

# I Passed the ATA Exam, Finally!

By Junko Gilbert

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**W**ere you very disappointed and upset when you did not pass the certification (formerly accreditation) exam given by the American Translators Association (ATA) the first time, or worse, the second time? I was!

I have been translating since 1986, and I have felt that my translations were well received. I have received many compliments and few complaints over the years. Then you hear arguments that ATA certification is not necessary and that some ATA-certified translators are not really all that good. For many years I took this advice and thought it was not a respected credential.

It was in August of 2000 that I finally joined the ATA and attended an ATA conference. I had joined the Carolina Association of Translators

and Interpreters (CATI) a few years before and had been enjoying the camaraderie and fellowship with translators and interpreters. I used to be a lone wolf, doing my translation without any knowledge of how other translators did it, except for what I had learned from working in-house at a translation agency for a year and half in the early 1990s.

To make a long story short, through my association with CATI and the ATA I learned more about the ATA certification program and exams. I attended a couple of ATA certification workshops, both non-language-specific and Japanese. Through these and the changes in the grading system adopted by the ATA in 2001, I was encouraged and motivated to take the exam, just as many of you were, I believe.

I took a practice test in November

**The JLD Wishes You  
Happy Holidays!**

よいお年をお迎え  
ください。

## ATA 46th Annual Conference in Seattle, WA



Photographs courtesy of Izumi Suzuki

2002, translating two passages. The results were 7 error points on the general passage (out of a maximum of 17 points that I could get and still earn a passing grade on the passage) and only 3 on the other passage. I was very pleased with these results. I thought, "Hmm, I should pass the test easily." Encouraged, I took the actual ATA exam in 2003 and failed it. Well, I might have had bad luck that year. So I tried again in 2004. Another failure! You can imagine how disenchanted I was after two failures. I started to doubt the validity of the ATA certification program.

...through my association with CATI and the ATA, I learned more about the ATA certification program and exams.

I was not ready to sit for another ATA exam in 2005, so I did not register for it, until the exam date in North Carolina was right around the corner. I said to my husband, "I'm not going to take the test this year because it is a waste of time and money." But he was very encouraging: "Why don't you take the test? I'm sure you are going to pass. You are a very good translator." Then I thought, "Well, if I don't take the test this year, I may miss the types of passages I am good at. If that happens, I will regret it." So I sent in the registration immediately and took the exam.

To my surprise, a few weeks later I received a letter of congratulations for passing the exam, together with an ATA certificate.

I had done a lot of thinking about the ATA certification exams for a few years. I wondered whether I was maybe getting too old for this type of test (I'm in my 40s now). I can see my memory is not as good as it used to be.

After learning that I had passed the exam, I notified many of my colleagues and found out that I was not the only one who had passed on the third attempt.

Here are the things that I think are important if you want to pass the ATA certification exam.

**Test the waters by taking the practice test, possibly all three passages.** Be sure to simulate the conditions of the exam in regard to reference materials (no Internet access), writing by hand\*, and timing (including the time it takes to read passages B and C and decide which one to translate). Here is what is recommended by the ATA: If you have already failed an exam, you should request the same passages as practice tests. (They normally appear as practice tests the very next year.) On the other hand, if the practice test passages are ones

you have already translated for the actual exam, you will be familiar with them; to offset that, you should allow yourself less time. A practice test you have never seen before would be more indicative.

**Do not get discouraged. Take the test consistently.** If you keep taking the exam year after year, you will have a better chance of having a passage in the area of your specialty. Passage A is a general passage and there is no guaranteed way to prepare yourself for this passage. Passage B is in the field of science, technology, or medicine, while Passage C is in law, business or finance. The ATA tries to vary the fields from year to year. For example, say you took the exam one year and Passage B was a medical document. Although none of these passages are highly technical, they are somewhat technical, and medicine may not be your favorite field. The following year, chances are that Passage B would be in one of the other two fields, namely, science or technology. The third year it might be in yet another field. Accordingly, if you take the exam year after year, your chances of encountering your field of specialty or favorite field are much higher than if you take the exam one year, and then skip a year or two before taking it again. Under "A Guide to ATA Certification," the ATA website says, "The certification exam is challenging

with an overall pass rate below 20%." So you may need to be prepared to take the exam for several consecutive years if you really want to pass it.

**Bring reference materials and glossaries in addition to dictionaries.** I brought my own glossaries and "The Japanese Patent Translation Handbook" published by the ATA's Japanese Language Division. Reference materials like that will help tremendously when you have any question in that field.

**Believe in yourself.** If you know you are a good translator, you will pass the exam—eventually. It may take longer than one or two years, but you will. Be persistent!

It is very gratifying to have ATA certification. It is like having a big personal "Congratulations" for having proved that you have the knowledge and skills of a very competent translator.

Junko Gilbert received ATA certification (English into Japanese) in April 2005. She has been translating since 1983 and is experienced in various fields with a special emphasis on legal documents. Her next goal is a degree in paralegal studies. She has been a member of the ATA since 2000, CATI since 1997, and the CATI Board of Directors since 2003.



\* Editor's note: After this article was written, the ATA announced that a computerized certification exam (CCE) will be offered beginning in 2006. The conditions under which the exam will be administered were the object of a detailed feasibility study by an ATA task force. They were described in the ATA Chronicle, June 2005, Volume XXXIV, Number 6.

## JLD Times 掲載記事 大募集

JLD Times では、掲載する記事を随時募集しています。通訳・翻訳に関連する内容の記事でしたらどのようなトピックでもかまいません。詳細は Irith T. Bloom までご連絡ください。

# JLD Times

## Newsletter of the Japanese Language Division of the American Translators Association

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## From the Administrator

Carl Sullivan



Konnichi Wa! It was great to see so many friends, old and new, at this year's ATA conference in Seattle! Being in the ATA not only means benefits in terms of education, networking, advertising oneself, etc., but, perhaps more importantly, benefits gained from the friendships and associations built with like-minded individuals. Sitting at the computer for hours on end, like many of us do, or even in working in a "regular" environment, it is often hard to find the time/opportunity for friendships. The

conference allows time for such things, and my wife Masae and I look forward greatly to the time we can be with you each year.

We will miss Ken Wagner, our outgoing administrator, who served us so very well. Ken was very passionate about the division, and worked hard to further the division through such efforts as supporting JAT/the IJET conference in Chicago, and in recruiting expert speakers from fields in which many of us translate. As new administrator, I hope to continue these efforts. Ken was also very available to division members, and listened to their desires/wishes; I also hope to be such. Please let me know if you have any needs or concerns with which I can assist ([masae@mail.manti.com](mailto:masae@mail.manti.com)/435-835-8504).

The conference was outstanding—special thanks to the committee members Chair Tetu Hirai, Rob Albon, Keiko Best, and Hiromi Fuji. We have an excellent new committee in place for next year's conference in New Orleans, and we will provide an update on their activities in the next *JLD Times*.

The times are changing, and we should be prepared for even greater things to come as we meet new challenges, both individually, and as a division. For example, the divisions of the ATA no longer have budgets to manage. I was first alarmed at hearing about this, but maybe it is good news (budgets can often be a source of conflict). I have been assured that normal, and even fairly special, requests should pass the board with no difficulty. Moreover, we see the steady rise of other Asian languages within the ATA, and have been contacted by representatives from a potential Korean division, who are interested in emulating what we have done. We may find ways to learn from each other as we go forward.

Individually, as interpreters/translators in various forms, we see movements within the industry that may greatly affect what we do in the next several years. Being "connected" through the division will, I am sure, become increasingly vital to all of us, as we pursue our livelihoods. In particular, I hope to reach out to members who may have not attended a conference for some time, but who still find value in belonging to our organization. We need to find ways to bring all of our members together, to keep everyone "in the loop," and to assist one another in achieving our dreams.

I also hope to reach out to new prospective translators, and to institutions who prepare such prospective translators—we owe it to them, for the assistance we also received when those of us who have been doing this for a while got our start. Please don't be shy about being a "first-timer!" We are all first-timers. I intend for the JLD to be a very "user-friendly" organization, in which everyone can feel comfortable and find assistance, at whatever level they find themselves.

I was a bit nervous about next year's conference being in New Orleans, but have been assured that everything will be up and running. I think that it's great that we can support New Orleans's come back by holding our conference there. Please plan to attend, and to enjoy a great time with us in the French Quarter!

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# JLD Sessions at the 46th Annual Conference in Seattle, Washington

The 2005 ATA Conference was held in Seattle, WA between November 9 and 12. The following summaries of Japanese Language Division sessions at the conference were provided by volunteers in the Japanese Language Division. Enjoy!

## Session J-2: Japanese ⇄ English Certification Workshop

Presented by Diane L. Howard, Connie Prener, Kyoko Saegusa, Izumi Suzuki, and Kendrick J. Wagner

*Summarized by Hiromi Fujii and Carl Sullivan*

The ATA certification exam consists of three passages (General, Legal/Business, and Medical/Scientific). Exam takers have three hours to translate the General passage and either the Legal/Business or Medical/Scientific passage. Each passage is about 250 English words long.

The JLD's certification workshop, an annual event, seems to improve every year. Because there were over forty first-time conference attendees within the division, the session was jam-packed this year. Presenters Diane Howard, Connie Prener, Kyoko Saegusa, Izumi Suzuki, Ken Wagner, Bunichi Ohtsuka, and Yuri Chujo Davis led would-be exam takers through specific examples of the exam (in both directions—English to Japanese, and Japanese to English—depending on the interest of the respective participant). The sample passages had been made available to attendees prior to the workshop, and some of the participants had submitted their translations to the presenters in advance, for use during the workshop.

The presenters were able to provide specific examples from the participants'

translations of what constituted acceptable exam responses, as well as various types of errors in specific categories. Working in small groups moderated by the presenters and other seasoned, certified JLD veterans, the participants were able to focus on their weak points and gain valuable insight into how the test is composed, how it is graded, and where they specifically stand in relation to the exam. Because this session is so specifically focused on the translation task, it is a lot of fun for everyone, including veteran translators. Plan to attend this one again in New Orleans!

*\*Note that the JLD's certification workshop is not a test-prep session. Therefore, those who are planning to take the exam should consider taking the practice test offered by the ATA.*

Hiromi Fujii is an interpreter/director of translation at Suzuki, Myers & Associates, Ltd. in Novi, Michigan. She is a member of the Japanese Language Division and was a member of this year's program committee.

## Session J-3: Translation Techniques for Clinical Study Tools

Presented by Martha A. Feldman, S. Lee Seaman, and Kendrick J. Wagner  
*Summarized by Richard Mott*

A large part of the workload for a medical translator often consists of translating documents related to clinical studies as part of the regulatory approval process for new drugs and medical devices. While many of the terms in Japanese and English are relatively straightforward to translate, a significant number of terms can be tricky for those new to the field. This presentation provided an overview of the process of medical product development and gave particular focus to the specialized

Japanese and English vocabulary associated with clinical studies.

In general, the preferred terminology is dictated by ICH (International Conference on Harmonization) guidelines. In some cases, this results in terms that may be non-intuitive at first. For example, a drug "side effect" is not an ICH term. The ICH-preferred term is "adverse drug reaction." Also, there are fine distinctions between similar sounding terms. For example, the term "adverse event" includes any adverse event that occurs during the term of the clinical study regardless of whether it is related to the drug being dosed, while the term "adverse drug reaction" refers to an adverse event that may be related to the drug being dosed. In addition, writers of Japanese clinical study documents are often slower than their U.S. or EU counterparts in adopting and standardizing newly adopted ICH terms. Hence, there may be lingering non-ICH terms in a Japanese source text. The translator should discuss with the client whether to render these terms as their accepted ICH equivalents in English.

There were far more examples of Japanese-English translation terminology than can be presented here. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation should soon be available on the JLD website at <http://www.ata-divisions.org/JLD/jldnotes/>. If you care to receive a copy before the file is uploaded, please contact the *JLD Times* Editor, Irith Bloom, who has a copy of the file.

Lastly, this presentation was an example of what might be called a "Guided Expert Presentation." Martha Feldman is an expert on clinical study planning and execution, and she is president of Drug & Device Development Co., Inc. in Redmond,

WA. As a key part of the planning, Ken and Lee met with Martha three times in advance of the ATA conference to shape and guide the presentation to be of specific interest to translators in the medical field. The result was a presentation that was both informative at an expert level and topical to ATA conference attendees. The presentation attracted translators from outside the Japanese-English language pair, some of whom asked insightful questions and provided additional perspective on the subject. Though it involved extra work, this approach of coordinating with and guiding an expert to present material of specific interest to translators resulted in a superior presentation.

Richard Mott is a freelance translator specializing in chemistry, pharmaceuticals, and engineering. Prior to becoming a translator, Richard had two decades of experience in technical and business positions in several multinational corporations, including six years at an R&D technical center in Kobe, Japan. He has a B.S. in Chemical Engineering and an MBA in Finance and Marketing. Currently, he resides in Golden, Colorado with his wife and two sons.



クニカルな装置についていかに知識を得られるかといったメリットを中心に説明がありました。日常は通訳 50%、翻訳 50% をこなし、通訳の業務内容は日本とのやり取りから TV 会議、電話会議、大規模の会議、商談、プレゼンテーションの通訳と幅広く、翻訳の方も、プレゼンテーションの資料、技術文書、仕様書、契約書、レターなど実にさまざまです。

仕事に関連する分野も多岐にわたり、半導体と一口に言っても、機械工学、電子、電気、制御、光学、物理、数学、レーザーなどがあります。この他にも仕事を通じて、カメラ、法律、ビジネス、会計、バイオテクノロジーなどを勉強することになります。日本への出張は、年間 5-7 回あり、米国内の出張も多くあります。工場見学も含めて、そのような機会は、エキスパートと製造過程を一緒に見られる、また質問をできるすばらしいチャンスだと強調されています。現在 NRCA の通訳翻訳者は、2~3 名の日本人通訳者と 6 名のベンダーで構成されていて、それぞれ MIIS の卒業生や ATA 認定資格の保持者です。採用の基準としては、プロとしての経験や、TRADOS の使用経験、科学技術の経歴、学ぼうという意志があることを重視する他に、対人スキルなども問われます。

Honda R&D Americas, Inc. で社内通訳をされている山崎篤子さんから、Honda のビジネス概要、製品紹介

に引き続き、通訳者の日常業務について詳細な説明がありました。Honda では、社内で通訳担当と翻訳担当とが分けられていて、紹介は主に通訳者の業務内容となりました。技術用語を扱うほかに Honda 社特有の専門用語があり、こちらでも相当の知識を積むことができます。通訳には社内の大中小規模の会議、TV 会議、セミナー、トレーニングなどがあり、その他に出張や、ジャーナリストを招待するイベント、連邦、州、地方高官との会議の通訳などがあります。

仕事の割り振りにはデータベースを使用し、コンピュータで通訳の依頼、レベル、日時場所、資料の有無の確認を行うなど制度が整っています。仕事を引き受けると、質問などをクリアにするために、依頼者との事前打ち合わせを行うなど品質向上に努めます。そして、会議に必要な機材などを各自で準備して当日を迎えます。たとえ 2 時間の会議と言っても、内容が非常にテクニカルである上に分野が幅広い場合もあり、悔えることは決してできないとご本人の経験から語られていました。通常、各準備には 3 時間かけていますが、それには資料を読み込む能力、組織内の強いネットワーク（対人スキル）、空気へのまれない精神力が必要とされます。また、会議の後では現場でわからなかったことをきちんと確認します。通訳の内訳は 99% が同時通訳であり、そのうちの 20% が TV 会議、

## Session J-5: In-house Interpreter or Translator —Is it for you?

Presented by Keiko K. Best and Atsuko Yamazaki

Summarized by Etsuko Murozono

企業の社内通訳翻訳者として、10 年以上の経験を持つお二人は、このプレゼンテーションで日常業務について、アンケート調査から得た社内で働くメリットとデメリットについて、さらに採用の基準などを出席者と共有してくださり、キャリアを考える上で大変有意義なセッションとなりました。

社内通訳翻訳者とフリーランスで仕事をしている人とを比較すると、社内通訳翻訳者はどちらかと言えば、スキルが劣るのではないかと思われがちですが、実際はどうでしょうか。Nikon Research Corporation of America (NRCA) で勤めるベスト圭子さんからは、Nikon のビジネス、NRCA の主要製品である半導体製造装置の紹介を通じて、社内通訳翻訳者がその非常にテ



Photographs courtesy of Izumi Suzuki

約70%は日英方向です。カスタマーは社内のエンジニアとし、Customer Educationも常に心がけていて、必ず2日前までに関連資料を受け取れるようお願いし、質問をする窓口は誰になるのか、リハーサルの有無などを事前に確認することが重要です。

社内通訳翻訳をしている人を対象にアンケート調査を行った結果、デメリットは、時間の柔軟性に欠ける、仕事の幅が狭い、自分がボスになれない、フリーランスより技術が劣ると思われるがち、時給が低いなどがあります。その他にQ&Aセッション中に、社内での認知度がまだ低いという意見があり、それを向上するには時間がかかるとの見解でした。他方の、社内通訳翻訳者にとってのメリットには、安定した収入や福利厚生がある他に、徹底した専門分野の知識を得られる、分野の専門家や参考資料へのアクセスがある、安定した職、連帯感がある、サポートを得られる、などがあります。通訳翻訳に求められる資質として、3割は言語能力ですが、残りの7割は専門分野の知識です。いかに自分の専門分野を身につける上で社内通訳翻訳者として仕事をするのがプラスとなるかは明確です。自分に向いているかどうかを見極める基準は、社内通訳翻訳の仕事チャンスをしたい、専門分野を作りたい、安定した職がいい、連帯感がある方がいい、チーム環境で仕事をしたいと思うことです。それに該当する人には、ぜひ社内通訳翻訳の道に進むことをお勧めします。

Etsuko Murozuno works for a translation company called Pacific Dreams, Inc. as an in-house translator/proofreader. Pacific Dreams Inc.'s office is located in Wilsonville, Oregon. Ms. Murozuno translates and proofreads various technical documents.

## Session J-6: U.S. Government Jobs for Language Professionals

Presented by Robert C. Albon  
Summarized by Carl Sullivan

In this presentation, Japanese translator Rob Albon provided a unique perspective on the job opportunities available for Japanese ⇔ English and other language combination translators within the government sector, an area which few within the JLD know much about. Rob's objective was to show how great the potential job field within the government actually is, and to assist attendees with valuable information for

overcoming the red tape involved in procuring such jobs. He discussed the U.S. government job site (<http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/>), talked about how jobs are classified on the site, provided concrete examples/advice for searching the site for specific jobs, and showed how to actually apply for a job. Rob talked about eligibility issues for various jobs, showing examples of job advertisements for government positions within Japan, and explained the GS pay scale. He also talked about security clearances—what they are, and what the process for obtaining one is like. Rob talked about other aspects of procuring a government job—the effective resume, the interview process, etc.—and indicated which languages, including Japanese, were in demand. Rob also talked about jobs for Japanese nationals on U.S. military bases, and at U.S. embassies/consulates. He concluded by saying that there are “plenty of jobs” for Japanese translators within the government sector: “Keep applying!” The complete text of Rob's presentation may be found on his website: [http://www.geocities.com/rather\\_be\\_in\\_hawaii/index](http://www.geocities.com/rather_be_in_hawaii/index).

## Session J-7: Software Engineering Document Translation

Presented by Tetu Hirai, Ph.D.  
Summarized by Megumi Weeks

Without knowing the concepts behind software engineering, translators may tend to rely on more literal translation, rather than creating a correct translation that conveys the intent of the original document. The problem can be as subtle as using an inappropriate



Photograph courtesy of Izumi Suzuki

conjunction, which produces a completely different meaning. Understanding these issues, I found that this presentation provided great tips on how to translate software engineering documents from Japanese to English. In the presentation, samples of Japanese sentences from technical documents were provided along with translations that included common mistakes, followed by the correct translations.

One of the examples that the presenter, Mr. Hirai, used was the source text “確保したメモリ領域の先頭アドレスのポインタ。” Its initial, incorrect translation to English was “A pointer of the start address of the allocated memory region.” Mr. Hirai explained that a more appropriate translation would be “A pointer to the start address of the allocated memory region,” and also took the time to explain the concept of the pointer. Another example “SIGNAL の下位16bitを第1引数としてシグナルコールバック関数に渡します” was originally translated “The low-order 16 bits of SIGNAL are given to the signal callback function as the first argument.” Mr. Hirai pointed out that the correct translation should be “The low-order 16 bits of SIGNAL are passed to the signal callback function as the first argument,” and then explained the concept of “Passing Values to Functions.” By the same token, he explained the concepts of “Include Files,” “Bits and Bytes,”

“RGBA Values,” and “Alignment” in terms of software engineering by using examples of “Include Files,” “Representation of Color Values,” “Transparency,” “Alignment of Data,” and “Arrays Consisting of Structures,” respectively.

Mr. Hirai recommends the “日外アソシエーツ EPWING CD—コンピュータ用語辞典(代4版)” (Japanese ⇔ English) dictionary for technical translation. He also recommended the following web sites for software engineering terms: “yougo.ascii24.com” (Japanese), “e-words.jp” (Japanese), and “whatis.com” (English). The web sites he recommended for learning programming concepts were “en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Programming#Programming\_Languages” (descriptions of different programming languages) and “computer.howstuffworks.com/c.htm” (an introduction to writing programs using the C programming language).

Megumi Weeks works for a translation company called Pacific Dreams, Inc., as an in-house translator/proofreader. Pacific Dreams, Inc.’s office is located in Wilsonville, Oregon. Ms. Weeks translates and proofreads various technical documents.

## **Session J-8: Professional Conduct in Working as/ with a Check Interpreter in Legal Settings**

Presented by Kayoko Takeda  
*Summarized by Yuka Seltzer*

Ms. Kayoko Takeda, an instructor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and a freelance interpreter for many years, gave a 45-minute session on this topic. She sourced her information from a July 2005 survey of 27 Japanese-English deposition interpreters. A synopsis of her seminar follows.

### **Survey Findings (1): Who does deposition interpreting?**

Deposition interpreters have, on average, 20 years of interpreting experience and 14 years of legal interpreting experience. Fifty-nine percent have at least two years of

professional training and many have graduate and post-graduate degrees. Only four of them are court-certified. They hardly ever work in criminal proceedings.

### **Survey Findings (2): How much work is there?**

The survey respondents don’t work exclusively in litigation, but in 2004, they worked on average:

53 days in depositions (max. 100 days)

13.7 days in attorney-client meetings (max. 50 days)

5.3 days in trials (max. 30 days)

2 days in settlement conferences (max. 20 days)

1.3 days in arbitrations and mediations (max. 20 days)

Depositions take place in the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Japan as well. The number of depositions taken in Japan seems to be increasing in recent years.

### **Survey Findings (3): Interpreting arrangements**

The presence of a checker or checkers in a deposition is something Japanese interpreters face regularly. The most frequent pattern is to have the official interpreter from the examining party, and a checker or checkers from the other party or parties. A setting in which a “neutral” interpreter acts as the official interpreter and each party provides a checker is not unusual.

### **Survey Findings (4): Important skills/competencies**

The 27 respondents reported that the three most important interpreting qualities are completeness of the interpretation, consistency with the original message, and good note-taking skills. Pleasant voice, native accent, and fast rendition were rated much less important.

### **Survey Findings (5): Professional conduct and ethics**

Ninety-two percent responded that confidentiality is highly important. Also, an extremely high percentage of the respondents reported the

following as important: avoiding conflicts of interest, remaining neutral, and clearly stating one’s agreement and disagreement when a checker intervenes. On the other hand, serving the client’s interests was considered less important or irrelevant.

### **“Ground Rules” (1): Interpreters’ shared goal**

The 27 respondents all thought that both the official interpreter and the checker(s) must have the shared goal of interpreting the examiners’ questions and recording the witnesses’ testimony accurately. Cooperation, courtesy, and professionalism are key to ensuring effectiveness on both sides. “It’s not personal,” says Ms. Takeda.

### **“Ground Rules” (2): Keep the record clean**

It’s important to keep the record clean. The official interpreter should clearly state his/her agreement or disagreement when a checker intervenes. Be prompt in interventions and responses. Use the third person when speaking for yourself (although checkers may use “I” statements). Example: “The interpreter stands by her interpretation.” Corrections and responses should be in English, to the extent possible. The official interpreter can ask for the checker’s version of an interpretation.

### **“Ground Rules” (3): When you are a checker**

Checkers must wait until the official interpreter’s interpretation is complete before intervening. They should not nit-pick, but rather should maintain a polite and non-threatening manner. Checkers should also be knowledgeable about the subject matter.

### **Conclusion:**

It is important to keep in mind that all the interpreters present at a deposition share the same goal: to produce interpreting that is as accurate and complete as possible for the record. To that end, they should work in a cooperative manner. When working as a checker, as one of the respondents said, always check in a manner in

which you would want to be checked if you were the official interpreter.

It is also important to find out, in addition to the subject matter, what companies and law firms are involved in the case before accepting a job in order to avoid any conflicts of interest.

The best way to get into the business is to start as a document translator to gain general knowledge about litigation and particular subject matters, and then interpret during witness preparation, and also work as a checker to be exposed to the proceedings and learn from the performance of the official interpreter. Then, ideally, you make your debut as an official interpreter.

Yuka Seltzer is a freelance translator specializing in financial and legal translation between English and Japanese. A Japanese native, Yuka has been translating for



well-known clients including international banks and magazines for over 15 years. She also leads cross-cultural seminars for large Japanese companies operating in the U.S. Yuka served six years on the board of NCATA, the Washington, D.C. chapter of ATA.

## Session J-9: Technical Aspects of Interpreting at the Winter Olympics

Presented by Robert C. Albon  
*Summarized by Carl Sullivan*

Having already presented on U.S. Government Jobs, Japanese interpreter/translator Rob Albon was back with an excellent presentation on his experiences as a Japanese interpreter during the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. Rob discussed the volunteer process, which included testing, as well as general and sport-specific interpreter training, and shared what specific kinds of positions were available for prospective interpreters. Rob shared specific examples of sport-

specific technical interpreting from his experiences with the Olympic sport of biathlon, which combines shooting with cross country skiing, and stressed the necessity of extensive research on one's assigned sport. Rob discussed the doping issue, which is a major issue relative to interpreting in any Olympic event, and the ways in which an interpreter might be called on to perform in that area, and also talked about press conferences—a potentially stressful situation into which the Olympic interpreter will likely be called. Rob also talked about the common topics discussed by athletes, and about interpreting for other clients, such as visiting dignitaries and the general public. Rob stressed what an incredible, once in a lifetime experience serving as an interpreter at the Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games was, and encouraged others to so volunteer their services. This reviewer having done exactly the same, I completely agree!

## JLD Survey (One Last Try)

As some of you probably recall, I sent a survey to the JLD listserv in August, promising to publish the data I collected in an upcoming issue of the *JLD Times*. According to the ATA directory there are over 350 JLD members, but I have only received about 30 responses so far. If you haven't already replied to the following survey, please consider taking a few minutes to do so. Thank you!

Irith T. Bloom  
*JLD Times* Editor

P.S. Please send your survey responses to [musicitb@gmail.com](mailto:musicitb@gmail.com). Thank you!

### JLD Member Survey

#### Basic information

1. How long have you been a member of the ATA?

2. How long have you been a member of the JLD?

#### Services offered

3. What language pairs do you translate?

4. What language pairs do you interpret?

5. Are you ATA certified? If yes, in what language pairs?

6. What, if any, are your areas of specialization?

#### Education and language training

7. Do you have a degree in translation? What other degrees do you have?

8. How many years of formal language training have you had? Where?

9. How many years has it been since you began studying Japanese or English?

10. How many years after beginning your study of Japanese or English did you begin working as a translator?

11. Are you currently enrolled in any Japanese or English language education courses?

12. Do you teach translation or Japanese/English language courses?

#### Demographics:

13. Where do you live (City/State, City/Prefecture, City/Province, City/Country)?

14. If you translate/interpret J-to-E and live outside of Japan, how many years did you live in Japan?

15. If you translate/interpret J-to-E and still live in Japan, how many years have you lived in Japan?

16. If you translate/interpret E-to-J and live in Japan, how many years did you live in an English-speaking country?

17. If you translate/interpret E-to-J and live outside of Japan in an English-speaking country, how many years have you lived there?

Thank you for your time!