



The MITA Reader

'Til we MITAgain!

Websites, professional directory to be discussed April 3

By Carol Shaw
Reader Co-Editor

Sure, the tax man cometh. But April also brings bluebonnets, Easter bunnies and your bimonthly MITA meeting!

Along with the presentation on research techniques, we will be looking at

MITA needs your talents!

Now that the decision has been made to continue to make MITA our local professional organization, the group needs your talents to realize this goal. There are those of us who think that MITA holds a wonderful potential for attracting translation/interpreting business to the Metroplex, in raising awareness of the need for more and better translation and interpreting, for marketing our services and for raising the standards of our profession through study and education. Join us at meetings and take your place in making MITA, and your business, ever greater!

some of the other ways MITA adds value to our lives. Come prepared to discuss a **new and improved website**, and a **new professional directory**.

In addition, our Steering Committee is still short of members. We urgently need a **Treasurer** and a **Public Relations** person. The Treasurer carries MITA's books, logs and deposits membership dues and writes checks for services provided to MITA.

The PR position is new and the lucky volunteer would have the able assistance of a professional journalist.

If you can invest a few hours each month to help build MITA into the strong, professional association that we all need, please come prepared to volunteer.

MITA will also need volunteers for specific projects (such as assembly of the directory). These short-term volunteers are invaluable and greatly appreciated.

See you there!

METROPLEX INTERPRETERS
& TRANSLATORS
ASSOCIATION

Serving DFW and North Texas



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March, 2004

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- *Consultant's Corner—beware of spyware!*
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The toiling tedious, taxing torture of tallying taxes now made easier by IRS

By Carol Shaw
Reader Editor

There nothing like hearing it "from the horse's mouth", and taxes are no exception.

If you haven't already filed your taxes (and even if you have), time is well spent browsing the IRS' Small Business/Self-Employed website:

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/>

Uncle Sam provides a wealth of information including online classes, tips for selecting someone to prepare your tax returns if you choose, and specific information for international tax payers.

For an added bonus, check out the free download for

tax software at

<http://www.taxact.com/index.asp>

Even though the topic of income taxes generally arises on or before April of each year, we all understand that taxes are really a year-round subject.

Do you have some good tips for fellow freelancers about deductions, expenses, or methods of tax payment? Any suggestions about investments or financial planning?

If you do, or know someone who does, contact the MITA Reader staff and consider writing this info to share.

Resource Center:

The Translator's Toolkit, a free newsletter, can be found at www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit/

Tereza d'Avila Braga: 'involvement equals success'

Meet your fellow MITAns

By John Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

Brazilian native Tereza d'Avila Braga offers some sage advice for those who are seeking success as freelance translators.

"For me, the key to freelance success is the ability to tackle three complex challenges," Tereza said. "First, you must always keep your translating skills very sharp and polished with a lot of reading and research. Secondly, you must embrace the freelance lifestyle without regrets and realize that nobody forced you to have irregular and crazy work hours. And finally, you must learn how to build and mind your own business. Remember, too, that people do business with people they like!"

Like many other translators and interpreters, Tereza began her career in another field that required translation, but that was not her specialty.

"Unconsciously, though, I had been preparing for this profession for many years," she said.

She first came to the Metroplex as a trade promotion officer with the Consulate of Brazil in the World Trade Center in Dal-

Tereza d'Avila Braga

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Tereza d'Avila Braga

las in 1984. The Consulate shared ground floor office space with a translation company that needed Portuguese/English language pairing and she began doing part-time work for them.

"I attended a MITA meeting and one of the final meetings of the old ATA chapter here," said Tereza. "After meeting MITA founding members Michel Meunier, the Quervels, Mies de Vries and Maritza Brown and colleague Maria Laporte, I was hooked."

Tereza attained her ATA certification and became more involved in the local translating community. The Brazilian Consulate eventually closed and Tereza went on to complete her Bachelor's and Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies at UTD and she joined the ATA ranks as a full-time freelancer. Attending national ATA con-

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Elsa Pittman swaps physics for publisher's pen

Meet your fellow MITAns

By John Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

It was her love for kids and reading that led to a radical change in Elsa Pittman's career, which is as diverse as that of any translator.

From Maracaibo, Venezuela, where she was born, to the DFW Metroplex after a brief educational stint in Oklahoma, and from college physics instructor to technical translator to language reference book author, her career has, indeed, been a varied one.

"I was teaching in public school in Plano when I took up ESL classes for elementary school children," Elsa said. "That led to ESL and Spanish teaching at the local community college and at local companies. After tutoring privately in my home for a while, I began to translate technical manuals, children's books and computer games."

Elsa graduated from the University of Zulia in the field of Geodesic Engineering. Part of her education there was devoted to taking initial measurements for the bridge that crosses the Lake of Maracaibo. During her time at the University of Zulia, Elsa discovered her love for physics and became a tenured physics professor at the University of Zulia.



Elsa Pittman

Through grants provided by the Venezuelan Government, Elsa studied at the University of Oklahoma where she completed her master's degree in Physics in 1978, with her thesis topic dealing in particle physics.

Elsa returned to Venezuela with more than just her Master's degree. "While studying at O.U., I met and married my husband, Gary, and we returned to the University of Zulia to resume teaching," said Elsa.

Three years later, the couple moved back to the U.S. and Elsa found her-

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Elsa Pittman

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STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS — meet on second Saturday of odd months — at 3 pm at the home of Diana Ianariello.

Regular MITA Meeting April 3

Join us for lively discussions and shared information! For directions, go to www.dfw-mita.com

April 2004						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
April Showers				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Tereza d’Avila Braga

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ferences, she was eventually named head of the ATA Portuguese Language Division (PLD).

After building her business for five years, she realized her earning and professional goals, and now works exclusively as a Portuguese/English translator.

“Becoming a self-employed professional doing what I love and earning a good living in a foreign country was incredible to me, and still is,” Tereza said. “This career helped me not only professionally but in a very personal way, too. It helped me to trust myself and believe in myself in a new way.”

In recounting her successes in her professional development, Tereza says there is one more item that should be on every translator/interpreter’s agenda.

“I have learned much about my profession and my own personal strengths through active involvement in local and national organizations,” she said. “I encourage every translator and interpreter to join and support their local and national professional organizations.”

Tereza has nine siblings and 22 nephews and nieces, with whom she communicates regularly by e-mail. Her parents are retired and reside in Mendes, a mountain town two hours from Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

Elsa Pittman

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self teaching in Plano. She began her career as a translator in 1992 after taking on some very technical work for which she was uniquely qualified.

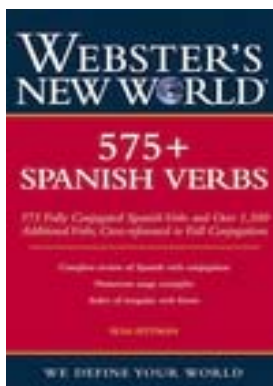
“With my background in physics, translation of technical manuals and computer games was easier than it is for most translators,” Elsa said.

She was soon asked to begin editing various translations by authors in the area. This new pursuit resulted in Elsa editing *Spanish for Dummies* of the famous *Dummies* Series.

She is also the author of **Webster’s’ New World 575 + Spanish Verbs**.

Elsa translates and edits books, tutors privately from her home, and continues her pursuit of bilingual knowledge.

She served as Treasurer for MITA in 2002 and 2003.



Elsa Pittman’s newly-published book, “575+ Spanish Verbs.”



“Passage of deformed man supermarket...”

This month’s grin comes courtesy of www.english.com:

Data Miner in possession?

By John Shaw
Reader Co-Editor

Do you know what, or who, is lurking about in your computer?

All kinds of companies and government entities have access to your computer, regardless of the steps you take to prevent identity theft. If you've ever wondered if Big Brother is watching you, the answer could very well be a cryptic scary "Yes!"

If you spend any time at all online doing research, finding interesting information, gathering data, and learning new terminology, your computer is going to be assaulted by spyware, adware, tracking cookies, data miners of all kinds, and, in some cases, invasive programs that go so far as to change your browser's home page.

"It's a big concern for everyone who uses the internet on a regular basis," said Anthony Taylor, a Dallas-based computer specialist. "There are programs everywhere that put small reporting devices on your computer to track your movements across the net. The really ugly part is that there are virtually no regulations limiting the use of data miners, and instead, using spyware and data miners has become standard in the field."

Spyware is a generic term typically describing software whose purpose is to collect demographic and usage information from your computer, usually for advertising purposes. The term is also used to describe software that 'sneaks' onto the system or performs other activities hidden to the user. These modules are almost always installed on the system

secretively, suggesting that spyware companies know how users feel about such software and figure that the only way to ensure its widespread use is to prevent the end-user from discovering it.

Consumer Privacy Implications Advertising-supported software, if done properly, is a unique and viable business model in which software developers can make money without requiring the end-user to pay for the software. However, the key words are if done properly, which is often not the case. While it may come as no surprise that adware uses your 'Net connection to download ads, you would have good reason to be concerned about the large amounts of data flowing in the *other direction*.

As much as current spyware modules do to steal away users' privacy, they have the potential to do even more. Spyware exists as an *independent, executable program on your system*, and has the capability to do anything any program can do, including monitor keystrokes, arbitrarily scan files on your hard drive, snoop other applications such as word-processors and chat programs, read your cookies, change your default homepage, and monitor various aspect of your behavior, "phoning home" from time to time to report this information back to the spyware's author. All the information obtained by the spyware can be used by the spyware author for marketing purposes, or sold to other companies for a profit.

User-Hostile Behavior

Many adware apps install separate advertising components on your system, that download ads and waste system resources even if you're not using the soft-

Consultant's Corner

ware that installed them. Often, these components remain installed and continue to perform their unsightly duties *even after the associated app has been uninstalled!* Spyware modules have been implicated in computer problems including system slowdown, Illegal Operation errors, browser crashes, and even the "Blue Screen Of Death". While normal system stability has usually returned when the interfering spyware modules were deleted, one spyware product in particular will *disable your Internet access if you try to delete it!*

What can be done?

Every internet/e-mail user should have a good anti-virus installed, but those who use the internet intensely and those who have DSL or cable should also have firewall.

Such programs are not usually very expensive. There are even some good free services on the internet. Ad-Aware removes spyware and data miners and has a free version available at www.ad-aware.com. AVG has a free version of its great anti-viral at grisoft.com. For a good firewall, Zone Labs offers a free version of its services for home use at www.zonelabs.com.

You might also check out the website at www.coexx.org, Counter Exploitation, for more information on spyware, other invasive software and how to remove it.

Submission Guidelines

The MITA Reader is your newsletter. If you have a news item, please let us know. We welcome articles, profile recommendations, cheesecake, etc.

Articles must be relevant to the industry in general, approximately 250-350 words, and all facts must be verified and verifiable. On occasion, we will specifically request submissions on particular subjects—keep an eye on the Editor's P.S.!

Humor - share your personal anecdotes, reprintable cartoons, or one-liners; we can't afford to take ourselves too seriously!

Have you found a helpful website, dictionary or glossary? Drop us a line so we can include it in the Resource Center.

Recommendations for Profiles on local translators and interpreters are welcome. Please tell us why we should profile your candidate and how we can contact him or her. You can even nominate yourself—our lips are sealed!

On occasion, we will **Challenge!** our colleagues. Respond or submit an idea for a future challenge.

As MITA members, you have **The Last Word**. Did you pass a test, solve a problem, relocate or increase your family? Let us know!

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MITAn Pittman publishes resource book

By Carol Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

Translators and interpreters are in the business of words. We learn their meanings, update ourselves on new terminology, and research contexts by industry and culture. We keep current with slang; we watch grammar, spelling and punctuation conventions.

Along the way, we collect the many tools of our trade. Every translator and interpreter benefits from a well-stocked library: general monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, thesauri, style books, specialized glossaries and a host of other resources fill our shelves.

And every once in a while, the linguist's library may include a resource book bearing their own name.

MITA congratulates Elsa Pittman on the publication of her

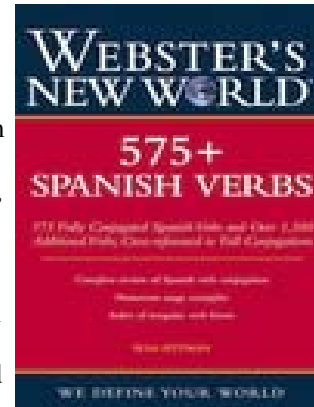


new book, "575+ Spanish Verbs."

The fruit of more than a year's labor, Elsa's book provides full conjugation of nearly 600 different verbs.

It includes sample sentences, an in-depth review of Spanish verb conjugation rules (in easily understood layman's terms - thank you, Elsa!) and an appendix of irregular verbs.

Published by Webster's New World, "575+ Spanish Verbs" is available through Wiley, Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com, among others.



Area Job Openings, Opportunities

JOBS

*Disclaimer: MITA is pleased to provide a limited job posting service for its members; this is a courtesy service with no liability or responsibility implied or accepted by MITA. MITA reserves the right to deny publishing of any job posting at its discretion. Postings will be published on a first-come, first served basis and as space and time permits. Interested parties should contact the job posters directly. Those who wish to post **permanent** job openings for translators and interpreters may submit them directly to jshaw@nexუსlanguage.com. Please limit text to 100 words or less.*

Full Time:

Home Interiors & Gifts, located in Carrollton, Texas, has an excellent opportunity for a Translator to join our Communications Department. This individual will be responsible for the translation of documents and other materials from English to Spanish and for coordinating the completion and publication of translated documents. The successful candidate will possess a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts or similar field with at least three years of related experience. American Translators Association (ATA)-accreditation is strongly preferred. Knowledge of type design, layout, composition, color theory, paper selection and creative concepts; good communications, interpersonal, and organizational skills; bi-lingual in English and Spanish. Salary range is \$15.25-\$16.80 per hour plus a competitive benefits package. Interested candidates should send a resume with salary requirements to tmccleendon@homeinteriors.com. (posted 3/23/04)

Part Time:

The Language Conservatory is expanding its many Language Departments and is now seeking additional qualified

language instructors experienced in teaching at all ages and levels of proficiency. Lesson times are scheduled around teacher's and student's available times. Fees paid range between \$20-40/hour plus travel expenses. The Language Conservatory is also seeking teachers for its June-July 2004 Summer Language Camps (Camps available: Preschool through Grade 12). Swimming, tennis and horseback riding will be offered between foreign language lessons in this total immersion program. This will be a unique Summer Language Camp Program in a country club setting in the North Dallas area. We are also seeking qualified translators. Contact: James van Loon, Director of Studies The Language Conservatory URL:

www.languageconservatory.com

Phone: (972) 202 2550 / (214) 789 2356 / Fax: (972) 503-8869 (posted 3/23/04)

Contract

Catholic Charities, with funding from the Texas Department of Health, has established a network of interpreters to improve client access to health care, immigration and social services in both Dallas and Tarrant Counties. A pool of linguistically and culturally diverse staff that is fluent in English and at least one other language has been established to serve the community. Besides being fluent in at least two languages, interpreters must attend a three-day training course which will be offered several times during the year at locations throughout the DFW Metroplex. The program will also offer on-going training to all interpreters in the network. Interpreters work on a contract basis and are paid for all hours worked according to an established salary schedule. For more info: <http://tinetwork.homestead.com/interpreters.html>

MITA survey: where's the best place to rendezvous?

With MITA meetings at a single, central location and held every other month, some members feel they don't have enough contact with translators and interpreters in their own pocket of the Metroplex.

Steve Branton has a solution.

"Why don't members meet in small groups once a month, by geog-

Send replies, opinions, editorials to:
cshaw@nexuslanguage.com

raphy? It could be informal, but it would help us all know each other and strengthen the support network" he suggests.

If enough MITA members are interested, we will devise a way to easily

identify your geographic neighbors at the June MITA event, if not earlier.

To let your voice be heard, send an email to cshaw@nexuslanguage.com with the subject line "Lunch Bunch Survey", and we'll tally up the responses to determine interest level.

Thanks - and here's hoping for some happy lunching!

April 3 MITA meeting will feature research options, tips

By Carol Shaw

Reader Co-Editor

We've all been there or known someone who has. "A short translation on power tools," says the client. Or "interpreting for a simple personal injury deposition." It's a good client and we have the time in our schedule, so we accept the job. It's a breeze, we think. No need to research, we're experts.

And that's when the fun begins.

We get the call from our client. We did a terrible job, they're having to redo everything, and they never want to see an invoice for our poor services.

Ouch!

The importance of research cannot be underestimated. In any given field there will be new developments, imported terms, regional differences or some other influencing factor that make it impossible for us to learn and remember every term we encounter.

The internet allows new terminology to make its way into everyday language faster than ever before. Terms are bor-

rowed from other languages. New technology hits the markets every day.

Far from being a sign of weakness, appropriate research is the professional approach. Translators and interpreters must be in a constant state of learning.

The upside, of course, is that we are surrounded by resources for our research. The MITA meeting on April 3 will include a presentation of traditional and non-traditional research options. Tips will also be provided on focusing our online research, narrowing results to specific data, and verifying terminology. Come join us!

Now, let's rewind that tape. The customer has called. We have accepted. We also remember Shaw's Law of Translation: the degree of difficulty in any given project will be in direct inverse proportion to the degree of simplicity claimed by the client.

As savvy translators and interpreters, we are aware of this Law. We do our research. We're prepared. The assignment is a complete success and the client is happy. Touchdown!

Sell & Swap

Spanish/English Dictionaries - 40% off original retail price. If interested, contact Ana Laura Gamborino for further information at agamborino@sbcglobal.net

*Diccionario Mosby de Medicina y Ciencias de la Salud

*3 Vol. Diccionario Enciclopédico de Términos Técnicos

*2 Vol. Spanish Technical Dictionary

*Diccionario de Términos Económicos, Financieros y Comerciales

*Diccionario de Tecnología de la Información

*The Grammatical Structures of English and Spanish

*Wiley's Business Dictionary

*Diccionario para Ingenieros

*Diccionario de las Ciencias

*Diccionario de Términos Jurídicos

*English-Spanish Banking Dictionary

*Gramática del Español

Humor, hilarity, ha-has in headlines

Even the best of us have trouble with English. Some headlines that made it past the editors and into print:

- Something Went Wrong in Jet Crash, Expert Says
- Police Begin Campaign to Run Down Jaywalkers
- Local High School Dropouts Cut in Half
- Panda Mating Fails; Veterinarian Takes Over
- Miners Refuse to Work after Death
- Juvenile Court to Try Shooting Defendant
- War Dims Hope for Peace
- If Strike Isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last Awhile
- Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures
- Red Tape Holds Up New Bridges

-submitted by Karen Sharp

Send your personal favorites to us via cshaw@nexuslanguage.com