My fellow readers, welcome to this new edition of The IAPTImes! As the year 2013 progresses, it’s good to pause and reflect on what we’ve accomplished so far, both individually and collectively as IAPTI members. I must confess that I am astonished by all the webinars IAPTI has delivered thus far. I hope you didn’t miss this unique opportunity to learn from highly respected speakers from different parts of the world. If you already are an IAPTI member, remember that some of these webinars are free for you or are offered at a reduced price. In addition to these wonderful virtual events, IAPTI offers another opportunity for training and networking: the real conferences! Did you know that the date and place for this year’s international conference has already been confirmed? It will be held on October 5, 2013 in London, UK. So mark your agendas!

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my concern about the growing trend for pro bono translation that undermines the profession. Obviously, I am not questioning this practice in its intrinsic nature, but rather the advantage that certain sectors are taking of it. My concern is based on the many newly graduated translators and translation students eager to get their initial experience no matter what. Under the promise of gaining valuable experience, sometimes they provide their services to organizations that can afford to pay for their translations, but in fact are making money with these translations or using them to create value for their businesses. I’ve been searching the web, and there is really not much information dealing with this issue. The only resource I have uncovered is a survey by Attila Piróth with valuable insights and comments from colleagues.

I would like to invite well-seasoned colleagues to help raise awareness about this practice. As a suggestion, you might like to write an article that we could publish on our article section. Finally, I don’t want to say goodbye without welcoming Rose Newell as The IAPTImes’s new proofreader. I would also like to thank Yolanda Stern Broad for her collaboration on the previous issues.

I hope you enjoy this new issue and, as always, look forward to hearing from you!

Luciana E. Lovatto
Newsletter Editor
Dear Mr. Dolphy,

You are quite right to be puzzled by this potential assignment. As with any project that is offered to you, there are various aspects you should include in making your decision to pursue the project further or not. In this particular case, a critical question would be why this project is pre-translated: Is it an agency known for price-cutting and advancing machine translation looking to translate the instruction manual for a surgical laser for a Fortune 500 company? Or is it a private client who has never had anything translated before and is hoping to save some money? Remember that some clients may feed your translation back into the machine to improve the engine, in which case you’d be shooting yourself in the foot and contributing to your own professional demise.

While I don’t think MT will ever produce quality that can seriously compete with human translators, it is already at a level where many clients think it is a viable option for their translation needs. And even though I believe they are wrong, the better MT technology gets, the more clients will think this way. You need to remember – and perhaps remind the client – that with medical texts there can be human lives on the line. It sounds dramatic but it is true. A serious mistake in the instruction manual for that surgical laser could cost a patient’s life. A distorted sentence in a clinical trial document could affect the integrity of the whole trial and cost the end client thousands if not millions of dollars… If the document is meant for wider publication, a poor translation could severely tarnish the client’s reputation. Personally, I think everyone deserves a second chance. If it is the first time this client has contacted you with such a request, it may be worth your time to try to educate them. That private client, for example, may not realize how inaccurate their machine translation really is. I’ve been approached various times by people who said (and genuinely believed) they’d had the text pre-translated by a machine, so all (?) I’d have to do is make sure there are no serious errors in it… if only it were that simple!

I then usually inform the client that as a professional translator, I intend to deliver nothing but a high-quality, accurate translation; and a machine translation is of such poor quality that it would need to be almost entirely rewritten to meet my quality standards. I could easily run any source text through a machine translation software myself, if I considered it a time-saver or otherwise beneficial in any way. Yet I don’t do it because I’d end up rewriting almost everything. I’d spend just as much time as if I were translating it from scratch and the end result still wouldn’t be the same.

That last point should be your most important consideration. If you deliver the same quality as always, the client has tricked you into translating a text from scratch for less money. Or – and that’s the general concept of MT – you work extremely fast, fix only what is absolutely necessary and while the end result is not “pretty”, it’s “okay” and “usable” (unless you’ve overlooked something in the hurry). Ask yourself: Did you go through years of academic training to spend your days with mind-numbing corrections of error-ridden gibberish only to deliver an “okay” text at the end of the day? Is it something that you’d be proud to put your name under? What if other clients or colleagues were to see the text and learn that it was supposedly translated by you? Would you be ok with that? I think if you are passionate about what you do, the answer will be no. It will be the same answer that any artist would give if a customer brought in a paint-by-numbers sketch and asked the artist to add a few inexpensive brush strokes and sign the “masterpiece” so the client can sell it.

So, if you think there is a chance you can reason with the client and help them realize that it is in their best interest to get a professional translation, by all means do so. If your well-meant advice falls on deaf ears, it is in your best interest to disregard the next project the client offers you.

René Fassbender, MA, MEd, DipTrans
ATA-certified translator
English <> German
Latin > English, German
http://www.aipti.org/eng/rene-philipp-fassbender/
The IAPTI Board has decided to hold our first international conference. We’ve been doing a lot of things to grow and contribute to the profession since our beginnings in 2009. If you are a regular follower of our activities, you will have been aware that we have organized a good number of meetings, webinars, regional conferences, and translators’ get-togethers all over the world. But now the Board feels that the time has come to do something bigger.

You may now be eager to know the location of this event. Well, let us tell you that the decision to organize an international conference has been as important as the venue we’ve chosen. And the winner (or location) is... London!

Why the UK? We decided to pay tribute to the group of courageous interpreters who, against all tides, have been resisting the agreement between the UK’s Ministry of Justice and Capita Translation and Interpreting (formerly known as Applied Language Solutions), a company paying sub-standard rates for language professionals working as interpreters for the police and the courts.

This agreement was one of the most shameful insults to our profession: the Ministry of Justice decided to spoil a full-fledged system of individual professional court interpreters and cut down on costs by granting a legal monopoly on the provision of these services to Capita. This company, in turn, intended to cut on interpreters’ rates by more than half.

Interpreters affected by this measure have been resisting and refusing to sell their services for peanuts since 2010. Some of them have even left the profession, which is extremely sad. But these brave actions have served to place interpreters and their work in the spotlight. They are fighting for their profession and we have been supporting them from the beginning.

This is not an easy moment for UK interpreters, but we will be there to support them. Will you join us? This first IAPTI conference will feature exciting presentations on interesting topics for translators and interpreters such as professional marketing, branding, translation theory, ethics, new trends in social media, and much more. All of this will be made in tribute to the UK interpreters.

We look forward to seeing you in October!

IAPTI Board
Meeting other IAPTI Members!
In this issue, we will meet one of our newest members and head of the IAPTI’s German Chapter, Rose Newell. She tells us about her successful career as a freelance translator and offers some advice to novice translators.

Rose Newell, MITI
German > English translator
Hamburg, Germany

Why did you choose translation as a career?
I find the translation process itself satisfying – from researching new terms, to discovering new information, to completion. I also appreciate the independence and financial rewards that come with being self-employed!

How did you specialize in finance, IT and technology?
Specializations are most sensible when they reflect genuine interests and experiences. My father’s background is in financial forecasting in the public services sector, managing a big budget and spotting future trends. He is good at that – when I was three, he put me in front of a black and white box of lights which he believed to be the future. Technology had me transfixed. Finance is an interest that grew out of conversations with my father about his work. I then studied finance- and economics-related modules during my first degree, while I later won an excellence scholarship for my Master’s in Human Aspects of Information Technology.

What was the most rewarding experience you have had in your career?
I am not exactly an interpreter ensuring victims of human trafficking receive justice. However, last year I edited a book jointly written by a Dutchman and a Swede. This was for the international marine conservation group, “The Black Fish” (www.theblackfish.org). The book is called “The Bluefin Bonanza” and highlights the plight of the bluefin tuna, which is facing extinction due to largely illegal overfishing. It is rewarding to support causes with more than just money, but expertise they would otherwise find difficult to source.

We’ve noticed you are very active in social media. How do you manage to organize your time with social media, blogging and translation jobs?
Social media serves a few purposes: networking, education, getting advice from colleagues and taking a break. Some colleagues have become online friends who understand the highs and lows of translation, while breaks to look at Twitter, Facebook or various blogs help to keep me focused. I do not like working in a rush, so there is usually time for “mini” breaks while I am working. I cut out all distractions whenever a deadline is tight, however!

Many translators turn to your blog, The Translator’s Teacup, to look for advice. In short, which is the piece of advice you always give to novice translators?
Charge based on the quality you produce, not what you think you are worth based on age, experience, or whatever some cheap agency tells you. If you charge low rates now, you will find it harder to earn enough to live on and support your growing needs as you get older. The race to the bottom engaged in by many translators (and those that will exploit them) is what is cheapening our industry.

What do you do when you are not translating?
I love playing computer games (RPGs, adventures), watching British comedy, (vegan) cooking, walking, and cycling. I also read a lot about technology, economics and politics.

If you weren’t a translator, what would you be?
I would likely be researching natural language processing/understanding, a part of my MA and thesis I particularly enjoyed.

What is the best book you have read?
I love G. K. Chesterton’s “The Man Who Was Thursday” for its weaving plot and well-crafted language. I also love Ray Bradbury, Philip K. Dick and Poe.

What are your future goals?
I will be speaking about translation agencies at IAPTI’s First International Conference this October. Other plans will have to stay under wraps, for now...

Don’t miss Rose Newell’s presentation in London: “Translation agencies: debunked and exposed”

Rose Newell
Head of the IAPTI’s German Chapter
http://www.aipti.org/eng/r-newell/
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Cartoon reprinted with the permission of the author, Alejandro Moreno-Ramos. Alejandro is an electromechanical engineer and English and French into Spanish Translator.

Capita interpreting contract: 15 months on

The UK’s court interpreting contract with Capita has now been in place for 15 months and we have heard and read about a “significant” improvement of service over time. If you look at it objectively, the initial reports from the courts indicated that the service was so abysmally poor, it couldn’t possibly get any worse. Let us remember that “improvement” is a relative notion. If the Ministry of Justice is referring to the number of people Capita is now able to send to courts to do the job of court interpreting, then Capita is now probably able to supply more people than 15 months ago. However, any “improvement” is questionable where there is a lack of quality control and monitoring. The current contract allows Capita to send under-qualified people with limited experience, no legal interpreting experience and no DPSI qualification.

More information: http://tinyurl.com/ljltojr

IAPTI’s President on crowdsourcing, machine translation and translation memories.
Aurora Humarán was interviewed by Marta Stelmaszak and Anne Diamantidis.
The interview is here.

AIIC, FTI, IAPTI and Red T wrote a letter to the Danish Government about protecting interpreters in Afghanistan. Almost immediately following publication, the Danish government announced a change in policy that would open the door for those interpreters to apply for visas. Congratulations to all four organizations for their efforts. (You can read the letter here.)
Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) for the Upwardly-Mobile Translator

In this fun and mind-opening webinar, Cesar Vargas will present some of the things that have been getting in the way of your desires, and will pinpoint a way to focus on what you want with such an intensity that you can almost touch it.

Some of the takeaways from the webinar will include:

- Three ways to connect with people at a subconscious/natural level
- How to ask for what you deserve, without feeling greedy
- How to raise your earnings by raising your self-esteem
- The Money-Mindset and how to use it for Upward Mobility

Presenter: Cesar Vargas

Cesar Vargas holds a Doctorate in Clinical Hypnotherapy, a Masters Degree in Education, with an Emphasis in Cross-Cultural Teaching, and a Specialization in Educational Technology, as well as Bachelor’s Degrees in Behavioral Science and in Business Administration.

He is a Certified Trainer of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, a Master Hypnotist, a Master Trainer of TIME Techniques, Emotional Freedom Techniques, and Coaching.

He is the author of the book Your Life Is Your Masterpiece, as well as the Spanish version, Tu Vida Es Tu Obra Maestra. He has translated into Spanish Joe Vitale’s Spiritual Marketing, Karol K. Truman’s Feelings Buried Alive, Never Die, Wallace D. Wattles’ Science of Getting Rich, James Ray’s Science of Success and Practical Spirituality, and Bart Baggett’s Success Secrets of the Rich and Happy.

He has been an expert guest to TV and Radio programs on the topics of his books, NLP, Hypnosis, and Success.

IAPTI members: USD 15
Red Vértice members: USD 22.50
Non-members: USD 25

Registration: info.request@aipti.org
There is more and more talk about MT (machine translation) these days among translators. I've heard a lot of arguments on the pros and cons of MT, but typical of the even-handedness with which translators—who, after all, are mediators by nature—tend to discuss issues, these arguments are usually very objective.

Me, I get a singularly subjective rash and feel my blood pressure climb every time anybody talks about letting a machine translate for them, especially when the text involved is anything even vaguely “literary.” Call me old fashioned, but I consider translating a form of writing and I consider writing, at its most mundane, a craft and, at its most sublime, an art. Hence, any suggestion that I, as a translator, could use an MT program to translate a poem or a short story, is tantamount to saying that Neruda or Hemingway could have used a machine writing program to create the originals. And that is simply ludicrous.

Am I saying that there will never be a machine that can write a book? No. In fact, machine writing already exists. Perhaps the best example is the brainstorm of a fellow about whom Naom Cohen wrote an article in The New York Times a couple of years ago: namely, Philip M. Parker. Parker is a professor of “management sciences” (whatever the hell that means), who conjured up some computer programs with which to compile data into book form. He then proceeded to “write” 200,000 books (yes, 200,000!), later having the audacity to dub himself “the most published author on the planet.”

In his NYT article, Cohen explains that what Parker has done is to develop computer algorithms that collect “publicly available information” on a subject (any subject, apparently, from medical conditions and treatments to tufted washable scatter rugs and bathmats... I kid you not), and, “aided by his 60 to 70 computers and six or seven programmers,” turns the results into books in a range of genres. They average 150 pages and are only printed when a customer buys one. In other words, other than how to program a computer to extraordinary effect, Parker would appear to be an “author” who doesn’t have to know squat about anything, nor, presumably, does he have the slightest idea whether what gets published under his name is worthwhile or even accurate—since, surely, not all of what is “publicly available” on any topic is worthy of repeating or useful as a reference. And if the computer—which, let’s face it, is mindless—is the one calling the shots and the “author” knows next to nothing about many of the subjects covered, then one can plan on having to wade through a lot of subjective claptrap and unmitigated bullcrap before actually discovering anything worthwhile reading, let alone recalling, about books “written” in this way. This, then, is an attempt at turning “culture” in general and “writing” in particular into a commodity.
Most translators would probably get this if you were to explain it to them from the standpoint of writing rather than translation. The thought that any worthwhile literature can be created by a machine would probably seem like a travesty to even the most tech-minded of translators. But when it comes to machine translation, translators are starting to fall prey to the hype. And the marketing is being so cleverly developed by the companies and wholesale translation agencies that are behind not only the software sales but also the use of such programs in creating translation memory banks designed to pay for less and less original translation, that anyone refusing to incorporate such “tools” is treated, increasingly, like a troglodyte and a social pariah in the progressively technified mainstream translation community. Translators are slowly but surely being brainwashed into believing that MT is a tool that is being created for their convenience, to alleviate their workload and to permit them to take on bigger and bigger assignments all the time and thus, presumably, make more money. The truth is, however, that the more translation becomes “commoditized” the lower the rate per word will fall. It’s a simply matter of supply and demand.

But it is also a matter of quality, since this is like trying to convince yourself that the quality and effectiveness of a twenty-dollar mass-produced wristwatch are any match for the craftsmanship, complications, calibers and excellent materials of a limited edition Swiss watch. The two simply cannot be compared. Nor can machine translation or machine book-writing be compared with the highest quality standards for the professional writing and translating craft. As with the comparison of a massed-produced watch to a fine timepiece, they are two entirely different things. For some types of technical and legal translation I can understand why professional translators with heavy workloads would be tempted to make use of certain electronic tools to help them quickly get through highly repetitive texts, to create permanent glossaries or to improve term consistency. But, bottom line, I think, any sort of translation tool (including the myriad dictionaries we use) is only as good as the professional who is employing it.

In literary and journalistic translation, which is the majority of the work I do, I have found no substitute for straight brain to page translation. To my mind it is laughable, if not insulting, for anyone to suggest that this can be done any other way. As insulting, in fact, as saying that a machine can write “just as good a book” as a seasoned writer. So depending on and trusting software to do a job equal to or better than the translator’s own brain seems to me at least fanciful if not dangerous.

All good translation requires writing skills—the possible exception being highly technical documents that mostly consist of lists or diagrams. On the other hand, however, I once worked for three years for a nuclear technology firm, translating its training and instruction manuals for a turnkey plant project. It was there that I learned how important clear, concise, understandable writing is on the job site. That was, in fact, why they hired me, a non-techy writer, to do the job. The point being that I was capable of learning the technology, or enough so as to be able to thoroughly understand what was being said, and to translate the message into clear, concise, understandable prose. That was something they hadn’t been getting from their former technical translators and it was the reason why they kept me on until the project was finished.

When it comes to literary work, there is simply no substitute for proper research and writing skills. Last year I translated a book that, because of the complex nature of the subject matter (which covered theology, philosophy, world history, international organizations, major treaties and politics) required two to three hours of research for every hour of actual translation. Fortunately, the author was an intellectual of substance, who understood this and understood the nature of the translator’s craft. He wasn’t interested, then, in getting the translation fast, but in getting it right. What this meant was that I, as the translator, had to know almost as much about his subject as he did.

The project ended up taking me nine months. The thought that I could have done less research by using MT software to “help me out” strikes me as hilarious. And in such cases, I doubt there will ever be a substitute for applying the seat of your pants to a chair for hours on end until the job is done, and done right.

Dan Newland
International Policy and Communications Liaison
http://www.aipti.org/eng/dan-newland/
Gerardo remembers translating his first book back in 2001. The Internet was not available for everyone in those days and Gerardo had to manage to find the right translation for the titles of the works of art and check the translation with his reviewer... Can you imagine how he did it? Let’s read his wonderful story!

In 2001, I was contacted by Leandro Wolfson, a renowned Argentine translator of literature and social sciences with whom I had done a translation workshop. He asked me if I would be interested in translating a book. I immediately said yes! He would conduct an ongoing revision of my translation, so every other week, I would take the files to his office in 3.5-inch floppy disks (that’s right, remember it was 2001!). I am forever indebted to Leandro for this opportunity to exert my translation skills to their fullest, and to learn from his comments.

The book was Introducing Modernism (chances are you have seen other books of the Introducing series in bookstores), and it was one of the most demanding, and the same time enjoyable translations I have worked on. Speaking through comic-style bubbles, James Joyce, Salvador Dalí, Le Corbusier and other modernist icons discussed how to define Modernism, its manifestations in music, painting, literature and architecture, its relationship with the political ideas of its time, and the artistic agendas of its main representatives. The main challenge from page one was achieving a natural translation that would be enjoyable to read. However, extensive research was also needed to find the names of the numerous paintings, films, literary and musical works mentioned throughout the book in Spanish. Poems by famous and not so famous writers were also quoted, so I set out to find whether they had any “authorized” translations. I clearly remember crouching, with detective-like joy, over a Spanish translation of T.S. Eliot’s The Waste Land found in a local library, as well as translating some verses by the First World War poet Wilfred Owen myself, whose poems were harder to find in Spanish.

Introducing Modernism was published by Longseller in Argentina as Modernismo para principiantes. I enjoyed every moment of the experience: writing and rewriting each sentence to make sure it would “flow”, the joy of translating a book in a widely read collection, and especially, being transported (a bit like the main character of Woody Allen’s Midnight in Paris) to one of the most interesting periods of the 20th century.

Introducing Modernism was published by Longseller in Argentina as Modernismo para principiantes.

Gerardo Bensi
English > Spanish translator and interpreter
http://www.aipti.org/eng/gerardo-damian-bensi/
Browsing the Web

Blogs

_Ewandro Magalhães Field Notes_
In his blog, Ewandro not only shares his experience as an interpreter, but also publishes material and tips for his colleagues.
http://www.ewandro.com/

_Word Prisms_
A blog on translation, technology and the modern business of language
http://www.kevinhendzel.com/blog/

_Signs & Symptoms of Translation_
Emma Goldsmith’s blog is all about medical translation and tools for translators.
http://signsandsymptomsoftranslation.com

Journals

_JoSTrans_  
The Journal of Specialised Translation

In today’s academic and professional environment, the growth of specialised translation has resulted in the development of a significant area in Translation Studies. JoSTrans aims to create a forum for translators and researchers in specialised translation, to disseminate information, exchange ideas and to provide a dedicated publication outlet for research in specialised, non-literary translation.
www.jostrans.org

_Articles

_Boomerang-translating on the Internet_
Auto-translation tools are increasingly used for quick translations; but once thrown, will the boomerang return to its originator or spin off wildly into an incomprehensible back translation?
http://translorial.com/2012/09/01/boomerang-translating-on-the-internet/
Technology: What’s up?

**ABBYY Screenshot Reader**

ABYY Screenshot Reader is irreplaceable helper in everyday office work. It turns any image content captured from your screen into editable formats, making it easy to use in digital documents, emails or reports which you create or edit without any retyping. It can handle more than 160 languages with outstandingly accurate recognition.


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**The Terminotix toolbar**

The Terminotix toolbar integrates into MS Word 2007 or 2010 only. You can setup the search languages and other settings under the Setup button to customize the toolbar. Some of the resources available are Grand Dictionnaire Terminologique, OnTerm, UnTerm, IATE, Collins, Larousse, and Microsoft Language Portal.

More info: [http://tinyurl.com/ljmqrzr](http://tinyurl.com/ljmqrzr)

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**InterpretBank**

InterpretBank is a terminology and knowledge management software designed for interpreters (conference interpreters, community interpreters, etc.) and translators. It helps users to manage, learn and look up glossaries and term-related information. With InterpretBank you can optimize your professional workflow.

More info: [http://www.interpretbank.de/](http://www.interpretbank.de/)

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**TransTools© software suite**

TransTools© software suite is a free collection of tools specially designed to help translators in various situations. They will maximize your productivity in common activities such as proofreading, pre-formatting documents prior to translation, creating glossaries, etc.

More info: [http://www.translatortools.net](http://www.translatortools.net)
Upcoming seminars and conferences

2013 IAPTI First International Conference
October 5th, 2013
London, UK
Organizer: IAPTI
More info: http://www.iapti.org/conferenceUK/

Eco-translatology: Paradigm and Methodology
September 24-25, 2013
Wuhan, China
Organizer: Translators Association of China
More info:

26th Paris Meeting on East Asian Linguistics
June 27-28, 2013
Paris, France
Organizer: Centre de Recherches Linguistiques sur l’Asie Orientale

New Research in Translation and Interpreting Studies 2013
July 1-2, 2013
Tarragona, Spain
Organizer: Intercultural Studies Group

The 14th International Conference on Translation, 2013
August 27-29, 2013
Penang, Malaysia
Organizers: USM, ITBM, DBP and MTA
More info: http://ppa14atf.usm.my/

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