

ECHOES

EPITA

El Paso Interpreters & Translators Association



Picture By: bigvalleygrace.org

President's Message

By Valeria Delmar

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I'm happy to report we had a wonderful social mixer (with minimal shop talk!) recently at the Alamo Drafthouse in Montecillo, and if you didn't make it, we're sorry we missed you but look forward to catching you on the next one! Remember to bring a colleague and spread the word to new-to-EPITA and budding interpreters alike as well. This is a great opportunity to chat and mingle in a very relaxed, happy-hour setting.

As a reminder, we continue to plan on having our seminar for CEUs on October 6th and our guest presenter will be USCCI Ms. Athena Matilsky. Do mark your calendars if you haven't already done so.

Lastly, our "Day in the Life of" series have been wonderfully entertaining and they afford us an opportunity to better get to know the different work our colleagues do day in and day out. To this end, if you are interested in presenting, we'd love to hear from you at our monthly meetings. Please do get in touch with me, and I will get you scheduled!

Happy translating and interpreting,

Valeria B. Delmar

EPITA President

VOLUME No. 35

June 06, 2018

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ECHOES is published monthly by the El Paso Interpreters and Translators Association (EPITA)... read more on page 6.



9 Little Translation Mistakes That Caused Big Problems

By *ARIKA OKRENT* | *mentalfloss.com*

Published: February 16, 2016

Knowing how to speak two languages is not the same thing as knowing how to translate. Translation is a special skill that professionals work hard to develop. In their book *Found in Translation*, professional translators Nataly Kelly and Jost Zetsche give a spirited tour of the world of translation, full of fascinating stories about everything from volunteer text message translators during the Haitian earthquake rescue effort, to the challenges of translation at the Olympics and the World Cup, to the personal friendships celebrities like Yao Ming and Marlee Matlin have with their translators. The importance of good translation is most obvious when things go wrong. Here are nine examples from the book that show just how high-stakes the job of translation can be.

1. The seventy-one-million-dollar word

In 1980, 18-year-old Willie Ramirez was admitted to a Florida hospital in a comatose state. His friends and family tried to describe his condition to the

paramedics and doctors who treated him, but they only spoke Spanish. Translation was provided by a bilingual staff member who translated “intoxicado” as “intoxicated.” A professional interpreter would have known that “intoxicado” is closer to “poisoned” and doesn’t carry the same connotations of drug or alcohol use that “intoxicated” does. Ramirez’s family believed he was suffering from food poisoning. He was actually suffering from an intracerebral hemorrhage, but the doctors proceeded as if he were suffering from an intentional drug overdose, which can lead to some of the symptoms he displayed. Because of the delay in treatment, Ramirez was left quadriplegic. He received a malpractice settlement of \$71 million.

2. Your lusts for the future

When President Carter traveled to Poland in 1977, the State Department hired a Russian interpreter who knew Polish, but was not used to interpreting professionally in that language.

Through the interpreter, Carter ended up saying things in Polish like “when I abandoned the United States” (for “when I left the United States”) and “your lusts for the future” (for “your desires for the future”), mistakes that the media in both countries very much enjoyed.

3. We will bury you

At the height of the cold war, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev gave a speech in which he uttered a phrase that interpreted from Russian as “we will bury you.” It was taken as chilling threat to bury the U.S. with a nuclear attack and escalated the tension between the U.S. and Russia. However, the translation was a bit too literal. The sense of the Russian phrase was more that “we will live to see you buried” or “we will outlast you.” Still not exactly friendly, but not quite so threatening.

4. Do nothing

In 2009, HSBC bank had to launch a \$10 million rebranding campaign to repair the damage done when its catchphrase “Assume Nothing” was mistranslated as “Do Nothing” in various countries.

5. Markets tumble

A panic in the world’s foreign exchange market led the U.S. dollar to plunge in value after a poor English translation of an article by Guan Xiangdong of the China News Service zoomed around the Internet. The original article was a casual, speculative overview of some financial reports, but the English translation sounded much more authoritative and concrete.

6. What’s that on Moses’s head?

St. Jerome, the patron saint of translators, studied Hebrew so he could translate the Old Testament into Latin from the original, instead of from the third century Greek version that everyone else had used. The resulting Latin version, which became the basis for hundreds of subsequent translations, contained a famous mistake. When Moses comes down from Mount Sinai his head has “radiance” or, in Hebrew, “karan.” But Hebrew is written without the vowels, and St. Jerome had read “karan” as “keren,” or “horned.” From this error came centuries of paintings and sculptures of Moses with horns and the odd offensive stereotype of the horned Jew.

7. Chocolates for him

In the 50s, when chocolate companies began encouraging people to celebrate Valentine’s Day in Japan, a mistranslation from one company gave people the idea that it was customary for women to give chocolate to men on the holiday. And that’s what they do to this day. On February 14, the women of Japan shower their men with chocolate hearts and truffles, and on March 14 the men return the favor. An all around win for the chocolate companies!

8. You must defeat Sheng Long

In the Japanese video game Street Fighter II a character says, “if you cannot overcome the Rising Dragon Punch, you cannot win!” When this was translated from Japanese into English, the characters for “rising dragon” were interpreted as “Sheng Long.” The same characters can have different readings in Japanese, and the translator, working on a list of phrases and unaware of the context, thought a new person was being introduced to the game. Gamers went crazy trying to figure out who this Sheng Long was and how they could defeat him. In 1992, as an April Fools Day joke, Electronic Gaming Monthly published elaborate and difficult to execute instructions for how to find Sheng Long. It wasn’t revealed as a hoax until that December, after countless hours had no doubt been wasted.

9. Trouble at Waitangi

In 1840, the British government made a deal with the Maori chiefs in New Zealand. The Maori wanted protection from marauding convicts, sailors, and traders running roughshod through their villages, and the British wanted to expand their colonial holdings. The Treaty of Waitangi was drawn up and both sides signed it. But they were signing different documents. In the English version, the Maori were to “cede to Her Majesty the Queen of England absolutely and without reservation all the rights and powers of Sovereignty.” In the Maori translation, composed by a British missionary, they were not to give up sovereignty, but governance. They thought they were getting a legal system, but keeping their right to rule themselves. That’s not how it turned out, and generations later the issues around the meaning of this treaty are still being worked out.

10 Fascinating Interpreters Who Changed History

By DAVID TORMSEN | istverse.com

Published: MAY 11, 2015

The gift of gab has been invaluable throughout history, with interpreters playing a key role in war and peace throughout the ages. Often they simply fade into the background, but not always. Here are 10 interpreters that had great influence on the world.

9

Alexander Burnes



Photo via Wikipedia

A Scotsman with a natural gift for languages, Alexander Burnes immediately threw himself into the study of Hindustani and Persian after arriving in Bombay as an appointed ensign in 1821. He rose quickly through the ranks of the Indo-British administration and was appointed assistant to the Resident in Kutch, Henry Pottinger. Burnes was sent on an expedition up the Indus, the first by a Western power since Alexander the Great, in the hopes of opening those waters up to Western shipping. Rather than British troops, he took a retinue of Balochi tribesmen to conceal his purposes, and after a successful journey of 1,600 kilometers (1,000 mi), he returned to Lahore to significant acclaim. His second mission took

him through Afghanistan, Turkestan, and Iran, his account of which was entitled *Travels into Bokhara*, being an *Account of a Journey from India to Cabool, Tartary and Persia*. In 1836, Burnes was dispatched on a commercial mission to Kabul, where he was warmly welcomed by Dost Muhammad Khan, with whom he was on good terms after a previous meeting. Burnes wished to offer Khan British support, but the Amir's independence was mistrusted, and the ineffectual ex-Amir Shah Shuja was restored to the throne of Afghanistan, with William Hay Macnaghten named as chief envoy. Knighted but politically stuck as a second fiddle without much to do, Burnes made a bad reputation for himself by womanizing and throwing extravagant parties at his Kabul residence. Eventually, his home was surrounded by an angry mob and torched. Burnes was initially convinced that the Afghans would not hurt him, but while fleeing in a turban and robes, he was caught in the streets and hacked to death, the beginning of a massacre of British and Indian troops in Kabul. His will caused some controversy and embarrassment for his family, with the instructions: "I charge my father to find out a poor unfortunate misled girl whom I know in London and give her 200 pounds . . . The 'nom de guerre' of the poor demoiselle is 'Emma Graham' but this is not her true name. The mode of life will soon end her days and this legacy, if she be spared, must be paid."

EPITA PINWALL

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Our next EPITA meeting will be on:

Thursday, June 21st

The Community Room of the
El Paso Police Department
West Side Regional Command Center

6:00 PM

4801 Osborne Dr. El Paso, TX 79922

SPECIAL GUEST:

Molly D. Luevanos

LCDC and LPC-Intern at Pinnacle Social Services, provider of individual and group therapy for adolescents and adults with substance use disorders.

Practicing Self-Care for Vicarious Trauma

Working with and caring for individuals who have experienced trauma can be fulfilling; however, also carries risk for vicarious traumatization, burnout, and compassion fatigue. Engaging in regular practice of self-care is critical to ensure wellness for ourselves and continued work.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

5 Patricia Hernandez

10 Margarita Armijo

Happy Father's Day!

EPITA INFO

2017-2018 EPITA OFFICERS

President:
Valeria Delmar

Vice President:
Josefina Font

Recording Secretary:
Josefina Flores

Corresponding Secretary:
Fabiola Tortajada

Treasurer:
Mara Villanueva

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Annual CE Courses:
Margarita Armijo
Rosa Alva Garcia

Bylaws:
Ralph Garcia

Membership:
Keila Reyes

Public Relations:
Margarita Lozano

ABOUT ECHOES

ECHOES is published monthly by the El Paso Interpreters and Translators Association (**EPITA**). For information regarding membership contact the Membership Chair. For newsletter contributions, contact the Editor, Rosa Alva Garcia. Deadline for submission of articles and news is the last Saturday of the month.

EPITA is an association that promotes ongoing education and development of translators and interpreters.

EPITA, through its meetings and workshops, supports accreditation and certification programs, and engages in outreach.

Individual annual membership: \$30.00

Mission:

WHAT IS EPITA?

The goals and objectives of this professional association are: The advancement, protection and benefit of its members. To elevate the status of its members and to advance their interest. EPITA, since its inception, has found that interest in interpreting and translating has increased along with the need for continuing education. We offer monthly mini-workshops on current topics of interest and an annual conference. Participants come from a wide area surrounding El Paso, TX.

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