’s Annual Conference, there is a Tools Forum, where many of the tool vendors have a chance to demonstrate and introduce their tools and be exposed to critical questions. You can always continue to ask additional questions after the Forum or see more demos in the Exhibit Hall area.

The second is a website ([www.translatorstraining.com](http://www.translatorstraining.com)) that presents Flash-based demos of the 15 most common TEnTs (full disclosure: I am part owner of the site). In the videos—which were prepared by the tool vendors themselves and edited and narrated by us—every tool is shown processing the same file according to the same “script,” making them very easy to compare. Most recently, we have also added videos that show how some of the tools work with TMX files and bilingual files that were prepared in Trados.

These are some good ways to find out which tool suits your needs. The most important thing is to go out and start using one. Do not let yourself be dazzled by the maze. Use some of the road signs I have just outlined and you will find your way out in no time.

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## Dictionary Review

Compiled by

**Peter A. Gergay**

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### **Lääketieteen termit [Medical Terms], 5th edition**

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**Specialty/field:**

Medicine and allied basic sciences, dentistry, pharmacology, veterinary medicine

**Languages:**

Finnish into Swedish, English, Latin

**Reviewed by:**

Anja Miller

**This Finnish** medical dictionary, compiled by expert members of Duodecim, the Finnish Medical Association, is my standard working tool. The fifth revised edition has been much expanded and improved. Here are a few highlights:

- **Appendices:** Glossaries in English, Swedish, and Latin, with an overview of Latin grammar.
- **Type and quality of binding:** Glossy persimmon hard cover, solid “shelf-size.”
- **Quality of paper and print:** Good.
- **Typeface and legibility:** Good. Font varied by language and function.
- **Arrangement or format:** Traditional two-column pages.
- **Convenience of look-up:** Average. English and Swedish glossaries marked with shaded page edges.
- **Grammatical information; pronunciation:** Thorough. A total of 50 experts in various specialties listed as consultants to the editorial board.

### **Content**

Looking at this work, I wondered how it might also help translators who have little or no knowledge of Finnish. Until now, the main access to Finnish medical terminology from other languages has been the multilingual dictionary *Lääketieteen sanakirja*, edited by Niilo Pesonen, the last edition of which was published in 1987. *Lääketieteen sanakirja*'s main language is Latin, with each entry rendered in English, German, French, Swedish, and Finnish. As we all know, Latin still is the *lingua franca* of medicine. Even in Finland today, death certificates must give the cause of death in both Finnish and Latin.

Now the editors of Duodecim's latest Finnish-based dictionary, while continuing their strong emphasis on

maintaining and developing correct native Finnish medical nomenclature, have taken a major new step toward helping the world understand Finnish medical terms. By providing glossaries not only in Latin, but in English and Swedish as well, they make this latest edition as universally usable as *Lääketieteen sanakirja*. The entries in English include both British and U.S. equivalents. Where they may differ, American terms derived from Dorland's and Stedman's dictionaries are preferred. The Latin terms come from *Terminologia Anatomica*, and the Latin glossary is preceded by a good overview of Latin grammar.

Since the 1980s, another feature of Duodecim's work with each edition of the association's dictionary, in keeping with its counterparts in most Western countries, has been to include explanations with entries.

There are few other Finnish-based dictionaries in the health field except for a limited volume on nursing, one on medical writing, and some specialist and online glossaries. This Duodecim dictionary has been, is, and will continue to be the authority *par excellence*. The volume seems to be as up to date as is possible in today's rapidly changing world of applied life sciences. Every attempt has clearly been made to include the latest disease and treatment terminology as well as their explanations. Examples of new entries that have been added to the English index include:

Challenge test/infection  
Clinician  
Ligament  
Popliteal  
Tortuous [vasculature]  
Transdermal patch

The editors' deliberate decision to exclude numerous diseases with per-



sonal names is defensible. However, diseases such as Creutzfeldt-Jacob and non-Hodgkin's should have been included. Another understandable editorial decision was limiting etymological explanations to essential meanings (such as organs) as well as excluding complete linguistic derivations. In previous editions, a helpful traditional reference was a section of multicolored drawings of all body systems and their parts, but it was left out of this edition.

A couple of drawbacks may be worth mentioning. As the listed examples of missing entries indicate, this dictionary prefers professional terms over everyday patient language. Some colloquial and even slang expressions for certain disorders could conceivably have been included. Examples of entries that cannot be found in the

English index include:

Admission [to hospital]  
Antiplatelet  
Bird flu  
Cachet [capsule]  
CPR  
Dieresis  
Discomfort  
Exsanguination  
Extremities  
Hives  
Hospitalization  
Morgellons [also missing in Finnish]  
Patency  
Profuse  
Rash

### Overall Evaluation

At least in the humble opinion of this translator, a sizable component of medical language still missing from

this work is terminology connected with medical devices and equipment as well as their handling. As we know from our work as translators, in today's marketplace the majority of our medical assignments deal with traditional and new instruments and their parts, as well as procedures for their use, whether in the operating room or in general patient care. Regrettably, this commendable volume does not fulfill the urgent need for such a resource. Even so, this dictionary is one tool I would never do without.

*ata*

**Anja Miller** has been an independent translator since 1989 (ATA-certified English↔Finnish). She was active in establishing Finnish as one of the first languages of limited diffusion in ATA's Certification Program. Contact: [anjakmiller@cs.com](mailto:anjakmiller@cs.com).

## Do You Remember?



## ATA's 50th Anniversary History Project

### The year was 1959.

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

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

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

## Member News

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

- Elected to the board of directors of the Association of Language Companies ([www.alcus.org](http://www.alcus.org)): **Marla Schulman, Schreiber Translations, Inc.** (President); **Sandy Dupleich, Dynamic Language Center** (Vice-president); **Craig A. Buckstein, Geneva Worldwide, Inc.** (Secretary); **David Smith, Lingualink Inc.** (Treasurer); **Steven Iverson, Iverson Language Associates, Inc.** (Director); **Elisabete Miranda, Translation Plus, Inc.** (Director); **Camilo Munoz, Translation Source** (Director); **Kristin Quinlan, Certified Languages International** (Director); **Jon Sommers, CyraCom** (Director).
- Elected to the board of directors of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators ([www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org)): **Isabel Frammer** (Chair); **Rosemary Dann** (Secretary); **Peter Lindquist** (Treasurer); **Lois Feuerle** (Director).
- Elected to the board of directors of the National Capital Area Chapter of ATA: **Kelly Gomes** (President); **Margarita Tobar** (Vice-president); **Marjon van den Bosch** (Treasurer); **Chari Voss** (Secretary); **Kenneth E. Palnau** (Certification Chair); **Maria Eugenia Kyburz-Ochoa** (Information Chair/Website).

*ata*



It's time to start **planning** for the **49<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
American Translators Association  
Orlando, Florida  
November 5 – 8, 2008

For more information and to register,  
see the *Preliminary Program*  
(enclosed with this issue of *The ATA Chronicle*).

Visit [www.atanet.org/conf/2008](http://www.atanet.org/conf/2008)  
for all the latest details!

## ATA Certification Exam Information

### Upcoming Exams

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#### California

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

#### Georgia

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

#### Utah

Salt Lake City  
September 20, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
September 5, 2008

#### Colorado

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

#### Massachusetts

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

#### Washington

Seattle  
August 24, 2008  
Registration Deadline:  
August 8, 2008

#### Florida

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

#### Tennessee

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

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

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## New ATA Certified Members

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

#### English into Russian

Dmitry Prokofyev  
*Washington, DC*

#### German into English

Michael W. Collins  
*Chapel Hill, NC*

#### Portuguese into English

Mary H. Swanson  
*Washington, DC*

#### Russian into English

Vanessa L. Bittner  
*Hermon, NY*

#### English into Spanish

Edward D. Palm  
*San Antonio, TX*

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## Active and Corresponding Membership Review

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

#### Active

Ursula M. Baker  
*Davenport, FL*

M. Cecilia Santamarina  
*Atlanta, GA*

Leonard F. van Zanten  
*Oxnard, CA*

Kelly A. Gomes  
*Washington, DC*

Helene Olsen Richards  
*Worley, ID*

#### Corresponding

Emercio Arenas  
*Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

Matteo Ippoliti  
*Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

Visit the ATA Calendar Online

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

for a more comprehensive look at upcoming events.

# Upcoming Events

## August 4-7, 2008

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

## August 17-29, 2008

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

## August 23, 2008

ATA Localization Seminar  
Seattle, WA  
[www.atanet.org/pd/localization](http://www.atanet.org/pd/localization)

## August 24-28, 2008

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

## September 11-13, 2008

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

## September 11-13, 2008

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

## September 12-14, 2008

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

## September 27-28, 2008

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

## October 10-12, 2008

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

## October 13-15, 2008

Global and Localization Association  
12th Localization World Conference  
Madison, WI  
[www.localizationworld.com](http://www.localizationworld.com)

## October 15-18, 2008

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

## October 23-25, 2008

American Medical Writers Association  
68th Annual Conference: Setting the Pace  
Louisville, KY  
[www.amwa.org](http://www.amwa.org)

## October 29-31, 2008

Languages and the Media  
7th International Conference and  
Exhibition  
Berlin, Germany  
[www.languages-media.com/index.php](http://www.languages-media.com/index.php)

## November 5-8, 2008

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

## December 27-30, 2008

Modern Language Association  
124th Annual Convention  
San Francisco, CA  
[www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)

**The El Paso** Interpreters and Translators Association (EPITA) was established in 1984 as a nonprofit association. From its inception, EPITA has promoted the continuing professional education of its members. In addition to speakers at its monthly meetings, for the past 11 years EPITA has held an annual Border Area Translation and Interpretation Workshop.

Membership is open to any individual engaged in interpreting, translating, or closely related work who desires to improve his or her skills and knowledge, or any individual who desires to support the association or has an interest in interpreting and translating.

## Quick Facts

- Established: 1984
- Website: [www.metroplexepita.org](http://www.metroplexepita.org)
- E-mail: Rosa Alva Garcia (mrsrag1981@msn.com)
- Telephone: (915) 546-2143, ext 4296
- Contact: P.O. Box 27157 El Paso, TX 79926

### Goals

- To increase the working efficiency of its members through workshops and seminars.
- To promote fellowship and goodwill among its members for the betterment of the profession.
- To educate the public on the value of the services of qualified interpreters and translators.
- To promote and support programs for certification.

- To maintain communication with similar organizations.
- To work with institutions of higher learning, government agencies, businesses, and the legal and medical professions to achieve its goals.

### Additional Information

For complete information on what EPITA has to offer, please visit its website at [www.metroplexepita.org](http://www.metroplexepita.org).

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*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, Inc. (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](http://www.afti.org)) or from AFTI at the address listed in this notice.

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.

Columbia Plaza, Suite 101

350 E Michigan Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Phone: (269) 383-6893

Fax: (269) 387-6333

E-mail: [aftiorg@aol.com](mailto:aftiorg@aol.com)

[www.afti.org/award\\_Berger\\_Nomination\\_Form\\_2008.pdf](http://www.afti.org/award_Berger_Nomination_Form_2008.pdf)



**The Translation** Inquirer just returned from visiting Spain, where his appreciation of the country would have been even greater if he had known what he does now. Each year, an average of 10,000 book-length translations from the various languages of the world are published

there. It works out to an average of close to 30 books for every day of the year, weekends and holidays included. This is an amazing figure. What the figure is for the entire Spanish-speaking part of the globe is unknown, but it probably would boggle the mind.

### New Queries

**(E-C 7-08/1)** Queries involving Chinese are rare but very welcome. I am not sure I can provide the characters in an answer, so please, if you can do this one, include a transliteration. A member of ProZ wondered about “examine a popular preoccupation” in the overall sentence: “The sector will examine a **popular preoccupation**: how Chinese can better access universities, colleges, and schools around the world.” Hat’s off to you if you can provide an answer!

**(E-C 7-08/2)** Obviously from the same source as above, but none the worse for that, is the phrase “encounters with the texture and feel” in the sentence: “Features on alluring overseas destinations will be mixed in with stories of **encounters with the texture and feel** of faraway places, cuisines, wines, and cultures.”

**(E-G 7-08/3)** Perhaps the excessive heat had much to do with the trouble this ProZer had with the phrase in bold print below, taken from a patent text: “With this in mind, these, as well as other moieties, may be employed without departing from the spirit of the present invention. In the case of difunctional cyanoacrylates, R would be bound to two reactive groups. **These are, therefore, intended to define and be included by general reference to such prior art and by those knowledgeable**

**thereof.**” Is it in you to handle that tricky sentence?

**(E-Ro 7-08/4)** The development term “infill” was difficult for this ProZ member going into Romanian. The context phrase causing the trouble was: “with the exception of small scale **infill**, all new developments should be required to provide separate foul and storm water sewerage systems.” What is it, and how does it differ from the large-scale phenomenon?

**(F-E 7-08/5)** A ProZer struggled with a paragraph from a technical description of a chemical reactor that appeared in a contract. The problem words are *contre pales*, and here is the sentence: *Dans le respect des exigences du décret 99-1046 du 13/12/99, le fournisseur a la responsabilité de l'ensemble de la fabrication de l'équipement et de ses accessoires (tubes plongeurs, **contre pales**, TP, déflecteur, supports calorifuge) de la conception à l'apposition du marquage CE.* Who can try this one?

**(G-I [E] 7-08/6)** Speaking of a diesel-powered sports car, this advertising text had three difficult words at the end of a rather short sentence that caused problems: *Der sportliche Adel gibt sich bescheiden.* How to make some good Italian, or English, out of it?

**(G-I [E] 7-08/7)** Among the ProZ headaches of the day was *Einlistung*, a

## Abbreviations used with this column

C-Chinese	G-German
D-Dutch	I-Italian
E-English	N-Norwegian
[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
	U-Ukrainian

dairy term. Here is the context: *Die Einlistung von Bio-Produkten ist für viele Lebensmittelverarbeiter eine entscheidende Hürde.* What is this concept?

**(G-R [E] 7-08/8)** Anyone old enough to remember the early Nazi era might know what *Eintopfsonntage* were. In this case, it was mentioned during a discussion of internal National Socialist policy and everyday life. Can anyone explain it and provide the proper Russian or English?

**(R-G [E] 7-08/9)** Here is a pair of sentences about sawing lanes in a forestry document that a ProZ member was translating from Russian into German. The reference to карманы (pockets) was puzzling and needs clarification: Устройства для удаления, сбора и промежуточного хранения отходов в виде коры и щепы перед отправкой на сжигание. Бревнотаска для транспортировки брёвен с гидравлическими сбрасывателями и 18-ю **карманами**, расположенными наиболее компактно общей длиной **карманов** около 45 метров. What are these *karmany*?

**(Sp-E 7-08/10)** This one has to do with a term from ancient battle tactics used in

the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Something close to “squadron of horses” is meant by the problem phrase, *haces de caballeros*, as found by a ProZer. Here is where it comes from: *Todos los movimientos tácticos estaban orientados a poder lanzar oleadas de haces de caballeros que cabalgaban muy apretados y se lanzaban en tromba contra la formación enemiga con el objetivo de desbaratarla.*

**(U-E 7-08/11)** This context-quote from a patent text focuses on *прямо не опосередкований* as the trouble term. Take a deep breath, here it is: Для З’ясування питання, чи є інтерес правовим, тобто легітимним, рекомендуємо використовувати у роботі позицію КУС, викладену в справі від 1 грудня 2004 р. за № 18-рп №-/2004 (про охоронюваний законом інтерес), де Суд розкриває поняття «охоронюваний законом інтерес» у логічно-смісловому зв’язку з поняттям «права» як прагнення до корисування конкретним матеріальним та/або нематеріальним благом, як зумовлений загальним змістом об’єктивного і **прямо не опосередкований** у суб’єктивному праві простий легітимний дозвіл, що є самостійним об’єктом судового захисту та інших засобів правової охорони з метою задоволення індивідуальних і колективних потреб, які не суперечать Конституції і законам України, суспільним інтересам, справедливості, добросовісності, розумності та іншим загально правовим засадам.

### Replies to Old Queries

**(E-D 4-08/1)** (*down-regulate*): Jane Dumsha says that this term is definitely not the same as inhibit. Down-regulation involves a change in the receptors, not just an inhibition of expression. *Stedman’s Medical Dictionary* (25<sup>th</sup>

edition) defines it as “rapid development of a refractory or tolerant state consequent upon repeated administration of a pharmacologically or physiologically active substance; often accompanied by an initial decrease in the affinity of receptors for the agent, and a subsequent diminution in the number of receptors.” Perhaps the Dutch for this could be found by searching offline in the work of Fons A. J. van de Loo, et al. This can be found at [mskreport.com/articles.cfm?ArticleID=508](http://mskreport.com/articles.cfm?ArticleID=508).

**(E-Sp 5-08/4)** (*AEs*): Mercedes Pellet says this is the abbreviation for architect-engineer, the designation for a company that designs a project and builds it (e.g., Brown & Root). Susan Mast notes that more context is needed, because it can also mean approved enterprise or academic enterprise. Indeed, she is right. Despite a lengthy context sentence, the reference remains unclear. Gonzalo A. Ordóñez says the abbreviation fails to correspond to any usual generic name of companies, corporations, or the like in the U.S. Therefore, lacking any indication of some other country, one possibility, following the context, could be American exchanges.

**(F-E 4-08/5)** (*pupitrage*): Kerry Benton likes system administration or administration for this, as performed on a large, multi-user computer or network thereof. A *pupitreur* is the person in charge of such aspects as the maintenance, configuration, and security of the system. Kerry is pretty certain this is what it means, having at times taken on that *sysadmin* role himself.

**(F-Sp [E] 5-08/5)** (*Sur quoi la Cour*): This literally means “on which the court,” says Annie Hounsokou, and refers to the court’s legal reply to a particular problem. The words imply that

the court made a previous statement or ruling on something.

**(G-E 5-08/6)** (*Durchführung eines Feststellungsverfahrens*): Rudy Theis understands *durchführen* as “perform,” *feststellen* as “verify,” and *Verfahren* as “procedure, process.” Therefore, his rendering of the last part of the phrase is “on the centralized distribution of student places (admittances) and the **performance of a verification procedure.**”

**(N-E 5-08/9)** (*sist på falla sjø*): Once you get out of downtown Oslo, all rules are off with Norwegian spelling and grammar. Dan Lufkin tried his hand at the entire context phrase as found on page 51 of the May issue: “The fishermen in Gandvik could spin yarns about how all of a sudden, with the wind blowing up the ford and the current running out, especially **on the tail of an ebb tide**, the current was a monster that could seize control of your boat.”

**(Po-E 4-08/9)** (*pozataryfowe*): Lawrence Schofer says the context phrase on page 40 of the April issue suggests that items other than tariffs limit trade. His translation goes like this: “Limitations beyond those presented by tariffs in the trade between the community and outside states.”

**(Pt-E 5-08/10)** (*ausência de estruturas que permitam formar médicos*): This, says Annie Hounsokou, is not a technical dentistry phrase. The whole sentence means: “The lack of professionals and the **absence of structures allowing the formation of doctors (physicians) in dentistry** in Macau were the principal problems raised during the Congress.” Edmea McCarty offers this:

Continued on page 56



## Humor and Translation

Mark Herman

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## Redundant Redundancies

**In Mount** Pleasant, Michigan, where I live, the main east-west street through downtown is Broadway Street. Beyond the city limits, it becomes Broadway Road. Though Mount Pleasant is a university town, those in charge care not that the “way” part of “Broadway” means “street” or “road.”

Such redundancies abound in English, in other languages, and especially in terms taken into English from other languages. Politicians dismiss the hoi polloi and weather forecasters warn of the *El Niño*. A philosopher once said that a person cannot step into the same river twice, but the River Fleuve and the River Flume perhaps make such a two-step unavoidable.

Throughout Michigan, Little Caesar’s sells pizza pizza. Las Vegas has a Circus Circus. Would you rather have an orange orange, or a yellow one? When sickness strikes, do not go to a Ph.D., visit a doctor doctor.

Americans like things that are very unique, irregardless (there’s an eerie word!) of the fact that they cannot be. And are virtues in danger of being false if they are not true? Obviously, or why else would there be true grit, true mettle, true courage, true fortitude, and true heroism. Note also that progress is good; we must never revert back to an earlier state, though we may refer back to it.

Some women give birth to two twins, though I cannot imagine a different number (except of course on a baseball team).

Sometimes several redundancies pertain to a single ethnic or religious group. For example, there are Jewish rabbis, but is there any other kind? And some Jews request that their food be “kosher kosher.” This locution either distinguishes food that is glatt, or strictly, kosher, from food that is merely kosher, or food that is merely Jewish-style, but is nonetheless rou-

tinely called kosher, at least in the Midwest, from food that is actually kosher. And, on at least one record jacket, a *klezmer* musician is described admiringly as “the Jewish Benny Goodman.” (By the way, *klezmer* itself originally meant only “musician.”)

Be of good cheer: there is also at least one anti-redundant locution in English: “quality” these days means “high quality.”

*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.*

*ata*

### The Translation Inquirer Continued from page 55

“The shortage of professionals and the lack of **structures for graduating doctors** of dentistry in Macau are the key problems raised during the Congress.”

**(Sp-E 3-08/10)** (*muros corridos*): These, says Mercedes Pellet, are continuous walls. *Muro de cimentación corrido* means continuous foundation wall, but, as used in the original text on page 43 of the March issue, it is correctly translated as continuous walls.

**(Sp-E 5-08/11)** (*su voluptuosa plástica y refracción artificial*): Gonzalo Ordóñez suggests “Its sensual plastic art and man-made refraction....” According to Mercedes Pellet, the con-

fusion in this passage lies in the use of *plástica* as a noun—normally it would be an adjective—which actually means *arcilla* or clay. Her offering of the English is: “(Its) voluptuous clay and artificial refraction pursued me for some time—I don’t know why, for some reason—as often happens with my processes. Night is permissive. Things happen at night that are denied to the day....”

So much good material is found in this month’s column that I do not know how properly to thank everyone. If you like this column, contribute to it, and it will stay at this high level.

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

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

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