

## Re: Fascinating book ...

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**From:** necoandjeff (*spam\_at\_schrepfer.com*)

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Travers Naran wrote:

> *Kevin Wayne Williams wrote:*

>> *Paul Blay wrote:*

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>>

>>> *Basically (as far as page 46 anyway ;-) it's about things like the traps of literal translations, the importance of considering the background, why it's 'inadvisable' to do a 'two phase'\* translation without*

>>> *having the original work to look at and such.*

>>>

>>> *\* e.g. English -> Dodgy Japanese (by English speaker)*

>>> *Dodgy Japanese -> Good Japanese (by Japanese speaker)*

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>> *Just went through a similarly painful exercise: couldn't find an English to Spanish translator, so I used a English to Dutch translator and a Dutch to Spanish translator for my employee's contracts. I gave the Dutch to Spanish translator the original English to use as a reference, but judging from the long negotiation sessions with my staff, it didn't help much. Unfortunately, the only legally binding version is the Dutch one, which neither me nor my staff can read.*

>

> *I read that when Commodore Perry steamed into Tokyo Bay, they had to negotiate the treaty by way of Portuguese translators (Japanese -> Portuguese -> English).*

A famous mistranslation occurred with the Treaty of Peace and Amity signed in 1854. Section 11 of the English provided:

"There shall be appointed, by the Government of the United States, Consuls or Agents to reside in Simoda, at any time after the expiration of eighteen months from the date of the signing of this treaty, provided that either of the two Governments deem such arrangement necessary."

The Japanese translation provided:

sci.lang.japan: Re: Fascinating book ...

\$BQ@T"@/I\%K1w%FL5Z!57M-G78u;~%OLO\k%K4s%j9g=0T"41My%N<T2<ED%K:9CV8u57%b2DM- (B  
\$BG7!"L`LsDjD40u%h%j==H,2U7n8e%KL5G78u%F%OIT5ZB6578u;v!# (B

\$BQ@T"!J\$j\$g&&\$3\$!K@/I\%K1w!J\$\*\$\$!K%FL5Z!!J\$h\$s\$I\$3\$m\$J\$-!K57!J\$.!KM-G7!J\$3\$I (B  
\$B\$"\$j!K8u!J\$=\$&\$m\$&!K;~%OLO\k%K4s%j9g=0T"41My%N<T2<ED%K:9CV!J\$5\$7\$\*\$-\$!K8u!J\$= (B  
\$B\$&\$m\$&!K57%b2DM-G7!J\$3\$I"\$k\$Y\$/!K!"L`!J\$b\$C\$H\$b!)!KLsDjD40u%h%j==H,2U7n8e%K (B  
\$BL5G7!J\$3\$I\$J\$-!K8u!J\$=\$m\$!K%F%OIT5Z!J\$\*\$h\$P\$:!KB6!J\$=\$N!K578u!J\$=\$&\$m\$&!K (B  
\$B;v!# (B

The Japanese thought that the appointment of a consul would be something that both countries would discuss and agree upon ( \$BN>9q@/I\%K1w\$\$\$F (B). They didn't realize that America had the power to appoint one unilaterally until Townsend Harris showed up in Shimoda in July 1856.

Jeff