

The MITA

Reader

www.dfw-mita.com

A newsletter for the DFW-area Metroplex Interpreters and Translators Association

Interpreters, take note

By Laura Tamayo Gamborino

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The MITA Reader is published for the benefit of MITA members and friends. Submissions are welcome and should be submitted to the editor, Carol Shaw, at cshaw@nexuslanguage.com. The editor would like to thank **Marilyn Retta** for generously contributing her editing skills!

Interpreters, take note

By Laura Tamayo Gamborino

Let's talk interpretation. Most people in our industry tend to concentrate on either interpretation or translation, but few enjoy both—or at least few enjoy both equally.

Sure, at first glance, they seem very similar, save the medium: one is spoken and the other written.

But the difference is much more substantial. Both require strong language skills, a robust vocabulary, and a deep cultural understanding of the source and target languages. Interpreting, though, ups the ante, demanding an excellent memory and mighty public speaking skills.

Why the public speaking? Because people are actually listening. It's important to transmit the proper intonation to get the speaker's points across... and to keep the audience from being lulled to sleep by the spectacular monotone droning through their headphones.

Unlike translation work, interpretation is ephemeral. We have one shot to get it right. Fortunately, what we need to get right is the message, not every last syntactic detail of the construct in the source language.

Still, this is much easier to accomplish with a reliable and clear note-taking strategy.

Of course, not all interpretation work requires note taking. I can think of leisure travel cases with consecutive interpretation scenarios where pulling out a notepad would have been awkward at best.

That said, many jobs absolutely benefit from your pen and steno pad.

Several techniques are available. I'll go over a little of what we saw at MITA's June workshop, Note Taking for Interpreters:

Tip #1: Write in a staggered downward direction. It's more in sync with your natural eye movement.

Tip #2: Avoid writing everything. Instead, make a note of the bones of each phrase: Subject, Verb, Object.

Tip #3: Use symbols and abbreviations to connect phrases.

	He		
		walked	
			dwn the hall + stopped in livingrm
COS	He		
		heard	
			a noise

For those starting out, some good practices were addressed that are worth mentioning.

- Request material from the client so you can study ahead of time. Not only will you do a better job, it will do wonders for your confidence and composure.
- Try to chat with speakers ahead of time. You can coordinate natural pauses and get a heads-up on specific lingo, anecdotes, or puns.
- Speakers focus their talk in the title, so be sure your listeners get to hear it.
- A word on wordplay: funnies won't always translate. Knowing they're coming lets you at least plan your attack.
- That's right, deal with jokes; don't skip over them. Often they can't be interpreted, but don't fall silent. One fabulous suggestion: simply let your listeners know the speaker is making a joke. They'll give a polite laugh and you won't get brain-tangled.
- Finally, presenters look to pack a punch in their last line... Don't skip it!

This is a very small collection of highlights from the first session. I hope it's helpful and that it will inspire you to participate in future workshops.



MITA's Laura Tamayo is a translator, interpreter, and has neat handwriting which is a great help to note-takers. .

June 14 Workshop

MITA hosted a workshop day on June 14, in conjunction with the Arlington ISD (our thanks to **Francisco Guerrero** for making this work!) The exceptional facilities at the AISD's Professional Development Center made it possible to enjoy some top-notch training.

Tom Dent of Adobe used the computer lab to provide some much-appreciated training on using Adobe Acrobat to work with PDF files. As more and more clients submit projects in PDF format, translators are finding this kind of training a tremendous help. We're hoping to ask Tom back at a later date for a repeat class, for those who missed the first round.

While a group of translators were in the computer lab, in another room **Hana Laurenzo**, a MITA member and certified EU interpreter, offered a lively and highly useful class on note-taking for interpreters. It was almost standing-room only, and the comments overheard afterward highlighted the value of this training.

Lunch (catered by Panera) provided an opportunity for MITAns and AISD personnel to network. **Maria Elizalde-Honoman**, **Tiina Fallini** and **Karen Sharp** provided additional refreshments, and **Maria Yolanda Rivera** signed up a few new MITA members and issued ATA CE points certificates.

The afternoon session saw everyone in the same room for a moderated discussion on time, client and project management. Led by **Mies de Vries** and **Carol Shaw**, the group addressed issues such as:

- what to do when your best client asks for a 10,000 word translation... due tomorrow;
- how to calculate the real time needed for a project, including research or travel time); and
- how to manage the stress that we all inevitably face, and more.

Before the workshop ended at 2:30, Maria Elizalde-Honoman announced that plans are under way for a social MITA gathering in the near future. Details will be announced as soon as possible! Meanwhile, another workshop day will be scheduled for later in the fall.

From the Editor's Desktop

Finding a terrific link or great piece of freeware is almost as fun as being six years old and finding out where the Christmas presents are hidden. I also love what I call "cheapware": software priced so inexpensively that it practically begs to be bought. Here are three new nuggets from my desktop:

One Look Reverse Dictionary (Link)

Available only in English, unfortunately, but the idea is neat. Type in the concept you're looking for, and the dictionary searches for words to express the concept.

www.onelook.com/reverse-dictionary.shtml

Express Scribe (Freeware)

If you transcribe audio recordings of any type, then you really need to check this out!


www.nch.com.au/scribe/

LogMeIn (Free) and LogMeIn Pro (Annual OR monthly subscription)

The LogMeIn Free program (freeware) is similar to GoToMyPC and others, which allow you to access your home computer from remote locations. LogMeIn Pro, however, provides broader solutions to people on the go. For a \$70 annual subscription, you can access your PC, print to your home printer from a remote location, and provide a client with access to a single file on your computer (an FTP-free way to send files that are too large to email.) Don't think you need the service for a full year? LogMeIn Pro offers monthly subscriptions as well.

www.logmein.com

July 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		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	31		

Bank holidays:

July 4: Independence Day

Events:

July 26 - ATA Translation Tools seminar, Boston (www.atanet.org)

August 23 - ATA localization seminar in Seattle (www.atanet.org)

August 25 - back to class for most local schools

August 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					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
31						