



capital translator

Newsletter of the National Capital Area Chapter of the American Translators Association
Vol. 21, No. 5 June 1999

NCATA Seminar

The Business of Translation

by Alison Sondhaus Carroll

NCATA President Scott Brennan continues to provide members with excellent opportunities to hone both their translating and business skills. This seminar was no exception: it gave both a snapshot of the translation industry and a nuts-and-bolts approach to taking the ATA accreditation exam, getting work through translation companies and learning to price your services appropriately. In short, there was something for everyone.

American Translators Association President Muriel Jérôme-O'Keefe kicked off the seminar with a broad-ranging talk on where translation is today. O'Keefe pointed out that translators and interpreters finally have a category of their own on the U.S. census, reflecting increased public recognition of the profession and growth in the industry in general. In fact, translation is no longer thought of as a cottage industry, and translators now fall under the category of "communication professionals" on Schedule C. As the demand for translation has grown, so too has the ATA, becoming one of the world's largest associations of translators. O'Keefe talked about some of

the many new services offered by the ATA, like the mentoring program, and stressed the links it is establishing with other associations. Currently, the ATA is also conducting a survey of its members to generate information on the industry that could be useful for grant applications and lobbying at the national level.

Growth in the translation industry, however, means that training and equipment needs have also changed, and translators today must be mindful of this and stay as up-to-date as possible. O'Keefe pointed out that the globalization of translation users and providers has also brought home the importance of productivity tools in the translator's software arsenal (your competition is now global, and working speedily and accurately is even more important than before in the Internet age). This in turn has driven up the cost of doing business, but O'Keefe was not alone in noting that staying ahead of the technology curve was the key to remaining competitive in the global marketplace.

Shuckran Kamal, Chair of the ATA Accreditation Committee, addressed the ATA accreditation process next. In her view, the ATA

exam was developed to give credibility, status and a solid foundation to the profession, and it was designed as an entry-level exam to evaluate the competency of a given transla-

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ISSN 1095-4821

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The *Capital Translator* is a newsletter published by NCATA nine times a year from September through June with a combined issue for December and January. Letters to the Editor, short articles of interest, and information for the calendar and other sections are invited. Submissions become the property of the *Capital Translator* and are subject to editing unless otherwise agreed to in advance. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Chapter, or its Board.

Editor: Ruth Zimmer Boggs
703-378-9305
REZB@aol.com

Assistant Editor: Dimitra Hengen
703-426-4938
DimitraH@aol.com

Production: Karin Wuertz-Schaefer
301-607-8036
wuertz-schaefer@erols.com

Deadline: No later than 5th day of month before the issue

Membership: Alissa Martin
301-718-0405
martina2@gusun.georgetown.edu

National Capital Area Chapter of the American Translators Association (NCATA)

President: Scott Brennan
703-393-0365
sbrennan@csi.com

Vice President: Sangeeta Prasad
703-369-2068

Secretary: Kriemhild Zerling
202-543-7574

Treasurer: Therese Hathaway
703-925-9087

Program Chair: John Vázquez
202-487-7878

Accreditation: Bill Keasbey
301-897-8318

The **Chapter Address** is P. O. Box 65200,
Washington, DC 20035-5200,
Tel: 703-255-9290
Web site: www.ncata.org

The **National HQ Address** is American Translators
Association, 225 Reinekers Lane, Suite 590,
Alexandria, VA 22314-2840,
Tel: 703-683-6100, Fax: 703-683-6122
Web site: www.atanet.org

For address changes, please write to the chapter at
the above address, Attn: Membership

For advertising in the *Capital Translator*,
please contact Angelika Spears, Advertising
Coordinator, Tel: 301-464-8309,
e-mail: 102502.3224@compuserve.com



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President's Corner

by Scott Brennan



On behalf of NCATA, I recently attended the annual meeting of the board of directors of the American Translators Association (ATA), our parent organization. One of the resolutions adopted at that meeting has important consequences for our chapter.

Previously, active membership in ATA—which essentially means the right to vote, hold office and serve on the board and committees within the national association—was restricted to individuals who had passed an ATA accreditation examination or been accorded active status through a peer review process. This mechanism was designed to ensure that voting members were “professionally engaged in translating, interpreting or closely related work” as ATA’s bylaws require.

ATA’s bylaws also call for chapter presidents and vice presidents to be voting members of ATA. Since only about 40% of NCATA’s membership are also members of ATA, and a fraction of those are voting members, the pool of talent NCATA has been able to call on as candidates for those offices has not necessarily reflected the breadth of our organization.

On March 13, ATA’s board voted to decouple accreditation and voting rights, introducing an expanded peer review process using criteria

such as accreditation or certification by a member association of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs, a degree or certificate in translation with a letter of reference from a client or supervisor, or other evidence of at least three years’ work as a translator or interpreter or other closely related work.

This decision opens the offices of NCATA president and vice president to a broader range of chapter members who, for perfectly valid reasons, are not currently voting members of ATA.

This Fall, the offices of NCATA president, treasurer and accreditation chair come up for re-election. I especially want to encourage the many talented and energetic translators and interpreters we are fortunate enough to have in our organization, who have chosen not to run for chapter elected office before, to reconsider that decision.

To find out more about the offices of president, treasurer or accreditation chair, contact the current holder of the office in which you are interested. To register as a candidate, contact NCATA Vice President Sangeeta Prasad at (703) 369-2068. The formal election announcement will appear in the September *Capital Translator*. ✍

School's out for summer...

...and your CT, too, will take a break. Look for your next issue in early September. Here's wishing safe travels, great vacations, and some much needed R&R to everyone.

The Editor

Seminar ...continued from page 1

tion. Kamal described the exam as a sort of “peer review” process and stressed that the ATA does not train translators, it only tests them. The main reason for failing to pass the exam is, first, poor grammar in the target language and, second, misunderstanding the source text. Her advice for newcomers: take the practice exam and then practice, practice and practice some more before taking the exam itself.

After a short break, Kevin Hendzel, COO and Director of Language Services at ASET, an Arlington-based translation company, stepped up to the podium. Hendzel is well versed in the statistics of the translation industry, and he began by throwing out information on the \$6-8 billion global translation market, which is currently growing at 20% per year. About 20,000 registered companies or individuals provide translation services in the U.S., with the average company consisting of 3 people. In the U.S. market, only about 30% of translation is “inbound” (into English), and the largest area of growth is software localization (a \$1.7 billion market growing at 30% annually).

Hendzel noted three important trends in the translation market, all related to technology. Echoing O’Keefe, he stressed the importance first of productivity tools and then of learning how to handle “Web-centric commerce.” Finally, he pointed out that the labor market is becoming more international, meaning that subject-matter expertise and being comfortable with technology are beginning to outweigh language skills. So when approaching potential clients, translators now have to find effective ways of offering value (their knowledge and experience) while addressing the client’s needs (for expertise, quality, timeliness and reliability). In detail, Hendzel provided several strategies for marketing one’s services, including a very useful series

of résumé pointers and an overview of subject-area trends.

Jonathan Hine, a freelance translator based in Charlottesville, ended the presentations with his always practical and guilt-free method of determining rates. He also outlined several steps that are key to running a successful translation business, such as budgeting (including allowances for growth and capitalization) and record-keeping, factoring in special services in preparing a translation, such as unusual references or graphics, when setting rates, and finally, providing precise and comprehensive job orders or contracts for each assignment. Hine’s informal but well-reasoned approach to these topics is always refreshing, for it breaks down the sometimes mysterious process of becoming a successful freelancer into a series of

common-sense steps that any small business must follow to stay afloat.

There is no doubt that the translation industry is booming, but it is also true that positioning yourself in the market is critical to getting your share of the business. Through this seminar, NCATA has done an excellent job of providing useful suggestions from a variety of experts for newcomers and old timers alike. ✍



Alison Sondhaus Carroll is the owner of Commonwealth Language Services, Ltd., an Arlington-based firm providing translating and editing from French, German, Portuguese and Spanish into English.

NCATA Seminar— Another View

by Susanne Martikke

What does it take to be a good translator? In part due to the activities of ATA targeted at giving the profession more credibility and highlighting translators’ capabilities in addressing the need of the global marketplace, but also to translators proving themselves as highly specialized professionals, the requirements for entering the profession have become higher than they used to be. It is no longer enough to master two languages in order to meet the ever-increasing demand for translations. Rather, this is merely an indispensable base on which to build more specialized subject knowledge. This was the main message of NCATA’s recent seminar “The Business of Translation.” In delivering it, the

speakers walked a thin line between painting translation as a serious business and completely discouraging the audience.

The seminar had generated a high turn-out. Many of the people in the audience were experienced translators, but the majority were newcomers to the field like myself. So, when Kevin Hendzel of ASET International Services stopped short of portraying a degree in quantum physics as the basis for success in translation, one could tell that many of us were one step away from calling it quits before we had even started. Once again I saw myself confronted with the vicious circle of



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View

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any beginner in a new profession: “How do you acquire experience if nobody is willing to give you a shot?” The seminar gave some valuable suggestions for that, too. One of them was to take advantage of peer review. However, anybody who has learned a little bit about the profession knows that most translators are very busy people, so that peer review is a nice idea for which there is not always enough time. Considering that, it is good news that ATA is planning a mentoring program.

Once one has enough subject knowledge to specialize in a field, there still remains the usual problem of how to communicate one’s strengths to a potential client. Kevin Hendzel presented the client’s perspective, highlighting some of the more obvious aspects of marketing oneself that tend to be forgotten in the process of wracking one’s brains for the most appealing way of self-presentation. I have myself seen numerous résumés, for example, that either don’t list a language combination at all or only as an afterthought, when it is, of course, the most important piece of information that a prospective client is looking for.

Hendzel’s way of narrowing down the marketing process to a set of simple questions, such as “What does the client need?” and “How can you meet that need?” is a great help when you are confused as to what the priorities should be. His sketch of the translation market and suggestions of how to remain flexible in meeting the evolving needs of that market by investing in translation tools and other software were also very useful. There was probably hardly a translator in the room who wouldn’t like to buy a program such as Trados, Star or Déjà Vu, as these tools make life so much easier for translators. But frequently, cost considerations are an obstacle.

Jonathan Hine addressed the problem of viewing the business

from a translator’s perspective. Presenting what seemed a clear-cut and user-friendly approach to determining one’s budget, he provided the audience with a very helpful tool for organizing one’s finances. So, rather than just randomly choosing one’s rates, using that approach allows one to determine exactly what the minimum rate should be based on one’s individual budget. That way, it becomes possible to

...a translator should be a good writer and not just a technocrat...

plan ahead for the purchase of translation memory tools, dictionaries, software and other equipment. However, the question that remained unaddressed is whether prospective clients are willing to pay higher rates in return for translations produced with the help of that equipment or whether they expect the high quality and consistency that memory tools can help create without being willing to pay higher rates for them.

Finally, the seminar did not account for those individuals whose interest still is—despite the lack of financial profitability—to engage in other types of translation apart from technical, medical, legal and software localization. There were people in the audience who were interested in literary translation, but that segment of the field was more or less dismissed by referring to the fact that literary translators “still work for \$40 per 1000 words.” I would like to know whether this fact may not in part be due to that very disregard? Should the translation profession, supposedly composed of peo-

ple who have an appreciation for language in its many forms—at least one concession was made to that fact when somebody mentioned that a translator should be a good writer and not just a technocrat—have the same attitude as the rest of society by placing emphasis on everything that is considered useful and profitable while relegating the humanities to the realm of luxury and idle hours? After all, the publishing industry is big business as well, and maybe the low rates only reflect that associations like ATA have not yet brought the same respectability to all translation genres?

Apart from questions like these, the event was a great opportunity to meet colleagues from all walks of the profession. The isolation most translators experience as part of their job is especially hard on newcomers—start-up problems seem so much bigger when one feels that one is the only one affected by them. Sure, the speakers and the handouts they had prepared along with the folder distributed to each participant by NCATA were a bonanza of information, but the most educating aspect of the seminar was the opportunity to get first-hand advice from colleagues and encounter people who have similar problems and experiences. People made full use of the breaks following Jonathan Hine’s joking advice that “if you’re not networking, you’re not working.” All in all, NCATA has presented itself to newcomers as a friendly support network through this seminar. ✍

Susanne Martikke is currently working as a German editor and freelance translator. She graduated from the University of Frankfurt with an M.A. in American Studies in 1995 and worked as a journalist and editor. After frequent stays in the U.S. for travel and study, she moved to the Washington area in January 1998.

The Translator Formerly Known as Jim Shipp

by James F. Shipp



When I first read about Prince's notion of what a name change should be, I didn't think much of it. As time went by, though, it slowly dawned on me that it wasn't really his name he was changing—it was his image as an artist.

After spending years as a charter member of Neil Inglis' famed "poverty cult," I, too, finally decided that a change was in order, so late one night, in the throes of despair, I sat down to give myself a much-needed professional makeover.

The new, improved Jim Shipp, I told myself, would have a rate below which he absolutely would not work, no matter how desperate the pecuniary circumstances. Even though the impenetrable minimum I set for myself was fairly low owing to my geographic location (yes, Virginia, location does make a difference), it felt good to finally have an etched-in-stone basement rate.

The transfigured Jim Shipp, I further vowed, would not wait any longer than 30 days to be paid (35 counting mail time), unless by prior arrangement with a well-respected longtime client. Imagine trying to obtain a product or service from any other vendor, then telling *him* how and when he would be paid! Yes, the age of 60-, 90-, and even 120-day delays in the receipt of payments would be a thing of the past for The Translator Formerly Known as Jim Shipp.

This translator would no longer be the victim of cost-cutting contrivances on the part of the client—hourly rates, flat rates, the mandatory formatting of tables without being allowed to enter the attendant tabular data, etc., etc., etc. My new motto would be: Send me the document and I will translate it from stem to stern—make it Shippshape, so to speak.

Being a writer who happens to translate (as are so many other of my colleagues), my persona nova would no longer yield to the pride-stripping demand for techno-English, that increasingly pervasive, perverse, and staccato genre, the sole purpose of which appears to be to reduce word counts—the anti-Christ of good writing. I would instead, I declared, write my translations in beautiful, flowing English, the way they were meant to be written, while at the same time making absolutely no attempt whatsoever to purposely "inflate" the word count. I would write them exactly the same for every client (almost all of whom are "agencies"), then let each individual client edit a given manuscript to suit his or her own particular tastes and needs (this being one of the stated "benefits" of agencies anyway).

My battle plan thus forged, I launched my image-altering campaign via fax and e-mail, then sat back to await the public outcry with heart in throat (which, to my great surprise, is actually a much more palatable feeling than hat in hand).

I must admit that, for a while there, I felt like Daffy Duck after delivering a particularly "dith-picable" one-liner—there was no sound in all the world except that of a few invisible, indifferent crickets. My transformation as a translator, while earthshaking in my own little universe, barely made a ripple on anyone else's pond.

In the long run, I lost a couple of low-paying, slow-paying clients, which, of course, was the whole point of the exercise. At the same time, through word of mouth, I acquired a few new clients. If the truth be known, I am now working a little less and making a little more than the former Jim Shipp did. It turns out that most clients like con-

stancy—they know your rate, they know your terms, they know the caliber of your work, and they know that these things are inalterable. This is somehow reassuring to them.

There has been one down side to my recent emergence from the "poverty cult" cocoon though—this Prince of a linguist is now having a heck of a time getting the bank to cash checks made payable to "The Translator Formerly Known as Jim Shipp." ✍

James F. Shipp obtained his bachelor's degree in Russian language from Syracuse University. He began his career as a professional translator with the US Air Force Security Service in 1968. During 1971-1977, he worked as a senior information specialist for Informatics, Inc., in Riverdale, MD. From 1977 to 1979, he was employed as a senior language analyst by the US Library of Congress. Following a 15-year stint as an independent contractor, he accepted an in-house position as the manager of EOP Translation Services, Inc., in Washington, DC, which he held from 1993 to 1995 before returning to the freelance arena. Shipp has completed half a dozen month-long assignments to various republics of the former Soviet Union as a translator for the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other clients. He is the author of four Russian-English technical dictionaries and nearly 80 published articles on various aspects of translation work. He recently moved back to his boyhood hometown of Hartselle, Alabama, after a 40-year absence and now lives in a "dacha" adjoining the farm on which he was raised. There, he continues to compile dictionaries, write, and translate on a fulltime basis.

A Book Review

Speaking Globally by Elizabeth Urech



by Eve Lindemuth Bodeux

In a recent search for books on localization and internationalization, I have discovered some worthwhile references. In this and a series of articles, I will summarize and review some of these sources. The first of these is *Speaking Globally: Effective Presentations Across International and Cultural Boundaries* by Elizabeth Urech, published by Koran Page Limited in 1998. Ms. Urech is an American living in Switzerland who has her own consulting company training international executives to communicate effectively with their varied constituencies around the globe.

The book's main theme—how to adapt a presentation for an international audience—ties in perfectly with the goals of localization: international consumption and acceptance of a specific product. The broader ideas in *Speaking Globally* are helpful in gaining an international mindset in any context. The author's writing style is clear and well-organized, and the book is a quick-read.

The author has succeeded in providing a valuable resource to individuals planning to speak to a global audience and to those who interact with internationals on a daily basis. Furthermore, many parts of the book offer recommendations that would benefit speakers in any forum, not just an international one. The first four chapters of the publication offer detailed information on how to prepare for a speech, how to size up an audience, tips for organizing one's thoughts, and how to make your message memorable. Throughout the book, the author gives lively examples from her

professional practice, and her enthusiasm for the topic shines through.

With chapter five, she begins to address more precisely issues that show themselves when an international (which often means non-native English speaking) audience is present. She discusses different ways to get the audience's attention in a positive rather than negative way, such as beginning in the language of the host country. She also gives the reader clear examples of what not to do: one speaker insulted his fellow presenters because of their accented English.

**...advice on how (to)
develop a positive
relationship with an
interpreter...**

She talks about adapting the delivery of an English-language talk (or other language, for that matter) for non-native speakers. She also gives tips on how to become comfortable when presenting in one's second language. Advice on how to actively involve (or not involve) audiences of various cultural backgrounds is also welcome. An important area that Ms. Urech tackles is the role of women in the international arena. Her comments on this topic are appreciated due to the

varying status of women in various cultures. Summed up, her advice is that women should balance being assertive against showing respect for the cultures they visit. You will have to read the book to find out more!

One criticism of the book is a small one, but must be mentioned in an article printed in a translation newsletter. The author gives helpful advice on how a speaker can develop a positive relationship with an interpreter and how to get the most out of an interpreted presentation. However, she mixes up the terms "translation" and "interpretation," it seems, in search of synonyms. This is a small error in a book otherwise filled with good information.

The last section of the book gives specifics per country on how to conduct oneself when giving presentations around the world. *Speaking Globally* by Elizabeth Urech is a worthwhile read for anyone interested in communicating cross-culturally, including different cultures in the same country. It will also benefit those with a general interest in international communications. ✍

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Eve Lindemuth Bodeux is Recruiter at ILE.

Sequelae Of Soviet Language In Ukraine: Implications For Translators

by Roman Worobec

Recently, I was involved in a discussion with a small group of federal linguists and congressional staffers on changes in the post-Soviet world—encompassing both the former Soviet republics and satellites—which turned to the fact that there is relatively little demand for Ukrainian translations. This seemed surprising to some because Ukraine is regarded as a player in Europe, even if not a major one, for no other reason than because it is larger than France and served as a heavy industry war-horse for the USSR. Moreover, some who follow events in that part of the world will recall a 1990 article in the New York Times based on a Deutsche Bank analysis in which Ukraine was ranked ahead of Russia in terms of economic potential.

What most discussants overlooked was the fact that Ukraine did not have a government per se, but Moscow-appointed administrators charged with implementing and enforcing directives and policies set by the central authorities. There was no diplomatic corps to speak of, for example, and all trappings of statehood were merely that. In addition, the very concept of Ukrainian nationhood and culture was foreign to these select appointees, accustomed to operating in an uncompromising autocratic manner under a democratic veneer that assured them 99.9% of the votes in any “election.” Independence to them meant simply business as usual under a slightly different veneer. To this day they remain in control of the Ukrainian infrastructure, albeit tolerating a greater expression of Ukrainian cultural autonomy. Privatization in Ukraine was different from that in Poland or the

Czech Republic, it simply meant conversion of property of any value and assets into the hands of the few “chosen ones.”

Nevertheless, on the surface it had appeared logical to assume that once Ukraine became independent, there would be heavy demand for Ukrainian language translations. After all, it still is the second most widely spoken of the 12 surviving Slavic languages and now, seemingly, would come into its own.

...factors in reducing the use of Ukrainian were ethnic cleansing...

Since things did not turn out this way, it may be worthwhile to delve briefly into history and the language policies that determined the fate of Ukrainian as a means of communication. The first thing to realize is that Ukraine never had the status in Western eyes that Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, etc., had during their darkest days as political nonentities. Ukrainian aspirations to independence and linguistic rights were perceived as not quite legitimate.

During centuries of statelessness and domination by politically luckier and more adept neighbors, the language of the Ukrainians was grudgingly tolerated at the best of times, but more often than not

Ukrainian was subjected to administrative restrictions or simply declared not to exist. Although the Russian Empire showed some tolerance of Polish, Finnish, and Baltic, Caucasian and Central Asian languages in religious services, courts, and schools, Ukrainian was deprived of even these rudimentary rights. In fact, in 1863 a secret circular issued by Pyotr Valuev, Russia’s Minister of Internal Affairs, effectively terminated publication in Ukrainian and also asserted that ‘there was not, is not, and cannot be’ a Ukrainian people or a Ukrainian language. In 1876 Czar Alexander II, while in Ems, Germany, took the time to issue another secret decree—the Ems Ukase—reinforcing Valuev’s restrictions on the Ukrainian language and adding new ones to make sure that Ukrainian printed matter from abroad did not enter his realm.

Following the revolution of 1917, most of Ukraine wound up in the Soviet Union, and the Communist party’s initial nationality policy led to the widespread use of Ukrainian in government, public life, education, the arts and scholarship in general.

Once firmly entrenched, however, the Soviet government reversed its policy on all these issues, especially when it came to Ukraine. In the thirties serious linguistic work came to an end, and 62 of the 85 researchers at the Institute of Linguistics in Kiev were dismissed, as were 90% of those involved in the Ukrainian cultural renaissance and most top government officials. Publication in Ukrainian was severely curtailed, the number of Ukrainian schools fell and contin-

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Ukraine

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ued to decline until the nineties, and Ukrainian was virtually eradicated from higher education, government, and public use in urban settings. Ukrainian became relatively unimportant as a means of communication and certainly did not have the cachet of success about it; it came to be regarded as merely a rural idiom. A favorite saying in some intellectual circles at that time was “Are you going to talk seriously or in Ukrainian?” Indeed, speaking Ukrainian was regarded as nationalistic deviation.

Even more insidious were the modifications introduced into the structure of the language to bring it closer to Russian. This involved changing spelling rules, semantic modifications, altering preferred case endings, changing genders of nouns, attempted elimination of the vocative case, deletion of the character for the hard g from the Ukrainian alphabet, new rules for transliterating foreign names and words, abridgement of the Ukrainian lexicon, and so forth. Finally, secret instructions were issued by Glavlit [Main Administration for Literary Affairs and Publications] to transliterate Ukrainian ethnonyms and other words into foreign languages as if they were Russian. Thus, masculine given names such as Olexander, Andriy, Ihor and Volodymyr appeared as Alexandr, Andreij, Igor and Vladimir in the Roman alphabet, while the feminine names Olena, Ol’ha and Kateryna became Yelena, Ol’ga and Ekaterina. Masculine surnames like Hnatyshyn, Berehovyi, Honchar, Khmil and Il’kiv came out as Gnatishin, Beregovoy, Gonchar, Khmet’ or Khmelov, and Yel’kov, while the feminine surnames Hors’ka, Rozumna and Hiliarevs’ka became Gorskaya, Razumnaya and Giliarevskaya. Toponyms did not fare any better. Lexicographers, writers, translators, grammarians, and others working in the language were

at risk if an unapproved lexical term or transliteration was used, and Stalinist penalties were indeed severe. Confounding factors in reducing the use of Ukrainian were ethnic cleansing—to apply nineties terminology to earlier times—two world wars that rolled over Ukraine, and three politically motivated famines that reduced the population to below the 1900 level.


As Mikhail Gorbachev was to say on the subject of the collapse of the USSR: “in Ukraine even the Ukrainian language was on the verge of extinction.”

What are the implications of all this for translators? Many, obviously! Numerous studies on psycholinguistics and language attrition and recovery show that overcoming decades of linguistic neglect and inconsistencies takes commitment and is a slow process. Since Ukraine gained independence, several conferences have been held dealing with orthography and grammar, recognizing that old and distorted habits die hard. An expedient consensus was reached to tolerate various spellings and usages and let nature take its healing course. But the learning curve can be steep with so much confusion and a government that sends ambivalent signals when it comes to the language question. Consequently, a translator is faced with a difficult task if a client or an editor is too demanding as to the convention he or she prefers, particularly if the translator’s natural linguistic instincts and intuition take him or her in a different direction.

That progress is being made is indicated by the fact that since independence, the production of various dictionaries has increased by more than 224% in the post-Soviet period. Production of dictionaries is a relatively good indicator of a language’s viability, and the Library of Congress now holds 266 various Ukrainian dictionaries—more than 70% published after independence—in comparison with 674

for Polish.

To conclude with some practical samples of problems that a translator might encounter: In reading Ukrainian technical reports one finds giga translated into Ukrainian as hiha, giga, and giha. Vice President Gore usually becomes Hor rather than Gor, and even Europe in Ukrainian is now spelled in two ways (and pronounced at least four different ways.) And think what a challenge names like Harvey and Garvey pose in Ukrainian if both are to be translated with an H! These are just some of the problems that a translator encounters as a result of decades of Soviet language policy in Ukraine. A number of recent articles in the *Capital Translator* have stressed that a translator has to be factually accurate and linguistically sensitive and astute. In Ukrainian this is a special challenge.

What of the future of the Ukrainian language? Perhaps a couple of short facts will suffice to indicate a trend. In 1990 only 20% of the students in Kiev studied Ukrainian, today the figure is 90%; the corresponding figures for Sevastopol, Crimea, are 0% and 75%. 

Roman Worobec received a doctorate in microbiology and immunology from Tulane University, New Orleans, and, after an academic stint at a medical school as a teacher and researcher, turned to his avocation of languages, biomedical sciences and information analysis, translating (German, Russian and Ukrainian) and abstracting. He currently leads the Medical Sciences and Biotechnology Team, Library Services, Library of Congress, and works as a part-time freelance translator and abstractor.

Technology Corner

Getting Organized

by Ruth Boggs

We all do it. We have scraps of paper spread out here and there, several spreadsheets with information on this or that job, word processing tables that hold even more information. Some of us even have a filing cabinet that was at one time going to be the final step. We were going to get organized!

We all have had to deal with *the* problem: how to make a system that tracks our very specialized business. Enter *Customer Pro-File* by Land Software.

Billed as the only invoicing system designed for interpreters and translators, *Customer Pro-File* does indeed help with invoicing but has enough other features that make it a must-have for anyone serious about getting organized.

Minimum requirements are for a 486/66 8mb RAM (Pentium 90 with 8mb RAM recommended) or a Macintosh 68030 8mb Ram (Power Macintosh with a 603e and 8mb RAM is recommended).

Installation is a snap. Standard Windows or Mac installation. After installing you are presented with a convenient icon on the desktop (PC only) to start the program.

Double clicking on the Customer Pro-File icon brings up the **Main** screen. This is a nice screen with flags as buttons to navigate through the program. When I first started the program I wasn't sure what to do and in fact had a bit of a hard time until I clicked on the **User Manual** button. I strongly recommend reading through this, especially for those that have not used a database before. The other thing you should do right away is click on the **Setup** button. Here you will enter your name and information to show on

your invoices and envelopes, e-mail accounts and phone/fax/etc. There is also a place to enter your logo if you want.

After reading through the User Manual I was ready to start. The first thing to do is enter your client information. This module, **Client Entry**, stores all client information; company name, multiple contact fields, e-mail account, and phone/fax/etc. numbers. You can enter in all of your clients at once, edit them at any time and easily add new ones

I strongly recommend reading through (the User Manual)...

you get. You can also categorize your clients here. There are category buttons at the bottom of the screen that allow the user to create their own categories for easy sorting. Clicking on the **List View** button brings up the list view where you can easily sort your clients by name or category or any other way you wish.

This module also contains a **Letter** file. Click on the Letter button and you are taken to the **Letter** screen. Clicking the **New** button brings up a list of clients. Choose one then enter a date and also a re: if you like.

Click **done** and now we have a one-page letter before us. This is

handy but limited since you can only have one-page letters. The main **Letter** screen shows all your letters, dates, and subject for easy access.

On the **Main** window you can click one of two ways to get to the invoicing windows: **New Invoice** or **Invoice List**.

The **New Invoice** window opens to a window that pops up a list of all your clients. Choose the client for this invoice then enter an invoice number. I had expected the **Invoice Number** to be autogenerated but you have to enter your own. This is apparently because there are quite a few companies that want their own invoice numbering on the invoices you send. This can be confusing if you're entering your own scheme but there is a handy field at the bottom that tells you what the last invoice number was that you entered. Nice touch. There is also a field for secondary charge numbers such as a purchase order.

After you enter this information clicking on the **OK** button takes us to the **Invoice** window itself. This is where you do all the work. Here you can enter words times rate (up to 4 instances) or per diem times days. Also any secondary charges you might have (flat fees, etc). There are plenty of fields to cover any charges. And it does all the math for you! There are fields for net (30/45/60), currency (\$, US\$, etc.) and they are all modifiable so you can put in anything you want. Also fields for a description of services that shows up on the invoice.

Once this information is entered



...continued on page 10

Organized ...continued from page 9

you can now click on the invoices button where you have a choice of several different invoice layouts. They are all quite different so most folks should be pleased with the choices offered. Print one of these and you're ready to drop it in the mail box.

The other button from **Main, Invoice List**, takes you to a list of all your invoices. In this window you can easily track all of your invoices. There are buttons for **30, 60 and 90** days overdue, **Paid** and **Unpaid**. Each invoice is indicated with a **Paid** or **Overdue** indicator (in green and red no less!) and you can also quickly see the days since the invoice was made. You can bring up all of one client by the click of a button or you can use the handy **Find** feature. Once you receive payment from a Client you can easily find the invoice and use the **Payment Window** in the original invoice to update it. There are multiple payment fields for those that don't always pay in full.

From **List View** you navigate to the **Report Center**. You can view or print reports on **Words Translated by Month, Language by Month, Income by Month, Billings by Month, Year Summaries**, and many more. If you've always wanted to know how many words you translated in French last January then this is the program for you. The **Report Center** can show you all of the business that you do over the years or you can narrow the search by finding a range of dates. It would be nice if this were automated somehow but it is fairly simple to do and there are lots of popup help files to show you if you don't remember.

The other major modules are **Business Expenses** and the **Glossary**. I was quite skeptical of the **Glossary** until I started using it. The simple looking screen is really quite powerful. It is made for easy tracking of every client and their phrases or just

words and phrases alone. If you wanted to find all of the phrases that one of your clients prefers in Spanish, then do a simple find on the Client, Spanish, and there you have every word or phrase the way they want it. It is just as easy to find a word or phrases in any language. You can import your current glossary (with a little tweaking) into the program.

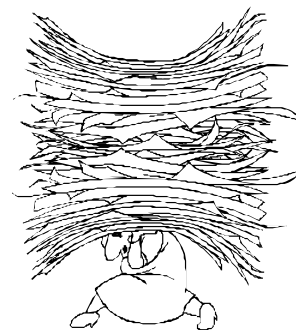
The **Business Expense** module is just that: enter all of your expenses by category, company, etc. As with all of **Customer Pro-File** modules it is easy to make your own categories and to sort or find information with little effort.

The other modules are nice but fairly simple. **To Do Lists** module, **Message Pad** module, **Check Book** module, **Contacts** module. These are all very rudimentary but this is a small complaint. The program is an invoicing system and these are small extras that one can use or not. The **personal phone book** is quite nice and makes accessing things very easy.

Like any new program **Customer Pro-File** can be intimidating at first. If you're not used to using a database it can be even more confusing than usual. However, with the **User Manual** and the **Online Help** screens it won't take long before you find yourself navigating around and it will start to make sense. Plus it has

a very nice and friendly interface. I kept putting off using it saying that I was too busy to take on something new. I should have started right away because it is the busy times when this program really shines. It organizes and automates the billing aspect of your business so well that you're free to concentrate on the translating. And for \$69 you just can't go wrong. ✍

Ruth Boggs is a full-time G>E and E>G translator and interpreter who lives and works in Fairfax, VA.



For customers who mention that they've read about **Customer Pro-File** in the *CT*, Land Software is offering the package for \$54 for the month of July only.

<http://www.landsw.com>
landrcords@aol.com
202-237-2733

Information Exchange

Ten Great WWW Sites for Translators

by Frank Dietz

While there are hundreds of www sites out there that are of interest to translators, a few of them stand out by the scope and depth of information they offer. Here are my ten favorites:

1. Rivendell Language Resources <http://rivendel.com/~ric/resources/dictionary.html> offers numerous online dictionaries from Abadani to Yoombe, links to language chat sites, a list of software localization companies, and Real Audio radio in many languages
2. The Human Languages Page <http://www.june29.com/HLP/> dazzles with its wealth of languages (including Bavarian, Dalekarlian, Klingon and Manx). You also find information on language schools, organisations for translators and interpreters, as well as jobs and internships.
3. The Translators Home Companion <http://www.rahul.net/lai/companion.html> offers links to foreign-language news services, patent and government databases, online dictionaries, translation agencies and much more.
4. Onelook <http://www.onelook.com/> contains links to hundreds of online dictionaries in subject areas ranging from medieval tournaments to high energy astrophysics to beer.
5. The University of Vaasa (Finland) offers a substantial terminology collection at <http://www.uwasa.fi/comm/termino/collect/>. You will find both general language dictionaries as well as specialized glossaries in many fields ranging from agriculture to vehicles.
6. Cecilia Falk's home page <http://www2.sbbs.se/hp/cfalk/indexeng.htm>, which is available in Swedish and English, links you to mailing lists and newsgroups, glossaries and tools for translators.
7. If you ever need an unusual font (Egyptian hieroglyphics? French sign language? Latvian? Old Church Slavonic?), the Yamada Language Guides site <http://babel.uoregon.edu/yamada/guides.html> is the right place to go. This site offers 112 downloadable fonts in 40 languages.
8. The Translation Journal, edited by Gabe Bokor <http://www accurapid.com/journal/> is a great resource. Here you will find informative articles on topics such as diesel engine terminology, organic chemical nomenclature or "A Translator's Day in Armenia". The journal appears four times a year.
9. Did you ever need a flag for your advertising brochure or your web site? You find plenty of them at the World Flag Database <http://www.flags.net/>, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, plus flags of provinces.
10. Eurodicautom <http://eurodic.echo.lu/cgi-bin/edicbin/EuroDicWWW.pl> is the multilingual terminological database of the European Commission's Translation Service. It just has received an "interface lift" and seems somewhat faster now. ✍

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Important Reminders

Is Your Entry in the Year 2000 Directory?

August 15, 1999, is the deadline for submitting your information to be included in the printed *Professional Services Directory 2000*. Don't wait until the last minute! Submit your PSD Information form or check out your entry on our Web site (<http://www.ncata.org>) and send any changes in writing to the Membership Chair (MartinA2@gusun.georgetown.edu). This is the last reminder! The next newsletter issue will reach you after the August 15 deadline.

Advertise in the Year 2000 Directory

Whether you have an entry in the year-2000 issue of the NCATA Professional Services Directory or not, "it pays to advertise." From business-card size to a full page, NCATA members can advertise their services at greatly discounted rates. The directory goes to over 300 buyers of language services and will be used over and over again, thus enhancing your visibility. Contact Michael Wahlster (NCATA@GW-Language.com) for a price list and join the growing number of advertisers. Deadline is August 13, 1999.

Join the NCATA Mailing List

NCATA has set up a mailing list for the distribution of messages, job announcements, and reminders. You can join this list (or cancel your subscription) from the Mailing List option of our Web site (<http://www.ncata.org>). This mailing list has taken the place of the previous e-mail broadcast announcements. Stay on top of what is happening in the chapter and subscribe to the Mailing List today!

NCATA
P. O. Box 65200
Washington, DC 20035-5200