2013 Honors and Awards Recipients

Creating a Professional Portfolio

Translating Screenplays

Improving the Post-Editing Experience
From the President
Caitilin Walsh
president@atanet.org

Open Door

This is the time of year when people roll out their New Year’s resolutions. These normally have to do with a habit we would like to break or cultivate, and always focus on improving our corner of the world. I would like to share one of my resolutions with you: I will read and answer e-mail addressed to president@atanet.org.

Many of the e-mails that come to the president’s address are informational, letting me know about an upcoming conference or webinar. If I think something might be of interest to a person or group, I will send it on to those folks. But there are always a few communiqués that my father refers to as “needing more than 10 seconds of thought.” I will do my best to answer these or find out who might be able to answer. Before you write that e-mail, however, please consider the following points:

- The question or request really should have something to do with the Association and its mission and/or the language services industry. The best I can do with items tangential to translation and interpreting is to try to connect you with someone who knows about that area; advice to the lovelorn and general politics are way over my head.

- If you are debating floating a new idea, please share it. Some suggestions may take longer to follow up on than others, but the ideas members share contribute to the vitality of the Association and are very much appreciated.

- The depth and breadth of expertise and knowledge within our membership is awe inspiring, and I may not always fully understand your suggestion at first, so please be patient if I ask questions or ask you to do some legwork. I will do my level best to give you a lead or two or hand off your request to someone who may be able to assist you.

- Especially regarding complaints, remember that old adage that you catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. When we are upset, it is easy to lash out. Please remember that the person who reads that e-mail is a real live (volunteering) person.

- Positive feedback is also useful. I know that no news is good news, but my door is open, and saying that I value hearing from members is not just lip service.

- Finally, if you do not know whom to contact, start with me. I will help you find the best person to address your suggestion or concern.

Know that this is not an entirely selfless resolution: keeping a finger on the pulse of our membership is key to our Board’s work. An open door helps paint a more complete view of the situation: you can come in, and I can see out. Please know your messages are welcome.
January 2014
Volume XLIII
Number 1
A Publication of The American Translators Association

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Cover Illustration: © 2013 Ivary
Our Authors
January 2014

Christine Kretschmer is a lecturer in audiovisual translation at City University, London. She helped establish City University’s MA in Legal Translation Program. She has been an English-German translator since 1985. She has a master’s degree in screenwriting and is a graduate of European Audiovisual Entrepreneurs. Contact: c.kretschmer@city.ac.uk.

Uwe Muegge has more than 15 years of experience in translation and localization, having worked in leadership functions on both the vendor and buyer sides of the industry. He has published numerous articles on translation tools and processes, and taught computer-assisted translation and terminology management courses at the college level in both the U.S. and Europe. He is a director at CSOFT in Beijing. He is also the coordinator of the Masters in Translation and Localization Management Program at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. He teaches courses in computer-assisted translation and publishes regularly on translation technology. Contact: uwe.muegge@csoftintl.com.

Marcela Reyes is the chief branding officer for Latitudes | Training, Coaching and Consulting. She is an entrepreneurial marketing expert and business coach with over 20 years of experience. She partners with language services providers around the world to help them communicate their value to attract more clients, expand their services, and develop their own brand in local and international markets. She gives presentations around the world and is a published author. She has a bachelor’s degree in communications and an MBA with an emphasis in marketing. Contact: marcela@latitudescoach.com.

Looking for continuing education events in your area?
Check out ATA’s online event calendar at www.atanet.org/calendar.

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81% of subscribers read the advertisements in The ATA Chronicle and 36% of the readers BUY the products that are advertised.

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New Year, New Look:
The *ATA Chronicle* is the Association’s flagship publication and reflects the professional image of the organization. To maintain that position, this issue of the magazine introduces a fresh new look. The update includes improved readability with a left-justified, ragged-right format and a more contemporary style for the cover, table of contents, and monthly columns. Credit for the new look goes to Ellen Banker, our long-time designer. Of course, the design would be meaningless without the practical information, experience, and knowledge provided by the many volunteer contributors and columnists. Finally, thanks to ATA Editor Jeff Sanfaçon for his stewardship of the publication and for making it all happen every month.

Membership: The New Year also means it is time to renew your ATA membership. Renewal notices have been mailed, but you do not need to wait—it will only take a minute to renew online right now: www.atanet.org/membership/renew.php.

This year, in response to member feedback, we have added a digital-only option for your subscription to *The ATA Chronicle*. Of course, you can continue to receive the print edition by mail in addition to unlimited access to the online version. The choice is yours. Just check the delivery option you prefer when renewing online or by mail.

We know you have opportunities to network, learn, and market your services elsewhere, but ATA brings them all together more effectively and efficiently—and better—than anywhere else. Renewing your membership is a smart business decision and an investment in yourself. If you have any questions about membership and the benefits available to you, please contact ATA Member Relations Manager Lauren Mendell at lauren@atanet.org or 703-683-6100, ext 3001. Thank you for renewing for 2014. We look forward to serving you.

Retirement: I wanted to share some news concerning a key promotor of ATA and the translation and interpreting professions. ATA Past President Peter Krawutschke has retired from Western Michigan University, where he taught German and translation, among other subjects, for 46 years. During that time, Peter pushed successfully to get translation and interpreting recognized by higher education and the federal government. In 2008, Peter received the Association’s highest honor, the ATA Gode Medal, for his many outstanding professional contributions. Congratulations, Peter!

---

2013 Election Results

Congratulations to ATA’s new officers and directors:

President Caitlin Walsh; President-Elect David Rumsey; Secretary Boris Silversteyn; Treasurer Ted Wozniak; and Directors (for three-year terms): Evelyn Yang Garland, Rudy Heller, and Jane Maier. They join Directors: Lois Feuerle, Odile Leggeay, Corinne McKay, Virginia Perez-Santalla, Faiza Sultan, and Timothy Yuan.

The election was held during the Meeting of Voting Members, November 7, at ATA’s 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio. The full election results are online: www.atanet.org/membership/election2013_election_result.pdf.

Be Sure to Renew:

Membership renewals have been mailed. If you prefer to renew online, please go to: www.atanet.org/membership/renew.php. Thank you for being an ATA member in 2013 and please renew for 2014 today.
54th Annual Conference
San Antonio, Texas
Marriott Rivercenter | November 6-9, 2013

A Big Thanks to Our Exhibitors and Sponsors

ATA wishes to thank all of the sponsors and exhibitors for helping to make this conference such a success!

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Opportunity. Market your services worldwide in ATA’s online Directory of Translation and Interpreting Services.

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Knowledge. Expand your skills with professional opportunities online and throughout the U.S.

Information. Get news and know-how, from terminology to software to business practices . . . and more.

Services. Take advantage of members-only discounted business services, including small business and professional liability insurance plans.

Visibility. Support an advocacy working for greater public awareness of the translation and interpreting professions.

For detailed information, visit www.atanet.org/aboutus/overview_ata.php

It’s Time To Renew!

From membership in any or all of ATA’s 18 divisions to discounted business services, ATA gives you the strategic edge that benefits your bottom line. Don’t miss a single day of benefits—renew today and let ATA continue to be your most important professional resource. It’s simple:

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Membership Renewal
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA

Renew by Fax
Fax the ATA Membership Renewal form with your payment to:
+1-703-683-6122

Renew by PayPal
www.atanet.org/paypal.php for instructions

Questions? Need More Information?
Contact: Lauren Mendell
ATA Member Relations Manager
Phone: +1-703-683-6100, ext. 3001
E-mail: lauren@atanet.org

Thank you for your past support and for renewing for 2014.
ATA wishes to thank all of the volunteers from chapters, affiliates, and other groups who staffed their tables during the Annual Conference in San Antonio.

### Host Group
- Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association
  - [www.aatia.org](http://www.aatia.org)

### Chapters
- Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators
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- Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters
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- Michigan Translators/Interpreters Network
  - [www.mitinweb.org](http://www.mitinweb.org)
- Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters
  - [www.matiota.org](http://www.matiota.org)
- National Capital Area Translators Association
  - [www.ncata.org](http://www.ncata.org)
- New York Circle of Translators
  - [www.nyctranslators.org](http://www.nyctranslators.org)
- Northern California Translators Association
  - [www.ncta.org](http://www.ncta.org)
- Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society
  - [www.notisnet.org](http://www.notisnet.org)

### Affiliates
- Houston Interpreters and Translators Association
  - [www.hitagroup.org](http://www.hitagroup.org)
- Nevada Interpreters and Translators Association
  - [www.nihaonline.org](http://www.nihaonline.org)

### Other Groups
- Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies
  - [www.languagepolicy.org](http://www.languagepolicy.org)
- National Council on Interpreting in Health Care
  - [www.nchip.org](http://www.nchip.org)
- Translators without Borders
  - [http://translatorswithoutborders.com](http://translatorswithoutborders.com)
2013 Honors and Awards Recipients

Alexander Gode Medal

Alan K. Melby

The American Translators Association is honored to recognize Alan K. Melby as the recipient of the 2013 Alexander Gode Medal. ATA’s most prestigious award is named for one of ATA’s founders and its first president, and is presented to an individual or institution for outstanding service to the translating and interpreting professions.

Alan has served on ATA’s Board of Directors for 16 years, having served two terms as secretary and four terms as director. During his time on the Board, Alan led ATA’s effort to validate the Certification Program based on academically rigorous studies aimed at defining the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a translator must possess. He has also supported the Certification Program in another vital way, by creating and bringing to fruition the keyboarded certification examination—the first in the world for any translation certification program instituted by a nonprofit organization.

Alan has been interested in terminology management and terminology exchange since the mid-1980s. He has been involved in various efforts to develop terminology exchange formats, including the terminological data chapter of version P3 of the Text Encoding Initiative guidelines and various terminology-related standards within ISO Technical Committee 37. Alan is the reason your tools can talk to each other. The Exchange Standards in your tools are a result of his work. He continues to work on establishing and maintaining international standards relevant to the language services industry.

In addition, Alan’s academic research and publications have made a contribution to our profession that is of extraordinary breadth and depth. A professor of linguistics at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, his skills as a teacher and mentor have helped many of his students become valuable members of our profession. Most importantly, in everything he has done, he has been a tireless and highly effective maker of connections—few others have worked as hard as he has to bring us together for our mutual benefit.

The Alexander Gode Medal is named for ATA’s founder and guiding spirit, who was the first recipient. The medalists represent a record of achievement in a variety of venues, including not only translators and interpreters, but lexicographers, theorists, association leaders, and institutions. This award may be given annually.

Are You LinkedIn?

What is LinkedIn?
LinkedIn is a free e-networking service that helps you create an online community of links to new contacts, prospective clients, and great jobs. Through a LinkedIn network you can discover inside connections and reach the clients you need to meet through referrals from people you already know and trust. Your professional relationships are key to building your business.

How Does It Work?
Begin by inviting colleagues and clients to join LinkedIn and connect to your network. Next, add to your community by searching LinkedIn for professional contacts you already know and inviting them to connect to you. Then, post a profile summarizing your professional accomplishments, associations to which you belong, schools you have attended, and places you have worked so that former business associates, co-workers, and classmates can find you and connect. Each connection expands your network. The result? Your network now consists of your connections, your connections’ connections, and the people they know, linking you to thousands of qualified professionals. Take advantage of your ATA membership. Joining LinkedIn through ATA gives you an instant community with opportunities to grow your network quickly. Don’t wait—get your online networking underway! To join, just visit www.atanet.org/linkedin.php.
JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation

Patricia M. Fundora

Patricia M. Fundora is the 2013-2014 recipient of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation’s (AFTI) JTG Scholarship in Scientific and Technical Translation or Interpretation. This award was funded a decade ago by Muriel Jérôme-O’Keeffe, a past president of both ATA and AFTI, to encourage and recognize students in technical translation and interpreting programs.

Patricia is a full-time student enrolled in the Translation and Interpretation Studies Program at Miami Dade College, where she is pursuing an associate in science degree (major: translation and interpreting). She has made the Dean’s List on a regular basis and is a member of Sigma Alpha Pi (National Society of Leadership and Success) and the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Her main focus is completing her studies and preparing to take the written certification exam administered by the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters. After graduation, her goal is to work as a medical interpreter or translator, or in a position combining both areas of expertise. A native Spanish speaker, she is looking for opportunities to volunteer as an interpreter and/or translator for the Hispanic immigrant community while pursuing her studies. In addition to ATA, she is also a member of the International Medical Interpreters Association.

About JTG, Inc.
Founded in 1995 by ATA and AFTI Past President Muriel Jérôme-O’Keeffe, JTG, Inc. is a language consultancy that supports homeland security, intelligence, and global business with cross-cultural communications. JTG, Inc. has underwritten the AFTI scholarship since 2001. Visit: www.jtg-inc.com.

About AFTI
The American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation (AFTI) was established in 1997. AFTI’s primary charitable and educational activities consist of sponsorship and dissemination of research and education in the fields of translation and interpreting through research grants, scholarships, conferences, and commissions for the production of education materials, as well as through the establishment and maintenance of an archive for the collection of documents and artifacts related to translation and interpreting. Visit: www.afti.org/about_AFTI.php.

Ungar German Translation Award

Philip Boehm

Philip Boehm is the recipient of the Ungar German Translation Award for his translation of Herta Müller’s 2009 Nobel Prize-winning novel, The Hunger Angel (Picador, 2013). This is the second time Boehm has received the award, having won in 2007 for his translation of A Woman in Berlin.

The Hunger Angel begins on an icy morning in January 1945, when a patrol comes for 17-year-old Leo Auberg to deport him to a camp in the Soviet Union. Leo will spend the next five years in a coke processing plant, shoveling coal, lugging bricks, mixing mortar, and battling the relentless calculus of hunger that governed the labor colony. Herta Müller calls upon her unique combination of poetic intensity and dispassionate precision to conjure the distorted world of the labor camp in all its physical and moral absurdity. She has given Leo the language to express the inexpressible, as hunger sharpens his senses into an acuity that is both hallucinatory and profound. Boehm’s pitch-perfect translation of The Hunger Angel exposes the reader to the icy winds, unremitting hunger, and apparent hopelessness of the labor camp.

Born in Romania in 1953, Herta Müller lost her job as a teacher and suffered repeated threats after refusing to cooperate with Ceausescu’s secret police. She is the author of, among other books, The Land of Green Plums and The Appointment.
Philip is the author of numerous translations from Polish and German, including works by Franz Kafka, Hanna Krall, and Christoph Hein. His translations have received numerous awards, including the American Literary Translators Association’s National Translation Award and the PEN Center USA Literary Award. Philip, who resides in St. Louis, is also a playwright and theater director. Fluent in several languages, he has staged plays in the U.S., Poland, and Slovakia. In 2004, he founded Upstream Theater, which has since become a leading producer of new international work, having presented over a dozen U.S. premieres of plays from countries such as Cuba and Croatia. In 2012, Upstream was recognized by the American Theatre Wing with a National Theater Grant as one of the most promising emerging companies in the U.S. As a dramatist, Philip’s staged plays include Mixtitlan, Soul of a Clone, and Alma en venta. Originally from Texas, Philip studied at Wesleyan University (Connecticut), Washington University in St. Louis, and the State Academy of Theater in Warsaw, Poland. 

The Ungar German Translation Award is bestowed biennially in odd-numbered years for a distinguished literary translation from German into English that has been published in the U.S.

**Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award**

**Ralf Lemster**

Ralf Lemster is the recipient of the 2013 Marian S. Greenfield Financial Translation Presentation Award. ATA and the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation offer this prize to recognize an outstanding presenter of a financial translation session during ATA’s Annual Conference. Ralf presented two sessions at this year’s conference in San Antonio.

In his first presentation, “CMBS, RMBS, and ABS of CDO: Some Insights into the Alphabet Soup,” Ralf examined a number of acronyms and similar concepts commonly used in the context of structured investment products, securitizations, and similar structures. His second presentation, “Credit Derivatives: Key Concepts, Applications, and Terminology,” explored key concepts of credit derivatives, their primary fields of application, and the main technical terms financial translators need to know.

Ralf is a managing partner of Ralf Lemster Financial Translations GmbH, a specialist financial translation company focusing on complex financial markets texts. Following more than 10 years of investment banking experience with a major German bank, he has been working as a full-time translator since 1997, having passed the German state examination for English that same year. He is a vice president of the German Federal Association of Interpreters and Translators (BDÜ).

Marian S. Greenfield is a past president of ATA (2005-2007) and the New York Circle of Translators. Currently, she is the president of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation and the chair of ATA’s Professional Development Committee. She is the owner of msgreenfield Translations. She has worked in the translation industry for over 30 years. A translator in New York’s Financial District for 20 years, she is the former manager of translation services at JP Morgan. She is a translation industry consultant, Trados instructor, and freelance Spanish, Portuguese, and French into English financial and legal translator. She has taught at the University of Chicago, New York University, and the University of Puerto Rico.

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**Upcoming Events**

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<td>Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters Annual Conference</td>
<td>April 5, 2014</td>
<td>Spartanburg, SC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-America Chapter of ATA MICATA Symposium</td>
<td>March 28-29, 2014</td>
<td>Overland Park, KS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Federation of Translators 2014 World Congress</td>
<td>August 4-6, 2014</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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You’ll find more events at [www.atanet.org/calendar](http://www.atanet.org/calendar).
Christina L. Lowry is the recipient of the 2013 ATA Student Translation Award for her translation project from German into English of the 1992 German musical *Elisabeth*, written by Michael Kunze and Sylvester Levay. Lowry is a senior at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia.

Empress Elisabeth of Austria is well-known in Germany and Austria as a beloved folk hero. A trio of semi-biographical films in the 1950s starring Romy Schneider immortalized the Hapsburg empress, affectionately known as “Sissi,” as a romantic fairytale princess. While the popular films tell the story of an independent young girl thrown into the world of politics by her marriage to Emperor Franz Josef I, the real-life Elisabeth’s transition to court life was far more difficult. With no privacy, an overbearing mother-in-law, and tensions with her husband, Elisabeth eventually withdrew from court life, traveling restlessly until she was assassinated at the age of 60. Kunze’s and Levay’s musical *Elisabeth* portrays this much darker version of Elisabeth’s life.

Christina began translating *Elisabeth* during her junior year at Washington and Lee University as an independent honors project for her German major. She says that “the complexities of translating the lyrics of an almost entirely sung musical, with their poetry and rhythms, has been by far the most challenging aspect.” Christina hopes to publish the translation and eventually see it performed in English.

The ATA Student Translation Award is presented to any graduate or undergraduate student, or group of students, for a literary or sci-tech translation or translation-related project. The award is given annually.

For complete entry information and deadlines, visit www.atanet.org/membership/honorsandawards.php.
ATA 2012-2013 School Outreach Contest

María Elena Gaborov

ATA member María Elena Gaborov won free registration to ATA’s 54th Annual Conference in San Antonio for a photo of herself with a group of smiling undergraduate students from the Department of Romance Languages at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill.

In her presentation, María explained to Spanish language students how important translators and interpreters are in everyday life in the U.S. and abroad. She addressed what skills language professionals need and what consequences may arise if the services of professional translators or interpreters are not used.

Invited to speak at UNC by Spanish lecturer Alan Redick, María seized the opportunity to discuss what she feels passionate about: informing the general public that formal training is required to become a competent language professional. She hopes that this will boost the general recognition of translators and interpreters. The students were so interested and had so many questions that her talk, which was originally scheduled for 20 minutes, lasted 90 minutes!

A native Argentinean and an English<>Spanish interpreter and translator, María lives in Durham, North Carolina. She earned her translation degree at the Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Argentina. She is a certified medical interpreter and works in-house at the UNC hospitals in Chapel Hill. She also serves as vice chair of the International Medical Interpreters Association’s North Carolina chapter. As a freelance translator, María specializes in medical documents and legal certificates.

Contributed by Birgit Vosseler-Brehmer, winner of ATA’s 2011-2012 School Outreach Contest.
Call for Nominations

The 2014 Nominating and Leadership Development Committee is pleased to call for nominations from ATA’s membership to fill three directors’ positions (each a three-year term). Elections will be held at the Annual Meeting of Voting Members on Thursday, November 6, 2014, in Chicago, Illinois.

Under ATA’s Bylaws, all Active members of ATA are eligible to run for elected office. Active members are those who have passed an ATA certification exam or who are established as having achieved professional status through an Active Membership Review (for more information on this process, visit www.atanet.org/memb_review.php). Active members must be citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. Other member categories are not eligible to serve as officers or directors. However, any member may submit a nomination. Please note that members of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee are not eligible to run for elected office.

2014 Nomination Form: ATA Directors

Members may make a nomination using the form on page 16 or online (www.atanet.org/elections.php). Nominations should be submitted as early as possible so that the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee can fully consider proposed candidates. The deadline is March 3, 2014. Mail, e-mail, or fax the completed form to:

Dorothee Racette
Chair, ATA Nominating and Leadership Development Committee
225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590
Alexandria, VA 22314 USA
Fax: +1-703-683-6122
E-mail: Walter@atanet.org

If you plan to put names forward for nomination, please contact the potential nominees first, explaining your intention and the fact that a nomination does not guarantee a formal invitation to run for office. If a nomination is not put forward by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee to ATA’s Board of Directors, an individual may still petition to be added to the slate of candidates by submitting the nomination in writing along with the signatures of at least 60 voting members endorsing the nomination. The petitions must be received by the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee no later than 30 calendar days after first publication by the Board of Directors of the names of the candidates proposed by the Committee.

All ATA officers and directors serve on a volunteer basis: please do not nominate colleagues who express serious concerns about service, or who have conflicting priorities. Please fill out the nomination form completely with the candidate’s help so that the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee has up-to-date information about the candidate’s service and affiliation with ATA. Members may nominate themselves.
2014 Nomination Form: ATA Directors

Person making nomination: ____________________________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________________________ Telephone: ______________________

Nominee information

Name: ____________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________________________ Telephone: ______________________

Please check all that apply:

- full-time
- part-time
- translator
- interpreter
- in-house employee
- other (specify):

Number of years in translation/interpreting: ______________________

1-4
5-9
10-14
15-20+

Number of years as an ATA member: ______________________

1-4
5-9
10-14
15-20+

Please answer the following questions:

How has the candidate demonstrated commitment to the translation and interpreting professions?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What strengths would this person bring to ATA’s Board of Directors?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Why did you nominate this person?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Final thoughts: What perspectives or points of view do you feel are important to have represented on ATA’s Board?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Any other comments? ______________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for being an ATA member and for your active commitment to the future of your association.
Branding Yourself: Create a Professional Portfolio

By Marcela Reyes

In today’s business world, it is becoming increasingly difficult to make yourself competitive, especially as a translator. More and more freelancers are being added to the market, so what can you do to make yourself stand out in a sea of many? A great place to start your differentiating process is by creating a professional portfolio. A portfolio is an invaluable tool in more ways than one. But what exactly is it, and exactly how can it help you?

What Is a Portfolio?

A portfolio is simply a collection of your work that can be used to market your language services, apply for a job, highlight your professional experience, or document what you have learned. As a translator, you need a portfolio to create the link between what you can do and what the prospective client or organization wants from you. Your professional portfolio will distinguish you from the competition. It will clearly highlight your experience and demonstrate that you are serious about your career as a translator and your job search. It will show examples of your unique strengths and pique the interest of your potential clients or employers.

In addition, it will help you build confidence in what you can do.

How Can Your Portfolio Help You?

What are your professional activities, and what are the outcomes of those activities? Are you documenting them adequately so others can see your contributions? Do your activities and the outcomes they produce match your profession? What do you need to change or enhance about what you do and the outcomes you document? A professional portfolio will be an immense help in answering these questions constructively. It helps you keep track of everything you have done in your career as a professional translator or interpreter and points out where you should go next. Most importantly for freelancers, it will definitely get you attention and help you stand out from the crowd.

The Importance of Your Unique Value Proposition

Before you embark on creating your professional portfolio, you must first identify your value proposition—a clear statement in line with the market’s challenges and your desires, communicating the unique contribution you and your services are providing that is different from your competitors. Try to answer the question, “Why should I do business with you and not someone else?”

Your unique value proposition must appeal to the client’s strongest decision-making drivers. It should be believable, authentic, and specific. Once you have a statement that you are confident communicates your value, you have the basis on which to build your professional portfolio. Like a classic novel that has a specific theme or overall message, your unique value proposition should...
pervade your portfolio. Whoever is reading it should get an overall sense of your value without your having to state it explicitly.

**What Goes Into a Portfolio?**

The key point of your portfolio is that you want to give an employer cause to hire you or a prospective client reasons to retain your translation or interpreting services. You want to showcase your education and work experience by showing examples and evidence of your work, skills, and accomplishments. While your portfolio can be creative and contain an array of items based on the exact message you are conveying with your unique value proposition, there are some elements that are absolutely necessary. These are your career summary, bio, personal philosophy, and mission statement.

**How to Make Your Career Summary Interesting and Relevant**

Your career summary is simply a description of who you are through what you have done throughout your career as a linguist. It typically includes information not on your résumé, such as your work ethic, professional interests, and your philosophy about life and work. In your summary, aim to quantify your achievements by using varied adverbs and more descriptive detail. Instead of simply mentioning that you did X translating job for Y company, make a statement saying something along the lines of you **consistently** did X job, translating 3,000 words per day at Y company.

**How to Define Your Personal Philosophy and Mission Statement**

This is a personal statement about the principles that guide you, your purpose, and your value proposition. Consider this your personal executive summary. While it may be short, this is important for singling out your mission as a linguist and expressing your uniqueness.

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**Your unique value proposition must appeal to the client’s strongest decision-making drivers.**

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**Perfect Your Bio**

In the business world we summarize our experience, qualifications, education, skill-sets, and any other important aspects of our professional life (and sometimes even our personal life). This is contained in what is typically known as the résumé or CV (*curriculum vitae*). The information presented, its style, format, length, etc., all vary among cultures. Nevertheless, it is an important component of your marketing kit, regardless of the culture you are targeting. However, this tool does not really highlight all of those personal characteristics that make you different from others.

The biography is a highly underestimated, yet very powerful, tool that should be essential in any marketing kit. It is simply the story of your life. A résumé lists your credentials. A biography presents them in a story, automatically making the content much more interesting. Stories are fascinating and have the ability to engage and connect us with our target market through purpose and passion. Let your human side shine through your story. Your audience wants to find that special connection with you, and there is no better way to connect than by sharing your story. Do not be bland. Personal hobbies and interests, while not necessary, may be helpful in letting your readers get a taste of who you are as a person.

When composing your bio, consider your audience—who exactly will be reading it? This is important, because what you include in your bio should and will vary depending on your target audience. While this may be difficult to achieve, a good bio is short—somewhere between 150-300 words. To keep the length to a minimum, it is important to focus only on the highlights or more significant moments. Use phrases such as among others or to name a few. These phrases keep lists short, but convey the notion that the list continues. Your bio should also be written in the third person in order to keep it formal and professional.

**Some Other Items to Consider in Your Portfolio**

While every one of the following items is not required in your portfolio, you should try to include what you feel is necessary to convey your unique value proposition. Consider the following:

- Career summary
- Goals
- Personal brand statement in a tagline form
- Mission statement
- Bio
- Résumé
- Accomplishments
- Work samples
- Research publications and reports
- Testimonials
- Letters of recommendation
- Awards and honors
- Conferences and workshops
- Transcripts
- Degrees
- Licenses and certifications
- Professional development activities
- Volunteer and community service
- References

One thing to keep out of your portfolio is your rates. Also, if you are targeting translation agencies, include the tools and technologies you use; however, when targeting direct clients, this information is not necessary and may even confuse your potential buyers.
Stylistic Tips to Keep Your Portfolio Professional

Use an assortment of syntax and vocabulary so that your portfolio does not become boring to the reader. Be careful to stay truthful. If you are caught lying or even stretching the truth, you will lose a lot of precious credibility—and likely a client as well. In addition, industry jargon should be kept to a minimum. What good is your portfolio if the reader does not understand what is being said? Monitor the length of your sentences so that the flow of your statements does not become choppy or confusing. Keep in mind that bulleted lists are easy to follow and show organization. Avoid words that are too “flowery”; that is, if you think your reader might have to go to a dictionary for it, do not include it. Definitely omit pronouns, as they make your portfolio look less professional. You should always keep your intended audience in mind when planning your approach. Perhaps your readers would prefer something a little more personal. Always remember that your portfolio should motivate the reader to take action.

Stand Out from the Crowd with Your Work Samples

Regarding samples, if you are a translator, make sure you include the source and target translation. If you really want to stand out from the crowd, you can simply include a hyperlink to the source document and the corresponding translation if they are available online (like a website). Instead of just including the source and target translation, focus on highlighting any outcomes that resulted from your translation. For example, if you translated a website, and that website is reaching out to X amount of people, point that out.

If you are an interpreter, you can include a link to a short video clip of an actual interpreting assignment along with a brief description of what the gig was all about. A word of caution: if you are going to include hyperlinks to projects or assignments on which you worked, make sure you always get the proper permission from your client to do so. You do not want to infringe on any confidentiality agreement and jeopardize not just the relationship with your client but also your professional reputation.

Your Portfolio: Why It Should Be Online

Google is your biggest promoter. The Internet is the biggest gallery in the world, with millions of potential clients online. You need to make sure they can find you and your work. An online portfolio gives you the perfect opportunity to do this. With numerous social media outlets, you have the ability to showcase yourself and your work to thousands of people not available via traditional methods. Think about the implications of not popping up on someone’s online search for your name. Will you lose all trust or credibility since you are not in the results set? Are you hiding something? If others cannot find you online, you have done a poor job of letting people get the chance to know you and your services. Your online portfolio is available around the clock. You want your online portfolio to be like a website that is well designed, easy to use, and tells the reader exactly what is wanted quickly and without hassle. Not to mention, you want it to be instantly inspiring upon first glance. One of the most important aspects of your online portfolio is its appearance—easy to read, clean, and thorough. When you create easy-to-read application material that paints a detailed, well-matched picture of your professional self, you make recruiters, clients, and employers happy and interested.

Online Tools to Create Your Online Portfolio

Find websites that can both stylize your portfolio with graphics and organize your information in a visual and compelling way. There are numerous free and inexpensive tools online that allow you to create graphical representations of your skills, working history, and professional achievements. If you do not already have your own personal website, consider investing in one.

Make it easy for others to find and be impressed by you. Make them think, “Wow, I need those services, and now!” It is easier than you think to make yourself accessible. You will find that your professional portfolio (particularly one that is online) will do that for you. All the effort required is the initial creation of the portfolio. So, go out and self-promote. After that, your clients will come right to you!
Ten years ago, machine translation (MT) was very much a niche technology for translation professionals. MT tools were expensive, supported only a small number of language pairs, and did not play nice with many standard translation tools. Today, MT is available either for free or at very low cost, in thousands of language combinations, and many translation memory systems offer integrated MT functionality. In other words, MT has evolved by leaps and bounds.

As the number of translation professionals who post-edit raw MT has increased dramatically over the past 10 years, the big question is whether developments in post-editing have kept pace with those in MT.

**Post-editing: The Basics**

Before we proceed, let’s review some of the basics. A general understanding of MT technology is a good place to start.

**Machine Translation (MT):** process of using software applications that automate the translation of text from one language (source language) into another language (target language), with no or minimal human intervention.

**Raw Machine Translation:** output generated by machine translation without human post-editing.

**Post-editing:** process of revising raw machine translation by human linguists.

**Translation Memory:** software application that enables translation professionals to reuse their previous translations and perform other translation-related tasks efficiently.

**Revision:** bilingual editing of target content based on a comparison between the source content and the target content.

Simply put, during machine translation, an MT application takes the source files as input, and, depending on the type of MT technology (rule-based, statistical, or hybrid), uses specific algorithms to create target files. Depending on the intended use, these raw machine translations can either be used as is or be revised (“post-edited”) by human linguists.

The convergence of translation memory and MT technologies has been critically important to language services providers and, as a result, globalization efforts as a whole. Essentially, translation memory systems have at their core a large database of aligned source and target segments (typically sentences) that automatically provides translation suggestions for sentences that have previously been translated or that are similar to previously translated sentences. While most translation professionals consider translation memories as primarily productivity tools, they are in fact first and foremost quality assurance tools. Even if linguists do not get a single match during a translation project, they always benefit from functions such as automatic completeness checks, automatic terminology recognition (if properly prepared), automatic tag/formatting checks, etc.

Post-editing of raw MT is the process where professionally trained human linguists systematically review and edit machine-generated translation content. Depending on the intended use, post-editing may range from only correcting terminology errors to comprehensive rewriting where the final text is indistinguishable from a human-generated translation.
Most rule-based MT products were (and still are) targeted at the consumer market.

Custom Word Macros: One of the biggest problems in post-editing, at least in my opinion, is the fact that commercial post-editing tools do not offer much support for syntactical or morphological changes. Consider the following scenario. A word that is not the first word in a sentence needs to be moved to the beginning of a sentence to make that sentence more readable. This editing task typically involves the following steps:

1. Select the word to be moved.
2. Move the selected word from its current position to the beginning of the sentence.
3. Change the case of the first letter of the selected word to upper case.
4. Change the case of the first letter of what was the first word in the sentence to lower case.

Fortunately, there is a rather simple solution for this type of problem: the macro functionality in Microsoft Word. As earlier versions of Trados were themselves sets of Word macros, using custom macros was an obvious choice. By the way, all it takes to create Word macros is to click “Start recording” at the beginning of the process that is to be automated and “Stop recording” at the end. With macros, any complex editing task, such as the nominalization of a verb or changing the case/inflection of a word, can be reduced to pressing a simple hotkey combination.

Where Is Post-Editing Today?

In 2007, Google launched a free post-editing environment, Google Translator Toolkit. Translator Toolkit is a cloud-based service that...
The Great Leap Forward that Never Was Continued

provides translation professionals with a translation memory environment for post-editing raw MT created in Google’s statistical MT, Google Translate. Today, Google Translator Toolkit is probably the most popular system designed specifically for post-editing.

What is great about Google Translator Toolkit? Google Translator Toolkit became an instant success because this service offers a number of very compelling benefits:

- A free post-editing environment for free statistical raw MT.
- Support for more than 70 languages and more than 5,000 language combinations.
- Many key features such as terminology management, translation memory management, and collaborative translation/sharing of translation memories and dictionaries.
- A simple, very user-friendly system.
- A cloud-based service: no software to install; runs on Windows, MacOS, Linux, iOS, Android, and many other operating systems.

What is not so great about Google Translator Toolkit? First, I want to draw attention to the fact that Google did not create Translator Toolkit for altruistic reasons. Translator Toolkit was primarily designed to provide Google with training material for improving the translation quality of Google’s statistical MT system, Google Translate. Understanding Google’s motivation for creating Translator Toolkit explains why after all these years the feature set of this post-editing/translation memory system is still very rudimentary. (See Figure 1 below for an example.)

Google has received its share of criticism for the lack of privacy in Translator Toolkit. By default, all users of Translator Toolkit share their translation memories not only with the developers of Google Translate, but with all other users of the system as well. While it is possible for users to create “private” translation memories, there is no easy fix for the following issues I have with Translator Toolkit:

- Users have no way of customizing the raw MT Google Translate creates. There is only one specification users can make when submitting text for translation in Translator Toolkit: selecting the language pair.
- While users can upload their own bilingual dictionaries, these dictionaries will not be used for translation, as Translator Toolkit limits their use to the post-editing phase.
- Translator Toolkit does not offer specific functions for changing a) the syntax of a sentence, or b) the morphology of individual words.

By the way, most if not all of these limitations also apply to many translation memory environments that pull raw MT from Google Translate or Bing (Microsoft’s statistical MT service).

Figure 1: The editor (highlighted) in Google Translator Toolkit offers only very rudimentary functions for post-editing MT.
Three Things You Can Do to Make Post-Editing More Efficient

In my humble opinion, the most popular environment for post-editing raw MT leaves a lot to be desired in terms of offering task-specific functionality. However, the good news is that there are a number of things that translation professionals can do themselves to improve the efficiency of the post-editing process.

Manage Terminology: Using the right terminology consistently is very important in almost any translation project. In post-editing projects, even though the end user may be willing to accept less than brilliant style, incorrectly translated terms are typically not acceptable. Therefore, it is a good idea for post-editors to create comprehensive, project-specific, multilingual glossaries prior to each post-editing project. If the client does not provide comprehensive glossaries, I recommend using one of the many automatic terminology extraction tools and services that help post-editors create multilingual glossaries quickly and inexpensively. And it goes without saying that for the sake of terminology management alone, all post-editing should be performed in a translation memory environment.

Customize the MT System: One of the most powerful ways to improve the efficiency of post-editing is, of course, improving the quality of the raw MT. Earlier, I described how translation professionals can customize a rule-based MT system: by selecting built-in domain-specific dictionaries, uploading client glossaries, providing translations for all unknown words, and applying project-specific style settings. But what about statistical MT? Can users customize those? Absolutely! One of the most exciting developments in the area of MT is the advent of do-it-yourself (DIY) MT. In a DIY MT system or service, users build their own statistical MT system using their own translation memories. One example of this new breed of tools is Microsoft Translator Hub. The Microsoft Translator Hub is a free service that anyone can use to a) create customized MT engines, and b) use these MT engines to create high-quality raw MT. Raw MT from DIY MT systems is typically available in multiple file formats, including TMX and XLIFF for easy import into standard post-editing environments. Note that DIY MT services typically require a minimum of 10,000 sentences of parallel text/translation memory for customization.

Customize the Translation Memory System: None of the standard commercial post-editing tools available to freelance translation professionals support language-specific post-editing functions. As mentioned above, using the macro-recording function in Microsoft Word is an easy way of simplifying complex editing tasks such as changing the inflection of a word. While almost all translation memory tools now come as stand-alone tools, a few like MetaTexis for Word and Wordfast Classic still use Microsoft Word as an editing platform. Those translation professionals who are looking for the most efficient post-editing platform and are willing to invest a few hours recording macros should give Word-based translation memories a close look.

Post-Editing Can Be a Much Easier Task

By all indications, more translation professionals than ever are involved in post-editing raw MT. While the technology and the economics of MT have evolved dramatically, making high-quality raw MT available to almost every translation professional, commercial post-editing environments are still relatively primitive. The good news is that there are a number of strategies that translation professionals looking for an improved post-editing experience can use. Through managing terminology, customizing the MT engine, and customizing the (MS Word-based) translation memory system, linguists can improve their post-editing efficiency dramatically. It is certainly true that each of these strategies involves a considerable and, with the exception of customizing the translation memory, ongoing effort. However, for any but the casual post-editor, the benefits of making these improvements in their tools and processes should be immediate.

Additional Reading


It would be tempting to view screenplay translation as a sub-genre of literary translation. After all, many screenplays are based on novels, are usually designed to tell a story, and contain dialogue, descriptions, and even poetic language—all of which are commonly found in novels. However, there are several aspects that distinguish a screenplay from a literary work and that have a bearing on its translation, both on the overall approach the translator needs to take and on specific translation choices.

In contrast to a novel, which is written to be enjoyed by the reader (the end user), a screenplay is the blueprint for a film, and its translation will, either immediately or after additional editing or rewriting, be retranslated, or to some degree interpreted, by the creative personnel involved in making the film. Thus, the translated screenplay is not only a target text, but simultaneously becomes a source text for this retranslation into the audiovisual medium. Like the screenwriter who uses the most precise language available to him or her to guide the future interpretation of the screenplay, the translator should create a precisely written source text so that it reflects as closely as possible the totality of the screenwriter’s intentions. And these intentions can only be understood by the translator through an awareness of the underlying dramatic structure of the work—character, plot and genre, audiovisual elements, and even, at times, psychology. The following examines the main challenges of this modality and provides some hints and tips on getting started.

**Basic Layout**

A screenplay is an industry document and must adhere to a standard layout, formatting, binding, and structure. Screenwriters tend to use professional screenwriting software that determines automatically the font, point size, and page layout, including the width of the dialogue columns, capitalization of the headings, numbering of the scenes, length of the lines, and the number of lines on a page. This very precise formatting is aimed at predicting the running time of the finished film: one page equates to roughly one minute of screen time. The most commonly used software is probably Final Draft, which allows users to choose the American or U.K. format (the latter is also used in the rest of the world). These formats differ in that American and Canadian screenplays are printed on 8.5 x 11 paper, whereas U.K. and European screenplays are printed on A4. Also, American screenplays use three screw pins in the script binding, whereas European screenplays use...
two. The producer or commissioner of the translation will probably take care of the binding, as the translator is likely to deliver the translation electronically. There is, however, one conundrum that needs to be addressed before the translation process starts: the overall length.

**Length**

Screenplays are usually 90-120 pages long, and the expectation is that they are tightly structured, so much so that Hollywood executives are known to flick through them to find certain events (such as inciting incidents, act breaks, and turning points) on certain pages. It is commonly acknowledged that translations can expand or contract by up to 20-30%, depending on the language combination. Hence, the initial negotiation between client and translator should touch on whether or not page numbers should be matched between the original and the translation. If they are required to match, then the translator needs to ask how to proceed without creating unnecessary constraints imposed by the limited space that here stands for the defined running time. In subtitling, the viewing public has come to accept that the time and special constraints imposed on subtitles means that the latter tend to be an edited version of the film’s dialogue and a more or less acceptable compromise. However, it would be unwise to subject a screenplay translation to potentially severe editing, given its status as a source text on which the work of the creative contributors to the film is based. Reducing the point size (in agreement with the client) may be a better solution in such cases.

**Why Translate a Screenplay?**

There are a number of reasons a screenplay might be translated. One reason may be that a writer in the target country may wish to adapt the screenplay for that particular market, or even the international market. This may require changing some of the settings, characters, and storylines. In these cases, all the target content writer requires from the translator may be the totality of the work without any need to worry about the overall number of pages of the translated work. If, however, the work is translated for the purpose of financing a film or television series, then there may be a good reason for matching the page numbers of the translation to that of the original. Other reasons for translating screenplays may be to seek permission for filming in other countries, to translate screenplays of well-known films for publication in book form, or to facilitate the work of creative contributors who are not fluent in the language in which the project is filmed. While English is spoken by most film professionals, there are occasionally complex co-production arrangements (usually to enable the financing of the film) that may result in the need for translations into one or several languages within the context of filming for cast and/or crew.

**Main Components**

The three key components of screenplays are the scene headings, the stage directions (or scene descriptions), and the dialogue.

**Headings:** Scene headings are usually numbered and capitalized, giving information on the lighting conditions required (exterior/interior), the location, and the time of day. It is worth bearing in mind that scene headings should be translated consistently, as they may later be used to sort locations within film scheduling software.

**Dialogue:** In film, screenwriters tend to follow the rule “show, don’t tell”: they try to tell the story through visual means rather than relying too much on dialogue to impart information. Hence, dialogue lines are usually kept short and to the point—in other words, they are highly edited versions of spoken language. In her book *Creating Unforgettable Characters*, Linda Seger compares good dialogue to a piece of music that has “a beat, a rhythm, a melody” and can be easily spoken. Each line of dialogue usually runs for no more than two or three lines, and the translator should take care to keep it as succinct as possible and to ensure that there is cohesion between the exchanges. Seger compares good dialogue to a tennis match that moves back and forth between the players, conveying “conflict, attitudes, and intentions. Rather than telling about the character, it reveals character.”

Good dialogue shows how a character deals with a specific dramatic situation that has already been set up. The translator should be sure to create dialogue that sounds authentic and idiomatic in the target language, and that reflects the speaker’s age, social standing, and, very importantly, any subtext conveyed, without allowing the latter to become explicitly stated. Screenwriters try to avoid dialogue that is “on the nose” (i.e., openly stating what their characters want). Translators of screenplays should try to retain any ambiguities in the target text and to use explicitation with great care.

**Stage Directions:** Arguably the most challenging aspect of screenplay translation is the translation of the stage directions/scene descriptions. These tend to be written in short, mostly active sentences in the present tense that describe the action and sounds in the most economical way possible, and often in a kind of shorthand, but not necessarily in grammatically complete sentences. The translator should replicate
the syntax of these short sentences, as they impart information in a specific order that parallels the intended visual language of the film. For example, in Anthony Minghella’s *The English Patient*, the sentence “An officer, German, focuses his field glasses.” should not be translated as “A German officer focuses his field glasses.” This is because the source text intends the audience to receive the information in small chunks. For example, we see the image of an officer, and only a split second later we realize that this officer is in fact German (the enemy), and (worse) that he focuses his field glasses in order to find our protagonist. Thus, this small sentence contains three separate pieces of information that build up the drama by slowly creating anticipation in the audience (and the reader). The following are some other important elements of stage directions the translator needs to keep in mind when working on a screenplay.

- **Maintain Order of Information:**
  The order in which information is given can also define an image. For example, in *The English Patient*, the sentence—“A web of scars covers the Patient’s face and body”—creates a visual statement. It should not be translated as “His face is covered by a web of scars,” as the focus would then shift onto the factual statement of where the scars are and lose the focus on the image of the scars themselves. In this case, there are two reasons for this. First, screenwriters often use so-called “active questions” to arouse curiosity in the viewer, and the unusual image of the web of scars suggests a close-up before revealing the remainder of the information—that the scarred face belongs to the English Patient. Second, in this particular scene, we see the world from the point of view of the English Patient, bearing in mind his psychological and physical state. Having sustained severe burns in a plane crash, he is being carried across the desert on a stretcher and can only see fragments of the world around him because his face is covered by a protective mask: “His view of the world is through slats of reed … He glimpses camels …” etc. The screenwriter has created a very clearly defined image here that suggests how the scene should be shot and possibly also edited, and seeing the action from the English Patient’s point of view means that we identify with him as our main character.

- **Maintain Capitalization:**
  Stage directions usually contain some words that are capitalized, which the translator must replicate. Capitalized words roughly fall into four categories: 1) all of the characters’ names are capitalized when the character is first introduced, 2) any important or main images are capitalized, 3) as are important sounds, and 4) camera instructions. In *The English Patient*, the description picks out a “SILVER THIMBLE” from a larger image and emphasizes it through capitalization. This thimble is important later on in the narrative as it comes to represent the intimacy and connection between the main character and his lover, Katharine. Capitalization signals to the director, cameraman, and editor (as well as the prop person) that this object must be seen clearly by the audience, either through a close-up, careful lighting (the thimble glints in the sun light) or, most likely, both.

- **Maintain Full Meaning of Verbs:**
  Another very important aspect of stage directions is the use of verbs. It is commonly said that adaptations from novels to screenplays involve the translation of descriptions into actions, and for screenwriters, action shown on screen is the currency of their craft. Hence the translator needs to pay particular attention to the verbs used and should try to replicate the full meaning of the original action as closely as possible. For example, in the adaptation of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the early scene during an air raid describes how a family rushes to the shelter after the siren “blares” (it does not just sound), and the characters grab (not just take), pluck (ditto), rush (not just run), scramble, shove, shepherd, yank, and tumble—all of which suggest the pacing of the action, the psychological state of the characters, as well as the chaos surrounding them. Verbs can also be used to describe the characters in the screenplay efficiently. For example, the reader will draw different conclusions about the character’s personality or the story at that point, depending on whether Johnny marches, saunters, or shuffles into the office, so these actions need to be portrayed with the same precision.

**Technical Elements**

The technical language contained in screenplays relates to different elements, including camera instructions, special or visual effects, sound or voice-over, or the pacing of the action. For instance, the words “A BEAT” usually signify a short pause (either in the delivery of dialogue or pacing of the action) to allow the audience to assimilate important
information. Special effects (SFX, usually created on set) or visual effects (VFX, usually created during post production) are marked as such, as are voice-overs (VO) and the off-screen sounds of dialogue (OFF). In terms of camera instructions, screenplays vary depending on whether they are American or British. American screenplays make liberal use of camera instructions such as “PAN DOWN,” “CLOSE ON,” etc., whereas U.K. screenplay conventions do not allow these. Instead, U.K. screenwriters are taught to suggest shots indirectly through descriptions of images. An example of this is the close-up suggested by the description of the scarring on the face of the English Patient mentioned earlier. Other terms include “FLASHBACK” and “(CONT’D)” for “continued” (this is usually inserted automatically by the screenwriting software at the end of each page). If the page breaks differently, then the translator can omit or move them accordingly.

**Screenwriting Theory**

Screenwriting theory has established a number of rules that help screenwriters shape their work to conform to audience expectations. The structure created will have a bearing on what the character does and what he feels at each point of the story, and hence also have an impact on translation decisions. A basic understanding of screenwriting theory is very helpful for translators so that they can decode the subtext of each scene.

A screenplay usually tells the story of a main character (the protagonist). It is divided into three acts: Act I (set-up), Act II (confrontation), and Act III (resolution). Screenwriters often speak of the “character journey” or “character arc” when they describe how the character first wants something, enters into conflict with an antagonist to get it, and changes in the process of obtaining it before the drama is resolved at the end. The expectation is that Act I and Act III each represent 25% of the screenplay, while Act II represents 50%. For example, Christopher Vogler’s model in his book *The Hero’s Journey* describes the different stages of the character’s journey and how these relate to the three acts. This journey is represented visually in Figure 1 above: the top right quadrant segment represents Act I, the bottom half represents Act II, and the top left quadrant segment represents Act III. Essentially, in the scenario depicted in Figure 1, when the film begins, we meet the hero in his or her ordinary world, then there is an “inciting incident” (here the “call to adventure”). Initially, the hero refuses this call, but then meets a mentor and finally crosses the threshold into new territory (the “special world”).

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of Act II). There the hero faces tests and meets allies and enemies, then approaches the innermost cave where he or she faces an ordeal, followed by death and rebirth, and receives a reward (e.g., the hero seizes the sword), and is then on the road back to the ordinary world. Following the final showdown and resurrection, the hero returns with the elixir (or the hero’s new knowledge/wisdom).

Each moment within the main character’s actual and psychological journey in the narrative can be related back to where it is found in the screenplay and vice versa, and therefore it can matter enormously to the translator whether the word or phrase to be translated is found: 1) at the beginning of the screenplay, where we meet the character in his or her everyday setting; 2) at the beginning of Act II, when the character has surrendered to the new challenge and has begun the journey (which may mean that the character is already in crisis to some extent, or there is a crisis brewing without it necessarily being acknowledged among the characters); or 3) at the point approaching the climax, where everything is out of control and the character struggles to overcome the obstacles to his or her goal in a final showdown. Key to making the right translation decisions is an understanding of the character’s psychological state and the subtext in each scene, so that the translation choices reflect the choices made by the writer and strengthen rather than weaken the established structure.

**Getting Started**

So now that you have a rough idea of what screen translation involves, how do you get started? Translators entering this field should begin by finding screenplays in their source and target language(s), many of which are available for free on the Internet. The use of parallel texts is the best strategy to ensure the accurate translation of technical terms. Translators can also search the latter individually on the web or look at film school websites, which often provide useful explanations. There are a number of free screenplay software packages such as Celtx or BBC Script Smart Gold, but Final Draft offers a free trial version for the first 30 days.

Although the challenge of translating a screenplay may sound daunting given the many technical aspects, it is ultimately creative, rewarding, and enjoyable work, and if you are offered a project, well worth doing.

**Notes**

2. Seger, 147.
How Not to Treat Your Customers

A powerful tool to learn about customer service and to get new ideas is to look outside of our industry. For example, I have learned quite a bit from my CPA, my dentist, my favorite airline, and my lawyer. Once in a while, I get treated the way I would not want to get treated, and I make a mental note. Here is a recent conversation (slightly changed) that I had with a pest control company. It reminded me of how important it is to explain one’s product or service to the potential customer without sounding condescending.

**Pest control place:** (mumbling) Pest control.

**Judy:** Um, hello, is this XYZ pest control on Bugkiller Avenue?

**Pest control place:** Yes.

**Judy:** Well, um, I have ants everywhere. Can you come out and give me an estimate? How much would it cost to get rid of them? I feel bad for killing them, but I don’t want them in my cereal.

**Pest control place:** That would be $150.

**Judy:** $150 for what?

**Pest control place:** To spray for ants. Or did you say you had cockroaches?

**Judy:** I get that, but how many times do you have to spray? How long will it take? What kind of products do you use? Is it safe for my dog? Do I have to leave the house? You seem reluctant to give me information here, and I don’t understand that. I am trying to give you business. Do you spray the chemicals on the wall?

**Pest control place:** Why would we spray the chemical on the wall?

**Judy (exasperated):** I have no idea where you spray it. I am not in the pest control business. I am merely asking questions, but you are not answering them.

**Pest control place:** I am sorry, I am just not feeling very good today. I apologize if I’ve been grouchy.

**Judy:** I hope you feel better, but I really don’t think this is going to work out. It seems like I’ve really inconvenienced you with this phone call, so I don’t want to inconvenience you any further.

**Pest control place:** I am so sorry! Look, we use an all-natural spray that’s safe for pets. You don’t have to leave the house. It will take about 20 minutes and we spray the baseboards in the house and also in the backyard.

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. Ideas and questions should be directed to judy.jenner@entrepreneuriallinguist.com.

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There are many phrases we use in English on a regular basis that do not have a direct translation into our other working languages. We may not even know how they became part of the English language. I have chosen a few to highlight in order to enrich our understanding of how these terms came to be.

The first, “top drawer,” is one that I ran across a few days ago when I saw a play by that same name. I concluded that it meant something that is the best, or the pick of the crop. Its meaning goes beyond this, however, and carries social implications. Someone who is top drawer is acknowledged to be the crème de la crème of society, which is exactly what it meant in the context of the play I saw. The term came into being because the social elite used to put their important papers and possessions in the top drawer of their dresser. Then there are sayings like “it costs an arm and a leg” (when something is very pricey), “you have a chip on your shoulder” (you are holding a grudge), “making no bones about it” (not leaving any room for doubt), and “it doesn’t cut the mustard” (something that does not meet expectations). The first one seems to have been popularized during World War II, when many soldiers paid the high price of war by forfeiting a limb. The second apparently rose from a local custom in the U.S. in the early 19th century, where boys wanting to fight would dare others to physically knock a chip of wood from their shoulder to instigate a fight. The saying “cutting the mustard” was easier to deduce because of references in the Bible describing how minute the mustard seed is, which makes it difficult to cut.

The saying “You’re barking up the wrong tree” (you are mistaken), originated from America’s English ancestry, in which hunting was prominent. At times hounds would apparently chase their quarry up a tree and start barking at the base of the wrong one. The phrase “quick and dirty fix” describes when something solves a problem but not in the best way. It appears to have come about in the 20th century in an environment related to mechanics.

A word I often use myself is “upshot,” meaning “result” (e.g., What was the upshot of the discussion?). It made it into our vocabulary through the field of sports, where it is used to describe the last shot in an archery match.

One of my favorites sayings, although very colloquial, is “he’s not the sharpest tool in the shed” (he is not the brightest person around). When life does not seem to offer any viable options, we have come up with idioms such as the more antiquated “you’ve put me between the devil and the deep blue sea,” or “between a rock and a hard place.” The first is easy to figure out: either we will be in the devil’s hands or at the bottom of the sea. The second, interestingly enough, arose after a union employment conflict in the U.S., where the miners involved were given the choice of working for very low wages or losing their jobs altogether.

I would love to hear some of your picks for a future continuation of this discussion, or about similar interesting phrases that have become mainstream in other languages. In the meantime, check out the sites below to learn more about the origins of some of your favorite phrases.

Idiom Origins
http://idiomorigins.net

Know Your Phrase
www.knowyourphrase.com

Information and Contacts

María Cristina de la Vega is certified as a Spanish<>English interpreter by the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the State of Florida, and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators. She is the president of ProTranslating, Inc., a language services provider in Florida. She blogs at http://mariacristinadelavegamusings.wordpress.com. Contact: mcdelavega@protranslating.com.

Be Sure to Renew: Membership renewals have been mailed. If you prefer to renew online, please go to: www.atanet.org/membership/renew.php. Thank you for being an ATA member in 2012 and please renew for 2013 today.
For better or worse, most of us in this world work in a Windows environment. If that is true for you, you can be assured that a lot of programs launch every time you start your computer. Why? I think it mostly has to do with the egos of software developers whose running inner monologues go something like this: “I invested a lot of time and love into the development of my program, so why would my customers not want to run it all the time? They’ll love it just as much as I do!”

Well, you and I know that this is not quite the case—even if we do have use for that particular program every couple of months, we would really appreciate it if it did not take up valuable computing resources for all those many days in between our uses.

(And yes, there might be reasons other than egomaniacal developers, such as automatic updates or faster boot times, but these potential advantages also do not justify wasting resources unless these programs are truly used all the time.)

So, how do we stop this?

There are two really easy ways to do it, and I can promise you that if you have never done this you will be amazed by the gain of speed and power that your computer will experience once you have gone through these steps and restarted your computer.

To see a list of your memory hogs, simply start the System Configuration utility by pressing WinKey+R and typing msconfig. (There are plenty of other ways to open System Configuration, but this works on all versions of Windows, including Windows 8.)

One of the tabs of the dialog box that will be displayed is Startup. You may be surprised by the many, many programs listed here, the vast majority of which can be unchecked so they will not start automatically the next time you start your computer. Of course, the question is where to start and where to end? Well, many of the entries are pretty self-explanatory: “Adobe Update Starter Utility” or “Google Update” say exactly what they do and what can be disabled. On the other hand, the purpose of “SSBkgdUpdate” might not be as apparent. Fortunately, you can search for these entries on special Internet lists (here is one: www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup_search.php), where you will quickly ascertain that most are superfluous.

(In Windows 8 and 8.1, you will find a link on the Startup tab to the Task Manager where you can disable the programs by selecting them and pressing the Disable button at the bottom of the dialog box.)

After this procedure, you will already have increased the speed of your computer after the next restart by quite a bit. You can do still more, though. There is another tab on the System Configuration utility that reads Services. Services are also programs that run in the background, and you have guessed correctly if you assume that your system will run more smoothly without many of those as well.

To start finding those that should be disabled, check the little “Hide all Microsoft services.” You do not necessarily need all the Microsoft services, but it is a much safer bet to avoid manipulating them; after all, you do not want to run into problems with your operating system. The remaining services will have relatively descriptive names, enabling you to recognize that items such as “iPod Service” or “Skype Updater” are to be unchecked. For the ones that you are not as sure about, press the WinKey+R again and type services.msc. This will open the Services panel where all services are listed with explanations that even the less technically minded among us can understand.

When you have unchecked all unnecessary services in the System Configuration dialog, click OK and you will be prompted to restart your computer. You do not have to do this, but go ahead and do it anyway, just to get a feel for how much nicer things will run from now on. And feel free to send me a selfie of your happy face (my kids just taught me that term).

One more thing: if you want to be like one of those developers and actually force a program to start every time you start your computer (like your e-mail program or a web browser),

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Fair disclosure: I have a positive bias toward most things Oxonian, and my shelves host several print editions of Oxford University Press dictionaries. I was tempted to document the unboxing of this new arrival, as the current fashion in social networks dictates, but could not resist and opened the parcel while at the post office. Then and there, I realized that this is not a new dictionary, but a reprint of the 1998 edition. Now consider that over the past 15 years, extensive and dramatic changes (mainly technological) have upped the pace in both English and Hebrew of creating neologisms and already outdating some of them. An example of this is offered in the dictionary’s introduction: Professor Kahane explains that “the Hebrew translation of ‘walkman’ (a personal cassette player) is קמפא [kaməp] in my phonetic transliteration, E.N. and no other ... Attempts to introduce a Hebrew-root based word ... have so far been rejected by native users....” Therefore, I asked my preteen daughter if she knew what a “Walkman” is. As she had no idea, I hinted: a small cassette player. Then I had to explain what an audio cassette is (or was). If you do not want to feel old and anachronistic yourself, do not repeat this experiment at home.

Content

The Oxford English-Hebrew Dictionary (OEHD) is a descriptive English-to-Modern Hebrew dictionary that tries to reflect the use of some nonstandard or nonpurist language, but often with no indication as to what is standard or otherwise. The following example can help explain. I tried my luck with some entries likely to differ between British English and American English:

tap n.
1. (for controlling flow): בור

faucet n. (USA): מוגфа

According to the Academy of the Hebrew Language (http://hebrew-academy.huji.ac.il/Pages/default.aspx), the accepted meaning of the word מוגфа (megufa) is no longer “faucet,” as it actually means a spigot as a plug, or a stopper, rather than a valve for controlling a flow. In this case, megufa is nonstandard, as it can be found in older texts. As for the word “tap,” there are several subentries for different meanings. So, why then is “faucet” different and why do botherez and megufa appear on one line as if they were synonyms? Likewise, on this same page, we see “fatigues,” a subentry of “fatigue,” and then separated by a semicolon are the mean-
ings for both “battledress” and “a shift to perform menial chores.” The proper meaning can be deduced in a given context, but this leads me to infer that this is not a book for beginners having only a basic command of English.

In the above examples, I have omitted the phonetics included with the main entries in an adapted International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) format. The IPA is based on the Roman alphabet and can be difficult for the non-specialist Hebrew speaker to read. Since this is unidirectional English>Hebrew, the logical choice would probably have been to transliterate the phonetics in Hebrew characters, as do some Oxford bilingual dictionaries for students. Of course, the distinctions of English-language vowel sounds cannot be expressed fully in Hebrew characters, not even with all of the diacritics detailed on page ix, where they are called “Pointing” (which is a debatable translation of the Hebrew word nqiqd).

Returning to the European/American usage, entries such as “lorry/truck” or “torch/flashlight” are covered, and so is the problematic “billion,” with a clear explanation of the difference in the usage in the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, and other countries. Nonetheless, I would prefer further detail about English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Nigeria), as they will probably pop up when reading English texts more often than the usage in France or Germany. I also checked “aerial/antenna” and “prep school,” where the differentiation looks fine.

The British “a golden handshake” can be found under “gold,” but not the American “golden parachute.”

A Hebrew speaker is less likely to need the entry for “kosher,” but there is no subentry for “kosher salt” or for “coarse salt.” “New Testament” appears both under “new” and under “testament,” but “New Covenant” does not. Other entries from Hebrew origin include “kibbutz,” where the English plural “kibbutzim” and the Hebrew singular are even provided. Right after that is an entry for “kibbutznik.” Are they essential? Probably not.

The entry for “Jew” includes the sub-sense of “excessively hard bargainer,” and the next column brings another pejorative, “Jim Crow.” Both are marked as derogatory—surprisingly, the British “Hebe” is not in the dictionary. Finding the slang term “johnny” for a condom is a relief, as some general dictionaries adopt a rather prudish approach. I dutifully checked all kinds of words related to sex and obscenities, and the OEHD is quite satisfactory for this purpose.

The technical language included has some flaws. For example, “LAN” is defined as רשת מחשבים, meaning a “computer network,” although with no indication of the sense of local. This leads to the fact that acronyms include a descriptive translation, but no explanation of what words are represented by the initials. Bear in mind that this dictionary was first published in 1996. There are entries for “Disk Operating System” and “floppy disk,” but no “flash memory” or “world wide web.” The entry for “cellular telephone” (actually, a subentry of “cellular”) renders “pelephone,” which is actually the brand name of the first company to offer that service in Israel, and telefon צלולארי. The colloquial uses are different (nayad, selulari, and the mentioned brand name, but never גלולארי).

Another surprise is that this volume does not include the names of countries. Adding them as an appendix would be a good idea. There are no appendices, no tables, and no illustrations, which in some cases could help to clarify matters. For example, for words like “ounce,” it would be handy to give the Hebrew reader in Israel not only the translation but the equivalent in grams as well.

**Overall Evaluation**

Overall, criticism is easier to write than the hard work that was indeed invested in this kind of endeavor. The binding for a paperback of this size is excellent, and so are the paper and the print, both in typeface and in size, making it a pleasant experience (not always the case when bidirectional text is involved). This dictionary is probably more for the advanced student, or an educated Hebrew speaker reading English texts, not for translators or linguists. However, I like it and will use it, as I see it now as one of the best published in this category thus far. In the long run, I will probably find more flaws as well as merits, as happens with many other tools.

Do some window-shopping before you buy! This being a reprint, many bookstores, both brick-and-mortar and virtual ones, are offering deep discounts.

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**GeekSpeak Continued from page 31**

you can do that also. Press WinKey+R, type shell:startup, and place a link to the program into that folder (you can create a link to a program by right-clicking on the <program>.exe file and selecting “Create Shortcut”).

No need to send a second selfie. ■
Until this month, the Translation Inquirer had been innocently imagining that the world of patents (where most of his work is) was a kind of Garden of Eden where human knowledge flourished, slowly but steadily pushing back the sectors of human existence where there are still inconveniences and inefficiencies to overcome. No more! The word is out and he finally got it: patent trolling, the practice of bringing unfounded lawsuits by law firms that buy up hundreds, even thousands, of patents, is now rampant. The term “patent trolling” has been around for 20 years. The owners of the patents often simply pay the fees for infringement, even though normally no infringement has occurred, simply to avoid further expense, both monetary and in court time. So, regrettably the serpent has entered this garden also, and the general public is the loser. I am sadder but wiser, and only hope that I never unwittingly work for a patent-trolling firm as a translator.

New Queries

(English>Swedish 1-14.2) Here is an item that was found on a spare parts list for a bowling alley pin spotter: “Mask light curtain finishing kit.” The kit includes a holder, small screws, and washers, etc.

(French>English 1-14.3) Here, regrettably, is a psychological evaluation report on a patient with alleged major depression, and the conclusion, in Quebec French, is concise: Conclusion: Il y a atteinte d’un plateau symptomato-clinique. What does this mean?

(Hungarian>English 1-14.4) Here is a legal contract in which the problem phrase is buried in an interior sentence. We had better supply more context to be sure we are applying due diligence: Házassági szerződésben szerepel: A házasság felbontását követően a kiskorú gyermek az édesanya gondozásába kerül azzal, hogy mindkét fél szülői felügyeleti joga fennmarad, az korlátozásra nem kerül. What do you make of the word in bold print?

(Italian>Czech [English] 1-14.5) A recircolo di sfere does not quite flow smoothly in this electrical engineering text: Lubrificare i pattini del carrello a ricircolo di sfere e pulire le guide di scorrimento. Can good Czech or English be supplied?

(Polish>English 1-14.6) To quote a part of this geological apparatus text, with the two difficult words in bold print, it speaks of: Wiercenia wykonano wiertnicą spalinową MWG-6 zamontowaną na podwoziu gąsienicowym, świadrami spiralnymi o średnicy 110 mm. In hopes that such context is sufficient, we present this as is.

(Portuguese>German [English] 1-14.7) The troubling six words of this query come from a Brazilian business contract. At the risk of gutting a good bit of the context, I will skip to the last part of the troublesome text that contains the section needing clarification: a outorga de fiança, emissão de notas promissórias, aceite de letras de câmbio, de avais e cauções pela Sociedade; para terceiros já depende de sócios.” Hone in on those bold words and provide good German or English, if you can, because the translator was utterly baffled by them.

(Russian>English 1-14.8) В режиме текущей обработки seems simple enough by itself, but in the pharmaceuticals context of this query, it is troublesome: Расход препарата в режиме текущей обработки определяется практическим (опытным) путем индивидуально для каждого бассейна, исходя из необходимости постоянно поддерживать уровень остаточного свободного хлора в пределах 0,3 – 0,5 мг/л. Who can help?
The concept of distance learning is bound to lead to new and unfamiliar terms. It may take an entire lengthy sentence to present the problem term in question (which is in bold print), but we need to do it: El interés de la UE consistió en financiar proyectos de “Cooperación en Gestión Institucional” que posibilitaran la “Gestión de Servicios de Extensión Universitaria” haciendo uso de las nuevas tecnologías y las metodologías docentes y pedagógicas relacionadas con la enseñanza semipresencial o no presencial, en modalidad e-learning.

Gems and minerals are always fun to deal with, and it has been too long since this column had them. The word ögonförande is troublesome, though, in the following: Sedimentådergnejser har stor utbredning liksom ögonförande gnejsgraniter. What is this adjective trying to say?

Replies to Old Queries

(Main structural frame of beams and columns) Margarite Heintz Montez consulted with German construction workers about this, and their conclusion was die Hauptbetonträger und Säulen des Baus.

(Nach Vorliegen der 3 ausstehenden Sputumbefunde): Oliver French suggests “in view of the sputum specimens submitted.” Margarite Heintz Montez goes with “after three comprehensive test results.” This part of the sentence, says Geoffrey Koby, cannot really be translated accurately with the rest of it, since the negative meaning of ergibt sich derzeit kein Hinweis auf eine ansteckungsfähige Lungen-tuberkulose influences the choice of translation for the first preposition. Stating up front that he is not a medical translator, Geoff proposes: “Now that the three pending sputum test results have been received, there are currently no indications of contagious pulmonary tuberculosis.”

(Daniela Pino suggests that the whole phrase could be translated as “The faculty of the subject who introduces the relevant judgment to identify ....”)

Italian>English 9-13.7 (specifica tecnica ... capitolo tecnico) Daniela Pino suggests that the former is a document defining the required characteristics of a product, such as quality level, use, safety, dimension, symbols, test case, packaging, branding, and labeling; in other words, a specification of the equipment. The latter is a document containing details of the work, the implementation methods of same, and materials that will be used or at least the requirements deemed necessary for proper execution. It can also define the rights and obligations of the two contracting parties, per chapters and in detail.

(UN Law Glossary as defining a ministerio fiscal as “Office of the Defender of the Rights of the State and Society.” The case in question, she believes, is going to that office for its report, something that is often done if children are involved. In the context material, she would like to correct jugado to juzgado.

2013 is far from over as I write this, but I want to convey my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this a successful column—again!

New Certified Members

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English into French</th>
<th>English into Spanish</th>
<th>German into English</th>
<th>Spanish into English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Isabelle T. Olesen</td>
<td>Angelica DeToma</td>
<td>Jeana M. Clark</td>
<td>Leonardo Duran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>Oak Park, MI</td>
<td>Pella, IA</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Di Tullio</td>
<td>Vicente L. Duran</td>
<td>Lynn M. Leazer</td>
<td>Vicente L. Duran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milford, OH</td>
<td>Detroit, MI</td>
<td>Verona, WI</td>
<td>Detroit, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Gutierrez</td>
<td>Oklahoma, NE</td>
<td>Julie L. Wilchins</td>
<td>Seattle, WA</td>
</tr>
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The ATA Chronicle  January 2014
Humor and Translation
Mark Herman

Salome

A translation can become canonical, that is, become accepted as the standard version in the target language. When the work is considered sacred, a new translation can cause the translator to be accused of error or worse, as were St. Jerome and Martin Luther, and efforts may be made to suppress the translation itself, as discussed in the July 2013 column for a translation of part of the Rāmāyana.

The story of Salome is not exactly sacred, but it is told in Matthew 14:3-11 and Mark 6:17-29, where she is the unnamed daughter of Herodias who dances before Herod and, at the behest of her mother, asks for and is given the head of John the Baptist as a reward, which she then turns over to her mother. The name Salome itself appears just twice in the Bible: in Mark 15:40, someone by that name is one of a group of women observing Jesus on the cross, and in Mark 16:1, someone by that name is one of a group of women bringing spices to anoint Jesus’ corpse, and who subsequently find the tomb empty.

Therefore, much of Oscar Wilde’s French play, Salomé, Drame en un acte (written in 1891 and first published in 1893) could not have been based on the Bible. Nor could Richard Strauss’ 1905 German opera, Salome, with a libretto by the composer based on a translation of Wilde’s play by Hedwig Lachmann. The biblical story does not ooze with decadence as do both dramatizations, includes no young Syrian committing suicide for the love of Salome, no conversation between Salome and John, no mention that Salome’s dance is a strip-tease, and no necrophilia (in the Bible, Salome does not kiss John’s severed head). And, as noted by David Ball in an essay in Translation Review 84 (2012), unlike the biblical story, Wilde’s play has “contrast and dissonance, a husband-and-wife exchange that could come from the world of comedy alternating with Salome’s unstoppable, tragic obsession” (50). As an example, Ball gives a few lines from Richard Howard’s 1978 translation:

Salome: Give me John’s head.
Herodias: That’s well said my daughter! You—you’re ridiculous with your peacocks.
Herod: Shut up. You’re always screeching. You screech like a peacock, and your voice annoys me. Shut up, I tell you. (Ball, 50)

Perhaps most important, Wilde’s play was not written in archaic or “biblical” French. The English version that most people know tries to echo the diction of the King James Bible with lines like “Ah, thou wouldst not suffer me to kiss thy mouth.” Written in 1894, it is by Wilde’s lover, Lord Alfred Douglas. Frequently reprinted, sometimes with unmentioned editorial changes, Douglas’ version has become canonical, persisting for more than a century and often taken to be the original, despite the fact that Wilde himself, in the famous Letter from Reading Gaol to Douglas, called the translation “unworthy of you ... as it was of the work it sought to render.”

In his essay, David Ball compares Wilde’s original with Douglas’ version and with later versions, including the one Ball most admires (though not unreservedly), the 2011 translation by Joseph Donohue. Among Ball’s comparisons are translations of the last line in Salome’s long speech to John’s severed head: “Il ne faut regarde que l’amour” (53-54). Ball calls it “one of those concise French constructions with a general meaning that poses hard problems for any translator,” especially since it is a “moving statement of Salome’s absolute credo that ... is crucial to the play.”

Douglas “solved” the translation problems by taking the coward’s way out. He omitted the line. Robert Ross, Wilde’s literary executor, later translated the line into the truly awful “Love only one should consider” and added it to Douglas’ translation without signaling his addition. This was also how R. A. Walker rendered the line in 1957. Richard
Howard’s 1978 translation added ideas from previous sentences and a term of address: “Love is the only mystery, love is the only thing to look at, prophet.” Richard Ellmann’s 1982 version is “We must think only of love.” And Joseph Donohue’s 2011 version is “Love is the only thing,” which Ball criticizes as too reminiscent of “some American pop song.”

And yet Wilde’s play survives. According to Ball:

There are many examples of [great works surviving bad translations]. The wit, the passion, and the tragedy of Wilde’s play may come through despite everything, on stage and even in print (although, to be honest, when I read Douglas, I can’t imagine how). (54)

Ball goes on to explain what does come through:

My theory is that a certain image of Salomé has replaced, in the minds of critics and spectators alike, the words they were actually hearing. Aubrey Beardsley, fin-de-siècle decadence, symbolism; it’s set centuries ago, in biblical times; the outrageousness of Oscar Wilde—it all comes together to form an idea of the play that is very different from the one Wilde wrote. (54)

By the way, Aubrey Beardsley was an early and famous illustrator of Salomé whose outrageousness matched that of Wilde. See for yourself. Many of his illustrations are viewable on the Internet.
Some Thoughts on MOOCs

(Posted by Corinne McKay on her blog, Thoughts on Translation, http://thoughtsontranslation.com.)

Massive open online courses, or MOOCs, are the hot new trend in online education (at least in the U.S.). I am one week into my second MOOC through Coursera (www.coursera.org), and here are some thoughts on the experience.

In general, I think that MOOCs are a great option for motivated learners with a specific goal. The course offerings are far more specialized than what you would find at a local adult education center or community college, and the price (most often free) is certainly appealing. You can work on your MOOC anywhere with an Internet connection, at any time of the day or night. Many MOOCs consist of online video lectures, which is great because you can pause the video, rewind it, look up a quick Wikipedia entry of a concept you do not understand completely, and so on. For example, my MOOC goal is to learn more about the science behind the international development documents I translate, so I am currently taking a course entitled “Epidemics: The Dynamics of Infectious Diseases,” offered by a team from Penn State.

The range of MOOCs is really staggering. Right now on the Coursera home page, you can sign up for courses ranging from jazz improvisation (taught by professors from the Berklee College of Music), to bioinformatics algorithms (University of California, San Diego), to a French course on business valuation (École des Hautes Études Commerciales Paris). The schools that offer these courses are top-notch, and thus they present an opportunity to take a course that is logistically and financially out of reach for many people. MOOC providers are also getting more savvy about what their students want. In the course I am currently taking, for example, you can get a certificate of completion (for getting at least an 80% on all assessments) or a verified certificate with distinction (for getting 100% on all assessments). Coursera’s newly launched signature program has already earned over $1 million, focusing on students who want to earn a credential from their MOOCs.

In just these two experiences, I have learned that all MOOCs are not created equal. The first MOOC I took was a general public health class, which was fine. It was certainly more interesting than reading a public health textbook, especially since I do not have a strong formal science background. However, the course was not really created for the online learning format. Most of the video lectures were taken with a camera in the back of the room during the professor’s live lectures, and they were uploaded in fairly long segments. In addition, the fact that the in-person students seemed a little disengaged from the material detracted from the experience. By contrast, the epidemics MOOC that I am currently taking is outstanding. The class has a huge team of instructors and developers, and was obviously developed specifically for this purpose. The videos are short (about six minutes each) and have excellent animations that accompany them. The videos are narrated by a bunch of different people, so they do not get monotonous. In addition, the staff seems to be spending a huge amount of time contributing to the online discussion boards for the class.

In my opinion, here are some caveats about the MOOC experience. If, like me, you are doing a MOOC because you realize that you should have paid better attention in those “throwaway” core classes in college, you are in the right place. I was too busy thinking lofty literary thoughts in college (and graduate school for that matter) to worry about the difference between macroparasites and microparasites.

Now, I am regretting that impulse, but Coursera has come to the rescue. In addition, I think that some of the classic criticisms of MOOCs, such as “there’s no interaction with the instructor,” “all of the assessments are multiple choice and graded by computer,” and so on, also apply to many of the courses one would take as an in-person student at a large research university.

Personally, I do not see MOOCs as a substitute for a solid, in-person, general education. I would not encourage my own daughter to bypass an undergraduate degree in favor of MOOCs. I agree that the human interaction element of education is important, and I even agree that graduate students can be excellent teachers. But for those of us who already have that general education and want to fine-tune our knowledge, I think that MOOCs are a great solution. ■

Information and Contacts

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