



PROTEUS

*The Newsletter of
The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators*

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New York, NY

NAJIT SPONSORS REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN AUSTIN

The Regional Educational Conference will be held at the Driskill Hotel in Austin, Texas, November 12-14. The event will begin with a reception on Friday evening, November 12, with food and an open bar. Ten seminars and workshops will be held concurrently throughout the day on Saturday, with topics ranging from the application of translation theory to legal interpreting, to the new IRS laws affecting independent contractors and the agencies that employ them. Several bilingual attorneys from Mexico and the U.S. will discuss civil contracts, international law, comparative law and NAFTA, and the challenges these pose for the legal interpreter and translator. Other subjects of interest to professionals and those now entering the field will include a seminar on testifying as an expert witness, computer uses for translation of documents and tape transcriptions, specialized medical and immigration terminology, and the role of the interpreter during civil depositions.

There are no conference sessions on Sunday, November 14, when the NAJIT Board of Directors is scheduled to meet. However, the American Translators Association will be administering

accreditation exams on Sunday morning and afternoon, so conference participants can take advantage of this opportunity. NAJIT members who have not yet taken the ATA accreditation exam in their language combination are strongly encouraged to do so, as this is the only exam available to gauge a persons' skills in written translation and an important credential to have. Arrangements to register for the exam may be made by contacting the ATA directly. The Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association, which is sponsoring one of the seminars at the NAJIT conference, also plans to hold a membership meeting that weekend.

The conference has generated a great deal of enthusiasm in the Texas area, where interpreter and translator associations are actively promoting it, and many in the legal profession have announced plans to attend.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: (512) 474-5911

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:

Tel: (212) 759-4457

FAX: (212) 759-7458

**MEMBERS: \$115.00; NON-MEMBERS:
\$125.00; STUDENTS: \$75.00**

LETTER FROM THE BOARD

Dear Colleagues:

The summer months, traditionally a time for slowing down and relaxing, were busy ones for NAJIT.

Board members have been attending meetings with state and federal court administrators, as the latter are paying increasing attention to interpreting services. The National Center for State Courts invited NAJIT to attend a meeting on July 14-16 of its Ad Hoc Work Group on Court Interpreting in Williamsburg, Virginia, and David Mintz was present. A report appears on page four.

I represented NAJIT at the first meeting of the Court Interpreters Advisory Subgroup, held in Tucson, Arizona on September 8. This body, which functions under the aegis of the Court Administration Advisory Council, is composed of staff and free-lance interpreters, a court administrator and two university professors. The Subgroup is responsible for reviewing every aspect of interpreting services in the federal courts. Very fruitful initial discussions took place at the one-day meeting, which produced a mission statement and a three-point statement of goals to accomplish in the next year. Subgroup members agreed that training and education needs to be one of its primary concerns. More information on the Advisory Subgroup will appear in a future issue of *Proteus*. Its next meeting via telephone conference is scheduled for November 5.

Sam Adelo spent another successful three weeks in Tucson, Arizona, where he, along with Alee Alger-Robbins, taught at the Summer Institute for Court Interpreters. An article on the Institute, attended this year by some 65 students, also appears in this issue.

Several NAJIT members participated in the Translation Studies Research Forum held September

30 through October 2 in Brownsville, Texas. The Forum was sponsored by the University of Texas at Brownsville and organized by José Varela-Ibarra.

Janis Palma, Fritz Hensey and Dagoberto Orrantia were among the presenters, who spoke on a wide range of subjects focusing on theoretical and academic aspects of translation and interpreting. Three people attending the Forum joined NAJIT on the last day and several are planning to attend the Austin conference in November.

Many of us also attended and participated in the 34th Annual ATA Conference, held this year in Philadelphia, October 6-10.

Finally, the Board has had to make the painful but necessary decision to raise the annual dues in 1994 from \$50 to \$75. In past years, expenses remained relatively low because all the work of the association was done with volunteer labor. This was adequate for a young and inexperienced group during the initial stages of our growth. Today, however, our needs and those of people working in the field have developed to the point where we can no longer depend solely on the good will and generosity of volunteers. Overhead costs, moreover, have gone up considerably since the last dues increase.

In order to expand and professionalize the services we provide and play a significant role in developing and elevating the status of judiciary interpreting nationwide, we need a more solid financial base. We hope that additional funds will also enable us to implement much called-for educational programs, such as classes, seminars and workshops. We realize this represents a sacrifice on the part of the membership, but hope everyone will see the need to support the association's work so we can continue to grow and promote the interests of interpreters and translators everywhere.

Mirta Vidal Orrantia
Chair, Board of Directors

CORRECTING INTERPRETATION ERRORS

David Mintz

The most often cited reason for having interpreters work in teams of two is the need for periodic relief. Equally compelling, in my view, is the argument that when testimony is presented to a jury through an interpreter, you need two interpreters: one to do it, and another to make sure the first one is doing it right.

If you accept the propositions that (1) humans make mistakes, and (2) that interpreters are human, then there is no question that interpreters make mistakes. Even an interpreter with a masterful command of all the vocabulary and every nuance of both languages and impeccable technique will eventually commit some random error and fail to realize it. The question is what is going to be done about it, when, how, and by whom. I refer here not to trivial, inconsequential errors, but rather to outright errors of substance or omissions that make the interpretation substantially different from the original message. Granted that the determination of what is substantial and what is inconsequential is largely subjective; we will come back to this question in due course.)

Important as it is, this topic is rarely discussed formally. Our ethical codes tell us that when we make a mistake and realize it, we should own up to it and correct it immediately. But who is going to correct the mistakes that we make unwittingly? Sometimes the witnesses themselves have enough English to detect an error made going into English, and enough nerve and motivation to say something about it. Some other bilingual observer in the courtroom might notice the mistake, but spectators do not customarily address the court in the middle of a trial, nor do they have any standing to do so. One of the attorneys, the case agent (in federal criminal matters), or a defendant might perceive an error, but as interested parties it seems inappropriate for any of them to question the interpretation, no matter how good their good faith may be. Thus it is up to the

other interpreter to say something.

The remaining subparts of the question, then, are when and how. When you see a colleague make an outright error on the witness stand, you have several options: (1) Do nothing at all. This is not particularly helpful. (2) Do nothing, but then go around gossiping about how so-and-so screwed up -- behind so-and-so's back. This is not a very professional approach to the problem, either. (3) Wait until a break in the proceeding, approach the interpreter, and say, "The witness said x but you said y." Then you have put the obligation on the interpreter to do something. This is preferable to the first two ways of dealing with the problem, but it is not ideal. The interpreter who made the error then has the option of either keeping his or her mouth shut about it, or making a solemn confession to the judge, outside the presence of the jury, and letting the judge decide how to remedy the situation. Certainly this is not incorrect, but it has one drawback: the lawyers get into the act and make an issue out of it (that's their job). The situation can then become needlessly messy. This remedy is also belated to the extent that the testimony continued after the mistake.

The interpreter also has the option of unilaterally announcing the self-correction in open court at a later opportunity, but this might displease the judge and/or the attorneys who would have preferred to have a say in the matter of how to remedy the problem.

(4) Stand up right now and say something like "Excuse me. The testimony was..." Alternatively, stand up and say "Your Honor, could the interpreters please have a moment to confer with each other?" Then alert the other interpreter to what happened so that he or she can then say, "Interpreter's correction: the testimony was..."

In either case, the point is to rectify the problem immediately. Experience has convinced me that this is the ethically correct way to go. The longer you go on without doing anything, the more the process is distorted. If the interpreters take control of the situation by acting immediately and decisively, the damage done by the mistake is minimal, even negligible. It feels uncomfortable and strange to stand up and interrupt a trial, but that is no excuse not to do what needs to be done. The sooner you simply do it and get it over with, the sooner you can get on with the show -- free of the nagging feeling that you ought to do have done something.

(continued on page 11)

NSCS Ad Hoc Work Group on Court Interpreting Meets

The National Center for the State Courts is taking a close look at court interpreting. NCSC director Bill Hewitt invited NAJIT to send a representative to the meeting, held last July in Williamsburg, VA, of what is known as the Ad Hoc Work Group on Court Interpreting.

I was asked by the Board of Directors to attend on behalf of NAJIT. The group of about 20 people from around the country was a more or less even mix of attorneys, administrators, judges, and interpreters. The Center intends to publish a book, which should be available early in 1994, to serve as a consciousness-raiser and reference source for attorneys, legislators, administrators, etc., who wish to enact interpreter certification and other related reforms in their states. The main purpose of this meeting was to assemble some of the best talent from around the country to work on what will become some of the main components of this book.

We spent the bulk of our time divided into two groups, one of which worked on a code of ethics while the other worked on a model court interpreter certification statute. We had been provided with working drafts of each document as a point of departure.

I participated in the group that worked on the model statute. The document had commentary interspersed with each section. Our objective was to make the language as clear and concise as possible. We also wrestled with specific issues and how best to approach them; for example, whether the model should cover administrative hearings as well as court proceedings. The basis for including administrative hearings is that due process issues are as relevant here as in judicial proceedings. However, a political

problem arises in that administrative hearings are a function of the executive rather than the judiciary branch, so to cover both in the same statute would raise significant logistical and budgetary problems. The solution we opted for was to append a brief footnote.

Among the many other issues discussed was the question of having different levels of certification (e.g., a minimum entry level, perhaps another grade beyond that, and a master level) with corresponding pay scales for each. The advantage would be that interpreters would have an economic incentive to improve their skills; the disadvantage, that court managers would have an incentive to hire the less qualified but cheaper interpreters.

We had a brief session with Harry Moedinger from AT&T Language Line's marketing division. He was ostensibly there to get some feedback from experts in court interpreting about what contexts are suitable for the use of Language Line telephone interpreters. Some members of the group reported that AT&T had been aggressively marketing this service as though it were an appropriate solution for courtroom situations that call for a skilled interpreter, and told of instances where minimally trained and unscreened Language Line interpreters had been used to interpret trial testimony -- over the phone. Moedinger was given what might be described as a cordially hostile reception. He did not have many answers to questions about how AT&T screens and tests its interpreters, nor about the ratio of what AT&T charges to what it pays its interpreters.

Court interpreting services in many states are woefully inadequate, as we all know. I came away from this meeting with a clear sense that the NCSC is serious about leading the way and creating a climate conducive to improving interpreting services in the state courts. NAJIT members should be aware and supportive of the NCSC's efforts. To offer comments or request information, contact:

William Hewitt
National Center for State Courts
300 Newport Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23185.
Tel. (804)253-2000.

David Mintz, Board Member

EL ESPAÑOL CARIBEÑO: DOMINICANISMOS

Miguel Aníbal Perdomo

Hace poco leí en *Proteus* (Spring 1993) una lista de expresiones propias de la variante dialectal puertorriqueña. Muchos de esos términos llamaron mi atención porque coinciden con algunos dominicanismos o se asemejan a éstos. Las palabras *aruñar*, *asalto*, *crica*, *cundeamor*, *guardarraya*, *jobo*, *maipriola* (los dominicanos dicen *maipiola*), *pringamosa* y *tapabocina* poseen el mismo significado que en República Dominicana. Sin embargo, los siguientes términos adquieren matices diferentes o tienen otro significado: *joyo* puede aludir al sexo femenino, además del año; *pescozón* es un golpe dado específicamente en la cara, bofetada; *sorullo* se pronuncia *surullo*, y significa algo mal atado y también persona de poco carácter; *trulla* significa mucha gente, grupo; *zurruma* se pronuncia *zarruma* y significa migaja.

Las frases *Le han hecho un trabajo y por eso está salao*, *La nena está brincando cuica* y *La bendición, pai* significan exactamente lo mismo que en Puerto Rico. Igual sucede con *tener churras*, aunque los dominicanos dicen *churrias*. Respecto a *coger pon*, los dominicanos dicen *coger bola*. *Limpiar el pico* significa también asesinar, pero el término *manflorita* no se usa normalmente; su equivalente más conocido es *pájaro*.

A continuación incluyo una lista de dominicanismos, para probar qué nivel de conocimiento de éstos tienen los lectores de *Proteus*. (Las respuestas se dan en la página 7).

I. Defina o explique las siguientes palabras:

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. agentao | 17. flu | 33. macuto |
| 2. allantoso | 18. follón | 34. majarete |
| 3. bija | 19. fucú | 35. mangú |
| 4. caguasa | 20. fuñón | 36. mañoso |
| 5. cajuil | 21. gagá | 37. pajuil |
| 6. calipsos | 22. gofio | 38. patilla |
| 7. cigua | 23. guanguá | 39. pichirrí |
| 8. ciguapa | 24. guillo | 40. rebú |
| 9. chepa | 25. güira | 41. safacón |
| 10. chichí | 26. indio | 42. San Zenón |
| 11. chilata | 27. jorocón | 43. samanense |
| 12. corbejú | 28. lechosa | 44. suspiro |
| 13. crucetear | 29. limoncillo | 45. tíguere |
| 14. cuquear | 30. locrio | 46. tutumpote |
| 15. curío | 31. maco | 47. zumbador |
| 16. fiebrú | 32. macorisano | |

II. Explique el significado de:

1. Le regalaron un pancho.
2. Había un perico ripiao.
3. Los estudiantes sacaron chivos.
4. Los guardias esperan el chao.
5. José está en la papa.
6. La piña está agria.
7. Juana vino en un concho.
8. Ese carajito sí embroma.
9. Luis y Manuel se abruzaron.

III. Responda:

1. ¿Quién fue *Lilis*?
2. ¿Cómo se termina esta frase: *Compadre Pedro Juan, ___?*
3. ¿Y ésta: *La rosa cayó _____?*
4. ¿Qué es un *limpiasacos*?

The author is assistant professor of Spanish at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Research Update

LAUNDERING MONEY AND USING THE DICTIONARY

José Varela-Ibarra

The spring 1993 issue of *American Speech*, a quarterly of linguistic usage edited at Duke University and published by the University of Alabama Press for the American Dialect Society, is devoted almost exclusively to articles and reviews on legal language.

"Using Language Evidence in Money-Laundering Trials", the lead article by Roger Shuy, who teaches sociolinguistics with emphasis on the legal setting at Georgetown University, is based on tape-recorded conversations between undercover agents and alleged money launderers. "Promoting, concealing, disguising and avoiding, as specified in this code, are accomplished by means of language," writes Shuy. "If there is a crime here, it is primarily a language crime."

Shuy raises issues of particular interest to judiciary interpreters. For instance, how would you translate *This money we're doing right now?* "Do is a dummy verb, a substitute for virtually any specific or explicit verb," says Shuy. "Equally ambiguous is the agent's use of we." The solution offered by Shuy is to contextualize the "hard parts" with the rest of the conversation. "The analyst's [for us, the interpreter's] need to derive meaning, actual or suggested, requires understanding of the larger context of discourse meaning."

Topic is the most crucial unit of measure in a conversation, according to Shuy. Other analytical procedures include response analysis (how speakers respond to topics) and speech act analysis (the ways people use language to accomplish things). For examples of how Shuy has used these methods in actual court cases, his previous articles should be consulted; they appear in Robert W. Rieber and William A. Stewart, eds., *The Language Scientist as an Expert Witness* (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1990).

The second article, "Evaluating Jury Comprehension of Illinois Capital-Sentencing Instructions" by Judith N. Levi, co-editor of *Language in the Judicial Process* (1990), is of value to beginners who think they are doing poorly educated defendants a favor by lowering legal register to a colloquial level that can be more easily understood. As Janis Palma so aptly put it at the recent Translation Studies Research Forum (University of Texas at Brownsville, 1993), such an act is really damaging to a defendant who would then

be presumed to have understood the higher legal register used by the lawyers or the judge.

"When Judges Use the Dictionary" by Lawrence Solan, the author of *The Language of Judges* [a review appears on p.], is also of value to interpreters. Using an example of a drug dealing case, Solan comes to the conclusion that the majority opinion in the Supreme Court has misused the dictionary. Eli Weinstein, an excellent interpreter and inspiring teacher of interpreting who has since passed away, used to tell the anecdote of a judge who would not accept her rendition of *chiva* as heroin because, after all, the dictionary said, and everyone knew, that a *chiva* was a female goat.

Jeffrey P. Kaplan, a linguist from San Diego State University, applies linguistics to discourses subject to legal interpretation in his article "Syntax in the Interpretation of Legal Language: The Vested versus Contingent Distinction in Property Law." After an analysis that the lay person may find hard to follow, he concludes that "the incomprehensibility of some legal discourses comes from semantic rules of interpretation that apply to particular syntactic structures, which is much more than saying that these legal discourses are incomprehensible because of mere lexical or syntactic properties." Those who think that all they have to do is get a "good dictionary" to "learn the terminology" would do well to read this article carefully.

The last article of interest to judiciary interpreters and translators is "If the Wages of Sin are for Death: The Semantics and Pragmatics of a Statutory Ambiguity," by Ronald R. Butters, which discusses a case involving a cocaine deal gone sour because of "short money." Butters has a book in progress on *Forensic Linguistics: Case Studies in Language and Law*.

The books reviewed in this issue are: *Legal and Ethical Issues in Surreptitious Recording* by Donald W. Larmouth et al. (U of Alabama P., 1992); *The Language Scientist as Expert in the Legal Setting: Issues in Forensic Linguistics*, mentioned above, *Language in the Judicial Process*, edited by Judith N. Levi and Anne Graffam Waler (New York: Plenum, 1990), and *Language Crimes: The Use and Abuse of Language Evidence in the Courtroom* by Roger Shuy (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993).

For judiciary interpreters and translators, this is an outstanding issue of *American Speech*. Let us hope *Proteus* readers will peruse this journal in their nearby friendly public or university library or, even better, subscribe to it.

The author teaches translation at the University of Texas at Brownsville. He welcomes information on research in translation and interpretation, particularly in the judiciary context. Address: José Varela-Ibarra, Modern Languages, UT-Brownsville, 80 Fort Brown, Brownsville, TX 78520 or FAX (512) 982-0115.

On a Clear Day You Can Get Confounded

Nancy Festinger

The Language of Judges

Lawrence M. Solan

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993

217 pp.

In a precedent-driven legal system, rulings of the recent and not-so-recent past become the cornerstone of legal theory and argument. These rulings, made on the trial, appeals or Supreme Court level, inform the everyday decisions of a judge and make up a body of knowledge that jurists and attorneys draw from at will. The provisions of the constitution and laws are continuously interpreted and re-interpreted in the context of a particular, and always unique, set of facts. In every case opposing sides offer conflicting interpretations of specific statutory or contractual language deemed crucial to their side; but when the roar of argument dies down, the judge's ruling remains.

A jury resolves questions of fact; a judge interprets the law. When judges look to the law itself they are often called upon to resolve questions of meaning and context. To do this, don't they perform a kind of linguistic analysis? In scrutinizing specific language to glean legislative intent, to what extent do judges rely on their own or other expert knowledge? What rules govern the interpretation of legal language, and are they uniformly applied? Is there any consistency in the determination of what constitutes clarity of expression? What if any external considerations affect judges' decisions on linguistic matters?

If you are seeking cogent answers to these and other nagging questions, *The Language of Judges* is required reading. Happily, it also represents the best kind of scholarship: a laser-like, thoroughly researched and readable treatment of a complex subject, the language of the law, i.e., English in all its guises.

Mincing no words, the author focuses on the times when "linguistics enters the scene as one of a number of crutches on which judges can rely to help make their decisions appear both definitive and neutral when candor is more difficult or risky." His bold

inquiry ranges over linguistics, philosophy and the critical thinking approach to legal studies. Where else could one find under the same cover Chomsky, Wittgenstein and RICO, together with a thorough discussion of pronouns? The very names of the chapters are a clarion call to order: "Chomsky and Cardozo: Linguistics and the Law," "The Judge as Linguist," "Stacking the Deck," "When the Language is Clear," "Too Much Precision," "Some Problems with Words: Trying to Understand the Constitution," and "Why It Hasn't Gotten Any Better."

The second chapter discusses interpretive principles such as "the last antecedent rule" and other legal doctrines which guide judicial decisions. For general background it highly useful to interpreters. As the cases and rulings analyzed amply demonstrate, these "principles" in fact function as preliminary guidelines and not indeterminate rules. When a judge needs to identify which of several countervailing principles apply to a given situation, theory does not provide an answer. Little wonder that on a clear day you can get confounded.

Multiple interpretations abound of even relatively simple sentences, for language is fraught with ambiguity in the original, let alone in translation. Chapter 3 deals mainly with the rule of lenity, which calls for a narrow interpretation -- "strict construction" -- of criminal statutes. This rule holds that any ambiguity is to be resolved in favor of the defendant. Thus, for the rule to be triggered, it first must be determined that something in the statute qualifies as ambiguous. The debates surrounding the rule of lenity serve the author as the perfect launching pad for exploring issues of multiple interpretations. In later chapters, Solan examines in great detail what he calls the fuzzy borders of language, the grey areas of meaning and intent that are the daily bread of speakers and writers of any language. One should not be surprised to find that ambiguity thrives as much in the courtroom as it does in human affairs. This, by the way, is the main reason why interpreters cannot and should not clarify or "clean up" anyone's speech. Ambiguity, too, should be preserved where it appears.

How accurate is the perception voiced by experienced judiciary interpreters that language issues are needlessly complicated on some occasions and foolishly ignored on others? Close to the mark, as it turns out.

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LETTERS

Estimados Colegas:

Para nosotros sería un gran placer poder intercambiar información con la NAJIT sobre las diferentes actividades vinculadas con la traducción y la interpretación que mi Centro y otras instituciones cubanas se encuentran promoviendo.

Quizás las más importantes en estos últimos meses han sido las EXPOLINGUA HABANA de 1992 y 1993, evento que organizamos todos los años en la segunda quincena de abril. En la de 1992, uno de los simposios estuvo dedicado al análisis de la formación y superación de profesores de lenguas extranjeras y de traductores e intérpretes, y otro abordó los temas de la terminología y la terminografía.

En la edición de este año, en varios simposios se abordó el tema de la traducción y la interpretación. Entre éstos se encuentran el dedicado a la comunicación intercultural, y el que analizó el tema de las lenguas en los negocios y la industria. En esta ocasión se llevó a cabo también un simposio sobre lexicografía.

Hemos publicado recientemente un libro, *Actas, Selección de Ponencias de EXPOLINGUA HABANA '92*, que recoge 70 de las más de cien ponencias presentadas en el evento del pasado año, en las 600 páginas que abarca cada ejemplar. Los que estuvieran interesados pudieran solicitarlo directamente a nuestro Centro o a la casa editorial alemana que tuvo a su cargo la impresión, y cuya dirección es : Freies Buch Verlag, TulbeckstraSe 4, 80339, Munich, Germany.

En la edición de 1994 de este evento, se han incluido varios simposios que abordan el tema de la traducción: El Mercado Internacional de la Traducción, y La Traducción y la Edición de Libros, además de los simposios que analizarán la lexicografía, las lenguas y la computación, la comunicación intercultural, y las lenguas y los medios de difusión y el turismo. El evento sesionará entre el 19 y el 24 de abril en La Habana.

Sería un altísimo honor y placer poder darles la bienvenida en La Habana a los estimables colegas de la NAJIT con motivo de este evento.

Deseo informar que mi Centro ha elaborado un *Directorio Nacional de Centros de Traducción Científica y Técnica* -- puesto que es nuestra principal línea de trabajo -- que recoge la dirección de 286 centros que realizan este trabajo en Cuba, según

datos de finales de 1991.

En el mes de noviembre se celebrará una Conferencia de Traducción Literaria, que tendrá carácter internacional.

En estos momentos nos encontramos muy atareados en los preparativos para la próxima creación de la Asociación Cubana de Traductores e Intérpretes, que pensamos puede quedar oficialmente constituida este verano.

Con saludos cordiales,

JOSE FRANCISCO VALES, Director
Centro de Traducciones y Terminología Especializada
Apartado Postal 2014, Código Postal 10200
La Habana, Cuba

THE LANGUAGE OF JUDGES

(continued from page 7)

Particularly pungent is the examination of the dual function of judges, who not only make decisions but are obliged to justify them. While recognizing that judges generally take pains to weigh the wisdom of their decisions, Solan highlights inconsistent applications of the same doctrine and the paucity of language-related rulings that make linguistic sense.

When the doctrine fails to provide an answer to a dispute, judges are under pressure to make it appear as if the doctrine does provide an answer... As long as [this situation] remains, the gap between decision making and rhetoric in hard cases will continue to exist, perhaps widening as the ever growing body of statutes and decisions makes it increasingly convenient to justify any decision reached... What makes the matter worse is that when judges choose to rely on linguistic argumentation to justify their decisions, incoherence will quickly become the rule -- not the exception. (p.177)

One comes away from this study with a deeper understanding of how language controversies in the courts are sometimes pressed into the service of other goals. That these other goals are often laudable does not take away from the impression that judges are far from effective in distinguishing the wheat from the chaff of linguistic issues.

The multidisciplinary scope of the work makes it a rare find. Your reference library is not really with it without it. One can always hope that in the future someone will undertake a similarly inspired study of rulings based on issues of foreign language interpretation.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Report from Arizona

A. Samuel Adelo

The 1993 Summer Institute for Court Interpretation was held at the University of Arizona campus in Tucson for its tenth year. Over the last ten years 600 students from nearly every state, and as far away as Australia, Mexico and Europe, have attended the intensive Spanish/English interpreter training course. Many returned to the Institute over the last ten years in order to continue improving their skills.

In celebration of its tenth anniversary, special ceremonies were held for the 1993 graduation. The Hon. Margaret O'Toole of the Compensation Courts of New South Wales, Australia, delivered the keynote address. Richard M. Martínez, Chief Counsel of the Arizona Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's Office, also spoke.

The 1993 faculty members included Frank Almeida, Linda Haughton, Laury Murphy, Sara Krauthamer, Joyce García and myself. Our newest faculty member was Alee Alger-Robbins.

This year the Institute included new lectures on issues relating to areas and topics such as Nafta, DNA fingerprinting and expanded video training for legal procedure. A new lecture on language varieties was so successful that there are plans to expand it for next year. Other training aids included the Washington State Courts video and a federal court visit.

This year the Summer Institute designed a joint effort with the New Mexico state courts to train and certify Navajo interpreters. Two federally certified Navajo interpreters interned at the Institute in anticipation of developing a training institute based upon our model. Alyse Neundorf and Esther Yazzie attended many of the labs and lectures, observed training, participated in faculty preparation meetings and received as much material as possible during the two week period. We are looking forward to seeing the policy, training and experience of the Summer Institute incorporated into a Navajo institute for New Mexico state court interpreters.

Further information about the Summer Institute can be obtained by contacting Dr. Roseann Dueñas González, Modern Languages Building, Room 445, University of Arizona, Tucson AZ 85721. Tel. (602) 621-3615 or FAX (602) 624-8130.

CORRECTING ERRORS

(continued from page 3)

Some may object to embarrassing a colleague. The counterargument is that a responsible colleague will be grateful for the correction, not resentful. If on the other hand the interpreter has a fragile ego, too bad. The accuracy of the interpretation comes first.

Another difficulty arises if the interpretation is so replete with howlers that you would have to interrupt every two minutes to keep the record straight. In that case, the problem is more basic than having to correct the occasional error: such interpreters have no business being up on the witness stand, and that is a different issue from the one that concerns us here.

To return to the question of deciding what constitutes a substantial error: is it the interpreter's place to make that judgement? Yes, because we have no other choice. Nobody else in the courtroom bears the responsibility for the accuracy of the interpretation. Yes, you use your judgement, and your instincts. When you are certain that you heard something wrong, and you get a feeling of unease, that is your ethical sense telling you to do something.

By way of examples, here are two stories about a recent drug conspiracy trial in which I worked for several weeks. There were a number of witnesses who testified in Spanish, so the interpreters had to be onstage for a cumulative total of perhaps 25 hours. Thus the occasional error was virtually inevitable; I watched and heard an extremely capable colleague translate a subordinate clause that came at the end of a long statement: "porque fue [Fulano] el que había entregado el dinero." She interpreted it as "because [Fulano] was the one who had collected the money." The semantic discrepancy is both basic and obvious; something had to be done. I stood up and said, "Pardon me. 'Because [Fulano] was the one who had delivered the money.'" My instantaneous judgement was that yes, this was a substantial error: it was important that the jury hear this witness' testimony about who had delivered the drug money to whom. We went on from there, and it was not a big deal.

Later in the same trial I watched a colleague interpret some testimony about how the witness had come to know one of the other people involved in the case: "yo lo conocía porque los colombianos jugábamos fútbol los domingos ahí en el parque, y fue ahí que lo conocí." When this interpreter rendered *fútbol* as *football*, I let it go, although I was certain that the witness meant *soccer*. At this point in the trial it was clear that the game the Colombians played in the park on Sundays was not an issue and not worth interrupting the proceeding.

In many cases the decision is not nearly so easy. Again, one has to do the only thing one can do: rely on one's judgement and gut reaction. By working together in an attitude of mutual respect and support, correcting one another's errors immediately rather than later or not at all, interpreters will do a better job than would otherwise be possible. In the process, they will earn the respect and gratitude of everyone in the courtroom who relies on their accuracy.

Items of Interest

The Professional Association of Translators and Interpreters of Puerto Rico and the Graduate Program in Translation of the University of Puerto Rico will hold the Second Symposium on Translation: Terminology and Lexicography in Ponce, Puerto Rico, February 19-21, 1994. The organizing committee welcomes panel and round table presentations on all aspects of terminology and lexicography. Deadline for submissions: December 31, 1993. Address: APTI, Apartado Postal 22723, San Juan, PR 00931. Tel. (809)268-4187; FAX (809)261-5863.

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The American Judicature Society is drafting a proposal for a two-day national conference on the deaf and hard-of-hearing in the courts. One of the major areas of interest focuses on interpretation issues. Seth S. Andersen, Program Staff Associate, is currently contacting experts in the field and organizations that represent court interpreters to get input for their project.

One of their main concerns lies in addressing the diversity of communication methods favored by different segments of the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities. The judges and court administrators who will be attending the proposed conference need to be informed of this diversity in order to successfully accommodate all hearing-impaired individuals who come before their courts.

If you would care to become involved in this project, write or call Mr. Andersen so he can send you a copy of their proposal. Address: Seth S. Andersen, Program Staff Associate, American Judicature Society, 25 East Washington, Suite 1600, Chicago, IL 60602 Tel. (312)558-6900.

A test for court interpreters working in Haitian Creole, Portuguese and/or Spanish is now available in New Jersey, according to a recent memorandum issued by Robert Joe Lee, Chief, Court Interpreting, Legal Translating and Bilingual Services Section for

that state. Anyone who wishes to take any of these tests should complete an application form. Mr. Lee points out that those who have taken the Spanish court interpreter screening test but have not passed it should be advised that there is always the opportunity to retake the exam. Address: Robert Joe Lee, Court Interpreting Section, CN-988, Trenton, NJ 08625 FAX 609-633-1286.

DOMINICANISMOS

(continued from page 5)

Answer Key

I. 1. vanidoso, presumido; 2. jactancioso, mentiroso; 3. achiote; 4. planta de la familia de la pasionaria; 5. planta anacardácea (cashew); 6. cierto tipo de calzado, de material sintético; 7. pájaro; 8. mujer mitológica, con los pies al revés; 9. casualidad; 10. bebé; 11. pequeña cantidad de dinero; 12. peludo; 13. pasar repetidamente por el mismo lugar; 14. provocar; 15. conejillo de indias, cobaya; 16. fanático; 17. traje formal de hombre; 18. ventosidad; 19. maleficio, fatalidad; 20. molesto; 21. baile de origen haitiano; 22. maíz tostado y molido con azúcar; 23. brujería; 24. brazalete; 25. instrumento musical típico; 26. persona de color oscuro, moreno; 27. persona poderosa; 28. papaya; 29. pequeña fruta ácida, quenepa, yerba aromática; 30. arroz amarillo con carne; 31. sapo; 32. natural de San Pedro de Macorís; 33. mochila de campesino; 34. postre de maíz; 35. plátano verde majado con aceite y agua; 36. ladrón; 37. niño mimado; 38. sandía; 39. parte del pollo, rabadilla; 40. pleito; 41. cesto de la basura; 42. nombre de un ciclón; 43. natural de Samaná; 44. dulce de huevo y azúcar; 45. muchacho de la calle, pilluelo; 46. hombre muy rico; 47. colibrí

II. 1. Le regalaron ropa usada; 2. Había un conjunto típico; 3. Los estudiantes estaban copiando de sus libros durante el examen, hacían trampa; 4. Están esperando la comida; 5. disfrutar de buena situación económica; 6. La situación económica anda mal; 7. Llegó en taxi; 8. Ese niño molesta mucho; 9. plátanos verdes fritos y arroz con frijoles; 10. pelearon, se fueron a los puños.

III. 1. Así se apodaba el dictador Ulises Heureaux. 2. "baile el jaleo": así comienza un merengue muy popular; 3. "en el agua": primer verso de una conocida rima infantil; 4. un adulador, un buscador de prebendas; 5. a cualquier persona de cabellos claros.



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