

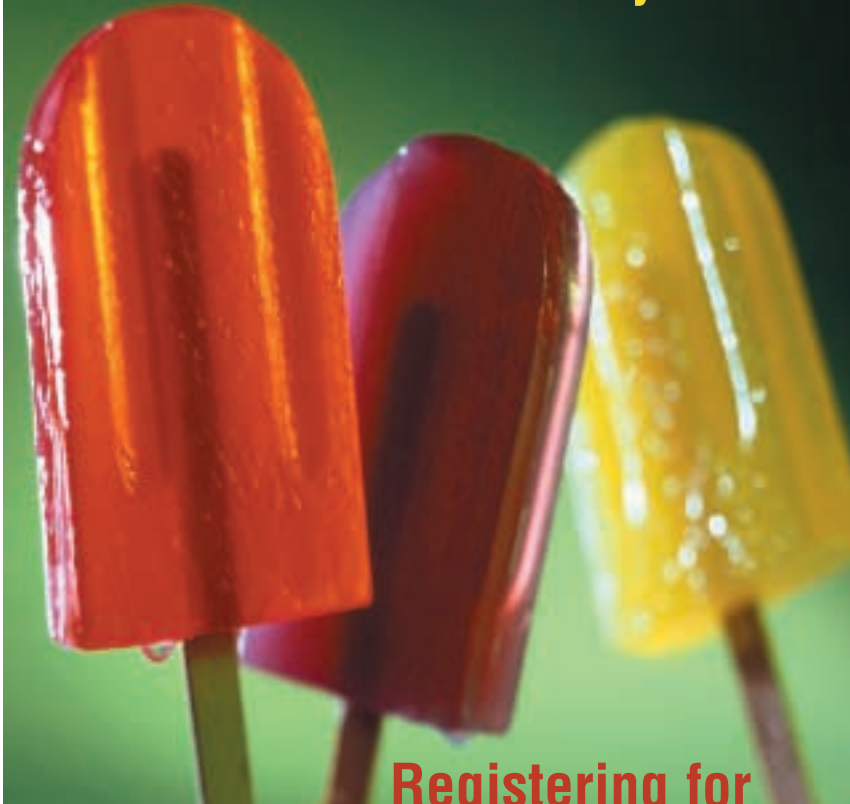
June 2002
Volume XXXI
Number 6

The *ata* Chronicle

A Publication of
the American
Translators
Association

in this issue
Adapting for Success

Don't Let Summer Sizzle By Without



Registering for

ATA's 43rd Annual Conference

Hyatt Regency Hotel • Atlanta, Georgia

November 6 - 9, 2002

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2002 *Chronicle* Editorial Calendar

January

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December 1

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Focus: Marketing
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January 1

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Focus: Legal Translating/
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August 1

November/December

Focus: Training and Pedagogy
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September 1

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The *ata* Chronicle

A Publication of the American Translators Association
1999 FIT Best Periodical Award Winner

The *ATA Chronicle* Submission Guidelines

The *ATA Chronicle* enthusiastically encourages members to submit articles of interest to the fields of translation and interpretation.

1. Articles (see length specifications below) are due the first of the month, two months prior to the month of publication (i.e., June 1 for August issue).
2. Articles should not exceed 3,500 words. Articles containing words or phrases in non-European writing systems (e.g., Japanese, Arabic) should be submitted by mail and fax.
3. Include your fax, phone, e-mail, and mailing address on the first page.
4. Include a brief abstract (two sentences maximum) emphasizing the most salient points of your article. The abstract will be included in the table of contents.
5. Include a brief biography (three sentences maximum) along with a picture (color or B/W). Please be sure to specify if you would like your photo returned. Do not send irreplaceable photos.
6. In addition to a hard copy version of the article, please submit an electronic version either on disk or via e-mail (Jeff@atanet.org).
7. Texts should be formatted for Word or Wordperfect 8.0.
8. All articles are subject to editing for grammar, style, punctuation, and space limitations.
9. A proof will be sent to you for review prior to publication.

Standard Length

Letters to the editor: 350 words; Opinion/Editorial: 300-600 words; Feature Articles: 750-3,500 words; Column: 400-1,000 words

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The ATA Chronicle (ISSN 1078-6457) is published monthly, except bi-monthly in November/December, by the American Translators Association.

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About Our Authors...

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ata



From the President

Thomas L. West III
president@atanet.org

ATA Goes to Sweden

In April, I had the honor of representing ATA at the annual meeting of the Swedish Association of Professional Translators (Sveriges Facköversättarförening), known by its Swedish initials SFÖ. Two of my goals in attending the meeting were to explore the possibilities of developing a Swedish-to-English accreditation examination, and to look for a speaker to provide continuing education for Nordic translators at our conference. I am pleased to report that Robert George Dewsnap, an experienced medical translator who has taught translation at Lund University, will be presenting a half-day seminar in Atlanta on medical translation for Nordic translators (particularly those who translate between Swedish and English). On the accreditation front, I was able to procure the passages from the most recent examination administered by the Association of

Authorized Translators in Sweden, and am hopeful that we can get the ball rolling on Swedish accreditation this year.

ATA was well represented at the conference. Our own **Susan Larsson**, who now heads up the English Network in SFÖ, gave one of her popular talks (in Swedish!) on how to search the Internet. **Chris Durban** brought down the house with film clips and a presentation on “Getting Intelligent Feedback: Translator Image and Interaction.” Also in attendance were ATA members **Dan Lufkin**, **Mireille Key**, **Per Dohler**, **Tonia Tell-Cerexhe**, **Lisbeth Mejer**, and **Lars Wiggers-Jepesen**.

I was invited to introduce ATA at a plenary session, and also gave a talk on legal language to the English Network. One of the exciting things I learned there is that the English Network has published two booklets

that will be of great interest to anyone working in the Swedish-English language combination. One of them is a guide to *Translating Names*, and the other is entitled *Pitfalls in Swedish-English Commercial Translation*. I plan to see whether our Nordic Division can make these booklets available for sale to our members. I also received from SFÖ member David Kendall an annotated list of resources for translators working in Swedish. David has kindly given us permission to publish the list in a future issue of the *ATA Chronicle*.

Finally, one of the exhibitors, Wordfinder AB (www.wordfinder.se), produces a CD-ROM that contains almost every significant dictionary in the Swedish-English language pair. This means that a translator can click in one place and search for a term in

Continued on p.51

Announcing

An ATA Professional Development Seminar

ATA's The Business of Translating and Interpreting Seminar Wyndham Hotel Boston, Massachusetts • August 10, 2002

This seminar features an in-depth look at the business of translating and interpreting. More information on the program will be e-mailed to all members and posted on the ATA website. All presentations will be in English.

Plus, an ATA accreditation exam sitting is scheduled for Sunday morning, August 11, in the hotel. (A separate registration is required for the exam. Please contact ATA Headquarters for more information.)

Space is limited. To register, contact ATA Headquarters at 703-683-6100 or visit the ATA website—www.atanet.org— On the home page, click on the Business Seminar link.

A few rooms have been reserved at \$169 a night, plus tax. To reserve a hotel room, contact the Wyndham at (617) 556-0006. Be sure to mention that you are attending the ATA seminar.

See page 57 for complete information.

Fee: \$165 ATA members; \$245 nonmembers • After August 1: \$235 members; \$330 nonmembers

Plan Ahead: Court Translating and Interpreting Seminar • San Francisco, California • September 14, 2002



From the Executive Director Walter Bacak, CAE Walter@atanet.org

ATA Professional Development Seminars Continued

I wrote in my March column, "Past feedback has told us that ATA members want more professional development opportunities than just the Annual Conference." I can now take this a step further and say more than 100 members registered for the ATA Medical Translation and Interpreting Seminar held in Chicago, May 18. While I don't have the feedback yet from this seminar, it was a success by the numbers.

ATA Professional Development Seminars are one-day educational sessions that focus on a specific area (e.g., medical translation and interpreting). The sessions feature subject-matter experts with real-world experience.

Building upon the success in Chicago, we have scheduled the next seminar: The Business of Translating and Interpreting, Wyndham Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts, August 10, 2002. ATA Professional Development

Chair Marian S. Greenfield, who coordinates the content for the seminars, says this seminar will have something for everyone: freelancers, small business owners, and even in-house employees.

The final content reflects the results of a broadcast survey we conducted. We asked you what topics you would like to see addressed. We were pleasantly surprised with more than 500 responses filled with great ideas. While we can only focus on a handful of topics, at most, during a one-day seminar, we will definitely be able to use these ideas for future seminars.

Following The Business of Translating and Interpreting, we are finalizing the details for Court Translating and Interpreting, in San Francisco, California, September 14, 2002. Mark your calendar and be sure to watch the *ATA Chronicle* and the ATA website for more information

and to register for these ATA Professional Development Seminars.

Watch your mailbox!

The *ATA Membership Directory* will be mailed this month. Be sure to check your listing and let us know of any changes or corrections. The *Membership Directory* is only mailed to ATA members and is designed to facilitate communication among members. (The online directories are for marketing members' services to companies and the general public.)

The *ATA 43rd Annual Conference Preliminary Program* will be mailed in late July. The information will also be available online. Plan now to attend this year's conference in Atlanta, Georgia, November 6-9.

ata

Attention Exhibitors

American Translators Association 43rd Annual Conference

Atlanta, Georgia • Hyatt Regency Hotel • November 6-9, 2002

Plan now to exhibit at the American Translators Association's 43rd Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, November 6-9, 2002. Exhibiting at the ATA Annual Conference offers the best opportunity to market your products and services face-to-face to more than 1,500 translators in one location.

Translators are consumers of computer hardware and software, technical publications and reference books, office products, and much more. Face-to-face selling, as you know, is the most effective and successful method of marketing. The ATA Annual Conference is the perfect venue, and you are assured of excellent visibility.

Exhibit space is limited, so please reserve your space today. For additional information, please contact Brian Wallace, McNeill Group Inc.; bwallace@mcneill-group.com; (215) 321-9662, ext. 38; Fax: (215) 321-9636.

Letters to the Editor

NSA/CSS Responds to Terrorism

Members of the ATA, the premier U.S. professional association for translators and interpreters, should know the truth about their government's fight against terrorism, so I would like to respond to Rina Ne'eman's article, "Translating Terrorism" (*ATA Chronicle*, March 2002, Volume XXXI, Number 3). I answer both as the National Security Agency/Central Security Service Senior Language Authority and as a language professional myself.

Ms. Ne'eman is correct in stating that "intelligence is the most critical link in the prevention of international terrorism,... [that] uncompromisingly accurate translation is one of the most critical components of intelligence," and that those in the U.S. translation industry are in a unique position to help in this fight. However, she bases her article on erroneous assumptions and unsubstantiated assertions about the language professionals who are on the battle lines now. First, she assumes that the U.S. Intelligence Community (IC), in particular the FBI and the National Security Agency, is waging the war against terrorism using contracted, untrained, and uninformed translators who happen to be native speakers, like the Arabic-speaking welder whom she mentions. Second, she states that government language proficiency tests are "ridiculously easy, and do not constitute any real indication of suitability to the mammoth job." And third, she says that the government pay for translators is far below what expert translators earn. These statements are far from the truth.

To be more specific, first, Ms. Ne'eman's not-too-polite statement that "it is no secret in the translation industry that the finest translators and interpreters are not often to be found in [these] government agencies..." is completely unfounded. A statement such as this, with no reference to any research or survey, is surely suspect at any time. The truth is that the IC

employs thousands of full-time language professionals as salaried, regular civil servants and military personnel. In fact, the IC's civilian agencies are our nation's largest employer of language professionals, and these include the best and the brightest, who do not stop at translation, but rather synthesize and report a wide variety of materials. Many hold high-level security clearances which enable them to translate, process, analyze, and report on sensitive, classified information vital to our nation's security. They are largely unknown to Ms. Ne'eman and to other commercial and freelance translators because they do not need to network and search out translation jobs. If they hold security clearances, they do not put themselves in the spotlight when they attend conferences and other public meetings. They do not, and must not, discuss their work in public. It is true that government agencies contract for translators, but the number of contractors is quite small compared to the size of the full-time workforce. The work these contractors do is often limited in scope; as nongovernmental assets, they are generally not the analysts who interpret the information for policymakers and generals within the language intelligence context. That "next step" of language work is left to full-time government resources precisely to avoid Ms. Ne'eman's high school math scenario. One problem the IC has encountered is that security clearances require U.S. citizenship, which many expert translators do not have.

Second, regarding government language testing, Ms. Ne'eman is also far from the mark. Many U.S. government language professionals hold ATA accreditation in their language pairs. They have found the government test batteries as challenging, or even more difficult than, the ATA accreditation exam. The latter has five texts, geared to a variety of topics but not to a specific level of difficulty, of which two

must be translated very well. An aspirant for ATA accreditation may be able to choose two lower-level texts and become accredited. In contrast, U.S. government exams are calibrated to the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR)/ACTFL Proficiency scales (0 to 5 in Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing). The ILR/ACTFL scale describes the difficulty and complexity that language professionals must be able to handle at each level and between levels. The government's professional level proficiency is at least 3/3+, which is just under that of highly educated native fluency. The following is a quote from the description of Level 3+ Reading proficiency:

Can comprehend a variety of styles and forms pertinent to professional needs. Rarely misinterprets such texts or rarely experiences difficulty relating ideas or making inferences. Able to comprehend many sociolinguistic and cultural references. Able to comprehend a considerable range of intentionally complex structures, low-frequency idioms, and uncommon connotative intentions....

(For complete ILR Proficiency Scale descriptions, see www.fmc.utm.edu/~rpeckham/ilrhome.html.) A language specialist with Level 3/3+ understands the technical complexities of the war against terrorism.

Ms. Ne'eman's third unfortunate statement is that trained translators who could work in the highly specialized fields needed for the translation war against terrorism would not work for the low government wages offered. It is true that no one gets rich working on the federal government's pay scale, and also that highly trained private sector translators in specialized fields and in less-commonly available languages may earn a lot of money. However, the federal salaries are not so bad, and our language professionals go home every night ➡

knowing they have really made a difference to our national security. Many freelance translators often work hand-to-mouth, spending time constantly searching for jobs and working more than 40 hours per week at non-language jobs to make ends meet. An average civilian professional federal language analyst working in the Washington, DC area may easily make \$75,000 (Grade 13/Step 5), and government benefits are solid. (For the government pay scale, see www.opm.gov/oca/02tables/indexGS.htm.)

I personally invite any skilled, professional translator who wishes to investigate a position with the U.S. government at this crucial time to look at the NSA website (www.nsa.gov) and at the websites of other IC agencies. Each has employment information. Don't be taken in by inflammatory criticism and unsupported statements about our government's actions in this translation war. We are fighting with the right tools, highly expert language professionals, and we could use more of them.

Renee M. Meyer

NSA/CSS Senior Language Authority

An Insider's Point of View A Response to "Translating Terrorism" by Rina Ne'eman

The role of the FBI translator is highly specialized and dedicated to a field that is unknown to the outsider.

FBI translators are, first and foremost, selected for their trustworthiness and loyalty. This selection takes precedence in light of the nature of the work and national security issues. The second priority in selecting FBI translators is the ability a prospective employee has in a foreign language. A generalized test is given which reflects well-roundedness in the foreign language as well as a good command of the English language. At this point, the specialization process begins. The FBI translator is introduced to all jurisdictional cases, Bureau terminology, and idiosyncrasies of government work. Through experi-

ence, the novice translator becomes a highly specialized weapon against any threat to our national security.

The government's need for translators is great, but no amount of outside experience or specialization can effectively prepare a translator for the nature of FBI work.

E.S. Morgan

Machine Translation Misunderstood

After reading the article, "Kevin Hendzel Sets PBS Viewers Straight..." (March 2002 issue), I felt I needed to respond as my "outreach activity for client education."

As a professional translator (with a master's degree from the Monterey Institute) turned machine translation (MT) insider (I've worked for a leading MT provider), I quickly learned that MT is easily misunderstood by those who are not educated about its abilities or its limitations. As such, MT has suffered from exaggerated claims and impossible expectations.

First, you must realize that MT has never claimed that it produces perfect translations, nor has it claimed to be able to replace human translators. It has a very distinct purpose...to allow people to quickly understand the "gist" of a given text or document written in another language. It is, therefore, not suitable for those wishing publication-quality translations.

In addition, it is not suitable for literary- or journalistic-style texts, which often contain references, ambiguities, idiomatic expressions, and metaphors, such as the example in Durst's writing, "the red, white, and blue bowling ball on the ping pong table of commerce," mentioned in the article. MT is most successful in technical texts because the writing styles must be simple and straightforward to be effectively understood by the reader.

Second, Kevin's practice of translating a sentence into Italian, then back again into English, is a very serious no-no in determining the quality of a MT system. When you

translate a sentence, a certain degree of inaccuracy is involved. Therefore, when you translate this slightly inaccurate sentence back into the original language, you get the translation inaccuracy of the first sentence multiplied by the inaccuracy of the second translation. The more you translate the text back and forth, the more inaccurate the translation will be.

In addition, it is important to note that MT systems are not comprised of one-to-one dictionaries that give the same word regardless of which direction you are translating between two given languages. They consist of unidirectional systems (translating only from one language into another, not both ways) that involve complicated programs which analyze context and syntactical and grammatical structures. Therefore if, say, you wanted to translate the English word "office" into French, you would get "bureau." If you then take "bureau" and translate it back to English, you get "desk." This is just one example of how MT is not designed to perform one-to-one translations.

Most importantly, however, is the use of Babelfish as the definitive source for judging the quality of MT systems. It must be known that Babelfish is the very basic form of the underlying MT system. It does not allow for any customization, which is precisely why it is offered free to the public. Those concerned with translation quality who wish to implement MT into their environment must make a serious commitment. They must utilize the various tools available for customizing lexicons, adhere to industry standards in terms of the vocabulary, style, and content used in documents which are to be translated, and, quite possibly, invest in customized improvement of the software itself. The implementation of one or more of these methods may result in a very high quality of translation.

Until people fully understand the complexities involved with MT, as well

as the purpose it serves, MT will continue to be criticized, attacked, and be the brunt of much undeserving jokes.

Shannon Clark
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Kevin Hendzel Responds

Public misunderstanding of machine translation (MT) is indeed the issue, and you are quite right to point that out. Your comment that “MT has never claimed that it produces perfect translations, nor has it claimed to replace human translators,” unfortunately, contradicts the historical record, particularly the sustained chorus of techno-hype on MT in the popular media dating back 30 years.

Claims that MT was faster and superior to humans and would “completely replace human translators within the decade” can be traced to speculative media predictions issued by MT researchers from Bunker-Ramo, IBM, and Itek Corporation from the late 1950s through the early 1960s. These same claims were repeated throughout the 1960s to justify U.S. government investment in early MT (although the government shut down funding for MT research for a while in 1966 following the devastating ALPAC Report that dismissed the technology as “hopelessly uneconomical” for the foreseeable future.)

Many translators may recall the ungainly “FAHQ” acronym tossed around in the early 1980s, a term commonly expanded as “fully automatic high-quality translation,” which was, of course, the explicit goal of MT research in that decade. The term “high-quality” implied a level of performance quite distinct from “gisting,” with software marketing departments claiming applications and accuracy levels that raised MT to commercially viable levels as a possible alternative to human translation. (For example, IBM claimed essential success in 1983 using a statistical approach, and took great pride in the fact that their quality level seemed to improve as they fired

more linguists from their staff.) The defining characteristic of this era was that MT was consistently offered (and clearly over-sold) as a perfectly reasonable alternative to human translation, albeit one with a few bumps along the road. These obvious shortcomings in the technology were impatiently dismissed with a wave of the hand and a promise that the solutions were just around the corner. Admittedly, the greatest offenders in this campaign were MT vendor marketing departments and the popular media, both of which had ulterior motives in hyping the technology to draw in buyers and readers, respectively.

What changed the target market of MT from “high-quality” to “gisting” was the Internet. Raw MT was born for “gisting,” as you rightly point out, but prior to the World Wide Web, there was no body of content available electronically that was suitable for fast, easy, and free translation. The low-quality “gisting” application of MT was, in many ways, a “solution in search of a problem” before the Internet age. Now that raw MT is used so successfully for “gisting,” we must resist the temptation to declare this very limited application constituted the entire scope of historical claims for MT.

Having said all this, industrial MT systems employing controlled English as well as pre- and post-editing by translators were, of course, successfully developed and employed by such companies as Caterpillar and Siemens. The public was almost never exposed to these very focused applications because they were too complicated to explain in a sound byte.

This brings us back to the issue of public education and expectations. It is important to remember that Will Durst was seeking a perfect solution to leaping the language barrier when he interviewed me on the PBS show “Livelyhood.” He was not asking for a device that “creates a certain degree of inaccuracy.” He wanted to

know whether there was a technological solution he could use to communicate accurately and effectively. The answer to that question is, of course, “no.” The media’s fascination with MT and other technologies has led the public to believe otherwise, which is why the question was posed to me in the first place. Many readers may recall Eduard Hovy’s silly prediction in *Byte* magazine in 1993 that a translating telephone would allow an English-speaking customer to converse in Japanese “within the decade.” Recently, we were treated to Bill Clinton’s equally mindless prediction in a nationally broadcast State of the Union Address that translating machines would soon be available that could “translate as fast as you can talk.” How could we expect Will Durst or other members of the public to understand that these predictions are simply nonsense? It is critical for ATA to take the lead in educating the public on the limits of MT and its proper applications—a task that has not been well addressed in the past (among other issues, this misunderstanding of raw MT capabilities has had a serious impact on translators’ income). I decided to use Babelfish to show the weaknesses in any automated system and to demonstrate the ambiguity and complexity of language—important points we should seek to emphasize to the public. There was also a humor benefit, which was important to the overall tenor of the show. Although I recognize that a round-trip run of his text through the MT engine may not have portrayed MT at its finest, it was the simplest way to show, in English, how those “inaccuracies” would show up to a foreign reader.

On balance, did my comments accurately convey that perfect MT was many, many years away? I think so. Will wanted to know whether Hovy’s Japanese translating telephone exists today, and, if so, where he could find it. The fact is that the public

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Conferences and Events

Washington, DC

**Translators Discussion Group
Borders Books and Music
18th & L Streets, NW**

Meets the second Wednesday of each month from 6:30-8:00 pm at Borders. For more information, please contact Lily Liu at LilyLiu99@aol.com

La Rochelle, France

**The Société Française des Traducteurs
First Summer Seminar for Financial Translators
July 10-12, 2002**

In today's global markets, skilled translators capable of adapting highly specialized financial texts from one language to another are in short supply. Yet demand is on the rise, as investors and financial specialists seek accurate information in their own language. SFT's (www.sft.fr) first summer seminar for financial translators will bring together professionals from the financial services industry to provide insights into the way they operate and their communications goals. For further information, contact sft_tradfin_LR@hotmail.com; Tel: +33 (0) 1 42 93 58 02.

Vancouver, British Columbia

**XVI World Congress of the International Federation of Translators
Translation: New Ideas for a New Century
August 6-10, 2002**

Canada is proud to welcome the XVI FIT Congress to Vancouver, British Columbia. It kicks off August 6, 2002, with the welcome reception and on-site registration, and the Congress itself runs three and a half days, August 7-10. This is the first time in over two decades that the Congress has taken place in North America, so we're happy to continue the tradition of welcoming hundreds of delegates from all corners of the world. Recent Congresses have been held in Mons, Belgium (1999), Melbourne, Australia (1996), Brighton, England (1993), Belgrade, Yugoslavia (1990), and Maastricht, the Netherlands (1987). For more information, please visit www.fit-ift.org.htm.

Lincoln, Nebraska

**Nebraska Association for Translators & Interpreters
Third Annual Regional Conference
"Bringing Down Barriers"
Holiday Inn Downtown
(Haymarket area)
August 15-17, 2002**

Who Should Attend? Translators, interpreters, language professionals, students of foreign language and international trade, social services personnel, law enforcement personnel, administrators coordinating language access, compliance officers, freelance and staff bilingual service providers. Several registration options are available. Check the website (www.natihq.org) for details. Discounted registration fees for NATI members and special hotel rates available. To be added to our mailing list, contact nati@cam-omaha.com.

Cambridge, England

**18th Intensive Course in Simultaneous Conference Interpretation
August 18-31, 2002**

Participants will interpret for guest speakers on a wide range of general and technical subjects under authentic conference conditions. In addition to the core curriculum, there will be specialized discussions in a variety of fields (for example, consecutive, on-site translation, use and preparation of texts, booth and stress management, marketing and negotiation, interpreting approaches to Shakespeare and the Bible, etc.), and briefings on the International Association of Conference Interpreters, the international institutions, and the profession. The course languages are English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish. The language of general instruction is English. Early enrollment is recommended. For information, including a detailed course brochure and application forms, please contact: Christopher Guichot de Fortis; Tel: (+32-2) 654-2080; Fax: (+32-2) 652-5826; E-mail: defortis@belgacom.net. (Note: *This course is specifically designed for conference interpreters only.*)

Slavonice, Czech Republic

**Slavonice International Translators Conference 2002
September 19-22, 2002**

For more information, please contact: Zuzana Kulhankova
Jana Zizky 2, 378 81 Slavonice
Czech Republic
Tel: +420-332-493777
Fax: +420-332-493770
Mobil: +420-605-726432
E-mail: zuzana007@hotmail.com
www.scholaludus.cz

Cambridge, Massachusetts

**6th Annual Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association Conference
"Unheard Voices"
Cambridge College
1000 Massachusetts Avenue
October 25-26, 2002**

For information or to be placed on the mailing list, contact either Joy Connell at (617) 626-8133 (joy.connell@dmh.state.ma.us) or John Nickrosz at (617) 636-5212 (jdnickrosz@aol.com).

Call for Manuscripts

**Multilingual Matters Series
Professional Interpreting in the Real World**

Suggested topics: Method (field-specific); Procedure (field-specific); Regulations (field-specific); Interpreting Equipment (conference and legal); Education (basics per field, advanced skills per field, advanced theory per field); Skills (memory retention exercises, note taking, troubleshooting per field, and specific language pair applications). The series editor will be pleased to discuss proposals with potential authors. Please send them to: c/o Multilingual Matters Ltd., Frankfurt Lodge, Clevedon Hall, Victoria Road, Clevedon, BS21 7HH, U.K.; or by e-mail to tommi@multilingual-matters.com. Guidelines for book proposals can be found on our website (www.multilingual-matters.com).

International Certification Study: Argentina

By Jiri Stejskal

With this article we enter the second year of the series on international certification, launched in the June 2001 issue of the *ATA Chronicle*. A year ago, my objective was to present readers with abstracts from the numerous letters and e-mails we received from institutional members of ATA, in addition to members of the International Federation of Translators (FIT), in response to our inquiry about certification procedures in their respective countries and their willingness (or lack thereof) to cooperate with ATA in the area of accreditation and certification. I was planning to go through the stack of the letters, write a few articles, and be done with it. This undertaking, however, turned out to be quite interesting, and the project has taken on a life of its own. As the study enters a more mature stage and as more issues become clearer than at its outset a year ago, I am actively seeking more information and feedback from officials and members of language organizations worldwide.

While the main objective of the study—to learn more about certification and similar programs of non-U.S. professional organizations for translators and interpreters—has not changed, the method of collecting information and the horizon of the study have changed substantially. Very soon after the launch of the study, I realized the risks of presenting information based on a single source, as was the case with the opening article on the Brazilian ABRATES. Since then I have made an effort to contact as many knowledgeable persons in the area of certification in the given country as reasonably possible, and to conduct adequate research for each article. To my delight, the response has been both positive and overwhelming, and the study has become more objective and

informational. This brings me to the expanded horizon of the study. I presented some background information and partial results of the study at the ATA conference in Los Angeles last year, and I am planning to present on this topic again at the FIT Congress in Vancouver and the next ATA conference in Atlanta. The purpose of these presentations is not to describe the study and reiterate what has been said in the pages of the *ATA Chronicle*. Rather, I am seeking input from the

...In Argentina, the only way to become Traductor Público (i.e., sworn/legal/certified public translator), is to earn a university degree...

audience in order to come up with ideas as to how to interpret the collected information, as well as how to chart the future course of the study. Ultimately, with the help of all those who are willing, I would like to conduct a detailed survey on certification procedures in various countries in order to be able to produce statistically (and otherwise) meaningful results. These results will help us to reexamine our own accreditation process and, I hope, will provide an impetus for more active cooperation with non-U.S. language organizations.

It is only fitting that we start the second year in South America again. For the information presented here, I am particularly indebted to: Beatriz Rodriguez and Graciela Steinberg, president and treasurer of the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires

(CTPCBA), respectively; Estela Herrera and Daniela Camozzi, both ATA members, certified translators, and active members of CTPCBA; Graciela Perillo, ATA member, certified translator, former member of CTPCBA's Executive Committee, and active member of CTPCBA; Marta Baduy, member of the Colegio de la Provincia de Córdoba and teacher at the Facultad de Lenguas of the University of Córdoba; and Miriam Golía and Natascha Ostroumoff, both ATA members, currently serving as president and vice-president of the Asociación de Traductores Públicos e Intérpretes de la Provincia de Buenos Aires (ATIBA), respectively.

In Argentina, the only way to become Traductor Público (i.e., sworn/legal/certified public translator [“certified public translator” hereinafter]), is to earn a university degree. In order to be admitted to such a program, prospective students must pass an admission language examination. The university programs vary from four to five years. Graciela Perillo has compiled a detailed list of participating universities and relevant syllabi. The scope of this article does not allow for such detailed information, but the data can be obtained directly from Ms. Perillo at perillog@lvd.com.ar. In most Argentine universities, the translation degree is offered for English and French, although the Universidad de Buenos Aires offers instruction in a number of other languages. In the last few years, Portuguese has been added in many universities, both public and private, in support of the MERCOSUR Treaty.

Argentine universities grant professional diplomas, for instance, in medicine, law, architecture, and, unlike universities in the U.S. and elsewhere, translation. In the translation studies program, students can earn either ➡

a scientific and literary translation diploma or a public translator diploma. University courses leading to the public translator diploma are focused mainly on legal translation. As such, the syllabi comprise many courses in law. A public translator can act as a certified public translator once licensed by a colegio profesional (professional board). Colegios, similar to U.S. Bar associations, have been created through a provincial law passed by province legislature. Registration with the colegios enables translators to certify their translations, but only in the particular provinces where these organizations exist. Only 5 out of the 23 provinces have a colegio (Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santa Fe, Catamarca, and, the newest colegio, La Rioja). In those provinces where there are no colegios, translators can apply for their “matrícula” at the respective courts. Once licensed, certified public translators have their own individual stamp and are entitled to vouch for the accuracy of their translations (a similar arrangement exists in many European countries). To work as a scientific or technical translator, no license is required, and there is no certification program in place.

The largest of the colegios, the Colegio de Traductores Públicos de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires, was created by National Act No. 20,305 of 1973, which governs the profession in the City of Buenos Aires. Pursuant to Article 4 of this Act, in order to act as a certified public translator you are required:

- To be an Argentine citizen (if naturalized, you must have had Argentine citizenship for at least five years);
- To be of age;
- To have a university degree granted by:

1. a national university, or
 2. a provincial or private university duly authorized by the Federal Executive (Ministry of Education), or
 3. a foreign university (provided the diploma has been recognized by a national university); and
- To register with the competent collegiate/professional body.

Also of interest in terms of legal certification procedures is Act No. 7834, which controls and governs the practice of certified public translators in the province of Córdoba, and which has been adopted as a model by groups of translators in different provinces of the country that are working to become translator associations. Detailed information on this Act is available from Marta Baduy at msbaduy@esl.unc.edu.ar.

Upon registration with a colegio, translators take an oath that they will accurately translate all documents. They are then given a license number which they have to use when signing a statement at the bottom of their translations:

“I, [name], an Argentine Certified Public Translator practicing in [city], license No. [license number], certify and attest that the foregoing is, to the best of my knowledge and ability, a true translation into [target language] of the original document in [source language] which I have had before me. Given under my hand and seal in [city] on [date].”

Certified public translators are considered to be assistants to justice. While they can perform activities in any field of translation and interpretation, they are the only ones authorized to act in an official capacity as court assistants,

experts, and/or interpreters. Certified translations are required in a number of official contexts: personal documents, certificates and diplomas, public deeds, documents that are involved in legal actions, expert witness reports, and also for commercial documents such as contracts, balance sheets, and corporate documents (bylaws, etc.). A certified translation will also be required in circumstances involving other types of documents, such as medical reports or expert opinions that are part of a legal procedure or an audit or a claim in an insurance company.

There are many different organizations for translators and interpreters in Argentina. The umbrella organization is the Federación Argentina de Traductores, or FAT (Argentine Federation of Translators). Similar to FIT, it is an association of translation organizations with no individual membership. FAT currently does not have a web presence, and information on its activities is not readily available. According to Beatriz Rodriguez, president of CTPCBA (see below), FAT currently represents more than 7,000 translators and interpreters through their respective colegios. The Federation was founded by CTPCBA together with three other colegios, namely those of Córdoba, Santa Fe, and Catamarca.

The colegios are the all-important organizations in Argentina when it comes to certification. The above-mentioned CTPCBA is the oldest colegio in Argentina, and boasts approximately 3,500 active members working in 34 different languages. The main role of CTPCBA is to represent certified public translators and to investigate, develop, promote, and share with the public the work and function of these professionals. It is the only body in Buenos Aires that formalizes member registration in the

profession, administers the resources of the association, ensures the strict observance of professional ethics, and controls and administers the registration of certified public translators as supporting technical experts within the Argentine justice system in the City of Buenos Aires. When registered, members of the Colegio agree to abide by the respective codes of ethics. Complaints or claims regarding professional conduct are dealt with by a Tribunal de Conducta (Ethics Committee).

CTPCBA, a member of FIT, is a nonprofit, noncommercial, nonstate association of public law, and its revenues come from registration/certification fees, annual member dues, the courses, seminars, and symposia it holds, and the authentication services it renders. CTPCBA has organized three Latin American Congresses on translation and interpreting in Buenos Aires. Our own Tom West, current ATA president, attended the II and III Congresses and was one of the keynote speakers. CTPCBA's commitment to professional translation and quality is reflected in a profuse academic training agenda, which includes not only courses, seminars, and symposia organized by the different CTPCBA committees, but also a distance training program, which includes translation into Spanish and Spanish for editing. Although distance training is designed for Argentine translators, CTPCBA is also planning to launch a new program customized for translators in the United States. CTPCBA belongs to the CGP (General Professional Coordinating Board) and is an active member of the CEPUC (Coordinating Board of University Profession of the City of Buenos Aires). During the last three years, CTPCBA has also been hosting ATA accreditation exam sittings.

CTPCBA is currently in contact with sister organizations in Latin America in a joint effort to organize the Latin American Regional Center for Translation. CTPCBA publishes two magazines, one of them for distribution among its members (also available on CTPCBA's website), and an academic magazine, *El Lenguaraz*, which comes out on a yearly basis. In addition, CTPCBA maintains a discussion list, "El Lenguaraz Electrónico." Detailed information on CTPCBA is available at the Colegio's website at www.traductores.org.ar (Spanish only).

Two years ago, the Comisión de Interpretación del CTPCBA (Interpretation Committee) was established. One of the objectives of this committee was to create a list of certified public translators who are also certified conference interpreters. To be included on this list, certified public translators have to prove they have the appropriate training and experience (usually by submitting client certificates). The minimum requirement is 340 points. The maximum number of points one can get for training is 100 (the number of points granted for a university interpreting diploma). The remaining points are granted for eight-hour days of interpreting, with one hour equaling one point. For example, an interpreter with an interpreting diploma (100 points) needs to prove interpreting experience equaling 30 days (240 hours) to reach the target 340 points.

There are just a handful of colleges where interested parties may study interpreting in Argentina, although there are many private organizations offering interpreter courses, mostly run by active interpreters. One such organization, the Asociación de Intérpretes de Conferencia de la Argentina, or ADICA (Argentine Association of

Conference Interpreters), is a professional association for interpreters of all languages that has been active for more than 20 years in Argentina and includes many AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence) interpreters. Aside from prospective members showing that they have worked at conferences, together with referrals from two or three active colleagues, there are no restrictions or certification exams to pass to become a member. Further information on ADICA is available at www.adica.com.ar.

Among active organizations for translators and interpreters in the Greater Buenos Aires area is the Asociación de Traductores Públicos e Intérpretes de la Provincia de Buenos Aires, or ATIBA (Association of Certified Public Translators and Interpreters of the Province of Buenos Aires). This association was organized in 1997 in order to support translators, train them for the corporate world, and assist them in finding a position in the community. ATIBA's publication, *Molinos de Viento*, offers interesting articles on the profession, language- and translation-related news, seminars, news about translation fairs, and all sorts of related activities (contact molinosdeviento@atiba.org.ar). In order to prompt translators to use all the electronic tools available, ATIBA has started a "Translator's List." This virtual community now has over 300 members. All interested parties may participate by submitting inquiries on difficult terms, language-related queries, and news related to the profession. ATIBA president Miriam Golía, who was recently invited to give a lecture on present market conditions in Argentina at the II CIATI International Congress of Translators and

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Marketing Myself, I Can If I Want To

By Michael Klinger

In starting a freelance translation business, there are many external factors to consider before moving forward. This discussion, however, will focus on the internal factors to be evaluated and cultivated in order to be successful in the field of freelance translation. The metrics and process of establishing a successful business are not often applied to the business of freelance translation. This article is about the power of making a decision, establishing goals, and following through. Ultimately, these same principles apply to any business or personal goals you want to reach.

The first step is to answer a larger question—if you were able to create anything in your life, what would that be (Ref. 1). Take one day in this ideal life and summarize it. How would you feel? Where would you be? What would you be doing? Who else is with you during this ideal day? Write out these details in a paragraph or two. Include feelings, places, people, activities, and times. For example, “I wake up early and go outside in my lush garden in California. It is summertime, I feel relaxed, happy. Am planting flowers. During the late morning, my children go outside and are playing with each other and their neighbors....” Keep this written document somewhere and refer to it frequently.

Next step, how do you link up your ideal day with your business as a freelance translator? What is the connection between your ideal day/life and your freelance business? Maybe part of your ideal day involves working in your study on the translation of Goethe’s letters to his mother. Maybe your freelance business allows you the flexibility of being home in the mornings to complete the activities of your ideal day. Maybe your freelance translation work brings you the money to purchase the boat you needed in order

to complete your ideal day/life sailing along the Pacific coastline. For example, going back to your ideal day in the garden, the connection to the freelance work might sound like this: “My successful freelance translation work four evenings a week allows me the freedom to work at home, outside, in the garden during the day, and play with my children. It also brings me the income I need to support my lifestyle and purchase the exotic plants and shrubs I always wanted.”

...The only thing keeping you from reaching your goals is yourself...

Once you determine the connection between your ideal day and your freelance career, get specific about the career (Ref. 2). Write out a few paragraphs where you include:

- 1) What is the business?
- 2) Where is the market for this business?
- 3) Who is the competition and how do you differentiate yourself?
- 4) What is the infrastructure needed to succeed in this business?
- 5) What are your financial goals (monthly, quarterly, annually)?

Keep the initial answers simple. For each of the ideas above, you can go into more detail separately. For example, say your business is in the area of freelance software localization translation for Latin American Spanish. Your competition may be other translators, web services, or agencies that do software translation. If you get more detailed about this, however, you may find that the real competition for you is located in

Colombia and Peru, where small groups of freelance translators are offering the same service at extremely discounted prices. Or you discover that ProZ offers a forum for freelance translators that poses a threat to your business due to the extremely low rates. This knowledge helps you determine how to differentiate yourself in terms of quality, flexibility, location, etc.

Once you have written your general business plan that includes financial goals, determine the daily, weekly, and monthly activity you need to do in order to reach these goals. Write a summary of these goals and refer to them frequently. For example, say you determine that you need 25K in revenue from translation agencies, and that you will get this business by calling agencies directly and speaking to the decision makers and then sending in your résumé. Evaluate how many agencies you will have to reach in a day/week/month to allow you to work with X number of agencies to reach 25K in revenue. The key point here is you want to break down and quantify your weekly, and even daily, activity so that you can successfully manage and regulate your own activity to reach your goals. If a large part of your day is spent on activities that do not bring you to your goals, you may want to re-evaluate. The activity numbers will have to be adjusted depending on the market, your analysis, and change.

Along the way, you want to constantly refer to your initial summary of your ideal day (Ref. 3). Keep the connection between what you want in your life and how this freelance translation business is part of the solution. Read and reread your summary of goals frequently.

You may discover that after going part way through this process that

you actually do not want to be doing translation in the area you have chosen (Ref. 4). It is never too late to change your subject or focus. Be clear that you are changing subjects or your approach, not because you are afraid of reaching your goals or are too discouraged, but because you are not interested in the subject itself.

Also, once you determine what your personal goals are, you will want to have a network of people who can support and help you realize these goals (Ref. 5). Your support network can take many forms. You may simply want to meet with a local organization of like-minded professionals to be able to share your experiences and network. You may want to create your own personal network of 7-10 indi-

viduals who you value. Each of you may come from different industries and backgrounds. You can meet and brainstorm together on how you can all meet your different personal goals. You may need only a network of one person (a mentor or a significant other). Whatever form your support group takes, it is important that you establish one as you embark on your career as a freelance translator.

Now that you have determined your goals and the related activities needed to accomplish them, set up a timeline and DO IT! The only thing keeping you from reaching your goals is yourself. You are the one creating this career and it is in your best interest to implement the activities that will help you reach your goals.

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International Certification Study: Argentina Continued from p.15

Interpreters in São Paulo, Brazil, held in May 2001, will be happy to supply further details (contact presidente@atiba.org.ar). Further information on ATIBA is also available at www.atiba.org.ar (Spanish only). Among other active regional organizations for translators and interpreters is the Asociación Argentina de Traductores e Intérpretes (AATI), which represents non-certified public translators (scientific, literary, technical) in the Buenos Aires. AATI is also a member of FIT.

In the next issue, we will examine the certification procedures in Norway. As the editor of this series, I encourage readers to submit any relevant information concerning non-U.S. certification or similar programs, as well as comments on the information published in this series, to my e-mail address at jjiri@cetra.com.

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Check Out Our Newest Group Listings!

(see pages 54-55 for more chapter and group information)

The Kentucky Translators and Interpreters Association (KTIA)

P.O. Box 7468
Louisville, KY 40257-0468
Tel: 502-548-3988
E-mail: vapues@insightbb.com
Contact: Laura Hardy, president

Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA)

Coordinator,
Minnesota Translation Laboratory
218 Nolte Center
315 Pillsbury Drive SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Tel: (612) 625-3096 • Fax: (612) 624-4579
Laurence.h.bogoslav-1@tc.umn.edu

The Awesome Power of Asking the Right Questions

By Dr. Barton Goldsmith

After his work covering the Iran hostage crisis, newscaster Ted Koppel was asked to run for the presidency. He declined by saying that if he had to stop asking questions and start answering them, he would lose his power.

Understand that the purpose of asking a question is to assist both the questioner and those being asked in finding answers. They are meant to assist, not demean, and will help everyone involved to find balance. St. Francis (and Steven Covey) said “Seek to understand [rather] than to be understood.” You can’t do this without asking appropriate questions. Just the act of asking makes other people feel that you care, and that you want to listen to what they have to say. It creates a positive feeling in people, and will allow everyone to work together to find the best answers.

When someone goes off track, ask a direct question like “Is that what you really meant?” or “Is this going where you had intended?” This is a great way to help people stay on their original path. Use questions to help others find answers for themselves, rather than answering for them. This creates self-esteem and empowers people to do more for themselves. It also frees you to do your job, rather than take the time to help them do theirs. Everyone gets lost from time to time. A great way to avoid embarrassment and gain some time to gather your thoughts is to ask someone an open-ended question like “What do you think of this or that?”

Questions will help you deal with difficult people. Engage the other party in helping you solve the issue. Asking “How can we solve this together?” is a great way to turn a potential conflict into a teamwork situation. It will

make the other person think in a different way, and they won’t feel like they have to deal with the situation alone. Knowing you’ve got an advisor or a helping hand can make the difference between solving a problem or making it bigger.

What do you do if someone is confronting you? Ask them a question. Asking a very simple and pointed question like “Why?” is a great way to turn the tables and put yourself in the power position. Learn to ask these

...The purpose of asking a question is to assist both the questioner and those being asked in finding answers...

questions in a nonaccusatory manner. Difficult questions make most people feel uncomfortable. It’s best to learn how to ask them in a way that helps the person you are asking feel safe about giving you an answer. That being said, sometimes difficult questions are the only way to get the answers you need. If the question is going to be difficult, try to ask it in an environment that is comfortable to both you and the other person. Don’t begin with what the other party may feel is an inquisition in a public or uncomfortable place. Also, do your best not to ask difficult questions over the telephone; give them the courtesy of a face-to-face conversation. Besides, you will want to look into their eyes to see if they’re being totally honest.

Instead of saying “NO” to a client or customer, ask them a question, find out more about what they need or

want. It can change their (and your) perspective on the situation. It can also turn an unhappy customer into a cheerleader for your company. Asking appropriate questions makes a person feel that you care about what is bothering them. Marshal Fields said, “Customers, when given a choice of where they spend their money, invariably go back to a place where they have been made to feel special.”

When you want people to think about what they’re doing, ask an evaluation type question. To build stronger relationships with team members, ask open-ended questions about your company. Get their advice on how things can be improved upon. Just the act of asking will make them feel that you care about their opinions. Doing this on a regular basis creates a stronger bond between your company, your team members, and you. It will also give you insights into your business that you may never get otherwise. A great way to do this is with a company evaluation. This should be an annual process where you ask company-specific questions of your entire staff. This is a powerful process, and you will learn a great deal about your business, as well as your team.

For additional information about the awesome power of doing a company evaluation, including a dozen questions you should ask, send an e-mail with the word “Evaluation” in the subject box to wendy@bartongoldsmith.com.

(Note: More information can be found at www.bartongoldsmith.com, or by contacting Dr. Barton Goldsmith, Goldsmith Consulting, P.O. Box 4502, Westlake Village, CA 91361; Toll-free: 866-522-7866.)

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The SSTI/NAJIT Translation and Interpretation National Certification Examination

By Dagoberto Orrantia

Certification in the professional life of a court interpreter is of enormous significance because it is almost equivalent to licensing. In spite of some district judges who still refuse to hire certified interpreters, certification, for the most part, keeps those who do not possess it from working in many federal courts and from enjoying the prestige it confers on court interpreters in this country. Federal court interpreter certification in the U.S. was conducted by the University of Arizona for over 20 years, but starting this year, the Federal Court Interpreters' Certification Examination will no longer be offered by the University of Arizona's Federal Court Interpreter Certification Project. Instead, this examination will be conducted by a consortium consisting of the National Center for State Courts (for the oral part), Second Language Testing, Inc. (for the written part), and Cooperative Personnel Services (for test administration and dissemination of results). As a result, the federal test is undergoing interesting changes for all concerned, but in particular for those of us in the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) who have been involved in the creation of The SSTI/NAJIT Translation and Interpretation National Certification Examination.

The federal certification program that originated with the "Court Interpreters Act" of October 28, 1978, resulted in a rigorous written and oral test that withstood court challenges (*Seltzer vs. Foley*, 1980) and became recognized as a valid and reliable means of providing competent interpreters for the federal courts. But the creators of that examination (Leeth, 1981; Arjona, 1985; Dueñas, 1991; Baca, 1992) have pointed out some of its limitations.

These include: 1) that the test only guarantees the courts that "the quality of the interpretation services meets the minimum standards necessary to facilitate communication in a federal court of law"; 2) that it makes no provision for revalidating one's certification; and 3) that, since it lacks a translation component, the examination does not provide a formal assurance that the translations the court interpreter is called upon to do meet even the minimum standards set by

...This credential will document the possession of the specialized knowledge and skills needed to be a forensic interpreter in any setting...

the interpretation test. According to Dueñas (1991): "the ATA accreditation program is a very commendable effort that has alleviated the quality control problem for translation clients; however, it is strictly a voluntary program. No doubt government entities will have to repeat the same steps they have taken with respect to court interpreting; that is, to mandate a certification procedure that will leave no room for doubt about the qualifications of the professional translator" (1991: 562). The 2001-2002 edition of the federal test still will not include a translation section, so there is no end to the complaint voiced 10 years ago by Dueñas.

At the time of this writing, the written portion of the federal exam has already been pilot-tested (in September 2001), and is scheduled to be given in December; the oral portion is scheduled for March 2002. As

described during the NAJIT Conference in Chicago in May 2001 by consortium representatives William Hewitt, Charles Stansfield, and Marike Van der Heide of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the examination will have a similar degree of difficulty to previous versions, because "it is not appropriate to make major changes." Their decision is obviously based on their situation and needs, and, coincidentally, reaffirms the decision made by NAJIT to develop its own Certificate of Competency in Judiciary Interpretation. NAJIT's certificate will differ significantly from the certification now available through the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, the National Consortium of State Courts, or the various states that now offer certification.

In a report given to the NAJIT membership, Society for the Study of Translation and Interpretation (SSTI) President Mirta Vidal (2000) wrote: "The NAJIT exam will be different from the federal and state court exams that already exist. Ours is conceived to encompass every aspect of the work performed daily by those involved in judicial interpretation. The exam will cover in- and out-of-court work that may occur in criminal and civil cases, with a wide range of medical, commercial, or technical terminology, involving subjects as varied as divorce, real estate transactions, or bank fraud. Of course, not every imaginable subject that may come up in the course of our work can be covered in a single exam. But our aim is for the content to be sufficiently representative so that a person who performs well can be deemed truly competent to work in this field.... Its purpose is to provide us with a valid credential of competency that can become the accepted standard for the profession nationwide, and give validation to the highly ➡

qualified individuals who have not had a way to measure their own performance until now. It will not provide a credential for employment in the state or federal courts, but NAJIT is striving for something different, broader in scope, embracing the entire interpreting community.”

The task faced by the SSTI is daunting: ultimately to create a universal credentialing examination in the various languages represented within NAJIT’s membership (there were 69 languages listed in the 1999-2000 *Directory of the Association*). Because Spanish is the language most heavily represented among the members, it was agreed that the first test would be in Spanish. This will help to generate funds for the development of examinations in other languages. The Spanish-English exam will serve as the prototype for the development of exams in other languages, permitting NAJIT to move forward to meet the credentialing needs of all its membership.

One of the first problems the SSTI faced was determining the scope of the examination. The solution was to conduct a task survey for judiciary interpreters prepared by the SSTI Board. This was done during September and October 2000. Three performance domains were identified in the survey: sight translation, consecutive interpretation, and simultaneous interpretation. Survey respondents were asked to evaluate each task according to its importance, criticality, and frequency. Importance (rated from “not important” to “extremely important”) is the degree to which knowledge and ability is essential to the job performance of a minimally qualified judiciary interpreter. Criticality is the degree to which adverse effects (evaluated from “no harm” to “extreme harm”) could result if the minimally qualified

interpreter was not able to perform a task in the performance domain. Frequency is the extent to which interpreters perform tasks associated with each performance domain (rated from “never” to “constantly”). The survey showed that simultaneous interpreting had the highest importance and the highest frequency, while consecutive had the highest criticality. The survey also showed that court interpreters perform a variety of duties that go beyond the usual courtroom instructions, arguments, and question-and-answer examinations. These tasks included such activities as interpreting at polygraph examinations and medical interviews and sight-translating contracts.

The importance of simultaneous interpreting in court is well established, as is the high degree of skill and knowledge required to carry out this seemingly impossible task. Candidates taking the oral component of the New Jersey State test failed the simultaneous portion in such high numbers that they are now first given this part to weed out those who cannot perform acceptably. The SSTI/NAJIT simultaneous interpreting portion of the exam differs from the federal and state tests because it is bidirectional; that is, the candidate must interpret from English into Spanish and from Spanish into English. The rate of speed of the four-minute passages that are to be simultaneously interpreted is 140 words per minute. The question of whether the speed of the simultaneous interpreting test should be based on the number of words per minute as determined by syllable density (Zoubek, 1963) was discussed. This was ultimately rejected in favor of a straightforward word count because, as researchers have found, a word in one language may be translated into another using a

phrase or a sentence (Setton, 1999). The passages are prerecorded and the candidate’s rendition is recorded for subsequent scoring. Interrater reliability is better preserved when the observers listen to recorded renditions. “Writtenness” is often a characteristic of legal discourse, and a more important factor than the speed of delivery. The texts are selected from transcripts of oral renditions, but are not limited to strictly forensic materials, since they may include medical and financial texts.

Consecutive interpretation is sometimes avoided by court interpreters who are fearful of exposing their inability to interpret completely and accurately. Justifiably, it received the highest criticality rating in the survey, because interpreters who are unable to properly transfer the words of the examiner or the responses of the witness may cause the latter to appear more or less culpable, thereby harming the impartiality of the proceedings. Working memory, note-taking skills, and the ability to work under pressure are sorely taxed in forensic consecutive interpreting. The SSTI/NAJIT examination, which includes criminal as well as civil, financial, and medical texts, requires the candidate to interpret consecutively at least two utterances of between 50 and 65 words. The candidate is allowed to request two repetitions at any time during the exercise. This portion of the examination is prerecorded, thus solving the problem of intentional or unintentional bias, one of the difficulties of administering and grading performance examinations (Shimberg, 1981: 1140). The following are representative samples of this test:

Q: What other symptoms did you have?
Did you have pain in your neck?

A: El dolor lo sentía más que nada en el brazo.

Q: Did the intensity of the pain change? In other words, sometimes was it worse than others?

A: Sí, era peor cuando usaba el brazo derecho.

Q: Of these symptoms that you just described as a constant pain in your right arm, did they change significantly in some way after that? In other words, you said that your condition leveled off approximately six months after the surgery. After that, was there a time when your symptoms changed again?

A: No recuerdo exactamente la fecha, pero en algún momento antes de esta última operación de 1999 fue que paulatinamente me puse peor.

Q: And you—strike that. Can you tell us how you got from Colombia to the United States?

A: De Colombia—de Bogotá me fui a México, del Distrito Federal me fui a Tijuana, de Tijuana a San Isidro, de San Isidro a San Diego, y de San Diego a Nueva York, con una escala en Chicago.

Q: And you had saved your own money to make this trip?

A: Sí, cuando era chico, cuando hice mi primera comunión, cuando tenía diez años, me regalaron una vaquilla, y la vaquilla creció y tuvo otras vaquillas y esas vaquillas parieron sus propios becerros, y entonces así fue como pude conseguir mi pasaje de avión para los Estados Unidos.

Q: I think you indicated upon direct examination that you bought these buildings from the proceeds of your legitimate enterprises, the jewelry store and the appliance store, is that correct?

A: Sí, señor.

Q: Did you buy these buildings strictly, exclusively from the proceeds of the jewelry store and the appliance store?

A: Fue un enganche muy pequeño que di por los edificios.

Q: When you negotiated with the bank in 1998, you were negotiating for a loan based on buying all three buildings, is that correct?

A: Los tres edificios de una vez, y cinco meses después hubo que hacer otro pago de cincuenta mil.

Q: And I assume you had to put this up with a certified check or a cashier's check or cash, is that correct?

Sight translation is bidirectional in forensic settings. Although it generally will require the interpreter to sight-translate typical court documents such as releases, complaints, indictments, and bonds, there may be surprises at times. These could include documents (such as a florid allocution or a notarial affidavit from a Spanish-speaking country) which contain extremely formal language, or instances of low-register (such as a highly informal letter from a relative of the accused to the judge, or from a defendant to a friend), or the transcript of a surveillance audiotape. In the SSTI/NAJIT examination, the candidate is allowed five minutes to complete the sight translation of a 250-word legal document such as an insurance form, a confession, a transcript, or an arrest report.

No domain in the survey was identified for tape transcription, an important aspect of the work done by court interpreters, and where they are most often called upon to testify as expert witnesses. With the demands this task places on the transcriber/translator in terms of the required knowledge of different geographical or social dialects, the auditory difficulties that

result from subreptitious recording and poor quality recorders, and the high possibility of being called to the witness stand to be questioned, it was deemed too difficult to evaluate in a survey context. Transcribing and translating surveillance tapes calls upon a different set of knowledge and skills (to say nothing of the need for access to professional-quality audio recording and playback equipment), and it may very well be that another test is needed for this type of work. One solution might be to have the candidate listen to a taped conversation and then be asked multiple-choice questions regarding its content.

The SSTI/NAJIT written examination will ascertain whether the candidate possesses the necessary encyclopedic knowledge of the source and target language, and the specialized knowledge of his profession that is necessary to work effectively in forensic settings. The written part of the test includes English and Spanish sections on antonyms and synonyms (with nouns, verbs, and adjectives); analogies (identifying a characteristic, degree, function, cause and effect, class to member, or part to whole); grammar and syntax; reading comprehension passages taken from the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences; and idioms and proverbs. The written part also includes sections on the ethics of forensic interpreting and passages for written translation taken from the legal, medical, and financial fields.

From the start, the question of assuring reliability and validity for the NAJIT test was fundamental, and Dr. Michael Bunch, of Measurement Incorporated (MI), and the members of the SSTI Board of Directors dwelt at length on this topic. MI and SSTI coordinated the lengthy process ➡

of selecting, gathering, and orienting test item writers, item and content reviewers, examiners, pilot test scorers, standard setters, and operational test scorers. Each of these groups' tasks is crucial to the successful creation of the exam. The item writers were asked to produce a sufficient number of items for three versions or forms of their part of the test. After thorough evaluation by the item and content reviewers, three versions of the exam were settled on to be pilot-tested during the 2001 NAJIT Conference. Pilot test scorers met for 10 days in August, and their evaluations were used to generate the two forms of the written exam which were administered at the ATA 42nd Annual Conference. The oral portion of the test is scheduled for May 2002 at NAJIT's 23rd Annual Meeting and Educational Conference.

This is a novel and challenging venture for NAJIT. The standards set are high and the SSTI/NAJIT examination will identify those individuals who have met them. This credential

will document the possession of the specialized knowledge and skills needed to be a forensic interpreter in any setting. Until a licensing law is promulgated for forensic interpreters, this credential will do much to assure the public that interpreting in the courts is being done faithfully and accurately.

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Letters to the Editor Continued from p.11

believes such devices already exist. It is our duty as translators and language professionals to set this record straight.

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A Linguistic Subplot

I got a kick out of Chris Durban's remarks in April's "Onionskin" about the portrayal of translators and interpreters on TV. It reminded me of how my daughter Jeanie and I some years ago (she was a translator herself at the time) reacted to the passage in Franco Zeffirelli's TV series "Jesus of Nazareth" where Judas Iscariot, by

way of introduction, says he is "a translator of documents." Though not very religious myself, much less a biblical scholar, I do believe now, as I did then, that it is nothing but an invention by the screenwriter. In fact, it is a base canard. I find nothing in the Scriptures to back it up.

So I exclaimed to Jeanie, referring to Zeffirelli, "Why that SOB! That pseudo-proletarian SOB!" Because the other Apostles, you see, tend to have less arcane, more workaday and therefore, perhaps, more trustworthy occupations. It is Judas the "translator of documents" who turns out to be the archetypal traitor and Bad Guy

(arguably a bogus rap, since he was a kind of tool in the divine scheme, or so I'm told; but let that go).

But now I learn that the writing credits go to Zeffirelli himself, to someone named Suso Cecchi D'Amico, and to Anthony Burgess, the witty and celebrated novelist who was also, coincidentally, an accomplished translator. And I bet it was Burgess who invented that phony bit of fluff. I can just picture his wicked grin as he turns the familiar old Italian chestnut on its head: "Traditore - traduttore."

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The Professional Association of Localization

By Nancy A. Locke

By any measure, the localization process and industry is still young. Evidence: try telling someone what you do for a living by simply stating, “I am a localization professional.” You will be met by blank stares, followed by requests for clarification. A long explanation will ensue, at the end of which you will hear, “Oh, you mean you do translation.”

Even within the industry, now at least 15 years young, the debate still rages over the use of the terms localization, globalization, and internationalization. One thing is certain: translation and translators, many of them freelance contractors, form an essential part of the process and the industry. Another certainty: to become mature and cohesive, the localization industry needs dedicated and energetic leadership that represents and gives voice to the wide range of professionals, including translators, who work in the industry.

In an essay published by *Multilingual Computing and Technology* (issue #31, April/May 2000), Reinard Schaller wrote: “A strong industry association is necessary for localization to gain long-denied recognition as an industry in its own right.” The director of the Localization Research Centre at the University of Limerick, Ireland, concluded: “What is needed is for somebody to take on the initiative and lead.”

Ricardo Erb, a seasoned localization professional, took Schaller’s words to heart. He, too, saw a need for leadership and, more, a professional network that might represent and support individual professionals and freelancers from the wide range of disciplines that make localization possible. In the early spring of 2001, with the support of like-minded colleagues, Erb founded the Professional Association of Localization (PAL) and

defined its mission. This mission explicitly acknowledges the importance of translators:

To provide its members with: Structured education and training; standardization and best practices; information about translation trends, tools, and career opportunities; discussion forums; and representation in the fields of localization, internationalization, and globalization.

...To become mature and cohesive, the localization industry needs dedicated and energetic leadership...

PAL intends to serve and represent those who prepare software and documentation for the world. To support its member translators, localizers, internationalizers, and globalizers, PAL assembles and provides information, organizes professional events, and serves as an advocate for member concerns.

Anyone who has ever participated in the birth of a new organization, especially one that relies on the energy and commitment of volunteers, knows that the process is arduous and sometimes very painful. The birth of PAL is no different. The results, however, are beginning to bear fruit.

In the past year, PAL has focused on some of the more knotty infrastructural challenges of a start-up association. For example, acquiring formal and legal status, ironing out governance issues, and determining how best to fulfill its stated mission.

The organization has achieved some success in each of these areas.

At the end of February, PAL achieved formal legal status as a non-profit international corporation. The governing body now includes Suzanne Topping as president. PAL’s directors are Nancy A. Locke (chair), Marilyn Mason (vice-chair), Ricardo Erb, and Dorinda Hale. Efforts are underway to further build the leadership in order to tackle the myriad challenges ahead. Finally, PAL’s mission has informed the creation of nine focus areas:

- Education and training;
- Employment information;
- Events and conferences;
- Online resources;
- Networking and information exchange;
- Tools, techniques, and trends;
- Standards;
- Association services; and
- Industry representation and alliances.

To offer such an ambitious array of services, PAL is committed to expanding its membership and encouraging active participation in every area of its operations through a wide grassroots volunteer base. So, while PAL cannot yet offer all the services it hopes to in the future, it can offer new members a real opportunity to shape that future.

Successful quality localization requires the participation of a diverse team of professionals. Yet, so often, each part of the team is isolated from the other, being focused on their specific part of the process and thus unsure or unaware of what the other team members are up to. Frequently, translators, because they are freelancers and

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Simplified vs. Traditional Chinese: What Every Translation Agency Should Know

By Jessie Lu and Claire Liu

It's another busy day when the phone on a Chinese translator's desk rings. Familiar questions are asked...

"Can you translate a document into Mandarin (or Cantonese)?"

[These are spoken dialects, not applicable for general written translation purposes...]

"Can you translate this documentation into Chinese?"

[Yes, but which form do you need: Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, or both?]

"Does it take longer or cost more if I want both Simplified and Traditional Chinese? I heard you just push a button after one version is translated to create the second version, right?"

[Sigh...Okay, let's start from the beginning...]

To properly respond to these questions, translation users must first understand the meanings behind the terms "Simplified Chinese," "Traditional Chinese," "Mandarin," and "Cantonese." In this article, we intend to help translation users gain a greater understanding of these issues as they relate to today's Chinese translation environment. For the purposes of this article, we will consider English as the source language and Chinese as the intended target language.

Background

What is usually referred to as "Chinese" is in fact the language of China's largest nationality, the Hans. The *spoken* form of Chinese has many different geographic dialects, including eight major areas: North China (northern dialect); Jiangsu-Zhejiang (Wu dialect); Hunan (Hunan dialect); Jiangxi (Jiangxi dialect);

Kejia (Kejia dialect); northern Fujian (northern Fujian dialect); southern Fujian (Fujian dialect); and Guangdong (Guangdong dialect, or Cantonese). Of the entire Chinese-speaking population, about 70% speak the northern dialect. This is often known as Mandarin, widely considered to be the "official" dialect. Despite the multitude of spoken forms of Chinese, there is actually only *one*

...Out of the entire set of Chinese characters (over 40,000), only 3,000-6,000 characters are used in everyday life...

non-alphabetic Chinese writing system composed of more than 40,000 characters, of which only 3,000-6,000 characters are used on a daily basis. The vocabulary and grammar structure of this writing system is essentially the same for all dialects. The primary difference lies in the pronunciation of the written characters.

Written Chinese characters first appeared as logographs on oracle bones from the Shang Dynasty (around 1400 B.C.), and later as pictographs on ancient bronze vessels. Although the appearance of these characters has changed significantly, the grammatical rules and the writing system in general have essentially retained their basic features through the ages. Despite the evolution of Chinese characters from complex pictographs into characters composed of strokes of a much simpler nature, Chinese still remains a language that is relatively difficult to learn, read, and write.

As previously mentioned, Chinese characters have undergone constant

simplification at the grassroots level ever since their first appearance over 3,000 years ago. Although government standardizations of Chinese characters may be traced back as early as the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.), the most aggressive and ambitious language reform project in Chinese history was undertaken by the People's Republic of China (Mainland China) in the post-1949 era, when the communist government came to power and the former KMT government moved to Taiwan. The Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Committee for Chinese Language Reform was founded in 1952 for three main purposes. First, to unify and simplify the language by reducing the number of strokes in Chinese characters. Second, to standardize Mandarin as the official national spoken language. Third, to introduce a phonetically based alphabet. In 1956, the Committee unveiled the Scheme of Simplifying Chinese Characters, which contained some 2,236 simplified characters.

Out of the entire set of Chinese characters (over 40,000), only 3,000-6,000 characters are used in everyday life. It is very important to understand that the 2,236 simplified characters contained in the Scheme of Simplifying Chinese Characters are among those 3,000-6,000 characters in daily use. As a result, those characters that are less commonly used undergo very little change. Furthermore, a considerable portion (about 10%-20%) of the 2,236 simplified characters are not newly simplified or newly created characters. They have been used by the Chinese people for years, but have not yet been standardized or made official. The Scheme of Simplifying Chinese Characters just endorsed these characters as official or standard characters. The simplification for the remaining

Table 1. Major Spoken and Written Languages in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong

Country/Region	China	Taiwan	Hong Kong
Spoken dialect	Mandarin	Mandarin	Cantonese
Written form	Simplified Chinese	Traditional Chinese	SC, TC, or Cantonese dialect characters

part of the 2,236 characters is twofold: 1) to reduce the number of characters (by combining two or more complex characters in one simplified character, mainly through the elimination of complex variants); and 2) to reduce the number of the strokes required to compose a complex character while at the same time retaining its basic form. For example, the complex character 龜 (*turtle*, 20 strokes) is simplified to 龟 (*turtle*, 7 strokes). Writing the complex character for “turtle” is akin to drawing a turtle: a very time-consuming task!

The simplified characters promulgated in 1956 were soon used throughout Mainland China in all textbooks, newspapers, publications, documents, etc. Other important parts of Chinese language reform included the creation of a Chinese alphabetic system of writing (known as Pin Yin) to facilitate the learning of Chinese characters and to help unify pronunciation. In addition, a nationwide campaign to popularize Mandarin was part of the reform. These topics are beyond the scope of the current discussion, but were important linguistic historical events.

Since 1949, the complex forms of Chinese characters (known as Traditional Chinese characters) have persisted in Taiwan and Hong Kong, as these areas were under the rule of the former Chinese (the KMT) and British governments, respectively. Mandarin is the official language in Taiwan, while Cantonese is the

spoken language that is dominant in Hong Kong. However, one should keep in mind that both China and Taiwan (or even Hong Kong) use a significant number of the same characters in their writing. This is because people in Taiwan and Hong Kong will most likely recognize all but about one-third of the characters that are newly created or simplified in China for daily use.

Chinese Encoding Systems

So how are the differences between Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese “translated” into a technical language (i.e., how are they represented on the computer)? Does one need a localized version of an operating system to view, edit, and print Chinese documents? If not, what are the alternatives? To answer these questions, we need to have some basic understanding about “character sets” or “encoding systems.” Most keyboards are designed for one-byte “Roman” character input, but computers require two bytes of information to process languages with large character sets like Chinese, Japanese, and Korean (usually collectively referred to as “CJK”).

When computer processing of Chinese characters became possible, China adopted GB (International Phonetic Alphabetic) code as its standard for word processing in 1981. GB code is the internal code for Simplified Chinese, and is built in Simplified Chinese Windows and its applications.

It is a two-dimensional table containing some 6,700 characters *in phonetic order*. Meanwhile, Taiwan adopted the Big 5 code as its standard for word processing in 1984. Big 5 code is the internal code for Traditional Chinese Windows and its applications. It is a two-dimensional table containing a similar number of characters *in an ascending order according to the number of strokes*. In 1994, the government of Hong Kong created an extension to Big 5, calling it the Government Common Character Set (GCCS), renaming it the Hong Kong Supplementary Character Set (HKSCS) in 1999.

Although more than half of the characters in these two tables (GB and Big 5) overlap, they are not one-to-one transformations due to the fact that they are arranged in different orders. As new characters are introduced into the Chinese language and old characters are phased out, both GB and Big 5 tables need to be updated periodically.

Localized Chinese Windows and applications are best suited to view, edit, and print Chinese characters, but not everyone has access to these programs. In the PC environment, Microsoft offers downloads of both GB and Big 5 plug-ins for non-Chinese Windows to display and reformat Chinese files in Office applications. For example, the English version of MS Office 97 or 2000 may be used to view both Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters if its Asian language support pack is installed.

However, a Chinese input method is needed to edit the Chinese texts, and at least one Chinese font is required to print Chinese texts. So-called bridge or “hybrid” software programs, such as TwinBridge, Chinese Star, or NJStar ➡

Communicator, can function as an interface between Chinese documents and operating systems based in other languages. That is, a non-Chinese OS with one of the above-cited programs may form the basis of an extended Chinese platform, under which Chinese texts may be viewed, edited, and printed correctly. Another alternative is to request Chinese documents in portable document format (PDF). PDF files should be created from localized Chinese systems. The PDF can then be opened and viewed using Adobe's free Acrobat Reader on virtually any platform. This is a feasible solution when no further formatting, editing, or desktop publishing work is necessary.

For Mac users, there is a CLK (Chinese Language Kit) available for a non-Chinese OS environment that provides two distinct scripts: Traditional Chinese and Simplified Chinese. These scripts can be installed independently or together (these Chinese language supports are also built in Mac with OS 9 or later versions).

The conversion between Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters (i.e., between GB and Big 5 codes) may be done automatically by a

computer somewhat accurately. Most Chinese platforms, including MS Chinese Word 2000, now include this conversion ability. One bright spot on the horizon is the development of Unicode, which, as a superset of the characters in GB and Big 5, could eventually phase out these two character sets so the conversion between Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters would be no longer necessary. For those who need more information regarding Simplified and Traditional Chinese computing issues, the following websites may be helpful:

- www.mandarintools.com
- www.chinesecomputing.com
- www.yale.edu/chinesemac
- <http://partners.adobe.com/asn/developer/type/main.html>
- www.njstar.com
- www.twinbridge.com
- www.cstar.com.cn

Target Audiences: China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and North America

It should be a piece of cake, then, one may think, to produce both versions of Chinese with a single translation and conversion effort in one go. It remains an incorrect concept in the translation

community to assume that "Simplified Chinese" only means Simplified Chinese characters with stroke reductions, and that "Traditional Chinese" only means Traditional Chinese characters represented by its complex forms. In fact, the true differences between "Simplified Chinese" and "Traditional Chinese," from language and translation perspectives, are represented by variations of terms and styles developed in each Chinese-speaking region due to cultural differences caused by prolonged political separation.

Chinese communities have spread all over the world, including Singapore (Simplified Chinese) and Malaysia (Traditional Chinese). For purposes of this article, focus is placed on the four major markets for Chinese translation: China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and North America. Although they have much in common, each market has its own unique flavor and preferences.

The most distinguishable differences between China (Simplified Chinese) and Taiwan (Traditional Chinese), from a language aspect, are the actual terms used and style variations between these two regions. Some of the terms used in China and

Table 2. Comparison of Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese Terms

English Terms	SC terms in SC characters	SC terms in TC characters	TC terms in TC characters	TC terms in SC characters
Internet	互联网	互聯網	網際網路	网际网路
Zip code	邮政编码	郵政編碼	郵遞區號	邮递区号
Intellectual property right	知识产权	知識產權	智慧財產權	智慧财产权
Project	项目	項目	專案	专案
Senior management	高级管理层	高級管理層	管理高層	管理高层
Videotape	录像带	錄像帶	錄影帶	录影带
Ball point pen	圆珠笔	圓珠筆	原子筆	原子笔

Table 3. Comparison of Simplified and Traditional Chinese Translations

English texts	SC translation which would be used in Mainland China	TC translation which would be used in Taiwan
<p>The influx of foreign capital has played an important role in stimulating the demand for domestic investments, encouraging China's continued reform of its economic system and more openness with the rest of the world, and promoting a sustained and healthy development of China's national economy.</p>	<p>大量外商投资的涌入，对刺激国内投资需求、推动中国经济体制改革和进一步扩大对外开放，以及促进中国国民经济持续健康发展，都起到了重要作用。</p>	<p>外資的源源流入，對於刺激中國國內投資需求，促使中國持續進行經濟體制改革並對外進一步開放，以及推動國內經濟持續穩健的成長，都扮演了重要的角色。</p>
<p>With the increase of operating capital, and loans for technical renovation being gradually implemented, the factory will adopt new measures to reduce losses due to poor product quality.</p>	<p>随着新增流动资金和技改贷款的逐步到位，企业将出台一项新举措，以期减少由于产品质量低劣所造成的亏损。</p>	<p>隨著營運資本增加，亦逐漸取得技術革新的貸款，本工廠將會推出一項新措施，以減少因產品品質不良而造成的虧損。</p>

Taiwan are given in Table 2, and an example of a typical translation is provided in Table 3. Although the terms or styles used in China are usually recognized by people in Taiwan and vice versa, improper use of terms or styles may become culturally sensitive and, in some cases, offensive.

The primary cause for the differences in terminology between these two translations can be attributed to the fact that, over the past 50 years, China and Taiwan have been ruled by separate governments. As a result, their language nuances and cultures experienced unique evolution. Despite increased communication between the two regions in recent years, the differences remain enormous. To address this issue, some efforts have been made recently in the computer industry. For example, Chinese Word 2000 not only converts the internal code, but also converts some of the most commonly used terms, such as “hardware,” “software,” and “printer,” between Simplified

and Traditional Chinese. Still, such automated programming switches remain far from sufficient for the purpose of translation. Ultimately, to convert one version to another is, in fact, a human localization process rather than a machinated conversion. Native language skills are required to bridge the gap.

The Chinese language used in Hong Kong is twofold. After 1949, communications between the people in Hong Kong and China virtually stopped, even though they were part of the same continent. However, communications between the people in Hong Kong and Taiwan continued as usual, with both regions using Traditional Chinese characters. Therefore, the Chinese language used in Hong Kong during this period (1949 to early 1980s) more closely resembles the Traditional Chinese used in Taiwan, with strong a Cantonese influence.

This scenario has changed since the

early 1980s, when China opened its door to the world so that people in Hong Kong could travel to China, resulting in large groups of Mainland Chinese flooding into Hong Kong. The renewed communications between the two peoples somewhat mitigated the language differences (particularly after 1997, when China reclaimed Hong Kong and Simplified Chinese became one of the common languages in Hong Kong along with English). Therefore, due to political reasons and changes in population in Hong Kong, Chinese translation for use in Hong Kong is now considered to be less culturally sensitive than in previous periods.

Lastly, this discussion would not be complete without including some mention of Cantonese dialect characters, which are *neither* Simplified *nor* Traditional Chinese, but rather the written renderings of Cantonese. For example, the Cantonese dialect characters for “is not” are 唔係 (pronounced “m-hai” in Cantonese), ➡

Table 4. Simplified vs. Traditional Used in Chinese-Speaking Target Countries

Target audience in	China	Taiwan	Hong Kong	North America
Chinese characters (written form)	SC	TC	SC, TC, or Cantonese dialect characters	SC or TC
Encoding system	GB	Big 5	GB or Big 5	GB or Big 5
Cultural sensitivity	Highly sensitive	Highly sensitive	Less sensitive	Less sensitive
Translator/editor/proofreader requirement	One should be a native SC speaker	One should be a native TC speaker	On case-by-case basis	Local linguists required (must have studied, lived, and worked in the local community)

but the Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters are 不是 (pronounced “bu-shi”). The Cantonese dialect character for “he/she/it” is 佢 (pronounced “keui” in Cantonese), but the Simplified and Traditional Chinese characters are 他/她/它 (pronounced “ta”) for “he/she/it,” respectively. Therefore, when ordering translations for use in Hong Kong it is crucial to determine if the document in question is being used for more formal purposes (publishing), or for a colloquial presentation (telephone scripts). The latter may require the use of “Cantonese dialect characters.”

The Chinese translation for the Chinese communities in North America (U.S. and Canada) is very unique. This is due to the fact that the Chinese population in North America is composed of Chinese immigrants of all literacy levels and vastly different backgrounds, who have come into the country from all over the world at different periods of time. No doubt, the mixing of these Chinese cultures is good news for the Chinese translators who serve the North America market, because the Chinese language used in North America is less culturally sensitive and no single style can accommodate all backgrounds.

Although most translations use Traditional Chinese, the style or language usage is less sensitive than would be the case in China or Taiwan. Actually, one may often find the style of Chinese used by the North American Chinese community to be a grand mixture of both Simplified and Traditional Chinese, old and new alike.

It is extremely important to consider hiring local linguists when one handles a Chinese translation project for the North American market. Every year, many new English terms are created in North America whose concepts have not yet been introduced to China or Taiwan. For example, let’s look at financial and insurance terms such as “diluted share,” “vesting,” “deductibles,” and “vice-president.” Due to the differences in cultural and social systems, these terms and the concepts they represent did not exist in China until very recently, and their translations are still not found in any modern dictionaries published in China. Because of the specific English origin of such terms, cultural-specific translation should be undertaken by individuals who have physically studied, lived, and worked in North America.

Suggestions to Translation Agencies and Other Translation Users

As discussed, the most important issue when dealing with an English-Chinese translation project is to determine the *target country* first, rather than if the language that will be needed is Simplified or Traditional Chinese. In fact, converting one version to another (i.e., to convert a translation for China [Simplified Chinese] to a translation for Taiwan [Traditional Chinese]) is a localization process rather than one of physical character conversion. It should be called localization, which normally requires that 40-60% (depending on subject matter) of your time be spent on producing the first translation. In a localization process, the change of style and terms is far more important than code conversion, and requires native language skills. This means that one of the linguists involved in a translation project (translator, editor, or proofreader) should have lived, studied, and worked in the target country.

Whether Simplified or Traditional Chinese should be used for the target audience in question certainly depends on the customer’s specific requirements. However, in the absence of such direction, the general

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The New (and Not So New) Words Bred by the Argentine Crisis

By Rut Simcovich

Speakers modify and adapt language continuously to satisfy their communication needs. They do so not only in response to changes in the external world, but also as a means of venting the feelings and emotions that such changes arouse.

Argentina is in the midst of a severe crisis which has economic, political, and social roots and overtones. I will not go into the details of this except to illustrate the point made above. As the crisis unfolds, people create new ways of describing reality and expressing their feelings towards it. As a result, translators and interpreters are being called upon to find equivalents to communicate this terminology to people who not only have a different language, but who also act in a different cultural context and according to a different mindset. Although this is always the case when interpreting or translating, the existence of a crisis magnifies the communications “gap.” This gap is especially prevalent in cases where references to the events unfolding are absolutely alien to the target culture.

A good example of this is the term “*bancarización*.” Before December 3, 2001, it merely referred to doing business with banks or “banking” (something that not a very large percentage of the population does in Argentina). But on December 3, new rules were passed making it compulsory to carry out almost all money transactions through banks.

How did the authorities enact this? By setting restrictions on the withdrawal of cash! When you cannot get hold of cash, the only way to pay is with checks, with a credit or debit card, etc. This means you need to get a bank account, and so must anybody who wants to sell you something or do any paid job for you. For that reason, “*bancarización*” should now

be more properly rendered as “compulsory banking.”

The following is a list of a few words and expressions linked to the current Argentine crisis. In some cases, these terms are newly coined; in others, they are old words that have acquired new meanings within the context of the crisis. Some terms will stay with us, others will perhaps be washed away. In the meantime, translators and interpreters need to find ways of dealing with these words, and in order to do that they must be aware of what they denote.

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Corralito: Literally, a small pen, such as a playpen for children. The name has been given to the new rules that prevent people from having access to their bank deposits or withdrawing cash from banks. At the same time, it is a play on the word “*corral*,” a stockyard where animals are kept.

Corralón: A reformed, more flexible “*corralito*,” or alternatively, a stricter “*corralito*,” depending on who you ask, which points at the existence of different interpretations for these new expressions.

Currolito: A play on the words “*corralito*” and “*curro*.” The latter is a slang term for a scam. The implication is that the government has swindled people out of their money.

Anticorralito: Adjective used for a claim or demonstration against the “*corralito*.”

Pesificación: The conversion of U.S. dollar-denominated deposits or credits into Argentine pesos prior to the devaluation of the peso. It is also used as a verb (i.e., “*pesificar*”). It has given rise to colorful expressions such as “*No me pesifiques*” (Give me some respect) and “*Se me pesificó la relación*” (Me and my partner are not getting along so well).

CER (Coeficiente de Estabilización de Referencia): An index newly created by the government for the future adjustment or indexing of loans and deposits that were “pesified” (converted into pesos). Nobody yet fully understands how this index will be applied. Since “*CER*” sounds like “*ser*” (to be) in Spanish, this has originated a number of jokes, such as “*CER o no CER*” (To be or not to be).

Choribanco: A robber bank. It is a play on words combining “*choripán*” (a *chorizo* or grilled sausage sandwich—a staple at soccer matches and popular festivals) and “*chorro*,” slang for robber. It reflects the reaction of angry depositors to the current difficulties they are experiencing when trying to withdraw money from banks.

Veraz: This is a reference to a credit rating company that lists people who have failed to pay a credit, loan, etc. Inclusion in their files means one may have credit rating problems. Examples of use: “*Pedir un Veraz*” (to get a credit rating); “*Estar en el Veraz*” (to have a bad credit rating); and “*Me salió un Veraz*” (“I turned up in a delinquency report”—usually in an unexpected, unwarranted way).

Patacón, Lecop, Porteño: Names of bonds issued by different economic authorities (the first by the Buenos Aires Province, the last by the ➔

The New (and Not So New) Words Bred by the Argentine Crisis Continued

City of Buenos Aires, etc.), which are being widely used as legal tender as a consequence of the lack of pesos.

Cacerolazo: A means of protest by banging on empty pots. On December 19, 2001, President De la Rúa made a speech on TV that led many people to take spontaneously to the streets banging pots and pans. It was one of the motives for his resignation. The same thing happened a few days later to his successor. This is considered to be a spontaneous, nonpartisan, mainly middle-class form of protest. Derivatives: “*Caceroleros*” (participants in “*cacerolazos*”); “*cacerolear*” (to take part in a “*cacerolazo*”).

Piqueteros: “*Piquete*” is used in Spanish (as “picket” in English) for a group of people who obstruct the entrance to a workplace during a strike. More recently, “*piquete*” became a form of protest by the underprivileged and unemployed that consists in blocking roads by burning tires, setting other obstacles in traffic, and establishing a soup kitchen on major roads or highways. Currently, it has come to designate a political movement, so that one may encounter frequent references to “*líderes piqueteros*” (picketing leaders), “*marcha piquetera*” (picketing march or demonstration), etc.

Escrachar: A traditional slang term, which originally meant having one’s mugshot taken; by extension, it came to mean “being put in evidence,” “being put on the spot.” The “*escrache*” is a form of protest that involves the gathering of a crowd at the private address of a person they wish to denounce. It was initially developed by a nongovernmental organization linked to the children of missing persons as a way of denouncing people who had been involved in the military repression that took place in Argentina during the 1970s. It has now been picked up by other groups as an expression of social repudiation. In the last few months, a number of politicians and government officials, upon being detected by some people at public places such as restaurants, sports stadiums, etc., have been the object of an “*escrache*.”

Judicializar: To take to the courts, to file a lawsuit. It means involving the courts in a situation that would have normally been worked out in the political arena.

Asamblea barrial: Neighborhood assembly. In many cases, the spontaneous, pot-banging demonstrations gave way to people gathering somewhere in their neighborhood to try to organize themselves as a pres-

sure group. It has given rise to the so-called “*asambleísmo*,” because some of these groups have continued meeting and elected representatives to interact with other similar groups, thus forming umbrella organizations. The term is used in reference to grassroots involvement and a certain style of political activism, as opposed to “*barras bravas*” (see below).

Barra brava: A hooligan at a soccer match. By extension, “*barrabravismo*” is the use of thugs to disrupt political gatherings or demonstrations, or to practice a repressive style of politics. “*Barra brava*” designates both an individual hooligan (i.e., “*Él es un barra brava*”) and a gang (“*Él pertenece a la barra brava de Boca*”).

Hopefully, at some point in the future, Argentina will come out of this crisis. When that happens, many of these words and expressions will probably be forgotten. Others will perhaps manage to endure, or they will evolve and mutate, and the language will retain them as the archeological traces of what happened far away and long ago.

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Simplified vs. Traditional Chinese: What Every Translation Agency Should Know Continued from p.28

requirements in Table 4 could serve as a guideline:

Conclusion

Simplifying Chinese characters has been an ongoing development in Chinese history. The differences between Simplified and Traditional Chinese extend beyond mere conversions between Simplified and Traditional characters (GB and Big 5

code conversion), which can generally be accomplished by computer programs. More importantly, converting one form to another to effectively communicate your message to the target audience is more accurately described as *localization*. The differences in styles and terms are due *primarily* to various historic reasons rather than *just* the simplification of Chinese characters. In order to satisfy the needs of the specific

markets they are working in, translation agencies or other translation users should keep the target country in mind when selecting translators for projects.

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