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Newsletter of the German Language Division of  
the American Translators Association



**Matt Baird**

## Editorial

Dear Readers,

When it comes to maintaining a second (or third, or fourth...) language, some might think that translators and interpreters have it easy. We work with our languages every day. We immerse ourselves in them, actually enjoy parsing sentences, and curse authors whose word choices or syntax make our heads spin. But maybe that's why we have to have it the hardest. Our livelihood depends on our foreign language skills, which makes it all the more essential that we maintain them. This issue's feature is all about maintaining your second language—and your first! Starting on [page 20](#), a number of colleagues share their stories and secrets.

**“Our livelihood depends on our foreign language skills.”**

Before our GLD Administrator, Ruth Boggs, tells her language maintenance story ([page 24](#)), she shares the latest division news in her biannual “Word from the Administrator” on [page 3](#). After that, you won't want to miss GLD Listmaster Gerhard Preisser's much-anticipated annual report, nor European Coordinator Karen Leube's notes about the “cultural marks Germany is making on US culture.”

As always, the first *interaktiv* issue of the year looks back on ATA's flagship event: the Annual Conference. What might surprise our

long-time readers is that this time the section is packed with a GLD recap, three (3!) first-timer pieces, and three session reviews! Even if you attended, you'll enjoy reliving the conference through new eyes.

Once you've made your way through our equally jam-packed feature, picking up tips and tricks along the way, you'll meet our Translator in Profile, Geoffrey Cox. A frequent and entertaining speaker at the ATA Annual Conference, this “post-punk-tinged guitar playing” German grammar geek gives us a glimpse into his own personal bilingual dictionary and explains why he's not actually a translator.

Unless you've been hiding under a rock, you've likely heard that GLD rock star Jost Zetzsche has published a new book, *Translation Matters*. Read a reprinted review on [page 32](#). And since you're now reconsidering ways to maintain your second language, you'll find a lot of opportunity in the GLD calendar, which is also available as a Google calendar! Learn how to get connected on [page 34](#).

Mit besten Grüßen aus dem Rheinland  
Matt Baird

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## A Word From the Administrator

Dear Colleagues:

As I write this, in early January, the holidays are behind us. We're a couple of weeks into 2018 and many parts of the country, my corner of Northern Virginia included, are emerging from a deep freeze. By the time you read this, many of us will be tired of winter and looking forward to spring. But it's never too late for a little retrospective, so let's take a brief look in the rearview mirror.

The year 2017 was a busy and challenging but ultimately also very successful year for the German Language Division (GLD). Our membership numbers are holding steady with an upward trend, we have a vibrant social media presence, the website is now also available in German, our GLD List continues to be a source of consistent education, sound support, and occasional humorous entertainment, and our bi-annual *interaktiv* is hailed by ATA as an exemplary newsletter. ATA's 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference also turned out pretty good. Our seven sessions were well attended, and our guest speaker received enthusiastic reviews. Lastly, eighty members attended our annual networking event at the Goethe-Institut, which was by all accounts a big success.

I'd like to thank my Leadership Council for their hard work and support in keeping the division running "like a well-oiled German machine," as someone so graciously put it at our annual meeting (or at least something to that effect).

But there's no time to rest on our laurels, because ATA59 in New Orleans (Oct. 23–27) requires planning ahead to make it another memorable one. We already have a promising lead on a guest speaker, and details will be forthcoming as soon as they are firmed up. I'd like to encourage those of you so inclined to submit proposals for potential sessions. We have a lot of talent and expertise in our midst, and it would be great if everyone

could benefit from it! The [call for proposals](#) is out, and the deadline is March 2, 2018. As for the annual networking event in New Orleans, we'll have to rely on recommendations from members who live there. With one of our own, ATA President-elect Ted Wozniak, being both a connoisseur as well as a New Orleans resident now nesting with a 'nawlins native, I'm confident we'll get some good input.

Going into 2018, there are some personnel changes in our Leadership Council to report. Lea Rennert resigned as Editor of *interaktiv* for personal reasons. We appreciate her hard work and her translation of the German-language GLD website, and wish her joy and blessings for the challenges that await her. Jeanette Brickner will succeed Lea, and I'd like to welcome Jeanette as a new member of the Leadership Council.

By the time you read this, the European Workshop (Berlin, February 3) will be history. Many thanks go to Karen Leube and her collaborators for organizing this annual event. Read all about it on the [GLD blog](#).

Finally, a personal note: Congratulations to our Editor-in-Chief Matt Baird, who can now add "CT" to his moniker. This is a good opportunity to ask all GLD members who've recently passed the Certification exam to let us know so we can give you a congratulatory shout-out in *interaktiv*.

My wish for all of you is a happy, healthy and prosperous new year (even if we are already well into it) and peace for our planet; may it start at home.

Collegially yours,  
Ruth Boggs, MA, CT  
Administrator, German Language Division



**Ruth Boggs** joined ATA in 1991 and is certified in German>English & English>German. She holds an MA in Writing from George Mason University. Before becoming a full-time freelance translator & interpreter in 1995, she was assigned to the German Embassy in Washington, D.C. Ruth has traveled the United States extensively as a State Department contract interpreter. She lives in Fairfax, Virginia and can be reached at [rutheboggs@gmail.com](mailto:rutheboggs@gmail.com)



## German Language Division Minutes from the 2017 Annual Meeting ATA's 58th Annual Conference in Washington, DC

The Annual Meeting of the German Language Division of the American Translators Association was held on Friday, October 27, 2017, at the Washington Hilton in Washington, DC. The meeting was called to order by Administrator Ruth Boggs at 4:46 p.m.

Agendas for the meeting were made available. A move was made to accept the agenda, which was then seconded. The minutes from last year's Annual Meeting on November 4, 2016, in San Francisco were also accepted by a motion. All minutes of Annual Meetings of the past years are posted on the GLD website under the heading "GLD Archive" and printed in the newsletter *interaktiv*.

As the first order of business, GLD Administrator Ruth Boggs provided her summary of the state of our division. Over the last year, two members of the GLD passed away: Claudia Growney and Helge Gunther. Memorials were posted in the summer edition of *interaktiv*. In her report on the sessions at the annual conference, Ruth indicated that there were eight (8) sessions submitted for consideration for this year's conference, of which six (6) were accepted. It was also noted that last year's suggestion of a translation slam was well received this year. The first half (German>English) was already held, and at the last minute, ATA offered a Saturday morning slot to the English>German session due to a cancellation.

GLD Web Manager Jessica Lucio provided her update on the website. The website now has a permanent URL, and a calendar has been added. To increase our social media presence, we now have a dedicated YouTube channel (ATA German Language Division). We need content from GLD members!

Editor-in-Chief Matt Baird reported on the newsletter *interaktiv*, which is published twice a year and is available online at the GLD website. He reported that ATA considers *interaktiv* its flagship divisional newsletter. Several improvements have been made to the newsletter, as well as a number of new content items included. One relatively new feature is that the table of contents links directly to the articles. Readers can click on an item to be taken directly to that spot in the issue rather than scrolling. One exciting

"Editor-in-Chief Matt Baird reported on the newsletter *interaktiv*, which is published twice a year and is available online at the GLD website. He reported that ATA considers *interaktiv* its flagship divisional newsletter."

new feature is that the newsletter now links to an online version of the GLD calendar. This Google calendar can be imported into Outlook and other calendar applications. Matt thanked GLD Calendar Coordinator, Stella Waltemade, who was not present, for all the time and effort she put into the project. Matt announced two resignations from the editorial team: Co-Editor Leah Rennert and Review Coordinator Michael Engley, which leaves two open positions to fill. Matt asked members present to contact him if they were interested. He also reminded everyone that *interaktiv* always needs content. He asked members to please think about



Pages 4 and 5 photo credits:  
Jeff Sanfacon

how they could help, suggesting that they could point out interesting articles they read, write conference session reviews or reports on other events and conferences, share blog posts from their own blogs, etc. All content should be sent directly to him.

New Member Coordinator Carlie Sitzman reported on the proofreading pool, a partnership between ATA and Universitas to serve as a meeting point for people interested in proofreading services. Carlie also distributed cards so that people can contact her directly about joining the pool. It has been ongoing since 2013. Her handouts, including information and links for new members, were also available for pick up.

European Coordinator Karen Leube reported on the GLD members in Europe. The group's listserv now numbers sixty (60) people, which means that over half of the some one hundred (100) GLD members living in Europe belong to the list. Their now 7<sup>th</sup> annual meeting—which has evolved into a one-day workshop complete with guest speaker—will be held on February 3, 2018 in Berlin, with social events planned for the Friday evening before and the Sunday afterward. The guest speaker is Bremen-based translator and copywriter Matt Bulow. The group has managed to organize the event on a shoe-string budget, so registration is a mere EUR 36! Karen invited anyone interested in attending to contact her.

Social Media Coordinator Sandy Jones reported on GLD's social media presence. The division now has 302 "likes" on Facebook ([GLDATA](#)) and 405 Twitter followers ([@ata\\_gld](#)). Please share anything that can be distributed via social media with Sandy! And please share and like the division's posts!

Listmaster Gerhard Preisser entertained the whole crowd with his now-famous report on the [GLD Listserv](#). Opening with the numbers,

he indicated that the list now had 479 members, up three from last year, making this the eighth year of growth. In 3,600 *Wortmeldungen* (500 fewer than last year), only three threads had to be closed. Gerhard also reported that the 100,000<sup>th</sup> post was logged in December 2016—and the lucky poster was none other than Bruni Johnson. He closed with a "Top 10" list of the most memorable moments on the listserv. [Editor's note: read Gerhard's report on [page 6](#)]

Under the first item of new business, Ruth called for volunteers for the nominating committee. Volunteers were Jill Sommer, Ruth Gentes-Krawczyk and Jeanette Brickner.

The next item of new business concerned suggestions for next year's guest speaker at ATA59 in New Orleans. The following suggestions were voiced by members present:

- Shipping or culinary (Jill Sommer)
- Raubkunst (Lois Feuerle)
- The German history of the coast of Louisiana (Julie Sullivan)
- Oil industry and environmental impacts
- Angloamerikansiche Rechtssprache Heideringer (Dagmar Jenner)

At this time, there was general consensus from those present that they had enjoyed this year's speaker, Karin Königs, who was suggested by Marita Marciano Baulesch at last year's Annual Meeting.

Ruth encouraged members to submit proposals to present at ATA59.

Ruth adjourned the Annual Meeting at 5:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melissa Field  
GLD Assistant Administrator





After starting out as a university teacher, **Gerhard** decided to pursue a career as a full-time E>G translator some 20 years ago. He has been in charge of the GLD List since 2009 and lives with his family and the mandatory “translator dog” in Manassas, Virginia.  
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## Jahresbericht von Gerhard Preisser, GLD List Owner

Wie immer freue ich mich sehr, dass die Reihen hier so gut gefüllt sind, was angesichts der eher brisanten Ansetzung unseres Meetings – wer hat an einem Freitagabend nichts Besseres zu tun? – ja keine Selbstverständlichkeit ist. Ruth hat mich in der heutigen Tagesordnung an die letzte Stelle gesetzt, und von daher ist es natürlich besonders erfreulich, dass so viele von Ihnen nach allen meinen Vorrednern und Vorrednerinnen immer noch hier sind. Ich schreibe das natürlich der enormen Attraktivität unserer Liste sowie Ihrer aller Neugier zu, was sich auf dieser seit meinem letzten Bericht hinter den Kulissen getan hat. Ich will Sie also auch gar nicht länger warten lassen.

Wir haben mit Stand von gestern 479 Mitglieder und damit 3 mehr als zum Zeitpunkt meines letztjährigen Berichts. Das heißt, dass wir seit meinem Amtsantritt im Jahr 2009 – wir hatten damals 345 Mitstreiter – mittlerweile im achten Jahr in Folge neue Listler hinzugewonnen haben, was ja nun keineswegs selbstverständlich ist. Die Zahl der Wortmeldungen lag im Berichtszeitraum bei knapp 3600. Nun könnte ich mich hinstellen und lamentieren, dass das ca. 500 weniger seien als noch vor einem Jahr, dass wir es hier mit einem besorgniserregenden Trend zu tun hätten, dass wir uns, wenn das in diesem Tempo weitergeht, in etwa sieben Jahren gleich selbst auflösen könnten und so weiter und so fort. Aber damit ist doch niemandem geholfen. Stattdessen möchte ich den Gepflogenheiten der Stadt, in der wir uns dieses Jahr befinden, Rechnung

tragen und versuchen, diese unerfreuliche Tatsache wie ein erfahrener Politiker in ein etwas freundlicheres Licht zu rücken. Und wie ginge das besser als mit einem Vergleich mit anderen? Greifen wir uns also die Liste der French Language Division heraus, die etwa 40 mehr Mitglieder hat als unsere, aber im gleichen Zeitraum nur auf 460 Postings gekommen ist. Das sind gerade einmal 13 % des Verkehrs, den wir auf unserer Liste verzeichnen. SAD!

Ich habe bei dieser Gelegenheit ja schon des Öfteren darauf hingewiesen, dass ich jeden Listenbeitrag gewissenhaft lese, weshalb ich mir auch

folgendes Urteil erlauben kann: Die Qualität der Wortmeldungen auf der Liste hat auch im abgelaufenen Jahr wieder zugenommen, und zwar (meinen absolut objektiven und nur mir selbst bekannten Kriterien zufolge) um den Faktor von 8,2 %. Und das ist doch etwas, was wir uns an unsere Fahne heften können, nicht wahr?

Wie jedes Jahr habe ich zur Vorbereitung auf diesen Bericht die Messages der letzten 12 Jahre auf Beiträge durchgeforstet, die uns einen Einblick darin bieten können, was unsere Mitglieder in ihrem Innersten bewegt. Ich bin dabei zu der für mich überraschenden Erkenntnis gelangt, dass viele von Ihnen ganz offenbar das Bedürfnis verspüren, die Liste nicht nur zur Wissensvermittlung, sondern auch als Gelegenheit zur Entblößung ihrer seelischen Befindlichkeit zu nutzen. Ich habe es mir daher erlaubt, aus der großen Zahl von Geständnissen, Bekenntnissen und Entschuldigungen der letzten 12 Monate

“Die Qualität der Wortmeldungen auf der Liste hat auch im abgelaufenen Jahr wieder zugenommen, und zwar (meinen absolut objektiven und nur mir selbst bekannten Kriterien zufolge) um den Faktor von 8,2 %.”

eine Top Ten-Liste zusammenzustellen, die ich Ihnen gerne vortragen möchte:

Nr. 10 „Geometrie war für mich immer ein Buch mit sieben Siegeln.“

Nr. 9 „I couldn't get to sleep last night thinking about a sentence in an annual report.“

Nr. 8 „I have been a lurker on this list for years.“

Nr. 7 „I do not trust any suggestions offered by Microsoft.“

Nr. 6 „Sorry, at 62, I don't watch many children's shows.“

Nr. 5 „Ich muss gestehen, ich ging Skilaufen im schönsten Sonnenschein.“

Nr. 4 „I recently consulted a dermatologist.“

Nr. 3 „Sorry, I could not respond earlier. Was somewhere outside.“

Nr. 2 „Ich schwanke zwischen Haare raufen und Haare ausreißen.“

Nr. 1 „It's a relief to think that this is not JUST because I'm a dumb-dumb.“

Darüber hinaus gab es auch den einen oder anderen Aufschrei der Verzweiflung, von „I'm a little confused“ über „I think I'm going bonkers over this“ bis hin zu „Losing my mind—singular or plural?“, aber auch beruhigende Zusicherungen wie „I keep trying to think about an honest answer to your question.“ Das logische Resultat dieses ehrlichen Nachdenkens war dann die folgende Aufforderung: „Think about it, and don't be so narrow-minded.“

Natürlich gewähren uns längst nicht alle unserer Mitglieder einen derart tiefen Blick in ihr Seelenleben; die meisten von ihnen sehen ihren Auftrag eher darin, ihren Kolleginnen und Kollegen unter die Arme zu greifen. Dass es sich dabei in aller Regel um die Darstellung komplexer Übersetzungstechnischer Sachverhalte handelt, dürfte hinreichend bekannt sein, aber nicht alle werden wissen, dass hin und wieder auch richtig gute Tipps für den Alltag die Runde machen, zum

Beispiel „There's a really good Currywurst und Pommes Frites Imbiss in the Stachus-Passage“. Zudem finden sich allerlei Warnungen, etwa vor Viren oder zahlungsunwilligen Kunden, oder eben auch Hinweise wie „Deutsches Bier ab jetzt alles andere als bekömmlich.“

Bevor ich meine Zitatschatulle für den Berichtszeitraum 2016/2017 schließe, möchte ich Ihnen folgende wichtige Erkenntnis eines unserer männlichen Mitglieder nicht vorenthalten: „Of course wearing panties and a pantsuit is something that women do regularly (according to several women I know).“

Wie Sie sehen, ist es auf der Liste wieder einmal hoch hergegangen. Ich möchte noch anmerken, dass ich drei Forumsthreads schließen musste – letztes Mal waren es noch sechs –, was natürlich für eine ausgeprägtere Listendisziplin spricht. Und es gab einen echten, aber bis jetzt völlig unbeachteten Meilenstein zu feiern: Wie Sie vielleicht wissen, führt Yahoo, unser Listen-Host, genau Buch über die Zahl der veröffentlichten Beiträge, und das seit Mai 1999. Heute, 18 Jahre später, kann ich verkünden, dass am 15. Dezember 2016 das einhunderttausendste Posting der GLD-Liste registriert wurde. Die Verfasserin? Unsere allseits geschätzte Bruni Johnson.

Damit möchte ich es für diesmal bewenden lassen. Ich bedanke mich herzlichst bei allen Kolleginnen und Kollegen, die dafür Sorge tragen, dass diese Liste, wie eines unserer Mitglieder vor ein paar Monaten zu Protokoll gegeben hat, (und jetzt kommt doch noch ein allerletztes Zitat) „wirklich ein Goldschatz“ ist. Und dem kann man eigentlich nichts mehr hinzufügen.

Herzlichen Dank.

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**Karen Leube** grew up in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. She earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in German in the United States and obtained a PhD in English and German as a Foreign Language (DaF) from the University of Heidelberg. She taught translation at the universities of Heidelberg and Mainz (Germersheim) and now works as a freelance translator and seminar facilitator from her office in Aachen.

## (Translation) Notes from the Homeland

*Karen Leube*

Today it's January 8, 2018, and in Germany I'm still allowed and expected to wish a Happy New Year to anyone I haven't seen or talked to on the phone so far this year. This of course also extends to the readers of this column: I wish you a Happy New Year, with health, prosperity, and everything you hope to achieve during 2018.

Perhaps one of your resolutions involves a trip to Germany, your actual or honorary homeland. At the same time, you may have noticed the cultural marks Germany is making on the US, in part thanks to translators and interpreters. One such mark is the translation of Jenny Erpenbeck's novel *Gehen, Ging, Gegangen* (*Go, Went, Gone*, translated by Susan Bernofsky, New Directions Publishing). Erpenbeck travelled to Aachen last year to accept the Walter Hasenclever Prize for *Gehen, Ging, Gegangen*, and it happened that the amateur orchestra I play in here was engaged to play at the awards ceremony. This made Erpenbeck's novel "our" book, and it was the Christmas present every German-speaking member of our family received in 2017.

So, I was tickled pink when I opened the *International New York Times* on December 22, 2017, only to find a book review of Bernofsky's translation of Erpenbeck's novel. Too late for the relatives to receive a copy in 2017, but it will be under each and every tree in 2018 – even though it portrays a different Germany than many of my own less-travelled family members associate with the reunified country. *Gehen, Ging, Gegangen* alludes to the German grammar lessons given in a fictitious but realistic German refugees' residence encountered by protagonist Richard, a just-retired professor from former East Germany living in Berlin. Post-retirement existential crisis meets refugee

crisis meets East-West conflict.

Add to that the latest German cultural kudo, the Golden Globes awarded the film *Aus dem Nichts* [*In the Fade*, English subtitle unknown], described by the *New York Times* as "a tale of grief and violence in modern Germany" and by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* as a "mitreißendes Rachedrama zu NSU-Affäre." Not only will the English version afford non-German speakers insight into [yet another] one of the country's many unresolved social problems, it will also give them a glimpse into the seedy translation world, with one of the protagonists being a Kurdish ex-drug dealer-turned-translation agency owner in Hamburg.

Getting back to your potential plans to travel across the pond, GLD members from six countries (including the US) will be gathering in Berlin on February 3 for the annual GLD Members in Europe meeting. And from May 29 to 31, Berlin beckons again, this time to "Translate Better 2018"—a writing workshop for German to English/English to German translators. The workshop facilitators include three ATA members: Nina Sattler-Hovdar, Matt Baird, and yours truly. The event program features hands-on sessions focusing on style in a number of areas of translation, including medical, marketing, technical, art and culture, and tourism. Registration is now open on the [BDÜ website](#), with separate tracks for German and English native speakers.

If you're planning to come to Germany, please let us know. With nearly one hundred and thirty GLD members in Germany alone, there's bound to be one of us nearby and eager for a *Kaffeeklatsch*.



## Revisiting some of my favorite things about the ATA58 conference

Melissa Field

As always, the conference week is a busy mixture of catching up with old friends, meeting many new people, learning new skills and concepts, and still finding some time to explore the city a little bit. That was true once again, and I also found myself spending quite a bit of time acting in my capacity as Assistant Administrator of the GLD this year. Here are two highlights.

### GLD guest speaker

Our guest speaker this year was Karin Königs, an expert on English to German translation who offers workshops and seminars focusing on everything from contrastive grammar to associations like the BDÜ, DAAD, and language schools. Ms. Königs hails from the small town of Rösrath near Cologne, the very town where my brother-in-law lives. Small world! And even though she has worked with the English language for many years over the course of her career, this was also her first visit to the United States. She had some lovely weather to welcome her, and she took full advantage of the trip to our nation's capital.

I'll admit that the concept of contrastive grammar was completely new to me before I walked into Ms. Königs's first session. Since I don't work into German, I also initially thought that it might not pertain much to my own work at all. But I learned something new that day, and that it would most certainly help me to understand grammatical nuances of my own native language. Ms. Königs demonstrated the translator's options by very clearly explaining the various syntactic structures in both English and German. It is quite satisfying to learn the linguistic explanation behind some of the choices we make every day.

"Ms. Königs demonstrated the translator's options by very clearly explaining the various syntactic structures in both English and German. It is quite satisfying to learn the linguistic explanation behind some of the choices we make every day."

### GLD networking event at the Goethe-Institut

Later that same day, we held our annual GLD networking event on Thursday—this year at the Goethe-Institut on K Street, just about a mile from the conference hotel. After a busy day of sessions, GLD Administrator Ruth Boggs and I walked there, having been promised an easy twelve-minute

walk—*Pustekuchen!* We found ourselves quite out of breath and a little bit footsore by the time we got to the venue. No time for a break, though, as the caterer had just arrived and we had only forty-five minutes to get everything ready for the big event! Being a local and quite plugged in to the community in DC, Ruth found us the absolute best venue and catering company we could have ever wished for. After we'd spent many hours perusing menus and crunching numbers, the Pure Perfection Catering team, Matthew and Franz, put together an incredible spread for us. It began with an array

of salads including Möhren-Lauchsalat, Gürkensalat and Krautsalat, followed by Wiener Schnitzel, Paprikagulasch, and Bratwurst for the main courses, with side dishes of Spätzle, Bratkartoffeln, and Leipziger Allerlei.



For dessert, they offered Apfelstrudel, Schokoladenmousse and Rote Grütze. The dishes were genuine German cooking, plentiful, and absolutely mouth-watering. I think many of the guests went back for seconds and thirds. I know I did.

Just a word about the venue, too. The Goethe-Institut was hosting an exhibit on the mid-80s arts scenes in East and West Germany: part punk rock, part social protest and subculture provocation. Concert photographs, fan magazines, and album covers decorated the walls of the rooms along with information about the various bands and events of the time. Fascinating!

Thanks to the strong interest in our networking event, around eighty-five people enjoyed spending a few hours in this ambiance, mingling with one another, reconnecting with old friends and discovering new ones.

If you are planning to attend ATA's 59<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in New Orleans, keep your eyes open for information on our next GLD networking event. I hope to see many of you there!



GOETHE  
INSTITUT

USA

Sprache. Kultur. Deutschland.



## Language Lobbyist for a Day, Translation Advocate for a Lifetime!

*Matt Baird*

If you ask me, lobbyists get a bad rap. Maybe it's the movies. Or the scandals that have made the headlines over the years. But when I hear the word, it immediately conjures up visions of men in expensive suits making backroom deals. Fact is, for every lobbyist more interested in lining his own pockets than educating Congress, there are probably a thousand walking the historic hallways of the Capitol, raising awareness among our country's lawmakers, showing them solutions to problems, and persuading them to take action.

After being one myself—even if just for a day—I'm now more convinced than ever of how important advocacy work truly is.

My opportunity came at ATA's 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Washington, DC, when the Association sponsored a Translation and Interpreting Advocacy Day in conjunction with the Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS). ATA essentially took advantage of a perfect opportunity. Some 1,700 translators and interpreters were going to be flooding the nation's capital, so why not send a small army of them to lobby Congress on language issues? It was a smart move: the event "sold out" in no time and has already produced results.

As someone who used to live and work inside the infamous Washington, DC, Beltway, I jumped at the chance to harness my former-life passion for policy and potentially experience the thrill of making a difference.

"After being one myself—even if just for a day—I'm now more convinced than ever of how important advocacy work truly is."

The all-day advocacy event was held the day before the annual conference began. Registration was open to the first fifty ATA members who signed up. The day began with a morning training session to get acquainted

with a number of federal issues that impact language service professionals. We also learned "how" to be lobbyists and what to expect when meeting with congressional staffers. We were given well-written policy statements, complete

with solutions and action items for Congress, which we discussed in working groups to prepare for our meetings. And we learned tips and tricks for talking to congressional staffers—basically the do's and don'ts of lobbying. For example, we were told not to expect the meeting to run more than twenty minutes, and not to be surprised—or offended—if it took place in the hallway.

Then, in the afternoon, the group headed to Capitol Hill for pre-scheduled advocacy meetings with our congressional delegations—both in the House and the Senate—to present the issues and urge our representatives to take action.

Both "nervous" and "excited" don't accurately describe my emotions as we stepped off the bus right below the Capitol Building. I was reliving my youth in a way. Though in college my dreams involved foreign policy and diplomacy (only to be shattered by the divisive reality of life in the swamp), the desire to engage and make a difference in US politics has never left me. As we made our way up to the Russell Senate Office



**Matt Baird** is an ATA-certified German-to-English translator, editor, and copywriter specializing in marketing and corporate communications. In addition to his duties as Editor-in-Chief of *interaktiv*, Matt also serves as a writer and speaker on the ATA PR Committee, which aims to **educate clients through public relations**. Based in Germany near the banks of the Rhine River, Matt is at his best crafting copy in his home office but happiest playing with his wife and two kids in the great outdoors.

Building for our first meetings, I was struck with a sense of satisfaction knowing that I finally had the chance to help make a difference.

Sound naïve? Maybe. But I'd venture to guess that many of the fifty colleagues climbing the hill with me that day felt the same way. And guess what? We made a difference. The United States General Services Administration (USGSA) updated their definitions of translation and interpreting, essentially explaining the different types of translation and interpreting services in greater detail. Although there are many different definitions of our profession used by different government agencies, the USGSA's is a big one since many agencies refer to their definitions. And until now, those definitions did not adequately explain what we do, which is crucial if you consider the fact that the government's overall lack of understanding of and respect for our professions can

influence the rates the government is willing to pay for these services.

Knowing that our efforts have already paid off is about the best gift any (honest) lobbyist can wish for, and it's a great motivator to do more. Be sure to check out the article on ATA's first-ever Advocacy Day in the January/February issue of *The ATA Chronicle*. There, you'll not only learn more from other ATA members who participated, you'll also find tips for advocating at the local level yourself! Or listen to Episode 19 of the [ATA Podcast](#), which is all about ATA Advocacy Day.

Don't hesitate to contact the JNCL-NCLIS for more information or advice. They are more than happy to help.

Advocacy really only works if we work together to raise awareness at all levels of government. Having now been a language lobbyist myself, I can assure you it's also extremely gratifying. I hope you'll join us.

"Be sure to check out the article on ATA's first-ever Advocacy Day in the latest issue of *The ATA Chronicle*."





## Back Home – A First-timer at ATA58

Amy Shrout

Having recently returned to my first profession, I was thrilled when I saw that ATA58 would be held in Washington, DC. I'd begun my translating career there years earlier, and the element of familiarity was welcome when so many other things were new to me. I'd never worked as a freelancer. I'd never used translation technologies. I'd never attended a conference completely on my own, not knowing a soul there or having been sent by an employer. I was excited to attend, and ATA58 did not disappoint.

I'd taken steps to integrate myself into the translation community by participating in ATA's Mentoring Program. Although she wasn't able to attend the conference, my mentor nonetheless helped me make the most of ATA58 by pre-viewing the program schedule with me before I left and by promptly responding to texts for quick consultations while I was in DC. For every time slot each day, I found more than one session that I wanted to attend, and I wished that I could have been in more than one place at once.

Although I was a stranger to everyone upon arriving, I made connections quickly. I appreciated the "Buddies Welcome Newbies" match-up and the opportunity it provided to meet other first-timers, as well as seasoned

attendees. The GLD's Networking Event and Annual Meeting each provided an opportunity to put faces with names I knew from the listserv. The group certainly comes across through email as more than collegial, and seeing many GLDers interact in person confirmed that impression.

The Job Fair was more than just an opening for potential employment. It also served as a showcase of different kinds of opportunities, arrangements, and organizations, and because so many of these were there in

one room, it was possible to take in a good deal of information in a relatively short amount of time. The vendor booths and tool support stations were staffed almost the full duration of the conference, making one-on-one conversations with the reps quite easy.

Attending ATA58 was well worth the cost in time and money. Benefits for those new

and/or returning to the field are significant, and it was obvious in looking at the program and at the networking taking place that attending annual ATA conferences would have positive yields for attendees at any stage in their career. I'm looking forward to more! Thanks to all who put together ATA58; your efforts have earned the endorsement of this translator, who is happy to be back home in her first profession.

"Attending ATA58 was well worth the cost in time and money. Benefits for those new and/or returning to the field are significant, and it was obvious in looking at the program and at the networking taking place that attending annual ATA conferences would have positive yields for attendees at any stage in their career."



**Amy Shrout** is a German-to-English translator who holds a BA in German Studies and Economics from Northwestern University and an MS in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee. Early in her translation career, she served at the US Embassy in Bern, Switzerland. Amy is a life-long educator and was inspired to return to translating professionally during a recent residency with her family in Marburg, Germany. She lives in Indiana and can be reached at [amy@argotpassport.com](mailto:amy@argotpassport.com)



**Gay Warshaw** is a German to English free-lance translator located just outside of Baltimore, Maryland. With over fifteen years of experience in higher education, she is new to the field of translation. Her earlier career was spent in international exchange with the federal government and in the nonprofit world. Gay earned her bachelor's degree in German and linguistics and her master's degree in intercultural communication.

## Fitting in at ATA58

*Gay Warshaw*

I wasn't sure if I would fit in. Not only was I a first-time attendee at ATA58, but I am new to the field of translation. I am what you'd call a *Quereinsteiger*. In my previous career, I had attended many large scale conferences, so I was not intimidated by the size of ATA58. I did decide, however, to attend the Buddies Welcome Newbies session just in case they were going to give out any special tips or advice. I'm so glad I did. I have to give a shout-out to my "buddy," Sandy Jones. Sandy was a huge help, introduced me to lots of people, and was very encouraging to me as someone new to the field. She even got me involved on Twitter!

On reflection, a large part of what the conference was about was the people. Of course I gained valuable knowledge and insights from the sessions, but the sense of encouragement and welcome I received from everyone I met was invaluable. I met people from all over the world who share a love of languages and a passion for what they do. I also met some fellow "career changers." And more than one stranger, upon seeing the "First Time Attendee" ribbon on my name badge, offered any assistance that I might need.

Meeting Jeanette Brickner was also a highlight. I had been participating in the online weekly German-to-English writing circle Jeanette leads, so it was especially nice to meet her face-to-face and spend some time getting to know each other.

In addition to attending sessions, I was looking forward to visiting the exhibit hall and job

fair. I had researched who was going to be there and identified several exhibitors that I wanted to meet. Despite being a little nervous, it was actually fun talking with the different representatives. I had set a goal for myself and accomplished it. And that in itself was a great feeling. I then followed up the week after the conference and am now registered with a number of them.

When I first joined ATA, there was a section that asked if I wanted to apply for a particular division (at no additional cost), so of course I chose the German Language Division. Well, I had no idea what a vibrant and active group of people I had joined. The GLD networking event at the Goethe Institute was a wonderful evening with great food and (bilingual) conversation. The audience at two of my favorite sessions consisted of many GLD members: the German>English translation slam moderated by Matt Baird; and "Passives, Punctuation, Particles, and Other Potential Pitfalls in German>English Translation" with Geoffrey Cox. Who knew translation could be so much fun?

I would definitely recommend that a first-timer attend the Buddies/Newbies session. Be open to new experiences and put yourself out there. Connect with your language division. Go to the networking events. Follow-up with contacts you've made, not only for potential work but also for networking with your colleagues.

After all was said and done, I did feel like I fit in. I was welcomed and encouraged in my new career choice.

"I met people from all over the world who share a love of languages and a passion for what they do."



## My Experience of ATA58 as a First-Time Attendee and Presenter

Jeanette Brickner

Because I live in Europe, I hadn't yet managed to attend an ATA conference, and so I was delighted to learn early last summer that my session proposal had been accepted for ATA's 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Preparing for a presentation on that scale was a new experience for me, and one which was every bit as overwhelming as the conference itself! After four months of preparation, I found myself in Washington, DC, on October 25.

Having attended a lot of conferences in Europe, I thought I had an idea of what an ATA conference would be like, but the scale is simply unparalleled by any other translation event out there. I was lucky to already know many colleagues from other events. The "Buddies Welcome Newbies" program comes highly recommended for people who don't have that advantage.

I was delighted to participate in ATA Advocacy Day, which the association and the Joint National Committee for Languages put together to take advantage of the conference location in DC [Editor's note: you can read more about Advocacy Day on [page 11](#)]. We spent the morning learning about important issues for the translation and interpreting industry, and in the afternoon we went to Capitol Hill to lobby Congress. It was a great lesson in civic engagement.

"Having attended a lot of conferences in Europe, I thought I had an idea of what an ATA conference would be like, but the scale is simply unparalleled by any other translation event out there."

Of the sessions I attended, the German-to-English translation slam was the highlight for me. I thought this slam was a bit more interesting than slams that I have attended in other settings, since instead of just involving two translators one-on-one, this one included several with their multiple viewpoints.

The GLD networking dinner was also very interesting. It was held at the Goethe-Institut, and it was a very nice way to see their facilities. The German food was a nice touch, and it was lovely to get to meet many of my fellow GLD members in

person for the first time!

My session was toward the end of the day on Saturday, and I'll certainly admit to having some butterflies in my stomach leading up to it! The scratching feeling in my throat that I woke up with that morning didn't really help. Luckily, everything went smoothly, the audience seemed very receptive, and my voice held out until right after it finished.

Altogether, ATA58 was a very rewarding experience, and I'm looking forward to attending ATA59 in New Orleans next October!



**Jeanette Brickner** is a German to English translator and monolingual English editor with over a decade of experience in the language services field and ten years in translation. Now specialized in automotive and marketing translations, she also worked as a research assistant in the Language Resource Center at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she provided consulting services to faculty and developed solutions to meet the needs of more than a dozen language-related departments.



**Heike Holthaus** is a freelance translator specializing in patents and technical texts and a speaker on patent translation. From the time of receiving her vocational degree as a forwarding agent until starting her career as a translator, she was the owner of an artisan bakery and a board member of an import start-up. Heike received her Certificate in Translation from World Language Services, Dublin, with special merit in 2012. In November 2016, Heike completed Kennametal's online course *Certified Metalcutting Professional (CMP)*. In the fall of 2016, she joined the German CPD provider academia-webinars.de as a presenter on patent translation. She lives in the beautiful countryside of Northeastern Michigan, and can be reached at [translator.heike@gmail.com](mailto:translator.heike@gmail.com)

## It's Settled then: Men Drop the Mop or Drop Dead! – My Thoughts on the German>English Translation Slam

Heike Holthaus

Is cleaning hazardous to men's health? A Belgian study seems to have settled the matter. Not so fast says the opinion piece "*Schadet Putzen der männlichen Gesundheit*" which originally appeared in *Der Spiegel*. This was the text chosen by our *interaktiv* Editor-in-Chief, Matt Baird, who moderated the GLD's first-ever German>English Translation Slam at ATA's 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.

Authors and statisticians Björn and Sören Christensen are clearly at odds with the conclusions the researchers draw from this study and they are not shy about saying so, as you can see in the figure below:

Michael	Source	Ted
Now, every <b>well-trained</b> statistician will be aware that results like that have to be interpreted <b>with a grain of salt</b> .	Nun lernt jeder Statistiker, dass solche Ergebnisse mit Vorsicht zu interpretieren sind.	Now, every statistician learns that such findings must be interpreted <b>with caution</b> .
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That insight doesn't require any advanced statistical knowledge. In fact, it's enough to consider what other factors could have an impact on life expectancy.	Dazu braucht es keine tiefergehenden Statistikenkenntnisse. Erst einmal reicht es, im Kopf durchzugehen, welche Faktoren sich sonst noch auf die Lebenserwartung auswirken könnten.	You don't need an extensive knowledge of statistics to see that. It is enough to just think about what other factors could also impact life expectancy.

Tasked with finding a suitable text for the slam that wouldn't bore the audience to death, Matt felt this piece fit the bill: it was interesting, amusing, and contained enough challenges for the slammers to provide material for a lively discussion. The mix of specialty fields in which the slammers work would naturally influence translation choices, making for an interesting mix of solutions: Mary Burke (Medical), Michael Martin (Marketing), Ted Wozniak (Financial) and yours truly (Technical & Patent).

### Let's get personal

"First-time attendee and presenter. Are you nervous?" "Not yet." This interchange started many conversations at ATA58. It's true, I don't get nervous before a presentation, until about 15 minutes before I step before an audience. But this time it was different. I found myself to be more excited and curious than nervous or anxious: I couldn't wait to see how my "opponents" had translated the passages I had found challenging or even the ones I felt particularly good about.

But I am getting ahead of myself. You might be curious why anyone would be willing to openly discuss their work in front of a group of strangers. When I volunteered—let me rephrase that, when I jumped at the opportunity—to participate, I did so without hesitation. Compare my translation against those more experienced? I'm in! As freelancers, we mostly scribble away in isolation. Hardly any feedback. Though ideally we should receive our translations back from the reviewer to accept or reject any



changes, in *my* reality that rarely happens. How can we even be sure we are as good as we think we are without feedback? What keeps us from becoming complacent? Satisfied with where we are instead of improving? That's what got me so excited about participating in the translation slam.

Speaking about nervous and anxious—lest any of you reading my translation slam story suspect me of being overconfident, I'll let you in on a little secret. No, I wasn't nervous on the day of the slam. I had plenty of time getting that out of my system while waiting for the text. Questions like these circled through my head: What if the text is too difficult? Will there be enough time? What if I don't know anything about the subject matter? What if I am being asked a question and don't have the answer? What was I thinking?!

So, I recited to myself one of my favorite sayings: "You cannot grow unless you challenge yourself." I know, I know, it sounds really cliché. But you have to admit, it is a great answer to "What was I thinking?!", and it is a wonderful motivator.

### All's well that ends well

Although working on a journalistic text as a technical and patent translator did present some challenges, I thoroughly enjoyed the change of pace. I learned a few things along the way and it was interesting to see how each translator's specialty field had influenced his or her choices and voice. Michael, with his experience in marketing, clearly had more to say than the rest of us, who hailed from the medical, technical/legal and financial fields. Yet I think each of the translations would have passed muster. Our moderator proved his talent as quizmaster, stimulating lively participation from the audience, and thus contributed greatly to making GLD's inaugural translation slam a wonderful experience and a huge success. Would I do it again? In a New York minute!

So, dear colleagues: dare to slam. You'll cherish the experience. And men, dare to pick up that mop. I promise it won't kill you.

"I learned a few things along the way and it was interesting to see how each translator's specialty field had influenced his or her choices and voice."

### Die Liste wo einiges los ist!

The GLD List is one of our member benefits – an opportunity to collaborate with and learn from each other. Subscribers pose questions, assist others by responding to queries or simply follow the conversation.

As Listmaster Gerhard Preisser puts it: Wer helfen kann, hilft; wer eine Antwort weiß, hält damit nicht hinterm Berg. Kollegialität und Kooperation werden großgeschrieben. Die auf unserer Liste vertretenen Übersetzer und Dolmetscher konkurrieren nicht miteinander – sie inspirieren einander, und ich habe das außerordentliche Vergnügen, diesen regen, auf höchster Kompetenz und viel gutem Willen beruhenden Austausch moderieren zu dürfen.

### Subscribing is as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. Send an email to: [gldlist-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:gldlist-owner@yahoogroups.com)
2. In the subject line, enter: **subscribe gldlist**
3. In the body of your email, write your:
  - email address
  - full name
  - ATA membership number



After starting out as a university teacher, **Gerhard** decided to pursue a career as a full-time E>G translator some 20 years ago. He has been in charge of the GLD List since 2009 and lives with his family and the mandatory “translator dog” in Manassas, Virginia.  
[xlator@comcast.net](mailto:xlator@comcast.net)

“For the next half hour, the audience—ever helpful and critically-minded, with a healthy dose of nerdiness—dissected, critiqued, and praised the suggestions and solutions that were offered by our intrepid trio.”

## From the Cheap Seats—My Take on the English>German Translation Slam

Gerhard Preisser

The mid-sized room was packed to capacity when, under the watchful eyes of referee Ruth Boggs, three seasoned English to German translators strapped on their fighting gloves and tackled...well, not each other, but, in true tag team fashion, a formidable source text by Susan Chira that was first published in the *New York Times* in July of last year: “[How to Get more Women to Be C.E.O.s.](#)”

The all-female translator team—Jutta Diel-Dominique, Maren Mentor, and Eva Stabenow—tackled this challenging opinion piece with vim, vigor, and verve, and presented their audience with a variety of approaches on how to interpret and translate something that required not only a factual understanding of the subject matter, but also the ability to determine the proper stylistic treatment of an opinion piece on a sensitive subject with quotes from influential women who, in the words of the author, “have made it all the way to the top.”

As Ruth Boggs, who expertly moderated the event, pointed out, this was not a contest, but a way of highlighting and contrasting a variety of different techniques as employed by three widely respected professional translators. What that meant was made clear to the highly engaged audience right from the opening bell, when three different German versions of the article’s headline were presented, as seen below:

*Mehr Frauen in der Chefetage: So gelingt’s*

*Mehr Frauen in die Chefetage – aber wie? Ein Wort von denen, die es geschafft haben*

*Mehr weibliche Führungskräfte braucht das Land*

(The translators had been given the source text in advance, with ample time to come up with their “best effort.”)

And that was just the opening salvo. For the next half hour, the audience—ever helpful and critically-minded, with a healthy dose of nerdiness—dissected, critiqued, and praised the suggestions and solutions that were offered by our intrepid trio. Passions among the assembled critics ran particularly high when it seemed that all three linguists had studiously avoided a literal translation of the term “comfort zone” (in *Get out of your comfort zone and get into line jobs*). This decision, though fervidly defended by Eva, Maren, and Jutta, briefly raised both eyebrows and tempers among the experts in the audience, many of whom claimed that “Komfortzone” was a perfectly fine and widely accepted translation option. (As a matter of fact, some participants felt so strongly about this surprisingly contentious issue that they continued this discussion for a few days on the GLD List.)

In due course, however, the session drifted back into more shallow waters, and the audience was treated to a fascinating display of linguistic ingenuity and translation expertise. Ruth, quite appropriately, ended the slam with a heartfelt thank you to the three representatives of our craft who had shown considerable courage by taking on a difficult text, translating it masterfully, and presenting their translations to a group of professionals not known for treading lightly.

## ATA session review: “You Are Only as Good as Your Gut” Presented by Noemy Cochran, CMI

Mary Virginia Burke

As an aficionado of gruesome horror movies, I’ve seen more than my share of guts, usually in places outside their customary locations. As an early music performer, I am amply familiar with guts in the form of strings. But as much as I value them in the arts and entertainment, I did not fully appreciate just how much these organs accomplish in the course of their normal physiological functions. Noemy Cochran’s fascinating presentation gave me a whole new perspective on the role that this inelegant but sophisticated system plays within our bodies.

The gut is both surprisingly independent and inextricably woven into the functioning of our bodies. It has its own nervous system (the enteric nervous system), which operates within the tissues that line the GI tract, managing digestive activities like peristalsis and secretion of the appropriate enzymes. The ENS is able to operate independently of the central nervous system, and has its own reflex arcs. It also houses a wide variety of neurotransmitters.

In addition to its neurological duties, the gut deploys an army of trillions of microbes (popularly known as the “good bacteria”) to assist with digestion, regulate the immune system, and produce numerous vital substances. The gut microbiome can affect our health

in countless ways; imbalances or instability in the bacterial population can cause problems like inflammation, autoimmune disease, fatigue, depression and more. Researchers are finding

correlations between diseases and specific microbe populations. Even if these correlations don’t result in actual cures, they could still at least lead to the identification of useful biomarkers for conditions like autism or multiple sclerosis.

Despite increasing awareness of the gut microbiome’s importance, modern societies aren’t doing much to make its job easier. We abuse our gut flora with excessive consumption of fats and carbohydrates and reckless use of antibiotics. Probiotics can help to restore the balance, with beneficial knock-on effects throughout the body.

And speaking of ingesting things, Ms. Cochran also covered the slightly nauseating topic of fecal microbiota transplantation (FMT), or stool transplants. FMT involves taking a healthy person’s gut microbes (obtained from the obvious source)

and transferring them to a sick person. The concept isn’t new—Chinese doctors were having patients drink a fecal concoction to cure GI issues many centuries ago—but at least we’ve made the dosage form less revolting. Infections with the notoriously antibiotic-resistant *Clostridium difficile* have been successfully treated with FMT.

“In summary, this was a fascinating overview of a very complex field. Hippocrates claimed that all disease begins in the gut, and after hearing this presentation I’m inclined to believe him.”

In summary, this was a fascinating overview of a very complex field. Hippocrates claimed that all disease begins in the gut, and after hearing this presentation I’m inclined to believe him.



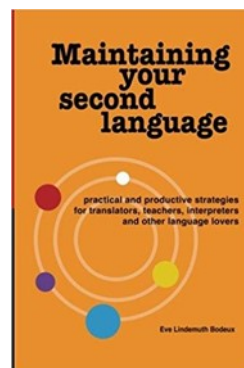
**Mary Burke** is an ATA-certified German>English medical translator with degrees from Kalamazoo College and Indiana University. Before becoming a full-time freelancer, she worked in public radio and wrote program notes for the Lyra Baroque Orchestra, the Bach Society of Minnesota, and various chamber ensembles, and she continues to perform professionally as a violist da gamba.

## Feature: Maintaining Your Second Language

When you speak more than one language, maintaining your skills in your second (or third, or fourth...) is a lifelong endeavor. Translators understand this better than anyone. That's why *interaktiv* decided to put some questions to our members about it and share the results. Over the following pages, you'll hear from Gbolahan Banjoko, Ruth Boggs, Linda Gaus, and Hilary Higgins, all of whom responded to our questionnaire, as well as Carlie Sitzman, who penned a piece about her experience.

This feature was inspired by two fellow ATA members:

French>English translator Eve Lindemuth Bodeux's book, *Maintaining Your Second Language: practical and productive strategies for translators, teachers, interpreters and other language lovers*, a review of which was published in the **Winter 2017** edition of *Interaktiv*.



English>German translator and GLD member (and current CTA President!) Marion Rhodes, whose article "German Immersion Strategies for Expatriates and Other Deutsch-Fans" was published on the **GLD blog** last summer.

German Immersion Strategies for Expatriates and Other Deutsch-Fans  
POSTED JULY 11, 2017 MARION RHODES



### Be a GLD Contributor!

Do you write or blog about the translation industry—or would you like to and need a platform? We want you! Please contact Matt Baird about how you can become a GLD blogger! [matt@boldertranslations.com](mailto:matt@boldertranslations.com)





## German Immersion Strategies for Expatriates and Other Deutsch-Fans

Marion Rhodes

A few months ago, a translation agency with an interesting client portfolio approached me about collaborating on creative translation projects for the German market. Excited about the opportunity, I sent them my CV. The next email I received was less positive: I was told that as a German native living in the US, I was not eligible to work with them because they only hire translators who live in the target country.

Part of me appreciated the agency's response as a sign of its commitment to quality. Language immersion is important for translators, especially in a field such as marketing, where translations need to really speak to the audience. For this reason, I actively try to keep up with my native language while living overseas. I told the agency as much, laying out my efforts in detail. To my surprise and delight, they decided to give me a shot, and I am now one of their lead translators.

This experience sparked my idea to present at last year's ATA Conference in San Francisco. Once I realized how many resources and tools I use regularly to keep my German from sounding obsolete, I figured I might as well share them with my colleagues. To expand my personal list, I asked fellow members of the German Language Division for input. In the end, I had compiled an extensive reference for anyone looking for immersion suggestions, which is now available as a [handout for download on the GLD website](#).

**"Keeping up with linguistic trends requires an all-senses approach: hearing, seeing, and speaking the language on a regular basis is key to becoming attuned to subtle changes."**

Keeping up with linguistic trends requires an all-senses approach: hearing, seeing, and speaking the language on a regular basis is key to becoming attuned to subtle changes.

With the evolution of technology, this has become easier than ever. From hard-copy publications to online broadcasts, German language materials are widely available around the globe.

Thanks to the introduction of e-books and audio books, we can read or listen to German literature with the on-the-go conven-

ience of our smartphones, tablets, and Kindle readers. Many magazines and newspapers offer digital subscriptions or their own apps, literally delivering German information into the palm of your hand. One of my favorite resources is the audio book platform Audible, which not only has a variety of German books but also features a weekly digest of articles published in the German newspaper *Die Zeit*.

Online TV recorders and streaming services, as well as the "Mediatheken" offered by various German TV stations, allow you to watch German television anywhere there is an Internet connection. If you have a Netflix subscription, you can find some German films in the international movies section, and many Netflix originals allow for audio selection in various languages including German. YouTube can be a treasure trove for those looking for specific German films, from children's shows to full-length features, and is a good source for German TV commercials.



**Marion Rhodes** is an English-German translator and copywriter specializing in PR and marketing communications. A native of Germany, she has lived in the United States for more than sixteen years, where she is the current president of the Colorado Translators Association. Her educational background includes a master's degree in integrated marketing communication from West Virginia University, a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Nebraska, and a certificate in German to English translation from New York University. Marion lives in San Diego with her husband and two daughters.

The Internet also allows you to listen to German radio stations, many of which offer live streams online or through their mobile apps.

German radio stations typically include a lot of back-and-forth banter among the DJs, regular news updates, and frequent commercial breaks, which makes them an excellent tool to immerse yourself in the language. If you want to listen to German songs, the Spotify app allows you to create your own channel based on a German artist that then results in a playlist featuring similar German songs.

Whenever I am in the car, I like to listen to German podcasts, whether it be the daily news (*Tagesschau*, *Tagesthemen* and *ZDF heute/heute-journal* all have their own

podcasts) or radio talk shows such as *Mensch, Otto! – Mensch, Theile!* Deutschlandfunk also offers a variety of podcasts, which can be accessed on the web as well.

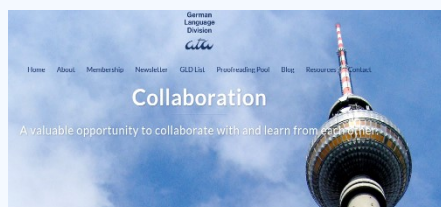
“In the end, I had compiled an extensive reference for anyone looking for immersion suggestions, which is now available as a handout for download on the GLD website.”

There are many other ways to immerse yourself in the German language, such as social media and online forums, local and online networking groups, and webinars and other CPD opportunities. We may not have it as easy as our in-country colleagues who

are surrounded by German wherever they go, but if we make a conscious effort, we can keep a finger on the pulse of our mother tongue’s linguistic development wherever we may call home.

## GLD's brand new face to the world!

Have you checked out the GLD's **new website** yet?



## GLD is on Facebook & Twitter!!

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## Maintaining your second language: Gbolahan Banjoko

### Can you give us a little bit of background on how you learned your second language?

My name is Gbolahan Banjoko. I am African, originally from Nigeria, and now an American. I studied German as an undergraduate at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Like most Nigerian students my age, I had wanted to study law, but when I did not meet the cut-off points, a voice inside me told me to study foreign languages instead. I chose German over French because it was uncommon, and I told myself I could learn French later (which I did). After my first German class, I fell in love with the language and decided to make a living as an into-English translator.

“You should be aware that, if you are like me and learnt the language as an adult and are not a native speaker, you are at a greater risk of losing the language. Therefore, you will need to put in extra effort in order to keep in touch with the language.”

German movies/television programs. I also read Spiegel online.

### What’s the one piece of advice you would give to others if they asked you how to keep up on or improve their second language skills?

If you live in a country where your second language is not the primary one spoken, you must find ways to immerse yourself in the language. You should be aware that, if you are like me and learned the language as an adult and are not a native speaker, you are at a greater risk of losing the language. Therefore, you will need to put in extra effort in order to keep in touch with the language.



**Gbolahan Banjoko** is a Nigerian-born and US-based freelance French and German to English translator. He specializes in Financial, Medical and Technical documents. He can be reached at [gbolly-banjoks@yahoo.com](mailto:gbolly-banjoks@yahoo.com).

### How often and in what situations do you get to use your second language now, outside of day-to-day work activities?

I make use of the language on an almost-weekly basis (two or more times per week) because I also work as a freelance over-the-phone (OPI) interpreter. I handle mostly medical or customer service calls and help customers to communicate. Occasionally, I also speak with fellow linguists when I attend association meetings (specifically the New York Circle of Translators (NYCT) and the Delaware Valley Translators Association (DVTA)).

### What activities do you specifically do in a given year to keep up with your second language?

I listen to Deutsche Welle a lot. I actually download several of their audio files to my phone so that I can listen to them over and over again. I also watch [ardmediathek.de](http://ardmediathek.de) and [zdf.de](http://zdf.de) for

### What specific resources (websites, periodicals, TV, podcast, etc.) for language maintenance would you recommend to others?

In addition to the resources I mentioned earlier, I buy textbooks, dictionaries, and resources from Amazon.com. I have a study timetable where I still study grammar once a week. For example, I bought First Year German (I used it in college), Mittelstufe Deutsch: Lehrbuch und Arbeitsbuch, Erkundungen: Deutsch als Fremdsprache C1 and C2, and other specialized dictionaries and resources.

### Anything else you’d like to add?

To be frank, maintaining your second language is a lot of work. But if you love the language and want to make a career out of it, you will go the extra mile to keep up with the language. In other words, you will be an eternal student.



**Ruth Boggs** has been an ATA member since 1991. She earned a master's degree in English (Professional Writing and Editing) from George Mason University in 1995 and has traveled the United States extensively in her career as a translator and interpreter. Her professional memoir, if she ever chooses to write it, has the working title "From the Whorehouse to the White House", because she's covered it all in the line of duty! Now cutting back on translation to make more time for writing, she is active in various writers' groups and became a published author last year.

## Maintaining your second language: Ruth Boggs

### Can you give us a little bit of background on how you learned your second language?

For many years, I was too embarrassed to reveal how I learned my second language. New trends in second-language acquisition have since vindicated me, but my method was, by any standard, a very unconventional one.

Born and raised in Germany, I attended a small, two-classroom country school that ended after the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The curriculum was very basic and did not include foreign languages. Growing up in the Rhine-Main area, which had a significant contingent of U.S. military forces, I always had an intense interest in everything having to do with *Amerika*—the food, the lifestyle, and in particular, the language. Anything spoken in English was music to my ears, and any word written in the English language begged to be deciphered.

I made an attempt to learn English by enrolling in a *Volkshochschule* English class, but gave up impatiently because it was too slow and the grammar structures were overwhelming. I wanted to learn the language fast. I bought an English dictionary and snuck into the *Stars & Stripes* bookstore at the nearby U.S. Army base every chance I got. Having always been a voracious reader helped. I also listened to AFN (the American Forces Network) a lot, but it was still slow going.

A few years later, married and with a baby and living in a remote corner of the United States, I still didn't know enough English to get a driver's license, write a check, or take my baby to the doctor. The internet was still years away, and I was virtually housebound. This is when my English learning kicked into high gear thanks to two rather unconventional factors: television and romance novels. There, I said it. Consider this my linguistic "coming out".

I started to watch soap operas with a passion because the captivating, slow, and repetitive dialogue, with the action to match, proved an invaluable tool in learning English. The same applied to dime-store romance novels. Their rather simplistic language, register, and story lines were easy to grasp, and the suspense made reading them fun. Initially, I even thought the "true" in *True Romance* meant true in the sense of "wahr", and I agonized over the romantically-challenged protagonists. It took several months for me to revisit the definition of "true" in the dictionary to put things into perspective!

The years I spent watching soap operas and reading romance novels laid the foundation for learning my second language. In my mid-twenties, back in Germany, I knew enough English to pass a test and get hired for an office job with the US Armed Forces, which proved to be a great on-the-job learning opportunity.

A few years later, I finally got serious about my second language. I took the GED test and, back in the US by then, I enrolled in college. The major I chose was English, of course. I opted for the writing program because writing has always been my passion. I eventually obtained a master's degree in Professional Writing and Editing, and I also completed ESL coursework to teach English as a Second Language, which I did for thirteen years.

The timing of when I started to learn English—in my teens, after I'd already joined the workforce—was a subject of heated debate with my linguistics professor during grad school. He insisted that it was impossible for a foreigner to master the English language if they learned it when they were already past puberty. I challenged his opinion.



I don't claim native speaker proficiency in the English language. I will always have a noticeable German accent, and I sometimes struggle with issues that would be a no-brainer for a native speaker. But I also know that my English is good enough to have succeeded academically and to become ATA-certified into English, and occasionally I'm even asked whether I'm German or American (actually, I'm both now).

My lack of formal English language instruction was never an obstacle in my academic path, with the exception of transformational grammar. I simply couldn't wrap my brain around it. But my English professor helped me out. "You know how to breathe, don't you?" she asked, when I told her, almost in tears, that I just didn't "get" transformational grammar. "Of course", I said, bewildered. "Well, can you explain how the respiratory system works?" She then went on to tell me, to my great relief, that being able to explain transformational grammar was not necessary as long as I knew grammar intuitively, which I do.

In the absence of any formal English-language proficiency credentials, ATA certification into both German and English opened the door for me to eventually pursue a career as a translator.

**How often and in what situations do you get to use your second language now, outside of day-to-day work activities?**

I have lived in the US since 1987, and English has become my predominant language. Consequently, my aim is now to avoid becoming alienated from my native language.

**What activities do you specifically do in a given year to keep up with your second language?**

It is more important for me to keep up my first language, German, which is one of my working languages. To that end, I visit Germany at least once a year. I watch German

television and read German news online every day; I subscribe to German-language magazines; I belong to a German-language Meetup group, and I make it a point to speak German with friends here in the US whose first language is also German.

**What's the one piece of advice you would give to others if they asked you how to keep up on or improve their second language skills?**

Immerse yourself. Do something every day to keep up your language skills. Read books, watch TV, keep up on news in your second language, join professional organizations, go to conferences, be active in groups and listservs—take an active role in preventing alienation from the target language.

**What specific resources (websites, periodicals, TV, podcast, etc.) for language maintenance would you recommend to others?**

I read *Spiegel Online* every day and *Focus Online* occasionally. I've also subscribed to *Stern* in the past. I'm subscribing to some entertainment and women's magazines from GLP International in New Jersey. Although there's plenty of resources available on the internet, I occasionally like to get away from the computer screen or tablet and hold a real book or magazine in my hands. I order German-language books on my Kindle and my iPad, but I also order hard copies through Amazon to be shipped to the US, which is not all that expensive.

**Anything else you'd like to add?**

Be fearless! I have brilliant, highly-educated American colleagues who are excellent translators, but they are reluctant to speak German because they are afraid of making mistakes. Don't be! Making mistakes is how you learn. I could write a book about the comical situations created through my travails while learning the English language, and maybe some day I will. Do it. Own it. Don't be afraid to take risks.

"Immerse yourself. Do something every day to keep up your language skills. Read books, watch TV, keep up on news in your second language, join professional organizations, go to conferences, be active in groups and listservs—take an active role in preventing alienation from the target language."



**Linda L. Gaus** has been a freelance DE-EN translator since 2000; she received a PhD in German from the University of California–Berkeley and lives near Washington, DC, with her family and indispensable feline “management team.”

## Maintaining your second language: Linda L. Gaus

### Can you give us a little bit of background on how you learned your second language?

I started taking German (my second foreign language—French was my first) at school in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. For the first six weeks of class, my teacher wouldn’t let us read anything at all and she repeated everything about a million times, which was a method that drove me completely crazy. In the second semester of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, we had a group of German exchange students visit us in Washington, DC, for three weeks; then, that summer, a group of us went to Germany. Even years later, my beloved “Pflegevater” loved to tell the story of how his family was completely prepared for my arrival: they had practiced their English, made sure they had plenty of English-language music and books on hand, and could serve me a full English breakfast. The punch line to this story: all Linda wanted to do was to speak German. We did a lot of drawing that summer (which is hilarious considering how badly I draw), but I was hooked. I continued to take French in school even into college, but from then on, my heart belonged to German.

### How often and in what situations do you get to use your second language now, outside of day-to-day work activities?

Outside of work, I have a broad network of German-speaking friends, so I make a point of speaking German with them whenever I can. I also check the German media every morning and make an effort to read a lot of German for pleasure. Although I wouldn’t say that it’s not work, I teach German to 4<sup>th</sup> graders on Saturday mornings, which

gives me a weekly opportunity to consider German in a very different way than I do while translating. I also have a lovely group of (mostly German) colleagues at *Samstagsschule*, which provides further incentive to push the boundaries of my language abilities.

### What activities do you specifically do in a given year to keep up with your second language?

I try my best to go to Germany as often as I can. In recent years, this has been about once a year, primarily to visit clients and/or take advantage of subject-specific trainings offered by the BDÜ. Furthermore, for the past eight years, I have spent four weeks each summer at *Waldsee*, the German-

language village of the Concordia Language Villages, directing the apprentice program for the oldest villagers. *Waldsee* is a full-immersion language camp where life happens in German, and although I’ve acquired plenty of *Waldseedeutsch* (things people say at camp that are not exactly like German anywhere else), I have learned plenty of things there that I probably wouldn’t have learned anywhere else.

### What’s the one piece of advice you would give to others if they asked you how to keep up on or improve their second language skills?

My best advice echoes the punch line of Jack Benny’s old joke about how you get to Carnegie Hall: practice, practice, practice! Do this however you can, whenever you can—and do it so that you enjoy it!

“Although I wouldn’t say that it’s not work, I teach German to 4th graders on Saturday mornings, which gives me a weekly opportunity to consider German in a very different way than I do while translating.”

**What specific resources (websites, periodicals, TV, podcast, etc.) for language maintenance would you recommend to others?**

The internet makes it possible for me to stay in touch with the German language and all things German in a way that I couldn't have imagined possible when I started learning the language—at that time, my father gave

me an old shortwave radio set that he'd built himself; I strung an extremely long copper-wire antenna outside my window and spent hours with my ear up against the speaker listening to whatever German I could find. My go-to news source today is the *Tagesschau*, followed by the *Zeit*,

**"Live the language—that is, let yourself be immersed in it, hear it, and "taste" it—there's no better way!"**

*Spiegel*, and *Stern* websites on occasion as well. I also spend some time each week searching for resources to share

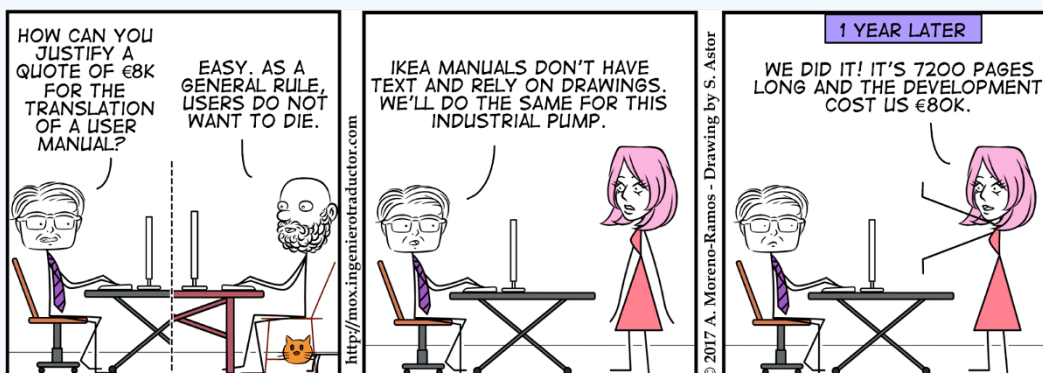
with "my kids": for the younger set, I'm a big fan of *Die Seite mit der Maus* and other educational sites. For Teenagers who have sufficient language skills, I like to try *Tatort*, and some of the content and programs

offered by *Deutsche Welle* are also quite good.

**Anything else you'd like to add?**

Live the language—that is, let yourself be immersed in it, hear it, and "taste" it—there's no better way!

**There is always an alternative to translation**



Follow Mox's freelance-translator life at [Mox's Blog](#)



**Hilary Higgins** has over twenty years of experience as both a freelance and in-house German to English translator. She specializes in marketing, manufacturing, corporate communications, IT and business. She currently lives in Bellingham, WA, but is looking for new in-house opportunities in Germany.

## Maintaining your second language: Hilary Higgins

### Can you give us a little bit of background on how you learned your second language?

I took several German classes in college, and also enjoyed a semester abroad in Germany during my senior year. After graduating from Oberlin College, I went back to Germany to work and study at the University of Regensburg. After several semesters there, I heard about a translation certification program (Übersetzerurkunde mit Schwerpunkt Wirtschaft) at the local Industrie- und Handelskammer. This line of work interested me, so I applied and was accepted into the program. After I completed the nine-month program, I began working at Siemens as a Team Assistant in the Marketing department in their Consumer Electronics and Semiconductors division. While it was mostly administrative work, I did get to do some translation. I changed jobs after a year or so and worked in-house as a translator for a manufacturing company in Regensburg. In all, I lived and worked in Germany for a total of eight years before returning to the U.S.

### How often and in what situations do you get to use your second language now, outside of day-to-day work activities?

Living in a small college town in the Pacific Northwest, it is difficult to speak German on a daily basis, but we do have a few German friends in town, and I make an effort to get together with them regularly to speak German. When I worked a second job in a local pub, I often met German speakers, and would immediately switch over to German with them, which always elicited surprise. There is a local Stammtisch through the university here, but I don't make it to their meetings very often.

### What activities do you specifically do in a given year to keep up with your second language?

Since returning from a two-year stint in Germany between 2011 and 2013, I often stream *Bayern3*, a local German radio station, while working. Or even *Antenne Bayern*. *Bayern3* has an excellent one-hour interview program called "*Mensch, Otto*"

which I often listen to. *Torsten Otto* usually has very interesting interviewees, not only famous "*deutsche Promis*," but also authors, comedians, psychotherapists, and local chefs. I like just hearing local news, it's nice to get a non-US spin on current events. I even get a buzz hearing the traffic reports. *Geisterfahren* is a thing in Germany. I also read German authors; my current

favorite is the Krimi writer Rita Falk. She just captures the "*Boarische*" dialect so well in her writing, I can just hear those deep guttural voices speaking in my head. It reminds me of my second home in the Oberpfalz. I have also started watching German TV shows and films on Amazon Prime, which is a recent but positive development.

### What's the one piece of advice you would give to others if they asked you how to keep up on or improve their second language skills?

Read in the second language and listen to it as much as possible, through whatever medium you prefer.

### What specific resources (websites, periodicals, TV, podcast, etc.) for language maintenance would you recommend to others?

*Bayern3* – "*Mensch, Otto*", 7:00 p.m. CET, 10:00 a.m. PST.

"I like just hearing local news, it's nice to get a non-US spin on current events. I even get a buzz hearing the traffic reports.

*Geisterfahren* is a thing in Germany."



## Diving into German

Carlie Sitzman

Perhaps it was because of my German ancestry, or the gorgeously unintelligible poetry of Goethe, or the allure of learning a “secret code”. Whatever the reason may be, learning German was one of my primary hobbies as a kid. While other teenagers were fawning over Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, I was voraciously consuming all of the German media I could get my hands on. To ensure that I was never left pining for an elusive German word on the go, I took along my Harper Collins German Concise Dictionary everywhere I went. Finally visiting Germany for the first time at age eighteen, I was intrepidly prepared to communicate everything in German—and not understand a word of the response! One bachelor’s degree and one semester in Germany later, I decided to go for the linguistic gold and moved to Germany for two years to complete my master’s degree in a German-speaking program at the University of Bayreuth.

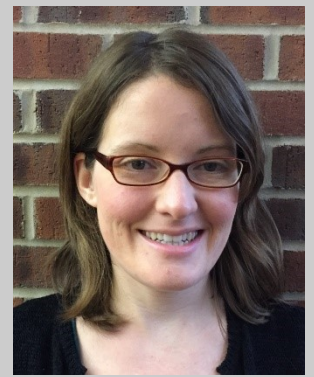
This extensive experience in Germany has been indispensable when it comes to maintaining language fluency outside of work. Many of the friendships I formed in graduate school are still going strong, and I am frequently in communication with my contacts in Germany. We communicate and share our daily lives mainly through Facebook and WhatsApp, which offer plenty of opportunities for casual daily language practice. I also usually Skype with one or two friends in Germany for an hour each week, which keeps my speaking skills sharp.

If you haven’t established a group of friends in a German-speaking country, there may be other resources at your fingertips. A friend

of mine uses [wespeke.com](http://wespeke.com) to find tandem partners in foreign countries who want to practice English while sharing their own language. You may also be able to find German groups near where you live with a quick Google search. In Philadelphia, there is a wonderful group frequented by native German speakers called “Netzwerk Philadelphia.” Members meet at a local restaurant each week to chat in German at a *Stammtisch*. Since most members of this group stay in the U.S. for two years or so and then return to their respective countries, it can also be a great opportunity for international networking.

Another asset in the quest to maintain my German has been that it never ceased to be a hobby for me. Reading German fiction is a regular fixture on my list of leisure time activities, and I favor books written for young adults. These tend to be a colloquial, easy read, and a nice break from the dense material I work through all day as a translator. My favorite series so far has been the “*Edelsteintrilogie*” by Kerstin Gier, which is about two time-travelers who become entangled in a mysterious plot for world domination. There is also a film adaptation of the entire trilogy that is very well done and fun viewing if you are looking to practice listening. For those keen on watching German television, there is [sendungsverpasst.de](http://sendungsverpasst.de). This website allows you to search and watch reruns of most television shows aired on the German public broadcasting stations.

So don’t stop using your second language when the workweek ends. Enjoy the rich cultural offerings of your second language, and your linguistic skills will be sure to benefit from it.



Carlie Sitzman graduated from Weber State University with a BA in German and an AAS in Technical Drafting in 2009, at which time it was clear that the best way to make her passion for language and fascination with technology into a career was to become a translator. In 2011 she moved to Germany where she simultaneously freelanced and earned her MA in Intercultural German Studies from the Universität Bayreuth. She now translates from offices in Philadelphia and Wilmington, Delaware, and will be celebrating her eight-year anniversary in the industry this year.



**Geoffrey Cox** has been an editor at German Language Services since 2010. He studied German language and literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz (BA) and the University of Washington (MA, PhD). He has taught language, literature, film, and cultural studies at the University of Washington, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität (Münster), Seattle Pacific University, and the Seattle Opera, as well as translation at the T&I Institute at Bellevue College. Geoff worked at Sub Pop and Up! Records in the (glorious) 1990s, and his heavily-effected, post-punktinged guitar playing can be heard on albums by Fotoform and C'est la Mort.

## Translator in Profile: Geoffrey Cox

### Where are you based and what brought you there?

I'm based in Seattle (born and raised, actually). I've spent my entire professional translation career at German Language Services, starting in 2010, and, perhaps a rarity in this industry, I work almost exclusively as an editor, with project management responsibilities and infrequent translations.

### What got you started in translation?

I came to the translation industry through academia. I began doing some translation work while in graduate school for German literature at the University of Washington, first by translating a critical article for a professor (on Sacher-Masoch, so the research was...eye-opening), later by doing some literary translations and translating materials for a cultural studies course I was teaching. I took a seminar on literary translation, and I realized it was something I really enjoyed. Having finished my doctorate (with a dissertation on pop music in the contemporary German novel—thanks for asking!), I was teaching German at various schools when a friend from grad school contacted me about working at GLS; she remembered I had mentioned being interested in translation years before at a cocktail party. I was interested but wasn't sure how to shift gears/careers. Translation seems to be a bit of a stepchild at American universities, unfortunately, perhaps because of some idealized hopes of avoiding commercial work. The higher education industry is at an odd juncture, and has been for a while: Universities continue to produce a surplus of potential professors, while there

are fewer and fewer long-term (much less tenure-track) positions out there. This requires either a willingness to live an itinerant academic life or some creative thinking, but translation is rarely presented as a viable career option. That is hopefully changing as people recognize that language instructors and translators are both language professionals, albeit with differing skill sets. That also comes with the realization that scholars may not make the best translators, just as earning a doctorate in English, for example, doesn't necessarily make you a good novelist.

### What languages do you work in and what are your areas of specialization?

I work solely in English and German, with a focus on corporate communications,

banking, and finance, as well as art, literature, music, etc. As an in-house editor, I take pride in working with whatever projects our clients need and doing the groundwork to get there.

### What do you like most about being a translator?

I'm not a translator ("although I play one on TV..." as the ad went). As an editor, I get to polish the work after the translators have already done the heavy lifting. I really enjoy the variety of work as well as the research that goes into every project. You never really know what the day's inbox will hold. You have the (all-too) rare opportunity of learning something new every single day, as you suddenly find yourself navigating a variety of very specialized fields for a variety of clients, each with their own terminology, expectations, and perspectives. I have the luxury of

"I have the luxury of working with fantastic translators who produce great translations; my job as an editor is to polish and fine-tune work that is already great, rather than conduct textual rescue missions, so to speak."

working with fantastic translators who produce great translations; my job as an editor is to polish and fine-tune work that is already great, rather than conduct textual rescue missions, so to speak. I like diving deeply into the projects, and I try to approach each as a “text,” replete with its own logic and system of patterns and connections. I’ve always enjoyed applying tools originally intended for literary/cultural studies on unintended subjects, and examining them seriously and critically (for example, I published perhaps the first critical article on mix tapes back in grad school). PowerPoints, org charts, or form letters might not have the same depths of meaning as Goethe, Kafka, or even Karl May, but reading texts from a critical perspective can yield some insights into what the author is (un)consciously trying to communicate. Just as importantly, it’s always vital to look at what is being communicated independent of the author’s intentions and how this will be received by the readers. Negotiating the

“Just as importantly, it’s always vital to look at what is being communicated independent of the author’s intentions and how this will be received by the readers. Negotiating the two can involve some creative intercultural sleight of hand at times, and that’s where some of the real fun is.”

two can involve some creative intercultural sleight of hand at times, and that’s where some of the real fun is.

**What do you like the least?**

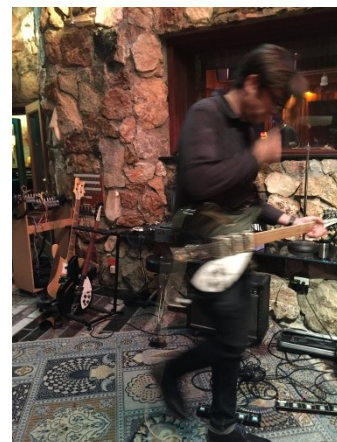
Keeping track of subtly different client style preferences.

**What are your goals for 2018?**

Making time to return to some long-dormant translation projects on music and culture.

**What are your hobbies or other interests?**

I play guitar in Fotoform (fotoform.com), a post-punk/shoegaze band with my wife, Kim, and it serves as a creative outlet. We just released our debut album, and it’s been well-received, making a number of year-end lists for 2017. We did a short European tour last fall (right after the ATA conference), which was an amazing experience, and we have some great things in the works for 2018, too. That said, I’m not planning on quitting my day job anytime soon.





## Translation Matters.

YOU SAID:  
Translation Matters.

INTO JAPANESE  
翻訳の問題。

BACK INTO ENGLISH  
The problem of translation.

**Jost Zetzsche**  
Author of *The Tool Box Journal*

**Author:** Jost Zetzsche

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## Book Review: Translation Matters by Jost Zetzsche

*Pisana Ferrari*

Anything produced by Jost Zetzsche is premium material and his new book "Translation Matters" is no exception. The collection of articles, reviews, posts and other writings spans over 15 years, with a nice combination of historical details, real life experience, personal reflections, interviews, stories and anecdotes. Despite the fact that there is a wealth of information about the evolution of translation technology in the book, the overarching theme is not so much the technology itself but the huge potential it has for the future of the translation industry and the empowerment of translators. Underlying it all is the author's passion for languages, for his profession, for the role of translation as "an essential key for unlocking commerce, communication, mutual understanding and many other doorways..." and his belief in the power of translators "to change our view of the world."

### Embracing and making the best use of technology

Linguistic skills form the core of a translator's competency but it is also vital to have a business sense; in practical terms this means that, as with any other business professional, it is essential for a translator to invest in the "tools of the trade." As Jost states, if translators do not invest, one of two things will happen: "We will either dread working with our main tool—the computer—so much that we lose passion for a task that we are otherwise highly qualified for—translation. Or we will become so ineffective with an unsophisticated technological set up that we will struggle to survive." Jost firmly believes that technology empowers translators and that they should see the new tools as "welcome helpers that, if employed properly, can simplify things enormously." This does not mean that all translators or language service providers should have all the tools, but they should have those that are adapted and

useful for their particular language combination, type of work and/or client.

The author says that, collectively speaking, translators have been slow to accept technology; many are still worried about their future and/or feel uneasy about the new developments. Technology is here to stay and in order to survive translators have to adapt and go along. Not only, but they need to become more confident in talking about it. An entire chapter of the book is dedicated to "talking points" that translators can use in conversations with people "in the next elevator pitch or cocktail party or sales call" to explain, for example, how machine translation is great for the average consumer to get a gist of the meaning of a web page, e-mail or other text, but that machine translation is a very different activity from what translators do. In his chapter on the "pillars of translation" the author says nothing can replace the human translator's "living knowledge" of the language, its nuances and subtleties, and the ability to understand contextually. This is what he calls the "third pillar," the first two being grammar and lexicon and the fourth the knowledge of the tools. Machine translation systems might know language rules, lexicons and technology but they don't truly understand language in context. Other supporting pillars include "marketing, client education and the ability to work as a team."

### Marketing and need for a more personalized approach

Learning how to communicate better is also a very important part of the future of the translation industry. In a chapter very fittingly called "And they shall no longer remain nameless," Jost appeals to translators to step out in the world and reveal themselves as "real people." He says this can be done in many ways, including by a more

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personalized portrayal on websites and brochures and by building meaningful relations with partners and clients. This theme comes back up and again in other parts of the book. In one later chapter the author encourages translators to be “more vocal” about themselves and their profession: to write articles, blogs and other publications that can be of interest not just to the translation community but also to the general public, to be proactive in online discussions, including engaging with journalists on social media (as he does) and be present at conferences which “are aimed beyond the boundaries of the translation industry.” As machine translation gains in relevance, he says that leaving the “cloak of anonymity not only carries the potential of curbing the impersonal nature of the client-provider relationship but it will also make us more successful as our clients begin to recognize and value our work by the name that stands behind it.”

#### **An appeal to the machine translation industry**

As a translator himself, who uses machine translation, Jost encourages the industry to re-evaluate their communication strategies and provide the necessary information about their products in a way that clearly explains what machine translation technology can do and what it can't do. He also feels that they should acknowledge their indebtedness to human translators' labor in machine translation development and involve translators more in the various phases of these developments.

#### **Increasing recognition for the professional figure**

Jost takes pride in the fact that the profession itself is gaining increasing recognition in a number of different areas. Here are a few examples: he personally attended a translator's conference in Buenos Aires which was opened by no less than the Argentine President herself (2010); the Mr. Arthur Award aka the “Genius Grant,” an international prize for exceptional figures from all fields, was awarded in 2014 to Arabic Translator and poet Khaled Mattawa; the Russian-to-

Dutch translator Hans Boland received that same year the prestigious Pushkin prize in Russia (which he turned down in protest against Putin's policies, but nonetheless...). “We seem to have come a long way, wouldn't you agree?”, he says in a chapter about the novel “The Tin Drum,” where he recounts how Nobel Prize winner Gunther Grass, for each new novel, organized meetings in Gdansk with his translators. Grass believed that “rendering the style, substance and linguistic complexity of his writing required a closer bond.” In this same chapter, referring to a 1962 edition of “The Tin Drum,” Jost points out that whereas in those days the names of translators never appeared on covers of books now they almost always do, another sign of the change of times.

#### **Stories and anecdotes**

The book is rich in charming stories and anecdotes like the one of the 14-year old Portuguese orphan who left for Japan in 1574 as a Jesuit novice and became the imperial confident and interpreter of the Japanese rulers, and the late 19th century Chinese scholar who did not know any foreign languages himself but “translated” over 180 works in beautiful Chinese by listening to “interpreted” versions read out by his colleagues. Translation fails are not only amusing but can sometimes have dramatic consequences, as in the example given by the author, where a rushed and inaccurate 1840 British-Maori translation of an important Treaty has led in recent times to over 1 billion NZD in reparations from the government of New Zealand. It was also interesting to read about the idea of a Hieronymic oath for translators, along the lines of the Hippocratic oath for doctors, to promote professionalization, launched by a former University professor of the University of Helsinki. And finally, the virtual interview with Jeromobot, today's “bot” version of St. Jerome, the 4th century Bible translator and Patron Saint of translators, on new technology and its challenges, was very enjoyable.



**Pisana Ferrari** is Italian, was born in Switzerland and has lived and studied in Canada, Italy, Australia, Greece and Belgium. She holds a degree in Political Science and International Relations from the Université Libre de Bruxelles. She started her professional life in Brussels, initially in the European Parliament and later in a EU consultancy firm. From 1986 to 1990 she worked in the press office of a large Italian agri-industrial group and, since 1990, has been an independent consultant in the communications and event management field. She is currently part time head of the communications team for a European NGO and, since December 2017, she is active as [cApStAn's online Ambassador](#): she curates and creates content, and interacts with followers. She speaks Italian, English and French.

## Calendar of Events 2018

The GLD calendar is now available on the GLD website, where you can also add it to your Google calendar. Go to: [www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/gld-calendar/](http://www.ata-divisions.org/GLD/gld-calendar/)

Date	Location	Organization/Event	More Information
Mar 13-16	Boston (USA)	<b>GALA 2018</b> 10th annual conference	<a href="http://www.gala-global.org/">www.gala-global.org/</a>
Mar 16-17	Sofia (Bulgaria)	<b>EULITA Conference</b> "Status and Recognition of Legal Interpreters and Translators Today" and Eighth General Assembly of EULITA	<a href="http://eulita.eu/wp/upcoming-events/">eulita.eu/wp/upcoming-events/</a>
Mar 16-18	Miami (USA)	<b>Spring into Action 2018</b>	<a href="http://springintoaction.info/">springintoaction.info/</a>
Mar 17-18	Speyer (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Medizinische Statistik (fast) ohne Formeln	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Mar 17-21	Boston (USA)	<b>AMTA 2018-01-28</b> Association for Machine Translation in the Americas	<a href="http://www.conference.amtaweb.org">www.conference.amtaweb.org</a>
Mar 23-24	Warsaw (Poland)	<b>The Translation and Localization Conference 2018</b>	<a href="http://sites.grenadine.co/">sites.grenadine.co/</a>
Mar 23-24	Munich (Germany)	<b>Film und Übersetzung: Workshop 4</b> Übersetzung für Voice-over	<a href="http://www.sdi-muenchen.de/">www.sdi-muenchen.de/</a>
Mar 29-31	Wisconsin (USA)	<b>American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association</b>	<a href="http://www.atisa.org/conferences">www.atisa.org/conferences</a>
Apr 13-14	Karlsruhe (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Kombiseminar: Finanzmarktwissen für Übersetzer und Ausweis von Finanzinstrumenten nach IAS/IFRS	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Apr 19-20	Madrid (Spain)	<b>13th EUATC International Conference</b>	<a href="http://euatc.org/conference/">euatc.org/conference/</a>
Apr 19-20	Vienna (Austria)	<b>BP18 Translation Conference</b>	<a href="http://bpconf.com/">bpconf.com/</a>
Apr 25-28	Scottsdale, Arizona (USA)	<b>ALC Annual Conference</b>	<a href="http://www.alcus.org/">www.alcus.org/</a>
Apr 26-28	Berlin (Germany)	<b>German Localization Unconference</b>	<a href="http://sites.google.com/site/localizationunconference/german-unconference-2018">sites.google.com/site/localizationunconference/german-unconference-2018</a>
Apr 27-29	Boulder (USA)	<b>8th Annual CTA Conference 2018</b>	<a href="http://cta-web.org/">cta-web.org/</a>
May 17-19	Porto (Portugal)	<b>APTRAD's 2nd International Conference</b>	<a href="http://www.aptrad.pt/">www.aptrad.pt/</a>
May 17-19	Vienna (Austria)	<b>Staging the Literary Translator</b> Roles, Identities, Personalities	<a href="http://translit2018.univie.ac.at/">translit2018.univie.ac.at/</a>



Date	Location	Organization/Event	More Information
May 18-19	Hameln (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Mentoringtag 2018 in Hameln: Aller Anfang ist schwer, Übersetzermentoring	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
May 28-30	Alacant (Spain)	<b>21th Annual Conference of the European Association for Machine Translation (EAMT)</b>	<a href="http://www.eamt.org/news/">www.eamt.org/news/</a>
May 29-31	Nauen OT Groß Behnitz (Germany)	<b>Translate Better 2018 – für deutsche Muttersprachler</b>	<a href="http://www.bdue-fachverlag.de/">http://www.bdue-fachverlag.de/</a>
May 29-31	Nauen OT Groß Behnitz (Germany)	<b>Translate Better 2018 – for native English speakers</b>	<a href="http://www.bdue-fachverlag.de/">www.bdue-fachverlag.de/</a>
Jun 7-8	Mannheim (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Zertifikat Revision: Basismodul, weitere Zusatzveranstaltung aufgrund der großen Nachfrage	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jun 7-8	Barcelona (Spain)	<b>International Conference on Video Game Translation and Accessibility</b>	<a href="http://jornades.uab.cat/videogamesaccess/">jornades.uab.cat/videogamesaccess/</a>
Jun 15	Greifswald (Germany)	<b>Anglophoner Tag</b> Translating the Arts, the Art of Translating	<a href="http://www.ciol.org.uk/">www.ciol.org.uk/</a>
Jun 15-16	Cologne (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Medizinisches Fachwissen: Endokrinologie	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>

### What's all the talk about?

Join ATAtalk and find out! [ataTalk](http://ataTalk) is a forum for discussions of ATA policy, activities, and governance issues. It's a place where members can voice opinions and discuss issues. Note that questions and problems that need to be addressed right away should continue to be directed to [president@atanet.org](mailto:president@atanet.org).



### ATA Certification Exams

The ATA generally has 30–40 exam sittings each year. Please visit the ATA Certification Program page on the ATA website for the most up-to-date list: [www.atanet.org/certification/upcoming.php](http://www.atanet.org/certification/upcoming.php)

Date	Location	Organization/Event	More Information
Jun 16-17	Heidelberg (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Kfz-Technik heute und morgen: der Viertaktmotor	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jun 18-20	Geneva (CH)	<b>Transius Conference 2018</b> III International Conference on Economic, Business, Financial and Institutional Translation	<a href="http://transius.unige.ch/en/">transius.unige.ch/en/</a>
Jun 22-23	Karlsruhe (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Aufbauworkshop Vertragsübersetzen: Standardklauseln in Verträgen – Terminologie und Formulierungen EN/DE	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jun 22-24	Wolfenbuettel (Germany)	<b>VdÜ</b> <b>Jahrestagung des Verbands deutschsprachiger Literaturübersetzer</b> 15. Wolfenbütteler Gespräch	<a href="http://www.literaturuebersetzer.de">www.literaturuebersetzer.de</a>
Jun 27-29	Alicante (Spain)	<b>International Conference on Economic, Business, Financial and Institutional Translation</b>	<a href="http://dti.ua.es/">dti.ua.es/</a>
Jun 29-30	Munich (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Englische Vertragsterminologie zwischen deutschem Recht und deutscher Rechtssprache - am Beispiel von Allgemeinen Geschäftsbedingungen und Handelsvertreterverträgen	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jun 30	Munich (Germany)	<b>Expertenseminar Werbetexte</b>	<a href="http://www.sdi-muenchen.de/seminare/">www.sdi-muenchen.de/seminare/</a>
Jul 7-8	Heidelberg (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Energietechnik: Green Building und Smart Home	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jul 9-13	Vienna (Austria)	<b>The International Terminology Summer School</b>	<a href="http://www.termnet.org/">www.termnet.org/</a>
Jul 20-22	Eitdorf/Cologne (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> VKD Summer Camp II - Dolmetscher und Übersetzer als Unternehmer - Aufbauseminar (Professional)	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jul 20-23	Eitdorf/Cologne (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> VKD Summer Camp I - Dolmetscher und Übersetzer als Unternehmer - Grundlagenseminar	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Jul 22-28	Norwich (UK)	<b>International Literary Translation and Creative Writing Summer School 2018</b>	<a href="http://www.bclt.org.uk/summer-school">www.bclt.org.uk/summer-school</a>
Jul 27-30	Gäufelden-Nebbringen (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> VKD Summer Camp III - Dolmetscher und Übersetzer als Unternehmer - Intensivseminar (Expert)	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Sep 3-6	Leuven (Belgium)	<b>3rd International Translation Technology Summer School</b>	<a href="http://www.arts.kuleuven.be/">www.arts.kuleuven.be/</a>

Date	Location	Organization/Event	More Information
Sep 6-8	Bonn (Germany)	<b>13th International Legal Forum</b> Legal Translation and Interpreting in a Changing World: Technology – Outsourcing – Shifts	<a href="http://aticom.de/fit-ilf-2018/de/">aticom.de/fit-ilf-2018/de/</a>
Sep 21-22	Karlsruhe (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Kombiseminar Vertiefungsworkshops SEO/SEA: Keyword-Recherche und Optimierung von AdWords-Kampagnen	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Sep 21-22	Cologne (Germany)	<b>BDÜ-Seminar:</b> Medizinisches Fachwissen: Stoffwechselstörungen	<a href="http://seminare.bdue.de/">seminare.bdue.de/</a>
Oct 3-5	Berlin (Germany)	<b>12th International Conference on Language Transfer in Audiovisual Media</b>	<a href="http://www.languages-media.com/">www.languages-media.com/</a>
Oct 15-18	London (UK)	<b>ICIT London 2018</b>	<a href="http://www.waset.org/">www.waset.org/</a>
Oct 24-27	New Orleans (USA)	<b>24-27 October 2018</b> ATA 59 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference	<a href="http://www.atanet.org/">www.atanet.org/</a>
Oct 31- Nov 3	Bloomington (USA)	<b>Alta Conference</b>	<a href="http://www.literarytranslators.org/conference">www.literarytranslators.org/ conference</a>
Nov 9-11	London (UK)	<b>The Language Show</b>	<a href="http://languageshowlive.co.uk/">languageshowlive.co.uk/</a>
Nov 13-15	Stuttgart (Germany)	<b>TeKom</b>	<a href="http://www.tekom.de/">www.tekom.de/</a>
Nov 29-30	Cologne (Germany)	<b>Interdependenzen und Innovationen</b> 2. Kölner Konferenz zur Translation und technischen Dokumentation (CGN18)	<a href="http://www.th-koeln.de/">www.th-koeln.de/</a>



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