



# THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

## ENGLISH AROUND THE GLOBE

Review by Gigi Branch-Shaw

**O**n a summer flight between the west and east coasts, I had the opportunity to read the New York Times book review of Robert McCrum's book *Globish How the English Language Became the World's Language*. Crossing the country, on a plane full of vacationing foreigners seemed an appropriate place to ponder languages and Roy Blount's review "One World, One Voice."

Mr. Blount begins off his review of McCrum's 321-page book on a positive note, taking pleasure in the author's attention to the development of the English language. He delights in the author's connection to 14th century terms such as *everyman* and *true commons*, whose meanings still ring today. Alas, for those who are interested in languages and linguistic development, the review contains no other such references. This may come as a surprise for those who are familiar with *The Story of English*, an extremely comprehensive biography on the English language, which was coauthored by McCrum.

*Globish* emphasizes the present and future more than to the past and focuses on cultural, historical and political factors that have helped to spread and sustain the English language around the globe. Much of this four-page review touches on McCrum's explanation of how the English language obtained its dominating role, why its linguistic presence continues to be strong, and why this bulwark position is secure for the future.

It all started with the once powerful and far-reaching British Colonial Empire, which commanded from the isolated British Isles, introduced English on four continents. No doubt American political, corporate and cultural entities have more that done their part to infiltrate the remaining continents and to cross more

borders. And today, other players, even non-English speaking ones, such as China, Russia or Japan, use English in their own political and financial dealings with other non-English speaking ones countries.

Blount lists a number of political ironies that McCrum notes are responsible for spreading the language, despite the intention of political powers. For example, the fact that the American Revolution reduced the size of the British Empire, but greatly expanded the language potential or the cold-war propaganda that helped to introduce and perhaps even glamorize English across previously unwelcome borders. He even cites the fact that the detachment of the W. Bush administration actually had "a positive effect [on the spread of English] because a global information network, and a global market, require a global language, but one that is not, overtly, the instrument of empire."

While these points may be debatable, the fact that the English language dominates the globe isn't. To quote Blount, it has become "the world's lingua franca" or in McCrum's words, "the worldwide dialect of the third millennium." This linguistic stronghold is fortified by the dominating presence of English on the Internet and the

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In general, articles and other submissions should be limited to around 1500 words. All text should be submitted as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word format. In case of previously published submissions, please advise us of this fact at the time of submission. ■

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broadcasting airways of international news and sports, in multinational corporate boardrooms and instant communications, and through global marketing and mass consumerism. And here we come to the premise of the book: English or what McCrum refers to as “Globish, a world dialect, will be less a language, more a means to an end.”

What exactly does McCrum mean by Globish? “Globish” is a term that was trademarked in 2004 by Jean-Paul Nerrière, a former French marketer. Nerrière wanted to develop an international English communication system that could be used between both native speakers, such as English, American, Australian, etc, and non-native ones around the globe. Using on a subset of 1500 English words, simplified grammar, and linguistic terms familiar to many non-native speakers, Nerrière created Globish.

McCrum quotes the prime minister of Singapore: “Speaking good English does not mean using bombastic words or adopting an artificial English or American accent. We can speak in a normal Singapore tone, which is neutral and intelligible.” While in McCrum’s point of view, Globish is “neutral and intelligible,” Blount brushes Globish off as “a pipe dream.”

Certainly for language service providers and those who work with languages, the concept of Globish seems simplistic and superficial. Could a viable translation and/or interpretation job be done well when limited to a 1500-word vocabulary? Naturally it

would depend on the depth or richness of the language needed to convey the message. But there is no doubt that the richness and color of the language would suffer.

McCrum quotes the prime minister of Singapore: “Speaking good English does not mean using bombastic words or adopting an artificial English or American accent. We can speak in a normal Singapore tone, which is neutral and intelligible.” While in McCrum’s point of view, Globish is “neutral and intelligible,” Blount brushes Globish off as “a pipe dream.”

McCrum does acknowledge that the practice of globalizing of English will water it down. He cites an example of how the sheer number of non-English speakers could influence a market, such as publishing, where a *Globish* prose could threaten the quality of the writing for those who cherish the language over the content. This idea doesn’t seem so farfetched when

we consider how many products today are catered to the taste of the masses.

I was glad to read Blount’s review rather than McCrum’s book. For one thing, it was much shorter, but still alerted me to the very unattractive idea of a simplified, globalized English. Secondly, I have to say that I felt more aligned with the reviewer’s thoughts on the subject than the author’s. I certainly hope that if McCrum’s vision of this abbreviated neutral version of my mother tongue is to be, that it be limited to corporate boardrooms and advertisements on the Internet and television. In any case, it would be a real tragedy for a language that has evolved over the past seven hundred years. I wonder what Shakespeare would say? ■

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Gigi Branch-Shaw is a freelance Fr>En translator who specializes in marketing and editorial translations. She also works as a contributing writer and content manager for online projects. She lives in New York City and is a regular contributing writer for The Gotham Translator, as well as a member of NYCT’s Editorial Committee.



**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

The New York Circle of Translators in collaboration with New York University – School of Continuing and Professional Studies proudly present

**THE SECOND SUSANA GREISS ANNUAL WORKSHOP**

Saturday, October 02 and Sunday, October 03, 2010

Time: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Place: Woolworth Building – Room 430

15 Barclay St. at Broadway across from City Hall, Public Assembly Room  
New York City, New York

Confirmed speakers are: Agnes Meilhac, Jon Ritzdorf ,  
Ellen Sowchek, Jonathan Hine.

See page 13 for more information.

# Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the Translation and Interpreting Programs at NYU-SCPS

by Agnes Meilhac

New York University's School of Continuing and Professional Studies offers four different professional certificate programs in Translation, Medical Interpreting, Court Interpreting and French to English Simultaneous Interpreting.

New York University's School of Continuing and Professional Studies offers four different professional certificate programs in Translation, Medical Interpreting, Court Interpreting and French to English Simultaneous Interpreting.

The approach is hands-on with a strong emphasis on training entry-level translators capable of handling assignments and turning out a professional product. Training is geared to prepare students for the present-day practice of translation, which implies collaborating with agencies, editors, proofreaders, project managers, etc. Introduction to CAT and TM tools is part of the curriculum. According to Eve Hecht, a long-time faculty member who teaches German-to-English translation, "A major aim is to instill confidence and to give the beginning translator resources to turn to when he/she begins working independently."

Classes are small (limited to 16 students but often topping out at 12) and allow participants to build ongoing relationships through online forums, live chats and assignments, which they work on in pairs. Since the students often take several courses together throughout the program, they are able to form networks that prove useful in subsequent job searching. A significant por-

tion of the student body is from non-English-speaking countries, providing precious feedback for the benefit of their American classmates.

Eve Hecht further noted that "The online format lends itself particularly well to the teaching of translation. It allows students to research their answers to questions posed and to add additional questions or comments on the lesson as the week progresses." Online learning can also easily fit any work schedule, attracting many students who are already employed or have small children.

Ultimately, students enrolling in a program to earn a translation or interpreting certificate are clearly showing prospective clients that they are willing to go the extra mile to stand out from the crowd. They acquire valuable skills and present themselves as professionals. As Eve Hecht so aptly put it, "that is a common goal of both the ATA/NYCT and of NYU."

## CERTIFICATE IN TRANSLATION

The NYU-SCPS Certificate in Translation can be earned in one of seven language pairs or in general translation. All programs are offered online only, except for English to

Spanish and General Translation, which are offered both on-site and online.

The program is a fully hands-on experience intended to provide students with the skills required of professional translators. Course work consists of the analysis and translation of documents related to the subject under study. Students are introduced to specific translation approaches and typical problems encountered during the translation

process. Instructors also address issues of style, terminology and specialized reference materials.

The department provides internship opportunities for students having completed five courses with an average of B+ or better. Interns are placed with a variety of companies requiring the services of language industry professionals: law firms, publishers,

media organizations, nonprofit organizations, translation agencies and sometimes even with freelance translators.

## CERTIFICATE IN MEDICAL INTERPRETING

The 160-hour curriculum designed for this certificate is intended to train entry-level medical interpreters in Spanish or Chinese to meet the needs of doctor's offices, hospi-

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*Completing a certificate in NYU's Translation Studies Program opened up a new career for me, one which has proven to be challenging, profitable and always fascinating. And after 11 years of teaching in the program, I am still as happy as the students are when they email to tell me that they've gotten their first 'big' job.*

– Anne Hecht

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tals, emergency rooms and medical facilities. Candidates for this program must pass an oral exam to prove their proficiency in English and Spanish or Chinese.

The program consists of four required courses taken in sequence: the prerequisite Introduction to Medical Interpreting, Medical Terminology for Interpreters, Consecutive Medical Interpreting and Clinical Internship (40 hours of medical interpreting in a real-life health care setting, including interpreting assignments in local hospitals).

The goals of this program are to provide students with interpreting skills and experience through a clinical internship. Students also gain knowledge of English medical terminology and receive ethics and confidentiality training. They learn the rules of professional conduct in various clinical settings and prepare for work in hospitals.

### **CERTIFICATE IN COURT INTERPRETING: SPANISH/ENGLISH**

The Certificate in Court Interpreting has been developed to provide professional

training to those preparing for careers in judiciary interpreting. It is particularly of interest to anyone planning on taking the federal or state court interpreters examinations.

Students must complete six courses within four years with an average grade of B or better to obtain the certificate. The six mandatory courses are: Fundamentals of Court Interpreting (prerequisite), Court Procedures, Consecutive Interpreting, Simultaneous Interpreting I and II, and Translation for Interpreters.

The skills learned in the prerequisite course include understanding the role and function of the court interpreter (including ethical issues), identifying reference materials and preparing glossaries. The course also addresses translation theories and approaches, sight translation, note-taking skills, consecutive interpreting and simultaneous interpreting. It serves as a preparation for subsequent, more in-depth course work, which covers specific interpreting techniques and skills, including shadowing, paraphrasing, decalage, queuing, dual-task

control training and voice control.

### **CERTIFICATE IN FRENCH TO ENGLISH SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING**

Designed for individuals with a mastery of both French and English, this program offers 80 contact hours delivered in an intensive four-week format. All prospective students must pass an oral entrance exam (telephone interview) to determine their linguistic competence in both languages and general cultural preparation. The completion of this course ensures that students have entry level skills in: Conference simultaneous interpreting, Using simultaneous interpreting equipment and Relaying.

The NYU-SCPS Translation and Interpreting Certificate programs and individual translation courses count as continuing education points toward maintaining American Translators Association (ATA) accreditation. Students are also eligible for the ATA's reduced-price student membership. ■

## **CIRCLE NEWS**

### **NYC MEETINGS**

All meetings start at 6:30 PM and end at 8:00 PM with dinner at a nearby restaurant. Check website for details. Please e-mail the Program Director at [NYCTProgramDirector@gmail.com](mailto:NYCTProgramDirector@gmail.com) if you plan to attend a meeting.

#### **September 2010 Meeting**

Tuesday, September 21, 2010

ANSI Center 25 W. 43rd Street New York, NY 10036

RSVP Date: Monday, September 20, 2010

Description: Jeffe Nunner from the agency Tipping Sprung will be speaking. There will be a dinner following the meeting. The details for the dinner will be posted soon.

#### **Susana Greiss Workshop 2010**

Saturday, October 2 and Sunday, October 3

Time: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Woolworth Building - Room 430

15 Barclay St. at Broadway across from City Hall, Public Assembly Room

New York City, New York

## Interview With the Academic Program Director

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**M**ilena Savova, Ph.D., is the academic program director for Foreign Languages, Translation, and Interpreting Programs. She has more than 30 years of experience teaching linguistics, translation theory and practice and foreign languages at the university level, developing curriculum, conducting research and supervising student research. Additionally, she has broad experience in educational administration, program development, marketing and constituency development.

The Gotham Translator decided to ask her about the program to get a first-hand feel of its benefits and advantages to both novice translation and interpreting students and already working language professionals.

**The Gotham Translator:** When were the Translation and Interpreting Certificate Programs created? Were they originally part of the NYC-SCPS foreign languages offering? Can you give us a quick history?

**Milena Savova:** The NYU translation program was started in 1984 by a group of dedicated New York translators, all members of the NY Circle. Thus, our close ties with the circle go back a long time. Initially it was only in Spanish, French and German and there were no special programs or courses dedicated to, say, Spanish as a source or target language. The court interpreting program was launched in 1995 and the medical interpreting one in 2004. Last year we started a summer intensive certificate in French to English simultaneous interpreting. All of these programs have always been part of the Department of Foreign Languages at SCPS. However it was a much smaller department in those days.

**The Gotham Translator:** Approximately how many students register every year in the different programs?

**Milena Savova:** At present we have seven translation certificates, two in medical interpreting, one each in court and simultaneous interpreting. We have a total of 503 students.

We have about 460 enrollments per semester in fall and spring semesters and about 240 in the summer. The largest number of students is in translation.

**The Gotham Translator:** Are your students predominantly freshly-minted language majors, already working language professionals or others looking for a change in career?

**Milena Savova:** I would say that our students are predominantly working adults who are looking to change careers or embark on a new career. We also have working translators with varying degrees of experience. Some are even members of the ATA. We do have some recent college graduates or even students. SCPS has a joint initiative with the NYU College of Arts and Science (CAS) called "Professional Edge", whereby juniors and seniors can take our translation or interpreting programs and earn a certificate which is attached to their diplomas. Those students need to meet all admissions requirements and perform all coursework. This is at no cost to them.

**The Gotham Translator:** Would you say that the Translation and Interpreting Programs are predominantly committed to providing hands-on learning and tangible professional skills (although based on essential exposure to theory)? What is the share of translation / interpretation theory in the coursework?

**Milena Savova:** The focus of the program is more on practice than on theory although

theory is not excluded. The certificate requires the completion of six one-semester courses. The courses are relatively short, once a week for 12 weeks (on site) and 10 weeks online, thus there is no time to introduce a great deal of theory. Instructors try to strike a balance between the two while leaning more toward practice. Colleagues and prospective students who have a greater interest in theory (as well as practice) might want to know that in fall 2011 we are launching a Master of Science in Translation in Spanish or French into English. The Master's will preserve our pragmatic edge and build upon the experience we have gained through the certificate programs.

**The Gotham Translator:** What are the leading benefits to your students while in the program and after obtaining their certificate?

**Milena Savova:** The top two benefits are (a) that they receive training (because too many translators and interpreters still work without having been trained) and (b) that they are taught by practicing translators and interpreters who bring work from their desks and invaluable expertise from the field. We seek to hire the best in the field. Often instructors pass work on to their students before they have completed the certificates. Our training is "from soup to nuts": we teach them translation, discuss the business aspects of it, and guide them through their first steps in the profession. Not least of all we encourage them to join the NY Circle of Translators and the ATA.

We also organize free events open to the public with panelists from leading translation companies as well as freelance and in-house translators and interpreters. The events are videotaped and posted on our web site for viewing by our students away from New York and the public at large. Another advantage is that during their studies students form bonds which last beyond the completion of the programs.

**The Gotham Translator:** Why did you choose the online study format for some of your courses? Can you describe how it works?

**Milena Savova:** All of our translation certificates are now online. We started with a single course in 1998 when the school was developing its first online courses. The thinking was that as a written activity translation lends itself to online instruction. We were not wrong. The second reason was that in some programs such as German to English we were not getting too many students from New York and had it not been for the online format that program might have been extinct by now. Transferring it online gave it a new life and it has been flourishing.

I never thought that we would reach a point when we would be offering all programs online. However, with the advent of the internet and all electronic communications the on-site courses fizzled out and we had no option but to go fully online. We do have a few generic translation courses on site in CAT Tools and subtitling. It is considered that those are better taught on site.

The online courses are ten weeks, one week being equivalent to one session. Most of the work is done asynchronously: for example, threaded forum discussions, group and individual communication with the instructor, reviewing syllabi and assignments,

doing homework and submitting it electronically. The only synchronous components are periodic audio chat sessions. Unlike many other online courses around the country ours include active instructor involvement.

**The Gotham Translator:** How would you sum up the benefits of your program to already established translators or interpreters? How does the program cater to the needs of both young graduates and seasoned professionals?

**Milena Savova:** The world of translation has changed dramatically in the last ten or fifteen years. Learning on the job is no longer an option for most future translators. Clients and companies like to see credentials. A number of established translators take our courses because they wish to have a document that shows that they have been trained. Others take them in order to expand their portfolios and become skilled in areas other than their initial expertise. Some wish to become more expert at using today's technologies and their applications to translation.

In court interpreting, the reasons are often that professionals wish to gain more practice before taking the state or federal certification examinations. Medical interpreting is still an emerging profession and by having a certificate people can stand out in the pool.

**The Gotham Translator:** Can you tell us a little bit about your faculty?

**Milena Savova:** I am very proud of our faculty. All are practicing translators and interpreters at the top of their fields. This means not just quality but access to a wide range of authentic documents that they bring to the (virtual) classroom (after obtaining permission from their clients.) We have

instructors from the world of free-lance professionals, in-house, project managers, etc.

**The Gotham Translator:** How long have you been the program's academic director and what type of challenges did you face when you first started out. What are your plans for the future?

**Milena Savova:** I started in this position on September 1, 1996. It was a different world back then. I remember that we had some students who didn't know how to use a computer and we referred them to courses for that. It was still acceptable to turn in hand-written homework, although we changed that a semester or two later. The court interpreting program had just finished its first year and we had to build a reputation and recruit students. We were also working out the curriculum. Then came the online project which has changed the nature of the program. That made it possible for us to offer less common language pairs where we could draw upon a larger pool of applicants. Now we are facing the greatest challenge of all: launching a Mater's which will be taught online. I think that will keep me busy for the next few years.

**The Gotham Translator:** In what way would you say that NYU's program is special? How would you compare it to other similar programs in the US?

**Milena Savova:** The greatest success of our program is that it has been around for 26 years thanks to the support it has enjoyed from the School of Continuing and Professional Studies and despite the fact that the faculty is comprised of part-time instructors. Many translation programs in the U.S. fizzle out when the individuals who started them retire or move on. This has not happened at our program. On the contrary, it has been growing steadily. Compared to

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other non-degree programs in the country we offer more language pairs and a wider range of courses. Our program is entirely online and has an international as well as a national appeal. The online format also makes it possible for us to hire instructors who don't reside in NYC or even the U.S. We may also be a more comprehensive program that combines certificates in translation and three types of interpreting.

**The Gotham Translator:** This year, NYU hosted the ATISA Conference. The American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association was founded to "encourage, support, and further the study of translation studies". It has organized con-

ferences, every two years, at various venues since its inception in 2002. How was NYU chosen for this year's conference? What can you tell us about it?

**Milena Savova:** I was thrilled that we were selected to host this year's ATISA conference. More than a year ago there was a call for applications. I submitted a proposal highlighting why we would be a good venue. I know that there were other applications too. My main goal in bringing this conference here was to give the NY translation and interpreting communities a chance to hear world class presentations and mingle with internationally recognized scholars. It was very exciting to work with my colleagues on the ATISA board. In a

short time ATISA has built a solid reputation which resulted in many strong submissions and hence presentations. We had over 110 attendees and had it not been for the volcano eruption in Iceland, we would have had more. Our keynote speaker, Michaela Wolf, could not fly here from Austria because of the flight cancellations. Technology saved the day: Michaela videotaped her presentation, sent me a link and we were able to show it during the opening session. I believe this bodes well for our Master's program to be launched in fall 2011.

**The Gotham Translator:** Many thanks for taking the time to answer these questions! ■

## ARTICLE REVIEW by Brooke Bates

Fernanda Santos' article *Language Help for City's Immigrants Falls Short* featured in the New York Times last July discusses the lack of language services provided at government agencies in New York. In 2008, Mayor Michael Bloomberg issued an executive order requiring 37 of the city's public offices and agencies to offer interpreters, translated documents, and other language help to people who spoke little or no English. Money was to be set aside to allow non-English speakers easy access to important services such as food stamps and subsidized housing and medical care.

Unfortunately, two years after the order was signed, no improvements have been made. Many government workers fail to offer interpreters, even when requested, and signs and forms in multiple languages are often nowhere to be found. Those seeking services are often told to provide their own interpreters or seek volunteers in the waiting room who might possibly speak their language. A lawsuit was filed against Human Resources Administration, one of the New York's largest agencies that has received the largest

amount of complaints. A lawsuit was also filed against them last year by Legal Services NYC. According to the legal aid group, the agency had "deprived individuals of the necessities of life and repeatedly subjected them to humiliating discrimination." In addition, it has been reported that the Police Department and Department of Housing Preservation and Development have also poorly provided language services.

For this to occur in one of the nation's most linguistically diverse cities is hard to believe. Even for an English speaker, navigating the city bureaucracy is an overwhelming task in itself. What is most troubling is that a study conducted by two advocacy groups revealed that many immigrants had no idea they were entitled to interpreters and translated forms, in large part because city workers had never told them and they had found no signs explaining their rights. ■

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** Brooke Bates is a regular contributing writer for The Gotham Translator and a member of our Editorial Committee.

# What Current Students Are Saying

The Gotham Translator talked to two American students living in Europe (Germany and Austria) and currently enrolled in the NYU-SCPS Translation program.

Jay Bergstrom has been translating for roughly 4 years, in addition to teaching English. He decided to make a gradual transition to full-time translating, while dividing his time equally between translating and teaching for the next 2 years. The fact that the NYU program is accepted by the ATA played a major role in his decision to enroll. Both the required and optional courses offered at NYU were exactly what he was looking for. He is planning on finishing his coursework in the coming spring.

Steve, a technical writer, who already has engineering and MBA degrees under his belt, liked the fact that NYU's certificate program is not a "full-blown degree" program. He wanted "to obtain recognized certification as a translator to complement [his] previous academic training and work experience." Translation is a new career path for him, although he has done some ad-hoc assignments before. Steve acknowledged that "getting into the translation field represents an evolution of [his] technical writing career."

When researching his options, Steve looked specifically for a program that catered to native US-English speakers. "The courses thus far have been extremely helpful." They gave him not only experience in the act of translating but also a realistic idea of "what the larger profession is all about." According to Jay, the quality of his courses was directly correlated to the instructors: "The critical feedback that I've

received from the instructors has helped to shape my approach to translating and made me more demanding in my own writing. Based on my experience I can say that I would not hesitate to recommend NYU."

When asked about the advantages and drawbacks of e-learning, Jay noted, "I think that e-learning for a translation program is ideal as it is very similar to the real work environment of a translator. I do think, however, that this might not be the solution for everyone; you need to be very structured with your time and be able to stick to deadlines as you are in a very real sense alone." Steve's take on the question was very similar: "The flexibility and geographical independence of taking courses on-line appeal to me. The coursework focuses on the practical act of translating and submitting texts, and thus simulates a real-world experience."

Most of the student-to-teacher and student-to-student communication in the course takes place in a forum. Since he lives in Germany, Jay said that in his situation "this is perfect as the time constraints due to location and work schedule sometimes limit [his] ability to plan in specific hours for an online discussion."

Jay spends between 10 to 15 hours on the

course work and assignments every week. New translation assignments are posted weekly, at the beginning of the week. The instructors also post instructional materials with an overview of the week's topic and various questions that students are expected to answer and submit to the forum. The assignments consist of a translation that deals with the week's topic. Since topics change on a regular basis, students get exposure to different types of texts, including medical and legal contracts that Jay said he

may normally try to avoid. Steve likes to check in on the forum to read other students' and the instructors' posts and to contribute his own ideas.

Overall, Jay guessed that, if he were to name one thing he liked the best about the program, it would have to be the feedback from the instructors. Steve likes "the practical aspect of getting experience translating real-world texts." It gives him confidence looking for translation jobs.

Asked about the advantages he expected to have over other translators after getting his certificate, Steve affirmed that "having professional credentials is important. It's proof not only of a certain level of competence, but also of commitment to the translation profession. Since the translation field is

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**I think that  
e-learning for a  
translation program  
is ideal as it is very  
similar to the real  
work environment of  
a translator.**

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*(continued from page 9)*

unregulated, anyone can hang out their shingle and claim to be a translator. Having the NYU certificate will, I hope, raise my professional profile a bit."

Jay is looking forward to slowly phasing out teaching in order to fully devote himself to translation. He is definitely planning on using his certificate when approaching new customers in the future. He believes that, in Europe, professional certifications are important to potential customers and that the NYU certificate will attest to his qualifications.

#### **FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF A NYCT MEMBER**

The Gotham also contacted one of its members, Gina DeMarco. Gina graciously answered questions about the NYU program from the perspective of someone who has already obtained the certificate and had a chance to put it to use.

Gina remembers having heard about the translation studies program at NYU from fellow ATA members and thinking that it would be worthwhile to improve her translation skills. She passed the admission test for the program in 1998 and took French-to-English Introduction the same year. Due to scheduling difficulties, she was not able to take another course until 2000. Gina completed her Certificate in French-to-English Translation, working on one course at a time, in 2003.

The Gotham asked her why she decided to

enroll in this particular program: "At the time I started the program, I was living in New Jersey. I loved commuting to class and spending time in Manhattan.

Coincidentally and fortunately for me, when I had moved out of the area was right around when NYU started offering these courses online, so I finished online. As far as other options, I don't know of a comparable program for my language pair in my general geographical area." So in Gina's case, most of her coursework was on-site in the beginning, while she was later able to take advantage of the new online format. She says that "online is a good option for those not in the NYC metropolitan area."

When she started the program, Gina had already done occasional work as freelance French-to-English Translator. She had also worked as an administrator at two different private language centers. She says that after completing the certificate, her freelance

practice took off. She currently works full-time as a legal secretary at a full-service law firm and is a freelance French-to-English translator outside of those hours. She admits to being very busy these days.

"I had hoped to improve upon my translation skills. It turned out that my skills needed more improvement than I knew at the time. Not only did I gain and improve upon valuable skills, I also made some invaluable contacts within the translation industry."

In her own words, the program was definitely hands-on and exceeded her expectations. Gina said that the instructors were helpful, professional and very knowledgeable in general. "I would definitely recommend the program. For future students, not much advice I can give except to simply work hard and keep up with the coursework, have an open mind and a positive attitude." ■

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The New York Circle of Translators is proud to announce that we have our own group on LinkedIn. All NYCT members who also use LinkedIn are welcome to join.

Make virtual connections with other members of the Circle to start building relationships for networking within our community. Share your ideas, concerns and opinions. LinkedIn Groups are powerful ways to get noticed and enrich your professional network in these difficult economic times.

Join by clicking on the "Join Group" button on the Group's home page. See you there!

You can also be part of NYCT's Events on LinkedIn, e.g. the upcoming Second Susana Greiss Workshop:

[http://events.linkedin.com/  
Second-Susana-Greiss-Annual-Workshop/pub/410598](http://events.linkedin.com/Second-Susana-Greiss-Annual-Workshop/pub/410598)

# What To Do In Denver

by Katie Spillane

Last spring a fellow translator recommended that I attend the ATA annual conference and told me I had really missed out by not attending the ATA conference when it was in New York City. I dejectedly asked him where the conference was being held this year. Imagine my delight when he said it would be held in none other than my native Colorado! I hope that by sharing some of what I know about Denver, your time at the conference can be complimented by an enjoyable visit to a wonderful city.

First a little downtown orientation... The Hyatt Regency hosting our conference is located on 15th Street in Denver's central business district - right in the thick of the action. Unless you plan on renting a car, you're likely to do most of your exploration on foot as public transportation is virtually non-existent. Denver has one of the highest per-capita vehicle ownership rates in the U.S. with an average of one licensed vehicle for every man, woman and child. Fortunately, on the ground orientation is easy, and the downtown is nicely compact. The Rocky Mountains towering west of the city provide a giant landmark whenever you need a directional reminder.

The 16th Street Mall, just a block east from the Hyatt, offers shopping and many restaurants. It's a great place for an evening stroll and a little street music. Just

north of our venue you'll find the Buell Theater and Denver's performing arts complex. Walk around to the front lawn to see the giant statues and you'll also get a glimpse of Denver's sports stadiums. Invesco Field at Mile High, home to the Denver Broncos, is the oddly shaped stadium to the northwest. The Pepsi Center, which hosts the Colorado Avalanche and the Denver Nuggets, is the stadium in front of the Elitch Gardens amusement park. To the east you can probably spot Coors Field where a mile high row of seats fills with those hoping to catch fly balls from the Colorado Rockies. South of the Hyatt you'll find Capital Hill, one of Denver's nicer downtown neighborhoods, the seat of Colorado government and the architecturally interesting buildings of the Denver Public Library, Art Museum and Colorado History Museum.

As you become more familiar with Denver, keep in mind that the city is a relatively young one - as most are in the west. Denver was established in 1858 after gold was discovered at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River. The Colorado Gold Rush brought with it 100,000 people. In a single generation, the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians were pushed off of their land and Denver grew to be the second largest city in the west, second only to San Francisco. Even today, Denver remains the primary metropolitan

area in the region and is home to more federal employees than any city besides Washington, D.C.

Back to our historical narrative... With the turn of the century came a depression and the end of the mining boom. Wheat, sugar beets, and the Denver Livestock Exchange and National Western Stock Show (still running today!) made a name for Denver as the "cow town" of the Rockies. During the 1960s and 70s, when Jack Kerouac came through Denver, the city's economic base shifted towards electronics, computers, and aviation. Ski towns like Aspen, Vail, Steamboat Springs and Breckenridge cropped up around the state and Colorado became a destination for snow bunnies as much as cattle. With 300 days of sunshine a year and relatively mild winters, Denver is, in some ways, a week-day bedroom community for these higher mountain getaways.

I am certainly looking forward to being in Denver and breathing some good dry, mountain air. I hope you all enjoy your experiences there as much as I have. If you have any questions, would like help with your trip logistics, or are interested in meeting up while you're in Denver, feel free to contact me. Until then! ■

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katie Spillane is a freelance Chinese > English translator. She can be contacted at: [spillanetranslations@gmail.com](mailto:spillanetranslations@gmail.com).

**WHERE TO EAT DOWN TOWN:**

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**The Hands-Down-Best-Dessert** in Denver can be found at *McCormick's Fish House and Bar* (1659 Wazee Street). The dinners are a little pricy, but every bite is worth it.

**Best Breakfast Hideaway:** *Dozens* (236 W. 13th Ave.) has a great selection of breakfasts offered in a sunny atmosphere. Small & cozy.

**Best Affordable French Food:** Definitely walkable for New Yorkers, but maybe a cab ride away for others, *Le Centrale* (112 East 8th Avenue) offers incredible food at the unbeatable prices.

**Best Vegan Fare:** Denver may be a cow town, but these cowboys are learning how to cater to a vegan/vegetarian crowd. Check out the faux chicken wings at *WaterCourse Foods* (837 East 17th Ave.) and you'll find yourself having a finger-lickin' good time.

**Most Exotic Western Fare:** If you've got a hankering for elk, rattlesnake, or Rocky Mountain oysters (not from the sea!) this is the place for you. *The Buckhorn Exchange* (1000

Osage) is just a light rail stop away from downtown. Live music (four days a week) and a large taxidermy collection will add a western flare to your meal.

**WHERE TO WET YOUR WHISTLE:**

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**Wynkoop Brewery** (1634 18th Street Denver) A classic western micro-brewery with good eats, great beers and a billiards hall upstairs.

**Einstein Brothers Bagels** (1600 California Street) Normally I wouldn't recommend a chain, but for Einstein Brothers' fresh squeezed orange juice I will make an exception. It's delish.

**Denver Chop House** (1735 19th Street) A Denver institution and place to be seen. Whenever one of the sports teams wins a game, you're likely to see players here celebrating.

**The Tattered Cover** (1628 16th Street), The Strand of the west opened up this cozy "LoDo" (Lower Downtown) branch a few years ago. Good coffee, great books, wonderful staff.

**Mynt Mojito Lounge** (1424 Market Street) In a city were getting dressed

up means you wear a fleece without dog hair, this is your best bet for a cosmopolitan evening. And, if you don't make it to a tour of the U.S. Mint (reservations available at: [www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov)) you can still tell your friends you went to the Mynt in Denver ;)

**WHAT'S ON WHEN YOU'RE IN TOWN:**

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With Halloween coming, Denver's performers offer a range of thrillers:

**Theater**  
([www.denvercenter.org](http://www.denvercenter.org))

The 39 Steps  
Dracula  
Free Range Thinking

**Colorado Ballet**  
10/24 Dracula

**Colorado Symphony**  
10/30 Alfred Hitchcock's Psycho

**Sports Card**  
10/24 Broncos play the Raiders  
10/27 Nuggets play the Utah Jazz  
10/30 Avalanche play the Blue Jackets

**GOT A CAR & AN URGE FOR A DAY TRIP? TRY:**

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**Boulder, CO** just 30 min. west of Denver, Boulder is home to Celestial Seasonings, CU Boulder, Pearl Street and day hik-

ing/climbing in the impressive Flat Iron mountains.

**Rocky Mountain National Park and Pikes Peak**, located an hour south and north of Denver respectively, offer spectacular views and great hiking.

**The Sunshine Brewing Company** offers tours of its breweries, run on solar power, in Ft. Collins an hour due north of Denver.

**Idaho Springs** is an hour's drive west into the mountains. There you'll find typical small town Colorado with a bit of mining history and the opportunity to try panning for gold. Have lunch at Bo Jo's famous pizzeria.

**COMING WITH THE KIDS? CHECK OUT...**

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**The Denver Children's Museum**  
([www.mychildsmuseum.org](http://www.mychildsmuseum.org))

**Elitch Gardens Amusement Park**  
(Weekends only)

**Denver Museum of Nature and Science**  
([www.dmns.org/](http://www.dmns.org/))

**Denver Zoo**  
(<http://www.denverzoo.org>)

**Casa Bonita**  
([www.casabonitadenver.com](http://www.casabonitadenver.com))

# The Second Susana Greiss Annual Workshop

## Why Freelancers are Management Accountants like it or not

*Jonathan Hine*

Management accounting is not what the CPA who does your taxes learned (that's financial accounting). Using the example of an overloaded freelancer, we will see how management accounting helps us make decisions about subcontracting, setting up ad hoc projects without becoming a translation company, reducing overhead, making time to translate/interpret, buying technology and tools, choosing continuing education courses and even how to take a vacation. New examples focus on career-changers and part-timers contemplating full-time freelancing. (Disclaimer: this presentation is not a substitute for professional advice, but you should be able to ask better questions and find the right professional).

## You Want Me to Do What?: Understanding Translation Requests in The Age of 'Web 2.0

*Jon Ritzdorf*

The speed of, and ready access to information (primarily via the internet) is rapidly changing the mediums via which translation is conducted and "traditional" translation norms. The translation paradigm as we know it is in a period of constant flux with new possibilities cropping up on a regular basis. Although the traditional concept of translate/edit/proof (TEP) is very much still alive and well in many fields, some translators are learning to be flexible in these changing times rather than simply holding fast to our commonly held conception of what translation should be.

Starting with a discussion of translation services at the dawn of the internet age (with the translation of "flat" websites), we will delve

into how the rapid evolution of "the web" has led to translation needs within mobile applications, wikis, social networking and blogging which has, in turn, spurred adoption of Machine Translation techniques and collaborative "crowdsourcing" of translation. Basically as our access to media grows, and the demand that that media be served up in real time, the need for the translation into multiple languages in ever shorter timeframes also grows.

## Co-star, Supporting Actor or Bit Player? – Image and Reality of the Role of the Interpreter

*Ellen Sowchek*

As an interpreter for performing artists, I have come to believe that the way in which the role of the interpreter and the act of interpreting are understood by the client (the artist) and by the public (the audience) have an important influence on the way in which the quality and the success of the interpreter's work is perceived and judged.

In previous presentations, I have focused on what it is like to work in the entertainment industry as an interpreter, a role I characterize as being "invisible in the spotlight", and the important elements of training and preparation needed to achieve that "invisibility". This time, I would like to consider the subject from a different perspective, focusing on the "visibility" of the interpreter. What is our perceived role – co-star, supporting actor or bit player? Where do these perceptions originate? Do they affect the way we view ourselves, how we do our work and how that work is received? Is it within our power, as professionals, to change them? We will be viewing a sampling of interpreter "performances" from film and television, which will

serve as the basis for discussion.

The question of professional image vs. reality is one that involves all of us, interpreters and translators, alike. I hope you will join me for an exploration of this topic.

## The World of Cosmetics Through the Eyes of a Translator

*Agnes Meilhac*

Cosmetics tend to have a reputation of being somewhat superficial and shallow, and yet they have been around for thousands of years and form an integral part of human civilization and culture. Think of Ancient Egyptians who used kohl eyeliner to reduce sun glare and the risk of eye infections. Think of women during WWII using leg paint to draw black seams up the back of their legs to create the illusion of the impossible-to-get nylon stockings.

Today, cosmetics are a prosperous multi-billion-dollar industry. Over the last 20 to 30 years, the market has undergone an important phase of globalization that has resulted in a massive boom, fueled by R&D and innovation. The technological revolution that took place in the second half of the 20th century has forever changed the way that cosmetics are made and sold. It has also generated a huge demand for translation providers specializing in this area.

Please join me in taking a closer look at the importance of translation in the cosmetics industry. We will briefly look at the history and development of beauty products through the ages. This will be followed by a discussion of the language of cosmetics, which reflects the industry's transition from small businesses selling merchandise domestically to "global brands" marketed worldwide by large international corporations. ■

**The New York Circle of Translators**  
 In collaboration with  
**New York University – School of Continuing and Professional Studies**  
 Proudly Present

**The Second Susana Greiss Annual Workshop**

Saturday, October 02 and Sunday, October 03, 2010  
 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
 Woolworth Building – Room 430  
 15 Barclay St. at Broadway across from City Hall, Public Assembly Room  
 New York City, New York

**SATURDAY**

**Registration**

9:00 – 9:45

**Morning Session**

10:00 – 1:00 Jonathan Hine – Why freelancers are Management Accountants like it or not

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch on your own.

**Afternoon Session**

2:00 – 5:00 Jonathan Hine – Why freelancers are Management Accountants like it or not (continued)

**SUNDAY**

**Registration**

9:00 – 9:45

**Morning Session**

10:00 – 1:00 Jon Ritzdorf – You Want Me to Do What?: Understanding Translation Requests in The Age of 'Web 2.0'

1:00 – 2:00 Lunch on your own.

**Afternoon Session**

2:00 – 3:30 Ellen Sowchek – Co-star, Supporting Actor or Bit Player? – Image and Reality of the Role of the Interpreter

3:30 – 5:00 Agnes Meilhac – The World of Cosmetics Through the Eyes of a Translator

**Participation in the 2-day seminar grants you 10 ATA CE Points**  
**Participation in one of the days grants you 5 ATA CE Points**

**Workshop Fees**

	1 day by September 25	2 days by September 25	1 day on site	2 days on site
<b>NYCT members/ NYU students</b>	\$50.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$150.00
<b>Non-Members</b>	\$100.00	\$175.00	\$150.00	\$225.00

**Registration Form by Mail**

Please fill out information below, detach and mail with a check made payable to:  
 The New York Circle of Translators, PO Box 4051, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163-4051

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Session     Sunday Session     Both Days

NYCT Member:  Yes  No    NYCT Student:  Yes  No

## INTERPRETING A WAR: MEMORIES AND WISHES

## NETA 2010 Conference Presentation by Haidar al-Sara

Reviewed by **Diana Rhudick**

**W**hat debt do Americans owe citizens of other countries helping the US military overseas? That question has been on my mind since I attended the talk “Interpreting a War: Memories and Wishes” by Haidar al-Sara at the recent NETA conference. Haidar is an Iraqi national who served as an interpreter to American servicemen in Iraq from 2003 to 2006. He said that he volunteered in that role because he wanted to help his city and his country to develop. Working with American soldiers, he could help bring things like a water treatment plant or schools to his city. But his fellow Iraqis saw the interpreters as spies, or as traitors, “stealing words and giving them to others.” Iraqi interpreters continue to be threatened by other Iraqis and often resort to wearing disguises to work. In the field, Haidar explained that there is no code of conduct for the interpreters. There were times when his US officer would ask him, “Haidar, what do you think of this family? Are they insurgents?” This situation is as much a violation of the interpreter’s role as a lawyer asking his interpreter whether or not he thinks the client is guilty. Haidar also pointed out that interpreters in Iraq receive no training in how to handle insurgents or IEDs or any of the other lethal situations they are likely to encounter. To become a military interpreter, Haidar approached some American soldiers and told them he spoke English. That was all it took. Yet because

interpreter fatalities are melded with Humvee driver fatalities in the statistics, no one knows with any accuracy how many interpreters have been killed in the line of duty.

Haidar described what would happen if an interpreter had been the target of any type of attack. That person is required to report the incident to the police, but, as Haidar explained, you couldn’t trust the police so the attacks go unreported. Paranoia and mistrust reign in current relationships, and the interpreters are afraid to make new acquaintances because these people are then potential targets of the insurgents. One possible solution would be for Iraqi interpreters to organize and speak out to the media in order to draw attention to their dire situation. But again, interpreters fear that going public could be the equivalent of painting bull’s eyes on their friends and family.

It is not surprising that many interpreters choose to leave Iraq. The US government has authorized 25,000 special immigrant visas (SIV) for “Iraqi nationals who have provided faithful and valuable service to the US Government” for the years 2008 through 2012. Haidar drew a discouraging portrait of what awaits them once they arrive. First, they must have worked as interpreters for a full year and have proof of that work in order to receive this special visa. Those working for several months or unable to contact the army personnel they

worked with are out of luck. The luckier ones are entitled to food stamps and health insurance for five years after entry. Haidar would like to see much more aid for these people, similar to the GI bill. He has spoken with his congressman to get help for these SIV arrivals. NETA’s president, Ilse Andrews, tried in vain to work with her congresswoman from New Hampshire toward the same end. Although we are told that the US government has a pressing need for Arabic translators and interpreters, it requires US citizenship for federal work. Haidar suggests speeding up the naturalization process from five years to three, or approval if you have a green card and solid recommendations. He would also like to see funds allocated for tuition so that former Iraqi interpreters can retrain and get a job in a different field. Of course, refugees are arriving on our shores from other war-torn corners of the world as well. How, and how much, do we as a nation help these people to thrive in their new country? ■

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Diana Rhudick is an ATA-certified translator, French and Spanish into English, drhudick1@gmail.com.

*Article is reprinted with permission from the New England Translators Association Newsletter.*



**THE GOTHAM  
TRANSLATOR**



The New York Circle of Translators (NYCT) is a New York State not-for-profit corporation grouping independent translators and interpreters as well as companies and organizations. It is a chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA) which is, in turn, an affiliate of the International Federation of Translators (FIT).

NYCT members work in a variety of languages and specialties. Our members are committed to the exchange of ideas and mutual support. One of our goals is to educate the general public about the professional nature of interpreting and translating.

NYCT members enjoy the following benefits:

- Free monthly meetings featuring speakers on all aspects of the translation profession
- Networking opportunities at monthly dinners and annual holiday party
- Professional development workshops and seminars
- Subscription to our newsletter, The Gotham Translator
- Listings in the NYCT Online Membership Directory and the annual NYCT printed Membership Directory
- Referrals (if you indicate that you accept them, existing members may direct work requests to you or clients may contact you directly)

Visit us at [www.nyctranslators.org](http://www.nyctranslators.org) and join online!



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