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Don't miss critical
information about the
JLD directory in
Izumi Suzuki's
ボード便り!

Sato Wins Translation Prize!

The Donald Keene Center of Japanese Culture at Columbia University has selected Hiroaki Sato to receive the Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission Japanese Literary Translation Prize for translation of classical Japanese Literature. According to Peter Grilli, the Director of the Center, the jury was unanimous in selecting Sato's translation of *Breeze Through Bamboo: Kanshi of Ema Saiko* as the best translation of classical Japanese works submitted this year.

Hiroaki Sato is well-known to members of the Japanese Language Division. He has been a presenter at ATA conferences on multiple occasions, and has contributed articles to both the JLD times and the ATA chronicle, the most recent of these being *Haiku Refracted Through Translation*, which appeared in the May issue of the Chronicle. He has translated two dozen books of Japanese poems in English translation. *Breeze Through Bamboo*, for which this



Hiroaki Sato

prize was awarded, came out in 1997, followed a half year later by *Silk and Insight: A Novel by Mishima Yukio (Sharpe)*. He has just published another book of translation, *Rabbit of the Nether World*, a wartime memoir in prose and poems by Koyanagi Reiko (Red Moon Press). His translation of *Five Plays of Mishima Yukio* will soon be published by the University of Hawaii Press. He is currently working on an

See **Translation Prize** on Page 2

Recognizing A Translator's Voice Unique Software Meets a Professional's Needs

by Lee Seaman

Six months ago I began using voice recognition software for all of my translation work. It isn't perfect, but it has been much better than I expected. In this article I will explain why the product works well for me. I will also tell you how I think it can be useful for other translators.

My experience

I have been translating medical and pharmaceutical materials full-time for nearly 15 years. A little over five years ago I developed wrist problems that became so severe that I began using a transcriptionist. The first several months were frustrating,

because I was accustomed to editing my work as I wrote, and with a tape recorder I no longer had that option. Also, I generated only about 30 hours of transcription per month and the flow of work was irregular, which made it difficult to find or train a good transcriptionist. However, even with these problems I found that transcription was time- and cost-effective after about six months.

My husband began experimenting with voice recognition software over a year ago, and last year I decided that when my current transcriptionist retired I would switch

See **Voice Recognition** on Page 4

ボード便り

by Izumi Suzuki

今回は紙面の都合上、ごく重要な点だけまとめたいと思います。

まずボードでの話ではないのですが、直接JLDの皆様に関係しますので以下をよく注意してお読み下さい。

この次のJLDディレクトリは本部で編集すると言うことで安心しておりましたが、非常に重要なことに気付き、是非皆様の協力が不可欠です。本部でJLDディレクトリをこれまでと同様な形にまとめるにはTSD (Translation Services Directory)のデータベースを使わなければなりません。現在TSDに登録しているJLDの会員数は、160人足らずで、全体数の半分にも満たない状態です。ですから、ディレクトリに掲載をお望みの方はできるだけ早く登録をお願いします。これは無料ですし、非常によいマーケティングツールになると思います。もしプライバシーの為登録したくないと言う方は、TSDと同じ情報を本部のBacakさんにJLDディレクトリ用と明記してメール又はファックスでお送り下さい。

TSDへの登録方法ですが、www.atanet.orgに行き、TSDの所をクリックして下さい。後はそこに書いてある手順に従って記入して下さい。記入方法に付いて御質問がありましたらウェブサイトから直接本部に質問できます。その他ディレクトリに関する質問は私までどうぞ。TSDに登録なさらないと、ディレクトリには入れられませんので、是非今日直ぐに登録なさって下さい。どんなに遅くとも8月31日までをお願いします。

● この11月でミュリエル・オキーフ会長が満期になりますが、この2年間会長の指揮の下に以下が達成されました。

- 1) 投票権の改定
- 2) 認定委のリストラ
- 3) TSDの確立と実施
- 4) 本部の引越し
- 5) ATA財団の設置
- 6) 会員調査の実施と集計
- 7) その他

● ボードでは会員によるATAロゴの使用を促進することを決定。詳細は今後クロニクルに掲載されます。

● 海外における認定試験について活発な意見交換が行われました。ボードの方針は今後発表されます。

● アンケート調査に対し、なぜ支払いが要するのかと言う疑問がJLD会員より出ていましたので、質問しました。まず、全体的な統計結果はクロニクルに発表されますので、これはもちろん無料です。詳しい結果については調査会社に支払った費用の一部回復に充てるため、会員に支払いをお願いしているとのことです。

● 今年の会議はセントルイスで11月3～6日です。マクファーレン副会長と本部の多大な努力により、会議のプログラムが早々と刷り上がりました。もう直ぐ皆様のお手元に届くと思いますので、じっくり検討して会議出席の予定を立てて下さい。なお、来年の会議はオーランドで、9月20～23日と例年より早めですので、頭に入れてお

て下さい。

以上、御報告致します。なお、内容についてご質問があたりの方は是非ご連絡下さい。

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Izumi Suzuki is an interpreter and a translator, ATA-accredited in both directions

between Japanese and English. Izumi and her husband

Steve Myers operate Suzuki-Myers Associates, Ltd. in Novi Michigan. Izumi is a member of the board of directors of the ATA, and is the Assistant administrator of the Japanese Language Division.



In the next JLD Times ...

Masaki Itagaki and Takashi Kosaka wrote an excellent article on software localization for the May issue of *The ATA Chronicle*. Don't miss the sequel in the next JLD Times.

Translation Prize (from page 1)

anthology of Japanese women poets from ancient to modern times for North Point Press. Many JLD members will remember his presentation on a related topic at the 1994 ATA conference in Austin, Texas. That presentation, entitled *Japanese Women Poets: Beyond Stereotypes*, was reviewed for the *JLD*

Times by Kyoko Saegusa.

This \$2,500 prize, which is awarded annually for the translation of classical Japanese literature, will be presented at an award presentation ceremony to be held early next year. To qualify for the prize, works must be book-length translations of Japanese work: novels, collections of short stories, literary essays, memoirs, drama or poetry. Submissions are judged

on literary merit of the translation, and the accuracy with which it reflects the spirit of the Japanese original. The winner is selected by a jury of translators and editors who are appointed by the Donald Keene Center.

The *JLD Times* is very proud to congratulate Mr. Sato on behalf of the Japanese Language Division.

JLD Times

**JLD Times Newsletter of the
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of the
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From the Administrator

Jon Johanning



Now that the ATA Board has adopted a new peer review process for active membership, it may be a good time to look back at the old route to active membership, accreditation. Does the test procedure currently used for accreditation accurately reflect the day-to-day work of professional translators?

On Honyaku, the other day, David Olson provided us with the URL of a philosophical essay on translation by Doug Robertson (<http://cc.uab.es/~iuts0/invisible.html>), in which this question is forcefully raised. Robertson, a Finnish translator, says that he has argued in the Accreditation Committee for several years that a test which requires the examinees to sit in a room with pencils and dictionaries and translate passages by themselves, without access to the Internet and the ability to confer with colleagues by fax or e-mail, is nowhere near an accurate reflection of current translation activity, and that the accreditation test is therefore obsolete in its present form.

The answer he always receives, he says, to this objection is that “we have to make sure everybody is doing their own work! Otherwise, examinees could cheat!” He replies that this concept of cheating is itself foreign to practical translation work today. Extensive networking to produce the best possible translations, he says, is an everyday practice. “In the marketplace, this is called professionalism. In the accreditation exam, it is called cheating.”

This is an interesting argument, but so far I am not quite persuaded that we need to equip the accreditation exam rooms with laptops and Net access just yet. The basic question, as I see it, is whether the accreditation exam is really intended to be an exact copy of the day-to-day translation workplace.

I think that this gets back to the basic purpose of the ATA accreditation program, which was essentially intended to be a way of determining who was qualified for active membership and who wasn't. All that is needed is that the examinee demonstrate that she or he has the basic knowledge and ability that the association expects its active members to have, and the traditional pencil-and-paper test can serve that purpose.

This is one reason why we always insist that ATA accreditation is not at all the same thing as “translator certification.” Actual professional ability, as Robertson insists, involves many skills besides those called upon in the accreditation exam, including the ability to judge one's own competency for taking on specific jobs, the ability to work cooperatively with clients as well as with colleagues and other helpers, the ability to turn out work of good quality and within deadlines over the long haul, the ability to seek out unconventional sources of information, and the willingness to educate oneself in both language and subject matter over the span of one's whole career. A fair test of all this would be a much more elaborate ordeal than the accreditation exam!

If a realistic test of the candidate's whole professional performance were what was needed for accreditation as an active member, then it might be better to use some sort of peer review, in which the actual performance of the candidate-at-work would be somehow scrutinized by other members of the profession, as the sole qualification for all members. Of course, I am not prepared to argue for taking this route at this point, but I would like to stimulate your thinking about what qualities we are really asking for in active members, and what are the best ways of demonstrating those qualities.

Voice Recognition (from page 1)

to voice recognition software rather than training another part-time person. I began planning for the change in September, and made the switch in November of 1998.

My first step was to study the available software. I decided to use Dragon Naturally Speaking ("NatSpeak"), partly because Dragon Systems has been in the voice recognition business for a number of years and has a good reputation, but mostly because my husband was already familiar with the program. Other companies also provide high-quality voice recognition software, including ViaVoice by IBM, which I know only by reputation. My comments here will be based on NatSpeak, but I will provide information on user mailing lists and web sites in a separate box for readers who wish to find out more about other software packages.

According to the advertisements, my computer had just enough RAM for the software package I wanted. However, comments from actual users suggested that I needed a much more powerful system. Since time is money in our business, I decided to save money by buying a new computer, a Pentium II 300 MHz processor with 128 MB of RAM, and installing NatSpeak Preferred under Windows 95. I was so happy with the results that I decided to save more money two months later by upgrading to a 400 MHz processor and 256 MB of RAM.

Resources

<http://www.dragonsys.com>
<http://www.dragonsys.ca/docs/hardware.htm>

<http://www.pcspeak.com/hints.htm>
medspeech@list.sirius.com (a mailing list primarily for physicians and vendors; you can drop a note to the moderator, "John Leipsic" <drjohn@sirius.com> to subscribe)

<http://www.mtmeetingplace.com>
(web site for medical transcriptionists and other voice recognition users)



Lee Seaman began the study of Japanese as a college exchange student at Waseda University in 1968, and then returned to live and work in Japan from 1971 to 1981. She has been translating medical and pharmaceutical documents as a full-time freelance for nearly 15 years. For health and sanity maintenance, she practices and teaches the soft martial art of Shintaido (新体道) including 棒術 (quarterstaff) and 木刀.

In February I also upgraded my software to NatSpeak Professional. (At that point my husband pointed out that we couldn't afford to save any more money, so further upgrades are on hold. However, voice recognition technology is still in its infancy, and new hardware comes out every day, so be warned - there is considerable risk of upgrade fever.)

I planned on three months to learn the program and regain my former level of productivity. It actually took two months, which was a pleasant surprise.

I think one of the reasons I have been pleased was that I did not expect too much from the program. (In fact, I expected it to be a lot of trouble, just like any new and complicated software. And of course it is.)

The technology, in my experience, is not yet as reliable as a good transcriptionist. For one thing, it makes some whopping errors. (My recent favorites are "fatal signs" instead of "vital signs," "vacuum nation" for "vacuolation," and "minced rating" for "menstruating".)

There are several advantages, though. One is that if I take the time to train the software as I go, I only have to spell any word once (including the names of bacteria, as long as I don't forget the pronunciations). Another is that the software is available day and night, so I don't have to work around a transcriptionist's schedule. The third is that

I can proofread as I go (hard to do with a tape recorder), which saves editing time and improves accuracy. And the fourth is that I don't have to train or pay a transcriptionist.

Things that make it easier

So maybe at this point you're thinking voice recognition could be a useful tool for you. Here's some advice.

First, use a good microphone. NatSpeak Preferred, priced at about \$200, comes with a serviceable microphone, but it is less comfortable and less accurate than the one provided with NatSpeak Professional (about \$600). You can buy a high-quality microphone alone for around \$80 (mine is a Parrot, but there are other good ones), without investing in the professional version of the software.

Second, optimize your computer for voice recognition. NatSpeak has its own simple word processor which works quite well at 300 MHz and 128 MB, but that configuration is glacially slow when running NatSpeak inside MSWord. With 256 MB of RAM and a 400 MHz chip, the delays are no longer irritating. I also paid extra for a Soundblaster sound card, which is one of several that Dragon recommends. (Turtle Beach is also supposed to be good.) From what I read on mailing lists, cheap sound cards can cause a lot

of problems. Life is too short to be that frustrated.

Third, train the program thoroughly. In addition to reading at least one of the long training passages when I first set up the program, I also read a short one every day or two before starting dictation. (I got that hint from a site connected to Dragon's web site, and it has really helped.)

Fourth, speak clearly. Not slowly, but make the consonants particularly clear. I taught English in Japan for several years, and that experience has come in handy. It's not necessary for every user to be a retired English teacher, but if you will be using the program a lot and are having problems it may be worthwhile to bring in a voice coach for one or two lessons on-site.

Fifth, take the time to train words as they come up, rather than just type them in and go on. It's slower in the short run, but training the program really improves recognition. (And back up your speech files REGULARLY onto some sort of removable medium like a zip drive—a floppy disk is too small—because those speech files soon represent literally hours of training.)

I am happy with NatSpeak Professional, even though it was significantly more expensive than NatSpeak Preferred. Professional has a large medical vocabulary, will allow me to write macros when I get around to it, and permits the addition of special medical modules sold by Dragon Dictate and third-party developers for about \$300 per module (as soon as I can afford to save more money, that is).

Things that make it harder

One of the reasons that I am pleased with voice recognition is that my other

options were expensive, unpleasant, and time-consuming. So I was highly motivated to make it work. But the technology is far from perfect. I think it would be particularly frustrating for translators who:

- Already have a completely satisfactory transcriptionist
- Expect to talk to the computer as if it were a transcriptionist
- Intend to use the software with a tape recorder
- Plan to run the software on an under-powered machine
- Have no difficulty in typing and no experience with dictation
- Try to use the software immediately under deadline pressure
- Try to use a computer with an unapproved sound card
- Do not speak clearly
- Are unwilling to train the program
- Cannot afford a few months of reduced income

Things that will make it easier in the future

This technology is changing rapidly, with new microphones coming out almost every month. For example, the new USB microphone technology makes sound cards unnecessary, an advantage for people who use more than one computer. There are also wireless microphones and directional noise-canceling microphones coming onto the market. As the hardware technology improves, accuracy will increase and prices will probably go down.

The new Pentium III chip (Katmai) is supposed to be optimized for voice recognition, which will increase processing speed and cut the time for initial training (from 18 to 2 minutes

according to Dragon Systems). When the next generation of software written for the new chip becomes available this year or early next year, I expect to see voice recognition become much more widely used.

My recommendations

Voice recognition works well for me because I have been dictating my translations for several years, I speak clearly, and I don't mind training (and being trained by) my machine. I was also able to invest in a new computer with enough power to run the program efficiently. Even though I ended up spending over twice as much as I originally planned, I expect the new system to pay for itself by mid-summer.

If your situation is similar to mine and you want to use voice recognition full-time, I recommend a high-end program like NatSpeak Professional. Study the options, get an adequate system, subscribe to some mailing lists, budget enough time for training, and dive in.

If you don't want to commit to using the program all the time but would like to play with it, check out the system requirements and keep them in mind for your next computer upgrade. Then get a copy of NatSpeak Preferred or a similar competitor, and try it out in your spare time or on some translation work when you are not under a deadline. (I understand that the most recent versions of NatSpeak Preferred and ViaVoice work within email programs, too.)

If you think the technology is interesting but not quite ready for "prime time" in your office, stay tuned. There are a lot more developments in the offing.

Do you like the appearance of this issue of the JLD Times? We owe it all to the good work of Monica Hardesty (aka Manako Ihaya), who worked with Hideki Ishii on layout, and did the lion's share of the editing. Monica brings good experience to this task, having done similar work for the Japan Times Weekly before she moved to the States. At our request, she also wrote the excellent report on the

recent IJET-10 conference that appears in this issue. More information about Monica is included with that article. A brand new member of the JLD, Monica has made it clear that she intends to be actively involved. If her duties as translator and mother of four permit, we hope to see more of Monica's work from time to time in future issues of the JLD Times.

Live Music and Translators

IJET-10 in Austin, Texas

by Manako Ihaya

On the weekend of May 15 and 16, the streets of Austin, Texas, were devoid of business traffic as music escaped from music clubs, locals and tourists casually walked about town, horse-drawn carriages carried happy families and ...a horde of translators made a one-hour trek out of the downtown area in hot, humid weather.

When not wandering outside, the 91 participants of IJET-10 stayed in the cool confines of the Omni Austin Hotel to learn and debate about, among other things, technical advances in machine translation and voice recognition software, and the implications of such software to our livelihood as translators. Of course, some cared less about such worldly matters as they engaged in sessions about poetry, anime, and the origins of the Japanese language.

For me, IJET-10 represented my first opportunity to meet translators from around the world in person, my first chance to match faces to names that I have known for more than two years now through the active virtual community that is the HONYAKU mailing list. Would their physiques match their on-line personalities? Would some of them chew me up mercilessly in person as they sometimes do in cyberspace?

So when I spotted a group of people conversing in Japanese just outside the airport, I had no idea that the nice, smiling, white-bearded gentleman to whom I ventured to ask, "Is this the IJET gang?" was the venerable Mr. Bill Lise himself.

"Yes, it is," he said, "Bill Lise-desu. Dozo yoroshiku," or something like that. I was totally taken aback that the person who always seemed to get on my case (and others') for working through agencies, the patent profes-

sional who wrote Chapter 5 of ATA's Patent Translation Handbook, was standing in front of me in the form of a jolly grandfather. But apparently, the surprise worked both ways.

"It's amazing how people come out so differently online," said Bill, as 10 of us tried to squeeze into the shuttle to our hotel. I wondered aloud if I would fit in. "Not if you were anything like I imagined," quipped Bill, who thought I was a much older, larger woman. But thankfully, I was small enough to make it to the hotel with the rest of the gang.

The eve of the big conference was celebrated by some 58 IJET participants and their spouses and significant others at the Copper Tank, four blocks from the hotel. The food, aptly, was Tex-Mex fajitas served buffet style. I concentrated on eating, trying to live up to Bill's image of me. So I did not try the variety of their delicious original brews tried and tested by Austin locals Jenny Nazak and Adam Rice, who arranged the place for us on top of

organizing the IJET conference itself along with other locals, Greg Moore,



Above from left, Shelly Orr Priebe (Texas), Megan Parsons (Wisconsin), Manako Ihaya (California), Aki Ando (New York) and Yukari Miyamae (Colorado); below from left, Shinji Nakano (Illinois), Gerry Gooding (California), Sue Nakano (Illinois) and John Loftus (U.K).



Robert Meadows and Steve Zaveloff. But the delightful effects of the amber liquids were being felt at the table where I joined my neighbors Gerry and Aiko Gooding from California,

Kathleen Taji and now my friend, Bill Lise, to whom I couldn't help but ask, "So, I came across as someone who's old and wise?"

"No," Bill replied firmly, with a smile. "Old and confident."

Right, Kathleen Taji (Hachioji, Japan) and Atsushi Tomii (Tokyo, Japan); below, Aiko Gooding (California) and Mayumi Nishioka (Wakayama, Japan); bottom, Izumi Suzuki (Michigan) and Hiro Tsuchiya (Illinois)



knew and revered on-line came alive in person. But hey, he was still charming us all with the twinkles in his eyes. If only such non-verbal communication also was made on-line!

Soon, the five of us wised up and decided the rest of the Friday evening could be better spent at a jazz club. It was none other than our editor Gerry Gooding, author/coordinator of the ATA Patent Handbook, who seemed most enthused about this aspect of IJET-10 being held in

Austin, dubbed the music capitol of the world. Having obtained jazz information beforehand on the IJET mailing list - the first mailing list exclusively for IJET participants and highly successful in helping us make pre-conference arrangements - Gerry led us along the streets of downtown Austin to a jazz club called Elephant Room, in the basement below Kyoto, a Japanese restaurant that had long since closed for the night.

The night, however, was just beginning for us as we were re-energized by the powerful live music of instrumental and vocal jazz. It must have been past midnight when we finally emerged from the basement onto the street, where

casually dressed people still merrily walked about and socialized, while part of the street was safely blocked from traffic. The scene was so inviting but, alas, we had our conference to attend in the morning.

(There are confirmed reports that an even bigger outing took place the following night, with some participants staying out well past 2 a.m. I opted for a good night's sleep. Bill must be right: I must be getting old.)

At the conference, I heard good news spoken by representatives from Austin's own agencies—Adams Translation Services and Ralph McElroy Translation Company—that they've seen nothing but expansion in the translation business in the past 35 years, and that translation tools actually enhance our profession. Tanya Sobieski—who did an amazing impersonation of a Japanese airline stewardess—taught me that sight translation, and using voice recognition software, had an additional benefit of producing a clearer translation by forcing the dictator to come up with sentences that actually make sense. I felt compelled to rush out to the store for this and other tools we simply had to have! OK, maybe that wasn't too wise.

Mutsuyo Unger's delightful presentation on "Putting your best foot forward with new clients" was an eye-opener for me, who had no idea that what colors you put on had such different effects on what others think of you. I think I'll go and get my colors done (here I go again). I enjoyed legendary Tomii-sensei's "All about Japanese-English/English-Japanese technical translations" compressed into 75 minutes. Had I done my assigned homework and had my copy of ATA Patent Handbook arrived in time, I also would probably have gained much from Gerry's and Bill's "Patent workshop." I was, however, overcome by a sense of helplessness surrounded by other patent pros who obviously knew what was going on. I took refuge down the hallway at Eric Selland's poetry session.

Then, hoping to get an insider's look at the translation of the anime world where my 12-year-old daughter is held captive, I listened to some



Ouch. So I'm not so wise. Just an over-confident woman who should probably keep her mouth shut (or refrain from pushing the "send" button too often). The Mr. Bill Lise I

See **IJET-10** on Page 9

by Eric Selland

Book Review: *Shredding the Tapestry of Meaning—The Poetry and Poetics of Kitasono Katue (1901 ~ 1978)*, by John Solt, Published by the Harvard University Asia Center and distributed by Harvard University Press, 1999, 395 pages, \$49.50 cloth, ISBN 0-674-80733-2. (Available on amazon.com)

Occasionally a book arrives that changes everything. Less, perhaps, in presenting something totally new, than in revealing that which had remained hidden, or forgotten. John Solt's biography and extended literary analysis of the life's work of Kitasono Katue, a major practitioner of avant-garde poetic forms from the 1920s to the 1970s, does just that. First in offering up the newest in that short list of very rare full-length studies of a modern Japanese poet, and second in its having laid open a forgotten history of dynamic artistic and literary development, as well as cultural exchange. A history, moreover, which intersects with our own, as becomes evident in the lengthy chapter on Kitasono's many years of correspondence with Ezra Pound.

Kitasono Katue (Solt uses the Francophile spelling preferred by Kitasono himself in his dealings with foreign poets) originally wanted to become a painter, but after a literary friendship and time spent in Tokyo, broiling with new ideas and a cosmopolitan lifestyle (Hirato Renkichi published his Japanese Futurist manifesto in 1921), Kitasono decided to become a poet. By 1924 he had become involved with a group of young poets publishing Japan's first Dadaist magazine, *Ge.Gjmgjgam*. *Prrr.Gjmgem*, thus beginning his many years of involvement with

iconoclastic new forms. The new magazine introduced sound poems, dadaist absurdities and work harkening the eventual development of Surrealism in Japan. One more very important characteristic of the magazine was the introduction of the usage of katakana words in poetry. Foreign words and images were used liberally, appearing both in katakana script and the alphabet. We tend to be non-plussed now about these graphical innovations due to the common use of foreign loan words and Romanized script in the Japanese of the present, but at that time it was revolutionary, and would even become dangerous by the late 1930s with the rise of militarism.

Kitasono went on to write Surrealist poems, such as appear in his 1929 collection *Shiro no Arubamu*, and in the 1930s became the main mover of the VOU club, an experimental group through which he introduced his own poetic theories such as "ideoplasty." It was at this time the correspondence with Pound began, and Pound eagerly promoted Kitasono and VOU in Europe and the United States, connecting Kitasono's ideoplasty with his own ideogrammatic theory in *Guide to Kulchur* (1938). The VOU poets were given an introduction by Pound and published in a London magazine in 1938. Kitasono provided his own translations of his work, a few lines of which appear below:

In leaden slippers I laugh at the fountain of night, and scorn a solitary swan.

A parasol of glass she spreads, and wanders along the lane the cosmos flowering.

Over the cypress tree I image, to

myself, a hotel marked with two golf-clubs crossed;
And move my camera on the sand of night.

[Excerpt from "Glass Coil" as originally published in *Townsmen*, Jan. 1, 1938]

Kitasono carried out intensive exchanges with Pound and other Western poets during this period, and remade contact with the West after the war in the form of contacts with Charles Olson, Robert Creeley, Kenneth Rexroth and others. Robert Creeley even asked him to provide the cover drawings for the first few issues of the *Black Mountain Review*.

Rather than settling on one fixed form once found, as has been the case with many Japanese poets of the same period (including those who later lapsed into free-verse sentimentalism after an initial experimental phase), Kitasono went from one experiment to the next. After the war he introduced concrete poetry, then published a series of books each taking a further step toward the complete dislocation (or indeterminacy) of meaning, and finally attempted the leap beyond language itself in his

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production of what he called “plastic poems,” poems without words in which he utilized photography and design elements. Kitasono can almost be considered Japan’s first Post-Modernist in his willful ignoring of the boundaries between genres, levels of speech, and conventional meaning formation.

Solt explains in his introduction that his approach is a historical one, rather than one whose purpose is to advocate any particular literary theory, however, he does make use of the ideas of important theorists on the international 20th century avant-garde such as Marjorie Perloff, especially in his interpretations of Kitasono’s post-war work. More importantly, Solt’s study offers an exposition of Japanese avant-garde practice through much of this century which serves to tear away the imposition of Western generated Orientalist exoticisms often overlaid on the more immediate intellectual and social realities of Japan.

The representation of Japanese literature in this country has often been effected by those more concerned with appropriating an overly idealized version of Zen and haiku for their own ideological purposes within a social and political milieu very different from Japan’s than in understanding the actual historical experience of a non-Western people in their coming to terms with the ideas and realities of their own times. Solt’s book gives us one of the rare looks at actual Japanese concerns within the poetic practice of the 20th century through the eyes of a Japanese poet, hence giving us a much needed breath of fresh air. The appendices, notes and bibliography give the serious reader important source information for further study.

It is hoped that this will open the way to more research on the development of Japanese poetic practice, as well as other Japanese arts and intellectual trends of this century. It seems to me that there is much more

creative potential for poets in this country in the consideration of the transformational processes involved in this period of intensive cultural cross-pollination, in the various acts of translation, literary readings and creative misreadings, than in the continued reliance on older, and often artificially exotic images invented by previous generations of Westerners with less of an opportunity to come into contact with the real thing.

Note: John Solt’s translations of Kitasono Katue’s poetry are also available under the title *Glass Beret*, Morgan Press, 1995, 2979 S. 13th Street, Milwaukee, WI, 53215.

Eric Selland is an independent translator working and living near San Francisco. His primary interest is in translating Japanese literature as well as writing poetry, but he pays the bills by translating in the fields of business, finance and some technical subjects.



IJET-10 (from page 7)

amusing tales of how Michael House and Shin Kurokawa collaborated to translate silly Japanese puns into English. And then it was time to get serious. I diligently participated in Izumi Suzuki’s ATA accreditation test workshop, hoping to pass the exam the very next day, after the conference was over. So by the time you read this, if you don’t see the happy ATA accreditation mark next to my name on the Translation Services Directory on the ATA web site, you will all know that I have miserably failed the test....

But fail me the IJET-10 conference did not. Saturday night’s cocktail buffet held at the hotel’s front lounge provided me with another chance to get to know fellow trans-

lators in person. Some of us dressed our best for the occasion, topped by the kimono worn by Mayumi Nishioka, who was promoting next year’s IJET-2000 to be held in Kyoto. Maynard Hogg was seen everywhere snapping away digital photos now available on his web site: <http://www2.gol.com/users/maynard/ijet99-plain.htm>.

Even as the conference drew to a close, we were still full of energy as Jenny and Adam invited us to their house in what turned out to be a one-hour trek cutting across the University of Texas in the relentless late afternoon heat of Austin. The locals must have wondered where the pilgrimage that involved at least three dozen old and young people of American, Japanese and other nationalities was heading. Needless to say, the beers graciously served

at the house tasted especially good. Even the tap water was great! There we were truly able to relax as we dug into our pizzas and talked away well into the night. Thank you so much to the IJET-10 organizing committee. I couldn’t have had a better time.

Manako Ihaya, who recently became an ATA member, also goes by the name Monica Hardesty. Manako’s (or, Monica’s) identity crisis started when she was young, being brought up both in Japan and the United States. After a stint as a staff writer for The Japan Times Weekly, she now takes advantage of her double identity by translating in Japanese and in English mainly in business and legal fields.



Words and 言葉

by Jim Davis

In this column I present sample passages that may be of interest to translators who work with Japanese and English. This segment deals with some of the characteristics of satellite telecommunication. I encourage the reader to translate the passage without looking at the remainder of the column and then compare the resulting translation with the one given below. Comments and suggestions for future segments are always welcome. Please send them to jdavis@engr.wisc.edu.

衛星通信の特徴

(1) 広域性、同報性

衛星通信は、指向性の強いアンテナを使用することにより、直径数百 km の比較的狭い範囲をサービス対象地域とすることもできるが、静止軌道から地球を見おろした場合の可視範囲である地球全表面積の約 3 分の 1 に達するきわめて広い範囲をサービス対象地域とすることができる。衛星通信ではこのような広域性を生かした同報通信が可能であり、VSAT システムなどにおいて実現されている。

(2) 広帯域性

衛星通信では、C バンド、Ku バンド、Ka バンドなどの高い周波数帯の電波を使用することから、大容量伝送が可能である。すなわち、1 本のトランスポンダから数千の電話回線が設定できるという数の効果のみならず、映像伝送などの大容量を要する通信が可能であり、映像通信ネットワークの構築に資することが期待される。

静止軌道 geostationary/geosynchronous orbit

VSAT Very Small Aperture Terminal

広帯域性 broad bandwidth

映像伝送 transmission of video
資する to contribute to

One of the most important elements of technical translation is knowing when to rely on a reference and when to use one's own judgement. In the very first section heading we encounter the word 広域性. One dictionary that I consulted gave the meaning "broad spectrum." If we interpret this to mean "wide area" or "wide range" we are in good shape, but use of the word "spectrum" in this context would be a mistake. Given the topic of this essay we could translate the heading as "Ability to broadcast over a wide area." In the first sentence we find a contrast between the relatively narrow range obtained through the use of a 指向性の強いアンテナ, which would be a "highly directional antenna," and the extremely broad range obtained when making full use of the 静止軌道. The latter term looks as though it should be simply "stationary orbit," but in fact the correct term would be either "geostationary orbit" or "geosynchronous orbit." Since we are dealing with a communication satellite (or broadcast satellite), we can treat the phrase 静止軌道から地球を見おろした場合の可視範囲 literally and describe it as "the range visible when looking down upon the earth from a geostationary orbit," or we can refer to the "footprint of a satellite in geostationary orbit." If we choose the shorter alternative, the first

sentence might read as follows: "Satellite telecommunication can provide service over a relatively narrow range—a diameter of several hundred kilometers—through the use of a highly directional antenna. However, it can also provide service over an extremely wide range, extending to approximately 1/3 of the entire surface of the earth. This is the footprint of a satellite in geostationary orbit."

The verb 生かす (sometimes written 活かす) has several meanings, but it generally indicates that someone is "making good use of" or "making the most of" something. In the second sentence we encounter the phrase 広域性を生かした同報通信, which combines the two characteristics expressed in the section heading. We also find the verb 実現す

る. The simplest translation would be "to realize" in the sense "to make real" or "to make concrete." The translation of 実現する has been discussed numerous times in on-line mailing lists; other possible translations include "to achieve" or "to obtain." In this case we are clearly dealing with a system that has been 実現されている, so the second sentence could read: "With satellite telecommunication it is possible to broadcast to many sites simultaneously, making good use of this ability to cover a wide area. This has already been realized/achieved with systems such as VSAT."

The second section is devoted to

One of the most important elements of technical translation is knowing when to rely on a reference and when to use one's own judgement.

See **Words and 言葉** on Page 11

Review

by Diane Howard

Earl Milner, Hiroko Odagiri, and Robert E. Morrell. *The Princeton Companion to Classical Japanese Literature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985. 570 pages. ISBN 0-691-00825-6.

Occasionally, even when doing technical translation, a passage will come up that requires familiarity with the Japanese cultural tradition. For anyone with a good Japanese education, this may not present much of a problem. For many non-native speakers, it does. The *Princeton Companion* can be described as a very complete cheat-sheet to Japanese literature and cultural allusions for those moments when a translator is feeling her lack of a classical education.

In the *Preface*, the authors explain that the *Princeton Companion* began as a collection of essays on Japanese literature, but as the contributors realized that other works covered the intended topics, they changed focus and give the book its published form, which is essentially a 570-page set of

lists. These begin after a brief overview of Japanese literature.

The first set of lists deal with chronologies and include the periods of Japanese history and the regnal and era names, in both *kanji* and *romaji*. They are followed by a section on *Major Authors and Works*, a listing of over 300 authors and more than 100 titles. Again, entries are given in *kanji* and *romaji* and are followed by dates and either a biography or a discussion of an individual work that may continue for more than one double-column page.

The works and authors are followed by a glossary of literary terms that is set up in the same way as the previous section. The terms range from the reasonably obscure (粹, as used by shitamachi geisha between 1804 and 1840), and things one occasionally needs to know, such as the 一〇八 order (the accompanying poem is included in six versions). Part Five provides lists of terms associated with the major forms of theater and includes labeled diagrams of different types of stages. This is followed by *Collections, Kinds, Criticism; Buddhism and Confucianism; Dictionaries*, which contains fourteen sets of lists having to do with these topics.

Chapter 7 covers time, directions,

annual celebrations, and various symbolism related to these. It includes terms having to do with the zodiac, associations of direction, images, and times, and a very complete list of traditional annual observances. The next chapter is *Geography, Maps, Poetic Place Names*. Here one can find the names of the provinces in any given era, their sinified-shû names, should the need ever arise, and the names of the principal mountains, rivers, bays, and straits.

Time and place being covered, the *Companion* then moves on to people: their ranks, offices, and titles, tables of the four classes of officials, and lists of the regents, chancellors, cloistered sovereigns, and shoguns. It then goes on to “architecture; clothing, armor, and arms; illustrated popular books and other genre representatives.” This section is very well illustrated. The palaces are labeled in *kanji* with translations, different types of court dress are illustrated, the *kanji* for all the different parts of a bow are given. In short, the *Princeton Companion* is a treasure chest of trivia that might just come in handy.

Diane Howard is a freelance translator working from Chinese and Japanese into English. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin, in an apartment that is (we hear) overrun with reference books. Diane specializes in medical and technical documents.

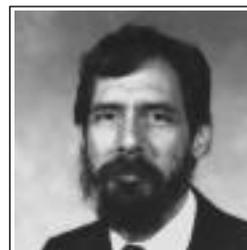
Words and 言葉 (from page 10)

“broad bandwidth” and is more straightforward. The first sentence might read as follows: “Because satellite telecommunication utilizes signals in a high frequency band—such as C band, Ku band, or Ka band—it is possible to transmit a large quantity of information.” It is worth remembering that 伝送 is almost always “transmission,” while 転送 could be “transfer,” “transmission,” or even “forwarding,” depending upon the context. The final sentence refers to a 数の効果, which is literally a “number/count effect”

but could be an “effect of scale,” and to 電話回線, which would simply be “telephone circuits.” Although 回路 is used for “circuit” when describing a path for the flow of electricity, 回線 is normally used for “circuit” or “line” when dealing with a communication path. Thus, we may encounter terms such as 論理回路 (“logic circuit”) and 専用回線 (“leased line”). The final sentence could be translated: “Not only is there an effect of scale, whereby several thousand telephone circuits can be established from one transponder, but communication that

requires a large data-handling capacity—such as the transmission of video—is also possible. It is expected that this will contribute to the establishment of video-based telecommunication networks.”

Jim Davis is Associate Professor and Director, Technical Japanese Program, Department of Engineering Professional Development, University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is a past administrator of the Japanese Language Division of the ATA.



Election of Japanese Language Division Officers

by Jim Davis, Chairman of the Nominating Committee

Our Division is led by officers whose terms extend for two years, beginning and ending at an Annual Meeting of the Division, which is held at the ATA Annual Conference. The terms of our current officers—Jon Johanning (Administrator) and Izumi Suzuki (Assistant Administrator)—will expire at the St. Louis conference, and it is time to determine the officers who will guide the activities of the Japanese Language Division for the next two years. I am pleased to report that both Jon and Izumi are willing to continue in their current positions. Jon and Izumi are well known to most JLD members, and we are fortunate that they have agreed to continue working for the Division. Campaign statements by both candidates appear below.

I encourage all Division members to read the campaign statements. Ballots will be mailed to all Voting Members of the JLD in September. I encourage all Voting Members to return their ballots promptly using the envelope that will be enclosed with the ballot. The bylaws of the Division state that, "Only active members of the Association who are accredited in Japanese-English, English-Japanese, or other language pairs including Japanese, or who have achieved active status through the Active Member Review process in Japanese-English, English-Japanese or other language pairs including Japanese, will be considered Voting Members."

This is a good opportunity to encourage those JLD members who are currently Associate Members of the ATA to consider upgrading their membership status to Active Member. An Active Member has the right to vote in

Division and ATA elections and also has the right to hold office in the JLD or in the ATA. John Bukacek, who led the JLD for the first six years of its existence, served as a Director of the ATA for several years, and Izumi Suzuki is currently a member of the ATA Board. Until now the ATA accreditation exams in Japanese-to-English and English-to-Japanese have been the common mechanism for obtaining Active Member status. However, many capable and experienced translators have elected not to pursue this route, and remain Associate Members. The ATA Board recently modified the peer review process to make it easier for a "typical" translator to obtain Active

Member status via the peer review process. The new policy on peer review and the options by which a person may obtain Active Member status are summarized on pages 14 and 16 of the May 1999 issue of The ATA Chronicle. The new options are a great improvement over the previous ones, and bring Active Member status within the reach of the vast majority of JLD members. I encourage all Active Members of the JLD to return their ballots for the current JLD election and I encourage all Associate Members to investigate becoming Active Members (either by accreditation or via peer review) so that many more JLD members will be able to participate when the next JLD election rolls around.

Statement by Jon Johanning, candidate for reelection as JLD Administrator



As always, the ATA is growing and evolving, with new divisions arising and membership criteria changing. I would like to continue trying my best to help our Division maintain its traditional position as a leader in the Association. The introduction to translation handbook is nearly ready for publication, and I will be looking forward to our next project.

Statement by Izumi Suzuki, candidate for reelection as Assist. Administrator



As the current Assistant Administrator, I have worked on the '98-'99 JLD directory (including the errata sheet that was distributed early this year). ATA Headquarters will start producing the JLD directory beginning this year. I will continue to be in contact with Alan Melby, who has prepared the entire membership database, to ensure that future JLD directories will maintain the same high quality and format.

It has been a pleasure to work for the JLD; I would like to continue as the Assistant Administrator while I serve on the ATA Board.

Can you make a web page for the JLD?
Please contact Gerry Gooding at
'gooding@ieee.org.'