

GeekSpeak

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Little Tricks to Harness Big Egos

For better or worse, most of us in this world work in a Windows environment. If that is true for you, you can be assured that a lot of programs launch every time you start your computer. Why? I think it mostly has to do with the egos of software developers whose running inner monologues go something like this: “I invested a lot of time and love into the development of my program, so why would my customers not want to run it all the time? They’ll love it just as much as I do!” Well, you and I know that this is not quite the case—even if we do have use for that particular program every couple of months, we would really appreciate it if it did not take up valuable computing resources for all those many days in between our uses.

(And yes, there might be reasons other than egomaniacal developers, such as automatic updates or faster boot times, but these potential advantages also do not justify wasting resources unless these programs are truly used all the time.)

So, how do we stop this?

There are two really easy ways to do it, and I can promise you that if you have never done this you will be amazed by the gain of speed and power that your computer will experience once you have gone through these steps and restarted your computer.

To see a list of your memory hogs, simply start the System Configuration utility by pressing WinKey+R and typing msconfig. (There are plenty of other ways to open System Configuration, but this works on all versions of Windows, including Windows 8.)

One of the tabs of the dialog box that will be displayed is Startup. You may be surprised by the many, many

programs listed here, the vast majority of which can be unchecked so they will not start automatically the next time you start your computer. Of course, the question is where to start and where to end? Well, many of the entries are pretty self-explanatory: “Adobe Update Starter Utility” or “Google Update” say exactly what they do and what can be disabled. On the other hand, the purpose of “SSBkgdUpdate” might not be as apparent. Fortunately, you can search for these entries on special Internet lists (here is one: www.pacs-portal.co.uk/startup_search.php), where you will quickly ascertain that most are superfluous.

(In Windows 8 and 8.1, you will find a link on the Startup tab to the Task Manager where you can disable the programs by selecting them and pressing the Disable button at the bottom of the dialog box.)

After this procedure, you will already have increased the speed of your computer after the next restart by quite a bit. You can do still more, though. There is another tab on the System Configuration utility that reads Services. Services are also programs that run in the background, and you have guessed correctly if you assume that your system will run more smoothly without many of those as well.

To start finding those that should be disabled, check the little “Hide all Microsoft services.” You do not necessarily need all the Microsoft services, but it is a much safer bet to avoid manipulating them; after all, you do not want to run into problems with your operating system. The remaining services will have relatively descriptive names, enabling you to recognize that items such as “iPod Service” or “Skype Updater” are to be unchecked. For the ones that you are not as sure about, press the WinKey+R again and type services.msc. This will open the Services panel where all services are listed with explanations that even the less technically minded among us can understand.

When you have unchecked all unnecessary services in the System Configuration dialog, click OK and you will be prompted to restart your computer. You do not have to do this, but go ahead and do it anyway, just to get a feel for how much nicer things will run from now on. And feel free to send me a selfie of your happy face (my kids just taught me that term).

One more thing: if you want to be like one of those developers and actually force a program to start every time you start your computer (like your e-mail program or a web browser),

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Information and Contacts

The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost is the co-author of *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*, a perfect source for replenishing your arsenal of information on how human translation and machine translation each play important parts in the broader world of translation. Contact: jzetzsche@internationalwriters.com.

ings for both “battledress” and “a shift to perform menial chores.” The proper meaning can be deduced in a given context, but this leads me to infer that this is not a book for beginners having only a basic command of English.

In the above examples, I have omitted the phonetics included with the main entries in an adapted International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) format. The IPA is based on the Roman alphabet and can be difficult for the non-specialist Hebrew speaker to read. Since this is unidirectional English>Hebrew, the logical choice would probably have been to transliterate the phonetics in Hebrew characters, as do some Oxford bilingual dictionaries for students. Of course, the distinctions of English-language vowel sounds cannot be expressed fully in Hebrew characters, not even with all of the diacritics detailed on page ix, where they are called “Pointing” (which is a debatable translation of the Hebrew word *niqud*).

Returning to the European/American usage, entries such as “lorry/truck” or “torch/flashlight” are covered, and so is the problematic “billion,” with a clear explanation of the difference in the usage in the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, and other countries. Nonetheless, I would prefer further detail about English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Nigeria), as they will probably pop up when reading English texts more often than the usage in France or Germany. I also checked “aerial/antenna” and “prep school,” where the differentiation looks fine.

The British “a golden handshake” can be found under “gold,” but not the American “golden parachute.”

A Hebrew speaker is less likely to need the entry for “kosher,” but there is no subentry for “kosher salt” or for “coarse salt.” “New Testament” appears both under “new” and under “testament,” but “New Covenant” does not. Other entries from Hebrew origin include “kibbutz,” where the English plural “kibbutzim” and the Hebrew singular are even provided. Right after that there is an entry for “kibbutznik.” Are they essential? Probably not.

The entry for “Jew” includes the sub-sense of “excessively hard bargainer,” and the next column brings another pejorative, “Jim Crow.” Both are marked as derogatory—surprisingly, the British “Hebe” is not in the dictionary. Finding the slang term “johnny” for a condom is a relief, as some general dictionaries adopt a rather prudish approach. I dutifully checked all kinds of words related to sex and obscenities, and the *OEHD* is quite satisfactory for this purpose.

The technical language included has some flaws. For example, “LAN” is defined as רשת מחשבים, meaning a “computer network,” although with no indication of the sense of local. This leads to the fact that acronyms include a descriptive translation, but no explanation of what words are represented by the initials. Bear in mind that this dictionary was first published in 1996. There are entries for “Disk Operating System” and “floppy disk,” but no “flash memory” or “world wide web.” The entry for “cellular telephone” (actually, a subentry of “cellular”) renders

“pelephone,” which is actually the brand name of the first company to offer that service in Israel, and *telefon tzelulari*. The colloquial uses are different (*nayad*, *selulari*, and the mentioned brand name, but never *tzelulari*).

Another surprise is that this volume does not include the names of countries. Adding them as an appendix would be a good idea. There are no appendices, no tables, and no illustrations, which in some cases could help to clarify matters. For example, for words like “ounce,” it would be handy to give the Hebrew reader in Israel not only the translation but the equivalent in grams as well.

Overall Evaluation

Overall, criticism is easier to write than the hard work that was indeed invested in this kind of endeavor. The binding for a paperback of this size is excellent, and so are the paper and the print, both in typeface and in size, making it a pleasant experience (not always the case when bidirectional text is involved). This dictionary is probably more for the advanced student, or an educated Hebrew speaker reading English texts, not for translators or linguists. However, I like it and will use it, as I see it now as one of the best published in this category thus far. In the long run, I will probably find more flaws as well as merits, as happens with many other tools.

Do some window-shopping before you buy! This being a reprint, many bookstores, both brick-and-mortar and virtual ones, are offering deep discounts. ■

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you can do that also. Press WinKey+R, type shell:startup, and place a link to the program into that folder (you can create a link to a program by right-clicking on the <program>.exe file and selecting “Create Shortcut”).

No need to send a second selfie. ■

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