

## A New Leaf: From The CATI President

by Mike Collins, [mike@globaltranslation.com](mailto:mike@globaltranslation.com)



Welcome to the first edition of the CATI Quarterly for 2011. As you all know by now, our long-time CQ editor and webmaster retired from those duties at the end of last year. *I'd like once again to thank David Heath on behalf of the association for the many years of fine service he gave to CATI.*

CATI installed a new board in January. Treasurer **Severina Pagliara** and Director **Manuela Garcia** were re-elected to the board along with me.

Former Director **John Milan** was elected to the Vice-Presidency, and former Director **Sandy Reul** was elected Secretary. We also welcome aboard newcomer **Javier Castillo**, who this year begins serving his first term as Director.

The CATI board says good-bye to former Vice President **Georgia Betcher** and former Secretary **Memuna Williams**. *We thank them both for their many years of volunteer service and contributions to the association.* We will miss them, and look forward to their continuing involvement in CATI as regular members.

Because of the webmaster/editor transition, this fall was a busy one for the board. We interviewed a number of prospects for David's replacement throughout the fall of 2010. We considered a number of different configura-

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tions and rearrangements of the way the CQ and the web site are handled, and balanced the various options against the cost, availability, and experience of the various candidates.

In the end, CATI decided to hire Flying Bridge Technologies in Charlotte to handle our web site hosting and the more technical intricacies of our internet presence. This small but savvy and experienced company provides

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## Upcoming Events

CATI Literary Night @ 7pm, FlyLeaf Book Store, Chapel Hill, NC .....	TBA
CATI Conference, USC Upstate, Spartanburg, SC .....	April 9
ATA Exam Sitting, USC Upstate, Spartanburg, SC .....	April 10
CATI Triangle Social @ 7pm (Madhatter, Durham, NC) .....	May 5
CATI Charlotte Social @ 7pm (Int'l House, Charlotte, NC) .....	May 5
CATI Triangle Social @ 7pm (Madhatter, Durham, NC) .....	Sept. 1
CATI Charlotte Social @ 7pm (Int'l House, Charlotte, NC) .....	Sept. 1
CATI Triangle Social @ 7pm (Madhatter, Durham, NC) .....	Nov. 3
<i>CATI (<a href="http://catiweb.org">catiweb.org</a>) serves North and South Carolina as a chapter of the American Translators Association (<a href="http://atanet.org">atanet.org</a>, 703-683-6100).</i>	

## The CATI Quarterly would like to hear from you!

*If you have an opinion that you would like to share with your CATI colleagues on any of the ideas expressed in this newsletter, please write to the editor, Heather Hille, at [catiadmin@catiweb.org](mailto:catiadmin@catiweb.org). Submissions are subject to editing.*

The *CATI Quarterly* is a publication that is published quarterly by the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI), a nonprofit organization designed to promote the recognition of translating and interpreting as professions in the Carolinas. Opinions expressed herein are the author's and not necessarily those of the Editor, the Association, or its Board of Directors.

### Reader submissions are welcome.

Suggested length limits are:

Articles 1500 words

Reviews 500 words

Letters 300 words

Submissions become the property of the CATI Quarterly and are subject to editing. For details, see the "Submission Guidelines" at [www.catiweb.org/guidelines.htm](http://www.catiweb.org/guidelines.htm). *If you have questions or would like to submit an article, please contact the editor, Heather Hille, at [catiadmin@catiweb.org](mailto:catiadmin@catiweb.org).*

### Advertising:

Please contact CATI at [catiadmin@catiweb.org](mailto:catiadmin@catiweb.org) for advertising information.

### CATI Membership & Mission:

CATI membership is open to anyone interested in translation or interpretation who supports the following aims of the association:

- To promote the recognition of translating and interpreting as professions and to defend and support the interests and concerns of professional translators and interpreters.
- To encourage high-quality service and ethical business practice among members.
- To disseminate information to the public about translating and interpreting.
- To facilitate mutual assistance among translators and interpreters and to provide a medium for collaboration with persons in allied professions.

## A New Leaf (continued)

CATI with a very direct personal connection for managing our site and dealing with issues associated with it. They will also be able to provide strong support to us as we modernize and upgrade the site in the coming year.

For the newsletter and day-to-day webmaster duties, CATI hired current Administrative Manager Heather Hille to take on these duties in addition to her current ones. While there were a number of very qualified candidates for these positions, Heather's familiarity with our association

We are tremendously excited about our upcoming conference at USC Upstate on April 9, 2011 in Spartanburg, South Carolina! Former CATI President and interpreter and translator extraordinaire Eta Trabing will be our keynote speaker – you will not want to miss her presentation!

and its members, and her knowledge of our processes and her previous experience producing newsletters swung the balance with the board. So, we are pleased to announce that Heather has taken over these duties as of January 1, 2011.

You will notice a somewhat different look to the Quarterly as Heather works to put her stamp on this flagship publication of ours. I hope members will peruse it thoughtfully and send any comments, suggestions, and other ideas about how we might adapt it as we move forward. If there is something you would like to see, let Heather and/or the board know. This is your publication, and your window to what is happening among your colleagues and in the profession at large.

This first issue of 2011 contains a number of interesting articles on a range of subjects. **William MacElrath's** delightful article on cognates joins pieces by **John Milan**, **John Rock**, and **Matthew Noel** that explore attitudes and experiences related to our profession.

Lastly, we are tremendously excited about our upcoming conference at USC Upstate on April 9, 2011 in Spartanburg, South Carolina! Conference organizer Graciela White and the conference committee have been working hard to make this conference a success. Former CATI President and interpreter and translator extraordinaire Eta Trabing will be our keynote speaker – you will not want to miss her presentation! The facilities are fantastic, and our exhibitors will once again include **Freek Lankhof of InTrans Books** and his varied selection of reference works for sale. *So watch for the announcement that registration is open, and sign up for what is sure to be another exciting and educational professional event.*

So, again – Happy New Year, and I look forward to seeing many, many of you in Spartanburg in April!

*Mike Collins*

# Embarked on the Adventure

By Matthew Noel, [mattnoel@earthlink.net](mailto:mattnoel@earthlink.net), a medical interpreter student.



As a child, I loved adventures and stories of adventures. Stories of Lewis & Clark, pirates, dragons and knights through books or imagination took me to worlds unknown. As I grow older, these unknown worlds have not lost their allure. For me, a love for language has been the vehicle to feed this desire in me to know, experience and conquer these unknown worlds.

As I look back on my journey into the world of interpretation, more specifically, medical interpretation, I look back and see little clues along the way that have proved valuable in my quest for language acquisition.

My first encounter with Spanish was at my first job when I was 10 years old after moving to North Carolina. Throughout middle school and high school I worked in more labor-intensive jobs such as landscaping and construction with primarily Hispanic immigrant workers. I experienced the two extremes of language; interacting with the colorful and free flowing slang of my immigrant co-workers and the structured, sometimes stiff and grammar centric Spanish in the academia of college professors and classes.

While in Chihuahua, I had the opportunity to interact and work with a vast range of people from varied economic and educational backgrounds, from middle and high school teachers, to businessmen, doctors and pastors.

Following graduation from college, going to live in Mexico was helpful in filling many of the language gaps that I had. I was in Chihuahua, Mexico, working at an orphanage when I heard language in its purest form -- through the mouths of children. Somehow, hearing their grammatical imperfections and experiencing their non judgmental and accepting spirit, made me realize that everyone is on a journey-even within one's own language. While in Chihuahua, I had the opportunity to interact and work with a vast range of people from varied economic and educational backgrounds, from middle and high school teachers, to businessmen, doctors and pastors. After years of trying to create a pseudo immersion experience through music, poetry, telenovelas and my ever-present flashcards, I was daily drinking in new words in such a rich, daily cultural context of everyday life that made them unforgettable.

My journey still continues and always will, however in looking back I can see several lanterns in the night that, unknown to me at the time, have served me as I pursue my passion of being a Medical Interpreter.

*Continued on page 4.*

## New Members

Please welcome....

### Jesus Rosales, Cary, NC

English<>Spanish T/I

Education, food/nutrition, immigration, medicine

### Sarah E. Allen, Clayton, NC

German>English T

Marketing, business, human relations, PR, travel/tourism

### Cecilia Moneta, Charlotte, NC

English<>Spanish T/I

Marketing, manufacturing, material handling, literature, music, art

### Manuela Garcia, Durham, NC

English<>German T

Immigration, education, medical

### Elisa F. Keefe, Raleigh, NC

English<>Spanish T/I

Special Education

### Mary McCusker, Chapel Hill, NC

German>English T French>English T

Dutch>English T

Finance, economics, IT

### John D. Bailey, Mt. Pleasant, SC

English<>Spanish T

Legal, immigration, business, government, personal and identification

### Bonnie Price, Indian Land, SC

French>English T/I Spanish>English I

Education, linguistics, literature, religion, sociology

### Eyda G. Arroyave, Mt. Pleasant, SC

English<>Spanish T/I

Education, personal documents, mathematics, industrial engineering, manufacturing, transportation

### Luis Matta, Charlotte, NC

English>Spanish T/I

Marketing/advertising, TV and Radio Spots, PowerPoint presentations, webcast scripts, press releases

### Emily Ortiz Alfonzo, Greenville, SC

English<>Spanish T/I

Law, personal documents, workers comp.

### Melissa Field, Mt. Pleasant, SC

German>English T

Finance, accounting, cost analysis, automotive, CIP

### Ellory Schmucker, Columbia, SC

English<>Spanish T/I

Art, education, literature, history, social services, personal documents

### Jan Notzon, Charlotte, NC

English<>Spanish T/I

Legal, medical



## 2011 CATI Annual Conference

**Saturday, April 9, 2011**  
Univ. of South Carolina Upstate  
Spartanburg, South Carolina  
[www.uscupstate.edu](http://www.uscupstate.edu)

**Keynote Speaker:**  
M. Eta Trabing

Eta Trabing ([www.eberkana.com](http://www.eberkana.com)) will be the Keynote Speaker at the 2011 CATI Conference. Eta is a past CATI president, author, teacher/trainer, technical translator, conference interpreter, and U.S./State certified court interpreter with over 40 years of experience.

**Hotel Accommodations**  
group rate \$94.00 + tax  
Spartanburg Marriott  
at Renaissance Park

[www.spartanburgmarriott.com](http://www.spartanburgmarriott.com)  
299 North Church Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29306  
(864-596-1211)

Mention CATI when you make your reservation. Cut-off date: March 18, 2011

**If you have questions contact:**  
Graciela White  
[ggwhite@nc.rr.com](mailto:ggwhite@nc.rr.com)

### **“I’m bilingual, and I think I’d like to be a translator or interpreter. What else do I need to consider?”**

For translation you must know the target language (the one you will be translating into) in great depth, and your grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation should be nearly perfect. *To read more of the article, **Looking Beyond Bilingualism**, please go to page 12.*

## **Embarked on the Adventure (continued)**

1. While living at the orphanage in Chihuahua, I was asked to interpret consecutively for the many visiting groups of American church groups and pastors for seminars and training, the orphanage staff or during chapel. At that time, I couldn’t have told you the difference between interpreting and translating, however I loved the challenge of interpreting theological words like atonement and inerrancy. I was always spurred on to look up the words that I didn’t know while everything was fresh in my head, a practice that I still keep to this day.
2. Later on, back in North Carolina, I worked as a Landscape designer and liaison between homeowners and the installation crews implementing the project. It presented me with somewhat of a dilemma, as I also wanted my Hispanic co-workers to learn English. I wanted them to feel comfortable communicating and saw this as an integral part of their ability to adapt to life in the United States and be involved in the community, their children’s lives and school activities. As a result, I would do a site walk through with the crew leader and customer making a point to speak in English. Afterwards, if there were any questions that our crew leader had, I would answer them in Spanish. More than anything, I was helping to facilitate communication and build trust between both parties—a crucial component of any interpretation interaction.
3. As a horticulture science major, we were required to take two levels of plant identification. Besides learning trees, shrubs, bulbs, perennials and groundcovers and their distinguishing characteristics, we also had to know the botanical name and family name (Latin) in addition to the common name. There were more than 600 plants total between both levels, which broke down to 30-40 plant names a week. I found myself enjoying the class because of the challenge and because it involved words and spelling in the study of plants. As I have begun delving into the complexities of the human body and learning the myriad of suffixes, pre-fixes and root words, I’ve been reunited with an old, familiar friend; Latin root words.

As a medical interpreter student, I am encouraged to find such a strong, tight knit, yet extremely professional community within interpretation. In all my levels of interpreter training, I have met individuals that are willing to help and share their knowledge and experience. I am excited to have the resources and blueprints for success that organizations such as CATI and AHEC have offered. I am also honored to have the opportunity to have studied under two amazing professors in Arelys Chevalier (AHEC) and Yasmin Metivier (Panoltia Inc.) Both of these women are not only world class interpreters, but have done as much to champion and promote Interpreter education, training and certification commensurate with the explosive growth that North Carolina has experienced in the past 15 years and fueled the growing need for competent interpreters in various disciplines. ●

## Are Translators Luddites?

By John Milan, [john@gypsytranslations.com](mailto:john@gypsytranslations.com); ATA Certified Translator (Portuguese/Spanish to English), economist, and independent researcher. He is currently serving as Vice President of CATI.



One night, in 1811, a group of men from a village just north of Nottingham, England, gathered outside of a shop and made a collective decision: they were going to destroy the machines that were threatening their livelihood and way of life. As they burst into a room filled with a half dozen weaving machines, they imagined a future in which their actions might be the first step in turning the tide against a rising industrial revolution. They smashed the equipment. Then they ran off into the night, pleased with their deed, and emboldened by the thought that if enough people reacted in a similar way, these devices might be put into its proper place: subservient to men, rather than supplanting them.

And of course, there is Google Translate, a free online service with enough capital and intellectual power behind it to make even the most stalwart of translators tremble.

The group claimed inspiration from a man they called “Captain Ludd” or “King Ludd” – a reference to Ned Ludd, a weaver from the region who had allegedly stood up to mistreatment a few decades earlier by destroying a pair of knitting frames. Their movement, though apolitical and at times disorganized, became known as the Luddites. For years they managed to wreak havoc throughout England. Their stated objective was to prevent “all machinery hurtful to commonality”, which meant, as a group of Luddites explained in a letter in 1812, not all machines or all technology; only that which could do harm to the common good.

They lived in a time of great social upheaval and economic distress. Their movement was about much more than technology, one of many factors enabling a revolution that was changing traditional ways of life and creating societal gaps. It was about growing inequality, poor working conditions, and the belief that their world was changing for the worse. But at the same time, technology was the most tangible of these factors, and as such, one that the average man could directly attack and hope to affect to some measure.

Fast forward to 2011. This “Luddite Bicentennial” seems a good opportunity for language-service professionals in general – and translators in particular – to pause and to take stock of their own modern technological reality. This is likewise a time of upheaval, with advances in artificial intelligence, software, and means of communication that threaten the way in which language services have been, and are being, rendered.

New technologies seem to appear every day, such as the telephone-software system that interprets in real time, or the application that can

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## New Student Members:

**Susan E. Zarate, Gaffney, SC**  
English<>Spanish T/I

**Rachael Lovelace, Gray Court, SC**  
English<>Spanish T/I  
Health Care, Law Enforcement, Education,  
Immigration, Speech Therapy, Literature

**Shaoyu Chang, Durham, NC**  
English<>Chinese T  
Medicine, health care, pharmacology, radiology,  
physical therapy, psychiatry

**Mar Gutiérrez, Chapel Hill, NC**  
English<>Spanish T/I  
Education, linguistics, literature, health care,  
medical

**Justin Byrum, Graham, NC**  
English<>Spanish T/I  
Insurance, education, medicine



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**Sandy Reul, Secretary**  
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**Severina Pagliara, Treasurer**  
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**Graciela White, Director**  
[ggwhite@nc.rr.com](mailto:ggwhite@nc.rr.com)

**Director (To Be Announced)**

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## Are Translators Luddites? (continued)

be downloaded onto a smart phone and uses the phone's camera to provide a rough translation of simple text almost instantaneously. And of course, there is Google Translate, a free online service with enough capital and intellectual power behind it to make even the most stalwart of translators tremble.

Translation and interpreting are among the world's oldest professions. They have been conducted in a fashion that varied little from generation to generation. From the solitary scribe toiling away over barely legible sacred texts to the bilingual envoy charged with delivering news that might very well result in his own demise, skilled polyglots were a limited bunch whose ability to do their job depended upon studying, memorizing, and faithfully reproducing communications among distinct groups.

Yet now, with a few keystrokes on a laptop, or a camera phone with the right application, translation and interpreting are truly at the fingertips of the masses. No longer must the monolingual wonder in a mixture of fear, distrust, and amazement about what "foreigners" are saying or thinking. With the technology now at their disposal, people are able to read and to hear and to gain a basic understanding of what is being said and written in another language.

This is a major breakthrough.

For those in language services, it is an essential point to keep in mind, because while rightfully concerned about quality and accuracy, translators and interpreters are not terribly representative of the population at large. They may quibble over the right word, tone, or register, but these are the details, the trees in the forest, and not the larger communication picture. Despite their best intentions, "good enough" translations may often be just that: good enough for the purposes in question. Far from perfect, with mistakes here and there, but they get the job done.

Which raises the question: What, if anything, should translators and interpreters do?

Like the Luddites of the early 19th century, today's language professionals face forces beyond their control, and with certain technologies, beyond their comprehension. Translation and interpreting technology is a small part of a much larger revolution in the way in which people communicate, do business, and interact on a global scale. It provides a means to an end: to understand what is going on in another part of the world, or to communicate with someone when a common language is not shared.

This technology exists because it solves a problem in a useful way. Most people do not competently speak multiple languages and may not have the means, desire, or wherewithal to develop these skills. Thus, it is much easier for them to rely on imperfect technological solutions, which will continue to be developed and to improve. As more people become aware of and familiar with these technologies, they will adopt them and begin using them in novel ways, not just for chatting online or understanding a menu while on vacation, but eventually to make legal decisions and to conduct business.

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## ePresents for the Holidays

by John Rock, [tranlink@earthlink.net](mailto:tranlink@earthlink.net);

Several years ago my son unwittingly made family history by giving the first ePresent in the family. That year my children had clubbed together to allow me to replace my old laptop with a fast, brand new, fifteen inch Windows XP model, with a CD disk drive.

Imagine my consternation on examining this wonderful gift to find out it had no 3 ½" floppy drive. I knew I could load programs using the CD drive, but how was I going to get data out to the desk-top?

My son just smiled and gave me a suspiciously small present to open. Inside was a 128 kB memory stick, my very first. Nowadays there's no translator who travels without a thumb drive adorning their neck, unless of course they are actually wearing jewellery.

For some years before that I had used zip drives to transfer data between systems, because as the logical extension of the disk drive technology they continued to be much cheaper and not all systems had USB ports. The thumb drives finally made any competition for portable memory as obsolete as the dodo bird. Now I have so many memory sticks that can I never remember where I left which drive.

This year I decided to reorganize the jump drives, and transfer their contents and the various hard drives onto one external terabyte drive where hopefully I could find anything I wanted. As with all my projects,

**And when push comes to shove, if you are not one of the younger generation translators and cannot be bothered with all this interconnectedness with YouTube and Facebook or gaming, the cheapest most basic laptop will serve.**

it was not before time. Once done, I wondered why I had not thought of it before.

I was fortunate that my new lap top had built in WiFi but I rarely used it. At first WiFi hot spots were few and far between, and I had to purchase access everytime. So for the longest while I continued to tote telephone cords to hook up to a telephone jack and I could use my dial up modem in the house or hotel where I was staying. This year I threw out my telephone cords and only packed a broadband connector cable.

The problem with traveling is that I am accustomed to twin screens to translate, and without twin screens it is not impossible but rather cramped and slow. I soon discovered to my chagrin that the video card in my particular laptop would not support twin monitors. Notwithstanding the price of laptops was dropping like a stone and it was more

*Continued on page 8.*

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## Student Contribution Memberships

Students can earn a year's membership by making a contribution to CATI in the form of an article for the *CATI Quarterly*, volunteering at a CATI event like the annual CATI Conference and/or workshops, or submit a 500-word essay on a topic related to the translation and interpreting professions. Students are encouraged to come up with own contribution. The board is open to suggestions.

Please contact Heather Hille, CATI Administrator, with your suggested contribution, at [catiadmin@catiweb.org](mailto:catiadmin@catiweb.org).

## ePresents for the Holidays (continued)

expedient to buy a second laptop for display purposes and also to help out with the electronic dictionaries. I looked at small notebooks, but for the extra outlay, another laptop was a better buy.

But lugging two laptops was a dead weight, and my computer bag was already splitting at the seams. It was time to invest in a computer roller bag. Once I did I wondered why I ever bothered to put out my shoulder and spine hefting a computer bag. Travel with a laptop was so much simpler.

A lot of translators seem quite comfortable using a laptop to translate. Not me. I do not like being hunched over the keyboard at an uncomfortable distance from the screen or having the laptop sitting at its designated spot, my lap, burning the top of my thighs.. I like a curved ergonomic keyboard with a numeric pad and a separate ergonomic mouse, and the screen at a comfortable ergonomic distance. So the external mouse and keyboard were essential components for my computer travel bag.

My working laptop is getting old and cantankerous so I have been eyeing the sexy new models in the computer store. There is such a confusing variety of models to choose from at an equally confusing variety of prices. I liked the idea of a 17.6" screen model, but good luck on finding a computer travel bag that is wide enough. Probably for those translators who are enamored of CAT tools, the extra real estate of 17.6" screen is a worthwhile feature. I am not. And when push comes to shove, if you are

**All those literary works I have ogled for years and dismissed as an unnecessary expense in these frugal times, are now only a few mouse clicks away.**

not one of the younger generation translators and cannot be bothered with all this interconnectedness with YouTube and Facebook or gaming, the cheapest most basic laptop will serve.

Dictionaries had always been a problem traveling. I used to take a handful of core dictionaries for three languages and refuse to accept jobs for a fourth. That was okay when traveling by car or ship. But today with restrictions on air baggage, it is a real problem. Gradually I weaned myself away from the hard copy dictionaries and actively sought out electronic dictionaries. Right now I only have a small CD case for my electronic dictionaries and I rely on the Internet for the rest.

But when I am back in my office and pick up my old, well-thumbed dictionaries, one or two of which are falling apart, I feel a certain affection that I never feel for my electronic dictionaries. These hard-copies are like old friends, we have been through thick and thin together.

Which brings me right up to the present. No pun intended. I had intimations from my children that I was going to receive a Kindle for Christmas. It was something I had looked into but was not enthusiastic about. I had offered to buy one for my youngest son for college, and he wisely refused, since he could not get the textbooks he needed from the Kindle



store. My big problem was quite different, in that I do not have good WiFi reception in my area, except at local hot spots. If there were such reception I would have bought a Blackberry or an iPhone ages ago in order to have the connectivity and the email ability. But - and this is a huge caveat - I find it difficult to read the bloody little screens. For me jumping from a 21" screen to a 5" screen is like entering Lilliputia. The most tempting was the iPad but the initial outlay and service fees put it out of my league as a costly non-essential. Besides which it does not have a USB port to download data. I would have to resend an email to myself to transfer data to my laptop. Not exactly a non-starter, rather more of an inconvenience.

So Christmas day rolled around and I received a Kindle and believe it or not my enthusiasm for the device warmed considerably. I spent the day after Christmas exploring the Kindle store.

First, there do not seem to be any bilingual dictionaries except at the most elementary level. I confess I have not fully explored what kind of search facilities the Kindle affords, although I know it is easy to access Wikipedia and Google. There do appear however to be a smattering of monolingual dictionaries which could conceivably be useful. There are language learning books and basic dictionaries for the adventuresome translator/interpreter on their next foreign travel vacation.

I did however find foreign language books by some of my favorite authors, although not their most recent works. Seeing I cannot find them in the local bookstore and there are no shipping charges, it definitely makes it a snap. Original works which are out of copyright are either free or only a minimal charge. All those literary works I have ogled for years and dismissed as an unnecessary expense in these frugal times, are now only a few mouse clicks away.

The one feature I did like is that I can upload a PDF from my PC to the Kindle, so that for short trips, I should be able to use the Kindle as a display device for source text. And only take one laptop with me. Even when the source text is in Word you can print it as a PDF, although I am not sure just which versions of Word have this feature. Although the Kindle does not have a stand, you can easily make one out of cardboard, or use a cheap plastic paper holder and a rubber band.

Definitely the most "wanna have" features of the Kindle are its compact size, so I do not have to carry even a paper back book in my computer case; the ability to read its electronic ink in bright sunlight, or a portable LED light when the other passengers are asleep; its free WiFi anywhere in the world - a big plus for translators and interpreters, and its capability to serve as an MP3 player - One less thing I have to carry!

My overall opinion is that it is only going to get better, there is going to be a bigger and better selection. The newer devices are going to have more features. Though what I am seeking is a device where I can receive and send email, even if I have to pay for connectivity.

So for the bibliophile in your family or even yourself, I can give the Kindle a positive recommendation. Plus gift cards are readily available, and make a convenient and thoughtful gift. Even so, as a long term reader, I still have a hankering for the physical satisfaction of turning the page. ●

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In 2008, the Board of Directors of CATI established the “Learning the Ropes” Program in an attempt to encourage translation and interpreting (T&I) knowledge exchange among CATI members. The goal of this Program is to promote the leadership of more experienced CATI members by making themselves available to student members or less experienced CATI members who are presently working or are planning to work in the fields of translation and interpreting.

### Program Participants

- Coordinator: a focal point of contact for this initiative.
- Mentors: CATI members with a minimum of 5 years of T&I work experience, who are willing to share their time and wisdom with individuals recently initiated into the professions of translation and interpreting.
- Mentees: CATI regular or student members in need of professional support.

Email [catiadmin@catiweb.org](mailto:catiadmin@catiweb.org) if you have questions.

## Cognates: False, Fractured, Shrinking, and Sliding

by William N. “Mac” McElrath, [macandbetty@nc.rr.com](mailto:macandbetty@nc.rr.com), the only Indonesian interpreter currently listed in CATI, and the author of sixty published books in two different languages.



Every member of CATI – indeed, every language student – knows the pitfall of false cognates. *Merci* does not mean “mercy” in French; *suceso* does not mean “success” in Spanish.

Indonesian, the national language of the world’s fourth most populous country, has a huge number of cognates. They might help you get off to a fast start, as you ride in a *mobil*, a *bis*, a *truk*, or some other means of transportasi. You might eat an *apel*, a *pepaya*, a *mangga*, a *tomat*, or a *bit* (beet). You might speak into a *telepon* or a *mikrofon*. You might work

as a *sekretaris*, a *notaris*, or a *guru* – perhaps in *bisnis* or *industri*, or at a bank or on a *kampus universitas*.

## Modern Indonesian is a fascinating amalgam of Malayo-Polynesian, Sanskrit, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, and English.

In your work you might need a **komputer**, as well as a **buku** and a **bol-poin** (ballpoint) for making notes. If you are **efektif** in your work and **sensitif** to what is vital, if you show **loyalitas** and real **dedikasi** to your **organisasi**, you might get promoted to the staf **managemen**, or even to an **eksekutif** position as **koordinator** or **direktur**. But if you take a merely **pasif** attitude, if you show lack of **konsentrasi** or **ambisi** or **disiplin**, then this might prove fatal to your hopes.

Yet – as with any other pair of languages – some of those similarities to English might mislead you. Modern Indonesian is a fascinating amalgam of Malayo-Polynesian, Sanskrit, Arabic, Portuguese, Dutch, and English. In the ongoing linguistic process, Indonesians have come up with what might be called fractured cognates: *English-sounding words that have split into two different words with two different meanings*. For instance:

**Dokter** means a physician; *doktor* means an advanced degree.

**Moril** and **materil** may refer to moral and material support; but *moral* only means ethical, while *material* means rocks piled beside the road – highway-building material, nothing more.

**Konsepsi** means concept; *konsep* is merely an unofficial rough draft.

Remembering that *l* and *r* often change places in Asian languages, it should not surprise you to learn that **lapor** refers to a report; but **rapor** is merely a school-kid’s report card.

This brings up another pitfall for speakers of **Inggris**: Indonesians have also formed many shrinking cognates, by narrowing the definitions of words that still sound like English. Unwary foreigners may make themselves ridiculous when they try to use such terms in the original wider meanings. A few examples, limited to a single letter of the alphabet:

**Kontrak**: Only a residence lease, not any other type of contract.

**Kongres**: Only a convention, not an ongoing legislative body.

**Komplex** or kompleks: Only a related cluster of buildings.

**Konsumsi**: Only the refreshments that are “consumed” at a meeting or a party.

**Kristen**: Only a non-Katolik Christian. (The plot thickens because several large Indonesian denominations are identified only as Kristen or Protestan, without a more specific designation.)

**Komplit**: A term on the menu meaning that potatoes and vegetables are included with your entree.

**Kontrol**: A manhole (for “controlling” the water main or sewer line running underneath).

## Indonesians have also formed many shrinking cognates, by narrowing the definitions of words that still sound like English.

Yet another sub-species of false cognates in Indonesian might be called sliding cognates. Sometimes the “sliding” seems to occur in sound and spelling, caused by the fact that the Indonesian term comes from Dutch rather than from a similar word in English. For instance:

**Publikasi** means publicity, not publication.

**Konsekwen** means consistent, not consequent.

**Vakansi** means vacation, not vacancy.

**Motor** means motorcycle, not motor (also used figuratively for the moving spirit in a group or committee).

Sometimes, though, the “sliding” involves a related but by no means identical definition of a word:

**Cross-country** refers to any kind of hiking, even on a paved road.

**Protokol** (in popular Indonesian usage) means master of ceremonies.

**Dokumentasi** means taking photographs to record who is in attendance.

A memorable example of a sliding cognate is **paddy**, the English word for rice field. But padi in Indonesian means harvested rice that has not yet been threshed! How did this “sliding” occur? Probably because an unwary European mistook an Asian’s meaning in pointing to ripened sheaves that had just been gathered in beside a rice field.

Thanks for joining me in this rather lighthearted look at several varied forms of false cognates that turn up in my other language besides English. Now maybe you’ll be more alert to similar pitfalls in yours! ●

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## Are Translators Luddites? (continued)

This reality is quickly approaching, and language-service professionals need to prepare. How will they face this future? Will they recognize that technology has indeed changed the industry, and they will have to adapt their business models accordingly? Or will they seek to organize in the night and make plans to break the machines of the 21st century?

There are, of course, plenty of possibilities in between; but the point is – the future for language services is now; and the sooner this future is embraced, the sooner translators and interpreters will be able to determine their roles in it. ●

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1. <http://zekeweeks.com/2010/03/03/real-life-babelfish-the-translating-telephone/>
2. <http://questvisual.com/> (Word Lens)
3. *How Translation Software Saves a Mother Tongue*, Clive Thompson, June 22, 2010 | 12:00 pm | Wired July 2010

## Looking Beyond Bilingualism

by Eta Trabing

“I’m bilingual, and I think I’d like to be a translator or interpreter. What else do I need to consider?”

So glad you asked! It means you know that having two languages does not make you a translator or interpreter any more than having two hands makes you a pianist. In both cases it takes a lot of study and practice. But let’s back up to more basic questions: What does the work actually involve? Do I have the personality type and the aptitudes and interests I’ll need for success in this field?

For translation you must know the target language (the one you will be translating into) in great depth, and your grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation should be nearly perfect. You must love words and be detail-oriented, for you will often have to research a word or phrase diligently until you find just the right translation for the context.

As a translator, you must also have practical and theoretical experience and knowledge in the fields you choose to work in before you can turn out a good translation, and you must be familiar with business and technical terminology.

For interpretation you must know both the target language and the source language (the one you will be interpreting from) very well indeed. It is one thing to speak a language fluently when you get to choose the words you want to use; it is an entirely different matter to speak it well enough to use the exact grammar, syntax and words that someone else chooses, and to convey the exact message and tone expressed by the speaker, without error. *If you know someone who would benefit from reading this entire article, **Looking Beyond Bilingualism**, they can find this article at [www.catiweb.org/becoming.htm](http://www.catiweb.org/becoming.htm).*



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