Come Join Us!

>> Confirmed speakers at the conference include:
> Duard Bradshaw, Esq., president of the National Hispanic Bar Association
> C. Carol J. Patie, Ph.D., author of "The Effective Interpreting Series"
> Bethany Dumas, Ph.D., chair of Linguistics Program, University of Tennessee
> D. Daniel Giglio, J.D., freelance interpreter and translator Thomas L. West, Esq.,
  "Spanish-English Dictionary of Law and Business"
> Alex Rainof, Ph.D., professor, California State University, Long Beach
> Cristina Castro, M.A., freelance interpreter and translator
> Lois Feuerle, J.D., Oregon Judicial Department
> C. Sebastian Aloat, Esq., Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice

More information about these and other speakers, seminars, and pre-conference workshops is available on the NAJIT website at www.najit.org.

NAJIT has obtained the remarkable rate of $79/night for this event, with complimentary parking and airport transportation. Come join us, and take a Tennessee vacation afterwards! The dogwoods will be beautiful in the spring.

Coming Soon: Summer Issue of The Interpreters Voice

“On Cognitive Analysis and Translation”
by Elizabeth Ivanova, St. Petersburg, Russia

Ms. Elizabeth Ivanova is a professor of philology at St. Petersburg State University in St. Petersburg, Russia, and is also a practicing translator. We’ll hear, among other things, about the role that translation played in the development of European proverbs.

We will also present the second half of the “Interpreting in Spain and Colombia: Two Perspectives” article from a 1999 NAJIT-sponsored Interpreters Roundtable.

Our quarterly newsletter, The Interpreters Voice (TIV), is up and running again! We plan to publish four quarterly issues annually. For the June issue, please submit your articles to Cathy McCabe at cathspan@ mindspring.com by the end of May.
Send any notices or news about training and certification seminars and training to appropriate editors.

Visit the Interpreters Division website for updates, events, and news: www.ata-divisions.org/ID

Advertise in The Interpreters Voice! (rates on page 2).

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We’re Back!

by Cathy McCabe, Editor

At long last, some of you might be thinking. Yes, The Interpreters Voice is back, and as the newsletter editors for the spring and summer editions, we are pleased to present this first edition to you. Just as a little background: Priscilla Padrón and I worked together for two-three years as the editors of Bridges, the newsletter of the Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators. We appreciated that opportunity and aim to carry on the collaborative effort with The Interpreters Voice.

We plan to bring you articles of interest from interpreters in different areas of the world and with different areas of expertise. Occasionally we will include articles from other interpreter newsletters that might be of interest to those of you who didn’t have the opportunity to see them. In this inaugural edition, an interpreter from Argentina presents some insight into psychological and linguistic aspects of language professionalism, and we’ve also included some interesting perspectives on court interpreting from our colleagues at the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators.

We weren’t able to accomplish one of our goals—to include an article from a Russian interpreter; we’ll need a bit more time to work out the quirks with Cyrillic characters in our software. Next edition! We’ve also compiled a list of information that might be helpful for your future reference. And, like all newsletter editors, we ask you to either contact us or send us the article directly, if there is something you’d like to submit. We look forward to hearing from you and to receiving any suggestions or comments.

One last thing. ATA’s Annual Conference will include a get-together and dinner for the Interpreters Division. Don’t forget to mark it on your calendars. Look in the column entitled “Administrators’ Perspective” (page 2) for more information.

ATA INTERPRETERS DIVISION CONTACTS

Administrators
Helen Cole
helen.cole2@verizon.net
Beth Tu
Etutu@aol.com

Certification Committee
IzumiSuzuki
izumi.suzuki@suzukimyers.com

Directory Committee
Virginia Pérez-Santalla
virginiasps@comcast.net

Listserve Master
Teresa Román
PortadaLLC@aol.com

Nominating Committee
Maria Carolina Paraventi
mcp6@prodigy.net
Inés Saraver

The Interpreters Voice Editors
Cathy McCabe (spring/summer)
cathspan@mindspring.com
Nurit Shohom (fall/winter)
nilufer@citlink.net

Listserve Master
Teresa Román; PortadaLLC@aol.com

Webmaster
Margareta Ugander
margareta@ugander.com
ADMINISTRATORS’ PERSPECTIVE: ID Highlights and Updates

Compiled by ID Administrators, Helen D. Cole and Beth Tu

Dear ID Members,

Highlights of updates regarding ID committees and activities, the majority of which were results from the November 2002 ID Annual Meeting, follows:

Website: Check the ID website periodically for updated information. Send any news of training opportunities to Webmaster Margareta Ugander at margareta@ugander.com for postings.

Listserv: Listserv master Teresa Roman, PortadaLLC@aol.com, has done a terrific job as the moderator of e-voice4ATA-ID Listserv Master. Listserv is a wonderful tool for us to share information, ideas, questions, concerns, etc. There are many options that you can choose to receive your listserv e-mails without feeling overwhelmed by daily postings. To better use the ID Listserv, check the ID website for Teresa’s instructions.

Interpreters Certification Committee: Izumi Suzuki, izumi.suzuki@suzukimyers.com, will compile a list of interpreters’ certification programs that are already in existence and will work with ATA to establish some type of recognition program for ID members. As a result of the discussion during the last ID Annual Meeting, the exhaustive amount of time and investment required to develop certification for one language pair made it unfeasible for ATA to establish an “Interpreters Accreditation” program. Rather than reinventing the wheel, we propose to have ATA acknowledge the existing certification programs.

ID Directory Committee: Virginia Perez-Santalla, virginiasps@comcast.net. Financially, it is not feasible to publish an annual paper ID directory. However, some interpreting agencies expressed the usefulness of a condensed paper directory. We encourage everyone to better use ATA Translators and Interpreters searchable directory on the website. ATA is open to suggestions regarding the modification of its electronic database.

ID Nomination Committee: Maria Carolina Paraventi, mcp6@prodigy.net, and Inés Saraver. All active ID members are eligible to run for the ID Administrator, Assistant Administrator, and Treasurer positions. Please submit any recommendations you might have for candidates to Maria and Inés; ballots will be mailed and elections held during our next ID Annual Meeting in November 2003.

The next ID Annual Meeting Reception will be held in the conference hotel restaurant, called Aunt Chilada’s, November 6, 2003, 7-9 p.m. Because the restaurant is at the conference site, all administration related to this reception will be handled by ATA. Cost: TBA. Please check the ATA Chronicle, pre-conference schedule, ID website, and the listserv for updates regarding reservations. Contact person: TBA. A heartfelt thank-you to Karin Isbell of Phoenix for the wonderful “advance work.”

The next ID Annual Meeting is scheduled for November during the ATA Annual Conference in Phoenix, AZ. ATA President-elect Scott Brennan invited suggestions and initiatives from ID members regarding interpreting sessions and activities at next year’s ATA Annual Conference in Phoenix, Arizona. The proximity of the federal court-interpreting program at the University of Arizona provides a “rallying point” for an enhanced interpreting lineup next year. ATA will solicit participation from the U of A interpreting faculty. Scott also aired the idea of ID, NAJIT, or other groups scheduling training seminars in conjunction with the ATA conference.

ID buttons are still available. New members should contact Mary David at mary@atanet.org for your free button and flags (max. 3). ID buttons are a wonderful fundraiser for our division and a great advertisement for your profession. To order more buttons, please download the order form from the ID website.

Many volunteers came forward and have made this division greater. Please accept Beth’s and my heartfelt appreciation. You have made this division a productive one and the Administrators’ work easier and satisfying. Thank you all and have a wonderful spring.
Interpreting in Spain and Colombia: Two Perspectives

by Daniel Sher
Reprinted with permission from Proteus, the newsletter of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (Vol. 8, Nos. 3-4, Summer-Fall 1999)

NAJIT ORGANIZES INTERNATIONAL ROUNDTABLE

In 1999 NAJIT sponsored an Interpreters Rountable at the federal court in the Southern District of New York. Speaking were Josep Peñarroja Fa, President of the Association of Sworn Translators and Interpreters of Catalonia, and Dr. Cecilia Plested Alvarez, from the School of Languages at the University of Antioquia in Medellín, Colombia. Both gave an historical overview of the profession in their countries.

Peñarroja spoke mainly about the market for sworn interpreters and translators in Spain. In our next issue, we will publish Plested’s view of the discipline of judiciary translation in Colombia from the academic perspective.

Peñarroja: Impoverished Nobility vs. Plebeian Security

The use of sworn interpreters in the Spanish-speaking world dates back to the colonization of the Americas (la Conquista). Spanish law was applied to the indigenous peoples during la Conquista and as such, “the Indians living in the Americas had the right to be judged and have a translator, an interpreter. In the early 1500s, the law stipulated that there be an interpreter who would interpret under oath.” Thus, 30 years after the Conquista, the profession of intérprete jura-do, or sworn interpreter, was born.

In 1841, it was decided that the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with jurisdiction over foreign languages, would appoint the sworn interpreters and administer their examinations. “At the time,” noted Peñarroja, “it was felt that anyone aspiring to be a sworn interpreter would be a bourgeois, someone with encyclopedic cultural knowledge. It was believed that a written examination would suffice. The problem is that the 1843 decision remained in force until 1966, which is an absolute embarrassment.”

Currently, the examination for sworn interpreters in Spain consists of three written sections, which deal with general subjects and require translation both to and from Spanish. The oral section, introduced three years ago, is “an interview to evaluate the interpreter’s knowledge of the foreign language.” According to Peñarroja, every year 2,000 people take the English exam and 12 or 13 pass. “My colleagues are rather high quality translators, although I must say that there are very few who actually interpret.”

In 1996, a second certification route was made available to aspiring sworn interpreters. Any person successfully completing an undergraduate course of study in translation and interpreting at an accredited Spanish university would automatically become a sworn interpreter.

Peñarroja viewed this as a disturbing development. “The university is a degree-making machine,” he complained. “If there are now 2,000 interpreters in Spain, with this new law, there might be 10,000. It’s not the same divvying up the pie among 2,000 as it is among 10,000. The university has destroyed us, because the number of interpreters will grow exponentially, but the amount of work won’t.”

Furthermore, according to Peñarroja, the Spanish university approach to translation and interpreting is excessively theoretical. “In Barcelona, legal translation is taught by a poet,” he observed. “I have nothing against poets, but let the shoemaker stick to his last (zapatero, a tus zapatos). What can you say about someone who has studied law with a poet?”

Peñarroja was quick to underline the paradox that while sworn interpreters are certified by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, they are supposed to work in the courts, under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice. Yet the Ministry of Justice “did not want to enforce our reasonable rates,” and “decided to hire non-sworn interpreters as staff interpreters. They didn’t hire people who had been approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was enough for an applicant to have a high school degree. The salary is about $800 a month. Our Association was radically opposed to this, of course, but we ran up against the government’s desire to save money. In Spain, the judicial branch has always complained about its low budgets, and whenever there are budgetary problems, the first area they look to cut is the interpreters.”

Today, most sworn interpreters in Spain work as translators. They work for notaries public, foreign investors and multinational companies, and are often called upon to translate documents in matters of commercial law (derecho mercantil). A translation by a sworn interpreter is more expensive than one done by a non-sworn interpreter. (Peñarroja recently raised his rates to about $.11 a word, which is high for the Spanish market.) Government-appointed interpreters working in the courts do not interpret all that is said, but intervene only at the direction of the judge. Not all defendants have equal access to an interpreter, Peñarroja noted. “In criminal cases, there may be drug traffickers who have a lot of money. They can afford the best. They can afford the best lawyer, they can afford the best interpreter. Of course, the poor unfortunate mule (camello) cannot. So we are becoming the interpreters of the rich and not of the poor, which is sad.”

Having spent a few weeks in the States observing interpreted court proceedings, Peñarroja told the group, “If you allow me to use a stereotype to compare our situations, I would say that in Spain we are somewhat like the blue-blooded English nobleman who is flat broke. Here, you don’t have that noble blood, but your checking account is doing okay. I am a sworn interpreter. I am named by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of his Majesty’s government. I can use the Stamp of the State as a seal for my work. But in reality, it’s all an illusion. I have no legal framework to support me. Perhaps here you don’t have all the trappings of nobility, but at least you have some regulatory framework to rely on.”
Self-discipline is a great virtue. Personally, I believe it ranks among the top highest virtues a human being can enjoy. Self-discipline dictates the path to walk along in life and helps frame a person’s destiny. It is self-imposed and works because it is the result of being related to an inner conviction.

Self-training in any field is naturally derived from self-discipline as the larger frame encompassing the desire to achieve self-defined goals. In fact, by this term is meant the ability to improve and polish what has already been acquired, as well as the need to update and learn to learn.

In professional interpreting, self-training is contemplated only after formal training has been completed, and working conditions evoke a growing awareness of the need to make never-ending progress, and experience demands it. Self-training should be approached as a requirement in the life of the interpreter. A great passion for acquiring information, an infinite pleasure to play communicator, and the thirst for knowledge to serve others are the salient characteristics that make a quality, disciplined interpreter who has learned how to learn.

In my opinion, the way self-training should be understood is related to a formal as well as to a non-formal general background. The former involves a knowledge of linguistics, critical discourse analysis, and information processing that provides the tools to access encoding and decoding data in our minds, while the latter refers to personal attitudes, experience, and individual features and behavior. The sources from which an interpreter feeds to consolidate his/her background, then, may be said to lie with: a) academic training and b) working in the profession.

The overall underlying ideas contained in self-training necessarily include constant practice and rehearsal of the interpreting modes at home, a frame of mind married to an avid need for general as well as specific information, a habit-forming disposition or cultivated inclination to perform the necessary repeated acts of endless reading and broadening the frontiers of one's mind.

Learning how to learn means to know how to gather information and materials, how to set priorities for needs at any given moment, how to acquire the preparation and keep in professional shape and how our own strings should be pulled to do the research and proper consultations in anticipation of a particular interpreting event.

The formal background acquired should be sufficient to allow any interpreter to independently follow self-guidance in his/her individual lifelong education. There are no shortcuts that substitute for hard work and the instinct to choose a tailor-made methodology for self-training. A self-designed guide with activities, lines of research, readers, and a course of studies to support and polish one's interpreting ability is always possible without having to turn to outside sources.

Public speaking can be practiced at home; there is extensive bibliography that provides excellent information on the need to improve the use of the voice and how that can be achieved. One's voice can be recorded on audio- or videotape to monitor one's body language as well. Choosing the right partner with whom to work—this kind of practice can be a bit more fun — and the feedback obtained when training in the company of someone else is enormously helpful.

Human beings enjoy a cognitive system that has a memory system that works differently according to each individual. We need to discover how our own particular memory works in order to find out how to develop memory span based on one’s own characteristics and individual needs and demands. There are endless recommendations for learning to retrieve information in our cognitive system, but none will be as valuable or helpful and practical as the self-awareness itself of the way one's own mind goes about processing incoming information, organizing the entering data, and rendering that same information in the target language. However, there is no recommendation that works as well as active listening, which is the best and only way to enter incoming information, organize it, and later retrieve it. This might best be summarized by "no listening, no retrieval."

Critical discourse analysis contributes greatly to decoding incoming information and ordering the data entered so that the messages therein contained can be organized for encoding in the target language, following the strategies offered by discourse analysis and the general patterns different types of discourse follow. We can find, for instance, that there is a given logic in how the information introduced in narrative style is introduced, just as there are various patterns to introduce ideas in argumentative and other styles as well. If discourse analysis is practiced and the main strategies and patterns are taken as universals to be used as tools for self-help, then such patterns and strategic moves that run through other people's discourses will be discovered and naturally, according to the particularities of idiomatic and personally distinctive features.

Learning how to learn must be taken as a continuum without gaps or time breaks, non-stop contact with the training process. When, why, how, what for, and who are the main question words that can be associated with learning to learn. The answers to each such word are brief but mutually articulated: day-to-day study and practice (when) because the interpreter can
be compared to a ballet dancer in need of maintaining muscle tone (why) by means of a self-designed plan for making progress and exercising (how) in order to master the interpretation techniques necessary (what for) with the aid of the right people for consultation in specialization fields (who).

Learning to learn should become second nature in the life of the interpreter.

**TEXT, CONTEXTS, AND THE INTERPRETER**

The term “context” is rich in more than one sense. It is difficult to imagine a life without context. No doubt, there must be the notion of text in its broadest scope for understanding the various types of context; in particular, the main circles of context with which an interpreter is involved: verbal context, cognitive context, and physical context. Personally, I envision context as a circle within a person is, say, enclosed. There might be smaller circles or wider ones. Text as discourse is ultimately always the source.

Linguistic or verbal context is immediately brought to mind if we think in terms of interpreting and the interpreter’s raison d’être. Although text is not to be taken as either verbally or written expressed language, it is ordinarily linked to its use. Verbal context for the interpreter is the vehicle—the conveyor belt of the forms and sounds that language takes—and should be associated to short- and long-term memory, most particularly to STM and not very long spans. It is this context that renders the sounds that reach the cognitive system, and it is also this context that provides the written source to do the required research for prediction in interpreting. Verbal context is linked to STM in particular because it is the main vehicle for input material in the construction of the target discourse. Linguistic context eventually fades down and actually dies out to give way to concepts.

Cognitive context opens the door to the ideas and knowledge fields managed in the interpreting situation, plus one’s world of overall knowledge that necessarily operates as cultural background. It is related to long-term memory since conceptualizing and gathering the information that will be used at the time it must be brought to mind is its main role. We can, then, infer we can speak of two separate kinds of cognitive contexts: one that provides the specific knowledge required in technical and specialized fields when having to interpret in any given specific situation and the general background context thought of as the interpreter’s safety net and closest friend in case of having to bridge the unbridgeable in terms of LTM functions and general education. Cognitive context renders either the support or data-base for gathering ideas and forming concepts.

Physical context actually intervenes at the moment of interpreting and having to decode correctly its different meanings, i.e., from an interpreter’s or speaker’s possible headache to an unforeseeable delay to a situation of war. This implies that the range for physical context is indeed broad. The personal or subjective, as well as the collective or international interests and concerns, are ever present. The interpreter’s and the source speaker’s well-being are essential and influential language and cognitive performance—the economic and political conditions of a country, natural phenomena like earthquakes and floods, terrorism and disasters—all are factors that play a crucial role in an interpreting situation. September 11, 2001 may be cited as one of the most relevant cases, and more recently, when the space shuttle Columbia fell apart, the spirit and frame of mind of everyone throughout the world was directly touched...or suffice it to mention the tense relations between Iraq and the rest of the world and the fear of an all-out war.

There are, then, situational constraints to which speech events are subject. The socio-cultural variables that characterize any given speech event may be said to be setting, participants, purpose, key, content, and channel. “Setting” refers to the time and place of the speech event and the form the speech takes—talking to the lecturer during the lecture in the conference room will necessarily differ from chatting to him/her after the lecture, over a cup of coffee perhaps. The participants determine certain hierarchical patterns of language use and performance to which the four participant roles—addressor, lecturer, addressee, audience—must adapt. The purpose should be reflected in features such as the presence or absence of persuasion, advice, greetings, warning, commands, and endless other possibilities. By “key” is meant the “tone or manner” in which a speech act has been or is performed. It may be a friendly key or a stern, distant one. “Content” relates to subject matter and, along with other factors, co-determines the language form to be used: register and style depend on content. Taboos, prejudices, and banned subjects are generally not dealt with mindlessly. And then, there are two basic “channels” of verbal communication: speech and writing.

The six variables mentioned above may be summarized as follows: who says what to whom, where and when, how and why. This might well become the macro-linguistic principle for an interpreter in self-training.

Personally, I think we can find there are two moments in an interpreter’s attitude that relate to exercising the interpreting abilities and excellence. There is a time for looking inward and for looking outward in self-training.

Looking inward is the time when the self-training interpreter must become clearly aware of personal individual resources, how to use them to the best of his/her knowledge and ability, and how to develop and actually implement self-help at the right time, with the goal being one of polishing and perfecting all areas to become a strong interpreter. Getting rid of fears and possible flops is also part of self-help. This looking inwardly should be thorough and merciless, in order not to leave any inner nook or cranny undisclosed before our own eyes. Stretching to the limit to keep in good interpreting shape is a powerful tool that prepares the interpreter for the unexpected and the unpredictable, which is the bread ‘n’ butter of the interpreting profession. Looking inward helps keep the gears well tuned and also aids in clearing up those jitters that irremediably are always present. It may become a way to achieve reasonable freedom from the stage fright all interpreters are at risk of suffering.

Looking outward, as I see it, connects directly with “other” and “otherness”—the world around us as “otherness” and the existence of the “other”—which has been dealt continued on page 7
When is a Team Not a Team?

by Nancy Festinger
Reprinted with permission of Proteus,
The Newsletter of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators.

Although the following article was written specifically with the courtroom setting in mind, some of the pointers expressed might be of interest to all interpreting professionals.

The co-pilot is trying to get the pilot’s attention, but the pilot isn’t listening; annoyed, he growls, “Don’t interrupt me now. Can’t you see I have a plane to get off the ground?” Later, the plane crashes.

unlikely? Hardly. It turns out that 95% of airline crashes are caused by communication failures in the cockpit. These failures are not traceable, as some might think, to machine malfunction, such as headphone or microphone failure, but to human miscommunication, the way that information is conveyed by crew members to one other.

In the example above, the co-pilot was trying to tell the pilot of an aircraft problem. But in the pilot’s rush to get underway, he silenced his subordinate, who then clammed up, perhaps doubting his own judgment. Some pilots have better safety records than others, but what distinguishes the best from the rest? Wanting to find out, the airlines commissioned a study to find out what pilots with the lowest error rates were doing that the others weren’t. Surprisingly, the price of success in this instance was measurable in time, not money. Successful pilots, it was discovered, always took extra time to establish team rapport before taking their positions in the cabin. Most flight teams are newly created groups of co-workers who have seldom worked together before. It was the pilot’s approach to teamwork that really mattered; no matter how experienced the crew. The successful pilot always introduced himself, invited questions, and reminded crew that the number one priority was passenger safety. This seemingly banal routine was shown to have a decisive impact on the team’s performance.

Interpreter supervisors have a lot to learn from this model. While I frequently choose the team members who will work together on a trial, too often I have taken for granted that they will be courteous in giving advice and support to one another. I have usually spoken to each one separately, but often do not have the occasion to sit down with the team together prior to “take-off.” Disasters, of course, have a way of unfolding without warning: terrible chemistry between teammates; sniping; indifference; correcting a colleague to a third party without telling the colleague first; disappearing acts; burdening one’s colleague with the lion’s share of the work or exhausting the colleague with chitchat; endless uncertainty about when to take turns, or excessively detailed timekeeping schemes; high-and-mighty attitudes; failure to answer colleagues’ questions; or outright derision at others’ ignorance. Jealousy and in-fighting are particularly common among interpreters of lesser-used languages, who may perceive each other as competition for relatively few jobs.

Although the combination of personality traits is infinitely variable, an introductory routine would be an excellent approach to limit the potential for disaster. It is a good idea for a supervisor to make a habit of talking to teams before a trial begins. While scheduling these sessions may be difficult to manage, team orientation should be a priority. The idea is to communicate directly and personally with the team members before they start, setting the tone for the trial.

A handout on Effective Interpreting Teams can be given, and then the interpreters would hear (with variations depending on the experience level): “Thank you for accepting this assignment with the court, and I hope your experience here will be rewarding. In my role as supervisor, I care a great deal about the quality of interpretation provided to the court. The judges are very mindful of the interpretation because they are used to high quality. I consider every interpreter an ambassador for the profession, and we are lucky to enjoy an excellent reputation because those we work for respect our skills. The team on this trial and in all trials has an important role to play. I am going to review what will be expected of you while this trial is pending so there is no misunderstanding about each one’s responsibility.

Our priority here is the accuracy of the interpretation and consideration for your teammate. As teammates you both have equal responsibility, even if your experience levels are different. Before the trial commences, you should agree on when to take turns with the microphone, keeping in mind that the person on the mike should be the one to pass it, not the other way around. Experience has shown that a flexible attitude toward switching is more effective than strictly timed half-hour intervals. If an opening statement lasts 40 minutes, the “on” interpreter may want to finish it before passing the mike. While interpreting, you may pass notes to each other on vocabulary questions, or assist each other with names, numbers, and other details. The relief interpreter’s role is to validate accuracy with the partner and to be available for attorney-client consultations, as well as for any emergency that may arise. Keep a record of case information in the event someone else comes in on the case who has not been here from the beginning. Do not absent yourself from the courtroom for more than a few minutes without warning because you have no way of knowing what may occur while you are out of the courtroom. Be friendly and available to one another without being overly judgmental. Share resources, knowledge, and information and treat your teammate as your parachute: to be most trusted in times of emergency.

>>Your attitude is as important as your language ability.

The interpreters are part of a much larger process, and should strive to remain in the background. I cannot stress enough the importance of punctuality: the interpreter may wait for others, but others should never wait for the interpreter. Both interpreters are
expected to be in the courtroom at the appointed hour, unless previous arrangements have been made. Interpreters should not offer an opinion about trial strategy, witness credibility, or someone else’s translation; and if you are left alone in the presence of a defendant, move a distance away so he will not be tempted to talk to you.

>> Refer all questions to the attorney, even questions you know the answer to, such as “Where does the jury sit?” Courtroom protocol should be respected at all times, in body language as well as appearance. Do not slump in the chair or betray facial reactions to anything happening in the courtroom.

>> Do not try to do anyone else’s job but your own. If asked to do something you are not sure is within your responsibility, please consult with your colleague and with me. If there are schedule changes in the trial, please convey them promptly to the office. We will also get any incoming message to you. In communication I may have with the judge, I represent the interpreter’s point of view and can advise the court of potential problems. If you have any questions or concerns, we can discuss those now.”

A meeting of this sort would take about 15 minutes. It is likely that fewer problems will present themselves once the team is put on notice that their cooperation is not only devoutly to be wished but expected. It’s not hard to be a good solo act when no one is watching, but the best interpreters, and those most valued by their supervisors, are those who are considered desirable teammates by their colleagues. Like a successful duet, a good interpreting team makes beautiful sense together. And the enjoyment factor increases twofold.

Interpreter Self-Discipline and Training (continued from page 5)

with thoroughly in other disciplines. There can be no interpreter without “other.” Opening up and self-effacing in order to make room for the other may be taken as the attitude components of reaching out and meeting other meanings and other worlds. The move of self goes outward and forward to decode and encounter different ideas and views. Opening up involves a readiness to accept what is different, that “otherness” which is so difficult to penetrate. Acceptance does not necessarily mean a conversion to foreign ideas but rather the appropriation of the source speaker’s ideas, of other cultural and intellectual systems which may be the only way to temporarily become the “transmitting rod” needed to reach out to the targeted audience in an attempt to establish the magic of direct communication. Text appropriateness fuses horizon lines for the interpreter needing to become one with the source material and source speaker. Looking outward may even turn into an adventurous cruise to surf through other worlds and cultivate or discover other peaks at the world.

M any of the possible combinations of the word “self” serve to describe and condense the interpreter and his/her work:

>> An interpreter’s self-confidence springs from his/her self-discipline and helps one become self-effacing.

>> Self-effacing suppresses judgment and helps eliminate personal issues that might be hovering around the mind and haunting the soul.

BOOK NOOK

Ms. Inés L. Drallny, author of this month’s article on self-training for interpreters, recently published a book (in Spanish) entitled “La formación del intérprete de conferencias” (trans., Training Conference Interpreters). Published in 2000, it is a welcome addition to the world of conference-interpreting literature. Ms. Drallny specifies her intent in writing this book in the Introduction: “(trans.) There is practically a total lack of adequate information about this profession. And what is even more serious is that not only is this profession unknown but also poorly understood, even by those who need interpreting services or who would be served by using these services.” With that in mind, the author begins with an interesting history of conference interpreting itself, which leads to a concise explanation of different interpreting modes (consecutive and simultaneous) and their characteristics. The author continues by explaining differences between translation and interpretation, while including a chapter on different types of discourse with which a language professional should be familiar. The last chapter of the book (in English) is entitled “Discourse Analysis, Text Linguistics, and Interpreting,” which presents a complete analysis of discourse in interpreting and translating contexts.

La formación del intérprete de conferencias, Inés L. Drallny, Ediciones del Copista (ISBN 987-9192-51-6, Ediciones del Copista, Lavalleja, 47-Oficina 7, 5000 Córdoba, Argentina)