ITIA

ITIA BULLETIN

February 2007

ITIA Bulletin

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

This month's issue reflects the multiplicity of roles that translators and interpreters fulfil all over the world. To some of us, technological advances are vitally important to efficiency and continuing viability. To others, technology is a threat. Others still have little concern for these issues as freedom of speech is not a given in their countries and censorship threatens their livelihoods. In this publication, I strive to speak to all translators and more importantly to keep us all informed about how others are making their way within T/I the world over.

With this in mind, read on for interesting articles on such diverse topics as immigration, technology and censorship as they relate to T/I.

Enjoy!

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Editor ITIA Bulletin
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Freelance and Quality

It is well known that Asian countries such as India and China today are developing fast and that their economies are growing stronger year after year. On a trip to China in 2005 Gordon Brown, Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, observed that in two decades China's English speakers will outnumber all the native English speakers in the world.

A good deal of products made in China already come with manuals unmistakably written in English at the very beginning. Sentence constructions, ambiguities, vocabulary, inconsistency and misspellings reveal a non-native authorship. In extreme cases, such writing is utterly incomprehensible. Not the ideal state of affairs conducive to accurate translation work and, to add insult to injury, in the end it is the translator who is blamed for the poor quality of the work.

It took me quite a while to realise, for example, that a "cash recycling system" was not an illegal procedure but an ATM.

It goes without saying that I (or anyone else) cannot prevent people from writing in a language other than their mother tongue (also because I do it myself) and/or from wanting their texts to be translated into other languages. Be that as it may, such documents could be at least revised by a native speaker first.

A freelance translator is, by definition, not engaged by a single employer but he or she is each time assigned a job from a different client (or intermediary agency) and no contract of any sort binds either party.

In such a scenario quality is consequently not an essential, to either the source text or the translation.

Raffaele La Gala

New Members of the ITIA

The ITIA welcomes the following new members…

Ordinary Members

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ROMANIAN to and from English
Translation and Interpreting

Joining the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is always delighted to welcome new members to the Association. There are five categories of membership:

- Ordinary
- Professional
- Corporate
- Concession (undergraduate & senior citizen)
- 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 *concession* membership is for undergraduate students engaged in third level language and/or translation studies and senior citizens. 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**

■ International Translation Day 2007

THEME OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSLATION DAY 2007 - DON'T SHOOT THE MESSENGER!

It always pays to hire professional translators and interpreters to get the job done right.

And it's extremely important not to shoot them.

"… At his outburst the chamber erupted, and despite attempts by high-ranking diplomats to extract an apology, Mr Berlusconi refused to oblige … Not surprisingly, there was also an attempt to shift blame to the translator – or interpreter, in this case. 'My joke wasn't meant to be offensive,' an AP dispatch reports Berlusconi saying. 'It was an ironic joke, perhaps the translation wasn't done in the ironic sense'."

"… 'The president was joking,' [a Kremlin spokesman] told the BBC: 'Russian is a very complicated language, sometimes it is very sensitive from the point of view of phrasing. I don't think that the proper translation is able to reflect the meaning of the joke'."

These familiar stories are two among many: it is a time-honoured tradition for political gaffes to be put down to the translator or interpreter to save face. Few people are taken in; the translators patiently shrug their shoulders, and life goes on.

But history is already littered with the corpses of translator-martyrs, and the language professions are becoming increasingly dangerous. There are parts of the world where translators and interpreters literally risk death simply by doing their job. Some 261 translators and interpreters died in Iraq in 2006, and more in Afghanistan. Elsewhere, translators have been jailed for their work, and received death threats for daring to translate the works of authors such as Salman Rushdie. One was murdered.

Translation is a risky business. Translators and interpreters bear an enormous responsibility in carrying messages between languages and cultures, and problems getting the word across can spell disaster on all sides. For without such experts – translators, interpreters, terminologists – our globalised world would be an uncomprehending place indeed.

...it is a time-honoured tradition for political gaffes to be put down to the translator or interpreter to save face

From the embedded translator in the battle zone to the interpreter whispering in the ear of a visiting dignitary to the specialist translating the owner's manual for your next car or subtitling a news report, the work of the language professions is present in every part of the globe, in every walk of life. Everyone, everywhere, is increasingly dependent on the services of those who make language their business. And the savviest leaders are already aware that the messenger is no fall guy, simply there to take the flak when things go wrong. They know that the language professional is to be celebrated, to be welcomed for insightful comments and questions that lead to messages – text and speech – whose clarity and impact do credit to their organisation's image.

The International Federation of Translators' choice of Don't Shoot the Messenger! as the theme for International Translation Day 2007 is intended to draw attention to the hazards faced by translators, and also by those who believe that professional language services are an unnecessary option. Using a professional means you can be sure of putting across your message in full, no matter what language you use.

Video messages via mobile for sign language users

While text messaging has helped give deaf people access to mobile communications, those who rely primarily on sign language have been left behind by cell phone technology. That could change, thanks to the MobileASL project at the University of Washington.

The MobileASL project seeks to use video compression to allow sign language communications over wireless phones. PDA phones with larger screens and built-in video capture capabilities have helped the effort toward its goal, but university researchers still face bandwidth constraints from today's slow wireless networks. To produce the quality of video needed for intelligible ASL, they have had to invent a real time video compression scheme.

Officials with the project say that they have been able to almost double the compression ratios of MPEG-2, allowing them to transmit video that allows users to understand semantics of ASL, regardless of the bandwidth issues posed by existing wireless networks. The National Science Foundation-sponsored project relies on cell phones running the Windows Mobile Platform.

The MobileASL stretches the bandwidth even further by using motion and skin detection algorithms to focus in on the most important areas in the video – the hands and face. By concentrating on the portions of the image that contain skin pixels, the researchers found they could then encode those regions at higher rates than the rest of the image.

The MobileASL group is inviting a few of the more than one million deaf or hard of hearing Americans who are fluent in sign language to take part in an eye-tracking study to determine visual patterns in sign language conversations.

New Report on multicultural integration emphasises learning of English

In the U.K., the Commission on Integration and Cohesion launched its interim report which states that language is the single largest barrier to community relations. The Commission on Integration and Social Cohesion was set up last summer amid pressure over multiculturalism and claims that not enough had been done to tackle issues raised by the July 2005 London bombings.

The commission was asked to come up with policies to help make an increasingly diverse society more cohesive.

In its interim report, the commission asks whether enough is being done to ensure that the correct first steps are taken to integrate two key groups into British

society: foreign migrant workers and spouses. Speaking English is emerging as the hot topic of the report.

If people do not speak any English on coming to the UK, the commission says ministers should consider changing immigration rules to ensure they have some command of the language before being allowed to come as a worker or through marriage.

"If you can't speak English...you are on a path to isolation and separation"

Commission chairman Darra Singh said: "Learning English is clearly the responsibility of the individual, but local authorities, central government and employers have a key role in supporting migrants to improve their language skills."

He added: "If you can't speak English - whether you are a new migrant or someone who has lived here for years - you are on a path to isolation and separation."

Under current proposals, only migrants who are unemployed or on benefits will qualify for free English lessons from September. The government also proposes to cut benefits to those who cannot prove they are learning English.

'Impractical' Rehna Azim, a barrister and editor, said suggestions that immigrants should learn English before arriving in Britain were impractical, "The idea that some young woman in Pakistan or Bangladesh can go to a class in her village to learn English when she knows nothing about this country is really... impractical and it is not going to happen."

In addition, and of interest to T/I professionals is that the interim report is suggesting that existing translation services be cut to prevent newcomers from using them as a "crutch" to avoid learning English.

Ruth Kelly, Communities Secretary, said her department would study the commission's recommendations carefully in June before responding.

Next Issue of the ITIA Bulletin

The next issue of the ITIA Bulletin will be out in March 2007. If you have any contributions, suggestions or scandals that you would like to share with over 980 subscribers worldwide, send them to Elizabeth Hayes at **elizabeth.hayes7(a)mail.dcu.ie.**

Subscribing to the ITIA Bulletin

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Call for end to censorship in Iran

PEN (Worldwide Association of Writers), IPA (International Publishers' Association) and Article 19 (Global campaigners for free expression) call for an end to censorship in Iran. The three organisations which support freedom of speech worldwide, have written an open letter to the Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad calling for an end to censorship in Iran. The letter was prepared jointly by the IPA, International PEN and the human rights organisation Article 19. In their letter, they express their concern that the dissemination of contents which are classified as "anti-Islamic, immoral or politically unacceptable" can be banned in Iran. The organisations call on the Iranian government to repeal state directives that contravene freedom of speech.

According to the IPA, several Iranian publishers have already reported cases of state censorship and many books have already been banned. The Frankfurt Book Fair has been told, for example, that all translations of the best-selling author Paulo Coelho have been confiscated, as well as Günter Grass' "*Mein Jahrhundert*", "*The Shadow of the Wind*" by Carlos Luiz Zafon, Andrej Kurkov's "*A Matter of Life & Death*" and Kurt Vonnegut's "*Timequake*".

The full text of the letter can be found at
www.ipa-uie.org/freedom/Iran%205Dec06.pdf

Another medical interpreting product comes on the market

In recent months, there have been several new technologies aimed at bridging the language gap in medical facilities. Hospital administrators are hoping that there is a technological alternative to hiring medical translators.

In the U.S., the increasing number of patients with limited English proficiency (LEP) has recently been attracting considerable attention in federal and state legislatures. Language barriers impact the quality of care, service utilization, patient satisfaction, health outcomes, legal liability, and hospital admissions, and have resulted in excessive costs within the healthcare industry.

Hospital administrators are hoping that there is a technological alternative to hiring medical translators

As a result, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Civil Rights and Office of Minority Health has mandated that any entities receiving federal funds, including healthcare organizations, "must offer and provide language assistance services, including bilingual staff and interpreter services, at no cost to each patient/consumer with limited English proficiency, at all points of contact, in a timely manner during all hours of operation." The 6,003 hospitals (2003 www.USNews.com) and 836,156 physicians in the United States (2001 www.ama.com) are expected to absorb hundreds of millions of dollars to comply.

This month's product is called 'Converser' and the following is what they claim to be offering...

Converser is a system for two-way translated communication between limited-English-speaking patients and English-speaking caregivers. The system allows people who do not speak the same language to hold broad health-related conversations in real time, without a human interpreter. It addresses a major pain-point in healthcare organizations: low budgets for patient communication and interpreting services. Converser gives medical institutions a translation solution that not only significantly reduces costs but improves overall patient safety, helping to eliminate numerous grave errors made by non-professional human interpreters.

Converser represents a fundamental advance in Machine Translation (MT) technology. No other system on the market today can provide reliable, bi-directional, real-time, wide-ranging translation via multiple interface modalities including speech recognition.

To improve translation accuracy and enhance the user experience, Converser provides reverse (or back-) translations and permits verification and selection of word definitions to ensure that the translation is "what you mean to say." Never before has a commercial product for conversational translation enabled a user to verify in real time that the translation is accurate, and, if not, to correct it on the spot. By allowing even monolingual users to monitor and guide translations as they happen, Converser promotes understanding of and trust in its translations, even in wide-ranging conversations. Monolinguals are thus empowered in multilingual settings, achieving an unprecedented degree of control. Other software products usable for real-time translation (e.g. free online translation services like http://babelfish.altavista.com) provide no such control or confidence.

T/I Services for Irish Government

Two Requests for Tender (RFT) are to be issued by the NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism) in the area of interpreting and translating in the coming year. The overall aim of the project is to provide a comprehensive proposal for quality, cost effective interpreting and translating services for Government in Ireland. The project is being managed by the NCCRI and is funded by the Reception and Integration Agency.

The following provides a brief overview of the work; further details are not available at this time but will be provided in the RFTs.

The first RFT (background research) is expected to be issued around the end of February; the second (Investigation of Options and Development of Proposal) is expected to be issued around July or August. An Advisory Group has been established for the project, drawn from key Government and other interested bodies; people who may be interested in

tendering for the work have not been invited to join the Advisory Group to avoid a conflict of interest.

RFT 1. Background Research: It is expected that the tenderers will carry out research in the area of provision of interpreting and translating services by key Government service providers to people whose first language is not English and will develop a recommendation for investigation. This research would take into account existing service provision in this area and will involve a literature review from Ireland and other jurisdictions, and interviews with key Government Departments, interpreting service providers, professional bodies in the area of interpreting and translating, and service users.

RFT 2. Investigation of Options and Development of Proposal: it is proposed that the recommendation(s) emerging from the research under RFT 1 be further examined, in particular an in-depth feasibility study and cost benefit analysis will be undertaken on the preferred option, and potentially a less in-depth analysis of other options. This will be accompanied by a high-level project plan for how to proceed, as well as a budget and key performance indicators.

If you are interested in receiving the RFTs, please respond with your contact details (name, email, telephone and postal address). If you are aware of someone else who may be interested, please forward this information to them.

Fiona McGaughey
Research and Policy Officer
NCCRI (National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism)
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■ Microsoft releases Vista

The 'Wow' starts now. That's according to Microsoft who released their new operating system, called 'Vista', with all the media hype one would expect. After all, Vista was originally meant to be released in late 2003, early 2004. According to a recent report, the new features in Vista are "evolutionary rather than earth-shattering".

The look and feel of the new operating system is certainly different. One of the first things you notice is the ability to literally thumb through open windows via Flip and Flip 3D. Also, Microsoft has finally delivered a workable desktop search function that should help to reduce the amount of information we lose. Vista is a better version of Windows, more logically organized, more pleasant to use and more secure.

This large release could be the last of its kind for Microsoft...

This large release could be the last of its kind for Microsoft as incremental Operating System updates are becoming the norm through increased use of Windows Update.

Is it worth going out to buy an upgrade to Vista? Not unless you are a committed techie and want to get involved with all the problems or updates, not to mention buying peripherals such as a new graphics card. However, if you plan on buying a new desktop or laptop, it is worth considering Vista over Windows XP but ensure that you can run or replace the applications you depend on and the hardware you plan to plug in.

Wordfast and Trados seem to have some compatibility issues judging by the forum on Proz.com. The best advice is to wait for a while to allow for bugs to be fixed and other software applications to catch up in the compatibility stakes.

Conferences, Calls & Courses

Certificate in Collaborative Translation Teaching (CCTT-2007)

University Ramon Llull, Barcelona, Spain (**www.url.edu**)
Dates: 16 - 20 July 2007

Organised by the Department of Foreign Languages of the University Ramon Llull, the Faculty of Translation of the University of Vic and the interuniversity research group "Collaborative Translation and Foreign Language Teaching" (GRACTLE).

An intensive certificate course designed for translation and foreign language teachers who are seeking to enhance their course development and delivery skills in the field of translation; graduates of translation and interpretation, and of languages and teaching, considering a career in teaching; administrators exploring the possibility of starting a new translation program; experienced professional translators wishing to teach.

This compact course is being offered to meet the needs of university-level translation skills instructors who are! interested in cooperative and collaborative models of learning and teaching and who wish to acquire a more solid foundation in innovative pedagogical and didactic theory and skills.

The program will offer both intensive instruction and a forum for constructive dialogue, and the curriculum reflects a thorough blend of theory and practice. Along with a survey of pedagogical principles, the participants will be provided with numerous opportunities to collaboratively develop curricula, syllabi, lesson plans and tests that can be used in actual translation courses.

Course participants will be part of a small student group enhancing the learning environment. There is a maximum of 25 places available.

Coordination: Maria González Davies **mariaGD(a)blanquerna.url.edu**

Lead instructors: Don Kiraly, Maria González Davies, Richard Samson

The language of instruction is English

More information at: **http://www.uvic.cat/fchtd/especial/en/collaborative_translation_teaching.html**

Translation Technology Nomadism International Conference

Concordia University (Montréal, Québec, Canada), March 8-10, 2007

The program comprises an exciting cross-section of academics and professionals worldwide and throughout Canada who will meet to discuss the new ideas and directions in research, practice and education that technologies have generated in the domains of translation and localisation.

Organisers: Debbie Folaron (Concordia University, Québec, Canada), Yves Gambier (University of Turku, Finland), Daniel Gouadec (Université de Rennes II, France), Michael Cronin (Dublin City University, Ireland), Daniel Simeoni (York University, Toronto, Canada)

Plenary Speakers: Robert K. Logan (Professor Emeritus, Department of Physics, University of Toronto, Canada), Marvin Minsky (Professor of Media Arts and Sciences, Emeritus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, United States), Jost Zetzsche (Translation and Localization Consultant, International Writers' Group, Oregon, United States)

You will find information and updates at regular intervals on our official conference website: **http://francais.concordia.ca/conf07/**. Online registration payment opens after February 10th, but you can pre-register now!

We are looking forward to seeing you at Concordia in March!

On behalf of the organisational committee,

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eCoLoTrain Workshop: Training in eContent Localisation and Translation Tools for Teachers of Professional Translation

Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia. 31 August – 1 September 2007

First Announcement and Call for Papers

The eCoLoTrain project, funded by the European Union in the framework of the Leonardoda-Vinci programme, aims at developing and testing innovative training opportunities for trainers and teachers in the field of professional translation. Its main objective is to contribute to closing the gap between traditional translation classes and specialised courses in translation technology by developing online training material and methodological guidelines for translation teachers, and by encouraging translation teachers to introduce translation tools into their teaching environment.

In order to celebrate the conclusion of eCoLoTrain, which will end on 30 September 2007, we are organising this final Project Workshop as an international forum for translation researchers, teachers and trainers, practitioners and tool providers.

We invite you to share your thoughts, experience and vision of integrating language and translation technology into the training of professional translators at universities, in companies or in professional associations by presenting a paper at our Workshop or simply by joining the discussion.

The Workshop will take place on the premises of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana in the week immediately before the 5th EST Congress taking place in Ljubljana from 3 – 5 September 2007. The language of the Workshop will be English. More details will be given soon on the project website.

Call for Papers

Papers to be presented in the Workshop sessions may address the following broad issues:

- integration of translation technology (terminology management, translation memory, software localisation or machine translation tools) in traditional translation classes
- scenarios for designing courses in general language and LSP translation
- introducing issues of Translation Project Management in translation classes
- new forms of teaching translation (e.g. project courses vs. traditional translation classes)
- e-learning in translation training
- curriculum design for translation training

Publication

All accepted papers will be published in the Workshop proceedings.

Key Dates

- Submission of abstracts (about 300 words): 30 April 2007
- Notification of acceptance of paper: 25 May 2007
- Submission of full versions of papers: 27 July 2007

Scientific Committee

Darja Fišer (University of Ljubljana), Karl-Heinz Freigang (University of Saarbrücken), Tony Hartley (University of Leeds), Yamile Ramirez (University of Saarbrücken), Alina Secara (University of Leeds), Špela Vintar (University of Ljubljana)

Further Information

Details on accommodation, location of the Workshop and travel information will be provided after registration. Registration fee is 60 EURO including snacks.

Contact

http://ecolotrain.uni-saarland.de

e-mail: ecolotrain(a)mx.uni-saarland.de

Dissemination workshop on translation technologies and e-learning development

Paris, France. April 14 2007

Following the previous and highly successful MeLLANGE workshop that took place in Vienna in May 2006, the MeLLANGE partnership invites you to attend the Paris dissemination workshop on translation technologies and e-learning development which will include hands-on sessions, reports of work in progress, and introductions to relevant new resources for e-learning development. Please find more information on the MeLLANGE oficial website: **http://www.mellange.jussieu.fr/**

Initially planned to take place in Olomouc, Czech Republic, the workshop is now taking place in Paris, France and it is being organised by the University of Paris Diderot.

The official language of the workshop is English.

The workshop aims at:

- Presenting the MeLLANGE framework for the European Masters in Translation Technologies (EMTT) developed within the project, as well as the criteria for potential partners to take part in the MA.
- Presenting to potential CEE universities partners best practices for the collaborative creation of e-learning teaching contents in translation, language resource management and technology.
- Presenting the creation process of a Learner Translator Corpus (LTC) and its applications in translation training and research.

Information on registration is now available at the following address:
http://mellange.eila.jussieu.fr/workshop.en.shtml

Registration deadline: 5 March, 2007

For any extra information, please contact the workshop commitee at: mellange_P7(a)eila.jussieu.fr

Natalie Kubler
Manager of the Leonardo European project MeLLANGE,
http://mellange.eila.jussieu.fr

Contacting The ITIA

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	Marion Winters
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Co-opted	Bernadette Moynihan

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**.

- *The Translation Profession*
- *Joining the ITIA*
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