



Irish Translators' and Interpreters' Association
Cumann Aistritheoirí agus Ateangairí na hÉireann

ITIA Bulletin

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In this issue

Editorial.....	2
Members' Corner.....	3
Interdisciplinary court interpreting practice.....	5
Bringing policing and interpreting practices onto the same page.....	5
The Client Perspective: The Ideal Interpreter.....	7
Announcement.....	8
What's hot, what's not.....	9
Worth-a-click.....	9
Joining the ITIA.....	9
New ITIA Members.....	10
Contacting the ITIA.....	11

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Editorial

2016 would appear to be the year of anniversaries - not only on a national basis, closer to home, the ITIA celebrates its 30th birthday in its home at the Irish Writers' Centre, IWC, which in turn is celebrating its 25th anniversary, recently marked by the visit of its Patron, President Michael D. Higgins.

To mark this auspicious event we have a number of plans in the pipeline - a 30th Anniversary Translation Ireland issue, a FIT (Federation Internationale des Traducteurs) Europe meeting in September and a school translation competition. This will be open to secondary school students of Irish, French, Spanish, Italian and German through the Teachers Association of each language and we hope it will awaken interest in the upcoming generation in the joys of both reading and translating written works from other cultures.

With a view to learning more about our members and therefore to be able to offer more tailored Professional Development, events and professional support in general we plan to send out two surveys - one looking at general information about your professional work and another on rates. The question of rates is the one we are most asked about and in line with practice in other professional associations we believe it is important to try to give members at least an indication of the very varied and variable current market rates for translating and interpreting. We will keep you updated on all these events on the website, on our Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages as

well as through this e-zine.

Also, some musical chairs on our Executive Committee - the new Chair of CPD is our Chairperson, Dr Mary Phelan and the new Chair of the Professional Membership is Dr Annette Schiller, taking over from Graziano Ciulli, who, happily, will continue to be our Honorary Treasurer. Along with new blood is a new sub Committee - this one will be dedicated to marketing, something we have long thought to be very necessary for the ITIA and its future. The Chair of Marketing will be Susanne Dirks and she will be aided by Karl Apsel, Miriam Watchorn and Miriam Abuin.

Another au revoir is to my Co-Editor and colleague, Adam Brożyński who has worked on the Bulletin as both Co-Editor and Editor since 2010 and thus ending our Hiberno-Polish editorial alliance. I am much relieved that he will stay on to do the layout and to keep an eye on his former co-editor. Adam is also taking his leave from the ITIA Executive Committee so we would all like to thank him very much indeed for all his valuable contributions to both the Committee and to the Bulletin.

Anne Larchet, Editor

MEMBERS' CORNER

Barbara Fisher is an ITIA professional member and Certified Italian-English translator with a Diploma in Translation from the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL). She is also a member of the CIOL and The Translators Association of the Society of Authors.

Q: Describe yourself professionally in a few lines.

A: I have worked as a full-time translator and interpreter for approximately 25 years. I mostly translate books/articles on architecture, art and design. At the other end of my spectrum are business/legal documents and advertising.

I have been a business/court/police interpreter since the 1980s.

Q: When and why did you decide on a career in translating/interpreting?

A: Anecdotally, at infant school. I used to tell other children's mothers at the school gate that when my (Belfast-born) mother said "wee" she actually meant small.

Languages have always fascinated me and I wanted to live abroad. By sheer coincidence, I ended up in Italy, teaching English, for three months and stayed 25 years, gradually moving into translating and interpreting.

Q: Name the most important thing you did that helped you launch your career.

A: Going to live in Italy. It is hard to have a thorough grasp of a language without spending a great deal of time where it is spoken. I became a partner in a translation agency which was like doing an apprenticeship. I learnt much of what I know the hard way from a more experienced Italian colleague. We worked for a local publisher of travel guides, which is how I came to specialise in architecture, art and design – all of Italy is an open-air museum – and we gradually added more publishers to our list of clients. My court interpreting career had a

colourful start. Nigerian prostitutes were frequently being arrested and the court needed an interpreter so they asked me. It was quite heart-breaking at times as the girls believe they are going to work as maids but are forced into prostitution on arrival. They all have children back home and have no means of escape. Acid was thrown in one girl's face when she informed so the police stopped pressing the girls for the names of gang-leaders.

It is hard to have a thorough grasp of a language without spending a great deal of time where it is spoken

Q: How important are training and qualifications for a career in translating?

A: Hugely important but so is working with more experienced colleagues. It is a never-ending learning process. An ability to write well in your target language is just as important as your grasp of the source language. It can be a lonely profession for freelancers so I recommend joining professional associations and doing CPDs to meet colleagues. You must be extremely disciplined when working from home and sit down at the computer at the designated time. I do mainly rough drafts in the afternoons and keep the mornings for final revisions when I really need to be fresh and focused.

Q: How do you find clients?

A: I have had many of my clients for 20+ years and most have come to me via word of mouth. Publishers do not look in the Yellow Pages or online, they ask around in the business for someone with a reputation for being good, fast and reliable – all hugely important qualities. One thing leads to another in this profession if you make sure you always do a really good job. It may seem time-consuming and unprofitable but it's an investment for the future. It does all come together eventually. I know a good English copy editor in Italy and we recommend each other for jobs. I also

translate papers for upcoming court cases in the UK.

Q: Do you think it is necessary to specialise?

A: Every translation requires specialist knowledge – even a business letter – so my answer is yes – but the main specialisation is learning the translation technique. Specialising in certain areas means you become faster and there may be more demand for your skill. One thing I always tell my clients is that they wouldn't ask their taxi driver to write advertising copy just because he/she speaks the same language (theirs is a different expertise). I find that then the client 'gets it'. For interpreting, you either specialise or do a lot of homework before certain assignments.

Publishers do not look in the Yellow Pages or online, they ask around in the business for someone with a reputation for being good, fast and reliable

Q: What is your favourite type of text/assignment?

A: One that teaches me something! Apart from architecture etc., I have translated books on Ancient Egypt, Archimedes, fine-art restoration and a whole host of subjects. In these cases, I avail of expert consultancy. I am the translation expert and they are experts on a particular subject. Yes, it is time consuming but you learn so much, it's like doing an accelerated course in that field. I also find it helps enormously to read texts on a subject while doing a translation as you develop an ear for it. Architectural texts are particularly difficult to translate because architects think in pictures and often struggle to put their ideas into words. You have to really delve deep into their heads. I am also always aware that Italian is an abstract language and English is very concrete, and I am translating for the reader.

Q: What is the best/worst thing about being a translator/ interpreter?

A: For me, the best thing about both is that jobs are always varied and never tedious. I also find them extremely satisfying – I remember translating a testing theological book years ago and, after endless revisions, thinking that the result was like a miracle because on first reading I thought it was an impossible task. On the downside, that job paid the same as a book my Italian colleague was translating called "Sex, Ask me Anything..." and she flew through it.

The worst thing is working to deadlines although they do focus the mind. Without one, it is hard to reach a cut-off point – you are constantly rereading and changing things.

Interpreting takes me into all worlds – from business meetings to court and custody suites. I have been sent out on a helicopter to a stricken sea vessel with an Italian engineer and boarded ships going in search of really stormy weather to certify inflatable lifeboats... The "worst" part of business interpreting is accompanying clients to expensive restaurants, especially in Italy. You never manage to eat anything as someone is always talking and the interpreter is either listening or speaking and all the while mouth-watering dishes are being served...

Q: Is it possible to have a good standard of living?

A: Absolutely, although for freelancers it helps initially to combine translating with another occupation. Translating isn't really profitable for the first few years as it takes time to become good and fast enough to make it pay.

Q: What advice would you give someone thinking of embarking on a career as a translator/interpreter?

A: You have to love it and be in it for the long haul. Aim for quality and, in time, you will become good, fast and in demand. If you aim immediately for quantity to make money, you

will become fast but not good – which is no use in this profession.

Forge a relationship with your clients, trying to meet them at least once in person rather than just being a name in their email box. Ask them questions about the job and go the extra mile if they are in trouble (without becoming their slave!). If they feel you are on their side, working with them for the best results, they will return.

On a technical note, sift every single word of the source text. Mistakes occur when we don't question our immediate understanding. Luckily, Google Translate can't get inside a writer's head yet.... Secondly, double check everything. You'd be surprised how many writers make factual errors (and put commas in all the wrong places...).

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These next two articles are from our Ausit (Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators) colleagues' publication, In Touch, and cover interpreting at two of the different stages of the judicial process, the opening point - police interviews - and the finale, in court. We know that a considerable number of our members work in this field so these articles should be of interest to them and hopefully to all the other agents, Gardai, lawyers and judges who work with interpreters. They might even take a leaf out of the Australians' book!

Interdisciplinary court interpreting practice with the UNSW (University of South Wales, Australia) law faculty

Court interpreting is a demanding and highly specialised interpreting role that requires extensive training and an excellent

understanding of how things work in Australian courtrooms. Apart from having students go to different courts to conduct observations, interpreting and translating students at UNSW team up with the law faculty every year to conduct an interdisciplinary moot court practice. Law students act as lawyers, and interpreting and translating students act as interpreters, non-English speaking background (NESB) defendants and witnesses to perform a mock trial. In some sessions, real judges come to judge the mock trial and share their experience. This interdisciplinary collaboration started in 2012, with the most recent successful run in 2014. Students from both disciplines gained hands-on experience in a realistic moot court that is equipped with all the facilities that are used in real courtrooms. Through interacting with law students and working through realistic legal proceedings, students gained a valuable insight into the discourse and challenges of court interpreting.

Bringing policing and interpreting practices onto the same page

Georgina Heydon, a senior lecturer at RMIT University, reviews a work entitled *Police investigative interviews and interpreting: Context, challenges and strategies* by S Mulayim, M Lai and C Norma (CRC Press, Boca Raton, US, 2015)

This work represents an important contribution to both interpreter and police training, providing an introduction to the challenges of interpreting police interviews being conducted according to the major international training standards in investigative interviewing.

Through the introduction, the authors provide justification for the focus on police investigative interviewing as a specialisation in interpreter training. The authors draw on useful case studies, legislative requirements and academic literature to present a step-by-

step approach to the complex background material. For instance, a section on police interpreting provides a helpful description of the role of the interview in the justice system, while the section on interpreter competence includes references to cases involving human rights violations relating to the inadequacy of police interpreter services.

In this way, the introduction provides an important context for the subsequent chapters and will assist policy makers, educators and professionals seeking to understand the environment in which police interpreting takes place.

There are five substantive chapters in the book, which are designed to provide resources for different audiences but can also be of benefit to the generalist interpreting student or police practitioner. The first two chapters provide essential information about interpreting and interviewing practice respectively such that professionals from either industry can quickly acquaint themselves with the environment in which the other operates and the key tasks each is trying to accomplish. This is a novel approach, given that research papers in the field - even those by the same authors - tend to be designed specifically for either a policing audience or an interpreting/linguistic audience, or are so academic as to be of limited value to either profession.

The approach taken in this book, which is simply to provide each professional audience with their own introduction to the unfamiliar practices of the other, is a great advantage. Moreover, reading through the material on both professionals' practice is not wasted time, since it is helpful to understand one's own practice from the perspective of an outsider, especially an outsider with whom one must co-operate professionally.

The advantage of providing separate introductions for each of the two main audiences becomes clear in the remaining four chapters. Once the fundamental features and institutional objectives of each

professional have been clearly described to both audiences, the authors can proceed with the assumption that "we are all on the same page". Chapter 3 can then proceed with an engaging discussion of the key challenges for interpreters operating in legal environments that will be informative and useful to all readers. Similarly, Chapter 4 provides a detailed discussion of the specific challenges that professionals can expect to encounter in interpreter-mediated interviews, drawing on the basic understanding of different interviewing techniques in Chapter 2.

As one of the few linguists researching police investigative interviewing, I am well aware that in both the general linguistics community and the interpreting and translating community there is a dearth of specialist knowledge about the interviewing and interrogation protocols used in police academies around the world. The modern police interviewing protocols used in the UK, Australia and New Zealand and to a lesser extent Canada are codified and structured, and utilise very specific questioning techniques designed to assist interviewees to recall details of an event accurately (see below). The North American Reid Method (™), which the authors of this book rightly observe has come under considerable criticism for its coercive techniques, is similarly structured and codified. Anyone attempting to interact professionally with police agencies in the countries mentioned (and many more besides) will encounter one of these dominant techniques, and will need to understand their principles and key features.

In Australia, police and other law enforcement agencies are adopting the principles and protocols broadly referred to as Cognitive Interviewing, which, as mentioned, utilises language in very specific ways. It is critical that both police officers and interpreters understand how the language used in these techniques poses particular problems for interpreters and that their

intended function can be considerably weakened unless they are rendered carefully into the target language. This represents a significant obstacle to both best practice interviewing and best practice interpreting in police interview settings, yet there is little research into the problem. In my experience, police officers are deeply concerned about the lack of empirical research into interpreter-mediated police interviews, since it is becoming an increasingly common circumstance of their practice. Fortunately, this book has the advantage that one of its co-authors, Miranda Lai, is one of the few scholars in the field to have conducted such empirical research, and so the treatment of this specific issue is as detailed and well informed as the present state of research permits.

...it explains the language structures that affect interviewing and interpreting performance...

The presentation in Chapter 5 of a range of linguistic phenomena related to police interpreting provides readers with valuable insights into the mechanics of turn-taking and the discourse-level features of interpreted interviews. Again, this will be of value to practitioners from either police or interpreting fields and a helpful resource for teaching staff, as it explains the language structures that affect interviewing and interpreting performance with descriptions that are practical and explicated with real-life cases.

While this book does not claim to present new research in the field of interpreted police interviews, the synthesis of findings to date is in itself a valuable new resource for professionals and scholars alike.

It is not surprising that there has been so little research in this field, as it requires a collaborative effort from police officers, interpreters, forensic linguists and forensic

psychologists in order to cover the relevant professional skills and academic disciplines. I sincerely hope that this book will inspire further empirical research that draws on established models of practice from both professional fields. In the meantime, this book will serve admirably to inform and enlighten police and interpreting practitioners and might also find a home in law faculties, where legal practitioners can apply this knowledge to their own practice and better inform their clients who are interviewed by police through an interpreter.

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This article is from Translation Times, a blog written by twin sister translators and interpreters, Judy and Dagmar Jenner. Judy gave a really dynamic workshop at the ITIA in 2011 and I think you will find some of her ideas, in this instance from a business point of view, helpful.

The Client Perspective: The Ideal Interpreter

What do clients want?

This post is from the client perspective, because in addition to being services providers ourselves, we are quite oftentimes clients ourselves, meaning that we buy interpreting services. More specifically, we outsource interpreting work to colleagues, mainly for conference interpreting projects. We'd like to give you a quick list of things that we look for, in no specific order. These attributes and characteristics go beyond actual interpreting skills.

- > The interpreter has a professional presence and presentation (website, business e-mail, etc)
- > The interpreter answers our questions the

first time (our pet peeve: we send three questions and get answers to two).

> The interpreter responds promptly. By that we usually mean the same business day. We certainly don't expect an immediate response, but the same business day is usually good.

> The interpreter sends a professional price quote when we ask. And by that we don't mean an email with a rate - we actually mean a document with terms and conditions etc

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> The interpreter knows which questions to ask, for instance about the equipment, when it comes to requesting background materials.

> The interpreter makes us look good. Ultimately, we send interpreters to events to do a great job and to make us look good. This includes being professional at all times.

> The interpreter solves problems quickly. In conference interpreting, problems can arise quite easily. We look for interpreters who take quick action and solve them as independently as they can - although we are, of course, always available to help.

>The interpreter is positive and outgoing. We look for interpreters who focus on the positive rather than things they can't control. Constant complaining at events is not attractive and serves no purpose. Some situations might be less than ideal, but you have to roll with the punches.

> The interpreter has a good rapport with the client. As opposed to many other LSPs, our small boutique agency is not afraid that our interpreters will 'steal' the client. We trust our interpreters and feel very comfortable in our relationships with our clients. At the event, we

think it's very appropriate for interpreter(s) to talk to the client if the situation arises - with or without our presence.

>The interpreter is on time, or early. We have a tendency to work with the same linguists, and we always choose people who have a history of being early. Being late means you will probably not work with us again.

These are the main things we look for when hiring interpreters. Is there anything else you would add?

Reproduced with kind permission of Judy Jenner.

Original at

<http://translationtimes.blogspot.ie/2015/12>

Announcement

MA in Conference Interpreting at NUI Galway

Applications are open for the MA in Conference Interpreting at NUI Galway. The MA in Conference Interpreting has been running since 2008, working in close co-operation with the interpretation services of the European Union. Places on the course are limited to 12 students and will be allocated on a rolling basis. Once full, successful candidates are placed on a waiting list so early application is advised. Applications can be made through www.pac.ie (course code GYA85) and successful completion of an aptitude test. For further details, see the University's website:

<http://www.nuigalway.ie/courses/taught-postgraduate-course/conference-interpreting.html>

What's hot, what's not

What's HOT...

Huiyi Bay, a lecturer at Fudan University, Shanghai and poet, is translating Irish poetry into Chinese. Her translations of poems by Paula Meehan and Harry Clifton are included in a soon to be co-published book, Irish Quartet, a new international poetry series. Although she had already translated Yeats and Heaney before she came, she found much inspiration during her time studying for a PhD at UCD, including birdsong in Blackrock.

...What's NOT

Much fury amongst linguistic purists with the introduction of new spellings, including removal of accents, of about 2,000 French words. Yet more decisions for translators to make!

Worth-a-click

Google translated Russia to 'Mordor' in 'automated' error

<http://tinyurl.com/zgyhk18>

Polish woman wins £5000 payout after being banned from speaking Polish at work

<http://tinyurl.com/juuy59>

Joining the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is pleased to welcome new members to the association. We currently have the following categories of membership:

- Professional
- Associate
- Affiliate
- Institutional
- Student
- Honorary

Professional Membership is awarded to translators or interpreters who meet the strict criteria of the ITIA based on qualification and level of experience.

Applicants must also achieve a PASS in the annual Professional Membership Examination (translator or interpreter) set by the ITIA.

Associate Membership may be granted to holders of a third level qualification in translation and/or interpreting and/or languages or to holders of a third level qualification with relevant experience.

Affiliate Membership is generally availed of by people with a professional interest in translation and interpreting, by those with a general interest in these professions or by professionals from other sectors who wish to work in the area of translation or interpreting and do not currently have a specific qualification or experience in the area

Institutional Membership is available to bodies that do not function as commercial agencies, for example university centres for translation and interpreting studies or cultural institutes. Application documents for Institutional membership are currently being prepared.

Student Membership is available to persons undertaking undergraduate studies in any discipline or those undertaking postgraduate studies in translation or interpreting.

Honorary Membership is awarded by the ITIA AGM to persons in Ireland or abroad who have distinguished themselves in the field of translation or interpreting.

New ITIA Associate Members Nov 2015 – Jan 2016

Ray Gainford

ENGLISH from German

Anita Prunty

ENGLISH from French

Ken Waide

ENGLISH from Japanese, French

Avril Wright

ENGLISH from French, German

New ITIA Student Members Nov 2015 - Jan 2016

Eimear Connick

Órlaith Delany

Caitlin Fahy



For further details and application forms, please see our website at <http://tinyurl.com/y65bgtb>

Contacting the ITIA

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ITIA Executive Committee: 2015–2016

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