

# MURATHIO

October 2008

International Translation Day 2008



FIT XVIII World Congress

Professional practice

# The South African Translators' Institute and its Executive



## **Chairperson/Voorsitter**

Anne-Marie Beukes  
Tel: 011 559 2694  
Fax: 086 667 6100  
ambeukes@uj.ac.za



## **Secretary/Sekretaris**

Beverley Boland  
Tel: 011 783 7594  
bboland@telkoma.net



## **Vice-Chairperson/Vise-Voorsitter**

Wilna Liebenberg  
Tel: 021 976 9563  
Fax: 086 502 2074  
wilna@lieben.co.za



## **Registrar/Registrateur**

Irene Dippenaar  
Tel: 079 492 9359  
Fax: 086 511 4971  
registrar@translators.org.za



## **Treasurer/Tesourier**

Marion Boers  
Tel: 011 803 2681  
Fax: 0866 199 133  
publications@translators.org.za

The Executive of the South African Translators' Institute was restructured in June 2005. A small core executive (above) will act as the management committee for the Institute. A series of standing and ad hoc committees are being established, which will deal with the activities that fell under the other portfolios previously forming part of the Executive. Each committee will be overseen by a member of the Executive. As the committees are established, details of their members will be published on this page.

## **Training Committee**

Prof Jackie Naudé (chair)  
Dr Anne-Marie Beukes  
Dr Ileana Dimitriu  
Prof Ilse Feinauer  
Dr Jan-Louis Kruger  
Ms Wilna Liebenberg  
Ms Lolie Makhubu  
Dr Kobus Marais  
Dr Kim Wallmach

## **Interpreter Accreditation Committee**

Mr Johan Blaauw (chair)  
Ms Bas Angelis  
Ms Asanda Katshwa  
Dr Annelie Lotriet  
Dr Marné Pienaar  
Mr Olivier Wittezaele

## **Publicity Committee**

Ms Corrie Geldenhuys  
(chair)  
Ms Ilze Brüggemann  
Mr Mashite Mogale  
Ms Michelle Rabie  
Ms Lungile Zungu

## **Website Committee**

Ms Marion Boers (chair)  
Mr Samuel Murray

## **The South African Translators' Institute**

### **Virtual Office**

c/o Marion Boers  
Tel: (011) 803-2681  
Fax: 0866 199 133  
publications@translators.org.za

### **Registrar**

Tel: 079 492 9359  
Fax: 086 511 4971  
registrar@translators.org.za

PO Box 1710  
2128 Rivonia

## **Chapter Chairpersons/Afdelingsvoorsitters**

### **Boland**

Gretha Aalbers  
Tel: (021) 461-0486  
Fax: (021) 465-5992  
aalbers@iafrica.com

Members who wish to re-establish the Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu-Natal or Interpreters Chapters should contact Wilna Liebenberg, the chapter coordinator. The same applies to anyone wishing to start a new chapter

The SATI constitution makes provision for members to form chapters if they wish "to

be recognised as a distinct group on the grounds of their geographic proximity to one another or of a common interest that is acceptable to the Institute". Chapters are formal structures of the Institute and operate in terms of a set of regulations approved by the members of the Institute. The intention of chapters is to offer members opportunities for networking and professional advancement, which can often be more readily achieved at a local rather than a national level.



### **SATI Web-site:**

<http://www.translators.org.za>  
(South African Translators' Institute)



### **FIT Web-site:**

<http://www.fit-ift.org>  
(International Federation of Translators)



**Journal of the South  
African Translators'  
Institute**

**IPhephandaba  
LeNhlango  
YabaHumushi  
BaseNingizimu Afrika**

**Jenale ya Mokgatlho wa  
Bafetoledi wa Aforika  
Borwa**

Muratho is the Venda term for "a bridge", the symbol of the communicative activity facilitated by language workers

Elithi 'Muratho' yigama lesiVenda elisho 'ibhuloho', okuwuphawu lomsebenzi wokuxhumana owenziwa yizisebenzi zezolimi

Muratho ke lereo la SeVenda le le kayang 'borogo', sekai sa tiro ya thaeletsano e e dirwang ke badiri ka puo

Information on the name of the journal is given in English plus two other official languages on a rotational basis (in this issue isiZulu and Setswana).

*Muratho* accepts articles in all the South African official languages, provided they are accompanied by an English summary.

**Published by** the South African Translators' Institute  
PO Box 1710  
Rivonia  
0132  
South Africa  
sati@intekom.co.za  
<http://www.translators.org.za>

**Editor:** Marion Boers  
Tel: (011) 803-2681  
E-mail:  
[publications@translators.org.za](mailto:publications@translators.org.za)

This publication is subject to copyright and no material may be reproduced without the prior permission of the publisher

Views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily supported by the editor or publisher

Subscriptions: Contact the editor

ISSN: 1680-1938

Layout: Marion Boers  
Printing: T-Vaal (Johannesburg)



Volume 8 Number 2 October 2008

## CONTENTS

### ITD 2008 / IVD 2008

- 3** Importance of terminology demonstrated in Cape Town
- 4** Compiling trilingual terminology lists
- 8** Comprehensive dictionaries and standardisation of terminology
- 10** Kgopolo ya Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi ya Sesiua sa Sesotho ntshetsopeleng ya mareo a Sesotho
- 12** Interpreting and terminology: An interpreter's perspective
- 14** Running a freelance practice in South Africa: Challenges and opportunities

### IN PRACTICE / IN DIE PRAKTYK

- 20** Time management and the art of saying no
- 21** Die veranderende rol van die hedendaagse taalpraktisyn in die kommunikasieproses
- 23** Wordfast in a higher education institution – How can it work?

### GENERAL

- 9** Cape Town Book Fair 2008
- 25** FIT XVIII World Congress
- 29** A Hong Kong experience in translation

Cover photos: Scenes from the XVIII World Congress of the International Federation of Translators. Photos in this issue are by Alta van Rensburg, John Linnegar, Ilse Feinauer, Jackie Naudé, Kobus Marais, Marion Boers and unidentified photographers at the congress.





# Editor's Notes

Terminologists often seem to be treated like the 'Johnny-come-lately' of the translation profession and so it was good to see them take centre-stage with this year's theme for International Translation Day – 'Terminology: Words Matter'. It is a field the average translator does not know much about and we rely blindly on the experts.

Our colleagues using African languages in South Africa will be well aware of the importance of terminologists, as one of the greatest obstacles they face at present is precisely the lack of terminology in their languages. Let us hope that the good work being done in this regard is accelerated and shared to the benefit of all. SATI will certainly help as far as it is able to.

It was interesting, and satisfying, to see how the 2008 ITD theme has been used in such a variety of ways in the celebration of this occasion around the country this year. Some presentations on the theme were reproduced in the last issue of *Muratho*, and several more appear in this issue. They show that indeed much work is being done to develop terminology and that there are various resources available to language practitioners.

The other focus in this issue of *Muratho* is the practical situation of the freelancer. As the large language offices of the past have closed down over the years, more and more practitioners have had to enter the freelance market. In the beginning there was not a lot of guidance, but today's language practitioners are far luckier. There are plenty of experienced professionals around willing to share their hard-won wisdom. In addition, there are wonderful tools available to assist in the day-to-day work, enabling translators to get more done with less effort. It is hard for those of us who started our careers 20 or 25

years ago to credit just how different things are today. I remember getting my first computer – a real innovation at the time – and being lost in the wonder of how it simplified the translation process. New translators today no doubt wonder how on earth any translation was done before the advent of the PC and all that has come with it!

As the tools have advanced, so have attitudes changed, and anyone working in the field today needs to act like a professional in order to get anywhere. There is no longer much room for the 'backyard mechanic' or the retired teacher 'just wanting to earn some pocket money'. Today's clients are used to being able to get top service at the drop of a hat, and language practitioners need to realise this and make sure their service meets their clients' expectations.

Until next time

*Marion*

# Importance of terminology demonstrated in Cape Town

SATI Boland organised a morning seminar on Friday 3 October to celebrate International Translation Day 2008. It was held at the Cape Milner Hotel in Tamboerskloof, Cape Town.

Presentations made by the following personalities in the language field ensured an interesting morning for all who attended:

- Pumlanzi Sibula (head of the Unit for isiXhosa at the University of Stellenbosch Language Centre) and Mhlobo Jadezweni (a lecturer in the Department of African Languages at the University of Stellenbosch), who discussed the challenges of finding and creating terminology
- Michiel Heyns (academic, author and prize-winning translator of Marlene van Niekerk's novel *Agaat*), who talked about terminology difficulties in literary translation
- Frik Lombard (final editor of the WAT – *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal*) and Phillip Louw (managing editor for dictionaries at Oxford University Press), who gave an overview of the task of dictionaries in standardising terminology

Proceedings were concluded with a finger lunch on the veranda, where the tentative awakening of spring in Cape Town could be enjoyed.

The seminar was advertised in the press and invitations sent to SATI members, as well as other interested parties such as colleagues working in the national and Western Cape legislatures. Some 36 people, some from as

*SATI Boland kept to this year's theme of 'Terminology: Words Matter' for their celebration of International Translation Day 2008*



*Participants at the SATI Boland ITD celebration*

far afield as George, attended to hear the five presenters. The response afterwards was very positive. Participants felt that a good overview had been provided of the process of creating terminology and providing resources and they had enjoyed the opportunity to interact with colleagues.

Various SATI Boland members contributed to the event, by organising the venue, identifying and inviting presenters, doing the registration, sending out invitations to members and to the public, doing the publicity and taking photographs – a fine example of teamwork. We hope that the day contributed towards promoting our profession and SATI.

*SATI Boland Excom*

The papers delivered by Pumlanzi Sibula and Frik Lombard at the Boland ITD celebration are published on pages 4 and 8



*Alan de Roos, Khaya Mabutho and Pumlanzi Sibula enjoy a light-hearted moment at the seminar (above)*

*The Cape Milner Hotel provided a gracious setting for the event (left)*



# Compiling trilingual terminology lists

*“The recognition of indigenous languages requires them to be developed so that they can be used efficiently in a formal way in various social, economic and political activities.”*

---

Article by Pumlani Sibula. Mr Sibula is with the Unit for isiXhosa at the Stellenbosch University Language Centre.

---

This paper reflects my experience in terminology work at the Unit for isiXhosa (UXF) of the Stellenbosch University Language Centre (SULC). The paper is devoted to all the practical activities leading to the final publication of terminology lists, thus outlining the work that constitutes the tasks of terminologists, the challenges they face, the skills they require in order to accomplish those tasks and some of the strategies employed at UXF in particular. The role of other stakeholders in terminological activities will also receive attention, as it will emerge that terminology is an interdisciplinary field of activity. Of particular significance is the fact that the paper contextualises these terminology activities within the South African national language policy, which clearly promotes multilingualism and, in a more general way, indicates a strong interaction between terminological practice and the general theory of terminology.

It is important to provide an overview of the theory of terminology before outlining terminological practices at UXF, so that the theoretical and practical interface emerges clearly in the relevant successive sections of this presentation.

## Theory of terminology

As an academic and professional field of activity, terminology has for a long time been quite problematic because of its interdisciplinary nature. Even its long history did not provide evidence of clear theoretical underpinnings.

Sager identifies and develops three dimensions in the theory of terminology:

- The cognitive dimension: related to the manner in which terminology represents a conceptual structure in a knowledge domain
- The linguistic dimension: related to the way in which terms are related to a particular language, its phonology, morphology and orthography
- The communicative dimension: related to the use of terms

While the above constitute the key elements of a terminological theory and provides gen-

eral principles and guidelines for terminologists, it should be noted that there are other factors that influence the development and application of the general theory to differ from one country to another. The development of a terminological theory in South Africa is outlined by Cluver (1989) and some of the factors determining its application may be noted in the works of Alberts (1999), Carstens (1998) and other scholars. This paper is therefore produced in the context of scholarly observations by reputable language practitioners and academics in the field of terminology. Below we will see how terminological work at UXF is not just an institutional vocation but a nationally motivated activity.

## Purpose and motivation for terminological compilation at SULC

In establishing the UXF in 2003, Stellenbosch University was responding to the demands of multilingualism as articulated in the Constitution, which recognises 11 official languages, including the indigenous African languages that were marginalised during apartheid. The recognition of indigenous languages requires them to be developed so that they can be used efficiently in a formal way in various social, economic and political activities. As Alberts (1999: 19) states, “Terminology is a strategic resource ... Through the use of correct terminology, the effective scientific and technical communication skills of all the citizens are developed.”

Terminology development, particularly in the indigenous languages, is a major priority in South Africa. Once terms have been created in the relevant subjects, it is possible to use indigenous languages for formal purposes instead of restricting them to vernacular spheres. This is aptly stated by Carstens (1998: 2) when she writes that “... the aims and motivations of terminologisation have functional elaboration, which allow a speaker of any official South African language to use his/her language effectively in any context. The use of indigenous languages for such purposes builds confidence in the language speakers.” According to Cluver, the use of indigenous language “... will change the speakers’ attitude towards their language,



promote self awareness, promote unity and feelings of nationalism in the speech community” (1989: 14). This means that students and parents alike may become enthusiastic about studying their languages instead of looking down upon them and preferring to study English. In this way, all languages may become symbols of national pride, an ideal stated in the South African Constitution.

Stellenbosch University wishes to contribute to the development and promotion of isiXhosa as one of the official indigenous languages in the Western Cape. In a particular way, the university is endeavouring to develop isiXhosa as an academic language, which also creates opportunities for its further use in general.

In this endeavour, terminology lists have already been published for the Departments of Sociology, Social Work, Psychology and Law at Stellenbosch University. The terminology list for the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (which comprises Accounting, Business Management, Economics, Industrial Psychology, Information Systems, People Management, Public-Development Management, and Statistical Methods) is being finalised for publication towards the end of this year. The compilation of these terminologies was done with first-year isiXhosa students as targets users, specifically to help them to understand Afrikaans and English terms in these areas of study, thereby by supporting and assisting them. The lists are also aimed at widening the scope of understanding, so that these students are afforded the opportunity to learn and understand these technical terms through their mother-tongue.

In her approval and support of the Social Work terminology list, Ms Kela, the Chief Director: Welfare Services Transformation of the Department of Social Development, had this to say about its importance: “It will assist in demystifying some concepts that are foreign to students whose home language is isiXhosa.” The presentation format also allows students to learn not only the isiXhosa terms, but also the English and Afrikaans terms as well as their definitions.

The UFX’s terminological products may therefore rightfully be regarded as LSP or specialised dictionaries, except that viewing them strictly lexicographically would require the inclusion of more data categories.

### The methodology employed by UFX

In collecting the data, the terminologist con-

sults subject field experts – the heads of departments at the university – and requests terminological data for the envisaged project. This data consists of term-lists representing the key concepts in the respective subject areas, using the English language. The subject specialists recommend some senior students to compile the lists under their supervision. The terms are also provided with English definitions. On completion, the terms and their definitions in English are forwarded to the UFX. Before anything else is done, confirmation is obtained that the English concepts and their definitions have been quality-controlled by the relevant subject specialists. After receiving this confirmation, the lists are sent to translators, who translate them into isiXhosa and Afrikaans. These translations are done with due cognisance of the linguistic theory of Catford (1965,) which states that a translation should have the same effect on a target language (TL) reader as the source language would have had on a source language (SL) reader.

The translated lists are again sent electronically to the subject specialists (lecturers). After the necessary corrections have been made, these lists are sent for the second time to the language specialists for final editing and proofreading – checking of orthography, spelling, punctuation, etc. After this step, the terminology lists are entered into the UFX database. Finally, they are converted into pdf files, and the cover pages are designed and sent to the printers. Once the lists have been printed as a booklet, they are officially presented to the relevant departments.

Each department decides how to market its terminology list. The Sociology terminology list, for example, is published in the department’s webct, whereas Social Work decided to advertise its terminology list in a specialised journal throughout South Africa and Namibia.

### Term-creation strategies

In the compilation of these technical lists the major term-creation strategies employed were **coining** and **transliteration**. However, the work of the terminologist does not only involve creating terms; in some cases terms are there and the terminologists simply have to correct the terms and ensure that there is a substantial degree of equivalence between the languages concerned. This requirement is particularly important in the subject areas of Sociology, Social Work, Psychology and Law.

For example, the following are *indigenous*

*“In a particular way, the university is endeavouring to develop isiXhosa as an academic language, which also creates opportunities for its further use in general.”*

*“The terminologist is caught in a dilemma where, instead of being acknowledged as contributing to communication and knowledge acquisition in the subject area, he may be accused of causing communication problems.”*

*equivalents* taken from Xhosa environment and language. These terms were readily available as full equivalents for the English terms.

#### *Sociology terminology list*

- oontangandini – age cohorts
- umasihlalisane – cohabitation
- ukuzindela – endogamy
- ubuntu-lukhuni – authoritarian personality

#### *Social Work terminology list*

- ukufikisa – adolescence
- uthintelo-nzala – birth control
- ubulwelwe – disability
- indlamanzi – habitual drinker

#### *Psychology terminology list*

- ukuziphicotha/ukuzicikida – introspection
- ukubhibhidla – babbling
- iimfanta – fissures
- ubumboni – clairvoyance

#### *Law terminology list*

- ukrexexo – adultery
- ubunyumba – impotence
- umbulo – incest
- ukudela inkundla – contempt of court
- ingqawule – parole

### **Coinages**

Coinage is defined, according to the paper presented by Mojapelo and Mojela at the 12<sup>th</sup> Afrilex Conference in Pretoria in June 2007, as “... the inventing of new words, phrases or expressions. This type of linguistic borrowing is sometimes referred to as neologism.” Coining is therefore the use of existing linguistic resources to name new concepts (i.e. semantic extension).

When coinage was not possible the challenge was addressed by using *keywords* in the English definitions as equivalents for the isiXhosa version:

#### *Psychology terminology list*

- interneurons – izidibanisi-nyuroni (lit. the combiners of neurons): The neurons that connect other neurons in order that information can be spread widely through the nervous system
- ablation – ushenxiso-malungu omzimba (lit. removal of bodily parts): Surgical removal of certain parts of the body
- interference – ushenxiso-lwazi (lit. replacement of information): Displacement of existing information in short-term memory by new information that is similar

#### *Law terminology list*

- affidavit – ingxelo efungelweyo (lit. a sworn statement): A statement in writing

and on oath, sworn before a person with authority to administer it

- habitual criminal – isaphula-mthetho (lit. a frequent law-breaker): A person convicted of crime on numerous occasions
- rescission – urhoxiso-sivumelwano (lit. a cancellation of agreement): The cancellation of a contract and the return of the parties to the positions they would have occupied had the contract not been entered into

Some of these following Law equivalents are *possessive constructions* (nouns combined by a possessive conjunction):

- annulment – ukutshitshiswa komtshato (lit. dissolution of marriage)
- perpetrator – umenzi wobubi (lit. a doer of evil)

In the Law terminology list – even though all the *Latin phrases* are used without being translated – the definitions are provided in all three of the languages:

English	isiXhosa	Afrikaans
<i>ab initio</i>	<i>ab initio</i>	<i>ab initio</i>
From the beginning/the start	Ukusuka ekuqaleni/ isiqalo	Van die begin af/die begin
<i>sui generis</i>	<i>sui generis</i>	<i>sui generis</i>
The only one of its kind/peculiar	Ekuphela kwayo kuhlobo lwayo/ekudidi lwayo yodwa	Eiesoortig, enig in sy soort of buitengewoon

The Latin phrases indicate the influence of subject field practices in terminology. Legal practitioners maintain that such expressions cannot be rendered in other languages. Since isiXhosa acquires terms from English, the terminologist was inclined to follow the English terminologists, who used the terms in the original language. The terminologist is caught in a dilemma where, instead of being acknowledged as contributing to communication and knowledge acquisition in the subject area, he may be accused of causing communication problems.

### **Transliteration**

When coinage or isiXhosa equivalents could not be used for the English terms, transliteration was used as a last resort and adhered to phonological and morphological structures of isiXhosa. These transliterated terms were adapted and naturalised to be identified, written and articulated as isiXhosa terms. Transliteration is defined by Mojapelo and Mojela (2008: 1) as the replacement of the letters of one alphabet by the letters of



another alphabet with the same phonetic sounds:

*Sociology terminology list*

- izenofobhiya – xenophobia
- ikhriminoloji – criminology
- isosiyoloji – sociology

*Social Work terminology list*

- ikhretshi – crèche
- i-ekholoji – ecology
- ustratweni – street child
- ivolontiya – volunteer

*Psychology terminology list*

- izitatistiki-nkcazo – descriptive statistics
- ipharadayimu – paradigm
- ifinominoloji – phenomenology
- isayikholoji – psychology

All the borrowed terms above are prefixed to follow the grammatical rule that all isiXhosa nouns commence with an initial vowel and end with a vowel rather than a consonant. Furthermore, although isiXhosa may retain the phonological features of the original English term, it changes phonemes to adhere to isiXhosa orthography, for example the substitution of /x/ with /z/ and /ph/ with /f/ in *xenophobia*, and /c/ with /kh/ in *creche*.

### Training and collaboration

In the light of the above information, it appears that terminology is an interdisciplinary vocation. It is a naming practice that is relevant to all the subject fields of human knowledge. However, it is a specialised field of activity with its principles, theories and standards set out by international bodies such as the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). This means that one needs more than linguistic or expert knowledge in order to indicate what is required.

It is for this reason that the UFX at the Stellenbosch University Language Centre is very grateful to PanSALB, because when the UFX shouted for help PanSALB offered an arm by providing resources and offering a three-day terminology training session in February 2006, at which language practitioners working in the indigenous languages of South Africa were trained in the principles, procedures and practices of terminology and terminography in the African languages. The theoretical and practical sessions expanded the participants' knowledge and expertise with regard to terminology development and put them on the right path.

Despite that training, the interdisciplinary nature of terminological practice still requires trained lexicographers to work in collaboration with subject specialists and other

stakeholders. As Alberts (1999: 30) says, "Terminologists never work in isolation." In view of this, the UFX has effective partnerships and working relationships with various bodies. The nature of its work requires these contractual ties for purposes of collaboration, e.g. with departments and other institutions on and off the campus of Stellenbosch University. It has networking relationships with the language specialists of the provincial and national bodies, which through their professional service help with translation, proofreading and editing. Collaboration ensures that relevance and quality are achieved, thereby guaranteeing that all three dimensions of terminology – the cognitive, linguistic and communicative – are satisfied.

### References

- Alberts, Marietta. 1999. Terminology in South Africa. *Lexikos* 9: 18-35.
- Carstens, Adelia. 1998. Science through Sepedi: Is Terminologisation a Worthwhile Venture? *Lexikos* 8: 1-17.
- Catford, JC. 1965. *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Cluver, AD de V. 1989. *A Manual of Terminography*. Pretoria: HSRC.
- Gouws, RH and Prinsloo, DJ. 2005. *Principles and Practice of South African Lexicography*. Stellenbosch: Sun Press.
- Mojapelo, MW and Mojela, VM. 2008. Natural Science and Technology Terminology in the Sesotho sa Leboa Monolingual Dictionary. *Lexikos* 18: 1-11.
- Nkomo, D. 2005. Compiling Specialised Dictionaries in African Languages: Isichazamazwi SezoMculo as a Special Reference. *Zambezia: The Journal of Humanities of the University of Zimbabwe* 32 (i/ii): 64-77.
- Sager, Juan C. 1993. *A Practical Course in Terminology Processing*. John Benjamins Publishing Company: Amsterdam.
- Sibula, Pumlan M. 2007. Furthering the Aims of Multilingualism through Integrated Terminology Development. *Lexikos* 17: 397-406.

*"The interdisciplinary nature of terminological practice still requires trained lexicographers to work in collaboration with subject specialists and other stakeholders"*



*Pumlan Sibula with Adriana Nuss during the tea break*

*Deirdré Roos, Antoinette van Rooyen, Marguerite van der Waal and Marianne Strydom*

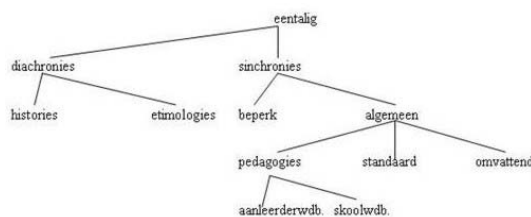


# Comprehensive dictionaries and standardisation of terminology

*“One thing that must be emphasised immediately is that ordinary lexicographers do not produce terms on cue, just like we do not create words: that is the domain of terminologists. We more or less just service or overhaul them.”*

Someone once said that a dictionary is merely the universe in an alphabetical order. But if you use that analogy, you must realise that the universe is probably strictly regulated and planets follow unwavering paths, and that the same should apply to dictionaries: they must be consistent and correct, and this starts with the notion or the conviction that the single word is all-important: words carry weight, are deserving of our careful consideration because they form the cornerstone of our linguistic efforts.

Typologically the WAT is a *monolingual general comprehensive dictionary*.



That means that, unlike in a limited dictionary which only covers a certain (specialised) subject-field, mostly general language is included. In this case, therefore, the whole lexicon is at stake, and not only terms. However, since the WAT finds itself as a comprehensive dictionary in the category of the *Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles*, the *WNT*, *Grimm*, *Webster's*, etc., lexicographers working on the project must certainly be on the lookout for terms from a whole host of subject-fields. One must also bear in mind that even general dictionaries are regarded as being normative as far as terminology is concerned (and are thus regarded as a kind of standard, an instrument of standardisation).

One thing that must be emphasised immediately is that ordinary lexicographers do not produce terms on cue, just like we do not create words: that is the domain of terminologists. We more or less just service or overhaul them. We simply look at the lexicon, and those terms making it through to more or

less 'general' or 'ordinary' language are included in the dictionary, for which we use an extensive library as well as word lists and a panel of advisors.

What are the implications facing lexicographers working on general linguistic dictionaries? Well, you do not actually need to be a terminologist, and none of the lexicographers at the WAT have had formal training in this field. However, you do have to develop a 'feel' for terms and the way of defining them. You must also bear the responsibility of choosing the correct term (out of several synonymous terms). Normally you will choose the most frequently used term (ubiquitous or overriding term). That in itself can pose a problem, but fortunately, as I said, we have a panel of advisors who assist greatly and we have a number of dictionaries in our library, both bilingual and descriptive, which we can consult.

Maintaining our advisors and replacing some of them is the job of the final editor. Fortunately we work in a university environment, and most subject specialists are very accommodating. What we do find is that advisors may have certain preferences regarding terms and they may differ from other advisors in the same subject-field. I find that there still is a divide: a north/south curtain if you wish.

For any term to find its way into the WAT, that term must meet the norms of our inclusion policy: it should be a term that both a layman and expert can begin to share. As such, a term does not really differ from a 'normal' lemma. We define the term, we indicate the subject-field, whether it is chemistry, architecture, physics, engineering, or whatever the case may be, and we also include citations to make the syntactical use of the term clear to our users.

Let me give you an example of what we have to deal with: Must we use the geological term *neerlê* or *afset*? According to our advisor, we must use *afset*. And must we use the medical term *rumatiese artritis* or *rumatoïede artritis*? Well, Media 24's archives suggest that you

---

Article by Frik Lombard. Mr Lombard is the final editor of the WAT – *Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal* – in Stellenbosch.

---

use the latter, and it seems that the medical profession agrees with this as well. In Afrikaans we have a number of records of *rock en roll* or *rock 'n roll* and then you also have to distinguish between *rock* and *rock en roll*. Here we took the decision to go with *rock en roll*, and also dealt with *rhythm en blues* in the same way. Being consistent may be the key here. When you deal with something like *plasma TV*, you also have to take cognisance of the existence of *LED TV*, etc.

One also has to realise that terms do change over the course of time, and this must also be reflected in the dictionary. No one will seriously suggest today that a *helikopter* be called a *hefskroefvliegtuig*, but that was exactly the case a long time ago. Some terms have a way of taking on the disguise of a normal lexical item, for instance *kruip* = crawl, but also has a geological meaning: *Van los grond, gruis, rotse of verweerde materiaal – onder die invloed van swaartekrag stadig en bykans onwaarneembaar afwaarts en soms buitewaarts beweeg* (to move down a slope slowly under the force of gravity, like soil or smaller rocks, etc.) and *kussing* = pillow = 'n *stuk kussinglawe*. It must also be remembered that a certain term may be used in more than one subject-field: *ojief*, for example, is used in architecture, building, joinery and carpentry.

We at the Bureau also take turns to answer questions from people who phone in. Normally they ask about spelling, but sometimes it goes deeper and may also relate to terms. If we cannot help, we refer the caller to the necessary experts. You probably also know that Prolingua (previously the Terminology Society of SA) busies itself with the development of terminology and with questions and problems regarding the translation of terms. They are also putting older technical dictionaries into electronic format, which is good news for everyone concerned.

In conclusion, have a look at how the terms below, from a variety of different technical fields, are dealt with in the *WAT* – this will give you an idea of the extent to which users will find the dictionary useful in relation to technical terms:



Frik Lombard emphasises a point

- **Geology:** grouwak, kussing, pyp
- **Cars:** mikstang, palwisseltransmissie (CVT), punt
- **Sailing:** jaaif, laveer, piek, preekstoel
- **Architecture:** metoop, ojief, pyler



## Cape Town Book Fair 2008

SATI this year again shared a stand at the CT Book Fair with the Professional Editors' Group and McGillivray Linnegar Associates. It was one of many at the fair, but the modest patch was defended with aplomb. Visitors to our stand, in fact anyone who strayed close enough, left with a clear idea of what we do, the role we play in the great publishing circus that was on display at the Fair, and a vague impression of our enthusiasm. We shared the same venue with many others but each stall had its own aims: publishing managers tended their small herds of assistants while authors, buyers and printers trotted from aisle to aisle browsing and listening. The range of books and other book-related services on display was impressive and well worth the cost of a ticket.

Here are some impressions from members who assisted at our stand:

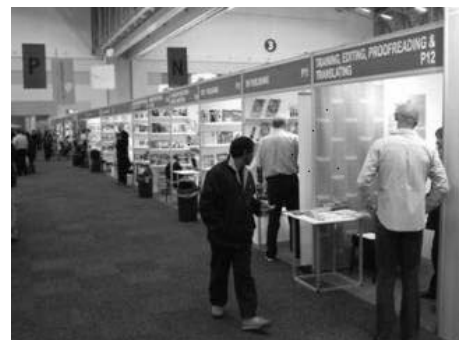
It was a very special opportunity to be at the stand. I met people from all walks of life. From their questions I learned a lot about the variety and the possibilities in the language professions. As I browsed SATI's website to be prepared for the questions that might come up, I also learned more about the organisation of which I'm a member. My impressions of the exhibition itself: people lost in browsing and reading and lively discussions. *Marley Daghari.*

I enjoyed the Book Fair, though it was my first encounter and rather overwhelming. Thank you for the chance to participate in such a huge event. *Erica du Preez.*

Although it was the first time I had assisted at the stand at the Book Fair, and I was only able to be there for two hours, I have a few strong first impressions. Briefly: the wide and varied interest in the stall (although small in size), and the enthusiastic and helpful assistance given by those who staffed the stall. *Margie Hurndall*

Reproduced with permission in edited form from *PEGboard*, newsletter of the Professional Editors' Group, August 2008

A view of the PEG/SATI/MLA stand and our position on one of the aisles at the Book Fair





# Putting words together

*The Programme in Language Practice at the University of the Free State held a St Jerome's Day Seminar on 8 October on the theme "Let us put our words together: Cooperating towards creating terminology in language practice". Here we reproduce two of the papers presented.*

## Kgopolo ya Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhogرافي ya Sesi u sa Sesotho ntshetsopeleng ya mareo a Sesotho

Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi,  
Bahlomphehi bohle ba teng  
kopanong ena

Ke leboha monyetla ona lebitsong la Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhogرافي ya Sesi u sa Sesotho, wa ho tla beha seo re se hopolang e le seo re ka tshwaelang ka sona tabeng ena ya ntlafatso le ntshetsopele ya mareo a Sesotho ke bohle ba amehang mosebetsing ona.

Ke kopa hore le ntumelle BoMme le BoNtate hore ke lelekele puo ena le hona ho dula ke e tshehetsa ka dintlha tsa kutlwisiso ya Sesi u sa Sesotho tse tla behwa mona, ka hore nako le nako ke leke ho ikamahanya le ditumellano, melawana le melao eo ke hopolang hore ke yona e lokelang ho tsepamisa kabelo ya rona ka bomong, le ka kakaretso re le ditheho (structures) tse tshepetsweng mosebetsi ona.

Ke taba e amoheleng ka kakaretso hore puo efe kapa efe e ntlafatswa le ho ntshetswapele ka ho boloka (preserving) letlotlo la yona la mantswe (vocabulary), ka tsela ya hore letlotlo lena la mantswe le ngolwe e le dikshenare (molemong wa meloko e tla latela, hore e hahelle hodima yona); lebaka le leng ke ho hodisa leruo la dingolwa tsa puo eo (expanding the wealth of literature); ho etsa melao (determining rules), ho lekoleng botjha (revising) dintlha tse amang kgolo ya puo jwaloka mopeleto (spelling), le mokgwa wa ho ngola (orthography); (e le ho thibela hore basebedisi ba puo eo ba se wele lerabeng la ho ba le mekgwa e sa tshwaneng (inconsistency) ya ho e ngola. Hape e le mawala a ho ba le mareo a tla beha boemo (standard) ba puo e sebedisetswang kgokelano (communication), ho fetisa tsebo haholoholo lehlakoreng la mareo ana a tsejwang ka hore ke a sethekeniki (technical

communication).

Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, Mokotaba wa puo ya ka kajeno o ntse o itshelehile Sehloohong seo re se filweng hore re shebisane dintlha tsa sona, e leng Tshebedisano ho theheng mareo tshebetsong ya dipuo (cooperating in creating terminology in language practice).

Provenseng ena ya Freistata ke tla qolla ditheho tse mmalwa tseo ke sa tswa bua ka tsona tseo Sesi u sa Sesotho se di tsebang e le tse tshepetsweng mosebetsi ona wa ho ntshetsa mareo a Sesotho pele mesebetsing ya tsona e fapaneng, eo ka mohlomong kajeno re fumaneng monyetla wa ho shebisana hore e mpe e be re ntse re sa etse phetapheto e sa hlokahalang (duplication), eo qetellong e sa tlo bontsha tema puong; kapa tshebetso e se nang moo e re kopanyang empa re sebeletsa puo e le nngwe (developing the same language) Khempaseng ya Yunivesithi ena ya Freistata re na le ditheho tse hlano tse latelang (five structures):

1. Lefapha la Dipuo tsa Afrika (Department of African Languages)
2. Setsi sa Ntlafatso le Ntshetsopele ya Sesotho (Language Research and Development Centre)
3. Lefapha la Dithuto tsa Afrika le Eshea, Puo ya Matsoho le Tshebediso ya Puo (Department of Afro-Asiatic Studies, Sign Language and Language Practice)
4. Yuniti ya Tsamaiso ya Puo (Unit for Language Management) le
5. Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhogرافي ya Sesi u sa Sesotho (Sesi u sa Sesotho National Lexicography Unit)

Hona mona Provenseng ya Freistata re boele re be le ditheho tsena:

---

Article by  
Motsamai Motsapi.  
Mr Motsapi is the  
executive director  
of the Sesotho  
Lexicography Unit.  
The title of his  
presentation in  
English is 'Sesi u  
sa Sesotho  
National  
Lexicography Unit  
Perspective on  
Sesotho  
Terminology  
Development'.

---

1. Tshebeletso ya Provense ya Puo (*Provincial Language Service*)
2. Ofisi ya Lekgotla la Dipuo tsohle ya Provense (*Pan South African Language Board*), eo tlasa tsamaiso ya yona re fumanang meifo e mmedi e leng: (a) Komiti ya Provense ya Puo (*Provincial Language Committee*) le (b) Moifo wa Setjhaba wa Puo ya Sesotho (*Sesotho National Language Body*)
3. HANSARD e Lekgotleng la Ketsamolao la Freistata (*HANSARD Free State Legislature*)
4. Lefapha la Tshebediso ya Dipuo la Yunivesithi e Bohareng ya Theknoloji (*Department Language Practice – Central University of Technology*).

Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, ebang se le teng setheo (*structure*) mona Freistata seo ke se lebitseng, ke kopa ke mpe ke inelwe matsoho metsing.

Mona ke ne ke mpa ke leka hore re shebisane, re etse hloko mokotaba wa letsatsi la kajeno e leng 'Tshebedisano ho theheng mareo tshebetsong ya dipuo' (*cooperating in creating terminology in language practice*). Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, ke dumela hore re ka atleha morerong ona ha feela setheho (*structure*) ka seng se ka itekola ho bona hore taelo (*mandate*) ya sona ke efe mabapi le puo. Ha sena se re hlaketse bohle re be re fetela mohatong wa bobedi e leng moo setheho (*structure*) ka seng se tla ipatla hore na se kgohlela (*fit*) jwang kapa se ka kgohlela jwang tshebedisanong ya mareo (*terminology cooperation*).

Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, ha Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi ya Sesiua sa Sesotho e leka ho ba le kabelo tshebedisanong le ditheho (*structures*) tsohle tse teng Provinseng ena ya Freistata, Sesiua se tla phehisa kopanong ena (*seminar*) ka hore se itekole, ka ho hetla morao hore na seo e leng taelo (*mandate*) ya sona ke eng? Ka hoo, hore taba ena e hlake, e tla hloka boitshetleho (*background*) bo itseng. Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Sesiua sa Sesotho ke se seng sa ditheho tsa Lekgotla la Dipuo tsohle tsa Afrika Borwa (*PanSALB*) leo lona le thehilweng ka boikamahanyo le Molao wa Motheo wa Afrika Borwa (*South African Constitution*). Taelo ya Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi ya Sesiua sa Sesotho ke ho ngola didikshenare le dihlahiswa tse ding ka sepheo sa ho ntshetsa puo ya Sesotho pele ka mokgwa wa hore Sesotho se sebetse jwalo ka English le Afrikaans. Sepheopheo ke hore Puo ya Sesotho e namele mahlakoreng a sethekeniki

(*technical fields*), ho fihlela ha jwale puo ya Sesotho e ke ke ya akareletswa mahlakoreng ana a sethekeniki (*integral part of the Sesotho domain*). Ka lebaka lena Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, rona re le Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi ya Sesiua sa Sesotho re utlwisisa ha bokamoso ba basebedisi ba puo ya Sesotho (*Sesotho users*) bo itshetlehile hodima boleng ba dihlahiswa tsa dikshenare tse tla hlaliswa ke Yuniti. Kgonahalo ya hore basebedisi ba puo ya Sesotho ba be le kabelo e phethahetseng (*full participation*) mahlakoreng ohle a bophelo mona Riphabliking ya Afrika Borwa, e itshetlehile katlehong ya Yuniti ena.

Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi e ke ke ya atleha morerong ona wa ho ntshetsapele mareo ka ho ngola dihlahiswa tsa dikshenare (*dictionary products*), ntle le ho tshwarisana mosebetsi ona le ditheho (*structures*) tse teng provinseng ena ya Freistata tse sebetsang ka mareo letsatsi le letsatsi. Ditheho tse teng provinseng, tse fetolelang, di qapa mareo letsatsi le letsatsi mosebetsing ona wa phetolelo. Mareo ana a fella kae? Seabo sa ditheho (*structures*) tseo ke di boletseng tse teng provinseng ena se seholo haholo puong empa re ka shebisana hore re ka fepelana jwang tshebetsong ya rona ya ho ntshetsa morero wa mareo pele, e le boiteko ba hore re tle re une melemo e latelang:

1. ho qoba tahlehelo ya mareo ao re a qapang le ho a fuputsa (*researched*) letsatsi le letsatsi
2. ho qoba mosebetsi o phethaphetwang (*duplication*) ke ditheho (*structures*) ka ho fapana
3. ho boloka tjhelete (*ensure fruitful expenditure*) ena e re setisang ho fihlela merero yohle ya rona


Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi, re na le Moifo wa Naha wa Puo ya Sesotho (*Sesotho National Language Body*) – hara e meng ya mesebetsi ya Moifo ona (*Body*) ke ho sebetsana le ho beha boemo ba tshebediso ya mareo (*Standardisation*). Ke mokgwa ofe oo ditheho tsohle tse sebetsang ka puo di ka romelang mareo (*terms*) Moifong oo hore Moifo o sebetsane le ona, e re ha a sebeditswe bohle re tseba hore a boemong ba tshebediso (*standardised*) a romelwe Yuniting ya Leksikhografi ya Setjhaba ya Sesiua sa Sesotho e tshepetsweng bongodi ba dikshenare hore a bolokwe (*preserved*) e le dikshenare. Ebe ha se o mong wa mehlala ya seo re bolelang hore e ka ba "Tshebedisano ho theheng mareo tshebetsong ya dipuo" (*cooperating in creating terminology in language practice*). Mona ke ne ke bua ka

tshebetso eo ke e utlwisang ya setheho sena se tsejwang ka hore ke “Yuniti ya Leksikhografi ya Setjhaba ya Sesiua sa Sesotho. Setheho se seng le se seng se teng kopanong ena ke sona se tsebang seo e leng taelo (*mandate*) ya sona tshebetsong ya ho ntlafatsa le ho ntshetsa pele mareo. Feelahore setheho (*structure*) ka seng se bona ka ho hlaka mokgwa oo se ka sebedisanang le tse ding ke seo re lokelang ho se batla ka bomong ba ditheo (*structures*).

Motsamaisi wa Mosebetsi ha ke qetella puo ya ka boemeding ba Yuniti ya Setjhaba ya Leksikhografi ya Sesiua sa Sesotho, ntumelle hore ke re meralo re dula re e etsa, le teng e metlehadi (*make wonderful plans*) empa ho phethahatsa (*implementation*) se meralong ke yona phepetso (*challenge*) e kgolo e re tobileng ka mehla.

Ha ke netefatse sena seo ke se bolelang mona ka ho qotsa (*quote*) dintlha tse pedi tse ileng tsa hlahellang diphuputsong tsa projeke e neng e tsejwa ka lebitso la TERMCo (project) e neng e tsamaiswa ke Mong. J H Hattingh mme e tobane ka ho otloleha le ho ntshetswapele ha mareo selemong sa 2001. Dikgothaletso (*recommendations*) tse ileng tsa etsetswa Lefapha la Bonono, Setso, Saense le Thekenoloji la mehleng eo e bile tse latelang:

1. Hore ho kenngwe tshebetsong mokgwa wa ho boloka le ho laola mareo Afrika Borwa, e le ho hokahanya ho qatjwa ha mareo, tshebediso ya ona le karolelano ya ona (*that a nationally maintained terminology management system be implemented to coordinate term generation, use and sharing*).
2. Hore ho be le kwetliso nako le nako e tla hlophiswa ke Lefapha la Naha la Tshebeletso tsa Puo (*National Language Service*) e le ho netefatsa mokgwa o tshwanang mmusong ka kakaretso mabapi le mekgwa ya tsamaiso ya mareo (*that regular workshops and training sessions be organized by the National Language Service to ensure a consistent approach throughout government in respect of terminology management*).

E be kopanong ena tseo re tlang ho di shebisana re ka etsa eng hore re di phethise, e se be sena seo Basotho ba reng ke ho fapanya molomo le pelo. Tumelo ya Sesiua sa Sesotho ke hore ditheho tsohle tse teng provenseng tsa puo di ka phethahatsa toro (*dream*) ena molemong wa setjhaba ha re ka tshwarana ka matsoho. KE A LEBOHA KGOTSO PULA NALA (*peace, rain and prosperity*). 

## Interpreting and terminology: An interpreter's perspective

This paper attempts to highlight the practice of interpreting at the University of the Free State (UFS), with specific focus on the utilisation and creation of terminology and glossaries by interpreters. This is done entirely from an interpreter's perspective, with additional inputs and information from other interpreters also working on a freelance basis at the UFS. It is based solely on what occurs in practice, and not on the desired or expected manner of managing terminology in terms of interpreting.

The general opinion in interpreting research seems to be that interpreters have progressed past the papers and notes (see Kalina 2007 and Moser-Mercer 2008). Drechsel (in Kalina, 2007: 115) indicates that there are a number of search engines and electronic aids that can help the interpreter in preparing for a session, which Kalina states is in stark contrast to the early methods (file cards and handwritten glossaries) of preparation (2007: 116).

At the University of the Free State the situation is still the same as it was for interpreting in the past. Interpreters make use of dictionaries and books to set up (handwritten) glossaries and terminology lists, which, after use, are filed, lost or merely placed with the rest of the unused terminology.

### The situation at the University of the Free State

Interpreters who work on a freelance basis for the University of the Free State interpret in classrooms, meetings, seminars and summits. Some interpreters are also assigned (by the UFS) to interpret at municipal meetings and the Free State legislature.

Because the scope of the interpreting is so wide, a tremendous collection of terminology is utilised and gathered by interpreters as individuals, but not brought together for collective further use.

Interpreters prepare for most sessions (by set-

---

Article by Xany du Toit. Ms du Toit works in the Interpreting Division of the Department of Afroasiatic Studies, Sign Language and Language Practice at the University of the Free State.

---



ting up handwritten notes) using means such as textbooks, class notes, agendas, speeches, dictionaries, etc. What has been found (in addition to personal experience) is that interpreters utilise these terms once, for a specific ‘once-off’ session, and then they disappear into the proverbial black hole – the terminology list is discarded or merely put away and never used again.

Conference interpreting at the University of the Free State is regarded in a different light to the usual perception of conference interpreting: except for two venues on campus, no booths are utilised. Instead, whispered interpreting equipment is used by the interpreters and those making use of the interpreting services. Because of this, the interpreters sit in the same room as those who are making use of the interpreting service.

Classroom interpreting (an emerging interpreting project at the UFS) is one example of this type of interpreting. As was indicated above, in most other interpreting situations interpreters only interpret a specific session once, but in the instance of classroom interpreting it helps to have long-term knowledge of the terminology. To a certain extent this can be regarded as specialisation. The interpreters ‘specialise’ in a specific subject and interpret that subject for the duration of the year (or longer). They become familiar with the terminology, so the continuous compiling of terminology lists becomes redundant after a specific period of interpreting. This is also the case with ‘once-off’ interpreting sessions where the development of terminology begins and ends with the respective interpreters.

Interpreters, unlike translators, cannot refer to long lists of terminology while they are interpreting. They either know a word or they don’t. Therefore, to interpreters at the UFS, terminology is important, but not as a list. It is imperative to prepare for each session. Except for references like calling cards and handwritten glossaries, once the preparation has been done, nothing much else can be done in order to ensure accurate translation of a word. Either the interpreter (or fellow interpreter) knows the word, or it is reworded or simply omitted (under very extreme circumstances).

Because interpreters do not utilise extensive lists of terminology while interpreting, they do not always feel the need to document and file every term after every session. Interpreters are under tremendous pressure in preparing for the wide range of subject matter they are assigned to interpret. After memorising the terms and the translations for a specific sub-

ject field, they consequently do not see the need to share the terminology with those who are not interpreting that specific session.

Another problem related to the lack of glossaries and terminology lists for interpreting purposes is that international glossaries and terminology lists are in languages that (except for English) are neither the source nor target language of the interpreters at the UFS. Another problem is that some of the terms are specific to South Africa, which means one can often only make use of South African sources, which in many cases do not as yet have glossaries or terminology lists.

The setting up of glossaries and terminology lists could prove to be of great importance in interpreting at the UFS. Not only would it improve interpreters’ time management and decrease the preparation time for all interpreters, but it would also assist the various subject areas with the creation of glossaries and terminology lists. It would also prevent duplication of effort, as interpreters would not waste time creating glossaries similar to ones that had been created in the past.

Kalina (2007: 113) states that interpreting assignments are much more varied than in the past. The result of an increase in interpreting assignments is that a great variety of glossaries are either set up or studied by the interpreters as they prepare for a specific session. In many cases the interpreters are responsible for preparing glossaries or terminology lists themselves, as glossaries in certain subject areas do not always exist. These glossaries are not always shared with other interpreters, owing to the fact that not all interpreters will be interpreting the same subject any time soon. For this reason the hard work put into the creation of lists of terminology and glossaries is simply accepted by the interpreters as part of the job.

### The solution

The most logical solution in this case is for interpreters to create a general terminology list to access subject-specific terminology for preparation for classrooms.

Obviously the cooperation of interpreters is indispensable, as their personal lists of jargon will be used to set up the terminology lists. As has already been mentioned, interpreters very often put an interpreting session behind them once they have finished. But if they knew that their efforts would not go to waste and that a terminology list would be set up for future use, interpreters might be motivated to make their terminology lists available to other interpreters after every session.

*“The interpreters ‘specialise’ in a specific subject and interpret that subject for the duration of the year (or longer). They become familiar with the terminology, so the continuous compiling of terminology lists becomes redundant.”*

This article is continued on page 19.

# Running a freelance practice in South Africa: Challenges and opportunities

*International Translation Day 2008 was celebrated at the University of Johannesburg on 29 September in the form of a seminar looking at some of the practicalities of life as a freelance translator.*

*"The good news is therefore: freelancing is here to stay!"*

Language is a thing most people don't think twice about. They can speak it, so what's all the fuss about? It therefore follows logically (to most people) that if you can speak more than one language, you can also translate or interpret between them. Why would you need (and pay) a specialist to do the work the cleaner can do? This also means that language offices are among the first to be closed down when companies start to downsize.

In South Africa this had led to an astounding growth in the number of freelance language practitioners, because after a while companies realise that they *do* need the professional's input, and as technology has become increasingly sophisticated freelancers can now work from almost anywhere in the world as long as they have an Internet connection. The good news is therefore: *freelancing is here to stay!*

However, there is naturally also some bad news: as a freelancer you are on your own. Your safety nets have been reduced to *one: yourself*.

## **Duty of freelancers – more cumbersome than in an office?**

Because a freelancer has to supply her own safety nets, she has to make sure that everything is in place to ensure that her clients get the best and the most professional service that she is capable of.

New responsibilities include ensuring that backup systems are in place, obtaining resources on an ongoing basis, checking and doing quality control (the buck now stops with you, no longer in the boss's office), sending out invoices, checking expenditure, complying with statutory obligations like taxes, and so on.

## **Freelancers and ethics**

Freelancers have to be aware that they are responsible for everything they do: if they make mistakes, they will probably lose their clients. They have to solve their own problems, deal with demanding clients – and probably be chief cook and bottle-washer too!

This is why the support and backup of an organisation like SATI is invaluable: even if you only need a friendly ear to keep you from murdering a client, you will find that, through SATI, you can meet most of your needs. And at a professional level, SATI provides the guidance you need to steer clear of problems like ethical issues.

SATI's Code of Ethics (available on its website, [translators.org.za](http://translators.org.za)) provides you with guidelines on how to approach your practice and your clients. If you abide by this code, you will seldom doubt your way forward. And if you do, you can contact SATI at any time to try to help you sort out your problem.

## **Office equipment**

When you start off your freelance practice you need to make sure that you cover all your bases. You have to make sure your office is set up so that it will meet all your needs. Do NOT try to work on the dining room table that you have to clear before every meal. Set aside enough room for yourself so that you are in nobody's way – preferably in a separate room, because then it may be tax-deductible (check the rules relating to capital gains tax, though)!

## **Furniture**

Make sure that your furniture meets your needs. A kitchen chair is NOT the most suitable for you to use in your office. You need a proper office chair that provides back support and is height-adjustable, and provides support for your arms as well. You are probably going to spend more time in that chair than in your bed, so make sure it's the best you can afford! To my mind – and I'm speaking from experience here – the best on the market at the moment is the GET ONE

---

Article by Wilna Liebenberg. Mrs Liebenberg runs a very successful freelance practice and believes strongly in using modern technology to one's benefit.

---

chair. Have a look at their website at [getone.co.za](http://getone.co.za). It is an ergonomically designed chair that is recommended by physiotherapists, and will definitely help you to remain in your seat for longer periods.

Your computer's screen should also be placed high enough that you can look straight ahead, as looking down constantly causes needless strain on your neck and shoulders.

Arrange the furniture in your office so that you can reach your equipment with a minimum of effort. An L or U-shaped arrangement works very well. If you are not sure if your arrangement works for you, consult an occupational therapist – they know all there is to know about ergonomics.

### Hardware

I may be speaking to a mainly computer-literate generation, but we all have our blind spots, and technology might be one of them. When you want to buy a computer, my advice is to find a friendly technical boffin who will LISTEN to you and what your needs are. Don't simply walk into Incredible Connection and tell the guy behind the counter you need a computer, now. The big companies may be a little cheaper, but they do not provide the type of after-sales service you require, and they do not care about your problems – and problems you are going to have!

Smaller companies are usually prepared to do call-outs, and care enough about their clients to make sure that all your needs are met. Talk to colleagues about who they use, and get quotes from them too. You will probably find that they can match the prices of bigger companies, and you will be much better off in the end.

Another option you might consider is investing in a laptop rather than a PC. It is more expensive at the outset, but if you want to move around the laptop gives you the mobility to work anywhere, at any time. You can buy yourself an ordinary keyboard for next to nothing and use it instead of your laptop's keyboard when you are at home. In time you can also buy an ordinary (larger) screen for use at home. A separate mouse is also a must if you invest in a laptop. You can now buy a cordless mouse/numerical keypad combination that works very well, even if you have to travel and cannot take your large keyboard with you.

### Software

As far as software is concerned, you must be guided by your colleagues and your clients. My rule is: never get too far ahead of your

clients, and *never* buy a Microsoft product before it has been replaced by another version or has been on the market for at least two years! This way you won't be part of the experimental phase, and you will have all the backup products you need.

A case in point is Windows Vista and Office 2007. You may feel that you are at the forefront of development, but the chances are that your clients can't use your files, you do not have a spellchecker that works properly if you work in any language other than English, and you can't find anyone to help you solve your problems, because no-one knows the new package ... A waste of time – and time is now money – *yours!*

It is also essential to learn to use your software efficiently. Shortcuts can make life much easier for you. Attend courses and talk to colleagues – continually. Buy the right spellchecker for your target language – this might initially cost a few rand, but will save a lot of time and frustration. Make sure that you can use aspects of your word-processing program like the word count, track changes when editing, etc. Save your work for at least two years – clients often use the same documents more than once. Also make regular backup copies of your work and purchase a good anti-virus program.

As far as a printer is concerned, I firmly believe that any translator who wants to project a professional image will use a laser printer. Again, this can be bought second-hand, and you need not select a colour printer. Initially you might get away with an inkjet printer, but I can assure you that you will at some stage become extremely frustrated if you have to print a document of 120 pages on such a small and slow machine. Although I print very little work these days, as most of my work is received and returned via e-mail, I still find my printer indispensable.

### Fax machine

Many people no longer regard an ordinary fax machine as essential, as all computers are equipped with modems and therefore also have fax facilities. It is very easy to receive a fax on your computer, but sometimes a fax machine is required if you have only a paper version of a document and have to get it to your client quickly. Naturally, you can now also buy a printer/fax machine/copier/scanner combination. However, do thorough research to make sure that such a multi-purpose machine will meet all your needs. A fax-to-e-mail facility is also very handy, as it saves you on paper and toner costs. It's free, so you should really consider it.

*"Smaller companies are usually prepared to do call-outs, and care enough about their clients to make sure that all your needs are met."*



*“Make sure that you read and understand the contract that your client wants you to sign before you do so.”*

### *Answering machine*

Some sort of answering machine/service is essential. Many fax machines and phones now contain an answering machine, and Telkom also provides a fairly priced answering service. Clients must be able to leave messages for you or get hold of you in some other way. As your practice grows, you can consider separating your phone and fax lines, although Telkom now also provides lines that can accommodate phone calls, faxes and Internet access simultaneously.

### *Internet access*

Talking about Internet access – this is no longer a luxury. You cannot run a practice without it. A freelancer who does not have access to the Internet and e-mail might as well forget about making a living. You will also probably have to download your e-mail more than once or twice a day, as clients often e-mail an urgent document without phoning to warn you beforehand, and it could cost you your client if you are unable to start as soon as possible. The Internet is also an extremely valuable research resource, and membership of Internet discussion groups is invaluable to freelancers. They provide you with access to the expertise and resources of numerous fellow translators and your problems can often be solved in no time at all.

Internet access options include ordinary dial-up connections via Telkom (the slow option), which can turn out to be very expensive and frustrating if you work with clients who tend to send you large files via e-mail. Another option is the ADSL connection, which gives you 24-hour access and very fast downloads. Prices differ here, depending on the speed of the line. Of course, your service provider also gets a cut, and your monthly fee depends on the size of the download option you select. Another option to consider is the cellphone route, for example the Vodafone 3G option, which is also a 24-hour option. Here you buy a download package and do not pay anything else except your ISP fee. The advantage of this option is that you have Internet and e-mail access wherever you have cell phone reception – virtually anywhere in the world. If you do not have 3G reception, you automatically switch to the GPRS option, which is slower, but still faster than a Telkom dial-up connection. You are also not limited to using this on a laptop, as you can buy a router or modem for plugging the device into your PC.

### *CAT tools*

A must-have these days is some sort of com-

puter assistance for translation work. Programs like Wordfast and Trados not only speed up your work, but improve the consistency of your translation and therefore the quality of the work you provide.

Electronic dictionaries are also almost indispensable these days. To my mind they will never replace hard copy dictionaries, but they save you an enormous amount of time and effort, especially if they are available in a service like Pharosonline, which enables you to search in about 20 dictionaries and terminology lists simultaneously for a single term.

### **Administration**

As a freelancer you no longer have the back-up of the company's administrative department – *you* are now the admin department! This means that if you do not take care of your contracts, invoices, taxes, etc., you won't have any protection against crooked clients, you won't have any money, and you will probably land in jail.

### *Contracts*

Make sure that you read and understand the contract that your client wants you to sign before you do so – it is your right to understand it before you sign it. And if you are not satisfied, ask someone to help you change it so that it protects you as well.

A basic contract should include information like the type of work, the format required, due date and, of course, the extent and rate. I also ask for the contact details of people I can approach for assistance with any problems. If you are not going to be able to meet a deadline, you have the right to discuss this with the client as soon as possible. Beware of clients who comply with so-called international standards with a contract that is so complicated that even an attorney has difficulty understanding it, and that in the end protects only the client.

If you have worked for a client for some time, it may be possible to negotiate rates. Matters that also need to be discussed are whether you can contract work to colleagues if the deadline is not feasible on your own and who will accept the final responsibility for the document (i.e. are you going to be the last person to see the document before it is printed, or will an internal person check it for in-house terminology etc.?). If you assume the final responsibility for, for example, a translation, it would be wise to ask an editor to check your work and to include this cost in the price you quote. I do this as a matter of course these

days, and shudder to think what went out of my hands to a client when I did not follow this rule.

When you work with clients regularly and have done so for a number of years, it is not necessarily essential to sign a separate contract for every piece of work. You can negotiate a rate with the client once a year, and if any conditions of your oral contract change, they can be put in writing. It is extremely important to develop a relationship of trust with your clients and never to breach this. Remember: your reputation is a material element of your practice.

When you discuss the format of a document with a client, make sure that you find out whether you have to include finer details like tables, bold type, italics, different font types and sizes, etc. If a document is very urgent, it could save time if a trained person in the client's office does this type of formatting when the final document is being prepared. You can also send a large document to a client piece by piece, although this is not recommended, as you will never be able to obtain an overall view of your work.

It is advisable to negotiate with the client to get the document to you in the cheapest way possible for you. E-mail is a convenient solution for both parties, but if this is not going to work, try to convince the client to have the CD or hard copy delivered to you. If you have to fetch it, it entails additional costs to you. If it is delivered by courier, establish who pays for the service. A reasonable solution for your pocket is the Post Office's Speed Services overnight courier service or PostNet's services. A faxed copy is also a solution, but if a document of, say, 60 pages is faxed, the chances are very good that the transmission will be interrupted a few times, that some pages will have to be faxed again or that they come through illegibly. This can be extremely time-consuming.

### Invoices

If you forget to send out invoices, you will definitely starve. Find out from your client what he or she requires on an invoice and make sure you follow these guidelines to speed up your payment. Usually an invoice requires the date, your invoice number, the client's reference number, the name of the client, the name of the job, the extent of the job, the rate and the amount to be paid to you. These days I always include my bank details, as I prefer electronic bank transfers as a form of payment.

Unless you know that you are going to do

several translations in the course of, say, a month for a specific client, it is advisable to send an invoice with every piece of work you return. In this way you make sure that the client knows what he owes you for the work concerned, and you also have an excellent excuse to enquire after a week or so whether everything with regard to the work and the invoice is in order. This often accelerates payment!

If possible, arrange with the client to pay you on delivery. Large clients often have cheque runs at certain times of the month. Find out when your invoice has to be submitted to be in time for the next run. If you work regularly for a client, you can arrange to submit one invoice per month for that month's work, to be paid at the end of the month concerned.

All these invoices must be indicated in your records. Records can be kept in electronic or hard-copy format, but it is essential for you to be able to give an account of what you have done and received. You need this to keep track of your clients, your deadlines, your income and your work on hand. It is a good idea to design a form containing the following information:

- date received
- name of client
- name of computer file
- instructions (translation, editing, proof-reading, copy writing, etc.)
- deadline
- rate (all your clients will not necessarily pay the same rates)
- number of units of work involved
- amount of your invoice

You can also include a column for checking whether payment has been received.

An unpleasant but essential task is to follow up non-payers. This can cost you one e-mail or phone call or it can take you three years. However, it does mean that you have to check your bank statements regularly to ascertain whether payments have been made, as clients do not all necessarily send out payment advices. Here Internet banking is invaluable, as it saves considerable time and effort. Diplomacy is the key word in this part of your practice, as you cannot afford to alienate anybody, but you also have to survive! However, sometimes you have to come to terms with the fact that a client is just not going to pay you, and write off the debt. Fortunately, you can deduct this again for tax purposes!

### Taxes

I know that traditionally tax evasion is a nat-

*"If you forget to send out invoices, you will definitely starve. Find out from your client what he or she requires on an invoice and make sure you follow these guidelines to speed up your payment."*

*“Know your rates if asked – don’t hum and ha. If you negotiate a special rate, make sure that you inform the client that it applies only to that job, and not to all future ones.”*

ional sport, but take my word for it: you are looking for *real* trouble if you try it these days. Register as a provisional taxpayer and rather deduct everything you can to reduce the taxes you pay, than trying to avoid paying anything at all.

I am not a very numerically literate person, so I prefer someone else to do the calculations and stuff. I have found a very competent tax consultant who takes care of all my tax-related admin and I gladly pay him what he asks me once a year to take that hassle off my shoulders.

I am not registered for VAT, and as far as I know you only have to register if you have a registered company or CC, or earn above a certain annual income.

*Medical aid, pension, insurance, etc.*

It is essential for you to have your own medical aid, pension fund and short-term insurance. Do *not* think you will be able to take care of all this later – you will *not* get round to it and a lack of proper preventive measures could mean the end of your practice. Shop around to get the options that will work best for you, but *get* them!

## **Dealing with clients**

### *Duty to clients*

You have a duty to your clients to provide the best work possible, and therefore you require the best resources, equipment, backup from colleagues, and so on. It really does not help to skimp here: you will only shoot yourself in the foot. Your reputation depends on you using everything possible to give your clients what they want.

### *Client IS always right*

Sometimes, in spite of all your careful precautions, you manage to antagonise a client and lose him. This is an extremely unpleasant experience, but it can happen to anyone, and you can only benefit from it if you handle the whole affair in a professional manner. Apologise unconditionally for any mistakes you have made and be prepared to sacrifice at least a part of, or even your full, remuneration. An honest acknowledgement that you have made a mistake does impress the client, and you might get an opportunity to salvage something.

## **Rates**

An important issue that haunts all freelancers is that of rates. No language practitioner wants to price himself or herself out of the

market, but you do not want to work for charity either! Use the SATI survey among freelancers as a point of departure, discuss rates with colleagues who live and work in the same area as you, determine an average for which you are prepared to work, and test it in practice. Remember that by law SATI may not prescribe rates, but nothing stops us from talking among ourselves! Just make it clear when asked that the rate you are quoting is yours, and that you have based it on the average rate in the market place.

Know your rates if asked – don’t hum and ha. If you negotiate a special rate, make sure that you inform the client that it applies only to that job, and not to all future ones. I know that some people charge lower rates for big jobs, but I feel that you work even harder on a big job, so why should you be paid less? In any case – negotiate this with your client!

Some big clients have a set rate that they pay their language practitioners, and you can negotiate these rates only after you have worked for them for some time. Others will be prepared to pay your price, or at least to negotiate with you. The golden rule is: remain flexible, but do not try to undercut your colleagues. This undermines the profession and your professionalism, and in the end you are the one who will have to convince the client to give you an increase when you find that you can no longer survive on a pittance!

If all else fails, simply refuse the work – it is not worthwhile accepting a piece of work for extremely little money, and then having to refuse a more lucrative job because you do not have the capacity to handle it. If all language practitioners stand together, we might even be able to convince the poor payers that they are the ones losing out.

If possible, negotiate annual rate increases with regular clients. Do not make your increases excessive – use the same principles as above for the initial rates. Remember that your rates have to make provision for elements like fax paper, telephone time, fuel, postage, etc.

## **Networking**

### *Importance of contact with colleagues*

You will find that one of your main problems as a freelancer is a feeling of isolation. It is essential to keep in touch with what is happening in your profession by maintaining contact with other practitioners, attending workshops and seminars and just chatting to colleagues.

One way of doing this is to join your local



chapter of SATI, which should regularly hold meetings and give you an opportunity to meet colleagues and ask their advice. This will also give you the confidence and contacts to find help by telephone if you have problems. If there isn't a chapter in your area, start one! If chapters are run properly, you will find them invaluable.

Another way is to join the Internet discussion group, ZALang, where language and job-related matters are discussed on a daily basis (send a blank e-mail to ZALang-subscribe@yahoo.com).

You owe it to yourself and your profession to expand your knowledge and skills continually by attending seminars and workshops, writing accreditation exams, etc. Your SATI membership makes all these things possible: through the SATI *Bulletin* and regular e-mails, members are kept up to date on opportunities that are available in the profession.

It requires tremendous discipline to run a freelance practice – particularly if you are working from home. Important matters to attend to are dividing up your day, setting time aside for family matters and setting time aside for yourself. Develop a routine of devoting certain times of the day to work. You have the benefit of being able to manipulate the day to suit yourself, but make sure that you do not expose clients to unprofessional conduct.

Set yourself targets to achieve every day. For example, determine how many words you can translate per hour and how many you have to translate per day to achieve your deadline. This is the only way in which you will be able to convince clients that you are seriously attempting to render a professional service.

However, make sure you set aside time for yourself. It is easy to become so immersed in your work that you forget completely that you also have a need for leisure time.

## Standards

Two aspects of your practice that may never be neglected are maintaining standards and the quality of your work. These are non-negotiable. Make sure that you regularly check the quality of your work by going over it again a week or so later (you will be astonished at the number of mistakes you find!) or by asking a colleague to check it for you. Even though you might not be able to correct the mistakes with the client because the deadline has passed, you can prevent yourself from making the same mistakes

again. Clients are also generally willing to discuss problems if they are convinced that you are really trying to improve the quality of your work.

When you are working on your own and for many clients, it is sometimes difficult to keep track of the style everyone prefers. The best advice is to develop your own style and to stick to it as far as possible. Try to convince clients of your point of view, but also be prepared to accept their house styles, even though you might not agree with them. However, be consistent in what you do in a certain document at all times.

## Conclusion

Once you have tasted the joy of running a freelance practice, you will find it difficult to adjust to an office environment again. It is not the easiest decision to make, because you sacrifice stability, routine, contact with other people and a regular income. However, the freedom you gain makes it all worthwhile. ☺

## Interpreting and terminology: An interpreter's perspective

[continued from page 13]

If such a tremendous amount of work goes into preparing for each interpreting session, the work should be developed into a coherent and cohesive UFS-based terminology list, catering specifically for the needs of the UFS interpreters, as they would be the ones to provide (and use) the terminology. This would make it much easier for any interpreter to research terminology in a specific subject-area. As each interpreting session was completed, the interpreters could input the terminology into a database.

Before this can be done, however, the interpreters at the UFS need to progress to a mindset of wanting to create lists of terminology. In this way, interpreters at the UFS might also move beyond the use of handwritten notes and into the so-called electronic age (Moser-Mercer 2008: 507).

## References

- Kalina, S. 2007. 'Microphone off' – Application of the Process Model of Interpreting to the Classroom. *Kalbotyra* 57(3): 111-121.
- Moser-Mercer, B. 1992. Banking on Terminology: Conference Interpreters in the Electronic Age. *META* 37(3): 507-522. ☺

*"Once you have tasted the joy of running a freelance practice, you will find it difficult to adjust to an office environment again."*

# Time management and the art of saying no

*"You cannot burn the candle at both ends and expect to deliver consistently good work. Your body will appreciate it, your family will appreciate it, and most certainly the quality of your resting times will be reflected in your quality of work."*

As a freelance translator, time management is often an issue because you are faced with the daunting prospect of having to say 'no' to an important client whilst working on a document for another important client, and you do not want to compromise your relationship with either! Indeed, it becomes a psychological struggle: if you take on the extra work, you run the risk of compromising not only the relationship with both your clients, but also the quality of the work that you are submitting! On the other hand, there is the dilemma of saying 'no' in full awareness that you may not hear from that client again.

You actually have to reach the extent of being mature enough to say no, without all the attendant feelings of guilt and lack of self-worth that accompany such an act. It is not an easy process, but I discovered that the best way is to be completely honest with your client and tell them you are busy with another assignment. Once that assignment is done, it is wise, though, to write back to the client and tell them that you are now available for new assignments. Your honesty is appreciated far more than the dishonesty in accepting an assignment you know you cannot complete properly because you are swamped. Indeed, I have found that once I have established a good relationship with a client, and I advise them that I am extremely busy and am only available as of such and such a date, they will actually contact me and tell me that they have extended the deadline to accommodate me. In this way, your reputation remains intact and the quality of your work remains consistent, which is an important factor in building and maintaining relationships with clients.

Another difficulty with regard to time management is related to accepting assignments without any regard to the time frame involved. It is important to calculate how many words you can translate in a day in order to accept assignments with deadlines in which you can perform the task properly. It is better to err on the side of caution here – for instance, if you know that you can flat out translate 5 000 words a day, but this needs considerable editing and proofreading which will take another day or two, then it is not wise to tell the client that you can translate this volume. Rather, advise a client of how much you can translate in a day, taking into account the volume which you can translate, proof-

read, edit (and do the appropriate research on, as necessary) and submit as if it were due that very day, with a clear conscience and in the full knowledge that you have done this job to the best of your ability.

Some translators have tried subcontracting their work, but have found that this does not work well, simply because they cannot attest to the reliability of this system and the quality of the other translator's work. In any case, at the end of the day you are ultimately responsible for that assignment, and if there are any comebacks from the client they will all fall on your head. Furthermore, if you have signed a confidentiality agreement with the client, it is not fair on the client for you to ask somebody else to take on that assignment, because you are the one that is bound by that agreement. Indeed, you run the risk of compromising that relationship because the other person may even contact your client directly, who will not appreciate your outsourcing work that has been entrusted to you! However, if you do have colleagues who you feel you can trust, it is a good idea to advise the client in advance that you would need to outsource the work.

So, to be successful in this line of business and not suffer from burnout, this is my advice:

**Set your off-days** – you cannot burn the candle at both ends and expect to deliver consistently good work. Your body will appreciate it, your family will appreciate it, and most certainly the quality of your resting times will be reflected in your quality of work.

**Be honest, learn to say no** – you will be more appreciated for your honesty than your lack of consistency!

**Calculate your daily translation output** – this helps you to know exactly how much you can take on. I reiterate that it is best to tell the client that you can translate less words a day – you will pleasantly surprise them if you return the translation assignment well before the deadline, and done to your best standard!

**Feel no guilt** – the client has several translators on their database anyway, and it is actually good for them to know that your services are in demand!

Time management in freelance translation is all about building and maintaining relationships, and relationships are not built on speed of delivery, but on consistency, honesty, quality work and a high level of integrity. 🐼

---

Article by Carla Selyer. Ms Selyer is a freelance translator and interpreter, working in English, French and Portuguese.

---

# Die veranderende rol van die hedendaagse taalpraktisyn in die kommunikasieproses

**M**et die snel ontwikkeling van die mens, die tegnologie en sy omgewing word daar toenemend gespesialiseer en die individu moet hom/haar dikwels by 'n nou veld bepaal. Dink maar aan die persone wat vandag in die sogenaamde Menslike Hulpbronne werk. Dit verskil dramaties van die destydse Personeelafdeling wat al die behoeftes van die maatskappy se personeel hanteer het. Verlof, kraamverlof, beurse, oorplasinge, aanstellings, verhuising – noem maar op. Jou vriendelike personeelbeampte kon jou met raad en daad bystaan, alles reël en dan nog opvolg dat alles glad verloop. As dié persone vandag nog werk gehad het, sou hulle bekend staan as 'generaliste'. Vandag se Menslikehulpbronne-konsultante spesialiseer in 'n bepaalde rigting en 'oortree' eenvoudig nie op sy/haar kollega se gebied nie. Sekere persone spesialiseer in werwing, ander in opleiding en nog ander in beurse. Dan praat ek nie eers van diegene wat met die vergoeding werk nie. Hulle werk met sekere modelle (nou nie dié met twee bene nie!), onderneem sogenaamde vergelykende opnames – in Suid-Afrika en internasionaal – in jou spesifieke dissipline, portuurgroep-vergelykings, gedwonge rangordebepaling, en nog 'n hele spul ander wat mens net verwar.

Daar word skynbaar minder van die individu verwag sover dit kommunikasievermoëns betref. Daarvoor is daar mos kommunikasiespesialiste. Die groot maatskappye of korporasies het meesal 'n kommunikasieafdeling en dikwels 'n mediaskakelafdeling en 'n openbareskakelafdeling. Taalvaardigheid geniet nie die hoë aansien van weleer nie. 'Solank die boodskap net redelik verstaanbaar by die teikengehoor uitkom' is 'n opmerking wat ek al moes aanhoor. Toe ek dié stelling bevraagteken, word ek ingelig: 'Julle sogenaamde puriste se dae is verby. Julle is te pedanties en het nie meer 'n plek in moderne kommunikasie nie. Vandag gaan alles oor die boodskap. Die taalgebruik is sekondêr!'

Die vraag hier is seker uit wie se perspektief die boodskap 'verstaanbaar' oorgebring word. Na my mening sal keurige taalgebruik nooit uit die mode wees nie. Dit sal eerder die aansien van jou maatskappy se beeld na

*Deon Pienaar oorweeg die rol van die moderne taalpraktisyn*

buite verhoog. Dink maar net aan die negatiewe beeld wat ons almal vorm van woordvoerders wat op TV hulle taal meng of hulle swak uitdruk.

Die pligte en verantwoordelikhede van die vertaler of taalpraktisyn het na my mening oor die jare ook dramaties verander. In die groter taalkantore het dinge ook heel anders verloop as vandag. Ek dink (soms met deernis) aan die dae toe en hoe kopie op jou tafel beland het en hoe jy jou taak moes afhandel. Die persoon in beheer van jou afdeling het dit aan jou toegewys. Jy het geen inspraak hierin gehad nie. Die opdrag was eenvoudig: vertaal of redigeer die kopie. Moenie aan die outeur se styl peuter nie. Moenie die feite bevraagteken nie – dis nie jou verantwoordelikheid nie. Jy het die stuk versigtig vertaal en hoegenaamd nie met die outeur of opsteller geskakel nie – dit was die verantwoordelikheid van jou onmiddellike senior. Die gepaardgaande navorsing was uiters belangrik en moes aan die onderkant van die bladsy netjies en volgens spesifieke voorskrifte geannoteer word. Al die beskikbare dissipline-spesifieke bronne moes aangehaal word. Dit was 'n oortreding 'van epidermiese proporsies' (met erkenning aan die sepie '7de Laan') indien jy nie bewus was van al die beskikbare en moontlike bronne vir 'n sekere dissipline of konteks nie. Senior vertalers het jou somer dikwels vooraf ondervra oor watter bron(ne) of spesialisie jy sou inspan of raadpleeg vir 'n spesifieke taak. Daarby is jy eenvoudig nie toegelaat om afleidings te maak nie. Junior vertalers is basies ingespan om die vertaalwerk 'meganies' te doen. Senior vertalers het daarna jou poging nagesien (en soms uitmekaargetrek!). Dan is die vertaling na die tikkantoor gestuur, waarna jy dit teruggekry het vir nasiening en proeflees. 'n Spesifieke patroon is gebruik om te verseker dat al die wysigings in die tikwerk weerspieël is. 'n Sirkel is in die kantlyn aangebring en afgemerk indien die verbetering in die getikte weergawe aangebring is. Twee persone (een senior) moes dan die werkstuk afteken as korrek en dan is dit aan die kliënt terugbesorg. As 'n fout dan

---

Artikel deur Deon Pienaar. Mnr. Pienaar is die hoof van ABSA se taaldiens, maar skryf hier in sy persoonlike hoedanigheid. Hy het sy aanvanklike opleiding as vertaler in 'n groot taalburo deurloop waar deurlopende opleiding in 'n magdom dissiplines aangemoedig is, en inderdaad noodsaaklik geag is as agtergrond om komplekse en tegniese tekste te redigeer en vertaal.

---



steeds deurgeglim het, was dit so 'n ernstige saak dat jy voor die departementshoof moes verskyn om te verklaar wat skeefgeloop het. Terugvoer oor jou poging was onmiddellik daarna. Dit was gewoonlik fel, uiters krities en nie iets waarna die jong vertaler uitgesien het nie. Die positiewe faktore aan die ander kant was egter oorweldigend: jy het onmiddellike terugvoer gekry – ware indiensopleiding. Jy kon put uit meerdere kennis en ondervinding en jy het verskeie kundiges om jou gehad wat antwoorde op al jou vrae gehad het. Al die nuwe goedgekeurde terminologie moes onmiddellik (op kaartjies!) aangeteken word en in die betrokke dissipline se kartoteek geliasseer word, en die departementshoof het sy gewaardeerde handtekening daarop geplaas.

Ons weet almal hoe hedendaagse taalpraktisyns moet werk. Soms in klein kantore, soms sonder enige agtergrondkennis, soms onder die uiterste druk, soms met beperkte kennis van die dissipline waarin gewerk word, en in die meeste gevalle niemand waarop jy kan staatmaak om die dokument na jou na te sien nie. Maar laat ek nie daaroor uitwei nie ...

### Kommunikatiewe aktiwiteit

Vertalers en taalpraktisyns werk nie meer in 'n vakuum nie. Hulle taak behels ook nie meer die slaafse meganiese vervanging van diskrete of leksikale items van die brontaal (BT) na die teikentaal (TT) nie. Konteks verskaf 'n bron van betekenis vir elke taalgebeurtenis aangesien dit die leser 'n verwysingsraamwerk gee om wat gesê of geskryf is te interpreteer. Om effektief te wees, moet die vertaler die vermoë hê om boodskappe van die BT na die TT oor te dra wat nie net linguisties korrek is nie maar ook toepaslik is in die konteks van die situasie en konteks van kultuur. Vergelyk bv die Hebreuse groetwoord *shalom* (vrede) en die Italiaanse afskeidswoord *ciao* – albei baie gebruiklik, selfs onder persone wat nie die spesifieke tale magtig is nie. Die vertaler moet bewus wees of 'n persoon wat sodanig gegroet word, arriveer of vertrek en dit dan korrek in die BT weergee.

Ek wil nie hier die verskillende vertaalmodelle bespreek nie, maar dit blyk dat formele ekwivalensie stadigaan in Suid-Afrika vir pragmatiese ekwivalensie plek sal moet maak sover dit die meer algemene tekste betref. (Hierdie siening sluit uit die aard van die saak hoogs akademiese en tegniese dokumente uit. Die persone vir wie hierdie hoëvlak-dokumente geskep en vertaal word, sal hopelik hoogs opgelei en derhalwe bekend wees met die terminologie van hulle dissipline.) Die boodskap wat oorgebring word, is

in talle gevalle so belangrik dat die beskrywing so noukeurig en omvattend as moontlik moet wees. Vreemde en ongebruikelike terminologie moet sover moontlik vermy word. Veral in Suid-Afrika waar die sogenaamde 'nuwe' Suid-Afrikaners in die hoofstroom van die ekonomie ingelyf moet word. Om die BT summier oor te sit in die formele ekwivalent in die TT en basta is nie meer goed genoeg nie. Met ander woorde, jy kan nie net meer die stuk vertaal en hoop dat die teikengehoor die boodskap sal verstaan en sal kan internaliseer nie. Die vrae wat by die vertaalde boodskap (TT) gevra moet word: is my teikengehoor terminologies of taalkundig opgewasse, maw verstaan hulle wat ek probeer oorbring? Het ek deeglik kennis geneem van die register van my teikengehoor? Ken hulle die betekenis van die vakterminologie wat noodwendig in sekere kommunikasie gebruik word – of moet hulle eers omsigtig ingelyf word? Daar is seker nog talle ander wat ook oorweeg kan word.

Die oorgang van die formele vertaalaktiwiteit na 'n meer pragmatiese benadering kan soos volg opgesom word:

Van	Tot
'n Meganiese oefening in die oorsit van terme en woorde	'n Kommunikatiewe aktiwiteit waar die taalpraktisyn 'meer' verantwoordelikheid aanvaar vir die vertaling wat geskep word en waar die klem op die verstaanbaarheid van die teks val
Formele ekwivalensie sonder oorweging van die gesofistikeerdheid of nie van die teikengehoor/lesers	Pragmatiese ekwivalensie (met inagneming van die gesofistikeerdheid van die teikengehoor, opleidingsvlakke en bekendheid met die spesifieke dissipline waarin die boodskap oorgebring word)
Woord-/sinsvlak	Teks- of diskoersvlak
Produkgeoriënteer	Proses- en produkgeoriënteer

### Slot

Vandag se taalpraktisyns werk dikwels in afsondering of alleen. Dus is die las soveel groter as hulle nie aan kommunikasie- of bemarkingstaal blootgestel word nie. Om nie te praat van ander tegniese dissiplines nie.

Die teikengehoor en die behoeftes van die leser het oor die jare meer prominent geword. Die taalpraktisyn moet hiervan kennis neem.

Formele ekwivalensie en tegniese terminologie moet dikwels plek maak vir 'n meer pragmatiese of beskrywende rendisie in die teikentaal.

Dit is dus duidelik dat vertalers en taalpraktisyns 'n interaktiewe rol in die hedendaagse kommunikasieproses moet vervul. 🐾

### Summary

The role of the translator or language practitioner has changed tremendously over the past few decades – from a mechanical transfer of words and sentences in the source language (SL) into words and sentences in the target language (TL), to a comprehensive communication activity in the TL. It is often left to the language practitioner – implicitly if not explicitly – to accept responsibility for the final communicative message. This means that a language practitioner also needs to have communication and marketing skills, among others.

# Wordfast in a higher education institution – How can it work?

*Leandra Jordaan looks at the utilisation of a CAT tool in an academic environment*

The one is small and the other is big. The combination of the two is a little bit like 'David and Goliath', but just like in the story, don't underestimate David. That sling is mighty.

Who would have thought a few years ago when Yves Champollion started his modest software endeavor it would lead to such a user-friendly workable system. In the old days, i.e. four years ago, the company was so small that you had to contact Yves Champollion (the architect of the system) directly with enquiries and problems. Now he has a whole team working/campaigning for him (I wonder where my cheque is since I am now campaigning for him myself?) But it is easy when software is workable.

Champollion saw three things in the market: translators needed cheaper software, they already used and were comfortable with Microsoft Word, and they needed user-friendly, doesn't-take-away-your-will-to-live software. He started developing Wordfast after-hours, and kept the principles with which he wanted the system to work intact, i.e. cheap (EUR 125 for RSA) and user-friendly.

Now Wordfast is taking the world by storm. Many people are commenting online in forums and on blogs about the usefulness of Wordfast and I have recently noticed that Wordfast has overtaken Trados as the number one favourite. Who are these ardent Wordfast fans? Translators of course, who else?

## How does Wordfast work? Principles and features

There are basically two main types of translation tools (although many exist). There are those that primarily use the machine and have no human interaction until the end when it is edited. These types of systems usually have a database of data (dictionaries/phrases/sentences), taggers, stemmers etc. This type of tool is called machine translation. The other type of translation tool retrieves previously translated data from the database and is usually interactive throughout the process. It is called computer-assisted

translation. Wordfast is a computer-assisted translation tool. The user is involved from the beginning to the end. The machine doesn't manipulate the text in any way. This of course is what makes Wordfast so popular with translators: the human is in charge. If the information has not been added to the database (which is empty when you start working with Wordfast), it cannot be retrieved as a translation unit.

A feature that makes Wordfast very attractive is the fact that the database, or rather translation memory (TM), is a plain text file. The databases used in these types of systems are usually complicated and inaccessible to 'regular Joe's', because they are so complex and guarded 'for security purposes'. However, Wordfast TMs are completely open. Even if you are not a computer whiz kid, you can enter the TM file and manipulate your data as you please – knowing, of course, that if you make a mistake your TM will no longer work until the problem is fixed. Over the years network capabilities have been added; we can now share our TMs. There is even an online TM for sharing data with other Wordfast enthusiasts – the Very Large Translation Memory (VLTm). You will be able to add and retrieve information (translation units) from the VLTm as well as your local TM simultaneously (Champollion, 2008).

A short list of useful features:

- Easy installation: Wordfast is a Microsoft Word add-on (comes as a template document that you install)
- Video files are available online so that you can train yourself how to use Wordfast effectively
- Terminology lists: The TM can compile glossaries as well
- There is no pre-built database, therefore Wordfast can support any language combination
- An analysis can be done on a text (pre-translation) to determine which of the existing TMs will retrieve the most translation units
- Creating a blacklist of terms will exclude

---

Article by Leandra Jordaan. Mrs Jordaan works in the Department of Afroasiatic Studies, Sign Language and Language Practice at the University of the Free State.

---

*“Translators are generally not very enthusiastic about changing methods that have been working and sometimes prefer the old ways, but I can safely say that this is not the case here. These translators are up for a challenge and would rather work smart.”*

these terms from the segment when it is validated (translators are warned)

- PlusTools (also a Microsoft Word add-on) allows you to align and add previously translated texts to a TM

The features are all easy to use and from their workings you can ascertain that translators were involved in the development of the system.

### **Campus users and future plans**

On the UFS campus we have parallel-medium education (classes in both English and Afrikaans). This in turn has the effect that our language policy caters for English and Afrikaans, with the further development of Sesotho. Our documentation therefore has to be made available in these two languages as far as possible. We have translators in several faculties and also in top management hammering out these documents. In order for them to keep up with the demand, they have to use computer tools for translation.

Translators are generally not very enthusiastic about changing methods that have been working and sometimes prefer the old ways, but I can safely say that this is not the case here. These translators are up for a challenge and would rather work smart. We have been implementing the EtsaTrans multilingual project for one year now. The plan is to gather all previously translated documentation (on campus) and to order and align the data. The goal is to create as many domain-specific TMs as possible and share these TMs (via a network) with other translators on campus in order to stimulate the flow of knowledge.

It will not be possible to share all the TMs as some of them may contain information of a sensitive nature. We have so far created TMs with the available minutes and agenda of meetings for top management (2007/2008), the Faculty of Humanities (2007) and the Faculty of Health Sciences (2008). We have also had a request to build a TM containing policy documents (2008): institutional policy documents, laws, regulations, guidelines, manuals and so forth.

We are working in a domain-specific manner, and so started with administrative-type documents like minutes of meetings, agendas and policy documents, because they take up precious translation time. The information in these documents is mostly governed by a controlled vocabulary used for meetings or general institutional terminology which makes them ideal candidates for computer-assisted translation. Another reason for

working in a domain-specific manner is that there is a guideline limit to the amount of data (360 000 translation units) that should be added to a TM (Champollion 2005). If the TM becomes too large, it will not retrieve as many translation units. Once the administrative domain is completed, a needs assessment will be undertaken to determine the next domain. We have had some feedback indicating that examination papers for students are a problem, and will look into the possibility of building such domains.

Each year we include one further faculty in the EtsaTrans multilingual project, and in so doing we achieve a good working relationship with these faculties. Our long-term goal is to have all the faculties interacting and sharing with each other, but to accomplish that everyone needs to have a stake in the project. One way of achieving this goal is to have workshops, to educate the users of Wordfast on the available features, and also to share and discuss issues that come to light.

### **Conclusion**

The ease with which Wordfast has so far been applied and the enthusiasm of the users shows where this endeavour will lead – to success. We will continue our work on campus and hopefully in the next few years we can make a difference with regard to translation standards being maintained on campus and establish good terminology usage.

An institution as large as a university can benefit tremendously from working with a system such as Wordfast with regard to the way knowledge is dispersed and the time and effort that is spent on the task. Another possibility would be for higher education institutions to work together to share knowledge and experiences with each other.

The user-friendliness of the system helps convince users that it is not just another tool they have to familiarise themselves with in order to satisfy some job description, but actually helps them do their work. The ease with which Wordfast is integrated into a daily routine is astounding. For such a small software package, its impact has been tremendous. Wordfast has improved consistently over the last few years and we hope that this will continue.

### **References**

- Champollion YA. 2008. Product – Wordfast. Available at [www.wordfast.net](http://www.wordfast.net) [Accessed 24 July 2008].
- Champollion YA. 2005. Wordfast – Training Manual, beginner level. Available at [www.wordfast.net](http://www.wordfast.net) [Accessed 02 February 2008].



# FIT XVIII World Congress

## Translation and cultural diversity in the flesh

### Ilse Feinauer – A congress of firsts

This was a congress of firsts for me: my first FIT Congress and my first visit to China. But this was definitely not the last FIT Congress and hopefully also not the last visit to China. I was warned by several scholars not to attend FIT congresses since they were apparently not academic enough and more focused on language practice. However, with a congress theme of *Translation and Cultural Diversity* most of the salient theoretical issues were addressed, although obviously there were also papers and panels on professional issues and business pursuits. One finds this mix of theoretical and more practical issues in all prestigious and influential conferences.

Over the three days of the conference 10 to 11 parallel sessions were held in three to four time slots, with speakers varying between four and six per session. On top of this there were also the plenaries and poster sessions. Fortunately, some of the sessions were in Chinese and that helped a little to reduce one's choice of which session to attend. All in all about 1 500 people from 70 countries attended the conference. Three South Africans read papers, namely Jackie Naudé and Kobus Marais from the Free State and me from Stellenbosch. Two South Africans from the Department of Arts and Culture also attended. Do I need to mention that SATI's very own Marion Boers was also there?

The Translators Association of China fed us well and everything was organised immaculately. Lunch was served in four different areas and tea and coffee were served on each floor of the magnificent Shanghai International Convention Centre. This did not prevent long queues at lunch and tea times, but this is where most of the networking took place. If you wanted to get away from the masses you could retire to the third floor with its scenic views of the Pearl Tower and the Huangpu River to enjoy a nap or to read the English newspapers distributed daily. Or you could fight for one of the nine computers to check your e-mails.

Unfortunately my research money does not allow for any organised tours or any dinners not included in the conference fee. One

*The most recent congress of the International Federation of Translators was historical for South Africa – and SATI in particular – as a SATI Executive member returned home the new FIT president. The open congress was attended by four SATI members and left a deep impression on them all. Here they share their reflections on the event in Shanghai in August.*

soiree was included in the conference package and it consisted of an evening of cultural events as well as a Chinese meal of several courses. The show was outstanding and the guests were up on their feet most of the evening taking photos.

My congress was preceded by attending one day of the FIT Statutory Congress on 3 August, where Marion Boers and I represented SATI. This meeting was held at the Shanghai Lansheng Hotel, where Marion performed so competently as part of the FIT Board that she ended up being appointed the new president of FIT. Obviously the South Africans were viewed with more respect thereafter. Hopefully I will be back at the XIX FIT World Congress in San Francisco in 2011 to support Marion and represent SATI.

Shanghai itself is just like any other big world city, or should I say the district that I visited and where the conference was held. There were hundreds of architecturally extremely challenging skyscrapers and very good Western restaurants and shopping malls in the CBD. My Chinese experience only really started after the conference, when my husband and I left by train for Beijing for the Olympic Games. This experience was priceless and Beijing is the city that makes me want to go back to China.



*Ilse Feinauer and Jackie Naudé with the South African flag at the congress*

## Jacobus Naudé – A perfect translation experience

The China of 1998, when I first visited Mainland China, and the China of 2008 are remarkably different.

In '98 I attended Eva Hang's conference at the English Department of the University of Peking (Beijing), with the theme *Translation and Culture*. At that stage China was quite inaccessible to foreigners (or *aliens* as Westerners were called) and it was a huge culture shock to me. You couldn't get about with English. All the noticeboards in art galleries and museums and in the streets and shops were in Mandarin. The only way to get around was using a card system with the Chinese translations for phrases such as 'Take me to ...' that someone at a hotel who knew a bit of English and Chinese wrote for you and you gave to a taxidriver. Although this system is still used, it is now not the only way to communicate with the people of China.

Another interesting discrepancy was the fact that international visitors were thought to be more worthy and wealthy and therefore had neater facilities than those reserved for the Chinese people. Foreigners even enjoyed better prepared meals than the Chinese people, as they believe international guests and academics to be more worthy. In the China of 1998, the group seemed to be more important than the individual. At the congress, nobody wanted to stand out or take the honour for anything they organised or did, as they believed the group is more important.

Almost ten years later, Kobus Marais and I arrived in a much more accessible China. We were greeted in English at the airport and taken to our hotel, where we were served in English. Although Shanghai might be described as a cosmopolitan city, it is still dramatically different to my experience in 1998. There has clearly been a huge shift towards a more Western and American lifestyle and habits. This is reflected not only in the food, but also in the architecture of the city. In 1998 only Chinese food were served, while it has now been adapted for foreigners and a more Western culture. I got the impression that Chinese people do not value their own culture and its economic worth. When you look at the architecture of Shanghai, it gives you the same impression as any Western city. In my experience China is not making enough use of typically Chinese traditions and artifacts like bonsai trees. It could be a wonderful tourist attraction.

The weekend after the congress we also visited Xi'an, one of the oldest main cities of

China, and although the history of the city is more Oriental and Chinese, it shows increasing signs of westernisation and modernisation.

One area where I realised we could definitely learn from the Chinese is the great emphasis they put on the education of their children – they would rather pay for their children's education than buy an expensive car. It is shocking to realise that a average Chinese family only earns about R12 000 a year.

## FIT Congress in Shanghai

From an academic point of view, the highlight at this year's FIT congress – attended by some 1 500 people – was without a doubt the four keynote speakers.

**Wu Jianmin**, former Chinese Ambassador to France, spoke on 'Respect for Others – The Key to Mutual Understanding'. He himself was an interpreter and translator and emphasised the role of these language practitioners. He mentioned that they are indispensable in intercultural exchanges. He stated that respect for others is the key to enhancing understanding between cultures and also that cultural complementarity is essential to building a harmonious world. Translators and interpreters can bridge that gap between Western and Oriental culture.

**Yohannes Mengesha**, assistant secretary-general for the UN General Assembly and Conference Management, spoke on 'United Nations Translators and Interpreters – Silent Partners in the Diplomatic Process'. He highlighted the distinctive features and special conditions of translation in a universal political institution like the UN, where cultural and linguistic diversity colour the diplomatic process and pose unique challenges to language staff. He noted that translation in such instances is not merely a job, but a calling and vocation that require translators and interpreters to be world-class professionals who are nonetheless willing to accept the lack of recognition that comes from working in the shadows of diplomatic negotiations.

The address of **Karl-Johan Lönnroth** stood out above the rest. He is Director-General for Translation at the European Commission and his address focused on 'Efficiency, Transparency and Openness: Translation in the European Union'. He highlighted among other things the development from monolingualism to multilingualism within the EU. Citizens have the right to their language in a multicultural society and this is essential to communication. Lönnroth said the future would need a renewed emphasis on regional



The keynote speakers

languages and rapid growth in the translation industry.

**Gu Yuego**, research professor of Linguistics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, delivered an address on 'The Chinese Language as a Multi-Dimensional City of History and Mystery – An Ecological Model for Knowledge Engineering'. In this model he drew a distinction between four types of discourse, viz. land-borne situated discourse, air-borne situated discourse, web-borne situated discourse and written word-borne discourse. Yuego indicated how the written word has gone over into the digital word. The model is also viable for knowledge engineering in machine translation and interpreting.

The greatest challenge was to decide which of the eleven parallel papers in the various sessions to attend. The sessions included Teaching and Training, Translation of Literature, Interpretation and Translation Studies, Localisation and Globalisation, Translation Criticism, Authors' and Publishers' Rights, Translation Standards, Publishing and Copyright, Social Science Translation, Scientific and Technical Translation, Translation and Intercultural Communication, Compilation of Dictionaries, Terminology Work as well as sessions on Translation and Interpretation Studies in Japan and China.

One of the most valuable sessions was on Teaching and Training in Translation and Interpreting, with papers on research-based teaching of translation to postgraduate students, 'extreme' translation briefs in advanced translator training, the effect of bilingual education on translators' education and authenticity in accreditation tests for interpreters in China.

The session on Multimedia Translation featured topics on the media translator as cultural mediator, adding text to image (challenges of subtitling non-verbal communication), cultural and linguistic challenges in subtitling Chinese films and bilingual opera subtitling.

A very relevant session was the one on Professional Associations and Their Management as I am currently involved with SATI's training committee as well as on the Executive of the Linguistics Society of Southern Africa. I also attended valuable sessions on terminology and methodology, referring to terminology policies and moving towards online documentation as a source of terminology, translation quality assurance and terminology management for localising software user interfaces.

The empowerment of African languages is

one of my passions and the session on translation and languages of limited diffusion was therefore of specific interest to me. The topics included the translation of African names in fiction, the importance of translated literatures in cultures and languages of limited diffusion, cultural transfer and the dilemma of community interpretation in West African Pentecostal churches.

At the previous FIT conference in Finland, the focus was mostly on language practice alone, without really acknowledging the value of academic research. I specifically appreciated the manner in which academic topics and language practice came together at this conference.

### **Kobus Marais – A differently similar world**

'You cannot always be first, but you can always be seventh.' This quote by a Chinese professor about how his mother taught him that there will always be someone brighter than you typifies my experience in China and of FIT. The experience of being amongst people who are totally different from you in almost all respect, and yet when you look at what they are doing and how they are doing it, you know that you are seventh. Not that seventh is bad. And you are grateful for being seventh, but you are nonetheless acutely aware of the fact that you are seventh.

As a translator who has to bridge cultural gaps every day, the vastness of some cultural gaps filled me with awe. It sometimes remains a wonder that we are able to interact at all across this cultural divide. It made me aware of the immensity of our task and the importance of our role and I am more convinced than ever that we should work hard on enhancing the professional image of language mediators.

I stood aghast at the smells, the noises, the houses, the food, the climate that were all totally different, that we all so foreign to me. And then I thought, hey, these people like it. They would probably feel uncomfortable at the smell of boerewors, bobotie, biltong, pap, etc. They live in this world that is totally different, but it's theirs. And despite the differences, I always found a common humanity – which is probably what makes translation possible.

What remains in my mind's eye is the four-way crossing without a stop sign on any of the sides. Buses, trucks, motorcars, motor cycles, bicycles and pedestrians crossing – zillions of them, without a traffic policeman. Just organising themselves. No road rage, no hooters –







at least not that I saw. People who have made peace with the fact that there are other people on this planet, that we have to live with one another. I saw a little of the individualism so prevalent in our society.

I am sad about the fact that so much of what is currently on view in China is a copy of the West. Shanghai could have been New York; Hong Kong could have been London. I wonder whether we still have an African identity, whether we are still proud of it, or whether we are just copying the USA.

As far as FIT is concerned, the main trend I picked up is the fact that technology is making it possible for us to move into a phase where communication will once again be holistic. With the advent of writing, communication was reduced to written texts, to a large extent. The technology of film brought back the visual and spatial dimensions of communication. In the Internet era, communication could become as natural as it was before man learned to write, or at least closer to being natural. This means that the disciplinary divide between interpreting and translation will most probably not be as strong in the world of business, because audio-visual-graphic texts will become the order of the day.

### Marion Boers – A cultural experience

When I heard there were to be 1 500 delegates at the Shanghai congress – more than twice the number at the previous one – I wondered how it was possible to organise such a large gathering. But I needn't have worried: the Chinese have proved themselves masters of organisation. That is perhaps my overriding impression of this congress. Despite the hundreds of people milling around, everything ran smoothly, sessions started and ended (fairly much) on time, food and drink appeared as and where necessary, assistants were present to deal with the

technical side of presentations. Even when the organisers were suddenly informed that they had to arrange security checks for all who entered the venue, this was done quietly and efficiently.

I also found it interesting to experience the graciousness and formality of the Chinese culture. Having been elected FIT president at the closing of the statutory congress, I was now counted among the VIPs and required to attend various formal occasions and ceremonies. Everything was carried out with great attention to detail and always the organisation was impeccable. The effect of such a long culture really shone through!

My new role came with a range of duties and so I was not able to attend as many of the sessions of the open congress as I had intended. In one way it made life easier, because the choice of presentations was mind-boggling. The plenary sessions alone made attending the congress worthwhile. The speakers were all excellent and offered both interesting content and food for thought. I did attend some interesting general presentations as well. I participated in a round-table discussion on the organisation of translators' associations, which highlighted that all associations face similar problems but also offered some interesting new ideas. Another interesting session dealt with standards, accreditation and certification. In addition, I had been asked to moderate a session on translation studies, which exposed me to fields beyond my normal range of experience, and another on professional associations and their management, which again offered food for thought.

Congresses like these are enriching experiences, both from the point of view of learning and for the networking that they offer. I salute the organisers and thank SATI for making it possible – though my participation in the FIT Council – for me to attend.



*The new FIT Council poses after the closing ceremony with the volunteers who assisted at the congress*

# A Hong Kong experience in translation

Not only did I have the opportunity to attend the FIT Congress in August 2008, but also the 2<sup>nd</sup> HCLS (Halliday Centre for Intelligent Applications of Language Studies) Conference at the City University of Hong Kong. The group was smaller (with only some 50 or 60 people) and the nature of the conference and the papers delivered more academic.

Kobus Marais and I first attended a two-day pre-conference workshop on the topic of the conference, namely *Translation, Language Contact, and Multilingual Communication*. The workshop dealt with such topics as text analysis for translation and properties of translated texts under the auspices of well-known instructors Christian Matthiessen, Erich Steiner and Elke Teich.

The Halliday Centre was named after the renowned linguist, Prof. MAK Halliday, who has enriched the discipline of linguistics with his keen insight into language and who also attended the conference. The centre's strategy is defined by its focus on the theoretical and computational modelling of meaning, and its commitment to the application of this linguistic insight in areas such as education, computer science and policy-making.

Halliday's model of discourse analysis, based on what he terms systemic functional grammar, is geared to the study of language as communication, seeing meaning in the writer's linguistic choices and systematically relating these choices to a wider sociocultural framework. In this model there is an interrelation between the surface-level realisations of the linguistic functions and the sociocultural framework. The genre (or conventional text type associated with a specific communicative function) is conditioned by the sociocultural environment and itself determines the elements in the systemic framework. The first of these is register, which is connected with a strand of meaning, forming the discourse semantics of a text.

Halliday can be said to be followed-up by another great figure, Christian Matthiessen. He chaired one of the plenary sessions and was responsible for a paper with the title 'Translation as a mode of multilingual

*Jacobus Naudé reveals some of the elements of the profession that interest an academic*

communication'. Although Matthiessen and others claim to be working with culture, they are not taking much of culture into account.

Other sub-themes featuring at the conference included the modelling of translation, translation and other forms of communication in contexts of multilingualism, translation as process and translation as product, translation and language contact, specific properties of translations as texts, the relationship of translation to other situations of multilingual communication, inter-semiotic translations involving different modalities, contrastive linguistics and translation, foreignising vs. domesticating translation, the translator's (in)visibility, natural language processing and translation and corpus-based investigations of translation.

On the last leg of our tour to China, I had the chance to visit the Chinese University of Hong Kong. This included a visit to the university's Translation Department, where they accommodate 50 students in language technology and 100 students in translation, presenting courses such as the History of Translation, Lexicography and Translation, Culture and Translation, and Translation Criticism. We also visited the Research Centre for Translation, which was founded in 1971-72. Work in the early years centred on establishing a quality publishing base for Chinese literature in English translation, with the successful launch of the journal *Renditions* in 1973 and *Renditions Books* in 1976. Its issues cover over 2 000 years of Chinese literature, from classical works of poetry, prose and fiction to their contemporary counterparts, as well as articles on art, Chinese studies and translation studies. In the 1990s the emphasis shifted more towards translation research, especially in its historical and cultural contexts in China.

The work on Translation Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong sets an important example which can be fruitfully followed in the South African context. ☺

*"The centre's strategy is defined by its focus on the theoretical and computational modelling of meaning, and its commitment to the application of this linguistic insight in areas such as education, computer science and policy-making."*

---

Article by Prof. Jacobus Naudé. Prof. Naudé heads the Department of Afroasiatic Studies, Sign Language and Language Practice at the University of the Free State.

---

# Help for sworn translators



A manual on sworn translation is available from the SA Translators' Institute

This comprehensive manual on sworn translation arose as a result of a lack of clear guidelines on exactly how sworn translators should be going about their business. Many conventions and requirements have arisen over the years, but they were not put together in a single

source. Newcomers to the profession had difficulty finding out what they were supposed to be doing.

The manual should obviate these problems. It covers all aspects of sworn translation, from the requirements to qualify as a sworn translator to details of the various conventions, in addition to containing samples of documentation commonly used in South Africa.

## Contents

1. What are sworn translators and sworn translation?
2. Legislation relating to sworn translation
3. What this means in practice
4. Your stamp and certification
5. Guidelines and conventions relating to sworn translation
6. Charging for sworn translations
7. Duties of a commissioner of oaths
8. Getting yourself known
9. Sworn/court interpreters and interpreting
10. The SATI exam for purposes of becoming a sworn translator
11. Useful resources for sworn translators

Annexure 1: Text of the Hague Convention relating to apostilles

Annexure 2: Samples of certificates issued to sworn translators

Annexure 3: Samples of stamps used by sworn translators

Annexure 4: Samples of certification statements used by sworn translators

Annexure 5: Samples of covering sheet for multiple sworn translations

Annexure 6: Covering letter for file of translated photocopies of documents for use in a court case

Annexure 7: Copy of regulations appointing sworn translators as commissioners of oaths

Annexure 8: Pro forma documents to be submitted when being sworn in

Annexure 9: Samples of common documentation

The manual is in A4 format and soft-covered, with 100 pages. It costs R120 per copy for Institute members and R180 for non-members.

To purchase a copy of the manual, contact Marion Boers on 011 803 2681 or [publications@translators.org.za](mailto:publications@translators.org.za).

# Marketing Solutions

Based on a highly successful workshop by Tina Potgieter, this book is a self-help guide to marketing your freelance business. The book teaches users to –

- assess where their business is at currently
- define exactly what their business needs are
- determine what their clients' needs are
- devise client-driven marketing strategies
- assess their competition
- determine which marketing methods work best for their business
- network successfully
- develop a practical marketing plan
- leverage themselves and build a successful business

A5 format, soft-covered, with 38 pages of excellent tips, many practical examples and implementable ideas.

Cost: R60 per copy for SATI members and R80 for non-members. To order, contact Marion Boers on 011 803 2681 or [publications@translators.org.za](mailto:publications@translators.org.za).



## Other publications

The Institute has produced a special volume to celebrate its 50th anniversary, giving an overview of SATI's history since its establishment on 25 August 1956. Copies are available from Marion Boers at R100 each.

The information on setting oneself up as a freelance language practitioner published in *Muratho* in October 2003 proved very popular and is being consolidated and issued as a stand-alone publication. It covers a range of issues and offers plenty of practical advice for those starting out in the profession. The publication date is not yet available.