

## Ma Conférence à Hilton Head, Caroline du Sud

Article by : *Odile C. Mattiauda*

Tout commença en Septembre 1997, lorsque je décidai de devenir membre de l'ATA. A l'époque, je n'avais pu assister au congrès de San Francisco. Après 12 mois de réflexion et d'immersion totale dans le monde de la traduction et de la localisation, je m'interrogeais toujours sur l'utilité d'une telle démarche. Après tout, j'avais participé à de nombreux salons professionnels et conférences diverses au cours de ma vie professionnelle. C'est une activité à la fois onéreuse et non lucrative : on y rencontre une multitude de gens (que l'on revoit rarement par la suite), on y bavarde à qui mieux mieux, on y mange trop, on y dort peu... Sans compter le temps passé (ou perdu ?) à ne pas s'occuper de ses affaires (temps qui peut être évalué en \$\$\$). Cependant, la lecture d'un article très encourageant dans la revue « Chronicle » avait piqué ma curiosité.

Je devorai le catalogue préliminaire du congrès reçu au début de l'été 1998. Le programme semblait intéressant mais confus et chargé. Je ne connaissais personne susceptible de m'y accompagner ou de partager une chambre avec moi. Heureusement, deux mois avant la conférence, je me décidai enfin à prendre contact avec Anne Vincent, alors administratrice de la Division française. En fait, j'étais penaude...Il m'avait fallu douze mois pour appeler un autre membre de la Division résidant comme moi dans le Rhode Island, le plus petit état de l'Union ! Il faut croire que les Français sont plus timides que l'on veut bien le dire ! Mais mon courage tardif fut amplement récompensé puisque je reçus mille informations (en français, qui plus est) et je me demandai en raccrochant comment j'avais bien pu douter un instant de ma participation à cette conférence et des bénéfices inouïs qui en résulteraient.

Entre parenthèses et en toute bonne foi, il me semble qu'Anne, n'étant plus administratrice de cette division à plein temps, pourrait fort bien entreprendre l'établissement d'un service de recrutement pour la conférence chaque année, à ses heures libres. Mais trêve de plaisanteries !

C'est alors que débutèrent les travaux frénétiques de préparation : réservation, recherche d'une compagne de chambre, inscription aux séminaires de pré-conférence, courses de dernière minute.

Finalement, le 3 novembre, j'arrivai dans le hall du Hyatt, le coeur battant, après un voyage sans encombre (j'avais déjà lié connaissance avec une traductrice turque de Houston durant le trajet Savannah/Hilton Head en navette).

*(Suite en page 4)*



## Question & Answer Session Newcomers to the World of French Translation

: Thierry Chambon, Chris Durban,  
Yves Quervel, Susan Rials

Article by: *Michèle Hansen*

Originally billed as a session on resources and tools for F<>E translators, this session at the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual ATA Conference grew to encompass a wider range of topics of interest to all translators. Susan Rials, a US-based French to English translator, started off with a discussion of the world wide web and its value for translators, as well as some tips on how to maximize web searching results. Her suggestions included using just one or two general search engines regularly and learning everything about them in order to be most effective. Don't consider it beneath you to read the Help files! She does not recommend meta search engines (those that search multiple sites at once), because each of the engines queried may use different syntax and your results will not be optimized. If torn between two different terms for the same concept, she suggested doing a search for each to see which has more (and more appropriate) hits. Of course, the caveat "verify your source" is essential when using the Internet—"Joey's Totally Cool Web Page" is probably not the final authority on the term you need!

*(Continued on page 6)*

**À-Propos**

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**From the Editor...**

Welcome to a *À-propos*, the Newsletter of the ATA's French Language Division. As the new editor for the newsletter I am excited about providing a forum for the exchange of ideas within our division. I would like to express my thanks to all of the volunteers who help produce the newsletter, including writers, proofreaders, the desktop publisher, the Editor-at-large, the ATA Headquarters staff, and others. Our primary goal is to provide FLD members with a newsletter four times per year. You can help!

If you have suggestions for topics you would like to see covered, contact me or one of the Division officers. And, of course, any articles you would like to submit are always welcome. Each year, the ATA Conference is a stimulating reminder of the diversity of the translation and interpreting professions. I am sure many of you have great ideas to share with your colleagues about the wide range of opportunities open to language professionals. See the insert for article due dates. I look forward to hearing from you!

Another objective in our sights this year is to provide archived versions of the newsletter on the FLD website hosted by the ATA. Look for more information about this as the year progresses.

*Bon courage à tous pour la nouvelle année. A bientôt !*

Eve Lindemuth Bodeux  
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~ NEWS FLASH ~

**Traducteurs: French Translation Discussion Group on the Web!**

As of December 1998, there is a new mailing list for French translators called *Traducteurs*. It is only days old at this writing, and it already has close to 200 postings! Its purpose is to provide a forum for the discussion of translation issues specifically regarding the French language. This list is moderated by Walter Weyne, who also started it. While LANTRA\* is a great resource for translators, its strength—encompassing all languages—is also its weakness. To subscribe to *Traducteurs* and share your ideas, questions, or comments with other translators around the world who work “to or from French,” send an empty e-mail message to [traducteurs-subscribe@egroups.com](mailto:traducteurs-subscribe@egroups.com). To sign up, or to learn how to view member postings on the web rather than receiving them in your e-mail box, visit the list’s web site at <http://www.egroups.com/list/traducteurs/>.

*Walter Weyne is the owner and founder of Global Communications in Ghent, Belgium. Global Communications is a translation agency that specializes in Dutch and French translation for all fields, with an emphasis on information technology and technical areas, such as automotive, software localization, and telecommunications. You may contact Walter at [walter@globalcom.be](mailto:walter@globalcom.be).*

\*To join LANTRA, the granddaddy of translator discussion lists, send the message “SUB LANTRA-L Your Name” to [listserv@segate.sunet.se](mailto:listserv@segate.sunet.se), or visit their web site at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7110/lantra.htm>

**“Sell This: Getting the Message Across in Advertising”**

*Presented by Molly Stevens*

*Article by Manouche Ragsdale*

Molly Stevens’ presentation at the ATA Conference was entitled, “Sell This: Getting the Message Across in Advertising Translation.” Enticing. Would it live up to my expectations? Obviously the subject was extremely appealing to the audience. The small room was packed. A few people were standing in the aisles.

Molly is a vivacious, petite bundle of energy who knows how to capture an audience with her fetching grin and her direct approach. Using transparencies, Molly illustrated her presentation on translating for the advertising industry, talking specifically about the materials that were sent between Giorgio Armani Perfumes in France and a New York advertising agency. We were presented with the concept texts and focus group reports that were developed to build the product’s personality and target. Molly effectively translated—aptly transposed and adapted—the

campaign concepts from one culture (French) to another (US), which is what fed copywriters with the “stuff” for their work. Molly was an entertaining presenter and one of the most likeable at the 1998 ATA Conference.

In a way, my expectations were not met, because I had hoped to learn something new, perhaps a new “trick” or technique for translating for the advertising industry. However, we had to realize that this particular approach to the translation of marketing materials does not allow the translator to come up with the target slogan: it revolves, instead, around a very meticulous semantic and cultural adaptation of the research and concepts to be used by one marketing team. This information is then utilized as background material by the creative marketing team in the target country.

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**The Annual FLD Dinner**

The French Division dinner during the ATA Conference at Hilton Head, South Carolina was held at *La Maisonette* on the island. The cozy restaurant was full of FLD members chatting away in French and English, getting to know one another better. The food was delicious as were the desserts: a choice between French chocolate mousse or southern key lime pie!

*It’s not too early to be thinking about where to hold the French dinner in St. Louis, the site of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the ATA (November 1999). If you are familiar with French restaurants in this city, send a note to Joan Sax, Division Administrator.*

### Ma Conférence (Suite de la page 1)

Je découvris un cadre extraordinaire et rencontrai Adriana Bucci de ILE dans l'ascenseur ; nous décidions, aussitôt, de partir en jogging sur la plage. Le lendemain, je fis enfin connaissance de la personne qui allait partager ma chambre pendant près d'une semaine, Joan Bond Sax, elle-même, la future administratrice de la Division. Décidément, le monde devenait tout petit !

Je dois dire qu'à partir de ce moment, il est difficile de tenir une comptabilité fidèle de toutes mes découvertes, rencontres et apprentissages... Le « Networking », comme l'appellent nos amis américains, est le secret d'un congrès réussi et je souris, aujourd'hui, à la lecture du programme mentionnant un « Networking Evening ». Pour ma part, le « Networking » a pris place partout et nulle part, du voyage en navette à l'ascenseur, des séances de QI GONG (pour la bonne conscience) au bar (pour la mauvaise conscience), du dîner français (pour les blagues osées) aux conférences, même surchargées parfois etc....

Qu'ils traduisent en polonais, tchèque, espagnol, italien ou en français, mes collègues de tout bord m'ont permis d'amasser une somme d'informations personnelles et professionnelles incommensurable.

Je ne peux imaginer meilleure manière, pour un travailleur indépendant comme moi, de sortir de son isolement et d'échanger et d'apprendre avec ses pairs.

Il est certain que les résultats immédiats sont difficiles à évaluer. Toutefois, désormais, j'ai le pied à l'étrier et les contacts sont pris. Je dois avouer que mes enfants (13 et 8 ans) continuent à me demander « ce que tu fais **vraiment** dans la vie déjà, maman ? », mais qu'à cela ne tienne. Je garde tout mon sang-froid et je me réjouis intérieurement à la pensée de renouer avec tous mes ami(e)s de l'ATA...

*See you in Saint Louis !*

Odile

*Odile C. Mattiauda est traductrice indépendante à Providence (RI) et nous a envoyé cette lettre enthousiaste depuis ODILEVH@aol.commande.*

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### Annual ATA French Division Meeting a Success

*Odile Mattiauda and Eve Bodeux contributed to this article.*

The annual French Division meeting was held this year during the 39<sup>th</sup> ATA Conference on November 5, 1998. Our thanks to Odile Mattiauda for taking the minutes. Anne Vincent, the Division Administrator for last year and current Assistant Administrator, chaired the discussion. Joan Sax, the newly elected Administrator of the French Language Division, and Eve Bodeux, the new Editor of the FLD Newsletter, were also present. Around 40 French Language Division members attended the meeting and contributed their thoughts and ideas.

For the most part, the discussion was in French. Anne Vincent presented the agenda for the meeting. First on this list were the seminars given on French-related issues at the Conference. These included:

- *The French Typography Minefield*, presented by Yves Quervel, freelance translator, Fort Worth, Texas.
- *Project Analysis and Glossary Creation (a French Approach)*, presented by Claire Languillat, in-house technical translator for ILE Corporation, Boulder, Colorado; Mylène Vialard, freelance technical translator, Eldorado Springs, Colorado.
- *Question & Answer Session for Newcomers to the World of Translation in and out of French*, presented by Thierry Chambon, freelance translator, Grinnell, Iowa; Christine Durban, freelance translator, Paris; Yves Quervel, freelance translator, Ft. Worth, Texas; Susan Rials, Frederick, Maryland.
- *Rethinking Neo-classical Translation Theory*, presented by Julie Hayes, instructor, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, University of Richmond, Virginia.
- *Sell This: Getting the Message Across in Advertising Translation*, presented by Molly Stevens, translator and director, The Art of Translation, New York, New York.
- *Teaching French to English Translation to Beginning Translators*, presented by Michèle Jones, instructor of French civilization, literature, and translation, St. John's University, New York.

*(Continued on page 14)*

## Teaching French>English Translation to Beginning Translators

*Presented by Michèle Jones*

*Article by Michèle Hansen*

Dr. Michèle Jones' presentation was a synopsis of her book, The Beginning Translator Workbook: or the ABC of French to English Translation. She stated that, in her experience, students have trouble grasping the concept of non-literal translation (i.e. going beyond word-to-word), so making this point is always her first objective. The second is defining the pitfalls of F>E translation; the third is arriving at solutions to these problems.

Achieving the first objective requires the definition of a "translation unit." This is not a word, but the smallest portion of a sentence whose words cannot be translated separately without resulting in mistranslation or nonsense. Translation units may be categorized as: (a) lexical—one word in the source language doesn't necessarily correspond to one word in the target language; (b) grammatical—for example, passive vs. active voice, or the use of different prepositions, as in "*rire de*" / "to laugh at"; and (c) message translation units—where the words or images are totally different but the meaning remains the same (for example, "*à la prochaine*" / "see you later").

Where do the problems of actual translation arise? From polysemy, or the fact that words have a semantic range of meaning. As working translators can attest, words can never be separated from their context, and context is the determining factor in deciding the correct meaning of a word (concrete or abstract, standard or specialized). Polysemy is a real obstacle in machine translation. Other translation problems arise from *faux amis*; different grammatical structure and word order in source and target languages; stylistic preferences for said grammatical structures; idiomatic expressions and phrases; and concepts that exist in one language or culture but not the other.

Dr. Jones enumerated several approaches to overcome these difficulties (borrowing, calques, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation) and explained the last four in greater detail. Transposition is a switch in grammatical categories (a noun in French becomes a verb in English, for example) that does not affect the content of the message. This technique is used when the problem is structural, as in "*C'est quand votre départ ?*" / "When are you leaving?"

Modulation is a difference in the source and target cultures' ways of thinking; there are word,

grammatical, and message modulations. Examples of word modulations are "*pompier*" / "fireman" (one emphasizes water, the other fire) and "*maladie mortelle*" / "life- threatening disease."

Grammatical modulations include "*marcher sous la pluie*" / "walk in the rain" and the use of the imperative (English) versus the infinitive (French) in instructions and directions. An example of a message modulation is "*Personne n'ignore ce danger*" / "*Everyone is aware of the danger.*"

Equivalence is actually an off-shoot of modulation and consists of "set message" modulation, such as the set phrases of greetings, letter closings, and idioms like "*quoi de neuf ?*" / "what's up?". Equivalence is an especially useful linguistic tool when translating ad copy or other culturally based texts.

Finally, there is adaptation, a method of approximating the source language meaning for the target language audience. It includes such areas as units of money, measurement, time, and space. Thus, converting liters to gallons, writing "*15 jours*" as "two weeks," or "*première étage*" as "second floor," and adapting school grade levels all fall under this category.

If you are interested in exploring this subject further, Dr. Jones' book is available in paperback from the author at the discounted price of \$36.50 plus \$2.50 shipping and handling. Send your check to Michèle H. Jones, 24 Calla Avenue, Floral Park, NY 11001, along with your name and address. It is also available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).

*Michèle H. Jones, Ph.D. is an instructor of French civilization, literature, and translation at St. John's University in New York.*

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### ~ CHECK IT OUT ~

**La Langue Invisible de la Culture** on page 13  
Joan Wallace

~ and ~

**Robert Francis: ATA Life Member** on page 10  
*Anne Vincent and Robert Francis*

~ and ~

**Translation in the Scientific Field: Creation of Terminology Tools for Translators** on page 17  
*Michèle Landis*

**All in this issue!**

## Web Sites of Interest to FLD Translators

Anne Chemali has graciously volunteered to be in charge of selecting information to go on the "interesting links" section of the FLD web site. To get us started, she has submitted some useful home pages discovered at the Conference. FLD members may submit suggestions to her at [sehaile@stratos.net](mailto:sehaile@stratos.net).

*Courtesy of Susan Rials...*

*Eurodicotom*, the database of the European Commission Translation Service, can be reached at <http://www2.echo.lu/edic/> or <http://www2.echo.lu/cgi/edic/EuroDicWWW.pl>.

*Translation Journal* is Gabe Bokor's on-line publication that contains articles related to the translation industry, as well as many useful links for translators. Find it at <http://accurapid.com/journal/tj.htm>.

*The Translator's Home Companion* has many useful links for translators, such as glossaries, translator organizations, and more. Surf to <http://www.lai.com/lai/companion.html>.

*The 1997 World Fact Book* published by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) contains a range of facts about different countries, including information on geography, population, government, economy, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues. Find the facts at <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>.

Martindale's *The Reference Desk – Worldwide Overview* has links to sites in many diverse subjects, including dictionaries, meteorological sites, and international services by country. Explore this resource at <http://www-sci.lib.uci.edu/~martindale/Ref1.html>.

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## Question & Answer Session

*(Continued from page 1)*

Thierry Chambon, a French translator living in the US, discussed the value of the Internet as a means of contact with France and the French language, often a problem for U.S.-based French translators. He presented four useful sites in this regard, plus one (in French) for beleaguered Macintosh users (he uses both Mac and PC, and is familiar with cross-platform issues). Yves Quervel, an English to French translator who resides in Texas, distributed a handout packed with computing tips on hardware, software, Internet, Y2K issues, and more.

Chris Durban, a French to English translator based in Paris, shifted the focus of the discussion to client issues. As freelancers, translators mustn't lose sight of clients' (and potential clients') needs and desires. Companies want to be presented accurately and in a positive light, so translators should always be on the lookout for opportunities to help them achieve this goal. She noted the important distinction between "in-bound" and "out-bound" translation, that is, F>E translation for American companies, generally for informational purposes, as opposed to that for French companies who want to market themselves outside of France.

The latter type of work obviously requires higher-end, more polished output, and as such she advocates charging appropriately higher fees. In her view, clients *will* pay for quality work, especially in markets that are quality-driven and

not price-driven. Specialization, of course, is a significant factor in producing such quality work; choosing a specialty is often a combination of background, interests, independent study and—quite simply—chance.

The panel participants stressed the importance of on-going *auto-formation* and recommended subscribing to trade journals and newspapers in order to learn more about both the subject area and industry jargon of a chosen specialization. Translators should constantly invest both time and money in their business—including visiting clients, attending trade fairs, joining professional associations, and contributing to same [*author's note: hint, hint, French Division members!*].

These costs should be reflected in your rate structure, but this should not be a problem, because in the experience of (at least) one panelist, the more people pay for your services, the more they value you and will listen to your advice! Another investment freelancers must make is marketing or promotional materials. Beyond the basic business card (don't forget to include language pairs and e-mail addresses), it is a good idea to have a brochure clearly stating what services you perform (and perhaps those you don't), as well as such information as your rates, terms of payment, references, and large projects you have completed. If your work has been published, try to get copies to include in your portfolio—they look so much more professional than photocopies. Clients are often

*(Continued on page 7)*

### Question & Answer Session *(Continued from page 6)*

willing to give these to you, flattered that their work is being highlighted as an example of a good communications project.

On to another topic: the importance of collaboration and cooperation for both freelancers and in-house translators. Susan Rials reported that when she decided to "go freelance" she relied on referrals from other translators and still benefits from such contacts by working with them to edit or proofread each other's work (making arrangements for payment of some kind) and to accept or pass on referrals. Cooperation between translators and clients is equally important. Yves Quervel noted that he sometimes contacts target language (in-country) distributors or subsidiaries to help with problematic terminology—although sometimes agencies discourage direct contact with their clients, so translators should be careful.

Several of the panelists have experience translating web pages, and these were cited as a good source of work because many French companies are rushing to establish an Internet presence. Translators can even generate such work from firms that are already on the Web, but whose sites use incorrect English or French, by (diplomatically!) pointing this out and offering to improve it.

In response to questions from the audience, we learned that none of the speakers has liability insurance, is incorporated, or uses terminology management tools. For the latter, Thierry Chambon has created his own database in FileMaker, and Chris Durban simply keeps Word files. Another question about valuable resources for F<>E translators led to Yves Quervel moderating an animated discussion on the pros and cons of the on-line tools *Termium* and *LeDoc* (now called *Le Grand Dictionnaire Terminologique*), ultimately recommending both as far superior to specialized (and expensive) print dictionaries. The Microsoft glossaries, available for download from the main MS site, were cited as another valuable resource for translators of computer technology. There are, of course, many more, but unfortunately we ran out of time—perhaps we can continue this session at next year's ATA Conference.

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### French Language Division Web Site Permission Form

The French Language Division may publish a list of all Division members' names and e-mail addresses on the French Division web site in 1999. *Please respond if you DO or DO NOT want your information published.* The FLD will not be able to publish your information without your written (or e-mailed) permission.

To give or deny your permission for having your name and/or e-mail listed on this public access web site, please fill out this form and fax it to the Division Administrator, Joan Sax at 781-237-9704. Instead of sending this form, you may e-mail Joan at Jsax1@compuserve.com. Put "FLD web site" in the subject line of your email and be sure to include your full name, email address, and phone number.

Please fax your form or send your email by March 12, 1999.

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 Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Check a box below to indicate your preference:

**YES**, please **DO** include my name or e-mail address on the French Language Division web site.

**NO**, please do **NOT** include my name or e-mail address on the French Language Division web site.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Problems of Translating Bi/Multi-lingual Literary Texts:  
The Haitian French of Jacques Stephen Alexis**

*Presented by Professor Carrol Coates*

~ and ~

**Foreignizing the "Domesticated Other" in Lilas Desquiron's**

***Les Chemins de Loco-Miroir***

*Presented by Professor Robin Bodkin*

*Article by Joan Sax*

During their presentations at the ATA Conference at Hilton Head, SC, both Coates and Bodkin dealt with the problem of translating literary texts containing several different languages (French, Kreyòl, Spanish, and even English) while maintaining the descriptive power of the different linguistic levels.

As described by Coates, Jacques Stephen Alexis' novel, *Compère Général Soleil* contains—besides French—words, terms, and folk wisdom in Kreyòl, as well as passages in Spanish and even English because the novel takes place during a period of American occupation. One cannot translate these different languages by the same colloquial English without losing the tension, conflict, and cultural differences that the different languages help identify and describe. In addition, Haitians themselves use three languages, French, Kreyòl, and a mixture of the two. Furthermore, Kreyòl does not yet have a standardized orthography, having been largely a spoken language until recently. This makes the pronunciation difficult to know. French and Kreyòl are mixed in the same sentence, with equivalent words next to each other. Sometimes glossaries are included and sometimes not. Further complicating the linguistic landscape is the fact that some French words have special connotations in Haiti.

In the novel, Spanish is spoken either by Dominican prostitutes, shopkeepers, or soldiers; by Haitians returning to Haiti from the Dominican Republic; or by Haitian sugarcane cutters. This Spanish is not spelled in the standard manner and makes extensive use of swear words and insults. English is the language of the occupiers, the marines, and the spoiled, racist U.S. children.

Faced with this linguistic diversity, what does the translator do? Some solutions are relatively easy. In the text under discussion, Spanish words and phrases were left in Spanish but with standard Spanish orthography, because though understandable, Spanish was viewed by Haitians as 'foreign.' English was also left as it was in the original text. These two languages are clearly identifiable as 'other' and therefore can remain unaltered in the translation (even though the English will lose its "foreignness" in an English translation).

The translator's solution was to "clarify the tension between the two principal languages intermingled in the novel." There were no direct quotes from the translation in order to see how Kreyòl and French were treated.

The second presenter, Professor Bodkin, showed examples of a translation of *Les Chemins de Loco-Miroir*. In English, the title was translated as *Reflections of Loko-Miwa*. Thus, a Kreyòl spelling of "Loco-Miroir" becomes "Loko Miwa" and the meaning of "mirror" in Miroir is placed in the first word of the title, "Reflections." Throughout his translation there are names of places in Kreyòl and other expressions, all of them in bold.

It was helpful to attend both of these presentations in order to develop translation strategies for multicultural and multilingual texts. The first described the linguistic background of the texts and the second showed actual practical solutions to the problems presented by such texts. Any translator wishing to tackle a multilingual text will find a useful methodology in these presentations.

*Joan Sax is the Administrator of the French Language Division. A translator for 30 years, she holds a Ph.D. in Romance Languages from Harvard University. Among her many accomplishments, she is an ATA accredited translator from French and Italian to English and works part-time as the head of translation and interpretation for the French Library and Cultural Center in Boston. She can be reached at JSax1@compuserve.com.*



**ATA Conference Presentation Review:  
Watch Your Step - Hazards of F>E Translation**

*Presented by Lillian Clementi*

*Article by Michèle Hansen*

*For more information on points of language usage, see Lillian's related article in this issue.*

Lillian Clementi's ATA Conference presentation clarified several points of French and English grammar and sentence construction that may pose difficulties for translators. Her spirited discourse on grammar (no, that is not an oxymoron!), left participants with a heightened appreciation for, and awareness of, the subject.

The first part of her presentation, "Common French Constructions that Don't Fly in English," included a discussion of commas in compound sentences, rhetorical questions, and dangling participles. She noted that a perfectly acceptable sentence in French (without commas) may become a run-on sentence in English unless a comma is inserted. Rhetorical questions are also more acceptable in French than English, and are often used in titles. However, their direct translation into English smacks of "translatorese." Her "no-brainer" solution is to simply change these questions into statements; thus *Quelles stratégies pour le développement des capacités ?* becomes *Strategies for Capacity Development*.

On the subject of dangling participles and participial phrases, Ms. Clementi gave several examples of how the incorrect use of these constructs can result in unintended humor:

*Crossing the lawn that morning*, Douglas Spaulding broke a spider web with his face, as opposed to *Crossing the lawn that morning*, a spider web brushed against Douglas Spaulding's face. Although their use is generally discouraged in French (see Grevisse, *Le Bon* 328), dangling participles are more strictly prohibited in English, giving rise to awkward French to English translations of participial phrases. The speaker offered two solutions: converting a dangling participle into a dependent clause or changing the subject of the sentence.

The second part of her presentation, "Distinctions in English that don't exist in French," addressed split infinitives, the use of *among* vs. *between*, and the use of *which* vs. *that*. Split infinitives, of course, do not exist in French but can and do cause problems for writers of English. The famous line from *Star Trek* was cited as an example: "*To boldly go* where no man has gone before." We can see that split infinitives are not entirely taboo in English, but rather should be used with care, when "the writer wishes to place unusual stress on the adverb." (Strunk & White)

On the question of *among* vs. *between*, we were reminded that the word *entre* in French may be translated as either of these, so particular attention must be paid to the number of objects referred to, because in English, *between* is used for two objects whereas *among* is used for three or more.

The matter of *which* vs. *that* is slightly more complicated. Both terms are used to introduce relative clauses: *which* for nonrestrictive clauses (set off by a comma) and *that* for restrictive clauses (no comma). A quick test of which to use is whether the clause can be eliminated without changing the fundamental meaning of the sentence; if so, it is a nonrestrictive clause and should be introduced with *which*. Another *which/that* test is to check if the pronoun can be omitted: *Titanic is the dumbest movie that I have ever seen* = *Titanic is the dumbest movie I have ever seen*.

Still confused? Ms. Clementi provided a bibliography of reference works for further explanation, including *The Chicago Manual of Style*, *Le Bon Usage*, *The Random House Guide to Good Writing*, *The Elements of Style*, and an article by Russell Baker entitled, "How to Punctuate," which may be found at <http://krypton.mankato.msus.edu/~glasej/baker.html>.

*Michèle Hansen is a freelance French to English translator. She can be reached at 70233.330@compuserve.com.*

## The French Typography Minefield

*Presented by Yves Quervel*

*Article by Anne Vincent*

Parmi les nombreux (très nombreux) avantages de la fonction d'Administratrice ou Administratrice adjointe de division, se trouve le droit de demander aux personnes de bonne volonté de présenter une session au congrès sur un sujet particulier. Après avoir entendu plusieurs relecteurs sûrs d'eux m'expliquer que mes habitudes de ponctuation ne correspondaient pas aux recommandations des ouvrages de référence, j'ai pris le taureau par les cornes et demandé à Yves Quervel, excellent traducteur, ingénieur méthodique et minutieux, de bien vouloir effectuer les recherches à ma place et d'en présenter un résumé clair, utile et bref durant les 45 minutes qui lui furent allouées pour sa présentation à Hilton Head.

Yves a débuté sa présentation en nous fournissant une liste des publications consultées au cours de ses mois de recherche:

### **France et Belgique (choix arbitraire)**

- Abrégé du code typographique à l'usage de la presse (1991) (ACT)
- Lexique des règles typographiques en usage à l'imprimerie nationale (1990) (LRT)
- Le bon usage (Grévisse – 1988) (LBU)
- Nouveau Petit Robert électronique – 1996 (NPR)
- Les pièges de la ponctuation (Hatier – 1995) (PDP)

### **Canada (choix arbitraire)**

- Multidictionnaire (Marie-Éva de Villers – 1992) (MTD)
- Le guide du rédacteur (Bureau de la traduction) (1996) (GDR)
- Le français au bureau (1997) (FAB)

*(Suite en page 12)*

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## **Robert Francis: ATA Life Member**

*Anne Vincent and Robert Francis*

Cette conversation avec Robert Francis fait suite à la question que je lui posai lorsque je remarquai que son nom était suivi de la mention « life member » dans l'annuaire. A quoi ressemblait l'ATA à ses débuts ?

AV: Vous êtes membre de l'ATA depuis de nombreuses années et vous devez avoir certainement des choses intéressantes à raconter ?

RF: Je suis en fait membre depuis 1964 et je crois la deuxième ou troisième personne en Californie du Sud à l'époque à s'être jointe à l'organisation. Deux ou trois mois plus tôt et j'aurais probablement été l'un des membres fondateurs. Les membres fondateurs étaient pour la plupart au début des personnes qui habitaient l'état de New York.

AV: Pour quelles raisons êtes-vous devenu membre de ATA ?

RF: Je faisais des traductions pour ma compagnie (Pacific Airmotive Corporation) et j'étais aussi ingénieur de liaison entre cette compagnie et Avions Marcel Dassault en France. Au cours d'un voyage à New York j'ai appris qu'un groupe de traducteurs avaient décidé de s'organiser. J'ai appris ceci d'une façon assez singulière au cours d'une réunion d'Alsaciens-Lorrains qui avait lieu dans une brasserie munichoise de New York. J'ai trouvé l'idée excellente et j'ai aussi appris qu'il y avait un traducteur à Los Angeles qui servait de contact à l'organisation naissante.

AV: Quels ont été les efforts déployés au départ ?

*(Suite en page 11)*

(Suite de la page 10)

- RF: Je crois me souvenir que les membres fondateurs étaient tout au plus une cinquantaine et que les autres membres étaient éparpillés au départ et surtout concentrés dans l'est des EU. Pour assurer la survie de l'organisation (qui se trouvait à Croton-on-Hudson, NY), il s'est donc rapidement avéré nécessaire de trouver des interlocuteurs intéressés dans les différents états ou régions des Etats-Unis. L'organisation de chapitres (local chapters) était donc une nécessité. Avec votre permission, et pour vous donner une idée du travail à accomplir au départ, je peux détailler la naissance de SCATIA en Californie du Sud.
- AV: Oui, puisque vous en avez été l'un des fondateurs.
- RF: Voici dans ses grandes lignes les efforts de quelques membres pour organiser ce chapitre. Les premiers membres ont donc été, je crois, John Haller, mort il y a plus de 20 ans et qui dirigeait une petite agence de traduction, ainsi que M. C. Olechno-Huszcza, traducteur et professeur d'origine polonaise. Monsieur Olechno et son épouse nous ont souvent reçus dans leur résidence qui servait de lieu de rencontre pour la poignée de traducteurs qui formait la présence de l'ATA sur la côte Sud-Ouest. Nos rencontres étaient assez rares et c'est en 1973 seulement que l'idée d'organiser un chapitre pour la Californie du Sud a commencé à faire lentement son chemin. Cette organisation, sous le nom de SCATIA, a en fait vu le jour en 1977 et nous avons été, M. Olechno et moi-même, les initiateurs de ce chapitre. Pendant plusieurs années j'ai été, le président, le secrétaire, le trésorier et même le cuisinier de l'organisation. En effet, pour attirer les membres, nous les invitions à venir aux réunions dans ma résidence de Hermosa Beach où des amuse-gueules les attendaient. Une collecte était faite pour défrayer le coûts et, si vous me permettez cette parenthèse, il était amusant de voir certains de nos visiteurs déployer des efforts discrets mais persistants pour échapper à la contribution. (Rire) Je me dis parfois que l'organisation embryonnaire n'a survécu à ses débuts que grâce à mon soutien financier permanent ! Finalement, en 1980 avec mon ami Denys Gontard, le premier président officiel, que j'ai nommé, je dois dire, arbitrairement, nous avons réussi à obtenir un nombre de membres suffisant (une vingtaine) pour être admis par l'ATA comme organisation locale officielle. Pour des raisons de santé, j'ai été interrompu dans mes efforts de recrutement et j'ai quitté la Californie en 1989. Mon expérience m'a démontré qu'il était très difficile d'organiser des traducteurs sur une base volontaire et que pour le Sud de la Californie cela devenait pratiquement une « mission impossible » en raison des distances et d'une certaine indépendance de gens venant de partout et n'ayant pas de racines profondes en Californie. Il y a sans aucun doute d'autres raisons que je n'ai jamais réussies à comprendre qui rendaient difficiles un tel projet. D'autres personnes ont été dévouées à la cause et je dois mentionner en particulier et parmi beaucoup d'autres, Denys Gontard, Manuela Cerruti, Alba Jones, et Manouche Ragsdale.
- AV: Accepteriez-vous que les membres vous posent d'autres questions sur votre expérience de traducteur dans notre prochain bulletin ?
- RF: Absolument. Je n'ai aucune objection à formuler et, au contraire, je pense que mes bonnes et mauvaises expériences peuvent être utiles à de nombreux traducteurs de français. Il y a des bouleversements qui se préparent et je pense que les traducteurs et les interprètes doivent se préparer à faire face à l'avenir qui n'est pas très clair.

*M. Robert Francis (François) est traducteur de français et d'espagnol depuis de nombreuses années. Son expérience peut être utile à beaucoup d'entre nous. Ingénieur de l'Aéronavale, officier de la Marine marchande, avocat, diplômé de gestion, il a travaillé pour plusieurs compagnies à vocation internationale. Outre les Etats-Unis, il a résidé dans plusieurs pays : France, Suisse, Espagne, Canada, Argentine, Vietnam, Mexique. Il habite à présent à Laredo au Texas près de la frontière mexicaine. Son adresse électronique est la suivante : aaarobfran@aol.com. Anne Vincent, Assistant Administrator, est traductrice indépendante d'anglais en français et son adresse est annevincent@pobox.com.*

## The French Typography Minefield *(Suite de la page 10)*

Alors que les plus disciplinés d'entre nous commençaient à en noter fébrilement les coordonnées, Yves nous a avertis de bien vouloir tout d'abord regarder quelques exemples.

**Accentuation des majuscules** : tous les ouvrages de la liste s'accordent pour utiliser l'accentuation des majuscules, y compris ceux qui ne se prononcent pas officiellement.

**Usage ou omission de l'espace avant certains signes de ponctuation en français.** Les recherches d'Yves ont produit les résultats suivants :

Avant : OUI (ACT, LRT, LBU, NPR, PDP, MTD, GDR, FAB)

Avant ; OUI (ACT, LRT, LBU, PDP) NON (NPR, MTD, GDR, FAB)

Avant **!?** OUI (ACT, LRT, PDP) NON (LBU\*\*, NPR, MTD, GDR, FAB)

Après « / et avant » OUI (ACT, LRT, LBU, NPR, PDP, GDR, FAB) NON (MTD)

*On observe donc un clivage Europe/Canada, mais Yves a remarqué un flottement amusant entre l'auteur de la dernière édition du Bon Usage (qui recommande de ne pas utiliser d'espace avant ! et ?) et le typographe de la même édition (qui lit peut-être le LRT et insère un espace).*

**Abréviation de « minute » :**

mn (ACT, LBU), min or mn (NPR), min (PDB), min and not mn (MTD, GDR), min or m (!?) (LRT)

Ce dernier exemple ne représente que l'un des nombreux cas de divergences entre les ouvrages de référence à la disposition des traducteurs.

Il m'est difficile de résumer une présentation qui fourmillait d'exemples passionnants et souvent désopilants mais la conclusion d'Yves mérite d'être répétée in extenso :

- Il existe fort peu de règles universelles : effectuez vos propres recherches, établissez vos propres normes de ponctuation et de typographie et communiquez les à vos clients en citant vos sources.
- Certains de vos choix seront dictés par le destinataire de votre traduction (Canada/Europe, publications scientifiques ou de marketing...), d'autres par votre expérience ou vos goûts personnels. L'important est d'apporter la preuve d'une démarche cohérente et de pouvoir citer l'une des références acceptées par une majorité (ou une forte minorité...) de professionnels linguistiques.

*Yves Quervel est traducteur indépendant au Texas et son adresse est quervel@flash.net.*

## Project Analysis for Translators: Real Life Scenarios

*C. Languillat and M. Vialard*

*Article by Joan Sax*

At their presentation at the ATA Conference in November 1998, presenters Claire Languillat and Mylène Vialard described four increasingly complex and difficult scenarios for fictitious localization projects (the names have been changed to protect the innocent!) and suggested algorithms for maximizing productivity and translation accuracy (see their article in the Conference Proceedings). The fictitious client, PhoneSoft, needs its telephone messaging system documentation translated.

Languillat and Vialard advised, that before beginning the translation, translators should ask a series of questions about the project, which in turn will suggest different courses of action (presented schematically with algorithms). Some

of the important questions include whether the client sent only the documentation or software; whether the documentation is for an update or a new product; whether it is related to other products; or whether there is a glossary or other supporting material. Another important consideration is whether the documentation was written with localization in mind (for example, does it have weights and measures used in the target language, etc.).

The presenters suggested going through the document thoroughly, making a list up front of possible problems, and asking the client about how he or she wants them resolved. Examples included changing typically American names like *Joe Smith* to a typical French or German name and changing the support numbers from an "800" number to the equivalent in the target language country. Sometimes a client will send software which does not correspond to the documentation.

*(Continued on page 16)*

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~ A SERIES ~

**Watch Your Step - Hazards of F>E Translation**

*This is the first in a series of articles excerpted by Lillian Clementi from a French Division presentation she made at the 1998 ATA Conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina. See the article in this issue by Michèle Hansen about Lillian's presentation.*

**Commas in Compound Sentences**

In English, as you may remember from Sister Regina's grammar class, a compound sentence consists of two clauses, each containing its own subject and verb and separated by a comma and the conjunction **and**, **but**, **for**, **nor**, **or**, **so**, or **yet**.

*Everyone was startled by the news, and several senators who had been standing in the hall rushed into the room to hear the end of the announcement.*

The comma is generally required before the conjunction; without it, you get a **run-on sentence** and in some cases a confused reader. This is particularly true when the conjunction is *and*:

*Everyone was startled by the arrival of the president and several senators who had been standing in the hall rushed into the room to hear his announcement.*

In this example the reader may well stumble, because it is not immediately clear that the senators are the subject of the second independent clause, and not another object of the preposition *of*.

In French, by contrast, the comma is not used with the conjunctions **and**, **or**, and **nor**. *Grevisse* says, "La virgule se met généralement entre les éléments coordonnés par une autre conjonction que **et**, **ou**, **ni**." I am reliably informed that this rule is less and less observed and that this is *l'un des usages modifiés insidieusement par la syntaxe anglaise*, but that's another story. To get back to compound sentences, the next example is a correct French sentence with no comma before the coordinating conjunction *et*:

*Tout le monde fut surpris en voyant le président et plusieurs sénateurs qui se trouvaient dans le couloir se précipitèrent dans la salle pour assister à sa déclaration.*

This perfectly acceptable French sentence, however, could easily translate to the run-on sentence we just saw in English if a comma is not inserted before the **and**.

Like every good rule, this one has an exception: in some cases the comma may also be omitted in English if the sentences are short and closely related, or if there is little or no chance of confusion:

*The president arrived and several senators rushed in.*

*Everyone was startled by the news and several senators who had been standing in the hall rushed into the room to hear the end of the announcement.*

However, it is not incorrect to use a comma in cases like this. Unless there is a good reason not to, I would argue for it, simply because it is a good idea to give the reader some help by signaling the start of a new clause.

*Lillian Clementi is a freelance translator based in Arlington, VA. She works from French and German into English and can be reached at LClementi@compuserve.com.*

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**La Langue invisible de la culture**

*Joan Wallace*

Tout comme il est possible d'apprendre une langue étrangère, on peut apprendre les signaux culturels qui constituent une part importante de la communication. C'est ce qu'affirme Raymonde Carroll dans son livre Evidences Invisibles : Français et Américains au quotidien. Par culture, elle entend les prémices acquises dès l'enfance, qui constituent la base de nos interactions et que

nous avons appris, au sein de notre propre culture, à considérer comme tout à fait naturelles. Nos différences linguistiques sont bien évidentes, alors que très souvent nos acquis culturels ne le sont pas. Selon l'auteur, notre comportement, en particulier dans nos relations les plus intimes, est déterminé de façon presque inconsciente. En agissant d'une manière qui nous semble naturelle, et souvent avec les meilleures intentions, nous sommes choqués, voire même

(Suite en page 17)

## **Translating Equity Research: Breaking Into French>English Financial Translation**

*Presented by Robert Killingsworth*

*Article by Alan E. Dages*

Robert Killingsworth is a CFA and freelance translator. During his presentation at the recent annual ATA Conference, his most important advice to French into English translators was that their best market is outside the United States. There is a torrent of documents every day relating to trade, finance, and commerce that must be translated into English—the language increasingly used to conduct international business. Fact: the working language of the new European central bank headquartered in Germany is *English*. Equity research is an attractive market niche and refers to financial analysts' reports on publicly traded companies.

The typical client is a private-sector brokerage firm based abroad. Paris has about 40 such firms. Many employ in-house translators while also farming out work to freelancers. Prospects are judged on what they can produce, rather than on their academic qualifications. Clients tend to keep up with technological developments and seek the same quality in their translators. Although the material is not overly technical, one must master accounting terminology and be able to write about a wide range of businesses being reviewed. The preferred writing style is concise and punchy.

To be successful, a freelancer must take an export-oriented approach. This means that the English used must be adapted to an international audience where British usage tends to dominate. Documents should be formatted in A4 sized paper (the European standard). Since the nature of financial translation calls for quick turnarounds, the time difference between Europe and the US can be a crucial factor. Some clients may prefer to pay in their own currency, so opening an account in their country provides an added convenience. Payment often takes much longer than the 30 to 45-day norm in the US.

Mr. Killingsworth ended his presentation with a discussion on the terminology used in French>English financial translation. Since there are often several ways to treat a given French term, the client should be prepared to provide a list of their preferences. Such a list would provide a clue as to who the target audience is. Mr. Killingsworth recommended three main terminology resources, The Financial Times of London, Termium (a French-English terminology bank on CD-Rom produced by the Canadian government), and the Internet.

*Alain Dages may be reached at 73321.334@compuserve.com and Robert Killingsworth at RKillingsworth@compuserve.com.*

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### **Annual ATA French Division Meeting** *(Continued from page 4)*

- *Translating Bilingual Haitian Fiction*, presented by Robin Orr Bodkin, contributor and participant, CITL in Arles, France & San Francisco, California; Carrol Coates, professor, French and comparative literature, SUNY-Binghamton, New York.
- *Translating Equity Research: Breaking into French > English Financial Translation*, presented by Robert Killingsworth, freelance translator, Palo Alto, California.
- *Translation in the Scientific Field: Creation of Terminology Tools for Translators*, presented by Annik Bouroche, director of English translation, Unité Centrale de Documentation, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, Paris.
- *Watch Your Step: Hazards of French > English Translation*, presented by Lillian Clementi, freelance translator, Arlington, Virginia.

Look for summaries of some of these presentations throughout this issue of the newsletter. The annual French Dinner was also discussed. This dinner was held at *La Maisonette*, a French restaurant on Hilton Head Island.

Continuing on in the agenda, Anne explained how the \$15.00 Language Division dues was allocated. \$4.00 go to ATA's general expenses and \$11.00 go to various costs such as transportation for speakers, printing and shipping expenses for the newsletter, and telephone expenses. With any remaining monies, the Division may choose to print a membership directory for next year. It was clarified that members of the French Language Division (and other divisions) pay their \$15.00 dues when joining the ATA or renewing membership. *(Continued on page 15)*

## Annual ATA French Division Meeting

(Continued from page 14)

The next item on the list was the French Language Division Newsletter. A lively discussion took place on what form the Newsletter should take. Suggestions were made that it be presented as hard copy (on paper), sent via e-mail, or posted on the French Language Division web site at the ATA. It was pointed out that some people prefer to receive a paper copy, which may be easier to consult and archive than an electronic version. In response, it was noted that it would be possible to print the newsletter from the FLD web site. [Editor's note: we are planning to provide a hard copy version for now and plan to have archives available on the FLD web site.]

It was decided that members will be able to indicate at membership renewal or otherwise how they prefer to receive the newsletter: via paper or an electronic method. A question was asked by FLD member Manon Bergeron regarding contributions she made to the Newsletter last year, but not published yet. Anne Vincent confirmed that they will be published in future issues of the newsletter. Regarding new articles for the newsletter, various FLD members volunteered to write the articles on ATA Conference presentations on French topics that are highlighted in this issue.

During the meeting, Joan Sax took the floor and led the discussion of several issues. She mentioned that from time to time, individuals or companies contact the Division asking if an electronic advertisement may be sent on their behalf to FLD members. Everyone present at the FLD meeting indicated that they have e-mail access and no one present was opposed to receiving such ads. Joan specified that members should act in good faith and respond to these job offers only when qualified. Such ads will contain a disclaimer to clarify the French Division's role.

Focus shifted to the FLD's web site. It will now be sponsored by the ATA. An attendee pointed out that the site could be used as a resource for French terminology. Anne Chemali volunteered to be in charge of selecting information to go on this section of the web site. FLD members may submit suggestions to her at [sehaile@stratos.net](mailto:sehaile@stratos.net).

The web site, expected to appear in the Spring of 1999, could also be used to publish reviews of dictionaries or CD-ROMs. Someone suggested creating links to other translator associations such as *L'Ordre des traducteurs et interprètes agréés du Québec* (OTIAQ), found at

<http://www.otiaq.org/>; *La Fédération internationale des traducteurs* (FIT), on the web at <http://fit.ml.org/>; or *La Société française des traducteurs* (SFT), found at <http://www.sft.fr/>; and others.

Another idea was to publish a list of French Language Division Members and their e-mail addresses on the division web site. Fill out the form in this issue of the newsletter and send it in to give permission for your information to be on the web site **or** to let the FLD know that you do NOT want your information listed. To have your name and e-mail included on the web site contact list, you must respond in the affirmative.

The voting rules of the ATA were clarified. Only ATA active members (accredited or those recognized by peer review) can vote at ATA meetings. In the divisions, all division members can vote as long as their dues have been paid. However, only active ATA members can serve in administrative positions within the divisions.

Before the meeting ended, it was noted that the FIT Conference will take place in Mons, Belgium in August 1999.

The meeting was adjourned and FLD members who had not yet done so by proxy or absentee ballot cast their votes for the Division Administrator and Assistant Administrator. Eve Bodeux served as Election Official. Joan Sax was elected Administrator and Anne Vincent was elected Assistant Administrator.

### ~ DON'T FORGET ~

Fill out the **French Language Division Web Site Permission Form** on page 7!

Send in your submissions for the Spring *À~Propos* issue by March 12, 1999!

Look for the second in a series of articles next issue created from a French Division presentation made by Lillian Clementi at the recent 1998 ATA Conference in Hilton Head, South Carolina!

Send us your comments about FLD and *À~Propos* any time. We want to hear from you!

## An Open Letter from the Interpreters Division!

*From Diane E. Teichman*

Greetings from the Interpreters Division!

Fresh from the 39th annual ATA conference in Hilton Head, SC, I am proud to bring the news of the establishment of the Interpreters Division. This conference was thoroughly enjoyable, and it also provided me, the new Administrator of the Interpreters Division, with the opportunity to meet many of you and to spread the word about the imminent founding of our group.

At the Conference, our division became a reality. The Interpreters Division (ID) was approved as a full division at the meeting of the Board of Directors on Sunday November 8, 1998. This group will surely be a great addition to an already highly regarded association.

I am writing this note to invite any of you who provide interpretation services in the French language to join us. I also encourage those of you who have an interest in our work to consider the ID as a means for learning about our multi-faceted profession.

The members of the Interpreters division have already taken an inter-active approach to laying the foundation for the years to come. We are set up to provide a forum where all interpreters— as colleagues— can find support and encouragement for their professional goals. It is a place to discuss specific issues encountered in the daily work environment. The members are enthusiastic about providing good resources to each other for the variety of languages represented in our division. These will be provided both through our newsletter and at next year's conference in St. Louis.

Please consider becoming a part of this new division when you renew your ATA membership at the end of this year. I welcome your comments, questions, and wisdom. I can be reached by e-mail at [linguistic.svc@juno.com](mailto:linguistic.svc@juno.com). Best wishes to you and the entire French Division for a productive and fun 1999!

### **Project Analysis for Translators**

*(Continued from page 12)*

The translator should list all the problems and questions he or she has identified at the outset, before beginning the translation, and ask the client to resolve them. If, as often happens, no one at the client office is overseeing or reviewing the project, the translator needs to explain how the problems have been resolved so that the client can go in and make changes if need be.

In their scenarios, the authors began with a fairly simple translation of documentation, followed by a translation of the documentation for an update of the software, then the translation of the documentation of new software which is not yet available to check, finally ending with a lengthy translation to be done by several freelancers. The lead translator in this case will

have each translator compile what the authors call the Question and Answer list (Q&A) giving the date, the question, the answer, and whether or not the answer came from the client.

This last scenario also requires the creation of a consistent glossary to be used by everyone on the project. The authors then discuss the process of creating such a glossary. They pointed out that often there are discrepancies between update documentation and previous versions. The translator needs to identify these inconsistencies and notify the client. Also, in order to make sure that cross references in the documentation being translated by different people are consistent, the authors suggested translating the table of contents first and giving a copy to each translator. Also, if there are recurring phrases, such as "See also", "Warning" or "For further

information", the translator should choose one way to translate them and make a list for the entire team.

Just as there are questions to answer before beginning a translation, there are questions to answer before creating a glossary. These are: what criteria to use to include terms in the glossary; what format to use; and what fields need to appear in the glossary. Criteria for inclusion in the glossary include frequency of use, terms translated in different ways in the text, product or domain specific terms, and recurrent general terms. Check the index and table of contents for initial lists of terms. All titles should be included in the glossary. The advantage for translating the index first is that terms appear there in their simplest form and have been selected by the authors as most important.

*(Continued on page 17)*



## Project Analysis for Translators *(Continued from page 16)*

Furthermore, the index is often in electronic form.

For the format, one can use a terminology database tool, or create one. The fields should be: source term, target term, context, project reference/name, entry creation date, changes (date, author, reason), and grammatical information. Often the client will ask to have the glossary as part of the translation. It will be a help to future translators, possibly even you.

The authors presented a well-organized method for attacking difficult translation projects that, though seemingly time consuming, helps save a lot of grief later in the process. They also are educating the client about issues that need to be addressed. and making future translations easier.

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## La Langue invisible de la culture

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même blessés, d'être mal compris. De même on peut choquer ou blesser autrui sans le vouloir.

L'auteur affirme que lorsque nous attribuons une caractéristique à l'autre, nous ne faisons que traduire les exigences de notre propre culture. Elle donne l'exemple d'un universitaire français en l'honneur duquel une réception est organisée. L'invité d'honneur est présenté à un historien américain auquel il demande son opinion sur un thème spécifique. L'Américain, qui possède de vastes connaissances sur ce thème, prend le temps de répondre à la question et s'attarde sur de nombreux détails. Aussitôt, le Français cherche à s'échapper en regardant ailleurs et invite un autre Français à se joindre à la conversation. Interrompu, l'Américain se vexe. Le Français trouve l'Américain ennuyeux. Que s'est-il passé ? Chacun applique des règles de conversation différentes. L'Américain a cru que le Français lui posait la question pour s'informer ; il ne comprend pas donc pourquoi le Français ne s'intéresse pas à la réponse. En revanche, le Français l'avait abordé par pure politesse, d'où l'attente d'une réponse brève. Si le Français voulait vraiment être renseigné, il aurait approfondi le sujet, mais un peu plus tard. Chacun, donc, aura interprété l'approche de l'autre en fonction des règles de conversation propres à sa culture.

C'est dans le but d'éviter ces malentendus que l'auteur offre ce livre. Les généralisations sont toujours dangereuses, surtout lorsqu'on aborde le sujet des différences culturelles, des sentiments ou du comportement humain. Cependant, s'il existe une personne qualifiée pour traiter le sujet souvent épineux des relations interpersonnelles entre Américains et Français, c'est bien Raymonde Carroll. Elle est française, anthropologue, mariée

à un Américain, anthropologue lui aussi. Ils demeurent aux Etats-Unis.

L'auteur cherche elle-même à délimiter la portée de ce livre. Elle commence par rejeter toute prétention d'analyse des raisons socio-psychologiques ou historiques profondes qui déterminent tel ou tel comportement. Le but qu'elle s'est fixé est d'enseigner une méthode d'observation et d'analyse culturelles permettant, selon elle, de « comprendre le système de communication qui permet les échanges d'informations à l'intérieur d'un groupe ». Ses observations personnelles, bien que fascinantes, sont donc secondaires. Cette analyse vise l'autre, mais surtout soi-même, parce que c'est en rendant « visibles » nos propres « évidences » et en comprenant nos propres réactions qu'il devient possible de communiquer et ainsi de mieux comprendre l'autre.

Nous les traducteurs, devons, par définition, nous débrouiller entre deux ou parfois plusieurs cultures, dans nos textes mais aussi avec ceux que nous aimons, nos amis ou nos collègues. Ce livre nous offre un solide point de départ pour des discussions qui pourraient mener à une meilleure compréhension.

### Disponibilité/Availability:

*En français/In French:*

Evidences Invisibles: Français et Américains au quotidien, par Raymonde Carroll, Editions du Seuil, 1987. ISBN 2-01-013300-8

La Cité, 2306 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064 Tel. (310)475-0658, \$36 + 5.50 s/h

Le livre international, 6, rue du Haut de Gazeran - 78125 Gazeran, Rambouillet (France)

Tel.: (011 33.1) 30.88.74.63 Fax: (011 33.1) 30.88.60.75 E-mail : livrintl@dialup.francenet.fr

Site Internet : <http://www.comitis.com/lli/> 160F + 35F s/h

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## La Langue invisible de la culture

(Suite de la page 17)

*En anglais/In English:*

Cultural Misunderstandings: The French-American Experience, Raymonde Carroll, translated by Carol Volk. University of Chicago Press, 1988. ISBN: 0-226-09498-7, \$11.95.

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### Translation in the Scientific Field: Creation of Terminology Tools for Translators

*Presented by Annick Bouroche*

*Article by Michèle Landis*

La conférence de l'ATA à Hilton Head fut certainement fertile en enseignements, en expériences et en rencontres pour les participants. En ce qui concerne la division française, on a pu constater qu'elle avait passé le stade de la genèse, qu'elle n'était « plus en cours d'établissement », selon la formule consacrée, mais au contraire pleine de vitalité, riche de la diversité et de la qualité de ses membres. Il suffisait d'assister aux présentations de cette division et de voir l'affluence et l'intérêt qu'elles ont suscités pour le constater.

La présentation d'Annick Bouroche sur son expérience de la traduction scientifique au sein de l'INRA (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique) a fait salle comble, malgré l'attrait qu'exerçait la plage de sable blanc toute proche et l'air marin que nous allions bientôt quitter à regret.

Le contenu de la présentation étant inclus dans le livre de la conférence, je ne vais pas reprendre les idées qui y sont développées. J'essaierai plutôt de montrer brièvement que ce qui est accompli à l'INRA par tous ceux qui participent à l'élaboration, la diffusion et la traduction des travaux des chercheurs, peut apporter une aide au traducteur, indépendant ou salarié, parfois isolé mais toujours désireux de se perfectionner et d'être plus efficace.

Les Français savent depuis Boileau que « ce que l'on conçoit bien s'énonce clairement, et les mots pour le dire arrivent aisément ». Les traducteurs consciencieux que nous sommes essayent toujours de produire des traductions fidèles et intelligibles, mais ce n'est pas toujours aisé. Il arrive que nous comprenions mal ce que nous traduisons parce que nos connaissances dans le domaine traité datent de nos années de lycée, ou ne dépassent pas le niveau atteint après la lecture de quelques articles de vulgarisation. Nous sommes amenés à faire des recherches terminologiques dans les dictionnaires spécialisés, sur l'Internet, ou dans les glossaires « maison » pour trouver le mot juste, ou la périphrase la mieux adaptée.

Nous nous trouvons souvent en présence de sigles mystérieux, introuvables, mais récurrents dans le document, qui seront peut-être connus et compris par ceux qui liront notre traduction, parce qu'ils sont spécialistes des questions traitées, mais que nous avons le devoir de développer et d'expliquer. Un autre casse-tête auquel nous sommes souvent confrontés, consiste à choisir le meilleur terme entre plusieurs synonymes, et à l'utiliser uniformément par souci de cohérence et de clarté. Parfois des expressions qui semblent recouvrir des réalités totalement différentes comme par exemple *flux croisés*, *flux parallèle* et *flux tangentiels*, cités par Annick Bouroche, sont, contrairement aux apparences, parfaitement équivalents. Dans ce cas, il arrive que le traducteur s'aperçoive seulement vers la fin de la traduction, après avoir acquis une meilleure connaissance du sujet, qu'un seul terme aurait suffi à rendre compte de deux ou trois expressions différentes.

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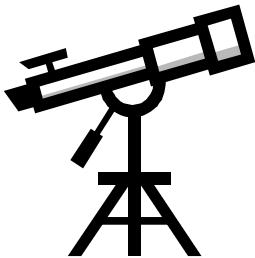
**Translation in the Scientific Field** (*Suite de la page 18*)

Le travail accompli à l'INRA, en collaboration avec la Délégation Générale de la langue française, aboutit à la création de dictionnaires spécialisés et de bases de données terminologiques fiables, constamment mises à jour. Le traducteur qui pourra y accéder bénéficiera de la synergie des compétences des experts concernés, chercheurs, enseignants, industriels, linguistes participant à l'élaboration de ces précieux instruments de communication. Des méthodes scientifiques rigoureuses, partant de la création d'un immense corpus de documents de référence pour en extraire une mine d'informations exploitées par de puissants ordinateurs et un travail d'équipe efficace, permettent de développer des bases de données terminologiques très complètes, sans lacunes, dans lesquelles le traducteur pourra trouver tous les termes, tous les sigles, toutes les expressions qu'il sera susceptible de rencontrer dans le domaine concerné.

L'effort exceptionnel consenti par l'INRA pour s'assurer de la bonne qualité et de la précision des textes publiés par ses membres en anglais et en français, devrait avoir des conséquences bénéfiques pour l'ensemble des traducteurs qui rêvent d'outils de traduction toujours plus performants, plus fiables et plus faciles à utiliser.

*Annik Bouroche est directrice de la traduction anglaise à l'Unité Centrale de Documentation, Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, Paris.*

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Keep an eye out for the FLD Web  
Site early in 1999!

Any suggestions or submissions of graphics to go with articles is much appreciated!! When you submit an article, submit a graphic too!



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