

OCTOBER 2010

◆ PET PEEVES ◆

PETS are usually 'fun' animals like puppies, cats, birds or even horses that may do tricks and make us smile, bringing pleasure to the home and family. But the expression 'pet peeves' -- said to date back to around 1919 and originally derived from use of 'peevish' in the 14th century -- means just the opposite: unpleasant annoyances that are personally particularly irksome to you, even though others may deem them quite acceptable.

The original meaning of 'peevish' was 'silly' or 'foolish,' but by around 1530 it had taken on the sense of 'cross' or 'irritable.' It then took several hundred years for 'peeve' to develop as an irritant that annoys you more than anything else. The 'pet' with a (sarcastic) sense of 'favorite' may owe its popularity and longevity to its mild perversity -- we love that a 'favorite annoyance' is somewhat of an oxymoron, not to mention its peppy alliteration.



In FRENCH, you might have a **Bête noire** [black beast, not necessarily a poodle, more of a nemesis than an annoyance]. In GERMAN, you would bring someone **auf die Palme** [up a palm tree!] In CHINESE, you might have a 'pet phrase' 口头禅, but it's not a peeve.

The Internet now abounds with everyone's own, and here at **TRANSLATION ACES**, our lingua list just goes on and on

- ◆ People who use 'people *that...*'
- ◆ Resumés full of *mistakes* and not proofread by a native
- ◆ Incorrect use of apostrophe's [!]
- ◆ Requests for translations of tattoos
- ◆ Neglecting to use spellcheck -- in any language (including and especially on menus: *Cesar* salads and anything *au juice* are particularly mouthwatering to us, though *deserts* are not -- just wait til next month!)
- ◆ Using computer translation before coming to us for professional, correct translation
- ◆ Omitting proper foreign-language accent marks (see our March 2010 newsletter!)
- ◆ Incorrect use of foreign expressions such as Prefixed Lunch (for *Prix fixe*); Lido Beach (*Lido* is beach in Italian), oh, we could go on!



◆ FEATURE ◆ Lingua Quiz!

- 1 Which of these English terms come from French with the cedilla [soft-sounding ç]?
 - (a) Building façade
 - (b) Comme ci, comme ça
 - (c) Ç'est la vie
 - (d) Chocolate mouçe

- 2 Which of these happen when you '*Speak of the devil*' in a foreign language?
 - (a) In French, you only have to mention him to see his tail
 - (b) In Serbian, he's at the door
 - (c) In Italian, his horns will appear
 - (d) In Japanese, his shadow will appear

- 3 Weather words mix & match:

(a) Raining 'cats and dogs'	(1) English
(b) Raining 'frogs and snakes'	(2) Czech
(c) Raining 'wheelbarrows'	(3) Swiss German
(d) Raining 'crowbars'	(4) Welsh and Afrikaans
(e) Raining 'old women and sticks'	(5) Bosnian

ANSWERS:

3 (a) = (1); (b) = (3); (c) = (2); (d) = (5); (e) = (4)

1 (a) + (b) 2 all of the above