

BORDERLESS DEFINED

Newsletter of Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC



Chat and Proust

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It all started with a chat with my interpreting partner a few weeks ago. Our client was troubleshooting some technical difficulty on the platform, so neither one of us was interpreting at the time.

While we were still on standby, my partner said to me in a chat

something to the effect of "let's start the timer when the meeting resumes due to time being wasted to the technical issue," meaning, *let's not count this time as part of the interpreting time*, to which I agreed right away.

Given my nature (i.e., hyper-sensitive to language as well as its implications), however, I quietly chuckled to myself and imagined the client willfully and gratuitously wasting everyone's time.

After all, it is just one word: "wasted." But did she perhaps first type "lost," then hit the Back key and replace it with "wasted"?

Setting aside whether she realized the implication, the truth is I was fascinated by this mini-event and what was to follow...

Fast-forward 12 hours, I was sitting at the kitchen bar table having breakfast with my husband. And this is when he presented [this BBC article](#) to me about In Search of Lost Time.

As Prendergast points out the "perdu" in the original French title, *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, means both "lost" and "wasted", a nuance it is impossible to capture in an English translation.

This is all "accompanied by the sense that the narrator has of wasting his time, that there's something out there that awaits him, that he can semi-identify as something to do with the project of becoming an author or writer... but he keeps detouring away from it, so he's wasting his life until he gets to the point where he suddenly realises it and embraces it," explains Prendergast.

Not having read the novel, I regret that I cannot comment on it any more than what the article has to offer. But it is clear from the article that "lost" and "wasted" can be closely intertwined.

In my humble opinion, the difference probably boils down to perspective or opinion as to whether there is any need to assign regret, responsibility or blame.

The next Borderless Defined will be in your inbox in the week of September 26, 2022.

Thanks for reading!

Noriko Rogers
Borderless Interpreting & Translation, LLC

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