



**Translators
come out
of the shadow**

An
Interview
with

**Ann
Goldstein**

Picture published with permission of Ann Goldstein.

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TRADURRE

Newsletter of the Italian Language Division

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Officers of the ILD

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Letters to the Editors

Letters should be sent to the Editors exclusively via e-mail. Letters can be edited for clarity and brevity.

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For any further information and closing dates
please contact the Editors.

News from the Division Administrator

TRANSLATED BY ROMINA MARAZZATO SPARANO

It's been a busy few months. We have been reinvigorated by the support and enthusiasm of colleagues and Division members, to whom I am eternally grateful. We are implementing some tried-and-true initiatives and developing some new ones.

Let's start with our general administration. Every year, the gears of the ATA's organizational machine start turning well in advance of the annual conference. Of course, an event involving over a hundred presentations and guest speakers for well over a thousand attendees from across the globe could hardly happen otherwise. I bet that the kids in Alexandria (in Italy, we still call people "kids"... practically until just before retirement!) collapse into bed for a week after each conference! Part of their job is to communicate with the Divisions through the Division Administrators and Leadership Council (a small group of colleagues who help and advise the Administrator and the Assistant Administrator) and to share information, ask and answer questions, and tell us about side events. These are also part of my responsibilities as ATA Division Administrator, and I'll talk more about them below.

This year, the conference will be held in Palm Springs from October 23 to 26. On the official website—kept up-to-date—you can find information about all aspects of the conference, from the list of speakers and sessions to links for booking a room at the conference hotel and information about nearby restaurants and bars. Why spend money to go to Palm Springs in October, in the world of digital communications and hyper-connectivity? Read why you should attend the conference according to our colleague Romina Marazzato Sparano in the box on **page 9**.

What does the Italian Division do at the conference? Well, in keeping with all this new activity, we tried to encourage colleagues to share a presentation specific to Italian or about other areas of interest. And things have started to happen. So far, we have one presentation specific to Italian, and, I believe several of us will be presenting on different topics with examples related to Italian. We will keep you informed through social media (the Division's Facebook page, Twitter account, and Gmail mailing list). It is important that those of us attending the conference give the Division's support to our colleagues who have invested their time preparing a presentation: friendly faces and a clap from the audience are always a pleasure! And afterwards, of course, we can all get together for a drink and maybe a dinner!

And now for the icing on the cake. We invited a guest speaker of great interest this year, and we are thrilled that she has agreed to come and talk to us: Ann Goldstein, the translator of the *My Brilliant Friend* four-part series by Elena Ferrante. Instrumental to the great success of this work in the English-speaking world, Goldstein has also translated other Italian authors, including Leopardi (*Zibaldone*), Pasolini, and Baricco, and coordinated the translation of Primo Levi's collected works. We will be hosting an interview with her in Palm Springs to talk about her translation techniques and discuss questions from the moderator. To get to know her better, read Tiziana's and Andrea's interview with Ann, **page 3**.

What can I say? With former guests like Severgnini, Annamaria Testa, Federica Scarpa, Giles Watson (in absolutely random order!), it seems to me that we have really had it all! A big thank you to Paula Arturo, administrator of the Literary Division, who enthusiastically agreed to share in this undertaking, and to Gloria Bianchi, who reached out to Goldstein, supported me, and suggested that we work with another Division to make this happen.

So, what do you think, is it worth coming to Palm Springs?

Moving on (or actually, go back to take back up an old project), as you can see, the Division's newsletter, *Tradurre*, is regaining momentum. And in this case as well, the work involved (a lot of work!) was teamwork. We took some major steps forward after the Division meeting in Milan last November, about which you can find info and photos here.

Let's start with the meeting in Milan, which became a new launchpad for us. We wanted to give those who live in Italy (and who cannot attend the ATA conferences in the U.S. for various reasons) a chance to meet face-to-face, get re-involved in the association, and maybe help push to rejuvenate our Division or do something for a community that has been so far only virtual. It was a good meeting, despite the bad weather. We chatted, sipped coffee, and talked about proposals and prospects.

Some of the ideas that are beginning to take shape after the Milan meeting are:

- new ideas for our *Tradurre* newsletter, which will be available on the Division's website;
- a new image for our site, the Division's logo, and more coming up. We already have a new logo! You can find it in various places here in the newsletter and on our social networks! We are grateful to our graphic designer Manuel Putzolu for his patient support.
- given the positive response for the meetup in Milan, we would like to repeat it more often. We are organizing a second meetup, this time in Florence! The date is November 23, 2019, about a month after the annual conference in the U.S. Of course, we will be posting more information on social media in the coming months. Briefly, the idea is to make it an opportunity for networking and collecting ideas (as we did in the Milan meetup), as well as a chance for continuing education. We would like to have a presentation that draws on the sessions at the Annual ATA Conference in the U.S. Speakers who have already shared a presentation, or those who would have liked to share one but were unable to do so, can propose a presentation. It will be like a scaled-down version of the conference.

Another proposal from the Milan meetup is to organize a certification exam sitting in Italy. This is a bit of a complex undertaking, but if you would like to support this initiative, please contact me.

That's it for now. We would like to make the ATA less abstract for those who live on this side of the ocean. We want to do so with proposals that better meet our needs, are tailored for the European market and for the professional environment of those of us who work in Italy (perhaps even in terms of taxes!) The editorial board of *Tradurre* and the Division's Leadership Council are open to contributions, comments, and suggestions.

An Interview with Ann Goldstein

 REDAZIONE **TRADURRE** - QUESTIONS TRANSLATED BY **MIRIAM HURLEY**


**A translator
steps into
the spotlight**

Picture published with permission of Ann Goldstein.

At this year's ATA conference at Palm Springs, the Italian Language Division and the Literary Division are delighted to have Ann Goldstein as our special guest. After years editing the New Yorker, Goldstein is now the translator of major Italian authors and is best known as the English-language voice of Elena Ferrante. Spurred partly by the mystery around Ferrante's identity, Goldstein has become one of the rare cases of a translator who has stepped out of the shadows, is no longer invisible, and has even become famous. Tradurre asked her a few questions to get to know her better before the conference.

First of all, can you tell us how it all started? What got you interested in the Italian language and culture?

In my second or third year of college, I took a Dante class. I immediately fell in love with the language and with the poem itself—so much so that I took the same class again the following year. We read a parallel-text edition and, having studied French and

Latin, I was able to work out much of the Italian, but it inspired in me a desire to read Dante in Italian. It was almost 20 years before I was able to do so. While I was working as a copy editor at *The New Yorker*, my latent desire to read Dante in Italian became more overt, and I somehow managed to convince some of my colleagues that they, too, wanted to read Dante in Italian. One of them was then studying Greek at Columbia, and among her classmates was the daughter of Maristella Lorch, a famous Dante professor at Columbia. We had a class in the office and after a year of studying Italian grammar we read the entire *Divine Comedy*, in the course of several years. The Italian class continued for many years after that.

How did you come to the decision to translate from Italian?

Like most literary translators, I began translating almost by accident. We had been studying Italian for four or five years, when the artist Saul Steinberg sent Robert Gottlieb, who was then the editor of *The New Yorker*, a book by a writer named Aldo Buzzzi. Buzzzi was a friend of Steinberg's—they had studied architecture together in Milan, before the war. Gottlieb wanted to write Steinberg a note, so he gave me the book, since he knew I was studying Italian, and said, "Just read enough so that I'll be able to say something nice to Saul." I read the whole book—it is quite short—and decided to try to translate it, as a challenge to myself, a kind of exercise, and a way of studying Italian more closely and intimately, from the inside, so to speak. It quickly became something more than that: the work fascinated and absorbed me. And then the translation was published in *The New Yorker*. Entitled *Chekhov in Sondrio*, it is a kind of memoir-reflection about Italy and Russian literature. So I came to translation by this somewhat informal route, rather than by formal, academic study of the literature, or through day-to-day life in Italy.

Do you generally choose the authors/books you translate or is it the publishers who propose them to you?

I think almost all my work has come from publishers who proposed books to me, and I have been incredibly lucky, in that these books have almost always been by very good—even great—writers.

Leopardi, Primo Levi, Pasolini, Buzzzi, Baricco and now Elena Ferrante. These writers are so different from each others. Can you tell us something about your professional (and personal) history, referring to this rich and diversified journey?

As I said, most of these projects have come to me from publishers or similar routes. Primo Levi was a huge project, conceived by Robert Weil, an editor at Liveright/Norton, to bring all of Levi's works into a single English edition. In that case I did some of the translations and edited the others: it was a project I was involved in for

eleven years. The Leopardi was also a group project, but in that case I was one of a team of translators, working with both an Italian and an English editor. At the start of the project, in fact, the translators all got together with the editors over a weekend and talked about various words and concepts. The second book I translated was Pasolini's *Petrolio*: a complex draft of a novel, unfinished at his death, which was a real trial by fire for an inexperienced translator. But I learned a lot about translation and about Pasolini, and I sort of fell in love with his writing, especially his novels, which are scarcely known in America.

Mr. Gwyn's English translation was much appreciated, someone wrote that the English version has a higher degree of authenticity, and that "Mr. Gwyn succeeds in owning its material fully only in translation", after having been re-imagined in another language. Can you tell us about the work you did for this novel?

That was a very generous assessment (I think from Stiliana Milkova) and I'm very flattered by it. I think Baricco isn't much appreciated these days in Italy—he's been around for so long and has written so many books—but I think he's a wonderful and original writer. I don't think I worked any differently from the way I usually do, but it may be that the English setting and the English characters somehow came into themselves when the language was English in a way they didn't in Italian.

How did you come across Ferrante?

Ferrante came to me through Europa Editions. In the early 2000s, Sandro and Sandra Ferri, who ran the Rome-based publishing house Edizioni E/O, decided to open an English-language branch. They had specialized, to an extent, in translations, bringing many Eastern European writers to Italy, and, especially after 2001, they felt that literature could be an important way of making connections and building bridges between cultures. So in 2005 they founded Europa Editions, and to launch this new venture they decided to publish, as their first book, *I giorni dell'abbandono*, *The Days of Abandonment*, which is actually Ferrante's second book, and which they had published in Italy with great success. They asked four or five translators to do a sample, which I think was the first chapter of *The Days of Abandonment*, and I was chosen.

Ferrante's four novels were best sellers in Italy too, but the Italian critics received them rather coldly. Why do you think the enthusiasm for Ferrante's novels ran so high in the States?

I don't really have a satisfactory answer. As readers we are immersed in the lives of Elena and Lila, we get to know their families, their friends, we experience what happens to them—marriages, births, deaths, loves, hatreds—over some six decades. We see them grow up and change and age and, in some cases, die, as we do with people in our own lives. It's not so much that we

identify with the details of these lives—most of us did not grow up amid the violence and poverty of an outlying neighborhood of Naples, Elena and Lila's childhood world. But I think we do identify with, and recognize, the people themselves and their relationships with each other and with life, and, perhaps, with their desire to find order or sense in their lives. Ferrante's ability to analyze, and dramatize, such emotions, to excavate them (to use a term she uses herself), is compelling and moving.

What was your approach in translating Ferrante's novels : domestication or foreignization?

I suppose that all translators try to steer a middle course between the two, but I would say that these days, in a more "global" world, the tendency is more toward foreignization. For example, I wouldn't translate the word "via" in a street name, and would most likely say Piazza San Marco rather than St. Mark's Square.

What was the main challenge you faced?

Ferrante's prose is dense; she can use a lot of words, not in a redundant way but in order to get at the precise truth of, say, an emotion, and because she is often describing emotional states. It can be tricky to preserve the intensity and the momentum created by the rush or pileup of words within an English syntax and without losing the meaning. Many readers have pointed out her tendency to write in run-on sentences; I think it's one of the ways in which she achieves that intensity, that force, and though it's true that Italian sustains such sentences more easily than English, I've tried to preserve the style as far as possible.

We read that you edited the English subtitles for the TV series of My Brilliant Friend. Can you tell us something about this specific work, and how was dealing with this different perspective?

Actually I edited the subtitles only for the first two episodes. It was an interesting process, to try to convey a character's words in a short space and in an idiomatic way. I was working not from a script but from a transcript—or rather, two transcripts, one in Neapolitan and one in Italian—of what the actors actually said onscreen. So yes, it was interesting, and I would certainly want to do it for any film made from a book I'd translated, but I don't foresee it replacing books.

Save the Dates

ATA Conference Dates

October 23-26

60th Annual Conference in
Palm Springs, California



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Italian Language Division Annual Meeting:
Friday 25th, 12.30-1.00

November 23

2nd ATA Italian Language
Division Meetup, **Florence, Italy**



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Registration required
Deadline to be announced

Frequently Asked Questions

TRANSLATED BY MIRIAM HURLEY

1. Can I submit articles to Tradurre about my work as an interpreter?

Yes. Despite its name, Tradurre gladly accepts articles about interpreting as well as translating.

2. Can I publish one of my translations in Tradurre?

No, but you could, for example, write an article explaining why you chose a particular text, how you approached it, the main translation challenges and how you resolved them, quoting relevant parts of the translated text. It could also be interesting to know if that translation had a particular outcome for you, such as improving a relationship with a client or increasing your professional standing.

3. Can I publish an article in Tradurre that has already been published elsewhere?

Generally speaking, we prefer to publish original articles. In some instances, we might accept articles published elsewhere. For example, if we have too few articles for an issue or if an issue is focused on a specific topic and we feel the article would make a significant contribution to the discussion.

4. I would like to propose an article, but I don't know what topics interest Tradurre.

Look at old issues of Tradurre to get some ideas about topics that may be of interest. <http://www.ata-divisions.org/ILD/OldTradurre.html>

We are interested in articles about our work as interpreters and translators. They might address topics beyond strictly linguistic matters, such as work methods, time management, new work tools, personal approaches to work, strategies for staying focused, or financial management.

5. If my article is accepted, will Tradurre publish it exactly as I delivered it? Will I keep the copyright on the article?

All articles are subject to editing. The copyright of all articles remains with the authors.

6. What are the advantages to publishing an article in Tradurre?

- The satisfaction of seeing your article published in an industry magazine;
- Visibility as a qualified professional with possible returns in terms of contacts with colleagues and possible jobs;
- Being able to mention this publication on your social media, bringing attention to you and to Tradurre;
- Continuing Education points for the purpose of maintaining ATA certification (http://www.atanet.org/docs/CE_approval_request_form.pdf).

Palm Springs Persuasion

ROMINA MARAZZATO SPARANO

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Do you need some persuading to attend this year's ATA Conference in Palm Springs? I bet you know about Palm Springs' delightful weather in the fall, its hot springs, stylish hotels, yummy restaurants, and relaxing spas.

Let's add to that list the vintage boutiques and design shops that go with its mid-century, modern architecture, so fun for window-shopping after a day of sessions. But the true reason to attend the ATA Conference is inside the host hotel itself. Especially starting last year, the Conference has taken a quality leap for the better.

You may think that the cost is steep, with the early bird

price tag at over \$500 for registration alone. Then, you factor in accommodations and travel expenses—likely airfare, even within California, and you could be in for well over \$1000. But when you consider the caliber and experience of the presenters, and the variety and, as of late, depth of content, you realize that it's actually well worth it. In a sense, the price serves to deter casual attendees and instead encourage committed

translators to attend and collaboratively further their professional skills. For it is not only within the sessions that learning happens. There is a huge amount of talent in the attendees that both presenters and fellow attendees benefit from during discussions and networking sessions throughout the conference.

For a number of years, sessions leaned heavily on the beginners' side. But a conscious effort has balanced the range of depths and topics covered at the conference. You will indeed still find sessions to support those new to the profession, both in terms of translation and business skills. Of interest for first-time attendees and young professionals is the Buddies Welcome Newbies program, where first-timers and veterans are paired up and take part in some getting-to-know-you and networking activities.



But those with longer professional experience will find juicy sessions as well. Some presenters organize interactive sessions allowing input from the audience and generating (and moderating) valuable dialogue. Some presenters go in-depth with the topics they cover and add valuable insights and tools to the experience translators' toolbox. And presenters are taking cue from Ted Talk tips: they shake up the delivery of content (yes, if you are or want to be a presenter DO NOT read your session!), they stick to what they know, making it authentic, and use slides for emphasis and examples rather than boring cheat sheets for themselves.)

It all boils down to becoming better translators together. Attending conferences and other continuing education events is also about networking with colleagues. Not a minor advantage is putting real faces and voices together with those we work with digitally. And, of course, the flip side of the synchronous experience is what we take away and sticks with us: the secrets and tips of our craft and the connections with colleagues

who will help and support us once we are back home.

Inside and outside the sessions, we learn to revisit what we do, share it with others, incorporate all that technology has to offer, and continue to improve. Attending events like this imbues a renewed love of our craft, a sense of confidence in our ability, and the recognition that it is only in each other's company that we can truly grow.

I hope that you will join us in Palm Springs and think about sharing what you know as a presenter in the future!

Romina Marazzato Sparano is a translator, editor, and educator with 20 years of experience crafting technical, medical, educational, and creative materials for a variety of organizations, including Fortune 500 companies. She provides training and consulting on plain language, translation, editing, and localization. As an educator, she designed and launched the Master of Arts in Translation/Localization Management Program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. She supports continuing education through leadership and training in professional associations.

<http://languagecompass.com/>



Il traduttore uno e trino: cronaca non seria di un progetto con troppi referenti

ANDREA F. TUVERI

Quello che segue è il racconto di un progetto creativo gestito a forza di psicologia e pubbliche relazioni (linguistica poca). La storia è leggermente arricchita, volutamente scherzosa ed emendata di alcune leggere volgarità dalle colleghe redattrici!

PROLOGO

Certe mattine iniziano con una bella telefonata. È un copywriter italiano con cui ho collaborato, mi dice: "Sto scrivendo per un gruppo di hotel di lusso, gli stanno per arrivare dei testi in inglese della loro agenzia pubblicitaria nel Regno Unito, ho consigliato te come traduttore creativo, ti contatterà il direttore marketing."

È quel tipo di notizia che mette addosso sia eccitazione che timore, quindi interrompo all'istante quello che stavo facendo e volo giù alla pasticceria artigianale, perché io sono per la celebrazione anticipata e figlio di commercianti, quindi la pelle dell'orso si vende e si festeggia rigorosamente prima di averla.

L'INCARICO

Il direttore marketing mi chiama, 2-3 minuti di complimenti senza conoscermi (quindi sopravvalutandomi, quindi accumulo tensione), poi le spiegazioni: "Abbiamo un contratto con un'agenzia pubblicitaria americana, i testi li scrivono a Londra, ci serve una traduzione creativa che sia coerente al nostro stile interno, oltre che in linea con i testi che scrive la nostra agenzia italiana di web marketing."

COSA PENSO

- A) Questi vogliono farmi fare il trapezista
- B) Chiudi i boccaporti Andrea, sta arrivando una tempesta
- C) Meglio chiedere più soldi

I POTENZIALI PROBLEMI

Number One - Leggo, per prepararmi, i testi dell'agenzia italiana di web marketing e mi sento subito poco bene, ad esempio vedo che al centro della pagina troneggia uno "STREPITOSAMENTE": come tutti sappiamo scrivere "STREPITOSAMENTE" tutto in maiuscole è del tutto in



linea con il tono di voce suadente di un gruppo di resort esclusivi, praticamente un passaggio obbligato.

Number Two - Arrivano i primi testi dall'agenzia pubblicitaria del Regno Unito: saltano di palo in frasca, iniziano piano, poi parte una pacchiana italianità modello chitarra e mandolino, che lascia d'improvviso posto alla cultura, alla tradizione e al design. In pratica, ho davanti una specie di frullatone di concetti dove mancano solo Mastroianni e Sophia Loren che passeggiando e chiacchierando illustrano i pregi di questi resort e salvano la situazione con disinvoltura. E ora come faccio a riseparare ciò che è stato così forzatamente amalgamato?

I PRIMI PENSIERI

- 1) Spacco tutto, riscrivo tutto, cancello tutto, rifaccio tutto (delirio di onnipotenza).
- 2) Chiamo il copy che mi ha passato il contatto e gli chiedo: "Perché? Perché io? Tu, sapevi tutto, dillo!". Se è incerto nel rispondermi gli manderò dritto un sicario (mi ha provocato lui).
- 3) Dai, iniziamo dalle piccole cose, proviamoci, sarà pur sempre esperienza (accettazione e realismo).

L'INIZIO DEL LAVORO

Inizio a tradurre i testi purgandoli dalle banalità più grosse e cercando una diamine di definizione di "Italianità": è un lavoro complesso durante il quale devo anche scacciare Sophia Loren, in precedenza evocata, dai miei pensieri. Ma quella torna, che all'italianità ci tiene. Non è facile tradurre se sei un uomo e pensi a Sophia Loren. Ma torniamo a noi, mi concentro, inizio a tagliare chitarre e mandolini, cerco di andare leggero sui concetti come "ritrovare te stesso", "riconnetterti", "scoprire una nuova dimensione" e balle più o meno banali di simile tenore, elimino selvaggiamente un buon 50% di aggettivi e avverbi, inizio a lottare contro la parola "lusso" che dà un fantastico tono volgare ai testi e parlo di eleganza, scelgo frasi brevi e semplici. Taglio anche metà delle promesse, che suonano poco credibili (non è che tornerai dal viaggio con il bilancio del Karma improvvisamente tutto in positivo, non sei andato da un guru in India, stai solo pagando cifre spropositate per un diamine di resort per pochi dove se paghi ti daranno "tutto").

I PRIMI CASINI

Alla prima riunione interna del cliente, il team legge quello che ho fatto e – come avviene da 888 anni a questa parte – inizia a chiedersi se il tono di voce sia appropriato per il loro brand e se sia adatto alla loro clientela target, in parole povere: se il mio "TU elegante" usato per la brochure funziona.

Perché si fanno le riunioni aziendali? Per scambiare idee? Sì, ma è un aspetto secondario. La riunione aziendale serve a far vedere che ci sei. Ed esserci, molte volte, significa offrire un parere diverso da quello degli altri, ossia: "io farei così anziché così, anche un po' come dici tu ma non proprio". In conclusione, in termini di linguistica salta fuori che:

1) Il mio tono di voce è giusto, ma forse un po' troppo confidenziale, magari andrebbe rafforzato, però sono stato bravo perché mi sono tenuto sul semplice, ma forse avrei potuto osare di più, e infine: "Ma suoniamo abbastanza italiani? E c'è il rischio di non essere sufficientemente internazionali?"

[queste considerazioni sono la diretta conseguenza del fatto che ho amorevolmente ammorbido il mix di pizza, mandolino, cultura, design, lusso]

2) I testi inglesi, è vero, erano troppo infarciti di cliché, ma nella versione italiana sono davvero molto concisi, l'agenzia britannica ha l'esclusiva per la pubblicità e noi gli stiamo cambiando tutto, potrebbe non apprezzare!

[questa in teoria è una preoccupazione di natura legale, ma all'atto pratico serve solo a peggiorare le cose in riunione]

3) L'agenzia italiana di web marketing dice, e lo dirà praticamente a ogni chiamata in conferenza, che i testi per loro non vanno bene, che non sono abbastanza diretti, né quelli originali inglesi né quelli tradotti.

[questo perché loro scrivono "strepitosamente" e io, si sa, strepito veramente poco]

4) Qualcuno del team interno chiude dicendo che in

definitiva: "Bisogna capire [e mi chiedo: chi dovrebbe capirlo?] come mettere insieme i testi delle brochure, quelli web e le email di marketing, ognuno con il suo giusto tono di voce."

[questo vuol dire che io devo creare un brodo primordiale che piaccia a tutti quelli a tavola]

IL CASO DEL DIRETTORE MARKETING

Dopo alcune chiamate in conferenza a cui partecipano qualcosa come 12 persone per volta, la situazione si delinea e questo è ciò che accade:

1) Il direttore marketing per ora non riesce a gestire sempre al meglio i suoi referenti (agenzia britannica, team aziendale interno, agenzia di web marketing), ognuno ha idee diverse sull'approccio linguistico, lo mettono sotto pressione e non c'è il capo dei capi.

2) Il direttore marketing mi telefona, mi chiede di confrontarci, mi parla del TU elegante, del LEI non troppo formale, del VOI banale, del TONO e del MESSAGGIO e dell'immagine del BRAND e l'unica cosa di cui io sono certo è: il direttore marketing ha terrore che tutto vada in malora e lui rimanga incastrato.

3) Il mio apporto come linguista si interrompe per qualche minuto, nel corso della telefonata mi trasformo in suo padre, lo rassicuro e gli faccio una proposta: basta chiamate in conferenza, fammi parlare e lavorare prima con l'agenzia inglese, poi prendo i miei testi e ne parlo io con l'agenzia web italiana, accolgo le loro richieste, poi facciamo leggere al copy italiano per un parere esterno e tu forte dei vari pareri coordini con il team interno.

4) Il direttore marketing ha un moto amoroso nei miei confronti. Io sinceramente non lo ricambio, ma sono contento.

STRATEGIA DI LAVORO E QUALCHE ASSO NELLA MANICA

Infine faccio quel che si deve fare:

1) Riscrivo i testi dell'agenzia britannica, avvio con loro uno scambio di email spiegando passo per passo il lavoro che sto facendo per trasmettere il loro messaggio, ma soprattutto sono politico e mi gioco due referenze personali, menzionando campagne andate a buon fine per clienti che conoscono.

2) Assumo un atteggiamento solo relativamente ruffiano verso l'agenzia web italiana, gli spiego che sto tagliando i testi per facilitare il loro lavoro di web marketing. Gli mando campioni dei testi senza che me lo abbiano chiesto scegliendo quelli "più tagliati". Questo fronte cerco di mantenerlo "stabile/accettabile".

3) Chiamo il copywriter italiano che aveva fatto il mio nome in origine, gli racconto il tutto, lo faccio ridere, gli dico come penso di scrivere questi benedetti testi e gli chiedo due cose: di "dare un feedback" rassicurante sul mio lavoro al direttore marketing per farlo sentire più tutelato, e di aiutarmi se l'agenzia di web marketing italiana rompe. Il copy mi vuole bene, il copy sa, il copy accetta!

4) Chiamo il direttore marketing, gli spiego tutto e lo metto al corrente della vera verità (lettore, preparati ad altre banalità): il tono di voce coerente per tutti gli usi non esiste, è un'allegria panzana che si dice in riunione e noi continueremo a dirla per tenere buoni i suoi, ma all'atto pratico la nostra strategia si chiama "coerenza linguistica pragmatica", è una definizione che non vuole dire niente in senso assoluto ma grosso modo significa fare concessioni di qua e di là nella misura che ci sarà richiesta.

[per far passare il concetto uso la solita parabola del mondo "anglosassone" e italiano che si osservano ma spesso non si capiscono, eventualmente si affascinano e fraintendono]

COSA SUCCEDERE SE AIUTI UN UOMO

Succede che quella persona si sente incoraggiata e agisce. Ad esempio, il direttore marketing riprende il suo colorito, va in riunione (me lo racconterà dopo) e stabilisce che: Andrea farà certi lavori direttamente con noi (web marketing italiano), certi altri lavori li farà parlando direttamente con l'agenzia pubblicitaria nel Regno Unito (sito), tutti i lavori saranno comunque valutati dal nostro copy italiano storico che riguarderà con occhio distaccato e con attenzione per le esigenze di tutti.

IL PROGETTO È FINITO, ANDATE IN PACE

D'improvviso c'è silenzio, nessuno alza più la voce nelle chiamate in conferenza, si sentono dei mandolini in lontananza, io scrivo, il copy legge e il direttore marketing amministra testi diversi per referenti diversi. Mi preparo ad abbandonare la nave dopo che avrò ricevuto il pagamento dell'ultima fattura.

In definitiva: non c'è mai stato un reale problema di testi o di linguistica, c'è stato solo un problema organizzativo e di equilibri interni del cliente, troppa gente, troppi incarichi, il timore di sbagliare. Il mio apporto come traduttore è stato anche limitato, a dirla tutta, ho passato più tempo ad ascoltare che a scrivere, ho ovviamente scritto cose diverse per usi diversi ma tutto nell'ambito di una banale professionalità (insomma, ho fatto quello che chiunque di noi fa ogni giorno senza per forza doverci scrivere un articolo o post).

COSA MI PORTO A CASA DOPO QUESTA ESPERIENZA

A fine progetto mi son detto: Caro Andrea,

1) Se incontri di nuovo un cliente "indeciso" o scappi o prendi accordi chiari dal primo giorno, su prezzi, ore che gli dedicherai al telefono, tuoi compiti. Tuttavia, visto che l'esperienza già l'hai fatta, magari la prossima volta scappa. Quindi, ho imparato a scappare.

2) A questo punto, visto che per portare a casa il progetto hai dovuto usare capacità di ascolto, politica e compromesso, continua a fare qualcosa di simile anche per clienti meno incasinati come le agenzie, ne avrai vantaggi. Ho imparato a stare all'erta anche se un lavoro sembra "di per sé facile".

3) Alla luce del casino che hai passato, cerca di averne almeno un vantaggio a livello di immagine, perché a livello di soldi è andata appena bene, quindi parla di questo tuo progetto, dagli risalto nel tuo profilo e, magari... arricchisci un po' la storia e fanne un articolo per l'ATA :-)



Andrea Filippo Tuveri was born in Cagliari (Sardinia) where he is still based. He has a degree in cinema studies from Bologna University and started his career as a literary translator in 1996, moving on to corporate marketing and advertising in 2000. He became ATA Certified in the EN>IT language pair in 2003 and has over 20 years of experience in the profession. In 2009 he graduated as Personal and Business Coach, and has been offering coaching services regularly since then, while also keeping his translation business going.

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“Virtuale è reale”, terza edizione dell’evento annuale di Parole O_Stili, a Trieste

REDAZIONE TRADURRE

Parole O_Stili è un’associazione non-profit che ha lo scopo di sensibilizzare, responsabilizzare ed educare gli utenti della Rete a praticare forme di comunicazione non ostile.

Nasce nel febbraio 2017 a Trieste dove è stato presentato il Manifesto della Comunicazione non ostile, una carta che raccoglie 10 principi di stile per ridurre, arginare e combattere i linguaggi negativi online. Da quando è stato presentato, il Manifesto ha fatto un viaggio straordinario di bacheca in bacheca, passando per le aule delle scuole d’Italia, per le università, gli uffici e molte aziende.



Picture published with permission of its author

Parole O_Stili ha colmato un vuoto in questi anni e il mondo della traduzione ha subito risposto con favore alle sue iniziative, con condivisioni e ottimi riscontri sui social al Manifesto della Comunicazione non ostile. Un collega di ILD ha partecipato all’evento annuale di Trieste 2019, seguendo vari incontri, fra cui quelli sul linguaggio violento del tifo sportivo, la capacità di risposta delle aziende agli attacchi sui social, la vita online all’epoca dell’antiscientismo e le parole ostili che rendono meno comprensibile l’innovazione delle startup. Alcuni incontri centrali, come quelli su Fake News, Revenge Porn e Cyberbullismo hanno avuto un grandissimo seguito. Tanti relatori importanti, fra cui Annamaria Testa, già presente due anni fa alla conferenza annuale dell’ATA come relatrice ospite della Divisione italiana. L’organizzazione dell’evento, nella bellissima sede della Stazione Marittima di Trieste è stata eccellente, con personale numeroso e disponibile, grandi sale ben attrezzate e aree per le pause. Nei prossimi mesi speriamo di collaborare e sostenere più da vicino le iniziative di Parole O_Stili e, certamente, saremo a Trieste nel 2020, come pure speriamo di averli ospiti al meetup di Firenze. A presto per altre novità!

Faraway, So Close Drawing on Our Virtual Community

MIRIAM HURLEY

By and large, we translators work all by our lonesome—physically, at least. In the beginning of my career, I liked this. Having escaped the numbing landscape of cubicles in Manhattan investment banks, my ten-second commute seemed the height of envy-worthy luxury.



Now, almost 20 years on, my fantasy is a translator co-working space. We would all work harmoniously, independently or on joint projects, in a wonderfully bright, spacious office, with a fragrant garden for breaks (make that a vegetable garden for fresh produce), and an espresso machine always buzzing. My fantasy translation team would have a mix of great IT>EN translators, with a perfect array of specializations, talented EN>IT translators, and an English reviser. Areas of total silence would alternate with group spaces for brainstorming, kvetching, and general socializing. We would have a Head of Administrative Headaches, who would do all our invoicing, chasing down payments, haggling on our behalf, formatting Word tables, and realigning PowerPoint text boxes. There’d be an IT expert who would keep all our computers in tip-top shape, solving our computer problems while we went on coffee breaks. We would call out to each other for advice and inspiration. “Hey, what would you do for ‘artigianale’ in this sentence?” Every translation would be revised both by a native English speaker and a native Italian speaker and then proofed again.

Perhaps my fantasy life is too limited. Why not throw in a sushi chef and yoga classes while I’m at it? After all, this fantasy office is not so far-fetched. Co-working is a growing trend. In England, there’s the Brighton Language Collective, a co-working collective just for translators.

But given the ever-irritating obstacles of geography, the free will of others, and the cost of rent, most of us are still tucked away in our home offices. Typical citizens of our era, we turn instead to scattered and/or virtual solutions.

For tedious tasks that bring me unpleasantly back to my years as a word processor in banks, I’ve recently turned to Upwork (despite the ridiculous rates offered by self-styled “translators”). A nice woman in Ukraine fixes my footnotes for me. Administrative headaches I’ve yet to outsource (though I know translators who have bookkeepers). Coffee, yoga, and sushi are, as ever, outsourced to the coffee shop, the yoga studio, and the restaurant.

The biggest allure of the perfect translator co-working space is community, both in terms of plain old good company and for an intellectual putting together of heads. The flip side of being a free and independent worker can be being alone and isolated.

Yet: "I hate team projects!" was one lament on a Facebook group of translators working between Italian and English (one great use of our virtual community is blowing off steam with the only people who can truly understand). Translation, of course, has a technical, exacting side and a creative side that takes writing talent and creativity to solve knotty problems. Team projects can be a pain when aligning technical matters, such as whether the comma should go inside and outside the quotation marks, and terminological consistency, adding extra layers of work (ideally done by a project manager). Others love team projects, especially if they can handpick their team members and the collaboration is well-managed (an experience I've yet to have).

On the creative side of the coin, trying to align styles, tastes, and quirks can be as problematic—or downright impossible—as writing a novel as a team might be.

But, when it comes to drawing on the collective intelligence of our far-flung translator community, even my fantasy translator co-working space would be hard-pressed to match the virtual joining of many (brilliant) minds to pick.

In my early years, I was sitting in my little bedroom in Brooklyn, looking out at the fire escape and working on a translation. An annoying phrase came up—*punto di riferimento*—a common expression in business promotion speak. This was the hundredth time it had come up in my short career, and it has no one-size-fits-all solution. It occurred to me that my more experienced colleagues would have faced the problem umpteen times. A query to a listserv group of Italian/English translators produced 25 brilliant suggestions, from "Iodestar" to "standard setter" which led to Pesky Words (<https://miriamhurley.com/pesky/>), now with dozens of Peskies and solutions to draw on to fit the always-all-important context.

These days, I turn often to a Facebook group, made up of both IT>EN and EN>IT translators, the native English

speakers from many Anglophone countries. Every time the final result is better than my single tired brain could summon on its own. Sometimes I have misunderstood the source text or not realized there's a typo in it muddying the waters. More often than not, I just want inspiration, and I always find it. As we translators know well, it is a fraught path from understanding intent in the source language to bringing it unscathed into our target language.

Just a few examples in which the group put me on the path to a better solution:

A headline in a blog post about the Pope kissing the feet of Sudanese leaders to ask for peace called it "un gesto sconvolgente." The group gave me a nice selection of solutions—"extraordinary," "remarkable," "unexpected," "astonishing"—from which I chose to best fit the article's content ("astonishing").

In the subtitles for a short film, a young man fighting with his sister attacks her as an "inconcludente." The group shepherded me to "loser." Recently, in a completely different context, it helped me with the same word applied scathingly to Romanian journalists in the 1930s, and we ended up calling them "shallow."

In another short film, a 30-year-old Italian man answers the phone when his mother is calling with "*Ciao, amore mio bello.*" This led to an interesting discussion about terms of endearment men might use (or not) for their mothers around the English-speaking globe and settling on "my darling mother."

Meeting and networking in flesh and blood—whether at translator events like conferences or a co-working space—offers real-world satisfaction that our virtual community can't match. Yet, I often think of a friend's grandfather who worked as a Hungarian translator a century ago, translating from several languages, spending his days in the library, hunting through dictionaries and reference books. He almost certainly would not have had the problems I have, like getting distracted by online videos of sloths eating carrots. But, he also would not have had the wealth of inspiration, humor, research skills, and advice from an international fleet of top-flight translators so generously sharing their knowledge.

Miriam Hurley has been translating from Italian to English since 2000 and earned her ATA certification in 2001. In the years since, she has lived in Oregon, New York, and, mostly, Florence. Combining her fascination with human behavior and language, she most likes translating topics related to social sciences (with tourism and design on the side).

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The Interpreter as a Digital Nomad

JONATHAN HINE



Most of you know that I am a translator. Many know that for four years I lived and worked on the road. Translation is a very portable career, but I am also an interpreter. Here is what happened to that side of the business:

The phone rings. It's from Chicago. I move my Starbucks® tumbler out of the way and go to the corner, where I won't disturb the other customers, but I can still see my bike outside.

"Scriptor Services, Jonathan Hine, may I help you?"

"Jonathan, this is Rachel Morris at Dunn, Dunn and Dunn, we would like to use you for another deposition on the case you worked with us last year."

"Thanks for remembering me, Rachel. I assume this is interpreting, or is it more like the 'language consulting' that last year's hearing turned into?" I hear her laugh, which makes me smile. Four interpreters had tried and failed to understand the witness, a terrified old man from central Italy.

Maybe because I grew up in those parts, I could understand him: he was speaking English with such a thick accent that they thought it was a regional dialect. Once I explained that he and his grown son were not suspects, he relaxed, and I got him to speak Italian so that there would be something to interpret (the judge could not understand his English).

"That was awesome, Jonathan, which is why the partner on the case wants you again. The deposition is here in our main office, not in Alexandria like last time. You're in Charlottesville, Virginia, right?"

"Well, no. I'm actually closer to you now if you're in Chicago..."

Responding to such requests like this is a little more

complicated than it used to be. I can't just throw a suitcase in the trunk of the car. I sold the car and hit the road in 2013. My income since then more than covered my travels around North America and Europe, including attending the ATA Annual Conferences in San Antonio, Chicago, Miami, and New Orleans.

It's easy enough to take in and deliver translations by email. But what about interpreting?

Making a living as an interpreter used to be restricted to those living in large metropolitan areas. Not anymore: the interpreter colleagues that I have visited are on the road a lot. State Department escort interpreters accompany their international visitors all over the country, often for days or weeks at a time. Conference interpreters must go where the conferences are because simultaneous interpreting is not a common skill. A distant hospital requiring interpretation services for a rare language or a delicate medical subject may need an on-site interpreter; there are still situations where telephone or video interpreting won't do the job.

Although I do a lot of *chuchotage*, which is simultaneous interpreting into the ear of the listener (no equipment), I am not a conference interpreter. My clients are not jetting me to Vail or Buenos Aires. When I do get a call (like the fictional vignette above), the cases are always unusual, and the situations justify the expense of paying my travel. Even before I lived on the road, there were travel expenses to leave Charlottesville.

Today, I can take in requests for non-translation services (including interpreting) wherever I am. I include the travel expense of going to the job in the estimate. It may involve searching a few schedules and time to buy tickets, but I can still prepare an estimate. The cost-benefit of using my services depends on where I am when the call comes in. For example, one client in Virginia was willing to wait until I rode past their location to perform some document triage. Another client wanting revision training waited until I arrived at a place where I could leave my bicycle, then paid for the round-trip travel to the training. But when the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Florida (ATIF) in Miami needed a replacement presenter for a workshop, I happened to be in town, so there were no travel expenses.

This business model won't work for a court interpreter who arguably must be where the trials (and court certification) are. But translators who only interpret occasionally and interpreters whose business already has them traveling to most assignments have no need to sit at home waiting for the phone to ring. To be sure, the business must be up and running before venturing out to travel full-time, so that the work is already coming in. At that point, it makes no difference to the clients where you are, if you can respond to their need.

There may be personal reasons for taking to the road on a near-permanent basis. For example, having an empty nest, or wanting to visit far-flung friends and relatives more often (or maybe for the last time). Depending on your vehicle and your lifestyle on the road, and whether you keep the house, living on the road can cost more or less than staying home. Also, some business models are simply more effective from one location. Careful analysis and planning can reveal the feasibility of going nomadic or confirm one's satisfaction in staying put.

Buona strada e arrivederci a Palm Springs!

Jonathan Hine, CT (I>E) translated his first book, *The Struggle against Blindness* by Luciano Moretti, in 1962. More recently, he translated *Beyond the Age of Oil* by Leonardo Maugeri (Praeger, 2010), *Schio: Industrial Archeology* (Sassi Editore, 2013), and *Combat Aircraft* by Riccardo Niccoli (White Star, 2016). A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy (B.S.), the University of Oklahoma (MPA), and the University of Virginia (Ph.D.), he belongs to the PEN Center, the American Translators Association (ATA), the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) and the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association (ATISA). He now writes and translates books, while bicycling and blogging at



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TRADURRE

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