

译风

THE ATA CHINESE LANGUAGE DIVISION NEWSLETTER

美国翻译协会中文翻译分会简报

Winter 2015



Chunwen Wang (third from right) at the 2013 ATA Annual Conference in San Antonio, TX.

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FROM THE EDITORS

Happy New Year! We are pleased to present the CLD Newsletter in a new format, in time to usher in the Year of the Goat.

In this issue, Di Wu shares his thoughts as the outgoing CLD Administrator. In another article, he brings news of the much anticipated ATA Chinese to English certification test.

We have fiction for the first time ever, written exclusively for CLD by Jim Jones. If Jim ever becomes the next Ray Bradbury, remember that you have read him here first.

Michelle LeSourd is planning a survey on technology use in our community and desires input from CLD members. We encourage you to contact her directly with your suggestions.

As a follow-up to the 2014 ATA Annual Conference in Chicago, Eric Chiang summarizes his impressions on the conference and the Windy City.

Pency Tsai writes about professional insurance in “Bird’s Corner” which hopefully will become a regular column.

Finally, we dedicate this issue to Chunwen Wang (王俊文), a CLD member who passed away in 2014.

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SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Suggested lengths:

Articles: 800 to 1,500 words

Reviews: 600 words

Letters: 300 words

Include a brief bio and a photograph.

Illustrations and links, etc., are
encouraged.

Submissions may be edited.

Opinions expressed in this publication
are solely those of the authors.

Send submissions for future issues to
echiang@atecworld.com

Submissions deadline for the next
issue: July 1, 2015

Dear CLD Members,

It's been an honor serving the CLD for the past two years. I have met so many wonderful friends and colleagues and learned a lot from all of you. I'm pleased to pass the baton to Alex Gao and Pency Tsai. I believe they will make a great team as they will bring a shot of energy and vitality to our organization. The Chinese to English certification test committee is working hard toward launching the test in 2015. I want to wish all of you the best during the holiday season and a healthy and prosperous 2015!

Sincerely,

Di Wu

Challenges in Launching the Chinese to English Certification Test



Di Wu is a Chinese Linguist at Leidos in Vienna, Virginia. He got his bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Rochester and served as the president of the Midwest Association of Translators and Interpreters (MATI) as well as the ATA Chinese Language Division.

If you take a look at the list of ATA certification tests available, you will notice the glaring absence of one particular language pair – the Chinese to English certification test is still not offered. It may come as a shock to many, since these are two of the most commonly spoken languages in the world. There has not been a lack of effort in getting this certification test up and running, as several groups had tried and failed in the past. Two years ago I took up the post of chairman of the Chinese to English test group to give it another try, and I would like to share with you some of the challenges I have experienced in launching this particular certification test.

First of all, passage selection is a challenge that all test groups must face. For any particular test, three passages (A, B, and C) between 225 to 275 English words (whether it is the source or target language) are offered to each candidate seeking certification. Passage A is a general text that expresses a view, sets forth an argument or presents a new idea, and it is mandatory for the candidate to translate. Passage B may be technical, scientific or medical in content. Passage C may be financial, business or legal in the broadest sense. Both B and C may be written by an expert, but not for other experts in that field. The candidate needs to choose either B or C to translate. Those of us working on passage selection must follow ATA's Passage Selection Guideline (PSG) and find an adequate passage with the right number of words that tells an entire story or conveys a complete idea. The passage must present the appropriate challenge on the sentence level and on the word level. In our particular case, we need to present the English translation of the passage to the certification committee. After the preliminary approval by the committee, we will fill out the Passage Submission Form (PSF) that identifies the translation challenges and resubmit it to the committee. When it receives another approval from the committee, the test group will need to work together on the Passage Specific Guidelines (PSG) which is a matrix that identifies as many potential translation errors as possible and assign points to them. This will facilitate the grading of future exams. As you can see, to make a passage test-ready is quite a lengthy process. A total of fifteen passages (five each for A, B, and C passages) are needed to formally launch a test. In our case, since there is great demand for the Chinese to English test, we are allowed to launch the test with just nine passages. So far we have five passages ready to go.

Second, a good deal of Chinese to English translation has typically been done in the past by translators who speak Chinese as their first language. Despite the surge of interest in the Chinese language during the past two decades, Chinese to English translators whose mother tongue is Chinese still vastly outnumber those whose mother tongue is English. Therefore the pool of Chinese to English translators

whose first language is English and who wish to volunteer on exam passage selection is very small to begin with, and much recruiting has to be done in order to put a team together.

Third, the grammatical structure of Chinese is quite different from any of the Indo-European languages. It is very difficult to quantify the translation challenges and explain them to the non-Chinese speaking members of the certification committee. I have personally experienced a great deal of headache in filling out some of the PSFs, but the insight I have gained has helped me in subsequent passage selections.

Finally, we already know that passage selection and approval is a very time-consuming process, and all of us are busy with work and family. For these reasons, it is hard to find time to work on this project. I for one am an in-house linguist working for the US government. I have had three jobs and moved twice within the past two years. Meanwhile, other team members have experienced family and health issues. Still, we have gone further than many of the previous teams, and I am confident we will soon find enough number of passages to ultimately launch the test.

(This article appeared in a slightly different form in the blog of In Every Language, a translation company.)

A word from the editors:

There is more to translation than finding equivalents, and translators need to get beneath the surface to look for the elusive “intention” of the source text. Jim Jones’ story below illustrates this point nicely.

To make it fun, we put a couple of errors in the translation on purpose. The first person to write us (see Page 3 for editors’ email addresses) and identify the errors will get a prize: a free lunch at the next ATA conference in Miami (not funded by ATA-CLD). Hint: to detect one of the errors, you need to know the author’s intention.

You can comment in CLD Yahoo Group (https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/ATA-CLD_Listserve/info) and on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/atacltd>) regarding the story or the translation.

Devil Deal Scuttled?

Fiction by Jim Jones

魔王交易命运未卜

钟杰木著

It is the year 2820, and a major shareholder in Devil Incorporated, God Management, says that God opposes a \$10 billion deal for the U.S. giant to go private. The investment group, which owns ten percent of Devil, says that the potential deal "undervalues Devil." John Smith of Financial News reported Saturday that if the company did go private, Jack Devil's \$5 billion stake in his company could eventually triple.

Said God's Director, in a phone conversation with John Smith, "That guy Jack Devil just annoys me. Why does he not just go and play elsewhere?"

Devil's board said this week that going private would be the best way for the company to reinvent itself, which they felt would be necessary in light of the alien invasion last year. The ensuing war, which is now in its tenth month, having played out on three battle-scarred continents, has taken away more than a quarter of Earth's human population. So far the aliens have only lost a handful of their thousands of interstellar ships. They have lost no personnel yet. For

光阴往前跳到 2820 年，美国商业巨擘魔王有限公司主要股东上帝管理集团宣称上帝将反对总额百亿美元的魔王私有化交易。拥有魔王百分之十股权的投资公司上帝觉得这项交易“低估了魔王的价值”。财经新闻记者约翰·史密斯星期六报导，公司私有化将使杰克·魔王所拥有的五十亿美元股权增值三倍。

上帝一主管在电话上对约翰·史密斯说：“杰克·魔王这人真让我头疼！他为什么不跟别人耍他的把戏？”

魔王董事会这星期说私有化是公司脱胎换骨的最好机会。董事会觉得自从去年外星人攻击地球以来，公司更需要彻底改革。这场对抗外星人的苦战现在已持续了十个月，使三大洲战伤累累，并毁灭了地球四分之一以上的人口。外星人拥有数以千计的太空船，但只丧失了其中的几艘，并且尚未有亡者。地球居民觉得局势将更加恶化，因而造成了他们反科技的心态，

people on Earth there has been a very certain anti-technology trend, because everyone is afraid that things could get worse. People are losing hope because of the aliens' use of a giant magnetic technology that takes away much of the world's electrical power for great blocks of time. No one knows the true capability of this technology yet.

People began to notice the phenomenon shortly after the aliens lost their first ship off the coast of Australia last year. At first, the news of the unexpected victory, the result of a joint Australian and Chinese military op, rallied everyone around the world. But within a few hours there were reports from many places of electricity going out or becoming intermittent for a few days at a time, as well as the temporary non-functioning of vehicles and smaller electrical devices.

The Grand Council, the collection of diplomatic representatives of the Alien War Operations Board from every individual nation-state, stated that the Great Electrical Outage (now dubbed the 1A Great Electrical Outage) that came shortly after Victory 1A, that first downing, signified that the aliens themselves were caught off-guard, and would seem to indicate that the aliens were not necessarily all powerful, just very powerful.

Back to Devil: "This deal is so unfair to shareholders," says Dick Dogood, chief investment officer at Knowledge Investment Management (KIM, a company that is on the Korean peninsula), a major shareholder. KIM estimates Devil Management's value to be close to \$30 per share.

In a late night phone conversation on Friday, the second one of that day, the Head of God said, angrily, "This alien issue is one thing, but the Devil thing is quite another. I have a feeling that people are going to beat the aliens, eventually, but if Jack Devil gets his way, who knows? I mean, in this case I cannot say for sure what's gonna happen. People might give up hope, ya know?"

Janet Tease, of Devil, stands firm. "It is a good deal, given the situation," she says, "and consider this: people are making inroads into the alien thing. Why just last month they managed to take down another

这是非常明确的趋势。最使居民感到绝望的是，外星人有能力应用一项庞大的电磁技术在长时间内掠夺世界的电力，而迄今无人知晓这项技术真正有多厉害。

这个现象是地球居民在去年外星人在澳洲海岸丧失第一艘太空船之后的短时间内察觉的。最初，这项由澳洲与中国联合军事行动所获得的意外胜利让全世界的人们欢欣鼓舞。但，几个小时后，许多地方开始出现停电、电力不继的报导，汽车与小型电气装置也开始出毛病。这些故障有时会持续几天。

由所有民族国家的外星人抗战委员会外交人员所组成的大议会称，“1A 胜利”（即第一艘太空船的毁灭）稍后发生的大停电（即现在所谓的“1A 大停电”）所显示的是地球的战略使外星人措手不及，意味着外星人的力量是强大的，但不是无限的。

回到上述的魔王交易。位于朝鲜半岛的知识投资管理公司（KIM）首席投资顾问狄克·行善说：“这项交易对股东太不公平了！”为魔王有限公司主要股东之一的 KIM 估计魔王股价在三十美元左右。

在星期五深夜，也是那天第二通电话谈话中，上帝负责人气愤地说：“外星人和魔王是两码子事。我相信外星人最后会被打败的。如果杰克·魔王的计谋得逞，那就难说了。谁知道以后会是什么局面？人们可能会觉得没有希望了，对不对？”

魔王的珍妮·提丝则不苟言笑地说：“这项交易其实无懈可击。想想看，对抗外星人已经有所进展，我们不是在上个月又摧毁了另一艘太空

of their giant ships. It is only a matter of time now.”

Devil's shares closed up for the week.

船吗？我们只需要一点时间而已。”

这星期，魔王股价呈涨势。



Jim Jones first learned Mandarin in the US Midwest 30 years ago in college. He is a 20-year and award-winning member of STC (Society for Technical Communication stc.org). He does translation, editing, writing, cartooning, and other things. Find him at [LinkedIn.com/in/jimxlat](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jimxlat).

Bird's Corner



Pency Tsai has been a community interpreter for the past 4 years, specializing in Canadian immigration and refugee tribunal hearings. She currently serves as the CLD Assistant Administrator.

In Case Life Hits the Fan....

Insurance. I was discussing this topic with a colleague recently and she shocked me when she told me, "Who needs insurance? That's a sucker's game." Now, we weren't talking about car insurance, not term insurance or travel insurance. There is no question that those fall under the category as "smart" buys. No, our discussion centered on professional insurance, namely errors and omission liability. My colleague and I often butt heads over the importance of many things in life and I could have easily left it at that, but that *little* voice inside my head told me, "Uh-uh, not this time."

I had to speak.

So, do you own your home? I'm sure you and your husband have worked hard to build up a lot of equity in your house over the years. Has it ever occurred to you that should you ever be involved in a lawsuit, the plaintiff could go after any personal assets that you may have? Yup, that's right – your cars, your savings, and your investments. I hate to say it, but, even your home is fair game. Don't you think it makes sense to protect what's important in your life?

"I've worked with this agency for years. They told me that they were covered by insurance."

My agency, while a bit on the cheap side when it comes to paying me, is also very nice to me. You're right though, my agency probably does have insurance. After all, any smart business would mitigate its risks by having insurance. It's a good thing that you work for such a good employer. What's that? You're a freelance contractor? Well, I guess it's still in their best interest to make sure that you're covered under their policy too, right?

"I've never heard of any translator who got sued."

Really?! What about the Hispanic family that sued for \$3 million in a preventable death lawsuit in Portland this past spring? So you think anyone remotely related to the incident would be sued, but not the interpreter? Not the one person who made the error that caused the entire mess-up? Keep turning a blind eye. Being naive and ignorant does not shield us from this risk that is inherent in our line of business.

Just remember, mistakes will always happen. We're human, not machines. If you can honestly say that you have had a perfect track record, then I salute you and you can stop reading now. For those of you who remain, let me provide you with my thought process before I made my decision to buy insurance.

Peace of mind. It is nice to know that everything that I've worked for is protected from this sue happy

world that we live in. It frees me from having to worry about my personal assets when dealing with my professional business. I can translate and interpret better, free to concentrate on doing my best, knowing that at the end of the day there won't be a cloud hanging over my head because of an error. I can sleep well, taking comfort in the knowledge that my house won't be taken from me, should anyone ever sue me.

A tool for marketing. Think about this for a moment. I am a professional. As a professional, I know that mistakes can happen and for that reason I have the foresight to protect myself *and my clients*. By ensuring that I am covered by insurance in the event that there is a significant error or omission in my work, I am advertising to my client that I am well-prepared and looking out for everyone. Look at it this way: if you're looking to put your money in a safe place, would you put it in Uncle John's safe or the FDIC-insured chartered bank across the street? I would be more inclined to do business with the bank rather than rely on Uncle John's word that "it's all good." It's likely your clients would think the same when given the choice between an insured and an uninsured translator or interpreter.

A sign of my professionalism. Being a professional means knowing your business and your clients. It means you understand the dynamics of this relationship and you co-operate with one another to get things done. Having insurance allows me to show my clients that I am adding value to the equation by being proactive in ensuring that there are mechanisms in place to cover errors that can happen. It shows them that they are working with someone who is just as professional as they are. They are in the business to make money and to protect their assets, as am I.

That day, at the end of our conversation, I told my colleague that I did not tell her all this on behalf of any insurance company. It was merely my opinion and opinions are free to all that want to hear them. I left her with something that I had heard, back in my days at university. Warren Buffett once said that you'd never know who was swimming naked until the tide went out. Don't get caught unawares when the tide turns. Get yourself covered because you never know...

How are Chinese <> English Translators using Translation Technology?



Michelle LeSourd is a Seattle-based Chinese into English translator. Since 2002 her freelance business has focused on the legal (particularly contracts, laws, and regulations), business, journalism, and social science domains.

In the last few years I've ramped up my use of translation environment tools (TEnTs – the preferred term of ATA translation tech guru Jost Zetsche), otherwise known as computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools, and seen a great increase in my productivity despite lingering at an intermediate level with only modest formal training under my belt. I've also made better use of auxiliary technologies like machine translation (MT) and optical character recognition (OCR).

As competition among translation tool vendors continues to heat up, more than one vendor representative told me during the recent ATA Annual Conference that they were working with universities in mainland China to make their technologies part of the curriculum for translators in training. No doubt the same is happening in Hong Kong and Taiwan. This is one of many signals telling us that TEnTs and other translation technologies have reached a certain level of maturity in our language pair and will deeply influence our work in the near future.

Along the way, I've been interested in discussing the use of translation technologies with other translators working in Chinese and English, but have not done so systematically. I plan to conduct a simple on-line survey of CLD members early next year to get a simple snapshot of technology use in our community, and report the results back to the CLD. Technologies for interpreters are also developing rapidly but, to keep things simple, will not be addressed in this survey. Perhaps an interpreter colleague might be interested in doing a future survey!

Some potential items for the survey include:

The use of TEnTs and which ones (e.g. Trados, Wordfast, memoQ, Déjà Vu)

The use of machine translation (MT) within or outside TEnTs

Terminology management within or outside TEnTs

The use of cloud-based services including on-line TMs and glossaries

Segmentation, numbers and other issues specific to CH<>EN

I would appreciate your suggestions about what to include in the survey. Please email them to me at michelle@c2etranslation.com by February 1.

Report From the 2014 ATA Annual Conference

By Eric Chiang

The following is a summary of the sessions I went to during the 2014 ATA Annual Conference in Chicago:

1. ATA Mentoring Program: Becoming a Happy and Prosperous Translator/Interpreter

I serve on the Mentoring Committee and we presented a talk on the mentoring program. This program is a membership benefit, which means that any ATA member can apply. We accept about 30 mentees every year and match them with mentors to coach them in the business side of the profession. Although most mentees are newcomers, we expect them to have some work experience, and we don't match mentors and mentees in the same language pair. Even if you are a seasoned translator or interpreter, this program may be of help to you. For instance, if you want to get into a new field, however specialized it might be, we may be able to find you a mentor, since ATA has members with expertise in many different fields. To apply, you must complete a worksheet (downloadable from the ATA website) and write an essay about yourself, your goals, and the subject matter for which you want to enlist the help of a mentor. The applications are due by March 7. For details and forms, see <http://www.atanet.org/careers/mentoring.php>.

2. The Art of Crafting Target Language in Chinese to English Translation

This very interesting talk was presented by Michelle LeSourd and Evelyn Yang Garland, and it went straight to the core of the matter and asked this important question: just how much source-language culture should inform the translation? The speakers used marketing and legal texts to illustrate this point. We all know that fidelity to the source is important, but what if being faithful renders the translation hard to read, or worse, makes it seem potentially ridiculous? Getting rid of the foreignness of the source text in the translation is both necessary and desirable. If this gets too difficult, perhaps we should transcreate, that is to say, abandon the source and express the author's meaning in a completely different way. My personal feeling is that fidelity to the source is no doubt important, but we mustn't sacrifice the reader's joy of reading to achieve it.

3. Deixis: A "Style Tool" that High-End French to English Translators Should Know

This presentation was given by David Jemielity, head of translations at a well-known Swiss bank and a professor of translation at the University of Geneva.

Why should a Chinese translator go to a French Division session? Because it affords a view of the English language from a different perspective and invariably teaches you to write better English. Deixis is a linguistic term having to do with an object's relations to other objects in time and space. It works differently in French and English. The common French word "ce" and all its other forms are generally translated as "this." A paragraph in a French to English translation may therefore contain many instances of the word "this", making the paragraph feel monotonous and abstract. Consider this sentence:

Registration starts on April 1; remember this date.

We can also say it another way:

Registration starts on April 1; remember that date.

Both sentences are good, and both convey the same meaning. If a paragraph contains many instances of “this”, we can change some of them to “that”, and the paragraph will sound much more lively and dynamic. We have to make sure that the change won’t affect the meaning of the sentence, however. This is a lesson that anyone who writes in English can take to heart.

4. If It’s Tuesday, This Must Be Cassation: A Whirlwind Tour of French Civil Procedure

This session was presented by Joe McClinton, a professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

When a French judge writes an opinion or explains a verdict, he may do so concisely, and in the background is a vast and complicated legal system which is implicit in his writing but which he does not explain. When this writing is translated, it becomes the responsibility of the translator to explain the legal system in the appropriate places, for otherwise readers will not understand the translation. The court of cassation is one of the French courts of last resort, which prompts some translators, indeed some dictionaries, to translate it as “supreme court”. This may present some problems very quickly, because a lower court in France can reject the decisions of a court of cassation; a translation may therefore state that a supreme court decision was rejected by a lower court, which makes no sense at all to readers of English.

Professor McClinton skillfully analyzed a short but difficult French text and showed where to infuse the translation with more meanings which are only implicit in the source. When he finally put all the pieces of the translation together, there was a round of applause for his virtuoso performance.

I do legal translation regularly and don’t recall one instance in which I needed to put my own explanation into a text. This may be due to the kind of texts I have been exposed to, and I came away from this session thinking that French legal translators may need to know about the French legal system more than their Chinese counterparts have to know about the Chinese legal system.

5. How to Self-Publish Your Translations

This session was presented by Rafa Lombardino, a translator who has published 14 books.

Self-publication seems to be a popular topic. You can create an electronic version of your translation (ebook) and sell it at places such as Amazon.com; you can arrange with a publisher to print your book on demand, or you can ask your aunt who has a nice and soothing voice to create an audio book for your translation. You need to obtain the translation right to a book before you translate it. Some authors grant this right to translators for free. Ebooks have their own format; there are for instance links instead of page numbers. Selling on Amazon does not mean iTunes or Google also know about your book, so you need to contact a number of websites to list your book. After publication, you

should check to see whether your work is plagiarized or if there are infringements on your intellectual property. You have to promote your book by telling your friends, your church group, your gym, and any other place you can think of. You should watch for reviews of your book in other media and, better yet, ask someone to review your book. In other words, there is work to do if you want to self-publish.

Apart from the interesting sessions taking place inside the Sheraton Hotel, outside, the city of Chicago offered many cultural attractions. There were opera and symphony orchestra performances (I opted for the symphony). The Art Institute, a must for any visitor, put on special Byzantine, Chinese, Japanese, and French impressionist exhibits during this period. The Museum of Contemporary Art had a David Bowie exhibit which is the subject of a movie that is currently showing across the US. A Dutch translator, a Bowie fan, told me that she saw the exhibit in London and Amsterdam and would see it again in Chicago. I also took a fun and instructive architectural boat tour up the Chicago River. I wanted to visit Chinatown, the Museum of Science and Industry, and the University of Chicago, but they were at some distance from downtown and I couldn't make time for them. All in all, I had a great time in Chicago.

Remembering Chunwen

By Eric Chiang

In 2012, ATA held its annual conference in San Diego, a short flight from where I live in the San Francisco Bay Area. Soon after I arrived, I went to the conference hotel to register. I thought I was alone on the escalator at the Hilton when I heard a woman's voice right behind me speaking in Chinese, apparently to herself. That was how I first met Chunwen and, as I was to discover in the ensuing days, this simple gesture was a perfect embodiment of her personality: a touch of shyness behind a core of playful spontaneity. But at the time, my first impression of her was that she was as innocent as a child.

I saw her many times during the conference. She was good-humored and loved to tell jokes, but there was a serious side to her as well: she interpreted for West Point and the United Nations, and she was going to Taiwan after the conference to find a publisher for her father's memoirs. I also found out that she was a devout Christian; tears would well up in her eyes whenever she spoke of things with even the remotest hint of spirituality.

She loved to buy clothes. During a CLD outing, some of us were sitting on a bench on the sidewalk while she went into a clothing store. She emerged five minutes later wearing a white knit shirt she wanted to buy and asked breathlessly, "Do you like it? It's on sale!" This scene was to repeat itself a year later in San Antonio.

Chunwen wrote a few messages to the CLD Yahoo Group soon after the San Diego conference, and I wrote back, but we didn't keep up the correspondence until just before the conference in San Antonio a year later. I wrote to ask if she was planning to attend, because I wanted to see her again. She said that she was. By coincidence, we had both signed up for a trip to the San Antonio missions a day before the conference started. When I saw her at the bus stop, I thought she looked a little pale. She sat next to me in the tour bus and told me that she had a somewhat serious heart problem. I asked whether she should stop accepting these high-profile UN assignments which would make any interpreter develop heart trouble. She laughed. The bus was full of happy, mostly French-speaking translators; I thought Chunwen was happy to be there too.

I didn't have the chance to say goodbye to her at the end of the San Antonio conference. I went home to my happy existence as a freelance translator and forgot about Chunwen and her health problems until two or three months later. I wrote to ask how she was doing, but there was no reply. I went about my business until June, when I learned that Chunwen had passed away on February 22, 2014, three months after the San Antonio conference.

Chunwen, you are finally with your maker. May you rest in peace, my friend. I'm very fortunate to have known you. God must have taken you because you have already accomplished so much in your life: after the UN, what else is there to challenge a consummate interpreter?



Priscilla Hung and Chunwen Wang at the 2012 ATA Annual Conference in San Diego, CA.