



Kicking Off 2007

Paul Headland, Trados and ATA Certification

By Carol Shaw
MITA Editor

MITAns, get out your calendars and a big red pen. Thanks to the efforts of **Tiina Fallini, Marilyn, Retta, Maria Yolanda Rivera**, and others, we have a couple of busy months ahead.

In the **February 3, 2007** meeting, **Paul Headland**, author, linguist and translator, will treat MITAns to a fascinating discussion on "Translating obligatory categories: Is every plural important?" Preceding the presentation, we will have a **Question and Answer** session for those wishing to take the **ATA Certification Exam**.

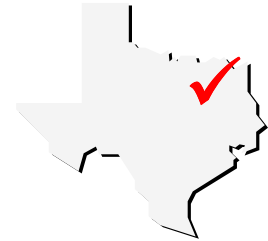
The weekend of **February 24-25**, a **TRADOS** (translation memory software) workshop will be offered in Dallas, sponsored by MITA. Further details and registration information will be available on the MITA website.

And on **March 17, 2007**, MITA will host an **ATA Certification Exam**. Anyone wishing to sit for the exam should contact the American Translator's Association at www.atanet.org. Further details will be posted to the MITA website soon.

If you wish to volunteer your help with any of the upcoming events, please contact a member of the MITA Steering Committee.

METROPLEX INTERPRETERS
& TRANSLATORS
ASSOCIATION

Serving DFW and North Texas



Volume 4, Issue 1

December '05-January '07

In this issue:

Meeting updates—1

Back translation—1

Calendar—3

Last call for renewal—4

Back Translation:

By Laura Tamayo Gamborino
Special to the Reader

The challenges of intercultural communication are the stuff the translation industry is made of. Several processes to address them have developed, one being the execution of back translation. Back translation is the process of translating a document that has already been translated into a foreign language back to the original language. It is used for the purpose of evaluating or perfecting the original forward translation. Due to its high cost, back translation is not overly common, but in very high risk, high return situations it is well worth the investment.

In the original translation (the forward translation), the process emphasizes conceptual rather than literal translation, as well as the need to use language that is natural and acceptable to the broadest audience.

Back translation, just as forward translation, should also stress conceptual and cultural equivalence rather than linguistic equivalence. The original document (before translation) and the back translated copy can then be compared. Discrepancies between the two can be specifi-

(Continued on page 3)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS — meet on second Saturday of odd months — at 3 pm at the home of Diana Ianariello.

MITA Meeting February 3

Join us for lively discussions and shared information! For directions, go to www.dfw-mita.com

February 2007						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

Elsewhere:

May 4—ATA Energy Conference (Houston) www.atanet.org

May 18—NAJIT Annual conference www.najit.org

March 2007						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February:

- 3—MITA Meeting, 2:30 p.m.
- 15—Last day to renew membership
- 24-25—Trados Workshop

March:

- 17- ATA Certification Exam

April:

- May 7 – MITA Meeting, 2:30 p.m.

Check the MITA website for locations.

Steering Committee

MITA’s steering committee met on January 20, 2006, at Le Madeleine in Irving. Present were **Ana Laura Gamborino, Tiina Fallini, Marilyn Retta, Buddy Strittmatter, Mies de Vries, Maria Yolanda Rivera** and Webmaster **Dienna Sanders**. Members worked on speaker plans for the remainder of 2007 as well as upcoming workshops.

All MITA members are welcome to participate in Steering Committee meetings; bring your ideas and bring your energy! Membership on the Steering Committee is open, requiring only the willingness to commit your time.

Back Translation

(Continued from page 1)

cally addressed, particularly problematic words or phrases that do not completely capture the concept addressed by the original item. These can be reworked before publication of the material.

Some of the more fun fiascos that would have benefited from back translation include:

- Instructions for a life vest (Japanese>English): Please pull a string, when you swell manually.
- Sign at a hotel in Bucharest (Romanian>English): The lift is being fixed for the next day. During that time we regret that you will be unbearable.
- Cleaners in Bangkok (Thai>English): Drop your trousers here for the best results.
- Outside a dress shop in Paris (French>English): Dresses for Streetwalking.
- Window of a Swedish shop (Swedish>English): Fur coats made for ladies from their own skin.

Back translation is a quality control tool. Companies employ this to when they want to make sure the wording of the forward translation conveys their message properly. This sort of translation highlights wording that is inaccurate or problematic in some other nuanced way.

Of course, some types of translation are more vulnerable to catastrophic consequences of misin-

terpretation than others. A few that come to mind include contracts, informed-consent forms, health warnings, and instructions (particularly for hazardous materials and dangerous tools). In research, a back translation can improve the reliability and validity of research in different languages by requiring that the quality of translated material used in the study be verified by an independent translator, thus avoiding misguided conclusions.

In order to ensure independent interpretation of the document, a professional translator other than the one responsible for the forward translation should complete the back translation. Fresh eyes lend a fresh perspective that the client can use to confirm that the information conveyed in the foreign translation reflects the required elements of the English original.

This is one more service that translators can provide to continuously improve communication in today's growing global market place.

Laura Tamayo Gamborino is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, and serves as adjunct faculty at Brookhaven College. A member of MITA, Laura is a freelance translator and writer.

If you are asked to do a Back Translation...

(things to keep in mind)

- A back translation serves to allow someone else—not you—to evaluate and adapt a forward translation; don't try to edit the forward translation.
- No one expects the back translation to be identical to the original. Don't try to guess what the original text said.
- Focus on what the forward translation actually says, not what you think it was supposed to say.
- Be very aware of cultural connotations and nuances present in the forward translation. Carry those into your back-translation, if necessary using translator's notes.
- Be aware of awkward syntax, spelling or punctuation; if necessary, use translator's notes.

A client of mine recently introduced me to a neat little tool called Snagit. Snagit allows you to capture a picture of anything on your computer—rather like a screen shot, but with the option of specifying the exact portion you want to copy.

Then Snagit allows you to modify your capture(change the text, insert, delete, rotate, etc.), and create a picture that you can later insert into text. The tool has been incredibly handy when working with texts that incorporate imbedded graphics.

Check it out at www.techsmith.com/snagit.asp.

Last call for renewals!

On **February 15**, anyone listed in the MITA online directory who has NOT renewed their membership for 2007 will be dropped from the online directory!

To avoid being dropped, send your dues for 2007, along with a completed membership form, to Maria Yolanda Rivera, at the address on the membership form.

Forms can be downloaded from the MITA website, at www.dfw-mita.com/join_us.htm.



MITA Christmas Party 2006

On December 2, 2006, MITAns gathered at Mi Cocina in Irving, to celebrate another years. The food was delicious—but the fun was even better. Thanks to Ana Laura Gamborino, Mariana Peterson, Maria Yolanda Rivera, Marilyn Retta and others for making all the arrangements, and thanks to Laura Tamayo Gamboino for providing the word games.

HUMOR

Sent in by Mies de Vries

For those of you who watch what you eat... Here's the final word on nutrition and health, and it's a relief to know the truth after all those conflicting medical studies:

1. The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.
2. The Mexicans eat a lot of fat and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.
3. The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.
4. The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and also suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.
5. The Germans drink a lot of beer and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.
6. Ukrainians drink a lot of vodka, eat a lot of perogies, cabbage rolls and suffer fewer heart attacks than the Canadians, British or Americans.

CONCLUSION: Eat and drink what you like.
Speaking English is apparently what kills you.
(author unknown)

The MITA Reader is published every other month by Carol Shaw, Editor, as a service to the (DFW) Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association. Please send submissions, comments or corrections to: editor@dfw-mita.com or to PO Box 496236, Garland, TX 75049. Submissions must be pertinent to the translation and interpreting industry, and non-language specific. Copyrighted materials must have the autor's consent prior to publication.