



NORTHWEST TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS SOCIETY

ATA RECAP : SURFING, BROWSING AND SYNERGY AT HILTON HEAD

LAURA A. GARCIA

On Monday evening, November 23, 1998, NOTIS held the recap meeting of the 39th ATA Annual Conference at the Seattle Public Library. Approximately twenty people attended, half of whom had been to the conference and were there to share their impressions during the two-hour informal get-together. On hand were Ann Macfarlane, the conference organizer (and ATA President-elect) and Courtney Searls-Ridge, newly re-elected to the ATA Board and member of the Conference Advisory Group.

Given that any large conference is at best a pick-and-sacrifice affair - and the bigger and better the event

the more the sacrifices have to be made - for all participants, what you settle on had really better compensate for all the discussions you were not able to attend. At any one time at Hilton Head there were never fewer than ten, and often as many as twelve, seminars running simultaneously, from Thursday afternoon, November 5, through Saturday afternoon, November 7 (Thursday morning was devoted to ATA general meetings).

The conference was structured so as to minimize conflicts for specialized interests. Thus, had you gone to find out about Spanish language issues you would have been caught up in sessions Thursday afternoon and all day Friday and Saturday, without having had to change meeting rooms. If you had literary concerns Thursday afternoon, all day Friday, and Saturday morning would have found you in the same place. This took care nicely of many scheduling conflicts. For example, on Thursday afternoon, the first Japanese language, the first German language and the third Spanish language seminars were occurring simul-

taneously; but this seemed not to pose a problem for too many people!

On the other hand, had you been interested in hearing about self-marketing techniques for free-lancers, Microsoft Word's translation-friendly features, English/Chinese reference materials, and what makes a great interpreter (all offered on Friday morning), or Japanese literary translation, translator/editor cooperation, the role of cultural competence in medical interpreting and project management issues (each

client-requested corrections, acknowledgement of credit, etc.)?

On Wednesday afternoon, Ray attended Pre-Conference Seminar No. X: "Quality Is Not Cheap: The Business Side of Freelancing" given by Jonathan Hine, Jr., a translator and writer from Charlottesville, VA. The material for this is available in printed form, in the February 1998 edition of the *ATA Chronicle* and in the conference Proceedings. Hine gave this talk at last year's annual conference as well, which attests to the importance of his message. He encourages freelancers to perform realistic, hard-nosed business budgeting and to make certain they are really asking enough money for their work. This seminar was tailored somewhat to the interests of the

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NEXT NOTIS MEETING! WORKSHOP

MARCH 27, 1999
1:00 - 3:00 P.M.

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

taking place during the first Saturday afternoon slot), you would have faced some painful choices. Woe to the polymath polyglot!

Here is how our Seattle delegates committed their conference time: Ray Roman, a lawyer and current Japanese-to-English freelance translator, summarized Wednesday morning's Pre-Conference Seminar No. III: "Contracts and the Free-Lance Translator and Interpreter" offered by Courtney Searls-Ridge and Lois M. Feuerle, a New York-based German and legal specialist. Courtney made available to the Seattle group a copy of the document distributed at the seminar, a collection of contracts encountered in the profession. The seminar posed questions such as: What constitutes a contract? When have you entered into one? Is a handshake acceptable? What kind of problem clauses should you be on the lookout for in a preprinted contract that you may be given to sign and what can you do about clauses you disagree with? Which points in a contract are negotiable (e.g., responsibility for

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and Interpreters Society
(NOTIS)**

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NOTIS News is published in February, May, August, and November. Letters to the Editor, short articles of interest, and information for the calendar and other sections are invited. Submissions become the property of NOTIS News and are subject to editing unless otherwise agreed in advance. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Society or its Board.

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Membership in NOTIS

Individual & Institutional \$35.00 a year
 Corporate \$50.00 a year

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NOTIS is a Washington State non-profit organization.

NOTIS NOTES

**WELCOME TO
NEW MEMBERS**

Tanika Barsegian-[Ru]ssian, **Megan Beach**-Ru, **Carol Benedick**-Ru, **Jonathan F. Delcourt**-[Ge]rman, **Joan Doty**-[Fr]ench, **Bente Eilertsen**-[Nor]wegian, **Douglas J. Foran**-Fr, [It]alian, [Por]tuguese, [Sp]anish, **Julio C. Foucaultt**-Sp, **Michael A. Fowler**-[Ja]panese, [Man]darin, **Laura Garcia**-Fr, Ru, **Amaya Gonzalez-Garcia**-Sp, Fr, **Diane J. Hills**-Fr, Sp, **Young Mee Hong**-[Kor]ean, **Larry A. Kalb**-Fr, Ge, **Fredrika Edstrom Klay**-[Sw]edish, **Larissa V. Kulinich**-Ru, **Emi Tsujikawa Landrum**-Ja, **Bill Lloyd**-Sp, Fr, **Isabell Loew-Trozzo**-Ge, **Erik J. Macki**-Ge, [Du]tch, Fr, **Cynthia L. McDonell**-Fr, **Steven Muzik**-Sp, **Bo Nordstrom**-Sw, Nor, [Da]nish, **Rosemary Nordstrom**-Sw, Nor, **Labib Palis**-Sp, **Johanne Raynault**-Fr, **Ray Roman**-Ja, **Abdulkareem O. Shamdeen**-[Ara]bic, [Kur]dish, **Hiroko Spees**-Ja, **Perry Marshall Tapper**-[Cz]ech, [Slo]vak, **Bret Thompson**-Ru.

**DIRECTORY ADVERTISING
THANKS**

The 1999 NOTIS Directory of Translators and Interpreters has been published and will be distributed to nearly 7600 users of language services across the country. The advertising revenues have made a substantial contribution to meeting the cost of publication. Many thanks all who advertised for supporting NOTIS in this vital aspect of our member services. For further information contact NOTIS by telephone, e-mail or on NOTIS Home Page.

**THANK YOU DIRECTORY
MAILING CREW**

Courtney Searls-Ridge, Rosa Allen with **Arthur** and **Alexandra, Dominique Blachon, Jon Delcourt, Sandra Layman, Betsy Streib,** and **Pieter Zilinsky**. "Many, many thanks to all of you who helped with the directory mailing party this Saturday, 1/23. I think we set a land speed record for stamping, stuffing and sticking! It isn't easy giving up the one sunny afternoon of the month. You should all give yourselves a pat on the back (provided the paper cuts have healed). Gratefully, **Abby Clay**". (Editor's Note: And a Thank You to Hostesses Abby and Betsy for their generous hospitality.)

MISSED MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL?

Make NOTIS grow and enjoy its support. Reminders for renewal went out at the end of 1998. If you didn't receive one, misplaced it or, perhaps, forgot about it, this is a timely and happy reminder. Membership rates remain the same for 1999: \$35/yr. for Individual and Institutional members, and \$50/yr. for Corporate members. Please be sure to let us know of any changes in your address, phone number, e-mail, etc. when you renew.

NEW NIB

The Winter update to the NOTIS InfoBase was posted at the beginning of January. Look for it on our Home Page:

<http://www.NOTISnet.org>

INTERNET ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

NOTIS members now have an opportunity to advertise on our home page marketplace at a preferential rate. We will accept advertising for services, post job announcements, and help you sell the odd dictionary or modem. (No Beanie Babies, please!). For more information, please contact the Webmistress at info@NOTISnet.org.

ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

Congratulations to **Carol Leibowitz**, on her election to the NOTIS Board of Directors.

THANK YOU

A generous Thank You to **Elsa Brodin** for serving on the NOTIS Board of Directors, administering NOTIS voicemail, and coordinating Directory advertising. We extend best wishes for her future endeavors, and appreciate her willingness to continue the vital service of coordinating all the advertising for the NOTIS annual printed Directory.

MISCELLANEOUS

Need help getting paid? Want to check a translation/interpretation company's payment record? Visit the Hall of Shame, a Web page that lists individuals and companies that have not paid translators and interpreters for their work. You can also file a complaint and they will help intervene. The URL is: www.geocities.com/Eureka/Plaza/6507/blacklist.html.

Corrections

Change of address in Aslan Aslanian advertisement on page 7:

9673 Crystal View Drive, Tujunga, CA 91042

Tel.: (818) 353-5862; fax: (818) 353-5862;

e-mail: Aslanian@pacbell.net

UPCOMING EVENTS**NOTIS Workshop**

Saturday, March 27

"Stumped? The Answer May Be on the Net...Somewhere"

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Savery 216, University of Washington

No charge, free parking

While we are all aware that the Internet offers a wealth of information, many see it as being in a state of blissful chaos. Because the Internet is an invaluable tool for translators and terminologists, it is essential for these professionals to learn to use it efficiently. There are various important elements that comprise a successful Web search: knowing which tools are available, understanding how to use them, the ability to quickly evaluate the quality and relevance of data found, and efficient bookmark management. In addition, by mastering a few special techniques, you will be able to locate just the term you need.

Susan Larsson, a Swedish-English translator and NOTIS member, will repeat her highly successful presentation from the ATA Conference in Hilton Head last November. Everyone is welcome.

Slavic SIG Coffee Hour

March 27, 3:30 p.m.

Translators and interpreters working in Slavic languages are invited to gather after the March 27 program for coffee, pastries and good conversation. We will meet at 3:30 p.m. at the European Restaurant and Pastry Shop, 4108 University Way N.E. NOTIS members and friends are all welcome.

For more information, contact Karina Watkins at (425) 562-7156.

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND ENJOY NOTIS

MEETING REPORT

NOTIS ANNUAL MEETING: OCTOBER 15, 1998

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY KATALIN PEARMAN, SECRETARY

The minutes of the 1997 Annual Meeting were approved. President **Caitilin Walsh** reported that the NOTIS - 1999 Directory of Translators and Interpreters - with 205 NOTIS members listed - will be mailed out by volunteers in January 1999. The introductory text of the Directory was rewritten. The advertising revenue (\$2,090) for the '99 edition will contribute significantly to meeting the cost of publication.

The NOTIS InfoBase (NIB) has been downloaded over 400 times this year. Visits to our Web site multiplied following the March '98 *Seattle Times* article about translators/interpreters. The majority of visitors to the Web site are from North American Commercial (.com) domains, but others are worldwide. NOTIS has a new Internet Service Provider, but the address has not changed (NOTIS owns its domain name).

NOTIS will no longer e-mail job announcements to everyone: this function has moved to the Web site. NOTIS will, however, continue to send announcements of general interest to the entire membership. Advertisement is now available on the Web site under the "Marketplace" section for translation/interpretation related items and services.

Treasurer Jochen Liesche presented the treasurer's report for the January 1 - December 31, 1997 period. NOTIS' income in 1997 was \$16,836.68, its expenses were \$10,874.68. Total assets as of December 31, 1997: \$7,064.35 (this includes beginning balance of \$1,102.35).

The external audit by a CPA showed everything in order. NOTIS is currently investigating changing its tax status to pay less federal taxes.

Membership Chair **Rosa Allen** reported that at the time of the Annual Meeting, there were 201 individual, 21 corporate, and 4 institutional members, for a total of 226 members. Membership by state: Washington 207, Oregon 17, Montana 2.

Courtney Searls-Ridge reported on NOTIS programs in 1998:

- Jan. - ATA Accreditation Workshop
- March - Small Business Administration Workshop
- April - ATA Accreditation Examination
- June - (with T&I) Internet Resume/Translation Company-Freelancer Relationship
- July - Picnic + first "Run from your computer" walk/run
- Sept. - Cascadia, including ATA Accreditation Exam (2nd in 1998)
- Oct. - Annual Meeting
- Nov. - ATA recap

NOTIS needs more volunteers for the program committee, and more membership input regarding programs, meeting locations and times. NOTIS tries to alternate venues and times to accommodate everyone. NOTIS is interested in more joint events with other organizations. There will be a Portland program coming up to reach out beyond the Seattle area.

Cascadia '98 was very successful with 172 conference registrations. The tour of ZymoGenetics was attended by 31, the banquet by 55. All participating organizations helped shape this success.

News editor, **Pieter Zilinsky**, reported that on its tenth anniversary *NOTIS News* became a quarterly. Expenses are lower and more time between issues helps produce a quality newsletter. Pieter thanked all the editors/proofreaders/writers, and asked for more input from the membership.

NOTIS proposed a change of date for the officers' term to correspond with the directors' term - mostly for the treasurer's sake. The membership voted for the change.

The slate of officers was also elected, namely incumbents **Abigail Clay**, **Jochen Liesche**, **Alex Mosalsky**, **Courtney Searls-Ridge**, **Kendrick Wagner** and **Caitilin Walsh**, as well as new director **Carol Leibowitz**.

New policy documents adopted by the NOTIS Board of Directors include: Advertising (Web, NOTIS News, Directory), Financial Procedures, Executive Committee (dealing with day-to-day issues, versus policy issues dealt with by the whole Board.)

Michelle Privat Obermeyer assumed the responsibilities of Program Chair. Office Manager **Anita Krattinger** moved abroad.

Plans for '99 include establishing a presence in the Portland area, exploring tax exempt status, clarification of ATA-NOTIS relationship.

Ann Macfarlane explained the ATA-NOTIS relationship issue even though there was no vote required at this meeting. The question is whether NOTIS wants to be a Chapter or an Affiliate. (Cooperating Group category no longer exists.) Ann listed some pros and cons for both options.

Red Cross Seeks Bilingual Volunteers

The Seattle-King County American Red Cross Language Bank is seeking Vietnamese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Laotian, Oromo, Somali, Tigrinya, and Bosnian-speaking volunteers. Duties include interpreting in person or by telephone for Chapter departments and non-profits throughout King County. Translating also needed and can be done from home. Good command of grammar in both the above language and English a must.

Please call James at (206) 726-3554 for more information.

The American Red Cross is a non-profit, humanitarian agency. All disaster relief is free, made possible by voluntary gifts of time and money from the American people.

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"ATA recap...."

participants; three weeks before the conference, Hine sent an e-mail out asking people about their concerns and what they would like to discuss. (He also conducted a conference seminar for independent contractors entitled "Taking Care of Business: The Non-Language Side of Freelancing". There was no report on this session, however.)

Ray also attended Friday morning's session entitled "Are You Liable? Insurance Liability Issues for Translators and Interpreters" led by Mary Durig, assistant vice-president of Sedgwick James of Virginia, Inc., the professional liability insurance program provider of the ATA. Durig referred to two cases in which problems with language professionals' work were at issue: one where a translator was found liable for mistakes in translation, another where a convicted felon appealed, claiming interpreter bias. Durig's interest in the question is obvious. But the issue is a thorny one - is it best to subscribe to protection that may become increasingly necessary as the idea gradually takes hold that translators can be held liable for their linguistic mistakes, or will jumping onto this bandwagon merely accelerate the trend? To which point is it best to let "sleeping dogs lie"? Under questioning, Durig admitted that her company had not defended any cases in the last two years.

Alfred Hellstern, Head of NOTIS' Computer Committee and a former NOTIS director, reported on Thursday's seminar of the Translation and Computer (TAC) and the Terminology Committees, co-presented by Alan K. Melby, ATA Director and Chair of TAC, and Konstantin Lakshin, a Russian translator and managing partner of an agency based in Colorado. Melby has been investigating the possibility of establishing a technical Help Desk for the ATA. For the past three years the project has proven too difficult to set in motion; but a Web site has been planned with a question-and-answer data base, seeded with 100 or so representative questions

Alfred attended Friday's Science and Technology Division Annual meeting, the Division boasting 1000 members, fifteen of whom were in attendance). The Division's journal has not been published for the last 18 months as it has no editor. The Division has had sufficient funds to support a print publication and now, with the appointment of a prospective editor, it should be possible to publish again. The question now is whether the publication will go on-line or appear only in hard-copy format. The exact 1999 start-up date has not been set.

On Saturday afternoon, the last of the TAC seminars (there were eight in all), was a discussion of Web-searching techniques ("Stumped? The Answer May Be on the Net ... Somewhere") given by two Web aficionados (Manon Bergeron, a French/Spanish/English translator certified in Quebec, and Susan Larsson, an American translator of Swedish, who is also a NOTIS member); Alfred deemed this the best discussion he attended.

Alta Vista and Hot Bot were mentioned as the best search engines for translation, Northern Light and Inference as the best for meta searches across glossaries. Bergeron and Larsson shared the trick of cross-engine translation searches, namely specifying in the search criteria "+glossary+English+French+potatoes" to retrieve results in all English and French glossaries for potatoes, for example; this is a good method for avoiding Alta Vista's limitations. They mentioned

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AND
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another strategy of setting up a search using a Latin term: searching for "gladioli" will lead to hits in many languages. It was recommended always to read the help files that are furnished with search engines, which will contain instructions for, among other things, treating special characters.

Abigail Clay, NOTIS' Vice-President, reported on two meetings she attended on Friday afternoon. One, "National Geographic's International Editions: Around the World in (At Least) Seven Languages" was a seminar presided over by Bernard Ohanian, editorial director for *National Geographic's* international editions, along with Camilla Bozzoli Rudolph, a staff translator. *National Geographic* launched its international editions in 1995 - before then the problems posed by multilingual reproduction had been too great. Now it comes out in six other editions: Italian, Japanese, two Latin American, Hebrew and Greek. *National Geographic* intends its foreign publications to be exact translations of the American one. The original stories are written and edited in the US. Translations are done abroad, then sent back to the US and farmed out to reviewers. The reviewers write up a list of comments for US in-house editors, who then decide what will be corrected or changed in the translated versions of the stories.

Two reviewers who were present at the session (Scott Brennan, a freelance member of *National Geographic's* Italian reviewing team, and Yukako Y. Seltzer, a freelance member of the Japanese reviewing team) talked of the problems they typically face, including typographical errors imposed on English names reproduced in the foreign versions, and the fact that in Japanese there is a tendency to embellish, even go overboard with translations of titles. There were many "business-card pushers" in attendance at the seminar, hopeful about lining up work with this publishing group, which enjoys the attractive reputation of "not sacrificing quality to economic concerns", an understandable lure for freelancers.

Sharing the same 90-minute time slot was a second seminar, "Sell This: Getting the Message Across in Advertising Translation", given by Molly Stevens, a New York-based French-to-English translator. The focus of discussion turned out to be slightly different than Abigail had anticipated. Rather than describe the responsibilities of a translator in the ad world in general, Stevens told of her day-to-day experiences in her first high-powered advertising project with an international perfume company, how she handled internal memos, and how such a setting led her away from literal translation to freely dispensing some "MTV-hip" terms.

Ann Macfarlane reported enthusiastically about the seminar she attended on Saturday morning, "Units of Weights and Measurement in Translation" given by Joao Roque Dias, a Portuguese technical translator. Specialized measurement scales such as the one applying to ring gauges on cigars were discussed. These are innocuous-seeming numbers that have meaning only for a specialist concerned with a narrow subject area. But they can acquire special significance for the translator or head of a translation project who may one day be called upon to deal with a recondite specification. Then they suddenly become something to use and reproduce correctly.

Dias drew attention to the system of International Units and the pitfalls of measurement abbreviations, where meaning can vary depending on which of the letters is capitalized: MW (no periods) is a megawatt, mW (no periods) is a milliwatt; pH (the picoHenry, which is a unit for measuring magnetism) should not be confused with pH (not an I.U., merely a convention for measuring acidity); nm (nanometer) should not

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AN OPEN LETTER TO NOTIS

Dear members of NOTIS:

October 12, 1999

The American Translators Association has valued your collaboration for the past ten years as a Cooperating Group. We appreciate NOTIS' efforts in acquainting your members with the work of ATA, administering workshops and the ATA accreditation examination, and familiarizing your members with the sessions at the Annual Conference through your "ATA Recap" session each November. In an effort to further enhance our relationship with NOTIS and other Cooperating Groups, I write to inform you that the ATA Board has approved an important change in our administrative structure and our relationships with regional groups. Acting upon the recommendations of the ATA Chapters Committee, the Board agreed to do away with the status of "Cooperating Group," thereby making it easier for groups to become Chapters. Instead, we will have a two-tier structure of Chapters and Affiliates.

It is my hope that NOTIS, after considering the benefits chapter status can offer, will decide to become an ATA Chapter. As you know, ATA Chapters are regional groups that have a special relationship with the national organization. They support the work of ATA, they have a President and Vice-president who are voting members of the ATA, while other elected officials are individual members; and they publicize their status as Chapters in their publications. However, members of a Chapter are not required to be members of ATA; the choice is left up to the individuals.

Chapters receive tangible benefits from their association with the ATA. Chapter members, who are also members of the ATA may designate a rebate of 10% of their annual dues for their Chapter. Chapter officers are covered by liability insurance under ATA's policies. Chapters are eligible for loans of "seed money" for regional conferences. ATA Headquarters is available to assist Chapters as may be required in obtaining professional materials for distribution, negotiating with venues or hotels for conferences, or offering other guidance in areas where Headquarters has special expertise.

These are significant benefits, but in my opinion the less tangible benefits are even more significant, for both the Association and for its chapters. ATA Chapters are closely linked with the largest professional association of translators and interpreters in the world. Vibrant and active Chapters help the Association to pursue the objectives of promoting the recognition of the translation and interpretation professions, and promoting the communication and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of translators and interpreters. In turn, the Association can offer support and assistance to Chapters in their regional endeavors.

It is the interplay of information, communication and ideas between the national and regional groups that offers the greatest hope for ATA's future, and by extension for the benefit of our professions.

As you know, these are exciting times for ATA. Individual membership is growing and will reach 7000 soon. We have excellent relations with our sister organizations in other parts of the world through membership in the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs. Our conferences continue to grow in variety and interest, and are drawing ever more international participation. As a former Chapters Committee Chair, and now President dedicated to strengthening relations with regional groups, I would welcome NOTIS' participation and involvement with ATA in an even closer mode than that of Cooperating Group. Your energy and expertise would be most valuable to the Association. I know that our Board shares in these sentiments.

On the other hand, should your membership decide against Chapter status, your organization will be recognized as an Affiliate Group. Regardless of your decision, I hope that you will continue the cooperation with the Association that has been so beneficial in the past. Please accept my thanks for all you have done for ATA over the first ten years of your history. I look forward to our working together in the future.

Sincerely,

Muriel Jérôme-O'Keeffe, President ATA

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION INSTITUTE

The T&I Institute offers a certificate program for linguistically skilled people of diverse educational backgrounds who wish to pursue a career in translating and interpreting.

Courses are offered at:
Bellevue Community College,
Bellevue, WA.

For registration information call:
(425) 649-3171 or

(206) 938-3600.

Fee for each course is \$300.

SPRING SCHEDULE

Basic Interpreting Skills (INTRP 102)

10 Thursdays, 6-9 p.m.
April 1-June 3.

Three credits.

Instructor: Susana Stettri Sawrey

Ethics & Business Practices (INTRP 106)

10 Wednesdays, 6-9 p.m.
March 31-June 2.

Three credits.

Instructor: Susana Stettri Sawrey

Vocabulary Acquisition & Terminology Research (INTRP 105)

11 Mondays, 6-9 p.m.
April 5-June 14.
No class 5/31/99.

Instructors: World Languages Staff

Introduction to Translation and Interpreting (INTRP 101)

10 Wednesdays, 6-9 p.m.
April 7-June 9.

Instructors: Courtney Searls-Ridge and
Martha Cohen

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"Upcoming Events..."

NOTIS General Meeting

June, 1999 in Portland. Look for details on a Saturday double-header in coming issues!

Fifth Annual Portuguese Language Meeting

The 5th Annual Spring Meeting of the Portuguese Language Division of the American Translators Association will take place on **Friday-Saturday, May 7-8** in New Orleans, Louisiana at the Hotel St. Marie. Those interested in making presentations, please contact Timothy Yuan, Administrator, PLD, tel. (718) 776-8139; fax: (718) 776-3589; e-mail: yuan@pipeline.com by March 1, 1999.

FIT Congress

The International Federation of Translators (Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs) will meet **August 6-10** in Mons, Belgium. For information: fit99@writeme.com or www.fit.ml.org

ATA Annual Conference

The 40th Annual Conference of the American Translators Association will be held **November 3-7** in St. Louis, Missouri. Contact: (703) 683-6100; fax: (703) 683-6122, or e-mail: ata@atanet.org

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"ATA recap...."

be confused with N.m (Newton meter, with either raised or a non-the-line period), NM or n.mi. (nautical miles); Pa (pascal) is not the same as pA (picoampere); kg and km should always be written with small letters. "Liter" has posed some problems for the scientific community, divided as to whether the shortened form should be capitalized; a liter is not an I.U. and strictly speaking the "l" should not be capitalized, but it is much easier to avoid confusion with the numeral "1" when "L" is used. The conclusion to this discussion was that "People should not be orphans of their measuring units."

Ivan Bobrovnikov, manager of a Russian-language translation and interpretation company in Seattle, gave good marks to the conference organizers. He had gone to Hilton Head with the aim of learning about new computer tools and attended the Thursday afternoon TAC seminar held jointly by Melby and Lakshin. Ivan also spent time talking with other conference participants, getting feedback on their experiences with computer tools, and came away with the general impression that machine translation remains a "buzz word". (There is an interesting example of a machine-produced translation and its heavily edited final version in the conference Proceedings.) Caterpillar was given as an example of a company that spends millions of dollars on computer translations, but not very successfully.

On the other hand, translation memory software, dubbed "the forgotten middle", is being used more and more and is even becoming a necessity for large clients, including the automotive industry. Translation memory tools refer to translations of entire phrases that have been entered and saved in a computer (as opposed to the machine's stab-in-the-dark attempts based upon translations of isolated lexical units). They function like an automatic glossary pop-up system, but one capable of recognizing and handling more complex syntactic structures. There are one or two translation memory packages that are being used heavily in industry (some have been covered by a survey in the ATA's Translation Company Division's September newsletter). These programs can run into a few thousand dollars and are more for translation companies to consider as an investment. Concerning software localization, it was estimated that 30% of all software packages are being localized; in a few years this figure is expected to rise to 80%.

Sara Koopman, a Spanish-to-English interpreter and translator, who attended this same TAC joint seminar, reported also on Friday afternoon's related TAC-4 seminar, "How to Benefit from Leading-Edge Translation Memory Technology Without Breaking the Bank" offered by Brian Briggs, a Chicago-based specialist in business applications of advanced information technology. For terminology management there are non-Access and non-Excel shareware and freeware offered over the Internet. Sara obtained some useful addresses and will share them with NOTIS. In conclusion, Sara lamented the time she had spent on Access, when it seems that there may be easier programs available.

She also attended the seminar on Friday morning, "Microsoft Word for Translators," given by former NOTIS director, Michael Broschat and Melissa Meier, a French translator and former researcher at Microsoft Corporation. The two representative tips Sara related were, first, to make use of the tiling feature of Word (have three windows open simultaneously: glossary, target text and source text); and, second, to use the bookmark function instead of an asterisk to note places in the text you're unsure of. A bookmark leaves no ungainly symbols that must be removed from the printed document and there is flexibility in how you reference each spot.

Sara also attended the seminar held by Dr. Virginia Benmaman (of the University of Charleston) on "Surfing Appellate Court Briefs for Interpret-

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TEN YEARS LATER.../"SEE-THRU" TERMINOLOGY

MICHAEL BROSCAT

I remember standing in front of about a hundred of you, some ten years ago, as we inaugurated the beginning of NOTIS. My talk that day was on the general usefulness of computers in the field of professional translation. There was no universal acceptance of this proposal, but some people were interested.

To many, the use of computers meant translation by the computer itself. To me, I had very specific problems in mind - I was excited about the possibilities for terminology management. But, little useful has happened in this field over those ten years.

What do I mean by terminology management? Let's look at an example. Imagine that you are reading an English language article. You encounter something like "The Organization of Central Intelligence took delivery of 500 supercomputers today." Your first reaction might be: this was written (or edited) by a non-native speaker of American English. Everyone knows that CIA stands for Central Intelligence Agency; the author has made a mistake. Then, you might wonder: well, maybe there really is an Organization of Central Intelligence. In fact, you might get very, very curious.

From the point of view of gaining knowledge of a particular country, this sentence could be of either extremely good value (new intelligence) or very, very bad value (mistaken intelligence). How would you feel if the next sentence in the article read: "The Central Intelligence Agency has more computers than any other government body in the world." Are you really confused? Are the two organization the same or not?

When I was doing translation of Chinese materials, there were too few guides to the translation of organization names, among many other things. It was at that time that I realized a principle I was to use later in a paper I presented before ATA: the translator is not so much responsible for accuracy as for consistency. Before you get too excited about this I'll rush to explain. A translator is not always able to deal confidently with the material encoun-

tered. In my work for the government, a common response to "I don't know what this means." was "neither do we." In one real sense, that excuses the translator from accuracy on that point. But, what if the translator had treated the same Chinese word or phrase in different ways? Someone reading the translation would not know that the Chinese was identical in the two or more different renditions of those words.

Without a serviceable glossary of organization names, how was I (not to mention any other translators) to render a given organization name? For that matter, how was I to know whether I had ever seen that phrase before, and, if so, how I had translated it before? To me then, and now, it seemed that only the computer could help.

*RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
AND
ENJOY NOTIS*

Terminology software was among the first computer tools developed for translators. I'm not active in translation any more, but do teach an occasional class in technology for translators, and manage to review a product every now and then. None I've seen has met the requirements for use by a translator. Why not?

A wise early commentator upon the use of computer technology for translation noted that if his technical equipment were not "transparent," he wouldn't use it. To say it another way, if a computer program weren't easy to use, he wouldn't consider using it. Too many of the products I've seen have approached terminology management from a scientific point of view. It is, indeed, a complex subject. Most users see one of these products, which usually requires one to designate part of speech, gender, etc., and judge that the effort is not worth the work.

Perhaps, we should start all over from the

beginning: keep a list. Have two columns, and provide a translation for each source language term you list in the first column. We "published" more than one of these glossaries in the early days, on the NOTIS BBS. With modern software, you can keep this list available on-screen at all times, something I wasn't able to do when I was translating.

Then, if this proves valuable to you, decide whether your system could be improved. Perhaps, it does as much as you want already. Or, maybe you see enough similarity in the kind of work you do that collecting your lists together into one big list is useful. You might find that keeping separate lists for each client helps distinguish the unusual terminology of each.

The point of this activity is to clarify the process of identifying terms that need attention. When you know something without hesitation or can find it readily in a common reference work, there's no need to put that term into a list. You need to use the terminology activity when you are deciding what something means, and you are accepting the responsibility of being consistent in your usage.

If you get interested in seeing what terminology management software developers have made for you, there are some products available. If you attend conferences; e.g. the annual ATA conference or those offered by your regional group, agents for some of these tools are usually among the exhibitors.

I've been looking at a product called DIMAP (you can too: <http://www.cires.com>). It probably answers all scientific arguments about lexicography and terminology management. It is less than transparent to use. The granddaddy of this kind of software is now called MTX, but it is unclear whether it is still sold: <http://www.linguatex.com/index.htm>. A recent search on the Internet for such tools suggests that the field has not been a successful one.

Terminology management helps to solve a real problem. Why don't translators use it more often? Share your discoveries.

Michael Broschat
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“ATA recap....”

ing-Related Issues” on Friday afternoon, which discussed defendants’ rights to have an interpreter; a right recognized until now by only a few courts.

Caitilin Walsh, newly re-elected President of NOTIS, attended the meeting of the ATA Ad Hoc Membership Categories, Rights and Benefits Committee Forum (Chair, Marian S. Greenfield; members, Gabe Bokor, Nicholas Hartmann, Richard Lodge and Ann Sherwin). Only a dozen people or so attended this discussion of voting rights for associate members of ATA, which could be brought about by disassociating voting rights and accreditation. Caitilin noted that peer review recommendation provides an alternate route to active membership, a mechanism that is not often invoked, but is nonetheless provided for in the ATA by-laws. The possibility of simplifying peer review procedure was discussed at the meeting.

Caitilin also attended Alan Melby’s session on “The Y2K Problem and Its Effects on Translators”. The two-page handout from this session was made available at the recap meeting, with instructions on testing a PC’s internal clock for Y2K, as well as susceptibility ratings for varied application software for programs commonly used by translators and Internet sites that have Y2K information. (Melby has contributed this same information in an article in the November/December 1998 issue of the *ATA Chronicle*.)

Courtney Searls-Ridge reported on the ATA Board meeting, with the election of officers, three of whom were incumbents (Alan Adams, Gertrud Champe and Courtney herself). She noted various ATA statistics, including a membership retention rate of over 80% in 1998, and the 1,011 accreditation exams and over 1,500 practice exams taken this past year. The ATA Board has approved workshops for graders to help improve the grading process. It was noted that there is a perceived lack of uniformity in the degree of difficulty of exams across languages in the Association’s examination system.

The ATA Translation Services Directory is going on-line, and Associate Members will now be included. Other questions currently being discussed are the setting of standards for translation users and instituting a mentoring program for translators, including the possibility of long-distance mentoring.

Courtney and Ann noted that because voting is open solely to active members, only 30% of the ATA membership currently votes. There is some disagreement with the linking of voting rights to passing the accreditation exam. A person can become an active member by being recognized as a “demonstrable” professional through peer review. The recent electronic survey included the question of what would constitute sufficient proof of a translator’s competence, but the answers obtained from members were inconclusive. It was noted in passing that there are some once-accredited people, who may “depart” from the ATA (i.e. do not pay dues) for a couple of years, then start paying their dues again. If this happens within a three-year grace period, they will not have lost their active status; otherwise they must start the accreditation process all over again.

The Interpreters’ Division has now been officially approved, and will be headed by Diane E. Teichman. Ms. Teichman is an accomplished interpreter from Houston who has taken up the position of administrator with great enthusiasm. The Division’s first annual meeting was held on Thursday afternoon, under the presiding eye of NOTIS’ Susana Stettri Sawrey (who also serves as President of NOTIS’ sister organization, the Washington State Court Interpreters and Translators Society). In all there were eight meetings at the conference that focused on interpreting issues.

Ann provided the last session summary for the group: the Susana Greiss Lecture, entitled “Publishing Translations from Eastern European Languages and Russian”, given on Saturday morning by Jonathan Brent, editorial director of the Yale University Press. He explained why he was originally inspired to go into - and has stuck with - publishing translations from Eastern Europe and Russia, in which there is now even less interest

than before and little money available. Brent is overseeing a project entitled “The Annals of Communism”, publishing seminal works from Eastern Europe and Russia. Brent’s opinion is that there appear to be no great literary discoveries waiting to be made from the period of the Iron Curtain. There will be no great revelations to come out of Eastern Europe, no great neglected masterpieces that will suddenly “come to light,” because the important works got published, either through “samizdat” or abroad.

Brent also discussed Yale University Press’ new publishing project, “Rethinking the Western Tradition”. Their new translation of Macchiavelli’s *The Prince* is a good example of the philosophy behind the project. It is a work that is more subtle and difficult than standard translations have heretofore been able to communicate; there are ambiguities in the Italian that the translator, Harvey Marsfield, attempted to capture in English.

This last was the only language-specific seminar reported on in Seattle. In all there were eight Slavic-language meetings at the Conference, nine Spanish, seven Japanese, seven French, four German, and two apiece for the Chinese, Nordic, and Portuguese languages. Division newsletters are providing short summaries of some of the relevant seminars. Selections provided in the conference Proceedings give extremely interesting and much more detailed information about the seminars covered, although not all sessions are included.

The Proceedings sell for \$50 to ATA members.

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CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	DETAILS	TIME & PLACE
Saturday March 27	NOTIS Workshop	Using Search Engines	1 - 3 p.m. Savery 216 University of Washington
Saturday March 27	Slavic SIG Coffee Hour 3:30 p.m.		3:30 p.m. European Restaurant and Pastry Shop
April 17	WITS Annual Meeting	To be announced	To be announced
June	NOTIS Double Workshop	To be announced	To be announced
August 6-10	FIT Congress	International Federation of Translators Meeting	Mons Belgium
November 3-7	ATA Conference	40th Annual ATA Nationwide Meeting	St. Louis, MO

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