



NOTA BENE

Vol. XXVI, No. 3

June 2003

Upcoming Events:

ATA Accreditation Exam

Saturday, June 21, 2003, 10:00 a.m.
Kent State University
Satterfield Hall 112, Janik Drive

Annual Picnic **July 12th – 2 p.m.** **at the Brecksville Reservation**

For details and directions, see pg. 6

Monthly Meetings at Borders

June 12, July 10, August 14

Welcome to

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NOTA Executive Committee Meeting

May 21, 2003

In attendance were Jill Sommer (President), Amanda Ennis (Secretary), Karin Debelius (Public Relations) and Lee Wright (Treasurer/Membership). Margaret Nevits (Programs) was unable to attend.

Items of business were as follows:

- 1) Our **summer picnic** will be held at the Brecksville Reservation (see page 6 for directions) on Saturday, July 12, at 2:00 PM.
- 2) In conjunction with the Terminology and Localization Workshop being held at Kent State University during the week of June 16-20, a **picnic** is being held on Thursday, June 19 at Fred Fuller Park in Kent. Please e-mail Lee Wright at lw1341204@aol.com for more details if you are interested in attending.
- 3) Membership update: NOTA currently has **105 members**. Approximately 35% of NOTA members are also ATA members.
- 4) We now have a **room number for the ATA Accreditation Exam** being held June 21st at Kent State University. The exam will begin at 10 AM in **Satterfield Hall 112**, on the ground floor of the building.
- 5) A **SCORE representative** (they provide counseling services to small businesses) will attend the next Thursday night Borders Books discussion evening (Thursday, June 12, 7:00 PM). The discussion group will **continue all summer**. We'd love to see you at our July and August meetings!
- 6) In the works for this fall: We are planning a **clambake** in a park in **Bratenahl**, just steps away from beautiful Lake Erie! It will most likely be held a few weeks before or after the September general meeting. Stay tuned for more details.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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NOTA BENE is published by the Northeast Ohio Translators Association, a chapter of the American Translators Association.

Other newsletters are welcome to reprint materials from NOTA BENE, provided they acknowledge the source and send us a copy.

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NOTA membership fees:

Individual:	\$20.00/yr
Corporate/Institutional:	\$30.00/yr
Student:	\$10.00/yr

For membership information, please contact Dr. Leland Wright at the above number or write to:

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President's Message

Hello everyone,

This is the last NOTA BENE before the summer break. Even though the NOTA BENE will be taking a short break, it does not mean that NOTA will be. In fact, we have quite a few events planned for the next few months including the ATA Accreditation Exam, the upcoming summer picnic, a Trados workshop, and the monthly Discussion Group.

The Discussion Group will still meet the second Thursday of every month. If the weather is nice we will even be sitting outside the café, so be sure to come by and soak up some sun. I have invited Jim Dehner, a representative from SCORE, to come speak at the Discussion Group on June 12th. SCORE, "Counselors to America's Small Business," is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth and success of small business nationwide. SCORE volunteers provide free, confidential face-to-face and e-mail business counseling to America's entrepreneurs. Counseling and workshops are offered free of charge at 389 chapter offices across the country. Jim is a representative from Summit County, but he will also be bringing phone numbers for Cuyahoga County. I am sure we will have plenty of questions to keep him busy. Feel free to visit <http://www.score.org/> before the meeting if you have any questions about the organization.

Margaret is hard at work organizing a Trados workshop for a weekend day in either July or August. We need to make sure the lab will be available. Kent State University has generously offered its computer lab and equipment, and Anne Chemali has offered to lead our members through the Trados software. If you would like to attend this event, please make sure I have your current e-mail address, because I will be sending an e-mail out to the members once we have the date and time set.

I would also like to briefly address the subject of participation. Frankly, based on the results of the survey, I was expecting more of it. Everyone has suggestions, but it seems no one is willing to put his money where his mouth is. Only two NOTA members found the time to attend the Intel ISEF – one event where we had an opportunity to shine and show our support for the community by volunteering as interpreters for young scientists. Be sure to read Amanda's ISEF report on page 4. While the Discussion Group still welcomes around 10 members each month, only one person has volunteered to help me re-design the Web site. NOTA can only grow and be even more successful if the members support it, so please feel free to roll up your sleeves and lend a hand. Write an article for the NOTA BENE; participate in the listserv; attend the summer picnic.

So have a great summer, and I hope to see you at some of our upcoming events.

Jill Sommer

The Easiest PR You'll Ever Do

by Amanda Ennis

Our profession is constantly changing, and yet, the more things change, the more they stay the same, at least in reference to one of our profession's biggest problems: our barely-there public image. Recently, the ATA Public Relations Committee has stepped up its efforts to garner more press coverage for our organization and exhort the membership to get out there and make itself heard, and as a result, more T&I professionals seem to be recognizing the problem and pondering some solutions. Just open the latest (May 2003) issue of the ATA Chronicle, and buried in an article on a new localization organization, we find the following comment by the article's author, Hans Fenstermacher: "Let's start by changing our persona, debunking the false notion that all we do is cobble together a network of dubious data processors. Let's take the lead on our own image, much like the IT profession that managed to change its portrayal as Dorito®-eating, socially inept geeks to invaluable, highly indispensable (and highly paid) cornerstones of successful corporations... Let's create our own public relations monster."

Yes, a public relations monster about the size of the brontosaurus at the Cleveland Zoo's new dinosaur exhibit would be just the ticket. Previous articles have discussed how individuals can make a difference writing letters to the editor of local newspapers, visiting local schools, offering to speak to local business organizations, etc. But—let's be honest here—how often can you take time out of your busy schedule to actually do any of these things? In addition to making a living, family concerns and errands seem to eat up much of our remaining time. You hear that newscast talking about the "translators" helping US armed forces interview Iraqi POWs and let it slide, or you let your local school's phone number languish on a Post-It on your computer for months.

Well, you don't have to feel guilty any more! In exchange for about 15 minutes of your time, you can establish an arresting, unique, highly visible, and tax-deductible (!) way of advertising your services and telling people about your profession: a vanity license plate. I ordered my plates a few months ago and was amazed at the response I have received. My neighbors noticed immediately: "Your new plates are so cool!" I had a lengthy discussion with my mailman about what I do because he saw my plates. My dog-sitter commented admiringly on them. I even turned the head of a toll lady on the Ohio Turnpike as I pulled up to her booth:

"You're a translator, huh? What languages do you work in?" We chatted pleasantly for a minute or two until another car pulled up behind me. I have also noticed interested looks and grins as people pass me on four-lane local roads around town. No one has yet rolled down his window to indulge in conversation while thundering down the interstate beside me, but in today's multi-tasking world, I'm sure it's just a matter of time. And the plates serve as excellent advertising for my services as well. It wouldn't surprise me if I started talking to someone in a parking lot about them and got a job as a result! (It hasn't happened yet, but give it a few more months.) But the best part of all is this: every time I find myself stuck in traffic, I smile, because I know the driver behind me is saying, "Trains-l-eight-er...oh, *translator!*" and thinking about what I do. Now *that's* what I call mindshare!



How You Can Get Your Own Translation-Related Ohio Vanity Plate:

- 1) Go to <http://www.oplates.com/>
- 2) Click on "Check Availability of Special Plates"
- 3) Select the vehicle type (passenger car, non-commercial truck, etc.) for which you want to purchase the vanity plate and click on "Submit."
- 4) Select a plate type (the default bicentennial plate, or one of the special plates on the list) and click on "View This Plate." Then click on "Continue."
- 5) A screen will come up where you can type in the letter/number combination desired and see if it is available. (How about I TRNSL8, TRNSL8S, TRNSL8G, TRNSL8N, or INTRPTR?) If you find something you like, all you have to do is click on "Purchase This Plate" and enter your information to complete your transaction! The plates will be mailed to you within 7-10 days.

Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) Rocks Cleveland!

by Amanda Ennis

On May 11, over 1,200 high school students from nearly every state in the U.S. and 39 foreign countries, from Russia to Argentina and everywhere in between, converged on the Cleveland Convention Center to celebrate great scientific experimentation and research. Over \$3,000,000 in prizes and scholarships were awarded to the students with the best projects in 14 different categories.

Many of the students coming from abroad spoke English well, but others needed help during the all-important judge's interviews, where judges came around the exhibit areas to ask the finalists probing, in-depth questions about their projects before making the final decisions about who would receive special prizes and awards. The ISEF organizing committee swung into action in January 2003 to recruit a whopping 151 volunteer interpreters to assist with these interviews. One German interpreter was also requested, so I thought, "Why not?" and signed up.

Fast forward to the morning of May 14, Judging Day. I maneuver my way through the throngs of students and parents in the main atrium to an out-of-the-way second-floor room where the interpreters have been instructed to gather. The large room is nearly full. We don neon-green ISEF T-shirts that scream "I am a volunteer! Outta my way!" and receive black ISEF tote bags and envelopes containing an ISEF lapel pin, a certificate of appreciation and thank-you letter (aww!), and \$10 for incidentals. After going to another room and getting name badges and spiffy black "INTERPRETER" ribbons that give us full access to all parts of the building, we go to the lounge where we are supposed to be matched with the finalists we will be helping. I quickly find two other German speakers who heard about the event and just decided to show up and two Turkish interpreters, one of whom works at NASA and has decided to take the day off to help out. The group is excited to be here and eager to get started.

Unfortunately, the interpreter coordinator soon bursts our bubble: "Sorry, but we don't have any Turkish students here, and the German students say they don't need an interpreter." The NASA guy looks crushed and wanders off to look at the projects before he leaves. We three German interpreters try to cheer ourselves up. "Well, sure, they *think* they can get through these interviews without us," we nod knowingly, "but we'll see what happens when the

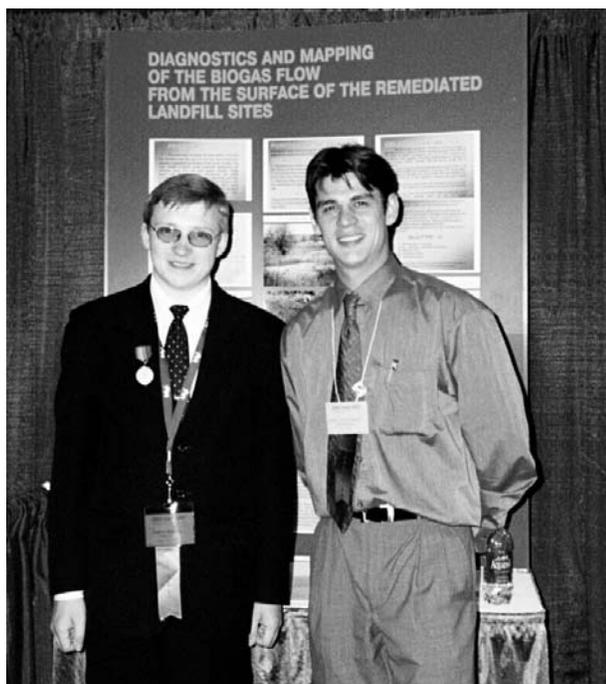
judges are standing there and they get tongue-tied." We meander down to the cavernous, hangar-sized exhibit floor to familiarize ourselves with the German projects, just in case, and to look around while the floor is relatively empty. Did you know that chocolate bars contain traces of lead? Or that consuming French fries increases the level of a carcinogen (whose name I no longer remember) in your body? Or that caffeine improves short-term memory? I pick up all this, and much more, browsing through aisle after aisle of student projects.

After a delightful lunch paid for by ISEF, the first judging period begins. I hurry down to Physics Project 307, AKA "Bionics—A Technical Realization of Crawling," where Daniel Illhardt and Tanja Zimmermann, two 18 year-olds from eastern Germany, are fidgeting nervously as they wait for the first judge to arrive. I show them my ribbon. "I'm an interpreter!" I yell above the din, and offer to jump in and help if they get stuck. Moments later, a judge appears and begins asking about their project, which has to do with replicating the movements of a snail using mechanical means. Daniel is doing reasonably well, while Tanja flounders around a bit. I wait for her to make eye contact with me and let me help, but she presses on, and the pair manages to complete the interview to the judge's satisfaction without assistance. After two more judges come and go, asking similar questions, Daniel and Tanja indicate they are fine, and I reluctantly move on. The other German student, 19 year-old Matthäus Kloc, is presenting a chemistry project entitled "A Carbon Nanocontainer for Atoms and Molecules." I stand to one side and listen as he tells a judge how his research could be applied to deliver drugs to the exact point in a patient's body where they are needed. I roll my eyes in frustration as I hear the young man's excellent English and realize my presence is utterly superfluous. It turns out Matthäus' father works in Princeton, New Jersey. Ah, well, that explains it.

Rather than calling it a day, I decide to observe and interview other interpreters working the event. I spoke with a total of 21 interpreters and learned the following:

- Twelve were interpreting for the first time in a formal environment.

- All interpreters I observed interpreted consecutively. None performed simultaneous interpreting.
- Seven heard about the event and were recruited because they or a family member worked for one of the companies sponsoring the fair. Four Brazilian Portuguese interpreters were recruited through the Brazilian Charitable Foundation of Cleveland.
- Most creatively recruited interpreters: one saw a flyer at the Solon Public Library, and another visited a booth ISEF set up at a John Carroll University job fair!
- Eight said they needed to interpret “90-100%” of what the judges and finalists said, while four indicated they were only needed “for the rough spots.” Others fell somewhere between the extremes.
- Eighteen said they engaged in some form of advance preparation before starting to interpret, i.e., reading through the student’s English-language materials, having the student explain his/her project in detail, etc.
- Only two worked professionally as full-time interpreters.
- All interpreters said they were enjoying the experience and would interpret again if asked to do so.



NOTA member Marat Suleymanov (R), a Russian interpreter with 12 years of experience, assisted Vanya Kouzel of Minsk, Belarus in explaining Kouzel’s method for tracking underground biogas flows to ISEF judges.

Did the students feel their interpreters were doing a good job? “I knew in advance that interpreters would be available,” student Andres Espejo Cozzi said (through his interpreter). “It improved my confidence. The interpreters are doing a good job helping me communicate, but they don’t always say things just the way I said it. And the noise levels in here are a problem.” Some interpreters admitted to giving their charges a little extra attention: “I ‘prepped’ my student in advance and reminded him not to forget certain things,” said Tatyana Ulcherko, a Russian doing graduate work at Cleveland State University. A Brazilian Portuguese interpreter sitting nearby admitted, “Sometimes I added a little extra to the student’s answer to impress the judge.” Another Russian interpreter, Sergio Lebid, also said he added to his student’s answers, noting thoughtfully, “It’s hard to present the student in the best possible light under these circumstances. The seven-minute limit [on interviews] is unfair.” On the other hand, some interpreters felt the need to shorten their students’ answers: “The students can get a little preachy about their projects,” reported Dr. Rosario Cambric, a Spanish interpreter. “Sometimes they provide more information than necessary to answer the judge’s questions.”



Laska Gilberti (M) helps finalist Pablo de Silva of Brazil (L) explain how his patterned concrete sidewalk and crosswalk designs can help visually impaired people navigate streets safely without a cane or guide dog.

How did the judges feel about the interpreters’ work? I asked Dr. Brian Bagatto, a University of Akron physiology professor and ISEF judge, if it was more difficult to judge projects where he had to use interpreters to conduct the interview. “It’s not more difficult,” he replied, “just slower. I didn’t water down my questions, or ask different types of questions than I asked the English-speaking students, but I did pause for a second to rephrase my

questions for clarity. I was satisfied with the answers I received, but sometimes I thought the interpreters gave extra information beyond what the students said.” (Uh-oh, the jig is up, interpreters! He’s on to you!) His only suggestion for improvement would be “extra time to work with interpreter-assisted projects. Another ten minutes or so [per slot] would have been really nice.” ISEF judge Russell Ezolt, an immigration lawyer from North Olmstead, concurred with Bagatto: “Language was not a barrier. The interview is a little more cumbersome, but you don’t lose anything in the process. Do you make a few

changes? Yes. Do you adapt a little? Yes. Is it a problem? No. I think it’s wonderful that the international students are here. Cutting them off because they don’t speak English would be incredibly small-minded.”

Hear, hear, Mr. Ezolt. Thanks to the hard work of more than 125 interpreters present that day, ideas took center stage, regardless of the language or country in which they were originally conceived. It was an exciting and fun time for everyone involved.

Summer Picnic at the Brecksville Reservation

We will be holding our annual summer picnic at the Brecksville Reservation, which is easily accessible from the north, south, east and west. Shelters are available on a first come, first serve basis, so I will be arriving early in the morning to stake our claim. I will also have my cell phone with me, so feel free to call me to find out where we are. The number is 330-421-0057. I hope to get the Harriet Keeler Memorial Picnic Area, which is right off the main road. If, however, someone beats me to it, please follow the brightly colored signs and balloons, which I will use to mark the way. Most of the picnic areas have electricity and are near bathroom facilities.

The following Picnic Areas are available:

1. Meadows Picnic Area (shelterhouse, ball fields)
2. Harriet Keeler Memorial Picnic Area (shelterhouse, ball fields)
3. Chippewa Picnic Area (no restrooms)
4. Plateau Picnic Area (shelterhouse)
5. Oak Grove Picnic Area (shelterhouse, ball field)
6. Ottawa Point Reserved Picnic Area (shelterhouse)
7. Stuhr Woods Picnic Area (shelterhouse)
8. York Road Picnic Area (shelterhouse)

How to get there:

I-77..... FROM THE NORTH OR SOUTH
Exit at Rt. 82 east (Royalton Rd.) to Rt 21 (Brecksville Rd.)

I-271..... FROM THE NORTH

Take I-480 West to I-77 South, then follow I-77 directions

I-271..... FROM THE SOUTH

Take I-77 North, then follow I-77 directions

I-71..... FROM THE SOUTH

Take I-271 North to I-77 North, then follow I-77 directions

I-71..... FROM THE NORTH

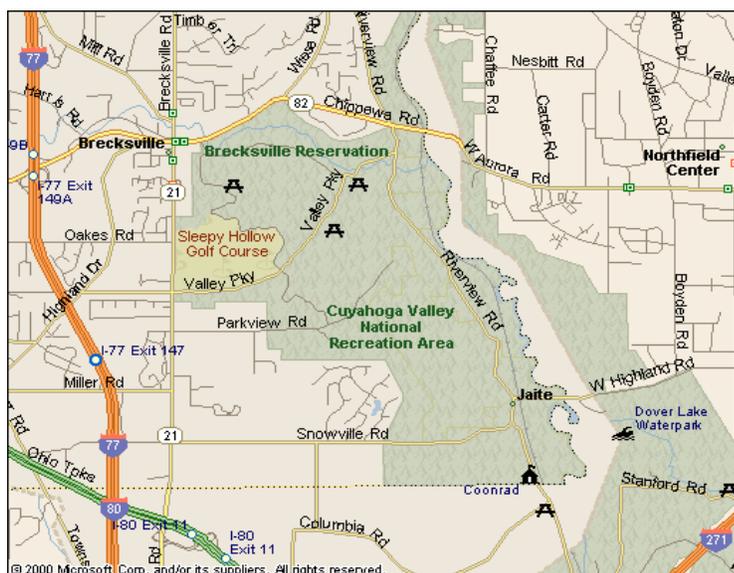
Take I-480 East to I-77 South, then follow I-77 directions

I-480 or I-90..... FROM THE EAST OR WEST

Take I-77 South, then follow I-77 directions

TURNPIKE..... EXIT 11

Take Rt. 21 (Brecksville Rd) north, you will then see the park entrance on the right



Ergonomics Tips

by Margaret Nevits

I bet at least 50% of our members will have to readjust their workplace after reading this article, and the other 50% will say "I know, I know" and leave it as it is. This subject is very long, but I will try to keep it short and to the point.

Let us focus on a few segments of our body that just might need some attention to help our hard working brains function without any physical discomfort. Proper positioning of your body will definitely prevent you from having all sorts of strain, stress, headaches, aches, fatigue, and wrist, neck and back pain – not to mention a serious injury that might occur days later because of the repetitive patterns of inappropriate positions.

Before I go into any details, I want to add that prolonged sitting, reading and writing without any rest could affect our well-being, day after day, so remember to give your eyes some rest (I have read that you should give your eyes a break every 15 to 20 minutes). Try to focus on some far-away object and look at it for a while. Exercise your neck by moving it gently from side to side (once or twice); try to touch your ear to your shoulder. You will see how great it feels! You will get that needed oxygen and blood back to your tired brain. Also, do not forget about your poor back! Stand up, stretch, and bend from side to side. Just move your body. Take a walk, get some fresh air in your room, and drink a glass of water!

Here are some tips on how to make your work less tiresome:

1. Be sure that you have proper lighting. See if the sun or a light from the lamp is reflecting on your screen. I myself use an anti-glare filter that is easily placed on the monitor and makes the whites not so overwhelmingly bright. As a result, my eyes are not as fatigued as they were before I used the anti-glare filter.
2. Your sitting arrangement (i.e., the chair in which you should **not** be slouching or leaning) ought to offer you good back support. The best chairs are the ones that you can adjust to your height. And personally, I like chairs with armrests, so my arms can rest on them. I also like to have a footrest to get my feet a bit higher off the ground. That way you can move your toes and ankles and get some circulation even in your lowest body parts. A footrest is probably more appropriate for shorter people to compensate for the leg length.

Remember that your legs should never just hang there in the air.

Your thighs should be parallel to the floor, your feet flat on the floor (except when you wish to extend your legs a bit and support them on the stool), and your back should be straight. Here is a nice exercise for releasing back tension: tighten your back and pelvis muscles (you should feel your back straightening against the back of the chair), hold for a count of 10, and repeat it a few times.

3. Your monitor should be directly in front of you – not at any angle. This only creates strain for your neck and twists your whole body into an unnatural position. The distance from your eyes to the monitor should be approximately 18 - 20 inches. Too close or too far creates too great a strain on your eyes. Keep in mind that you can set up your screen display fonts in a size appropriate to you (small, medium or large), and that really makes reading easier.

Also, make certain that your monitor's height is set appropriately. The right height is when your eyes can look at it at a slightly downward angle and the top of the monitor is at eye level. (Mine is already more than 5 years old but I can adjust it the way I need it, so I think that all the recent models are adjustable as well.) Believe me, your neck will thank you for it!

4. The keyboard. Oh, there are so many of us who don't know how important it is to have this part right. The keyboard should be directly in front of you, not at any angle. Your elbows should be resting on your armrests with your forearms parallel to the floor and wrists supported and at the same level as your hands. Your wrists should be just slightly lower than your elbows. I use a wrist support, which is just wonderful! I never feel any stress after prolonged typing. You can find one in any office supply store.

You should follow all of the above tips, unless your doctor has given you some other recommendation or there is something that restricts you from the above positions or exercises. If you are unsure about what you should do, be sure to ask your physician. I hope that my tips make your work stress-free!

P.S.: If you wish to read more about ergonomics, here is a wonderful website that I found after I completed this article: <http://ergonomics.ucla.edu/index.html>

ATA Tips for Candidates

(From the ATA Website)

Read both of the elective passages before you decide which to translate. Do the dictionaries you brought cover the subject matter? Are there complicated sentences that will take time to untangle?

When you finish a paragraph, read it over to yourself. Does it sound right, or does it sound awkward and stilted? Will changing the word order make a difference?

Working with a handwritten translation, instead of a word processor, may call for a different way of thinking. For example, it's not as easy to go back and insert qualifiers in the right place. Think your sentences through before you write.

Don't make hasty last-minute changes unless you're sure you made a mistake. If you're undecided, it's safer to trust your first instinct.

You will be graded on your ability to render the entire message of the original into the target language, not on your ability to rewrite or improve upon it.

- Try to preserve the register (language level, degree of formality) of the source text.
- Don't add clarifications unless you're certain that readers from the target-language culture will miss the meaning without them.
- Don't use specialized jargon or terminology where a more literal translation would convey the meaning equally well.
- The exam instructions say "Translate everything below the horizontal line." This is a reminder that any headings or subheads, for example, are considered part of the passage. Follow the conventions of your language combination with regard to words or terms that remain in the source language. Be sure not to add or omit information. Additions and/or omissions can essentially change the meaning. Qualifiers are also important.
- Be careful of where you place qualifiers and modifiers. Remember that word order is not the same in all languages and that careless placement can completely change the meaning.
- Alternative translations will be considered errors--major if one choice is right and the other is wrong, *but at least minor*. *It is up to you to make the selection*. The graders will not choose for you.
- Unwieldy sentences can be broken into shorter ones, provided nothing is added or omitted to change the meaning. Use particular caution in this regard when translating legal and literary passages
- Avoid regionalisms wherever possible, using instead more standard words

Special note for candidates taking the exam from English into German:

A new set of rules for German spelling and punctuation was introduced in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland on August 1, 1998. The old system will be phased out gradually, with the transition to be completed by July 31, 2005. **Until that date, ATA graders marking examinations from English into German are instructed to accept either the traditional or the new German spelling and punctuation, provided one or the**

other is applied consistently. Candidates are asked to indicate, at the top of the first page of their examinations, which system they are using.

The leading standard reference book containing the new official rules is *DUDEN: Die deutsche Rechtschreibung*, Volume 12 (Mannheim, Leipzig, Wien, Zürich: Dudenverlag, 1996).

This new volume of *Duden* also lists and identifies the new foreign (mostly American/English) words that are acceptable in German. **The ATA accreditation program will use this listing as the standard for judging the use of foreign words in its English>German exams, beginning with the 1999–2000 examinations.**

If a literal translation works well in the target language, lean toward that, but not at the expense of correct usage and natural syntax.

- In a word-for-word translation you may miss part of the meaning or lapse into the "third language syndrome" (neither source language nor target language). Pretend you are reading the passage aloud in the target language. Does it sound right?
- Expression in the target language. For example, in the phrase "... hanging around the house," it is especially dangerous to translate idiomatic expressions literally. Try to find an equivalent. "Hanging around" conveys the idea that one is relaxing, being lazy. Don't omit just because you can't find an exact translation.

Use dictionaries judiciously, and be sure your word choices are in context. If a dictionary offers more than one translation for a word, don't assume you can use any of them interchangeably. It sometimes helps to cross-check an unfamiliar term you have tentatively selected by looking it up in the other direction. If a word or phrase is not in your dictionaries, apply your translation skills. Perhaps it is a compound whose parts are in the dictionary, a derivative of a word that is listed, or a cognate you can look up in the target language. In other cases, you are expected to determine the meaning from the context. Texts selected as exam passages are modified to avoid obscure terms, and you will probably be penalized if you simply note "not in dictionary."

Watch spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Conventions vary from one language to another, and failure to follow target-language rules can change or obscure meaning.

You are not expected to make mathematical conversions of measures, distances, money, and the like. You will not be penalized if you convert correctly, but you will if the conversion is wrong.

Proofread carefully. Check

- proper names
- numerals and dates
- commonly misspelled words
- placement of punctuation and diacritical marks
- repetition (a bird in the the hand)
- grammar and usage: subject/verb agreement, prepositions, verb tenses

Don't make hasty last-minute changes unless you're sure you made a mistake. If you're undecided, it's safer to trust your first instinct.

Revised September 2002

