



ITIA BULLETIN

December 2003

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Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association
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■ Editorial

Welcome to the December issue of the *ITIA Bulletin*. In this month's issue, we have a copy of the submission made by the ITIA to the Public Consultation on Mental Health Services (see *ITIA Bulletin November 2003*) as well as other news items from the ITIA relating to certification and the ITIA website.

On a personal note, however, it is with a great deal of sadness that I have to announce that I will be standing down as editor of the *ITIA Bulletin* in January 2004. This was an extremely difficult decision to make, particularly as the readership has, with the assistance of the various contributors, the *ITIA Executive Committee* and the Chairman of the ITIA, Michael J. McCann, continued to grow steadily since I founded it in January of this year. Unfortunately, the demands of my PhD research, coupled with my "real" work as a translator and my involvement with the *International Association for Translation & Intercultural Studies* means that I cannot devote the time and effort the *ITIA Bulletin* deserves.

My successor as editor will be John Kearns, a regular contributor to the *Bulletin* and a fellow doctoral candidate at Dublin City University. I am sure that the success of the *ITIA Bulletin* to date will continue under his editorship. I would like to wish both John and the *Bulletin* every success. My tenure as editor has been thoroughly enjoyable and I hope you also found it interesting and enjoyable. I will still remain an active professional member of the ITIA so you might still see me around at the various ITIA events in the future. In the meantime, I'd like to wish you all a very happy and peaceful festive season.

Jody Byrne, MITIA
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■ ITIA Chairman's Book Prize

Congratulations to the winner of the ITIA's Chairman's November 2003 book prize who is *Lucía Alonso*, of Ballsbridge, Dublin 4, Ireland. A copy of *Shamrock Tea* by Ciaran Carson, the new Honorary Member of the ITIA, is on the way to the lucky winner as we speak.

By way of a "continuing thank you" and in order to promote the *ITIA Bulletin* a little more, we are continuing the Chairman's Book Prize for our subscribers in December 2003.

To enter, all you need to do is:

- 1 Invite a colleague to join the *ITIA Bulletin* mailing list by their sending an email to

*itia-ezine-
subscribe@yahoo.com*

- 2 Send a blank Email to bookprize@infomarex.ie to confirm your participation in the December 2003 draw.
- 3 On the 20th December 2003, we will pick a low prime number at random and - in the date and time order of the replies to bookprize@infomarex.ie. A member of the *itia-ezine@yahoo.com* mailing list will then be the proud and lucky owner of a translation related book.
- 4 The winner will receive the book in the post /mail and his/her name will be announced in the January issue of the *ITIA Bulletin*.

So, don't delay, invite a colleague to join our *ITIA Bulletin* list and send a blank Email to bookprize@infomarex.ie

■ Public Consultation on Mental Health Services

Submission from the Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association prepared by Mary Phelan, ITIA Press Officer

The Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association

The Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association (ITIA) is an association that brings together translators, conference interpreters and interpreters working in the courts, hospitals, mental health setting and at interviews with asylum seekers.

Background

Over the last ten years, the population profile of Ireland has changed dramatically. It is now a multicultural population that includes workers from the European Economic Area, refugees, programme refugees, asylum seekers and work permits holders. This presents new challenges to health service providers and to those working in a mental health setting who may find that they now need the help of an interpreter to allow communication take place. A further problem is posed by culture specific assessment tools.

At present in Ireland interpreters cannot avail of any training at all. They are not tested to ensure that their

knowledge of languages is sufficient to ensure a high standard of interpreting. Nor is their interpreting ability assessed. The assumption is that if a person speaks two languages they can interpret. This is a dangerous assumption because interpreting is a skill that benefits from training and practice. The mere fact that a person speaks two languages is not in itself a guarantee of a high standard of interpreting.

While some interpreters may have undergone training in their native countries and some untrained interpreters may work to a good standard, it is likely that untrained interpreters may not interpret all that is said, may add extra information or may alter information. Any such changes could dramatically alter a Mental Health specialist's assessment of a particular case. Interpreting in Mental Health settings was highlighted in two articles in the *Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine*, March 2002. In an article entitled *Characteristic and treatment of asylum seekers reviewed by psychiatrists in an Irish inner city area*, Kennedy et al. make the following points:

Of those with little or no English, an interpreter accompanied the patient in only one case and no one accompanied the patient on at least one consultation in six of the 14 cases. In 10 cases, there were problems obtaining a complete history due to language difficulties. (page 5)

This study pointed out the difficulty in carrying out a full assessment of those with a poor command of English without a fully trained interpreter. (page 6)

Language difficulties appeared to be a major hurdle to diagnosis and probably treatment in a substantial minority. Trained interpreters were not readily available, leading to incomplete assessments and probably lack of empathy and treatment in many cases. (page 7)

In *Mental illness in migrants: diagnostic and therapeutic challenges*, Feeney et al make similar points:

It is extremely difficult to engage the services of an interpreter in Ireland... it is often necessary to rely on the assistance of relatives or friends of the patient, who may also have a limited knowledge of English. This practice also makes it difficult to maintain patient confidentiality and may impede the development of a trusting therapeutic relationship with the mental health team. (page 30)

In 1999 the United States Office of Minority Health observed in the context of medical interpreting that:

The error rate of untrained 'interpreters' is sufficiently high as to make their use more dangerous in some circumstances than no interpreter at all. This is because it lends a false sense of security to both provider and client that accurate communication is actually taking place.

The mere fact that a person speaks two languages is not in itself a guarantee of a high standard of interpreting.

Mental health interpreting is generally considered to be a specialised sector of interpreting. It is essential that interpreters working in this field can avail of training.

A further problem is that there is at present no Code of Ethics for Interpreters. This means that interpreters may not be aware of the importance of confidentiality. They may agree to give the service provider their assessment of a client's condition. They may give advice to a client.

Examples of good practice

The Netherlands provide a good example of what can be done to improve interpreting. Originally there were six interpreter centres around the country (now being changed to one) that operated from a register of 700 interpreters. The Ministry of Justice pays the interpreters. The minimum age for interpreters in the Netherlands is 23 and they should have spent at least three years in the country. From 2003 all interpreters have to be accredited if they are to work for government services. Certification will become void after a certain amount of time; as a result ongoing training will be part of the system.

Similarly, in the United Kingdom interpreters can take examinations for the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting where they specialise in English law, Scottish law, medicine or local government.

What should be done?

- ◆ Training should be provided in interpreting, focusing on interpreting techniques, note-taking, interpreting practice, ethics and terminology. Ongoing refresher training for interpreters should also be provided.
- ◆ A testing system should be established for the most commonly used languages. In the case of other

languages, knowledge of the English language should be formally tested. A register of accredited interpreters should be established and a record should be kept of all cases where interpreting is provided and in what languages.

- ◆ Short training courses should be provided for personnel who need to work through interpreters.

Conclusion

The Irish Interpreters' and Translators' Association is extremely concerned at the present unregulated situation. While our members agree to comply with our Code of Ethics, unfortunately some working interpreters may not. The ITIA executive committee would welcome an opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail with the Mental Health Services. As we are very interested in finding ways to ensure a high standard of interpreting, we would like to work with the Services in exploring ways to improve the present situation. Please feel free to contact us.

References

- Feeney L, Kelly B.D., Whitty P and O'Callaghan E
Mental illness in migrants: diagnostic and therapeutic challenges, Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine, Vol. 19, No 1, March 2002
- Kennedy N, Jerrard-Dunne P, Gill M, Webb M
Characteristics and treatment of asylum seekers reviewed by psychiatrists in an Irish inner city area, Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine, Vol. 19, No 1, March 2002.

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ENGLISH from French, German

■ New Members of the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is delighted to welcome the following new members to the Association:

Professional Members:

ATSUKO YAMAMOTO

Ballyclough, Mallow, Co. Cork

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JAPANESE ENGLISH from English Japanese – technical, electronics, engineering, localization

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SPANISH from English French ENGLISH from Spanish – commercial, technical, legal, economical, linguistic

Joining the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is always delighted to welcome new members to the Association.

■ Next Issue of the ITIA Bulletin

The next issue of the *ITIA Bulletin* will be out on **15th January, 2004**. So if you have any contributions, news, suggestions or something you'd like to share, send them to the new editor, **John Kearns**, at [kearns\(a\)pro.onet.pl](mailto:kearns(a)pro.onet.pl). The deadline for submissions is **10th January 2004**.

Subscribing to the ITIA Bulletin

To subscribe, simply send an Email to [itia-ezine-subscribe\(a\)yahoogroups.com](mailto:itia-ezine-subscribe(a)yahoogroups.com)

To unsubscribe, simply send an Email to [itia-ezine-unsubscribe\(a\)yahoogroups.com](mailto:itia-ezine-unsubscribe(a)yahoogroups.com)

There are five categories of membership:

- ◆ Ordinary
- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Corporate
- ◆ Student
- ◆ Honorary

Ordinary membership is open to anyone with an interest in translating or interpreting. *Professional membership* is for those who meet strict criteria set by the professional membership committee of the ITIA and which is part of the drive to raise the status of the profession in the European market.

Corporate membership is for firms and agencies associated with the profession while *student membership* is for undergraduates engaged in third level language and/or translation studies. Finally, *honorary membership* is intended for national and international persons who have distinguished themselves in our professional field.

For more information on how to join as well as for the relevant application forms, visit the ITIA website at:

www.translatorsassociation.ie

■ Foclóir: A New Corpus-based Irish Dictionary

Some 40 years since Tomás de Bhaldraithe published the now familiar *English Irish Dictionary, Foras na Gaeilge*, the new body responsible for the promotion of the Irish language throughout the whole island of Ireland has announced that work is now under way on an exciting new project to produce a new, comprehensive and modern bilingual English-Irish dictionary. When completed, the dictionary will have in the region of 50,000 headwords and will be available in both print and electronic versions.

Unlike other dictionaries, this project will be based on a new Irish language corpus specifically created for this purpose. In general terms, a corpus can be described as a body of texts in digital form. However, a more specific definition of corpus is a large, representative sample of the written language which illustrates the full repertoire of text-types in a language. Over the course of producing this dictionary, the project will create a new corpus of Irish containing 30 million words as well as a new corpus of Irish-English consisting of some 25 million words taken from newspapers, novels and other sources.

The project team maintain that the three main dialects of Irish will be equally represented in the finished dictionary. This means that where there are different translations for the same term, each one will be given and the particular dialect will be indicated. On the other side of the dictionary so to speak, the English used will be predominantly of the Hiberno-English variety although some standard British and American English forms will be used.

As part of the development of the corpus, the team are asking the public to help by “donating” texts for inclusion in the corpus or by providing citations in Irish or Irish-English. All in all, this promises to be both an exciting and deeply beneficial project for the Irish language. Visit the *Foclóir* site to find out more.

Jody Byrne, MITIA
[jody.byrne\(a\)dcu.ie](mailto:jody.byrne(a)dcu.ie)

For more information, visit:
www.focloir.ie

■ Residencies for Translators and Writers in France

In 1997, the town council of Arphy, near Le Vigan in the department of Gard (France), acquired three quarters of the little village of Pratcoustals, which is 650m above sea level and has a superb view of the surrounding area. There are two sets of plans for the part that is owned by the town council, but no decision has yet been made as to which project will be realized.

‘*Pratcoustals en Caractères*’ is an association sans but lucratif (a non-profit-making association) with the objective of:

creating temporary living and working space in Pratcoustals for people who want to work on a project in peace and quiet. The emphasis has been placed on the written word (authors and translators), but others are welcome too, for example photographers and researchers.

The accommodation consists of:

- ◆ individual small houses and flats with working space (including an Internet connection), cooking facilities and sanitary fittings
- ◆ communal spaces:
- ◆ kitchen
- ◆ living room
- ◆ working space (including a dark-room)

This project has to compete with another one that is supported by tour operators and other groups with more influence and financial muscle, who want to develop Pratooustals into a grossly oversized holiday village, rather like Club Med.

Despite not having these kinds of resources, we have managed to raise the necessary interest in our project from the local authorities. But before going any further, the first thing we have to do is demonstrate that there really is enough of a response within the target groups. We therefore have to be able to present market survey results within a very short time frame. To do this, we are looking for people who would be so kind as to fill out and return the enclosed questionnaire (with no obligations, naturally) and for organizations (within the trade) that might be prepared to include this introduction and the questionnaire in their magazines and so forth.

Suggestions, remarks, queries or requests for more detailed information about the project (in French) can be sent to:

Pratcoustals en Caractères.
c/o Jorinde Brokke.
Pratcoustals.
F-30120 Arphy.
Email: encarteres (a) wanadoo.fr
Jorinde Brokke (secretary):
+33 (0)4 67 81 99 43.

■ ITIA Website

The Executive Committee of the ITIA has set up an *ad hoc* sub-committee to research and oversee the upgrading of our ITIA website at

www.translatorsassociation.ie

As we investigate ways of improving our web presence it is important that we know what you think of our website and how you would like to see it evolve. The sub-committee would be grateful if you could let us know what TWO things you, as an ITIA member, suggest for the website, bearing in mind

1. that this website is the first contact which the public and potential clients have with the ITIA;
- and**
2. that this website must be a professional statement of what the ITIA is.

Please send your suggestions to:
itia-website@yahoo.com

Your posting to the above eMail address will be read by each member of the ad hoc ITIA website sub-committee and will be briefly acknowledged.

■ Review: Innovation and E-Learning in Translator Training

Innovation and E-Learning in Translator Training: Reports on Online Symposia. Ed. Anthony Pym, Carmina Fallada, José Ramón Biau, and Jill Orenstein. Tarragona, Spain: Intercultural Studies Group, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, 2003. 99 pages. € / \$5.

November 20th-29th this year saw an online symposium on localisation and translator training organised by Anthony Pym and the Intercultural Studies Group at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona. The symposium was the latest in a series of such forums, and used a set of opinion papers to initiate a debate which featured over 100 email contributions from interested parties on a myriad of aspects of training in localisation. The symposium itself will be the subject of a future discussion (the curious may wish to investigate the archives at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/itit/messages>, though you'll need to first register at <http://groups.yahoo.com>), but it provides a useful occasion to take a look at a hard-copy publication from earlier this year, also emanating from the ISG in Tarragona, which presents position papers and summaries of discussions from two previous online symposia, one on innovation in translator and interpreter training which took place in January 2000 (again archived at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/itit/messages/1>), the other on translator training and E-learning from November 2001 (<http://www.ice.urv.es/trans/sociolinguistics/elearning/elearning.html>). While it's unfortunate that the book omits Seán Golden's first on-line symposium on translator training in 1997 (<http://www.fti.uab.es/sgolden/colloquium/colloquium.htm>), with its seminal contributions from Pym, Douglas Robinson, and Michael Cronin in particular, the present volume nevertheless remains a useful primer in its fields, with contributions from many of the leading names in translation pedagogy.

A first question which could be posed is 'Why bother with a print publication when contributions are already archived on the web?' Pym, in his introduction, provides various reasons for this – including the tendency which email has to encourage both garrulity

and tangential responses which the re-writing, editing, and summarising associated with print publications tends to reduce. Moreover, many of those who could benefit most from discussions of the integration of technology into education may not have access to the Internet or may be disinclined to use electronic resources in this way. As this is arguably the audience which could benefit most from such a discussion, both print publications and live face-to-face conferences will thus continue to play a role in the foreseeable future.

Translator training as an academic field has long suffered from a piecemeal approach to research – isolated papers on isolated research issues...

The symposium on innovation in translator and interpreter training used as stimuli a set of questions, along with position papers (some written in response to the questions) by Roberto Mayoral, Daniel Gouadec, Brian Mossop, Christiane Nord, and Don Kiraly (with a general response from Yves Gambier also included). To give the flavour of the discussion, here's a small sample of the questions asked: Who should be trained? What markets should we be training for? How should teachers be trained? How should translators be qualified? How many students should be in a translation / interpreting class? What do you actually do in class? Should we separate theory and practice classes? Should interpreting be taught before or after translation? Should specialised vocabularies and area knowledge be taught in translation programmes? Can distance-learning techniques be used in translator training? Are students being taught to work with the available electronic tools? Where do drop-outs go? Should we be producing technicians or humanists? What are the major success areas / shortcoming in current translator training? What innovations should be expected?

What I find intriguing about these questions is that, at least on one level, they're so basic. The fact that questions such as "Who should be trained?", "Who should be teaching?", "What do you actually do in class?" etc. may still legitimately be posed obviously reflects the youth of the discipline of translator training (and it should be emphasised here that the aim of these stimuli questions is highly legitimate and well conceived – no criticism is intended in this respect). Yet, at another level, it's almost as though the existing

research in this area has really produced no tangible results which those interested in translation training can use as starting points. Still more intriguing is the fact that there is not even basic agreement among the respondents about these primary issues. Among the responses to the stimuli, we find that two of the most famous writers on translator training - Daniel Gouadec and Brian Mossop - provide answers that are not only different, but are diametrically opposed on basic ideological premises. As Gambier notes, while Gouadec appears to privilege criteria of short-term performance in the "production" (Gambier's term) of students who are able to work as soon as they have finished their studies – Mossop puts more emphasis on humanist notions of 'education' rather than 'training' (32). Gambier believes that these two approaches "reflect the different speeds with which universities are developing in relation to social and technological environments", (though frankly to consider innovators such as Gambier or Mossop as representing any kind of typicality of their university environments may be putting things a little strongly).

Translator training as an academic field has long suffered from a piecemeal approach to research – isolated papers on isolated research issues which are not cognisant of other isolated research in the same field have tended to proliferate – and thus both the stimuli questions and Gouadec and Mossop's debate point to the necessity for more general debates, and indeed forums for debate, such as this. Elsewhere in this section there are summaries of discussions which arose in the symposium on accreditation, class size, cultural difference, interpreting, literary translation, media translation, collaboration and teamwork, which again serve well as useful introductions to the state of play in their respective areas.

The symposium on translator training and e-learning also features replies to another questionnaire from Debbie Folaron, Daniel Gouadec, Margarita Rodríguez, Ubaldo Stecconi, and the Vicenza-CETRA Project under the co-ordination of Giuliana Schiavi. Again there are summaries of symposium discussions on what has already been done with e-learning in translator training, students' reactions to e-learning, e-learning and interpreting, effort required for e-learning, the limits of technology, and the thorny issue of whether students should do real translations or translation exercises devised for pedagogical purposes. Some of the summaries (especially on the last topic) could perhaps have been extended a little longer, but if they serve to point more dedicated researchers to the

archived symposium for fuller treatments of these issues, then they will have functioned well.

The volume is available from Anthony Pym, Filologia Anglogermànica, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Plaça Imperial Tàrraco, 1, E-43005 Tarragona, Spain.
ap(a)fl.urv.es

■ Interpreters among war casualties

At least four interpreters have died during 2003 while working with journalists in conflict areas. This information comes from a new organization, the *International News Safety Institute*, set up by the International Federation of Journalists to monitor the activities of media personnel, including translators and interpreters, in hostile areas.

The four were, *Hussein Osman*, an interpreter for ITN who has been missing (presumed dead) since 22 April, when an ITN team came under fire from both Coalition Forces and the Iraqi Army close to Basra. Terry Lloyd, reporter for ITN was killed in the incident while the cameraman, Fred Nerac, is also missing and presumed dead.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there have been many casualties among interpreters working for the occupying forces in Iraq...

In Northern Iraq shortly afterwards, *Kamaram Abdurazaq Muhamed*, a Kurdish translator working with the BBC correspondent, John Simpson, was killed when the news team was travelling with coalition forces and was bombed in a friendly fire incident.

Another interpreter, *Waleed Khalifa Hassan Al-Dulami*, died in a car crash while on assignment for the Boston Globe in Iraq.

Finally, *Akité Kisembo*, an interpreter for AFP, was abducted and executed by rebels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there have been many casualties among interpreters working for the occupying forces in Iraq but information is hard to come by as these people tend to be treated with

contempt by the US and UK forces because of their association with Saddam's regime, and by the local people because of their collaboration with the occupiers.

The *INSI* admits that its own information may be quite sketchy and the real situation is probably worse, but at least now there is a forum in which the reciprocal needs of interpreters and journalists working in hostile environments can be monitored and discussed.

Michael Friel
Chair of the FIT Human Rights Committee
mfriel(a)iol.ie

■ A note from the ITIA Certification Subcommittee

The last AGM, which was held on 11th November 2003, passed a proposal to set up a Certification Subcommittee. Members of the ITIA Executive Committee: Bassia Bannister, Annette Schiller and Miriam Watchorn have now formed the Subcommittee, which is currently finalising a certification procedure. The procedure and qualifying criteria will be presented and fully explained to the ITIA members in the January and February issues of this Bulletin. An invitation to submit applications will follow in due course.

We would be glad to hear from any ITIA member who may be interested in becoming an ITIA Certified Translator. Please send an email message to: [bannister\(a\)eircom.net](mailto:bannister(a)eircom.net) indicating your language pair(s).

■ Interesting Links on the Web

Ethnologue.com

"Languages of the world and a whole lot more!" - includes publications, software and bibliography sections
<http://www.ethnologue.com>

Linguasphere Observatory

Linguasphere - an independent research network devoted to the classification of the world's languages and dialects.
<http://www.linguasphere.org>

■ Conferences

FIRST DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

Dublin City University, Ireland

Date: 26th-27th March, 2004

Call for Papers

This one and a half day conference will provide a platform for postgraduate students and post-doctoral researchers in Translation Studies to present their research and discuss matters relevant to their work in a supportive environment. Master students thinking about pursuing doctoral research are also invited to attend.

A number of staff members from the Centre for Translation and Textual Studies specialised in a wide range of subjects will be present to offer feedback to the speakers. Prof. Michael Cronin and Prof. Jennifer Williams will close the conference by rounding up issues raised in the sessions.

Presentations on all areas of Translation Studies are welcome. Papers should report on one or more of the following:

- ◆ research findings
- ◆ methodological issues
- ◆ ethical issues

Speakers will be allocated 20 minutes for presentation, followed by 10 minutes of questions. The language of the conference will be English.

Important dates:

Abstract submission deadline: 15th January

Notification of acceptance: 15th February

Conference organisers:

- ◆ Jody Byrne
- ◆ John Kearns
- ◆ Gabriela Saldanha
- ◆ Marion Winters
- ◆ Michelle Woods

Abstracts of 300 – 400 words should be submitted to

Gabriela Saldanha [gabriela.saldanha(a)dcu.ie]

Marion Winters [marion.winters(a)dcu.ie]

Details of registration fees, which will be kept to a minimum, will follow shortly.

For updates go to

<http://www.ctts.dcu.ie/CFPpgconf.html>

■ Contacting The ITIA

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■ ITIA Resources for Translators

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* has compiled a series of useful information leaflets for translators and interpreters - both members and non-members alike. These leaflets are available from the ITIA website at www.translatorsassociation.ie.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ◆ <i>The Translation Profession</i> | ◆ <i>Translation Services in Ireland</i> |
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