THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

The Price of Not Communicating

by **Leonard Morin**

Joseph R. Paraguas entered the operating room. The patient lay on the operating table, her body covered with drapes except for the face and right lower leg, which ostensibly was the infected area. Mr. Paraguas nervously glanced over at the instrument table. He identified the scalpel, forceps, sterilization tray, and syringe. There were a few other instruments he did not recognize, but he felt confident he would get it all after a little practice. He could tell from a cursory examination of the leg, and based on his autodidactic surgical studies, that this was going to be a question of either removing the infection or amputating the entire lower leg. It was his first day on the job and his supervisor had given him no guidance as to the particulars of the procedure. The department was understaffed and his new boss himself had five other operations he had to attend to that morning. Although Mr. Paraguas was unsure how to proceed, he knew that, having passed the medical doctor certification exam shortly after graduating from high school, he was the most highly skilled individual in the operating room. Without raising his glance, he commanded the person he assumed to be his assistant: "Scalpel."

Before I go into the significance of the hypothetical scenario above, I note the following. This essay sets forth my observations of some of the problems that impede the ability of translators and

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interpreters to serve their clients and some possible solutions. I discuss both translation and interpreting in this article because, although they are two distinct and different professions, they coincide in the broader sense of converting one language into another, and share many of the same challenges. I also practice both, so I am intimately familiar with them and they are close to my heart. For the sake of clarity, I suggest a series of five steps to perfect our rendering of service: 1) identify that there is a problem; 2) envision a solution to the problem; 3) develop the momentum for change; 4) implement the solution; 5) evaluate outcome to adjust strategy and commence the five-step plan again. I finally propose a working group structure to continue to review and address these challenges.

Readers should have little trouble extrapolating the imaginary situation sketched above to translation or interpreting. Indeed, it could apply to the inadequacies of medical, legal, or diplomatic interpreting or translation, and to a lesser extent of commercial interpreting or translation, such as market research. In the latter case, any damage would more likely be financial and not a matter of life, liberty, and death, but who is to say what the outcome of inadequate translation will be? Errors and mishaps are, by definition, unpredictable and any faulty or lacking translation is a risk. Skills of a very high level are required for translating or interpreting: superior command of a native language, superior command of another language, experience and training in the process of translation, and subject-matter expertise. Translation requires excellent writing skill in the target language; interpreting skills include simultaneous and consecutive interpreting and sight translation. There are also many subsets of skills, and the process to achieve this demanding level of competencies is almost inevitably long and arduous.

Despite the inadequacies, our profession has come a long way, and its gradual evolution was probably inevitable. One should not forget that a couple of centuries ago, barbers were the ones performing surgery, along with haircuts. We can assume that this fact derived from a lack of development of the medical field and not from some type of moral depravity. One hundred years from now, people will probably look back on our age with disdain for the primitive medical treatments we now use.

Identify that there is a problem

I believe readers recognize that our industry faces serious challenges, but for good measure, I cite Eric Candle of the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA), who has studied what happens when interpreting is deficient or lacking. He states that patients' limited proficiency in English results in "longer length of hospital stays and greater risk of complications…greater risk of surgical delays

and readmission due to greater difficulty understanding instructions, including preparing for procedures, managing conditions, taking medications, as well as identifying symptoms for immediate return to care and follow up." Fifty-five million people in the United States speak a language other than English at home. Yet it is worth noting that in the medical sphere, miscommunication is the number-one cause of patient harm whether a foreign language is involved or not.[1] Every year 96,000 patients die in the US due to miscommunication with their healthcare providers. Fifty percent of all patients are unable to communicate adequately with their healthcare providers.[2] Even though poor communication is already a major issue even if a foreign language is not involved, the potential for miscommunication is greater for individuals with limited English proficiency. This implies an enormous responsibility for translators and interpreters. Since translation and interpreting are used beyond the medical sector and presumably in every sphere of human interaction, the potential benefit of competent translation is formidable.

Envision a solution to the problem

To a great extent, we can continue doing what we have been doing, but more can be done. We have to educate the public, government, and employers so they understand that translation and interpreting are professions that require specific skills and training. We have to raise their awareness about what is at stake when the job is not performed or is performed inadequately. We should probably advocate for government investment in translator and interpreter training and certification programs. There should obviously be some regulatory threshold beyond which pay and quality shift upward. Some jobs should be legally reserved for linguists with specific certification. Possibly, unionization as a medium for professionals to advocate for their profession would play a role, as it already does in certain sectors of our industry, for example, in some courts. The IMIA has recommended mentoring programs for medical interpreters once they begin their duties after certification. The ATA is sponsoring mentoring efforts as well. This is advisable and helpful in any branch of our industry, since many challenges cannot be anticipated during previous training. For this reason, the initial days, weeks, and months on the job also tend to be particularly stressful.

Develop the momentum for change

The fact that good translation saves lives and money is a compelling argument in favor of investing more resources in it. But actually raising

1 "The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations describes communication error as the cause of 60% to 70% of preventable hospital deaths." Murphy, Joseph G. and Dunn, William F., "Medical Errors and Poor Communication," *Chest: Official Publication of American Chest Physicians*. December 16, 2010. http://www.pathology.med.umich.edu/intra/AP%20Updates/ErrorsCommunicationEdit_MurphyCHEST2010.pdf. Accessed October 28, 2014.

2 "Improving LEP Population Health & Health Care through Meaningful Communication," presentation by Eric Candle to the New York Circle of Translators, May 29, 2014.

this awareness among the public and decision makers is more challenging. The tragic case of Deisy Garcia here in New York City is a harrowing example of why translation should not be an afterthought. She, along with her two daughters, was murdered by her husband after a domestic incident report that she filed with the police was never translated from her native Spanish into English. In that report, she specifically stated that she feared her husband would kill her and her two daughters.[3] Besides cogently demonstrating that proper translation can be a matter of life and death, this case shows that translation that is inadequate or absent altogether incurs civil liability and, hence, loss of taxpayer dollars. Politicians lose face and are therefore not reelected, but costly lawsuits against government agencies are another likely consequence. Case studies of the effects of absent or deficient translation or interpreting abound, but further studies would surely be useful, since the use of language services has grown and proliferated throughout society. Which case studies one would cite depends on who needs to be convinced.

Implement the solution

Implementation will involve any stakeholders who want to play a role. It will be a lot of work and always hark back to the previous steps based on the insights gained from step 5. Once again, much has already been achieved. Various certification credentials exist, including the ATA translation certification for several language pairs, state- and Federal-court certification for Spanish and some other languages, and numerous medical-interpreter certification programs. Court certification and the right to an interpreter in court were codified by the Court Interpreters Act of 1978.[4] The progress in court interpreting has resulted in a colossal enhancement to the administration of justice in this country. The work of the IMIA to promote and standardize medical-interpreter certification has also been pivotal. But it would be a mistake to think no further work needs to be done. It is only sensible to build on the achievements of organizations and individuals that have already pioneered the advancement of our industry.

Evaluate outcome to adjust strategy and then commence the step plan again

Inevitably, trial and error will play a role. No grand solution will anticipate every eventuality. But what are some of the lessons we have learned already? How easy or difficult are the problems to fix?

Translators or interpreters must be intimately familiar with the specific subject matter of a given project. In

3 Boyette, Chris and Santana, Maria, "A woman's plea in her native language goes untranslated, three lives are lost," *CNN U.S.*, February 20, 2014. http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/19/us/new-york-domestic-killing-warnings/. Accessed on October 28, 2014.

4 The Court Interpreters Act in turn was the culmination of a series of historical factors, such as Civil Rights Movement, decades of research and advocacy, and landmark case law such as *Negron v. New York* (1970). Roseann Dueñas González, et al. *Fundamentals of Court Interpretation: Theory, Policy and Practice*. Durham: Carolina Academic Press, 1991. Pg. 37-69.

the legal field, for example, terminology is so vast that the challenge of mastering it is herculean: what law? Texas law? New York law? New York criminal law? I am constantly talking to lawyers about terminology, and they often cannot answer my queries since they concentrate on a relatively circumscribed yet broad area of law. Once we start talking about the different types of legal documents and jurisdictions in our country, let alone in others, discourse becomes byzantine. My point here is that, although translators and interpreters have to be highly trained, getting to where they need to be is not necessarily straightforward. Demands go beyond linguistic knowledge and specific translation and interpreting skills that also require years of preparation. While perfect translation—and particularly perfect interpretation—are rare, translators and interpreters must be highly educated and continually seek further education.

Even though the aspiring linguist can look to a local training program for guidance and preparation, one should not assume that such programs are the magic bullet for success in the field. After all, they have to prepare their graduates for virtually everything under the sun that can be talked or written about. The trick seems to be to anticipate vocabulary, concepts, phenomena, situations, and pitfalls as much as possible in the training. Teaching reliable methods of acquiring new knowledge prepares students for the unexpected. No one can predict everything that will happen, and experience will have to teach its lessons accompanied by the risk (as minimal as possible) of learning on the job.

I believe that the rapid growth of translation and interpreting programs that has occurred in the last decade or so is generally a very positive development. Yet this boom could develop into a bubble if such programs do not channel their students into jobs that will justify the expense of the prior training. If the programs are too expensive and/or the salaries too low, they will not be sustainable, and by extension, employers will have difficulty finding qualified interpreters and translators to do the necessary work. This situation harks back to the need to educate companies and government, as well as individual customers. They will not be willing to pay substantial and fair remuneration to translators and interpreters if they do not understand what goes into the results they are seeking. We should take a lesson from the current status quo, which, though a major improvement from a couple of decades ago, leaves much to be desired.

It seems that the cost-effectiveness and moral imperative of investing resources in translation and interpreting are not conventional wisdom. But exactly how to educate is more complicated. In the case of the government, conflicting budgetary priorities will

make it challenging to obtain more funds to pay translators and interpreters, especially in times of crisis such as our own. Swaying public opinion to valuing quality translation and interpreting is an endeavor that undoubtedly will extend beyond our lifetimes.

Certification exams seem indispensable even after training, but enthusiasm to enroll in training may wane if the candidate cannot necessarily count on passing the certification exam. Of course, if the exam is too easy, the linguists and society as a whole will be exposed to greater risk. And, while it may be cost-effective for the government to promote programs to train and certify translators and interpreters of Spanish, it may not be for languages of lesser diffusion such as Wolof, Tibetan, or Kaqchikel. Indeed, it would be a delusion to aspire to preparing linguists adequately for every possible language pair. What might be considered an unacceptable rendering for Spanish or Mandarin may have to be tolerated for Vietnamese or Tajik, under certain circumstances. But, once again, the lack of high-quality translation or interpreting in any language pair carries incalculable risks.

Conclusion

I think that permanent dialogue between the providers and users of language services is a crucial element to tackling the challenges our professions and their users face. There are numerous examples of such dialogue, such as the work of the NAJIT Bench and Bar Committee and the ATA PR Committee. As I indicated above, I acknowledge that this essay only scratches the surface of problems and possible solutions. By identifying some of the sore spots and suggesting some possible cures, however, I hope to contribute to this necessary debate. I propose the following structure to improve the rendering of services in our industries:

1. Establish a working group to discuss and research problems and recommend solutions, based on the five-step plan I propose, or a similar evaluation scheme.
2. Choose a specific area of our industry in which to begin this work, i.e., observation in a specific court or hospital system as well as library and media research.
3. Obtain funding to enable this ongoing work.

It bears reiteration that miscommunication (in the medical or legal services sectors, for instance) is a problem that extends beyond the intervention of translators and interpreters. Yet this does not absolve us from making sure that we are a strong link in the chain of communication. The potential for positive change in doing so is enormous. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leonard Morin has practiced full-time as a translator since 2004. He began his work as an interpreter not long thereafter. He currently works as a per-diem Spanish interpreter certified by the New York State Courts. He also translates chiefly legal documents from Dutch, Spanish, and German into English. He currently serves as president of the New York Circle of Translators.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

28th Annual Translation Prize

French-American Foundation & Florence Gould Foundation

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The **French-American Foundation** and the **Florence Gould Foundation** are pleased to announce that we are now accepting submissions for the **28th annual Translation Prize** for English translation of French work in both **fiction and nonfiction**. The Foundations will present a **$10,000** cash award for the best translations of French prose into English at an **Awards Ceremony** in New York in spring 2015.

Translations for consideration must have been published for the first time in the United States **between January 1 and December 31, 2014**. All categories of work are eligible in fiction and nonfiction, with the exception of poetry, children's literature, technical, scientific, and reference works.

The French-American Foundation will be accepting submissions through **January 15, 2015**.

For more information, please contact **Thibault Chareton** at tchareton@frenchamerican.org or (646) 588-6781.

TRANSLATION PRIZE

The Translation Prize has established itself as a valued facilitator in the intellectual and cultural exchange between France and the United States. The Prize encourages American publishers to bring French texts to the English audience and it provides translators and their craft with more visibility and recognition.

At the Awards Ceremony on May 22, 2014, the 2013 Translation Prize in Fiction was awarded to **Adriana Hunter** for her translation of *Eléctrico W* by Hervé Le Tellier (Other Press) and the 2013 Translation Prize in Nonfiction to **Alison Dundy** and **Nicholas Elliott** for their translation of *The Falling Sky* by Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert (Harvard University Press). ■

ABOUT THE FRENCH-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

Founded in 1976 and building on more than two centuries of shared ideals between France and the United States, the French-American Foundation-United States works to enrich a transatlantic relationship that is essential in today's world. With its sister foundation, the French-American Foundation - France, the Foundation brings together leaders, policymakers, and a wide range of professionals to exchange views and share experiences in areas of mutual concern for mutual benefit.

The Foundation addresses several current policy issues including education; immigration; security and defense; business and the economy; energy and the environment; urban development and renewal; health care; and cultural policy. Programs include its signature Young Leaders program, conferences, high-level professional exchanges, and study tours for leaders in government, business, academia, media, and culture, creating a rich network of people and ideas for action.

ABOUT THE FLORENCE GOULD FOUNDATION

The Florence Gould Foundation is an American foundation devoted to French-American exchange and friendship. Born of French parents in San Francisco in 1895, Florence Gould lived both in the United States and France during her lifetime. At her death in 1993, Florence Gould left the bulk of her fortune to the foundation bearing her name.

NYCT NEWS

Talking with TAUS

by **Margarite Heintz Montez**

I spoke with Tom Alwood, the TAUS representative for the Eastern US. He has been affiliated with TAUS since 2007 when he worked for a large corporation that was a member.

TAUS is a member organization funded by membership fees. Its mission is to promote knowledge and use of translation technology. Members are predominantly the big translation buyers and LSPs. Coming from various industries they include companies such as Microsoft, Cisco, Dell, eBay and Intel as well as large translation agencies like Lionbridge and SDL. There are also academic members such as Dublin University and John Hopkins University as well as smaller LSPs, tool makers and some smaller individual members as well.

TAUS promotes translation technology information in a number of ways including free information and member-only information on its website through bi-annual conferences, roundtables during the year and webinars such as monthly technology showcases where tool makers introduce their technologies. Information on TAUS can be found at www.taus.net

Tom Alwood
TAUS representative
for the Eastern US

TAUS has a variety of goals that will affect the translation and localization industry. One new effort they are currently promoting is the Human Language Project which is intended to gather and share speech and text data to try to save languages of diverse diffusion or languages that are slowly dying and have few speakers. By sharing this data TAUS hopes to encourage the survival of these languages and to allow technology such as CAT and MT tools to more easily include them.

They also want to work with the national and international associations of all the stakeholders in the localization process. Therefore it has relationships with ATA, BDU and they are in the process of forming a relationship with FIT and similar national associations.

But how does an association as TAUS benefit the individual translator or interpreter? Most individual translators are not looking to purchase large machine translation systems or major tools but they can benefit from the web research that TAUS provides and what trends are going on in the industry. There are many

TAUS
Enabling Better Translation

papers on the website, but some research is for members only. The immediate benefits for individual members, such as NYCT members, are as follows:

- research papers and info in the members only section
- discounts on conference
- monthly call and events

Membership is $150 Euros for individuals and for small agencies is $500 Euro. The price structure for large corporations varies. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margarite Heintz Montez is a conference interpreter and editor of the NYCT Gotham. She has been a long time member of the New York Circle of Translators, the ATA and FIT. She has worked at translation agencies as a Sales Manager and Marketing Manager.

NEW PROGRAMS

Dynamic Quality Framework is a standardized framework for measuring translation quality on both human and machine translation. It measures quality, but HOW? It allows users to score translations on a number of factors including technical – spelling mistakes, grammar, orthographical issues– as well as subjective -style and if it is appropriate for the target audience. It works particularly well with machine translation where you can score the edit-distrance to achieve human translation levels. It enables users to compare MT output against different MT systems and human output to decide if a machine translation is good enough to go out or do they need a human translator. Tom specified that "it is not a magic bullet to solve all issues with all clients but it can provide clients with a framework to measure success of the translation."

For individual translators it allows translators to give feedback to clients in a structured and quantifiable manner. The framework has gained a wide following with many industries who utilize machine translation. Though it is more geared towards agencies, translators can still benefit from knowing about it and how it operates.

Post Editing Course – TAUS and Systran have come together to develop this online course. Translators can take it and be certified upon completion "There is a shortage of good post editors and more are needed."

Eva Becerra

is proud to announce return to her

Atlanta-based language business

My specialty is English to Spanish translations of either general or specialized subjects. My translation business focuses on fields such as tourism, history, biography, narrative literature, journalistic writing, advertising and entertainment. I can translate a variety of texts, from brochures, correspondences, news articles, or children's stories, to larger ones such as novels, manuals, guides and websites. My most recent translation project has been a series of newspapers articles.

In the Summer of 2003, I embarked on the exciting journey of pursuing a certification in English<>Spanish translation, at Georgia State University. In May 2005 I received GSU certification as an English<>Spanish translator.

Due to my college studies, not only do I possess an excellent knowledge of Spanish and its mechanisms, but also, an extensive knowledge of the English language in various fields such as history, culture, literature, and linguistics.

I have also studied French for many years, and been widely exposed to the French culture, which has incredibly helped me to be confident enough to also translate French texts into Spanish and English.

Here are the language combinations that I work with, in order of competence:

English to Spanish - Spanish to English
French to Spanish - Spanish to French
French to English - English to French
Italian to Spanish, English, French

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The Centre for Legal and Institutional Translation Studies (Transius) of the University of Geneva will hold its first international conference from **24 to 26 June 2015**. The 2015 Transius Conference will combine two complementary events: a conference on Law, Translation and Culture (LTC5) organised in collaboration with the Multicultural Association of Law and Language (MALL), and a legal and institutional translation seminar organised in collaboration with IAMLADP's Universities Contact Group (UCG). Confirmed keynote speakers include Prof. Susan ŠARČEVIĆ and Prof. Łucja BIEL.

We remind you that **the deadline for the submission of proposals is 18 October 2014**. You can submit your abstracts in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish.

Please, also note that **EARLY BIRD STANDARD REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN**. Registration for authors of academic contributions will open on 21 November, after notification of paper acceptance. For more details on registration and on the call for papers and posters, please visit the conference website:

www.unige.ch/traductioninterpretation/recherches/groupes/transius/conference2015_en.html

Registration for roundtable speakers from IAMLADP–UCG member organisations will open during February 2015 (a specific announcement has been circulated among the relevant organisations). ■

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Introduction to memoQ 2013

Tips and Tricks for Productive Translation

Our speaker Christine V. Ferreira discussed the latest version of memoQ. She touched upon the basics such as TM and the translation window and also took questions from current users of the system.

According to teachers and trainers of translation, memoQ is the becoming the leading translation CAT tool. It is closing in on Trados in terms of sales and usage. Kilgray, the developer of memoQ is giving translators a 45 day trial period. One must go to their website at www.kilgray.com and follow the instructions for downloading the trial version. ■

2014 NYCT ELECTIONS

Candidate Statements

SEE PAGE 15 FOR BALLOT

Valeriya Yermishova

President

My name is Valeriya Yermishova and I am running for the position of President. I've been very fortunate to work with our current board as President-Elect since this past April. They have worked very hard to organize highly successful events in the past year and continuously streamline the way this organization is run.

I am a French and Russian to English translator and have worked in the fields of legal and financial translation and project management. Currently, I translate literature and freelance for international organizations. I studied translation at NYU SCPS and the University of Chicago and have been able to get to know the vibrant translation communities in both cities.

I've been a member of the Circle since 2010. What I like the most about it is that it provides a community and forum for translation and interpretation professionals in the tri-state area. It is a unique venue for linguists to exchange information and discuss topics important to us, and I encourage you to make the most of our listserv and LinkedIn group and ask questions of our knowledgeable membership. I also encourage you to submit special interest articles to the Gotham Translator.

I've learned a lot about the Circle's work and am excited to support its mission and projects in greater depth. I'm very proud of the workshop we held this fall and look forward to collaborating with our new Program Director, Kate Deimling, on future events. My main goals include increasing membership and visibility and continuing outgoing President Leonard Morin's outreach programs. Our Secretary, Gigi Branch-Shaw, has done an incredible job overseeing the design of our new website, and I've enjoyed helping our Administrator, Louise Jennewine, with social media.

Alta Price

Vice President

I'm honored to be nominated to run for vice president of the New York Circle of Translators, and look forward to serving our organization as best I can. The NYCT was instrumental as I founded my editorial business, and I'd be grateful to give back. As a full-time translator and editor working from Italian and German into English, I can relate to the challenges and rewards many of us experience in this field.

I grew up in central New York State and, like many translators, came to the profession through pure serendipity. After studying German at Brown University and earning a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, which included study abroad in Europe, I began translating short art-related texts for friends and colleagues. Upon moving to New York I worked as a bookseller and then in the international marketing offices of a small publisher. An interpreter colleague first told me about NYCT and I joined in 2005, upon launching my freelance editorial consultancy. That gave me the flexibility to keep translating while completing my MFA at Hunter College. I am also an active contributor to other professional organizations, and my experience producing the annual bulletin of an international artists' association has highlighted for me how much I enjoy working with peers on collaborative projects and events.

Over the past decade I've been a member of the NYCT, the American Literary Trans-

lators Association, the ATA, and just last year joined the Translation Committee of PEN American Center. My experience as a freelance translator working with a stable of direct clients, as well as participating in PEN, has made me keenly aware of the need to promote professional practices and empower this city's remarkable community of LSPs. If elected to the NYCT board, I would work to help the president in every way, collaborating with the membership and board to follow up on ideas and projects. I'd bring to the position my passion for the field of translation and interpreting, my experience organizing professional development events, and my commitment to advancing the recognition of our profession both locally and more broadly.

Osei Prempeh
Treasurer

My name is Osei Prempeh. I live and work in New York, and have been a member of the NYCT for over 10 years.

I am a certified public accountant with over 15 years of professional experience working for large international accounting firms and investment banking groups. Currently I am employed with the United Nations as part of their Office of Internal Oversight Services, with responsibilities for managing and coordinating the Resident Auditors Division.

A keen language enthusiast, I am fluent in French and Spanish, have a solid working knowledge of Portuguese, Italian and Mandarin, and am presently working on my German skills. I also enjoy reading and walking in my free time.

It would be a privilege to serve as the next Treasurer of the New York Circle of Translators and Interpreters, and if elected I would bring the strength of my financial experience and commitment to the community.

I appreciate the opportunity to make this appeal for consideration for the Treasurer position, and look forward to becoming part of a cohesive and professional governing team at your service.

Sarah Williams
Treasurer

Thank you for the nomination for Treasurer! It would be an honor to give back to our community in this capacity.

As founder and CEO of Pro Bono Speaks, an interpretation and translation agency, I manage the finances of a business serving large, international law firms. My primary goal is for attorneys to be able to focus on their client meetings, which for attorneys in the field of asylum and working with survivors of torture, is no small endeavor. Pro Bono Speaks' mission is to enable each asylum-seeker to fully and accurately communicate the events of her/his past. We also give back. In fact, we donate 10% of each dollar towards reuniting families of asylees, many of whom are survivors of torture. Managing funds efficiently and effectively allows us to fulfill this purpose of caring for those we work with.

It would be an honor to serve the New York Circle of Translators as Treasurer. As a small-business owner, managing our own accounts, I know the ins and outs of money management. Sound financial management has enabled us at Pro Bono Speaks to do more than what we set out to do as interpreters. It has allowed us to contribute, and to give back. I would be delighted to serve in this capacity, to help further our collective mission at NYCT of becoming the best interpreters and translators we can be, and of giving back to our community in novel ways.

Melissa Mannis
Secretary

I am writing to propose my candidacy for the position of Secretary with the New York City of Translators. In this statement, I will explain my purpose for running as well as the qualities that make me best qualified for this posi-

tion. Translation/interpretation is the mechanism through which meaning is found and progress can be made. With this statement, I hope to demonstrate to the NYCT Board of Directors that my strong work ethic and creative thinking, as fueled by my passion for cross-cultural understanding, make me an ideal candidate for the position of Secretary with the New York City of Translators.

I wish to serve as Secretary for the NYCT because I want to surround myself with New Yorkers who are well-informed about the field of translation and interpretation. As a native New Yorker, I have always sought to immerse myself in the linguistic diversity of the city, but I never imagined I would be able to contribute to the cross-cultural dialogues that make up the fabric of New York and, in the present day, the global market. I have had the good fortune of using my Arabic, French and Spanish skills for many years. I have helped refugees settle in their new country, prepared speakers for international presentations, translated a field of study for a new country, and made human rights videos accessible in countries across the Middle East. Now that I have used translation and interpretation in a variety of capacities, I want to become informed about the business and work of translation/interpretation so that I can more effectively contribute to the needs of organizations, government authorities and companies in the future.

In 2012, I graduated from Georgetown University with a Bachelor's in Arabic and in Sociology. For the past five years (during and after college), I have been traveling back and forth from the Middle East. I have lived and studied in Egypt and Qatar, worked in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, and traveled around the Arab Gulf region. My time abroad was centrally focused on developing my language skills. However, I also conducted social scientific research on the Arab Spring and its consequences on the future of the region. Most recently, I was involved in a unique partnership between Yale University and an Abu-Dhabi foundation devoted to raising awareness and building infrastructure around the field of early childhood development (ECD). My role on the team was to act as cultural liaison, translator and researcher. I worked closely with a native Arabic translator based in the Middle East to develop a glossary of terms for ECD in Arabic. We would travel to each other periodically to complete this work. The experience was so engaging and fascinating to me. I loved scrutinizing the connotations of all possible words in each context to land on the best approximation of the translation. The terms we developed ended up defining the way in which Emiratis began to talk about ECD. This experience was defining for me as it propelled me toward seeking a career in translation. I now am enrolled at NYU in the Arabic – English translation certification program. This experience is also what caused me to search for an organization such as NYCT.

As Secretary, I intend to learn from and engage with members of the NYCT Board of Directors as well as general members as I build my own professional career as a translator. I am best suited for this position because I believe the knowledge a group of translators can share will strengthen communication between organizations and others who request the service of a translator/interpreter. Through direct and consistent involvement with the NYCT community, I will be able to provide thoughts, questions and ideas from the unique experiences I have had. I believe so deeply in the importance of translation/interpretation that I will devote myself to the work of NYCT with ease, precision and enthusiasm. I look forward to the possibility of joining NYCT in a more involved

capacity as Secretary. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Tatiana Klesheva

Secretary

I've decided to run for this position as I think I'd love to do it. I also want to have a start- up experience of working in NYC as a secretary, as it will assist me further in my career goals. I have a passion for languages and this is the other important reason why I decided to apply for the secretary position in the Circle of Translators in NY. It will be interesting job for me to do that I'm sure I will gain some useful experience.

I have a Bachelor's degree from Moscow University in Tourism Management. However I always had a passion for languages and I started to work as a freelance translator when I was living in Costa Rica since 2009 year. I speak fluent Spanish (Latin American version) and I translate from English into Russian and from Spanish into Russian. Sometimes I did interpreting as well from English into Spanish. I left Moscow, Russia in 2006 for Costa Rica by personal reasons. While there I've learnt Spanish and was working in sales in tourism, customer support and as a freelance translator or interpreter when required. I had contract job in Moscow in 2010, working as marketing analyst and interpreter/ translator for Spanish companies which were promoting consumer goods and merchandise to the Russian market. I was interpreting on business meetings between Russian and Spanish business people in Moscow. I also translated some hotel and airline websites to Russian language and was presenting Costa Rican company at tourism exhibition in 2010 in Moscow, as I was asked by the owner of Nature Air Company to do so. I lived in Costa Rica from 2006 to 2012. I have been living and traveling in the UK, London, Norwich and Manchester for 6-7 months.

I have been living in USA for 1 year already. I absolutely love it here and my favorite city in USA is NYC. I'm thinking about passing the exam for ATA certification within 1 year time period. When I was in the UK, I passed preliminary examination in order to pass the translation certification exam at Westminster University, however due to my job situation back one year ago, I was issued US visa, and decided to go to USA.

I hope my travel experience, knowledge of various cultures and people will help NYCT board of members to develop successful business relations with other companies. I think my knowledge of 3 languages will enhance the cultural background of NYCT and I will be a useful addition to NYCT board members.

BALLOT

2014 NEW YORK CIRCLE OF TRANSLATORS ELECTION

Please read the candidate statements and cast one vote for each the following officer positions:

President

❑ Valeriya Yermishova

Vice-President

❑ Alta Price

Treasurer

❑ Osei Prempeh

❑ Sarah Williams

Secretary

❑ Melissa Mannis

❑ Tatiana Klesheva

Mail completed ballot to:

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PO Box 4051, Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-4051

NEW YORK CIRCLE OF TRANSLATORS
(917) 720-3487

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Please submit all contributions as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word format. Articles should be limited to 1500 words or less.

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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
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- Professional development workshops and seminars
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- reviews of books, conferences and workshops.

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