

# Journal des traducteurs Translators' Journal

## Technical Translation in India

Indian Institute of Science and Roger Moisan

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Canada is engaged in bringing independent groups into a single fold. ATA, on the other hand, is essentially an all-national entity already. In spite of this difference in present structure, the congress raises the question whether the unified Canada group and ATA, each on its own, are not headed for an ultimate similarity of structure, distinguished by only secondary differences.

In other words, this report proposes a basic confrontation of method in ATA development from this point forward: whether emphasis shall be laid upon the creation of highly autonomous geographical chapters — Philadelphia (Delaware Valley), NYMCATA, Pittsburgh, Washington D.C., California, etc. — and whether the approach thereby should be to achieve a 500 ATA membership quickly, with a planned evolution toward an ATA national, which, but for some members-at-large, will be a unity composed of numerous live chapters, with the ATA Board acting as elders to oversee the whole for guidance and coordination.

Discussion of planning on these lines could start now and be made the crux of the program at the 1963 Annual ATA meeting.

I shall be glad if the desirability of such discussion will be apparent to a sufficient number who will make themselves vocal so that the ideas here presented may be implemented.

(New York, May 2, 1963).



## TECHNICAL TRANSLATION IN INDIA<sup>1</sup>

The importance attached by the founders of the Institute, 50 years ago, to reference work in scientific investigations resulted in a steady flow of books and journals to its Library, not only in English but in several other European languages: German, French, Russian, Italian, etc. Those in charge of the Library made it a point to build up a large collection of specialized dictionaries and other books of linguistic importance. It can be said that today there is hardly a subject in science and technology which is not represented on the Institute Library's list of specialized dictionaries. The book capacity of the Library has grown to 81,000 volumes and 1,460 current periodicals. Of the latter, 12% are in non-English languages.

With the growing importance for technical translations, it was decided to introduce special language courses in German and French to make the scientist more self-reliant and thereby reduce the pressure on the Translation Service. Students who were found to be proficient in translation work were included on the panels of translators set up for the various departments of the Translation Service. This dual activity, translation service cum instruction, has created a new situation in a scientific institution: even with a limited understanding of the language, the student is now in a position to read abstracts or follow entire

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(1) This is a short digest of a detailed report sent to us by the Indian Institute of Science in the relatively small city of Bangalore (c. 450,000), capital of the State of Mysore, Southern India. This report should prove interesting in that it reveals the importance of translation in a new independent country wishing to match the growth of the most modern countries in the world. — *Roger MOISAN*.

proceedings in his own subject. Being familiar with the technical terms and the phraseology of his special subject, he can immediately discover a translation mistake if this appears illogical to his scientific knowledge of the subject.

A few years ago, a UNESCO report stated, "Every research scientist must be able to read papers on his subject in half a dozen languages, for abstracts are useful only as sign-posts to the paper..."

We are witnessing at present a renewed enthusiasm for learning foreign languages, now taught not only in all educational institutions, but also in special language schools equipped with language laboratories, and through broadcasting services. Numerous books are advocating new methods of learning languages as an instrument of communication, all the above-outlined schemes aim chiefly at providing the research worker with an instrument of information.

The fluctuations in the panels of voluntary student translators require a continuous training program of new recruits. However, in a university this does not present a major difficulty since there is a fresh intake of students yearly. This translation service cum instruction scheme can work *satisfactorily* only when :

(1) the class load is kept to a strict minimum, i.e. the number of students receiving language training does not exceed 50 per teacher, and (2) the students are not subjected to numerous examinations, tests, sessional work, etc.

It may be stated that this scheme works *successfully* under the following conditions :

- a) a small group of students, not exceeding 50, receive language training in a special intensive language course,
- b) the fluctuation in the panel of voluntary translators is limited,
- c) there is a high percentage of research workers in the institution,
- d) the Institute Library is well supplied with foreign journals offering good ground for language training,
- e) sufficient time is allowed for the staff of the Foreign Languages Section to revise and edit the Panel's translations.

In this scheme, 6 teaching hours per week per teacher may be considered as the critical maximum, above which a new scheme for a translation service has to be evolved.



## ¶ LE JOURNAL DES TRADUCTEURS FAIT PEAU NEUVE

(suite et fin)

### 3. Comment faut-il abréger le titre de la revue ?

D'après la documentation recueillie par M. Fortin,<sup>1</sup> il semble que la norme française exige, pour l'abréviation du titre de notre revue, une mention au complet de l'article *des* et un étoffement de *T.* (Traducteurs) en *Trad.* Ainsi, l'habitude déjà ancienne d'abréger le titre en *J. d. T.*, bien que commode et non ambiguë, ne serait pas conforme aux habitudes françaises; il faut lire *J. des Trad.*, et c'est cette abréviation qui sera désormais utilisée dans les notes, renvois en bas de page, etc. Cette décision ne règle pas le cas de *Translators' Journal*, qui n'a pas reçu jusqu'ici d'abréviation officielle. A cet égard, plusieurs lecteurs ont écrit pour demander s'il fallait que la revue comporte un titre bilingue; on nous a fait observer, ce qui est très juste, que le bilinguisme du titre

(1) Voir *J. des Trad.* 8.1 (1963), page 22.