



ITIA BULLETIN

October 2008

In This Issue

■ Editorial.....	2
■ ITIA Christmas Party.....	2
■ Prospective Certified Translators.....	2
■ New book released by Nataly Kelly.....	2
■ Joining the ITIA.....	2
■ Garda Tender for Translation and Interpreting Services .	4
■ ITIA Continuing Professional Development.....	4
■ Interpreter removed from court over affidavit conflict.....	5
■ Career Questions.....	5
■ Question on Language for Census 2011.....	7
■ The Twenty-Second ITIA Annual General Meeting.....	7
■ New research into language learning abilities.....	10
■ Obituary - Henry Fischbach.....	11
■ Obituary - Taheher Saffarzadeh.....	11
■ Job Advertisement: German-English Translator / Proof-reader.....	12
■ Job Advertisement: Translation Vendor Manager.....	13
■ Conferences, Calls & Courses.....	14
■ Contacting The ITIA.....	15

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■ Editorial

Dear Readers,

A survey was recently carried out in Cork University Hospital to determine the levels of alcohol use and abuse among patients admitted in a certain period. In the fine print of the research documentation lies a noteworthy point. Patients who were considered 'not literate in English' were automatically excluded from the study as they were unable to answer the questions in the written survey. In the most recent census (2006), it was found that 10% of people in Ireland were not Irish citizens. It can be assumed (in fact, it has to be assumed due to the lack of concrete data, see Mary Phelan's article on page 7) that many of these newcomers to Ireland do not speak English as their first language. Therefore, a large number of people were excluded from this survey as a result of their English language skills. The casual omission of so many people who call Ireland home speaks volumes about our attitude as a nation to 'the new Irish'.

Elizabeth Hayes
Editor ITIA Bulletin
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interpreters, a resource for educators, a reference text for researchers and a comprehensive handbook for consumers of interpreting services everywhere.

This book provides readers with a fascinating in-depth view into the world of remote interpretation via telephone. The first publication devoted exclusively to the topic, this book offers a wealth of information for interpreters, educators, training professionals and consumers of interpreting services within the realms of health care, legal services, public safety, finance, social services, insurance and numerous other industries where telephone interpreting services are used. Through the model code of ethics and standards of practice included in the book, readers can gain a better understanding of the levels of quality that can be obtained through telephone interpretation. Numerous role-play scenarios are also included to facilitate telephone interpreting practice.

Nataly Kelly is a respected author, consultant and advisor with a specialized interest in interpreting services, particularly remote language mediation, such as telephone and video interpreting.

■ ITIA Christmas Party

The ITIA Christmas Party will take place in the Irish Writers' Centre on Friday December 5th at 7.30. All welcome!

■ Prospective Certified Translators

For those wishing to gain certified status, the ITIA will be accepting applications from December 1st until January 1st. Further details will be posted on the website in mid-November.

■ New book released by Nataly Kelly

TELEPHONE INTERPRETING: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE PROFESSION. ISBN 1-4251-8501-0

In spite of its 30-year history and widespread use throughout the world, very little has been written about telephone interpreting. In this, the first book devoted entirely to the subject, the author provides readers with long-awaited transparency and insight into the field, in order to promote the highest possible standards of quality. The publication serves as a practical guide for

■ Joining the ITIA

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

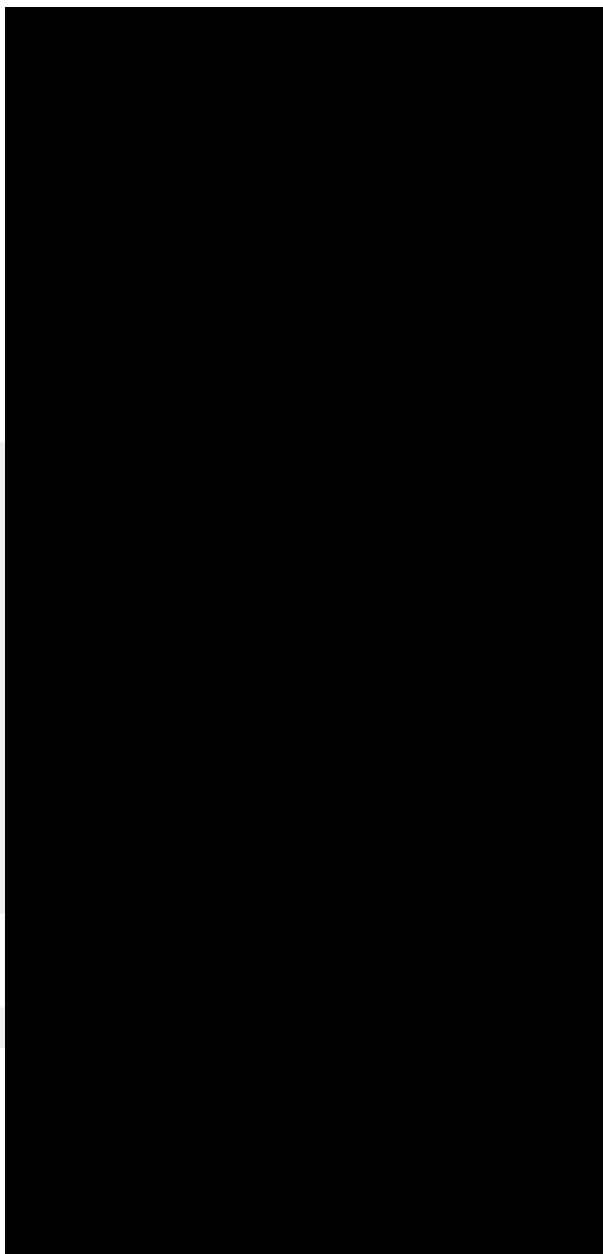
- ◆ Ordinary
- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Corporate
- ◆ Concession (undergraduate & senior citizen)
- ◆ Honorary

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.

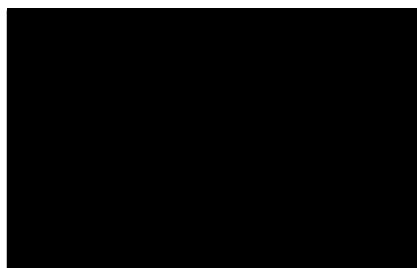
Corporate membership is for firms and agencies associated with the profession while *concession membership* is for undergraduate students engaged in third level language and/or translation studies and senior citizens. Finally, *honorary membership* is intended for national and international persons who 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

New Associate Members



New Corporate Member



■ Garda Tender for Translation and Interpreting Services

The Garda began a tender process some months ago for:

- ◆ Nationwide telephone interpreting service (one contract)
- ◆ Translation service (one contract)
- ◆ Sign language (3 contracts)
- ◆ Face to face interpreting service – up to 3 companies in each of 6 regions.

I contacted the Garda Procurement Office on 24th October for more information. Preferred bidders were notified by email on 21st October. This notification will be followed by a cooling off period and an opportunity to contact the Garda for debriefing. Contracts will then be signed and it is hoped that the new services will be in place by 1st January 2009. Complete information on the outcome of the tendering process will be available, probably at the end of the November, on the e-tenders website.

For face to face interpreting the country is divided into six regions with up to three companies providing interpreters for each region. The preferred bidders are ranked 1, 2, 3 and a garda who needs an interpreter will first contact company number 1 and if that company cannot provide an interpreter the garda will go on to company number 2. If company number 2 cannot provide an interpreter the garda will try company number 3. It will be interesting to see how this will work out in practice – after all the translation agencies are drawing from the same pool of interpreters. What will happen if none of the 3 companies can provide an interpreter with the language required?

Successful companies will be expected to provide ongoing training and updating to their interpreters. There will also be a quality assurance element under which members of the Garda will check on the quality of interpreting. Members of the Garda will be trained in the new system and a new policy document will be put in place. The Garda have certainly taken an innovative approach to the problem of finding interpreters quickly. This will be the first ever contract for telephone interpreting in the country. It will be interesting to see if we can move away from the current time consuming system of telephone interpreting provision to a speedy one where interpreters are provided within seconds. The Garda need interpreters day and night, 365 days a year; time will tell how all of this works out in practice.

Mary Phelan,
ITIA Public Relations Officer

■ ITIA Continuing Professional Development

Taxation for Beginners

10.30 am to 2.30 pm, 22 November 2008
Irish Writers' Centre, 19 Parnell Square, Dublin 1

This half day workshop will address all of the important tax issues that anyone in business for themselves or thinking of starting a business for themselves should be aware of. The workshop is delivered in an easy to understand manner with lots of examples and opportunities to ask questions. The aim of this workshop is to provide participants with enough information to enable them to deal with their own taxation issues as start-up or new businesses/sole traders.

Topics covered:

- ◆ Reporting requirements of limited companies, sole traders and partnerships
- ◆ The Self-Assessment system
- ◆ Preliminary Tax – What & When to Pay
- ◆ Capital Allowances/chargeable gains
- ◆ The PAYE & PRSI System
- ◆ The completion of an Income Tax return
- ◆ Personal Allowances and Rate Bands
- ◆ The VAT System - Calculating VAT and preparing VAT returns (The trainer will provide blank VAT Forms and facilitate a point by point explanation) - TBC

Brief background on Trainer

Clare Fay (ACCA) of RH Training has designed this training programme to meet the needs of start-up businesses. RH Training develops tailored learning solutions to start-up and small businesses throughout Ireland and is renowned for its knowledge and expertise in this area.

“Excellent workshop and excellent trainer. Very clear, professional and the knowledge of the subject was great” Workshop Participant, Taxation for Beginners, Spring 2008.

Please note: This workshop is for ITIA members only and is limited to 18 participants.

■ Interpreter removed from court over affidavit conflict

The Irish Times (25/10/2008) reported on an interpreter being dismissed from court for signing an affidavit. The interpreter's employer, WordPerfect Translations Ltd., received an irate phone call from the Courts Service over the affidavit which was signed by the interpreter. Three other people also signed the document in question. The events described in the affidavit conflict with the District Court judge's version of events.

The plaintiff, Tran Tuan Anh, is accused of having cannabis for supply in April of this year. The problem arose when the judge agreed to delay the case because the book of evidence was not ready. Ms. Pauline Walley (Mr. Anh's solicitor) said Ms. Geraty (the interpreter) and three other people who were present in court that day, two of whom were solicitors, had sworn affidavits that no oral evidence was given, either from a garda or other person, which could explain why the book of evidence was not ready.

...by swearing the affidavit the interpreter had become involved in the case...

According to Ms. Walley, Ms. Geraty was very upset because she had been dismissed from the case and was worried that it would affect future work as she is employed on a case-by-case basis by WordPerfect.

Mary Phelan, ITIA public relations officer, rang the Courts Service about this matter and spoke to Pat Moynan. He explained that the Courts Service was concerned because by swearing the affidavit the

interpreter had become involved in the case and they felt it was not appropriate for her to continue to work on the case. They contacted Word Perfect to explain this and according to Mr Moynan the Courts Service has no difficulty with the interpreter working on other cases in the future.

■ Career Questions

Máire Nic Mhaoláin is a renowned literary translator, lecturer, terminologist and lexicographer and an honorary member of the ITIA. She is the official Irish translator of the Harry Potter books and more recently the Artemis Fowl books.

1. Describe the professional pathway that led to your current career.

I had studied languages in Queen's University Belfast – French, Latin, and the Celtic languages, but had no special training as a translator. I taught for a couple of years, moved to Dublin as a researcher with *Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann* (in its first incarnation) and eventually ended up an editor with *An Gúm*, the Department of Education's Irish-language publications branch. For most of the next 27 years I was dealing with dictionaries, terminology, and textbooks in Irish on subjects other than Irish (many of which were translations) and general literature. I later spent a few years working on English-Irish dictionaries for the University of Ulster, and I also taught a literary translation module at Dublin City University. But translation began as a sideline, really.

2. Do you have an area of specialization?

I'm mainly a literary translator. In the early 1980s I translated a Welsh juvenile novel into Irish for a competition, and this was later published. A number of similar translations from Welsh followed, all into Irish. I also translated a number of literary works from Italian. I had also translated some children's books from French to Irish as part of my work with *an Gúm*. This is probably untypical for literary translators, but the Irish language is a special case. Success in Oireachtas na Gaeilge competitions brought me to the notice of general publishers and my first translation from English (*Under the Hawthorn Tree* by Marita Conlon McKenna) appeared in 2000. Thereafter I was commissioned to translate the first book in the Harry Potter series into Irish, and then the first Artemis Fowl book. By then I had resigned my day job.

The next issue of the ITIA Bulletin will be out next month. If you have any contributions, suggestions or scandals that you would like to share with over 1,000 subscribers worldwide, send them to Elizabeth Hayes at theitiabulletin@gmail.com.

Subscribing to the ITIA Bulletin

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To unsubscribe, simply send an Email to itia-ezine-unsubscribe@yahoo.com

3. What are the main advantages of your job?

From a professional standpoint, my career as editor left me with a mastery of the various Irish dialects, and of the *Caighdeán Oifigiúil* (official standard language) and technical terminology. Until the recent Official Languages' Act and the recognition of Irish as an official EU language, mastery of the *Caighdeán* and the proper use of terminology were not generally considered so essential in Irish higher-education courses, which had an emphasis on literature and the spoken dialects. I believe I was atypical at the time in writing correct Irish in the official standard language. The main advantage since I left my editorial post has been the freedom to work or not, but that's because I never really depended on my translation work to survive.

4. What are the main disadvantages of your job?

Translating can be a very isolated activity, for a start. And for a long time my translation work had to be fitted in after normal working hours, meaning even less communication with colleagues or fellow translators. And literary translation to Irish does not, even now, enjoy any great degree of appreciation.

Personally I would like to see translators taking a few more risks in translation.

5. What advice would you give to someone at the beginning of their career?

I feel things are very different now for people starting out as translators. I can only suggest mastering your languages (not necessarily for a quarter of a century), getting appropriate qualifications, joining an association such as ITIA, and maintaining professional standards at all times. Most Irish translations today are official documents rather than commercial ones, while commissioned literary translations are quite rare. Intending translators to Irish would do well to take *Foras na Gaeilge's* accreditation exam (to sit which no particular qualification is required, though the bar is set quite high) or follow one of the many postgraduate courses now offered in official-type translation. While my own early literary translations were not commissioned, the fact that I won awards helped me eventually get commissioned work, so my advice would be to make sure you have a publisher lined up before spending years, possibly, on a translation which may never see the light of day (unless, of course, you don't need the money).

6. What changes have you witnessed in your profession?

For Irish, recent years have seen a burgeoning in translation courses at many third-level colleges, and a real improvement in standards as a consequence. There are now good opportunities for translators and interpreters both in Ireland, north and south, and in the various EU institutions, though literary translation still lags behind her younger sister in the career stakes. Technological advances have rendered the processing of translation less arduous than formerly, but expectations are now proportionally higher.

7. How do you see the profession developing?

I can envisage translation to Irish as a full-time and well-paid career so long as Irish has the support of governments and public bodies in Ireland and the EU institutions. But literary translators will have leaner pickings, although translations of poetry have been faring quite well, not only in English but in other languages. Again, these are heavily subsidised. And it seems that only poets who have published collections themselves can translate poetry, and that irrespective of whether or not they know the language of the original!

8. Do you think technology has helped or hindered your earning potential?

There have been great advances in technology since I first hammered out my draft translations on my little Dutch typewriter. Irish, being full of accent marks and initial mutations in certain grammatical environments, was notoriously difficult for printers and typesetters, who rarely knew the language, and proofing could be very laborious and costly. Now most work is sent to print electronically, after being spell-checked, and the whole process is faster and more accurate. Of course expectations are higher on the part of clients and publishers as well, and time required for research and checking is often underestimated, and translators placed under a lot of pressure as a result. Official Irish terminology is readily available on line nowadays, though new terms may take time to be vetted and approved. As I mainly translate literature I have had little use for translation memory banks.

9. How could standards be improved?

With the tightening-up of quality control and tougher qualification requirements standards have already gone up, and this is set to continue. Personally I would like to see translators taking a few more risks in translation. One has to keep to strict terminology in legal or quasi-legal documents, but just because a word or phrase

doesn't appear in the dictionary or on the on-line database that doesn't mean one always has to submit it for approval, if an acceptable translation presents itself. But that could just be a literary translator speaking.

■ Question on Language for Census 2011

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) advertised in the national newspapers in August for submissions for the next census which will take place in 2011. The ITIA executive committee thought it would be a good idea to suggest a question on language spoken so we could get an idea of what languages are spoken in Ireland and by how many people.

There have been various estimates over the years – the Courts Service claimed that there were 210 languages and dialects and a study by the Language Centre in NUI Maynooth came up with a figure of 167 languages. An extra benefit would be to find out how many people use Irish or other Sign Languages – the Irish Deaf Society also made a submission suggesting that there be a question on this.

We thought it would also be interesting to know how proficient people consider themselves in English as this could help give us an idea of the extent of the need for translation and interpreting services.

We consulted various censuses online, mainly for English speaking countries. We were surprised to find that the UK census does not include a question on language. We particularly liked the Canadian census questions and thought they could be adapted to the Irish situation. We suggested the following three questions:

1. Can you speak English or Irish well enough to hold a conversation?

- ◆ English only
- ◆ Irish only
- ◆ Both English and Irish
- ◆ Neither English nor Irish

2. What language(s) other than English or Irish, can you use well enough to conduct a conversation?

- ◆ None
- ◆ Irish Sign Language
- ◆ British Sign Language
- ◆ Other (Polish, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese etc.)

3. What language do you use most often at home?

- ◆ English
- ◆ Irish
- ◆ Irish Sign Language
- ◆ British Sign Language
- ◆ Other (Polish, Russian, Mandarin, Cantonese etc.)

The Census Advisory Group considered the ITIA submission and agreed to include a new language question in the Census Pilot survey which will take place in April 2009. They also promised to keep us informed of the response to the question.

- ◆ Do you speak a language other than English or Irish at home? Yes / No
- ◆ If Yes, what is the language? (e.g. Polish, Lithuanian, German, Irish Sign Language)
- ◆ How well do you speak English? Very well / Well / Not well / Not at all

Mary Phelan

■ The Twenty-Second ITIA Annual General Meeting

IRISH WRITERS' CENTRE, SATURDAY OCTOBER 11TH 2008

The twenty-second Annual General Meeting of the ITIA was very well attended by Association members, a fact helped in no small part by the two workshops in legal translation and interpreting run by Leo Hickey earlier in the day, which also drew large numbers.

Proceedings commenced with an introductory talk from ITIA Chairperson Dr. Annette Schiller, who welcomed all present and introduced the executive committee members. During quite a long agenda the AGM heard of a number of major developments in the activities and administration of the Association.

In her Chairperson's report, Annette drew attention to much of the work which the ITIA has been involved in over the past year. She drew attention to two major aims in the ITIA in recent years. Firstly, efforts have been made to increase the ITIA profile externally, to improve awareness among clients using translation and interpreting services of the nature of the work we do and of the importance of demanding and receiving the highest standards from our members. Efforts have also been made to underline the importance of accreditation, of an assessment or testing system for professional translators and interpreters, and to highlight the dangers of using unqualified, inexperienced translators and

interpreters in such areas as the courts and the HSE. The ITIA continually points out the connection between low rates of pay attracting inexperienced and unqualified translators and interpreters, and the long-term consequences of this.

The ITIA has been approached for expert advice and to join forces with bodies such as the Irish Refugee Council, the Rape Crisis Centre, RTE, the print media, and the NCCRI, to mention but a few. Following on from being involved on the Government Advisory Committee on Interpreting and Translation services, we have been asked to join a cross-border advisory group involving the HSE and the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service which, with funding from Europe, will look at the establishment of standards and training for interpreters. The Association has maintained close contacts with other translator and interpreter associations in Europe, and for example, has been asked to join a panel on court interpreting in Europe to take place at a conference to be hosted next September by the German association, the BDÜ. These contacts with European sister associations are vital as no matter what the country or the language, many of the issues discussed are the same across the board. As a small association, we can benefit from the experience of the larger ones – especially those that are a number of years ahead in their development and perhaps work with a very different financial basis or legal framework. It is also important to be represented at meetings of the European associations as it is important for the small associations to have a voice, even if it means punching above our weight.

Efforts have also been made to [...] highlight the dangers of using unqualified, inexperienced translators and interpreters in such areas as the courts and the HSE

Annette reported that, closer to home, the ITIA's aim has been to enhance the direct benefits for our members. To this end, work has been carried out in a number of areas:

- ◆ The introduction of an element of assessment for accepting professional members. The Professional Membership selection process has been a bone of contention for a long time and there have been accusations of it being too easy. The introduction of an assessment element underlines the value of this type of

membership both to the translator or interpreter and to the client. Our aim is to encourage those working full- or part-time as translators or interpreters to become professional members as it is this category that will have most visibility from now on.

- ◆ A survey was carried out of ITIA members during the summer.
- ◆ A new programme of Continuing Professional Development was being devised
- ◆ The online database of members on the ITIA website was now populated and ready for testing
- ◆ PayPal has finally given us the go-ahead to use their services and we are currently waiting for it to be put on the website.
- ◆ ITIA Certification is now up and running and is proving very successful.

It is planned that the role of the administrative assistant is to be expanded as the administration workload involved in running the ITIA is such that it cannot be done on a voluntary basis. Many activities such as sending out subscription reminders, receipts, processing ordinary membership applications, dealing with applications for Certification and Professional membership, corresponding with applicants, booking CPD courses, booking rooms, dealing with queries to the Association, administering the database, all take up valuable time from committee members who could be putting their efforts into more productive work. The only way forward is to have a dedicated administrator working part-time at the very least.

This led us to consider the issue of office space: a room for the administrative assistant, a room for file storage, a walk-in office/physical presence, rooms for our CPD courses and for our various meetings during the year, quite apart from the Executive Committee meetings once a month. The rent paid by the ITIA to the IWC was to double from October 1 so, having examined and costed all options (i.e. renting space, in addition to renting rooms for CPD, serviced office), it was decided that the best option open to us was to do a deal with the IWC whereby we will have office space for an administrative assistant, rooms for all CPD courses, rooms for events during the year, and rooms for our various committee and SC meetings throughout the year. We will monitor the situation during the coming year but we hope that this situation will provide some permanence for the ITIA for some time to come and go towards enhancing the Association's profile and generally of the translation and interpreting professions.

Finally, Annette Schiller gave particular thanks to long-time executive committee member Bassia Bannister, who will be stepping down this year from the

committee following her hugely successful work in establishing a system of certification for professional translators. Thanks also went to Cathal McCabe and the staff at the Irish Writers' Centre who host the ITIA, and to former committee member Jody Byrne for his continuing work formatting the Bulletin you're reading.

Next the Honorary Secretary's report was given by the current secretary Mary Phelan who has been extremely busy in the past year as she has been working both as secretary and publicity officer, as well as chairing the Community Interpreting Sub-Committee. In her report she noted how much recent work has involved raising the profile of the Association (such as her recent contribution a debate in the RTÉ radio programme Spectrum). The ITIA had also featured in media reports in the Sunday Business Post, the Irish Independent, and Metro Éireann.

Other examples of how the ITIA has contributed to general activities in contemporary Irish society include its continuing role in making submissions to various public bodies. A recent example was a submission to the Central Statistics Office for a question on the next national census to provide feedback on habitual language use in Ireland. Submissions have also been made to the Courts Service and to the Oireachtas.

The only way forward is to have a dedicated administrator working part-time at the very least.

The Secretary also reported that the ITIA had also intervened in the case of an asylum seeker who had been in contact about the poor level of translation of his asylum application. The ITIA had the application translated by a professional translator and the discrepancies between this translation and the one which the asylum seeker had been given gave great cause for concern. Thankfully Mary's workload will be lightened in the coming year as Alison Boardman will be taking over as ITIA Honorary Secretary in the coming year.

Next came the report of the ITIA Honorary Treasurer Miriam Watchorn. Miriam noted that the new changes planned for the employment of an administrative assistant and for renting a permanent office base in the IWC would result in increased costs for the Association and thus the time had sadly come for an increase in membership fees (which, she noted, had remained

unchanged for several years). The increase proposed was as follows:

- ◆ Student members: Increase from €20 to €25 p.a.
- ◆ Ordinary members: Increase from €40 to €50 p.a.
- ◆ Professional members: Increase from €75 to €120 p.a.
- ◆ Institutional members: €150 (new category of membership) p.a.
- ◆ Corporate members: €120 to €300 p.a.

The rationale for these increases was provided case by case. Student membership was only being increased minimally both because many students were not earning and because it was proposed in a separate motion to expand the category of student membership as a means of encouraging people to join the ITIA. 'Institutional members' refers to a new category of membership for members currently in the category of 'corporate members' which were not functioning as commercial translation companies or agencies (e.g. university centres for translation and interpreting studies, cultural institutes etc.). Professional members' fees were being increased more than those of ordinary members' to reflect the increased benefits which would accrue to professional members within the Association (e.g. greater exposure on the online register of members, CPD activities, etc.) The membership fee for Corporate Members was being increased so as to reflect the economic realities and the benefits which corporate members enjoy in the Association.

Annette Schiller then delivered the report of the Professional Membership Sub-Committee. The sub-committee meets twice a year to deal with applications for professional membership. Annette provided an account of the new test for professional members, which was being introduced. On the subject of the language combinations available among ITIA professional members it was noted that, while a large variety of languages are represented, there were concerns about the fact that recently there have been fewer applications for translation into English.

The report from the Certification Sub-Committee was delivered by Miriam Watchorn, who announced that the sub-committee would meet to consider the next round of applications for professional membership in December. Thus far, feedback on professional membership had been extremely positive, particularly from embassies, the Gardaí, and insurance companies. However, Mary Phelan said that a greater variety of language combinations were needed.

Chairperson of the Interpreting Sub-Committee Mary Phelan provided an account of the Sub-Committee's recent activities, noting that they had recently been engaged in work on a Code of Ethics for Community Interpreters, draft copies of which were circulated. The Code addressed such issues as the role of a community interpreter, confidentiality, impartiality, accuracy, professional conduct, and interpreters' rights. It was noted that a similar code of ethics is also planned for corporate members of the Association.

...feedback on professional membership had been extremely positive...

Chairperson of the Continuing Professional Development Sub-Committee Miriam Watchorn gave an account of the activities organised in the past year. A workshop had taken place with an American authority on telephone interpreting Nataly Kelly, though turn out had been disappointing. Attendance was better, however, for the two workshops delivered by Leo Hickey earlier on the day of the AGM. A workshop 'Taxation for Beginners' is planned for November 22nd, to be delivered by Clare Fay (ACCA) of RH Training and a future workshop has also been proposed on financial translation. Contacts were also being established between the CPD sub-committee and training authorities in FIT Europe.

Four decisions were taken during the votes on motions at the AGM. Firstly it was decided that the category of 'Ordinary Membership' was to be renamed 'Associate Membership' to better reflect the distinction between this and 'Professional Membership' – as it is envisaged that professional members will enjoy greater visibility in the Association in years to come, it was felt to be fair that their membership category be clearly differentiated from that of ordinary members.

The new category of Institutional Member (mentioned earlier) was established, and student membership was opened up to those pursuing postgraduate studies in translation and interpreting. Finally, as there are many initiatives currently underway in the Association, the AGM voted to allow the current Chairperson to remain on in her post for the coming year.

In addition to Alison Boardman taking over as Honorary Secretary, Graziano Ciulli will be taking over as Treasurer from Miriam Watchorn. Three new

members were also elected to the executive committee: Ilaria Furlan, Ivana Milivojevic, Krisztina Zimányi. Thus the final composition of the 2008-09 committee is as follows: Annette Schiller (Chairperson and Chair of the Professional Membership Sub-Committee), Alison Boardman (Honorary Secretary), Graziano Ciulli (Treasurer), Mary Phelan (Publicity Officer and Chair of the Interpreting Sub-Committee), Miriam Watchorn (Chair of the Continuing Professional Development Sub-Committee), Elizabeth Hayes (Editor, ITIA Bulletin), John Kearns (Editor Translation Ireland), Giuliana Zeuli (Representative on CEATL), Máire Nic Mhaoláin (Representative on ILE), Adam Brozynski, Michael Friel, Ilaria Furlan, Ivana Milivojevic, Krisztina Zimányi.

The full minutes of the AGM will soon be available for ITIA members from the members' section of the ITIA website and will also be distributed at the 2009 AGM next October.

John Kearns
Kearns(a)pro.onet.pl

■ New research into language learning abilities

Some people seem to be good at learning languages while others, although equally diligent, struggle. Recent research carried out by the Cognitive Neuroscience Research Group (GRNC) linked to the Barcelona Science Park has provided some reasons for why this is the case. The difference lies in the ability of an individual to perceive sound differences in speech, even in their own language. The study showed that there was a marked correlation between students who had high levels of perception of phonemes in their own language and those who excelled at second-language learning.

How was the research carried out?

Firstly, the researchers evaluated the perceptive abilities of 126 university students born in the Barcelona area, who came from families that only speak Spanish and who therefore learned Catalan when they started compulsory schooling. Thus all of them were born and brought up, and lived in a bilingual environment. This population is ideal for the study as Catalan has some vowel sounds that most native Spanish speakers find particularly difficult to perceive.

Of the initial 126, 31 people were selected who corresponded to two different groups: the most and the

least successful when it came to perceiving the sounds of the second language (Catalan). The ability of the brain to register differences when faced with audio stimuli was measured for these 31 individuals.

strategic protocols and programs that optimize successful learning outcomes.”

Elizabeth Hayes

Some people seem to be good at learning languages while others, although equally diligent, struggle.

To do this, the electrophysiological response of their brains to different sounds was recorded and the amplitude of an electrical wave called the mismatch potential was calculated. Since the amplitude of this wave increases with the increasing ability of the brain to register an auditory change, comparing the amplitude of the mismatch potential between the different groups allows us to establish whether there are differences in auditory processing.

In order to assess the subjects' general auditory capacity (non-linguistic) all 31 of the selected participants listened to tones composed of different frequencies, of different lengths and which were ordered differently. Linguistic auditory capacity was measured by exposure to vowel sounds in the mother tongue (Spanish) and to vowel sounds in a language that was unknown to the participants (Finnish).

The results showed similar amplitudes of the mismatch potential for the two groups when the participants listened to sounds that were not from their language. In contrast, when they heard sounds from their own language (Spanish) the amplitude of the wave was significantly larger for those individuals who perceive the second language (Catalan) better.

What does this all mean?

According to Begoña Díaz, one of the authors of the study, “these results show that there is a positive correlation between specific speech discrimination abilities and the ability to learn a second language, which means that the individual ability to distinguish the specific phonemes of the language, both in the case of the mother tongue and in the case of other languages, is, without a doubt, a decisive factor in the learning process, and the ability to speak and master other languages.”

Díaz went on to say that the findings of this study “are very promising for predicting an individual's aptitude for learning languages and could be useful for designing

■ Obituary - Henry Fischbach

Henry Fischbach, co-founder, Charter Member, and Honorary Member of the American Translators Association (ATA) and the last surviving signatory of its Articles of Incorporation, passed away on September 25, 2008.

Born in Vienna, Austria, Henry Fischbach moved to the U.S. with his family at the age of 7, only to return to Europe a few years later. He attended French Lycée in Belgium and, upon moving back to the U.S., earned a degree in Comparative Linguistics and Pre-med Studies from Columbia University. Henry served as President and Vice President of ATA, as a Director for over 25 years, as Vice President of the American Foundation for Translation and Interpretation, and as ATA Representative with the *Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs* (FIT), its Vice President, and Chairman of its Technical and Scientific Translators Committee.

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■ Obituary - Taheher Saffarzadeh

Iranian poet, writer, translator Taheher Saffarzadeh died of cancer at Tehran's Iranmehr Hospital on Saturday morning. Born in Sirjan in southern Iran, Saffarzadeh received her BA in English language and literature in 1960 from the University of Tehran. Several years later, she left Iran for England and then went to the United States. She was a professor at the Shahid Beheshti University and several other academic studies centers in Tehran. Saffarzadeh published fourteen collections of poems including “The Red Umbrella,” “The Journey of Five,” “Move and Yesterday,” “Seven Journeys” and “The Visit to the Morning.” She is also the author of ten books on the principles of translation of literary, scholarly, and Quranic texts.

■ Job Advertisement: German-English Translator/Proof-reader



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Proofreader/Translator DE-EN, FR-EN

in the field of financial, marketing and legal translation at the earliest availability.

Your duties:

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- ◆ You perform English editing and/or copywriting tasks
- ◆ You assess the quality of the English translations delivered by the team's pool of external translators according to internal proofreading and editing standards
- ◆ You contribute to developing and validating the English terminological data in the client terminology databases
- ◆ You assist the Operations Manager in establishing and updating proofreading/editing standards for the English language

Your profile:

- ◆ English mother tongue
- ◆ University degree in translation (or a related field) with certification in the language combinations German-English and French-English
- ◆ At least five years of demonstrated experience in the field of financial, marketing and legal translation
- ◆ Experience in editing English texts
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euroscript Switzerland AG
Gotthardstrasse 54
CH-8002 Zurich
silvia.cerrella-bauer@euroscript.ch

■ Job Advertisement: Translation Vendor Manager



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Vendor Manager Officer

at the earliest convenience.

The Vendor Management Department provides external resources for technical and financial translation and editing. As Vendor Management Officer, you support the Financial Services and Industry operative units in the following tasks:

- ◆ Determining needs for external resources in cooperation with other technical departments
- ◆ Processing the applications of translators and technical editors
- ◆ Recruiting additional resources for translation and technical editing
- ◆ Administering and assessing supplier-evaluation information (vendor quality, monitoring)

Your profile:

- ◆ Degree in business (with focus on personnel management) or language/translation
- ◆ Experience in personnel recruitment and/or project management advantageous
- ◆ Experience in Internet research and competence with Microsoft Office applications
- ◆ Able to work creatively whilst focusing on solutions
- ◆ Excellent communication and social skills
- ◆ Excellent German and English skills, knowledge of other European languages advantageous

We offer:

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- ◆ Flexible working time and attractive working conditions

The position is full time and permanent. We look forward to meeting you. Please send a complete application (CV, copies of your certificates, salary expectations and earliest possible starting date) by post or email to:

Dr. Stefan Winter
Managing Director
euroscript Switzerland AG
Hauptstrasse 54
CH-8280 Kreuzlingen
stefan.winter@euroscript.ch

■ Conferences, Calls & Courses

Fourth Conference on Translation, Interpreting and Comparative Legi-Linguistics

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland from 2nd to 4th July 2009

The Institute of Linguistics at Adam Mickiewicz University will hold an international conference devoted to language and the law. Our aim is to provide a forum for discussion in those scientific fields where linguistic and legal interests converge, and to facilitate integration between linguists, computer scientists and lawyers from all around the world.

We invite papers on the following topics:

- ◆ FORENSIC LINGUISTICS IN GENERAL
- ◆ LEGAL TRANSLATION AND COURT INTERPRETING
- ◆ LEGAL LANGUAGES AND LEGAL DISCOURSE
- ◆ COMPUTATIONAL LINGUISTICS
- ◆ HISTORY OF LAW AND LEGAL SYSTEMS
- ◆ LAWS ON LANGUAGE

This list is not exhaustive. We also encourage you to submit session proposals including the following topics:

- ◆ translation of literature and poetry,
- ◆ LSP translation,
- ◆ Interpreting,
- ◆ Audiovisual translation
- ◆ Untranslatability.

Session proposals and any questions should be submitted to the following address: [lingua.legis\(a\)gmail.com](mailto:lingua.legis(a)gmail.com)
Adres poczty elektronicznej jest chroniony przed robotami spamujacymi. W przegladarce musi byc włączona obsługa JavaScript, zeby go zobaczyc.

Further information may be found at: www.lingualegis.amu.edu.pl

Presentation slots should not exceed 30 minutes (20 minutes long presentation plus 10 minutes for questions). Papers from the conference will be published.

Abstracts should be submitted by the end of March 2008 to the following address: [lingua.legis\(a\)gmail.com](mailto:lingua.legis(a)gmail.com)
Adres poczty elektronicznej jest chroniony przed robotami spamujacymi. W przegladarce musi byc włączona obsługa JavaScript, zeby go zobaczyc.

Conference fee: Foreigners – 150 Euro

The conference fee includes the cost of the conference gala dinner, 3 lunches, tea breaks and publication of papers.

LANGUAGES: Polish, English, German, Russian and French.

■ Contacting The ITIA

Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association
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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.

- ◆ *The Translation Profession*
- ◆ *Joining the ITIA*
- ◆ *Ordinary Membership Application*
- ◆ *Professional Membership Application*
- ◆ *Database Entry*
- ◆ *Code of Practice*
- ◆ *Background Information*
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