

# SPOTTING FAKE CVs

by the TRANSLATOR SCAMMERS INTELLIGENCE GROUP

Version: 08 JULY 2016 / Revision: January 9, 2020

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**WHO SHOULD READ THIS?** Everybody with any role or interest in the translation community. But, especially, PMs from translation companies and anyone from the companies' staff responsible for **validating and risk-assessing** any CVs received.

**HOW CAN I KNOW IF A CV HAS BEEN STOLEN AND HIJACKED BY SCAMMERS?** This is a recurrent question that translators and translation companies keep asking us. Below is our insight about it.

Start by bearing in mind that the whole CV scamming operation described in the **TRANSLATOR SCAMMERS DIRECTORY** is based on ONE thing, and ONE thing only: **an email address (or several email addresses) created and operated by the scammers as their point of contact**. Scammers don't want you to call them: they don't use phones or just publish fake phone numbers on their fake CVs. They don't want to receive mail from you: they have no postal addresses or just publish fake ones on their CVs. Some scammers even state on their CVs: "*Contact by email only!*" The name, any name, used by scammers (either the name of a real translator or a fantasy name, misspelled or even hilarious, created by them), is but a secondary element in their operation.

Then, scammers follow patterns and routines. And, when you think about the ways that can be used to hijack and modify a CV, there aren't that many:

**STRAIGHT COPY CV** (i.e., *verbatim*), keeping the translator-victim's name, but **including (ALWAYS) the scammers email address(es)**. We call this a **DIRECT IMPERSONATION**, and you should **be most careful with this type of CV**: scammers may have requested **and received** other professional or identification documents, like diplomas, certificates or ID documents, from the real translator (**and, therefore, the real name cannot be changed**) which they'll use to make their scam more credible.

**PARTIAL COPY CV**, changing only the name, or the address, or the education, or the professional details of **ONE** genuine CV. **Of course, the email address(es) listed on the CV belong to the scammers**. We refer to this as **INDIRECT IMPERSONATION**.

**COPY AND PASTE CV**. Scammers will use **(1)** a translator's real name or **(2)** a fantasy name and then "assemble" a look-real CV with bits and pieces from various sources, or just made up stuff. Frequently, these CVs will show 3 or more fonts of different sizes and (sometimes) colors. The postal addresses shown are, for the most part, either from a real translator or harvested from real estate portals, and frequently with "wrong" postal codes (to evade detection in Google, they think...). **Again, the email address(es) listed on the CV belong to the scammers**. This is but a **DELIRIOUS IMPERSONATION**.

As of October, 2017, the FAKE CVs themselves are now online. [Visit our homepage for the link](#).



1. Scammers **ALWAYS** send their emails from **FREE ACCOUNTS**: Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, Outlook (frequently from outlook.sa, i.e., Saudi Arabia!!!), etc. Only in extremely rare occasions they'll use other free email providers. **Further reading**: [Scammers, Emails, and Email Headers](#).
2. Scammers usually (90%) use 2 free email addresses to send their fake CVs. To hide their identity and elude detection, some scammers operate up to 6 and 7 different email addresses to send one (only) stolen CV... Recently, because of the public exposure pressure and to speed up their operation, **scammers are sending many CVs from one email address only, like Gmail or Hotmail**.

3. Usually (99% of the times), when two email addresses are used, messages are actually sent from the Gmail account (because Gmail doesn't allow geolocation), but appearing to have been sent from the other address (**from**). In the email header, look for "Sender:", "envelope-sender" or "SMTP" address. That's the actual email sending address.

Further reading: [Scammers, Emails, and Email Headers](#).

4. Email subject and body with fantastic copy. Here are some of our favorites:

*xx years of experiment Chinese Translator*

*Actions speak louder than words*

*Address: the capital of the Languedoc-Roussillon region of southern France (**wow!**)*

*An effective project manager aspires to make successful deals*

*Assistant at the Embassy of German in (...)*

*Beyond the dictionary*

*Bilingual Service with native speakers in U.S.American*

*Consultant for national governmental organizations I (**take your guess**)*

*Creative, Efficient, Precise, Hip & Careful (**yes, we'll be careful**)*

*Dear (**typical scammers' opening line in emails**)*

*Decorative words can not express fact, work only can show the truth (**wow!**)*

*English <> Japanese freelance translator*

*English <> Greece Translator*

*English<>Portuguese<>Japanese Translator (**scammers always work in all directions**)*

*English to Portuguese Translation adn Vice Veras*

*Freelacne Translator*

*High quality you'll receive*

*Highly Proffesional Talented Translator*

*Hope to have a prospective relation and cooperate with you*

*I am a French*

*I am a highly creative English translator from Turky*

*I am a native German speaker and fluent in English for about 10 years*

*I am available all the time even in weekends and holidays (**typical scammers' talk**)*

*I am honored to enlighten you with my great passion for being in your service*

*I am fully qualified as translator, because of Master's Degree in General Linguistics (**LOL**)*

*I am one of the few that can meet your goals*

*I am skilled in translating languages (**wow!**)*

*I am so productive and my motto is accuracy and speed and none should be sacrificed at the expense of the other (**wow!**)*

*I am very interested in the Freelance Translatotion*

*I declare that the above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge (**LOL**)*

*I have many Studies of Interior Design*

*I have obtained many certificates of different specializations from many countries (**one, please**)*

*I hope to make Cooperate with you soon (**LOL**)*

*I like languages, challenges and translating is an other way for me to travel abroad! (**wow!**)*

*I offer bestowal without confines in translation (**we love this one**)*

*I possess the unique ability to predict a customer's needs (**we love this one**)*

*I propose (!!!) as a freelancer translator*

*I Translate, you Relax (**don't you just feel safe?**)*

*I worship professionalism (**wow!**)*

*I would like to schedule an informational CV with you*

*I'm a highly creative translator (**frequently used in scammers' emails**)*

*Interpreter In Many Conferences In English <>Swedish<>Dutch (**for example? one?**)*

*It's my summit pleasure to working with you and I'm confident I'll be your good opinion*

*Meaning and understanding in a package*

*My BA Degree in English Language and Literature with MA of Arts also studied (!!!)*

*My goal is always to dexterously convey the message in the target language*

My native language is Japanese But I live in Russian  
 My strong is submitting translation before the due time  
 My target in life to satisfy your demand  
 Native Indonesian speaker with perfect translation skills  
 No translation without interpretation  
 Our choice of languages are great since our translators are enormous in numbers  
 Perfect Translation Skills Available (**favorite scammers' email subject line**)  
 Position in the Engineering Department (**any chance of telling us where?**)  
 Professional but affordable (**to catch their victim's eye, scammers always price themselves a few cents below to what they perceive as market fees**)  
 Professionalism level is not to high from me  
 Qualified and Certified (**any chance of telling us by whom?**)  
 Quality is No.1 priority  
 Several books (non-fiction) and books (non-fiction) !!!  
 Some of the pervious translation jobs I handled  
 Sophisticated Language Skills (**we love this one**)  
 Speed is important, quality is essential  
 Traducteur/trice – copywriter à temps plein (i.e., **just copied from a job offer online**)  
 Translation of 37 Thank Letter  
 Translating more than 700,500 web pages for Sports (**almost the whole Internet, right?**)  
 Trust me, and you will harvest the best translation  
 We will help you see the world anew  
 With sunny smiles and blessings for a lovely day I hope you are fine  
 You should try me. Be careful as it is addictive.  
 You will be ever fascinated with the excellent results  
 Your colleagues to translate (**on email subject. meaning?**)  
 Your TRUST Is My Infinite Satisfaction

5. Email body written in **lousy English, but ALWAYS in English**, even in mails from a "native French translator" sent to a French translation company. But, because scammers use the "cover letter" they ask from their translators-victims to make up their emails, their writing can look acceptable! When asked by an Italian company why "she" didn't communicate in Italian, "Elena Mazzotta" responded: **«I talk with all my clients with English language even if they are Italian, because of a lot of reasons such that to find my emails easily when I need to search about anything, to improve my English language and a lot of things that make my works easier.»**
6. In the CVs attached to the scammers' emails, look for:
  - a) In the document properties (in DOC format), look for the "Author" and, especially, the "Last saved by" info different from the CV's name, and in Contents, look for some Arabic word (**in CVs scammed in Palestine and other Arab countries, which account for about 99% of the fake CVs in circulation**); see a [list of names/words used in document properties](#).
  - b) Residential address (fake, most of the times or just copied verbatim from their victims' CVs) without house numbers and non-matching zip codes, and sometimes even with non-matching countries: scammers live in *42 Breedon Hill Road, Paris, France*, in a *76th floor* in Lisbon, Portugal, on *no. 82* of a street in Paris, France, in which numbers go only up to 52, at the Israeli PM's Office, in a Chinese address with a UK Postcode, (are you ready?) at the US Embassy in London, or (are you ready again?) at *60-185 Sk.rzewo Wrzosowa St., England!* And, after you put it all together, you discover that 10 "translators" live in *Bad Oyenhausen, Germany*, all in different streets and postal codes. And that 14 false translators include a genuine Belgium address on their fake CVs (in fact, a verbatim copy of the victim's CV scammed under different false names). And that 6 others live at Avenue de la Bourdonnais (Paris)! And that one particular French address – *n°107 rue de la jalade porte 109, 34090 Montpellier* – is used in 12 (twelve!) different scammed CVs. And that "Jennifer Allen" and "Jolene Marcus" share the same postal code, *13530 Trets France*, and the

same exact (fake, of course) phone number: 33 (0)4.42.54.14.22. Or that this (fake) VAT number DE202842983 is shared by 5 false translators! [See other addresses used by scammers.](#)

c) No phone numbers, or modified numbers to render them unusable (change, addition or deletion of one or more digits) or just impossible numbers with no country code or a wrong area code. For example, "Monica Cordeiro" (impersonation of a Portuguese translator with the same name) includes in "her" fake CV this very "Portuguese" phone number: +451 96 4544 005 (the country code for Portugal is +351, and there is no country with a +451 calling code)! "Fabien Iglesias" uses this very "Canadian" phone number: (819) 8827-11447 and "Jenifer Kerns" and "Tina Helen" both claim to have the same very "real" phone number: 1.293.802.6471 (area code 293 does not even exist).

d) Name used by the scammer can be **(1)** the name of a legitimate translator (direct impersonation) or **(2)** a fantasy name (indirect impersonation), sometimes misspelled or used wrongly: "Marian Arce" (used as the email name), "Marina Arce" (used at the email signature), "Marina Arce" (name used on CV) and "Marina Arcel" (used as the CV filename), "Jim" is a female, "Marcos Misha" is a "native Portuguese", Henk, a Dutch male name, short form of Hendrik, is used in a CV with a female photo, "Claire Haroon" is a "native Iranian", and "Erica Alves" is a "native Russian"; they'll impersonate a real translator called Charlotte using the name "Ritha" and use Charlotte's address on a fake CV belonging to a ghost called "Anna"; within a time span of two years, scammers also sent "Anna" to "teach translation in Bangkok", to be the "assistant director" of a Thai video production company and to be the "technical assistant" at the Modern Art Museum of Lille, France!

e) Unless the name used by the scammer belongs to a legitimate translator (**direct impersonation**), the fantasy names (and the emails) used by the scammers NEVER show up anywhere online (except, of course, in our Directory), no matter how impressive and "professional" the CV may look; **be careful, though: some scammers have created profiles for their ghosts in translation and other online portals to give them some Internet footprint.** [Some of these profiles are listed in our Translator Scammers Directory \(PDF edition\).](#) We regularly warn the major translator portals – ProZ, TranslatorsCafé and TranslationDirectory – about any profiles kept by scammers in their directories, but we are not responsible for their deletion.

f) Education details are usually easily traced back to the legitimate owner, specially if they include the titles of academic dissertations/thesis or are just copied from the University websites and sometimes modified, like this *"University of Salford, Manchester: bachelor Degree in Electronic System [sic]"*; look also for *Speedy Gonzales Translators*, i.e. ghost "translators" trying to impress clients with 4 different academic degrees from 4 universities (some of them inexistent!) in 3 (or 4) different continents within a time span of 4 or 5 years; in their lunacy, scammers will "justify" their knowledge of languages by claiming to have worked as tutors for young children in their (fake) countries of residence or birth; in other cases, scammers make their ghosts graduate in "Translation and Interpretation", right after they got their PhD in Nuclear Physics or Medicine! In this crazy world of fake CVs, you'll run across a "highly creative native German translator" called "Abella Madel", a "Palestinian translator with Japanese mother tongue" called "Basel Nahal", a "20-year old guy from Pakistan with a PhD" or a PM from a "translation company" working out of a Turkish bank branch (!)

g) Professional experience and other details are normally copied verbatim, or copied and pasted from several curriculums or job descriptions from job portals, to make online detection harder (e.g., the jobs section of a Russian colleague's CV has been cannibalized to feed, so far, more than 25 fake CVs...). Many fake CVs are also "decorated" with generic claims like *"65,435 words IT, computer and software"*, *"Editing of 50 000 word book on addiction"* or *"Translating more than 5000 books for Psychology"*, or *"Translation 80,000 poems"* and *"Translation more than 950 books for Psychology"*! Titles of translated books or work done for some obscure, less known companies or projects also provide good clues to find the legitimate owner of the scammed CV; or as one of our most faithful informants discovered:

«Scammers took the name of a Belgian cyclist (Ferdie Dierickx), born 1962, for their fake translator and gave "him" a matching email address: ferdidierickx@gmail.com! Then, they moved the poor guy to Utrecht, in the Netherlands, where he has to live in a non-existing street (Bas Backerlaan 20, Utrecht, 6986 DZ)!!! Life being very hard at this place, he had to start working as a translator at the age of 17. At the age of 19, he was "Project Assistant [sic] in Finance", then he worked in IT, all of a sudden became a paralegal, then a freelance translator, and also a "professional Environmental Planner". Not bad, for a guy of 32 years of age...»

h) out of utter stupidity and carelessness, scammers often betray themselves: "Rosanna Shirley", a ghost created by scammers, circulates a CV stolen from a senior Italian translator, born in 1942. Therefore, "Rosanna", born 1972, "she" says, claims in "her" CV: «retired on grounds of age»... Or "Alexey Weliam", a "male" and a "mother for 2 boys" and a "Lea Lutz" claiming that «I am not that man who is talkative and talks a lot about his qualifications»... Or (you'll love this one), a "Vanda Mark", who used an image of the specimen of a German ID card (available online) as "her" passport to open an account at an online payment portal:



Vanda Mark's beautiful "German passport" with the "Mustermann" signature



Specimen of the German identity card (image available online)

- i) "Rates are always negotiable", and "available 7 days a week including vacations and holidays" are also common claims from scammers;
- j) outrageously bad CVs: in their scamming craze, scammers will use anything, including some of the lousiest and unprofessional CVs (real or just made up) we and you will ever see...

As a final exercise, ask any "native" French, or German, or Japanese ghost if he/she is available for a Greek to Norwegian translation job of a *Turbo Encabulator system* (or any other stupid text you may think of). Without even blinking an eye, you'll promptly get their answer: "Yes, I'm available. Please send file and PO"! It's up to you to take this "test" a bit further... If you do, ask scammers for any positive proof of their ID (for payment purposes, you'll say), and you'll hear: *I cannot send you any proof of ID, because the net is always being hacked...*

Or, as the ultimate weapon to expose a fake translator, ask him/her for a chat on camera! You'll hear the most amazing excuses: "bad connection", "camera broken", "I'm driving", "no camera", "I don't use chat for business, just email", or our favorite excuse by a "Carlito Tronci" to evade an online interview: **"I want to express my apologie on your request because I have a speaking problems, my vocal cords damaged due to an old accident."**



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