

NETA Support for Interpreters working for The Executive Office for Immigration Review

By Laura Rojo MacLeod

“Life and language are alike sacred,” wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, who continued, “Homicide and verbicide—that is, violent treatment of a word with fatal results to its legitimate meaning, which is its life—are alike forbidden.” This is a serious matter, a sine qua non relationship. Language reflects the community where it was born, it shows the character and interactions of its people. Indeed, we communicate at every step of our lives, in a variety of ways and with the natural, sociocultural, or personal world. This rich interaction should display the best of mankind: the more cultural diversity, the richer the interactions and results for everybody.

But today, when storms of all kinds stop us in our tracks, when appalling lack of kindness towards other human beings makes us wonder about mankind’s endgame and leave us speechless, today more than ever, language is of the utmost importance. Language, cultivated by qualified language professionals, is the essential bridge and the guardian of communication between cultures. How rich, complex and useful the role, insights and interventions of translators and interpreters are!

Right now, given the immigration crisis, court interpreters are especially valuable language workers. Court interpreters interpret everything the respondent’s attorney, the government attorney and the judge say, plus everything the respondent says. Interpreters are the indispensable expert communicants, the human bridge to connect the worlds of those in power and those seeking safety, particularly in the case of vulnerable immigrants.

For those appearing before federal immigration judges, the process is daunting and challenging as it is, never mind without an EOIR interpreter. The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) is an office of the United States Department of Justice and is responsible for adjudicating all immigration cases in the United States. Recently a decision

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Personal Branding for Translators & Interpreters

2019 Conference Endnote Address by Ewandro Magalhães

Reviewed by Marcus Giotto

As a strong voice in the translation and interpreting industry over 30 years, Ewandro Magalhães defines himself as a conference interpreter at heart. Ewandro currently acts as VP of Marketing and Communication of KUDO, a remote simultaneous interpreting platform in NYC. The scope of Ewandro’s presentation was on how to effectively market and brand ourselves.

Ewandro proposed creating one’s image as a freelancer and defining that image in professional and consistent ways. Come to meetings with the



*Endnote Speaker
Ewandro Magalhães is a
former chief interpreter of
a United Nations agency.*

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for more about the
2019 NETA Conference
as well as links to conference
papers and photos.

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NETA News

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The Linguist as Analyst: Where Expertise Adds Value

2019 Conference Keynote Address by Jonathan Levy

Reviewed by Erika Schulz

Jonathan Levy is a professional educator and language services consultant based in Arizona. As a child, he grew up on a reservation for the Navajo, the largest Native-American nation, spreading over four US states.

This might seem a diversion from the main topic, but actually, his father's being an anthropologist on the reservation allowed Jonathan to meet the medicine man and experience firsthand a chain of events that led to his interest in languages and how to serve as a culture and language broker.

What happens when the government builds a hospital but the local Navajo population would not use it? Why wouldn't they take advantage of having access to the best health care possible? It took the mediation of a local informant, an interpreter, to learn that the hospital was seen as a place where people went to die. And more, it was a place where no traditional cleansing rites were performed after people passed. Personally, given this context, I would have avoided hospitals too.

In addition to this account, Mr. Levy walked us through how a medical interpreter program was created to build a bridge between the Navajo people and the hospital.

Why was this program successful? Mr. Levy pointed out the three strengths of the program:

- 1) interpreters spoke both languages;
- 2) interpreters understood both cultures; and
- 3) interpreters functioned as analysts.

In the case of the medical interpreters working at the hospital with Navajo patients, Mr. Levy described linguists as having the ability to function as analysts of language and culture, as being passionate about their role and continually asking questions about medical terminology and the Anglo health care system. As he added, a linguist/analyst can go beyond converting language A into language B. They can answer "why" people ask certain questions or why they behave in a particular way.

This might seem idealistic, treating linguists as experts, but it is happening more and more. In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, Levy was with FEMA coordinating the deployment of

Spanish and Vietnamese interpreters in the affected region. There he witnessed how FEMA relied on the linguists as experts and how they were able to "accomplish the mission", focusing on the victims and their needs, by trusting the language and culture analysts.

Other examples of this include the military relying on linguists for their missions and wire-tap assignments; hospitals integrating interpreters into their health care teams, and higher education hiring experienced translators as part of their project teams.

While an evident shift to expanding the interpreter's role as advocates is in the air in many health care organizations, there is no doubt that technology is also playing a role in how our profession is evolving.

Levy shared that as a result of using the technology of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI), services are being cut off. The technology does not allow for complete

communication or enriching contextual interaction. In addition, we have Machine Translation (MT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) capable of processing large amounts of data, voice recognition and learning from the corpora and (innocently) sharing online. All this technology may not sound promising, but Levy reminded us that machines cannot answer "why?". There is still hope because machines cannot be "human". No matter how much technology is put to use, nothing compares to the in-person interpreting encounter.

Being human allows us to read and communicate emotions and body language. Thus, we are capable of interpreting the elements of non-verbal communication. We can understand what we hear and also what we see. There is a vast body of sensory data that cannot be processed by machines. As Levy stated, "Even the rich prefer to be treated by a human, because they know it is better".

Given that the tendency is to learn from linguists and slowly replace them with technology, there is a dire need to counteract this trend with more education, teaching more interpretation and translation skills.

Levy sees promise in future generations. He thinks those coming after us will figure out the problems we are leaving them. He sees hope in how the youth is valuing the work of co-ops and unions. And he also encourages us to keep up the good work, to communicate more about what we do and to research and grow professionally.

So, what do we need to do to be considered analysts today? I asked Mr. Levy why the military more than other sectors of society, rely on linguists as analysts. His answer was surprisingly simple: The military is mission-based, with objectives. Linguists have the skills to help them complete the mission.

Mr. Levy's answer gave me a new insight into how to educate non-linguists about what we do and how to introduce ourselves as analysts. This is a reminder for us all that clients come to us because of our expertise, the same way we hire an accountant.

**A linguist/analyst
can... answer "why" people
ask certain questions
or why they behave in a
particular way.**

Personal Branding for Translators & Interpreters

Continued from page 1

attitude of showing the world who that persona is. Be careful in our relationships and consistent in how we present ourselves - be human, yes, intimate, no.

Be visible. If we are freelancers, the client is going to find us but we need to gain visibility. This is enhanced by maintaining similar photos across online platforms. Ewandro's choice of social network for professionals is LinkedIn - an excellent lead generation tool with over 575,000 registered members. Another rule of engagement is to be dynamic in posting comments, articles, to demonstrate that you care about your field and colleagues.

Don't burn any bridges. Occasionally, we will run into a person that irritates us but never react to provocation. Avoid engaging in negative or unproductive conversations on social media. Future clients are watching!

Mind the 80/20 ratio. If we are looking for work and want to be viewed as a team player, keep in mind that there are thousands of others doing the same thing. So 80% of what you do online should be about other people – clients, colleagues, and the market, but only 20% about yourself. Lift others up. Take the time to go online and say “What a great presentation!” to a colleague, carefully tagging the relevant people and, promoting that person, because this attitude only creates good vibes and serves to bring more good things back to us.

Watch your taglines. This statement should tell people what we can do for them. For example, the LinkedIn profile of Bruce Kasanoff, who has a very effective tagline focused on his clients: *“My best skill is simplifying complexity and getting to the heart of what you want to communicate.”* Keep your summary brief. Summaries on LinkedIn, only show the first three lines, so ensure that the last phrase ends in a period. Check how the summary appears on a cellphone screen.

Spread kindness. At the bottom of each LinkedIn page, in the space for endorsements and recommendations, Ewandro suggests giving more than what we expect to receive. In his profile, there are **32 received** and **43 given** recommendations. Make a point of endorsing and recommending others generously, and providing meaningful and thoughtful recommendations. You are planting seeds.

Thank you, Ewandro Magalhães, for such an inspirational presentation showing us how to navigate our social media personas, following your three-step approach to success: *appreciate, praise, and share*. Suggested book reading: *“The Four Agreements”* by Miguel Ruiz.

Editing Literary Translations

2019 Conference Presentation by Cecilia Weddell

*Reviewed by Laura Rojo
Macleod*

It was a very interesting fine line Ms. Weddell put across in her presentation about ‘Editing Literary Translations’.

She emphasized that translators are the experts informants of the text, they represent it and therefore they can tell what's worth publishing. I would add that they, as quality language workers, can certainly suggest some specific editing possibilities. As Weddell also pointed out, citing Massop book: ‘don't just make changes because you are not the author. Justify them.’

Points to ponder for translators of different types of periodical publications:

Avoid provinciality and expanding beyond a Western understanding of literary merit.

Regarding ‘strangeness’, consider the inherent prioritization of Anglo literature always in acceptance, asking that a work ‘reads well’ in English. Weddell considers this aspect implies further complexities.

Be curious, with a positive attitude, think of the treatment of the work by different hands as a natural process

To illustrate her topic, Ms. Weddell interviewed different journal editors: Kara Thors, Garcia Roberts, Archie Burnett, S. Vincent from Harvard Review, Exchanges, and Translation Review, for example. She asked them what they look for, first of all, when considering submissions of works in translation for publishing, what editing treatment follows, who are involved. They agree that the general principle and priority is consistency in the text and the advice to see editors as collaborators. A ‘smooth’ attitude is appreciated in order to deal with language teams previous to the final publishing. Editors always offer suggestions that, depending on content and style, this work in progress may be done to a degree. The translator already does self-editing, clarifies to avoid confusions, changes syntax for editing taste, etc. Check Rosario Castellanos’ “Domingo”.

And Bernofsky calls to ‘Turn the volume up!’, to review the text again, see it under a variety of nuances to gain more insights. Indeed, it's a fine line, I say a journey to keep on travelling. Translators always do it; we are the word workers for all seasons...



2019 New York City PEN Translation Slam at the World Voices Festival

By Terry Gallagher

An Icelandic poet. A Japanese novelist. What do they have in common? Both are writers whose works must be translated into English to reach a wider audience. Can that process be presented live on stage?

For several years now, the international writers organization PEN has featured a Translation Slam as part of its annual World Voices Festival, in New York City. This year, the featured languages were Icelandic and Japanese, and I was invited to participate.

An audience of about 100 people gathered in the Nuyorican Poets Café, a performance space deep in the East Village. On the small stage at one end of the large room, we were organized into two panels, each consisting of a moderator, an author, and two translators. Each panel had less than an hour to make our presentations and take questions from the audience. Unlike a typical poetry slam, there was no voting.

The Icelanders were up first, and Gerður Kristný read her poem, *Atlantis*. The two translators, Kara Thors from Canada and Larissa Kyzer from Arizona, read their competing translations. The three short texts were displayed in three columns on a big screen. The translations were similar, yet different enough to spark a lively discussion about things like word selection, verb tenses, and what it is like for the author to see her work transformed into another language. Björn Halldórsson, an Icelandic who lives in New York, managed the discussion well.

Then it was time for the second panel. Kanako Nishi read the first page of her novel *Fukuwarai* (*Lucky Laugh*). The moderator was Allison Markin Powell, another Japanese-English translator and recent co-chair of PEN America's Translation Committee. Iyasu Nagata and I were the translators. This time, the translations were strikingly different (though still recognizably the same "text"). For one thing, Iyasu thought the main character was female, and I thought male. (The author herself said she was no longer sure. She had one idea, but she could see why someone else might think differently.) Japanese does not make much use of pesky personal pronouns like "he" and "she." The words exist, but they are more often used to mean "boyfriend" and "girlfriend." Also, in



the very first sentence of the text, Iyasu used the pronoun "she," and I thought it should be an "I." We were having to guess, and the answer could only be known by reading more of the book.

We also discussed what it means to be "faithful" to the original. With Japanese being so "minimalist" and "high-context," I argued

that the translator must add information that is not explicitly present in the original text, but which any Japanese reader would understand and a non-Japanese reader might not. For example, adding the word "traditional" to the phrase "pine decorations."

Part of the challenge in this exercise was that we were given just a single page of the novel. Many of our

questions, as translators, would have been resolved had we been able to read further. Also, we were presenting what I would call "second drafts," which had been polished to some extent, but which had not benefited from a back-and-forth with the author or any editor.

In the Q&A with the audience, the author said our discussion prompted her to rethink her own ideas, and see her work in a different light. Who would have known translation was that powerful?

The PEN World Voices Festival was started 15 years ago by [novelist Salman Rushdie](#).

Translation is core to PEN's mission. This year's one-week-long festival had over 70 events in total, with the participation of 200 writers

from 50 countries, including Arundhati Roy, Dave Eggers and Laurie Anderson. This year's festival is over, of course, but you can read [PEN's summary article](#). Hope to see you there next year!

Long and Short Range Connections

2019 Conference Presentation by Bruce Popp

Reviewed by Marcus Giotto



In this session, Dr. Bruce Popp, ATA certified translator from French into English, and Patent Agent, discussed observations from his practice of translation. Dr. Popp began his talk by describing terminology drift, which refers to the document level cohesion in the choice of terminology. He stressed the importance of looking at the document as a whole rather than breaking it down into small parts.

Listeners were invited to consider length when practicing translation – be that grammatical forms, cohesive devices, subject-verb agreement or when resolving polysemy considerations. Terminology drift, which has us look to solve multiple meanings word issues that we are working with, both in the source and the target language, is inevitable in a translation.

Grammatical Distance: Dr. Popp pointed out that subject-verb agreement within a sentence can be difficult. Microsoft Word and Antidote grammar checkers sometimes incorrectly identify the subject of the verb telling that the verb is in the wrong person - failing to identify a complex subject.

We must be able to accurately deconstruct and analyze the sentence to recognize noun-phrase conjunction. Dr. Popp tells us his thought process: “Here is the subject, and now what is the right tense for the verb? How do the parts need to fit together?”

For other kinds of agreements: With French as his example, we need to have the adjective and the noun correctly agreeing in number and gender, by determining which they are. Dr. Popp was emphatic: “Be careful of long phrases between the subject and the verb. Pronoun-antecedent also causes problems which go beyond a single sentence.”

Cohesion: Dr. Popp showed us that terminology drift is an error of consistency, or global cohesion, within a single translation. It can be accidental or incidental to the process of preparing the translation. To find and correct terminology drift, we need to be aware of the possibility that it will happen and actively look for it. See [ATA Chronicle, January-March 2019](#).

Resolving Polysemy – Dr. Popp’s goal was to find answers to the following questions: How closely related are the multiple meanings of the source or target word? How much of the struggle is to find the correct target word that matches the intended meaning of the source word? How close are such meanings? As an example, Dr. Popp discussed the French word “tension” that can be used in either an electrical or mechanical meaning. In the case of power lines, Dr. Popp explained that they could be under tension by their weight (gravity) and carrying a voltage. In French, the word tension has to be understood in context to be correctly translated into English.

We are grateful for the valuable understanding of terminology drift shared by Dr. Bruce Popp and challenged to take this important point into consideration when practicing our craft.

Importance of Professionalism in Résumés and LinkedIn

2019 Conference Presentation by Megan Kregel

Reviewed by Jairo Suarez

Megan Kregel is a Multilingual Supplier Resource Coordinator, Writer and Free Lance Translator. In her job as a recruiter, too frequently she receives incomplete résumés, résumés with unprofessional email addresses, and résumés full of typos and incorrect formatting. That was what prompted her to offer this presentation.

Megan said mistakes in writing or sending résumés are not just made by new interpreters but also by linguists who have been in the field for years. Common mistakes range from incorrectly labeling a Curriculum Vitae to ending emails with *hugs*, emojis or responding with “k, thanx or pls resnd.”

Megan’s presentation was full of work anecdotes and funny examples. She is always surprised when she sees interpreters with several years of experience who still have an email address that’s along the lines of princessgirl214@yahoo.com, wordstolivebyforever@msn.com or boothwhisperer98@gmail.com. “No cutesie, ‘live-your-life’ slogans,” she suggested. It is important to have a professional email address. Also, it is best to use @gmail.com; she recommends against using @aol.com, @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com. Only use a university email if you are in academia.

Megan indicated that LinkedIn is an excellent resource and that she would love to see more interpreters listed. It would not only help them when applying for jobs, but also for networking purposes. For that reason she offered some helpful tips and tricks for using LinkedIn. “Photos are okay on the resume...as long as it’s not a selfie!”

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Importance of Professionalism in Résumés and LinkedIn

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Megan added with a chuckle. “I do not want to see you on a rug, I do not want to see you in a pub, I do not want to see you in a car.” Also, Megan recommended not posting like you would on Facebook, but to keep it academic and instructional. LinkedIn profiles should include current role, publications, licenses, certifications and volunteering activities. “Do not ask for endorsements” Megan advised. It is enough to list the city of residence; the street address is not needed. If you had a career change, list both professions if they are relevant to the position you are applying. Hashtags and keywords are important!

Recruiters are looking for specific skills that should be included in résumés. “Less is not always more in our industry; the more details, the better— within reason.” When using an application form, fill in as much information as possible. Don’t use typewriter, serif, or TNR fonts. Arial is a good basic font. Don’t use [Europass](#) or other auto-generated formats. “Be honest, accurate and use proper tenses” she recommended. Testimonials and references are okay to include.

Some people get angry when an agency requests additional information. They say; “I am an expert, I don’t need to list...” To these people, she had a warning; “We remember.” Megan advised not to argue with an agency representative if they say you do not have the necessary qualifications needed for a project.

Translators should mention relevant information to recruiters, such as:

- Services, TR, ED, PPR, formatting, etc.
- Working Language Pairs
- Specializations; doc type breakdown
- Credentials
- Memberships
- Software
- Years of Experience
- Payment Methods
- Website Information
- Translation Work History
- CAT Tools Used

Interpreters should include the following information on their résumés:

- Working Language Pairs
- Type of Interpreting: Consecutive, Simultaneous, OPI, In-Person, VRI
- Credentials
- Memberships
- Years of Experience
- Interpreting Work History
- Trainings Attended
- Areas of Expertise

Megan offered these recommendations of what **NOT** to do when submitting your résumé:

- Send it in the email message itself or take a screenshot of your resume on your phone and send a .jpeg image of it.
- Résumés should be sent as a Word or PDF document.
- Send it via Google docs.
- Send a résumé more than two years old.
- Name the résumé anything other than your name and the year.
- Include an objective.
- Send the résumé as an attachment without some type of greeting in the email message.
- State that you will not provide additional information.
- Fill out applications, forms or send emails on your cellphone.

Regarding the use of emails, Megan recommended:

- Respond with a formal greeting;
- Make sure spelling and punctuation are correct;
- Do not use all caps;
- Do not copy and paste from parts of a chain email with block formatting or basic text;
- Typically, do not editorialize about any test results;
- Do not list employees of LSP’s as references without permission;
- If given an employee’s personal number for any reason, do not text or call them outside normal working business hours. Only text/call for professional reasons. Do not ask for Skype or personal contact information.

To end her dynamic session, Megan recommended participants pay attention to whom you’re sending your résumé and not just randomly reply/apply to job postings, especially if you do not meet the requirements for the position.

Juvenile Court Terminology Solutions for Portuguese

2019 Conference Presentation by Steve Sanford

Reviewed by Sarah Heller

Steve Sanford's presentation sounds like it would only be of interest for Portuguese translators and interpreters in the narrow context of children's court. However, in actuality, although the examples came from Steve's experience with Portuguese in Juvenile Court in Massachusetts, his method for determining specialized terminology can be applied to any language and any specialized situation.

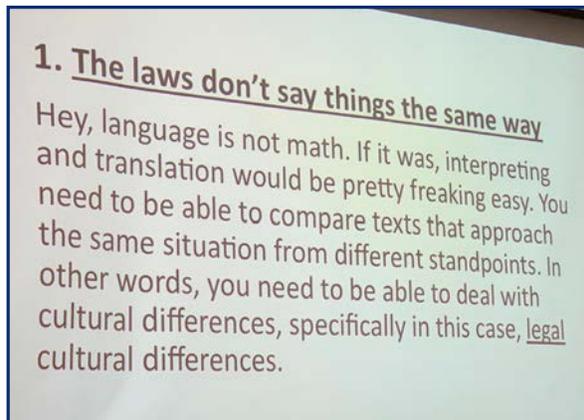
Steve explained that he was forced to develop his own research method because bilingual legal dictionaries don't include many of the terms he needed. It was a bit mind-boggling to learn that every jurisdiction and every court department within each jurisdiction has its own terminology.

Here is Steve's basic method to detect the correct terminology:

- (1) Establish the meaning in the source text. If you are not sure of the meaning, first look the word up in a monolingual dictionary or ask someone (or preferably several people) who are knowledgeable in the subject area. This step is crucial because if you have the wrong meaning in the source language, it follows that your translation will be wrong.
- (2) Hypothesize what the target term might be by (a) looking up the term in a bilingual dictionary; (b) using Google Translate; (c) asking a fluent speaker of the target language with knowledge in the area; or (d) making an educated guess.
- (3) Verify that the target-language term you have chosen has the same meaning as the source-language term, in the specific context.

Ways to verify include: (a) using a monolingual target-language dictionary; (b) searching for images of the term (if it's a physical object); (c) asking a person knowledgeable in the subject area, or (d) relying on your own knowledge.

- (4) Confirm common usage by googling the word or phrase. Make sure to add the domain extension of your target language country (e.g. www.google.com.br for Brazil). Add extra words if needed to make sure that you get hits in the right context (medical or legal, for example). If you want to search for a phrase, put quotation marks around it. If there are very few hits, it's probably the wrong word. Go back to (2) and try again.



You want a lot of hits but they need to be reliable. Blogs and social media are only good for slang. Bilingual dictionaries don't count, nor do Wikipedia or any translated sites. Look for websites

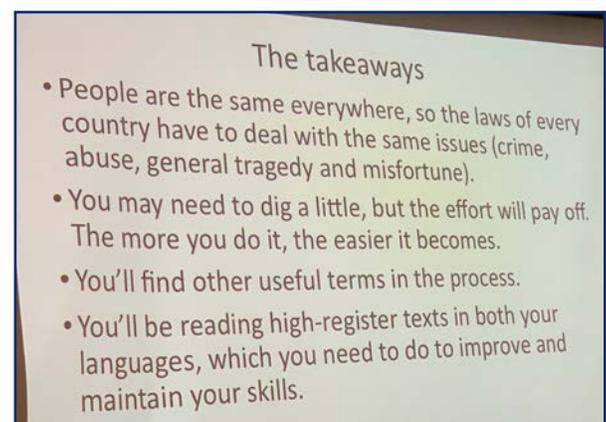


from target language countries such as government and commercial websites, as well as local news stories.

In a legal context, there is an additional research option: Compare comparable laws in source and target languages. It is time consuming but will yield good results. Steve went into detail about how to go about doing this. Original legal texts are a gold mine of information. Even just reviewing the index can reveal a lot. By reading and comparing the actual legal documents from the two countries, you will get a feel for style and presentation differences between the two cultures.

The slides presented here give you just a taste of the wealth of information Steve Sanford presented during the session. He was generous explaining many tips and observations he has gleaned from his years of experience in interpreting and translating.

This was a very worthwhile presentation and reminded us how careful we need to be in choosing correct terminology.



People, Place, and Purpose: Leadership Skills in Consecutive Interpreting

2019 Conference Presentation by Rony Gao

Reviewed by Stephanie Newton

Rony Gao, English <> Chinese conference interpreter based in Toronto, emanated a professional and personable stage presence and shared anecdotes (what would you do if you were interpreting for someone who said, “When Eisenhower became president...”) and comments that made the audience burst out laughing and almost sparked a debate (“Westerners’ names are hard!” “No, Chinese names are hard!”) to explain the importance of leveraging our understanding of “people,” “place,” and “purpose” in order to be leaders as interpreters. This helps us not only avoid errors, but also, he said, harness opportunities to do an even better job.



Rony reminded us of the importance of knowledge of the people participating in the interaction. He recommended practicing people’s names and titles in advance of a session if possible, and emphasized this recommendation with the story of the unfortunate but hilarious mispronunciation of an official’s name as “Mr. Spaghetti.”

Beyond people’s names and titles, an acute understanding of the power dynamics in the room can help a session run more smoothly. Rony recalled a meeting, for which he was the consecutive interpreter, that took place right after a long bus ride. As the meeting progressed, he noticed the attendees getting up one by one to leave the room. Rony’s recognition that the Chinese are unlikely to interrupt a session to ask to use the bathroom prompted him to use his position as the only bilingual person in the room to suggest a bathroom break.

Another leadership skill that interpreters can embody is an understanding of place, which encompasses cultural knowledge. During a break between interpreting sessions at a conference in Canada, a Chinese visitor asked Rony why Canadians drink ice water. Rony decided to use this curiosity as a way to foster connection between people from the two countries, and he let the leader of the next session know the question, who then used it as an icebreaker. In case you’re wondering, the conclusion was that Canadians drink ice water because it’s refreshing, and Chinese drink hot water because they believe it’s healthier.

A third important leadership skill is understanding the purpose of the interaction. Rony invited Joshie Ng, a Chinese-English interpreter to the front of the room, who interpreted the last few sentences of a sample speech that Rony gave, thanking “Mr. Wang.” The interpreter rearranged the order of Rony’s original message, thus prompting us all to applaud, rather than interpreting the speech directly which would not have solicited the applause, and therefore not supported the intended purpose of the speaker.

And with that, the audience gave Rony a hearty round of applause for an interesting and entertaining session!

What’s Missing in Your Interpretation and Translation?

2019 Conference Presentation by Scott Crystal

Reviewed by Diana Rhudick

I wouldn’t swear to it, but I get the impression that interpreters enjoy the limelight. Or so it seemed during the role play segments of Scott Crystal’s presentation. Crystal asked audience members to volunteer to come to the front of the room and act out scenarios to demonstrate how an interpreter is affected by his surroundings. And yes, for each scenario, it was the interpreters who volunteered—which was fortunate for the rest of us.

The first few role play segments illustrated Dr. Albert Mehrabian’s Rule of 7-38-55. What on earth is that, you ask? The UCLA professor of psychology claimed that when we like or dislike something, 7 percent of our communication is based on visual cues, 38 percent on tone of voice, and 55 percent on body language. To test this rule, Crystal had an audience member interact with his assistant while the assistant used body language and tone that were at odds with her words. The point of the exercise was that although interpreters are usually taught to be neutral parties in a conversation, using varying tones of voice and body language can help to improve their performance.

The most complicated role play involved various volunteers interacting with Crystal’s assistant as the assistant interpreted, to see how their actions would affect her work. One volunteer made loud noises, another sprayed a strong perfume to distract with smell, and the assistant had to start the whole exercise by eating a mint in order to have the influence of taste. Here, Crystal was exploring whether an interpreter’s sensory perceptions influence his word choices. The result was that the poor assistant was so distracted by all the stimuli that she could barely produce a coherent word.

Crystal’s presentation was a fun foray into how we communicate and how that communication is affected by outside forces and by context. In answer to the concern about how to filter out our personal experiences when interpreting, Crystal suggested that the interpreter be mindful and that he moderate his interpreting.

Increase your Interpreting Productivity with Technology

2019 Conference Presentation by Maha El-Metwally

Reviewed by Stephanie Newton



At the beginning of her incredibly informative session that had everybody frantically taking notes and calling out questions, Maha El-Metwally reminded us what Bill Wood asserted: interpreters will not be replaced by technology, they will be replaced by interpreters who use technology. Maha, a conference interpreter who works in Arabic, English, French, and Dutch, then reviewed nearly two dozen technologies that can aid us in our work. A few are highlighted below.

- **Rocket Book and Pilot Pen** - a notebook and pen set that allows you to digitize your notes. Marking your notes with a symbol will transfer those notes to a specific storage area that you've indicated ahead of time, such as Google Drive, email, or DropBox.
- **Iris Pen** - transforms what you write into digital form.
- **Bamboo Folio** - a digital slate paired with an app on your tablet that you can put regular paper on, and it digitizes the notes you take.
- **Neo SmartPen** - digitizes notes you take on SmartPaper. Maha uses this to evaluate how her students are doing when they are learning consecutive note-taking.
- **LiveScribe** - records everything you write to the pen itself, which also records the sounds happening when you are writing, both of which you can then upload to a computer.

Maha also told us about many other practical tools and tips, including:

- **Noise-cancelling headphones** - cancel background buzzing while travelling, but you can still hear people speak.
- **LimitEar** - Your hearing is one of your most important tools as an interpreter. LimitEar designs products to keep noise below 85 decibels to protect you against acoustic shocks.
- **Solar backpack** - charge your devices on the go.
- **Voice Amplifier** - amplify your voice, your other most important tool as an Interpreter!
- **Keyboard covers** - silicone overlay to place over a computer keyboard with letters in languages besides English (with the added advantage of protecting the keyboard).
- **Privacy screens** - protect sensitive information.
- **Haystack** - a digital business card app.

During Maha's information-packed presentation, audience members were even jumping in to give suggestions and look up prices for one another. One person added in a creative example to help

illiterate patients with medication or discharge instructions - record the instructions on a greeting card where you can record a greeting, and the patient can take the card with them and play it back to themselves. Maha pointed out that most of these technologies were not designed specifically with interpreting in mind, but by looking at things with a "different pair of eyes," you can repurpose creative inventions to assist you in your work - and even support solar energy while you're at it!

NETA's 2019 Fall Programs

Events are usually held in the Boston Area. Look for emails with specifics closer to the date.

In the meantime, mark your calendar for these upcoming NETA dates:

Saturday September 21
14th Annual Translation Bash

Saturday October 19
NETA Monthly Meeting:
Topic to be announced

Saturday November 16
Adding Value to your Translations
by offering Page Layout and other
Ancillary Services.

Date to be announced
December Holiday Party

Program Coordinator Marian Comenetz is always looking for monthly meeting ideas. Please share your ideas with her by emailing Programs@netaweb.org.

Evidence-Based Approach to Ensure an Equitable National Certification Program

2019 Conference Presentation by Margarita Bekker

Reviewed by Sarah Heller

Margarita Bekker is the Chair of [CCHI](#) (Certification Commission For Healthcare Interpreters). Her presentation focused on CCHI's development of an exam that tests interpreter competencies independent of any specific language proficiency. Traditional interpreting tests include assessment of an individual's ability to perform competently in a specific language pair. Usually such testing is also targeting a particular domain of interpreting, e.g. medical, legal, business. CCHI already has certification exams available for interpreters which tests both language proficiency and interpretation skill in health care for English<>Spanish, English<>Mandarin, or English<>Arabic.

Now CCHI aims to have a certification program that is available for interpreters of any language. However, creating a traditional interpreter competency test for every language is basically impossible. It is not just the hundreds of thousands of dollars needed to develop the tests. Even more difficult is to find a statistically valid sample of at least 250 people who are interpreters in each language pair. Then there is the problem of who will be the graders? Who determines if these people have the ability to assess the results?

As an alternative to traditional paired language interpreter exams, CCHI launched the EtoE Project to develop an English-English skills test. In addition to language proficiency in two languages, an interpreter needs skills that either have no direct correlation to language proficiency or are not exclusive to language proficiency. These are the skills needed to successfully convert meaning from one language into another. The EtoE exam will test for these non-language specific competencies.

Margarita had us try several exercises to demonstrate some of the skills needed. One exercise was related to memory capacity. We broke into pairs and one person talked for a short period of time while the other person tried to remember everything. Then the listener repeated back as closely as possible what had been said. This is an excellent way for people to experience the intrinsic difficulties of interpreting!

As the final part of her presentation, Margarita explained how CCHI is doing the actual development of the EtoE Test. Designing an English only interpreter exam requires data and analysis to

validate the exam. With a grant from the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, in 2018 CCHI began recruitment of a panel of volunteer subject matter experts in different languages who will write test items, review, and validate them under the guidance of a psychometric consultant. Once the test is written, they will pilot it. The pilot study participants will take two exams, the EtoE exam and the dual-language CHI™-exam in their corresponding language. CCHI will compare the results to see if there is a correlation between the two tests. If a valid correlation is found, the EtoE exam will be available for performance testing of interpreters of any language.

CCHI will soon be looking for interpreters of Spanish, Arabic and Mandarin to take part in the pilot study. Margarita encouraged people who are applying for the CHI™ certification to volunteer. Find out more at the [CCHI website](#).



2019 NETA Board of Directors Election Results

There were five candidates for four seats on the NETA Board of Directors in the May 2019 election. Candidate statements were available on our website, and notice of the election was emailed to all members. Members could vote by email or in person at the May Conference. Many thanks go to Diana Rhudick and Marian Comenetz for managing the election this year. The following candidates were elected to the Board for two-year terms:

Lesley Andrews
Laura Rojo MacLeod
Erika Schulz
Rokhaya Smith

NETA appreciates all who took the initiative and stepped forward to run for office. All members are encouraged to attend board meetings and volunteer for committee work.

For more information, talk with any officer or board member or email info@netaweb.org.

NETA Support for EOIR Interpreters

Continued from page 1

was made by the EOIR to “replace in-court interpreters at initial immigration court hearings [Master Calendar Hearings] with videos informing asylum seekers and other immigrants facing deportation of their rights.” Implementation began in July, when videos were shown at initial court hearings in New York and Miami. People are reporting what we knew would happen. (Read more about it in a [July 17 article in the San Francisco Chronicle](#).)

NETA is standing with the EOIR interpreters.

A variety of comments on NETA’s email discussion group urged a response. Ideally there would be a joint statement from translators’ associations like NETA, ATA, NAJIT and other concerned groups addressing both human rights and the matter of interpreters’ livelihood. It was posited that NETA might use

**Interpreters are the
indispensable expert
communicants, the human
bridge to connect the worlds
of those in power and those
seeking safety, particularly
in the case of vulnerable
immigrants.**

its professional status and expertise to push back primarily on the degree of added systemic dysfunction that will result from implementation of this so-called “cost-saving measure.” Other suggestions were to post the issue in our social networks individually and invite other associations to join in, for example: bar associations, judges associations, law firms, academic institutions, *The Boston Globe*, etc.

As conversations on our email discussion forum took place, the [ATA released a statement](#).

Following consideration by NETA’s board, our president, Diana Rhudick, informed the membership that the board concurred with the ATA’s announcement and notified the ATA:

“The New England Translators Association has endorsed the ATA statement opposing discontinuing immigration interpreting services. Many of our members were very concerned by this administration’s decision and have been organizing counter-measures. They are pleased to see the ATA take a strong position in this case. NETA’s board felt the statement was appropriate and necessary, and we certainly hope that our small effort of endorsement will help it to have the impact it deserves.”

In a follow-up message, Diana also inquired whether the ATA intended to gather support statements from other groups. NETA now has confirmation from the ATA that they would like to keep track of

who is supporting their statement against termination of interpreters at initial asylum hearings.

Please send the names of any groups who have formally endorsed the statement to [Walter Bacak Jr.](#), ATA Executive Director.

NETA posted its endorsement of the ATA statement on [Facebook](#) in mid-July. Our endorsement is also posted on [our website](#).

NETA vice president Lesley Andrews made a special comment:

“The statement from the ATA and the support from NETA and other organizations are focused on making sure that the policies and processes we have are implemented properly, and that people facing immigration hearings have the opportunity to be heard, understand their legal situation, ask questions, and be treated fairly. The proposal to replace interpreters with videos explaining the process looks like an effort to cut costs, increase the speed of processing people through the system, and trample on the rights of people to speak and be heard during the process, making it easier to round people up and ship them back out of the country without giving them the chance to plead their case. It is difficult to process large numbers of people while respecting their rights, it takes time, effort, and money, but rejecting people who come here looking for a better life without due process goes against the principle of keeping this country a place where people can find opportunity and live without persecution and oppression. Instead of giving tax breaks to the rich, investing in a fair and humane immigration process would seem to be a much better thing to do.”

I believe that together, supporting the EOIR interpreters, we can make a very positive difference, a quality difference where a language of human kindness, alive and for all seasons, should prevail against all odds.

NETA Board Meeting Minutes, June 18, 2019, Newton

Present: Lesley Andrews, Diego Mansilla, Laura Rojo MacLeod, Erika Schulz, Rokhaya Smith, Alice Wolfe (outgoing), Antje Ruppert (remotely)

Also attending: Diana Rhudick and Marian Comenetz

ATA conference in Boston, Fall 2020. Rudy Heller will record more videos for the promotion at this year's ATA. He is in touch with Adrian Aleckna from the ATA so Bruce Popp can get started, too. Sarah Heller has the bookmarks and Diana will get a list of NETA members attending this year's ATA in Palm Springs. Lesley to check for brochures.

Treasurer's report by Crystal Zhong. She shared some information for the third quarter, and will finalize numbers by the end of the month. She has received almost all conference expenses and will create a full picture of the conference. Some conference registrations still need to be figured out.

NETA 2020 Conference. There were talks about bringing a speaker from England as well as from Ohio, California or Canada. Conference committee is working on theme and keynote speaker. Also, the board will ask Elena Langdon if she would be available and interested in chairing the ConfCom for 2020.

Roles for 2019-2020 period. The following positions were considered and confirmed or to be confirmed for continuity: president, Diana; vice president, Lesley; secretary, Rokhaya; treasurer, Lesley to ask Crystal; membership coordinator, Antje; super administrator(s), Lesley and Diana; programming coordinator, Marian; newsletter editor and layout person(s), Diana to ask Terry Gallagher and Sarah; job opportunities poster, Alice; conference coordinator, Diego to ask Elena.

Also, confirmation of roles in double system: At least 2 people receive key emails. Currently, admin emails (Antje, Marian, Lesley and Diana), membership emails (Antje and Marian); info emails (Diana and Marian), payment emails (Crystal and Antje) and job opportunities (Alice and Diana).

Voting process: Voting for the 2019 board elections yielded 35 votes online, using Google Forms; 30 paper votes at conference site; 4 votes via email; and 2 votes via snail mail sent to Marian. The idea is to move all

voting to Google Forms and have people email Lesley if they have questions. Diana to update voting instructions. The "Meet the Candidates" was a successful idea.

NETA's groups.io: This members-only list was verified by Lesley when migrating to the new groups.io platform. Usual active member verifications are performed in February and August, and Antje checks the list.

Membership (Antje): As of this date, there are 275 members; 220 are regular and 55 are students/seniors, plus there are some lapsed and pending members to confirm. There are 16 new memberships to process from the conference. Membership cards are in the works and will be available soon. Marian, Diego and Lesley will meet separately to discuss a person's situation regarding membership.

Website: Diana and Lesley to switch method of payment from PayPal to Wild Apricot's platform. On Erika's request, Diana and Lesley will look into NETA's online directory to make credentials and certifications visible.

Monthly programming: Marian to contact person at BU to have space for monthly meetings. New dates for 2019-2020 term: 7/20, summer picnic; 8/24, possible ATA workshop; 9/14, possible ATA exam sitting; 9/21, 14th annual translation bash; 10/19; 11/16; December TBD: holiday party; 1/18; 2/15; 3/21; and 4/18. Lesley is working on creating a registration form for remote attendees. Zoom allows for this and it would be ideal to send it along with Marian's meeting announcement. Lesley will create a list of IT resources available/needed for presentations, such as having PowerPoints ahead of time. Speakers will also be asked if they agree with remote sessions. Erika is still working out details with possible webinar on internet hygiene.

2019-20 board meeting dates, times and places were discussed and set as follows: 9/28/19: Worcester; 1/25/20: Waltham; 3/28/20: Waltham, 6/27/20: Waltham.

Conference (Elena and Conference Committee): Elena will send the CEU certificates soon. She is planning to change the sign-up system for CEUs. Lesley will have the report on the surveys. Final finance numbers for conference expenses and income are to come. Per available figures, the conference was attended by 119 members, 58 nonmembers, 40 students + 20 UMass-sponsored students and 26 of the above individuals registered onsite. The board decided to wait and see more conference information before deciding to keep or raise current sponsor and exhibitor fees for 2020. It was also decided to keep exhibitors' logos posted on our website till the end of the year. Elena has them in Google docs. It was noted that the conference booklet and the food were great and effective. It was great to have 50-minute sessions. Regarding credit card use, there were computer and browser issues, may reconsider or leave online registration open till closer to conference date, though may prove difficult to calculate attendees for food, folders, etc. Students need to confirm attendance sooner than a week prior to conference. Since the board had been

Instructions on How to Increase Your NETA Online Privacy

by Diana Rhudick

If your name and contact information are included in NETA's online directory, be aware that these may be harvested by anyone using the web. The instructions below explain how to hide specific fields in your profile, which will of course also become hidden to potential clients.

NETA Board Meeting Minutes, June 18, 2019

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approached by other organizations to have joint conferences on subsequent days, it was decided not to partner with other organizations for the time being. It was decided to keep the UMass Boston conference site, but maybe in a different building though more expensive. Diego to look into this. Possible date: May 2, 2020. Early-bird registration may start in January, possibly with names of speakers and sessions. The need to always have a "Getting Started Sessions" and to keep sessions to address translators and interpreters equally was addressed and the board will develop guidelines on Board expectations for the conference. It was mentioned that Noah Lynn had a conference timeline with tasks to perform chronologically. It would be great to recover this resource and use it for reference. It is believed that conference supplies are with Elena, Montserrat Zuckerman and Inés Fusco. Erika to ask them and confirm. The board also discussed raffling admissions for student volunteers. Inés Fusco's role coordinating volunteer tasks was highly praised, but given the late hour, it was moved to treat this topic at the following meeting. Andy Klatt is this year's recipient of the service award. Lesley will buy the gift card and prepare the award certificate. It was determined that at this moment, having a videographer at the conference is beyond the budget. It was agreed that it would be great to have Conference Committee members attend board meetings to keep fluid communications.

Website: Regarding old Yahoo groups, Diana shared that it appears there are no new messages from the Alt-NETA Group and that it might be necessary to have a board member contact Yahoo to close all old NETA groups.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for 9/28/19, at 10:00 a.m., in Worcester, MA.

Respectfully submitted,
Erika Schulz, MA



Click on your name to show the menu.

Click on "View profile."



Click on the gray box to left, "Edit profile."



Click on "Privacy," in the middle.

This page lists each field of your profile, and gives you the option to make each field visible to anybody, members only, or nobody, (No access).

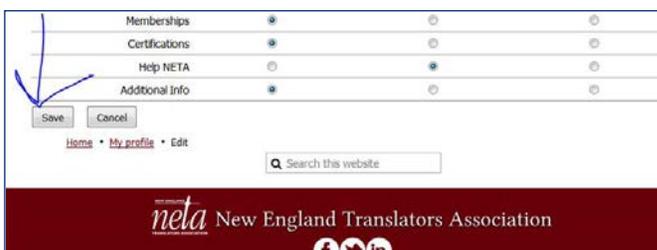


You can also click or unclick "Show profile to others" near the top.

The email field is about 9 down on the list. You can select "No access" for it.



To save changes and exit, click "Save" at the bottom.



Thank you, everyone, for a successful 2019 conference!

NETA wants to thank the conference committee, volunteers, presenters, sponsors, exhibitors and members of the translation program of the University of Massachusetts Boston for making the 23rd annual NETA Conference such a success. We also are especially grateful to all the volunteers, who gave of their time. It was a true team effort. Some people came early to help with set up and registration; others stayed late to help clear things away. Still others monitored the book table and greeted participants. Many wrote articles that appear in this issue of NETA News. Whatever your contribution, please know that it is greatly appreciated. The fact that you responded to our call for help made all the difference as we came together to create another successful event.

A conference debriefing potluck supper was held on June 12 where participants discussed what worked well and what might be done differently. The NETA Board of Directors also considered the conference at its June meeting. Minutes of that meeting can be found on [page 13 of this newsletter](#).

The 2019 conference committee will begin meeting in the fall. NETA invites you to join the conference committee. If you can make a solid commitment for the 2019 conference, so much the better, but if, realistically, you can only pitch in on discrete tasks here and there, we'd certainly like to hear from you, too. Meetings are held in the Boston area, however we do a fair amount of meetings via conference call, so please don't let geographical distance stand in the way of your joining in on conference planning. To express interest or find out more, contact anyone on the NETA Board or email ConferenceInformation@netaweb.org.

The 2019 Conference Committee:

Elena Langdon (chair), Diego Mansilla (UMass coordinator) Joseph Brockway, Inés Fusco (volunteer coordinator), Rochelle Sweeney and Milena Vitali-Charewicz

Organizers for the bilingual reading and academic panels:

Diego Mansilla, Adel Fauzetdinova, and Joseph Brockway

Key Assistants:

Montserrat Zuckerman, Marian Comenetz, Diana Rhudick and Lesley Andrews



Snapshots of the 2019 NETA Conference

*Photos are from Twitter
#NETAconf2019*