



InterPRESS

A quarterly publication of the Arizona Court Interpreters Association Fall 2008

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FALL PLENARY MEETING

Join us

**Saturday, September 27, 2008
10:30am – 4:00pm**

at the

**Phoenix Saguaro Library
2808 North 46th Street
Phoenix, Arizona**

for the

ARIZONA COURT INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION

**FALL PLENARY MEETING
AND
NON-LANGUAGE SPECIFIC TRAINING**

GANGS AND DRUGS*

*** EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT GANGS AND DRUGS
BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK**

Admission will be free for Members and \$25.00 for Non-members or Guests.

Please pre-register in order to ensure that the appropriate materials are prepared.

**To Register contact Kathy Schaben KMSchaben@aol.com
For Directions contact Blanca Lucht at BLucht1@cox.net**

A Message from the President



Dear Members:

There appears to be some confusion as to renewal of membership and the related dues. Therefore, in an effort to ensure that all our members who wish to retain active membership are able to do so, ACIA's Board has made the decision to relax attendance requirements for this year's sessions. This action is being taken to assist all members with the transition to the most recently adopted by-laws requiring a minimum of 2 meeting per year. The Board is extremely pleased with member participation at the events offered this year and plans to offer an increased calendar for next year focusing on our goal of variety in both topics and venues.

I would like to take the opportunity to announce that I have appointed David Svoboda as our new Treasurer he will take over the position left vacant by Sandra Feijóo-Negrón. ACIA has also retained the services of a book-keeper, Tammy Mascareñas. David and Tammy will be working together and have already taken our record-keeping into the 21st century.

The next two ACIA events will focus on forensic issues. At the Fall Plenary we will offer presentations on Drugs and Gangs and at the November 1st meeting to be held in Florence we will offer a presentation on Psychosexual Evaluations. These topics were requested by our members. I encourage you to contact the Board with any suggestion as to presenter, topic or location. Our workshops in Kingman (page 4) were the result of just such a request

Hope to see you all at the Fall Plenary!

Blanca Lucht
President

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Edward Adel, Arabic, Phoenix
Ana Arvayo, Spanish, Mesa
Judith Costello, Spanish, Flagstaff
Victor Jasso, Spanish, Naco
María Madrid, Spanish, Phoenix
Dana Petras, Czech, Mesa
Verónica Muñoz, Spanish, Phoenix
Laura Mata, Spanish, Kingman
Jane Xu, Mandarin, Mesa
Cristina Moldovan do Amaral,
Romanian, Phoenix

ACIA COMMITTEES LIST

Program Committee:
Chairperson, Kathleen Schaben
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Membership Committee:
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Education Committee:
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Ethics Committee:
Chairperson, Kathleen Schaben
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Non-Language Specific Delegate:
Juan Cordova
Juan.Cordova@cityofmesa.org

Parliamentarian:
Ricardo Gonzalez
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Certification Committee

Fundraising Committee

If you would like to join a Committee
please contact the Board

ACIA Fall Plenary Meeting Agenda

September 27, 2008 Phoenix, Arizona
 The Phoenix Saguaro Library
 2808 N. 46th Street Phoenix, Arizona

GANGS AND DRUGS*

*EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT GANGS AND DRUGS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

10:30am to 11:00am	Registration
11:00am to 1:00pm	<p>Drugs</p>  <p>Detective Benjamin Felice Scottsdale Police Department</p>
1:00pm to 2:00pm	<p>Lunch On Your Own Suggestions for Nearby Eateries <i>Within Walking Distance</i> Coco's / Subway / Papa Johns Strip Mall Right Around the Corner Schlotzsky's / Chipotle's / Taco Bell / Chili's.</p>
2:00pm to 4:00pm	<p>Gangs</p>  <p>Detective James Hill Scottsdale Police Department</p>

Directions

Saguaro is located on 46th Street just south of Thomas Road.

Admission will be free for Members and \$25.00 for Non-members or Guests.
 Please pre-register in order to ensure that the appropriate materials are prepared.

To Register contact Kathy Schaben KMSchaben@aol.com
 For Directions contact Blanca Lucht at BLucht1@cox.net



Mohave Superior Court

KINGMAN ARIZONA May 17, 2008



Kingman Municipal Court

On May 17, 2008, ACIA once again “boldly went where it had not gone before”, enlisted the teaching skills of Education Chair Scott Loos, 1st VP Kathleen Schaben and President Blanca Lucht and offered a presentation and skills workshops in Kingman, Arizona.

The event was held in a very large room at the Mohave Community College and attended by local interpreters working in Superior, Justice and Municipal Courts.

The day began with an overview and discussion of the Interpreter Code of Ethics. That was followed by intermediate/advanced workshops in each of the three interpreting modes, Consecutive Interpretation, Sight Translation and Simultaneous Interpretation. The attendees worked very hard and enjoyed the workshops so much that we were asked to hold at least one or two meetings a year in Kingman. We hope to go back early next year.

The meeting in Kingman was an excellent example of what ACIA is all about. The events were planned in accordance with the requests of the attendees who suggested not only the location (great place) but also the subject matter and skill level. We wish to thank Vilma Weigand and Laura Mata, interpreters working out of Kingman, for all of their help - we could not have done it without them!



Vilma Weigand receives a Certificate of Appreciation from ACIA President Blanca Lucht





Meetings of the Non Language Specific Group

By: Juan Carlos Córdova, NLS Delegate

May 2, 2008, Judicial Court Observation, Explanation and Expectations from the Bench

June 20, 2008 Alphabet Soup

So far this year the Non-Language Specific group has held two very successful training sessions, the first one in May and the second one in June. The presenters included the Mesa City Court Presiding Judge, the Hon. Matt Tafoya, a senior City of Mesa prosecutor, Bill Burk, as well as Juan C. Cordova, Mesa City Court interpreter supervisor and Delegate of the Non-language Specific group. The first presentation was titled: *“Municipal Court Observation, Explanations and Expectations from the Bench,”* and the second one was: *“Alphabet Soup”*. Almost all the attendees were ACIA members who came from all over the state, including Yuma County, Santa Cruz County, Pinal County, Maricopa County, and Pima County. (The total tally for both presentations was over 35 attendees!)

The first presentation included observation in a variety of court events, including arraignments, pretrials and a motions hearing. The observation was followed by Q&A about the court events, procedures, language and law. Judge Tafoya kindly fielded questions from all the attendees and addressed expectations from the bench. Interpreter protocol and legal obligations were also discussed.

The second presentation, “Alphabet Soup,” was a very lively presentation that provided a long list of acronyms and abbreviations commonly used in court. What made this NLS presentation special was the fact that Mr. Bill Burk not only provided the acronyms/abbreviations and their definitions, but he also provided an extensive explanation as to how each term fits and how it is used within the legal framework, and in some cases he even provided historical background to better explain the meaning.

We wish to express our appreciation to Judge Matt Tafoya and Attorney Bill Burk as well as to the attendees who made these meetings a resounding success.

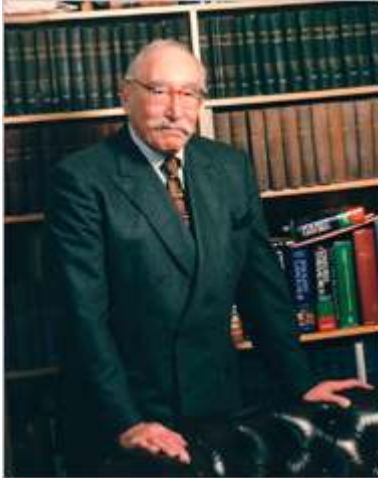
A reminder to our members: you are encouraged to suggest topics for future presentations. Remember, our goal is to meet your needs and provide you the training that will benefit you the most.

Laurence Urdang, Language Expert Who Edited Dictionaries, Dies at 81

By [BRUCE WEBER](#)

Published: August 26, 2008 New York Times

Laurence Urdang, a prolific lexicographer who had a hand in more than 100 dictionaries and other reference books, died on Thursday in Branford, Conn.



He was 81 and lived in Old Lyme, Conn. The cause was congestive heart failure, said his daughter Alexandra.

As the managing editor of the first edition of the [Random House](#) Dictionary of the English Language — a 9 1/4-pound, 2,091-page volume defining more than 260,000 terms, which appeared in 1966 and was the first dictionary to be organized with the aid of a computer — Mr. Urdang presided over a seven-year research and compilation project that, at a cost of \$3 million, was, at the time, the largest undertaking in the history of Random House, a company founded in 1925. But it was merely a foundation for a career that, in so many words, encompassed so many words.

Mr. Urdang's view of language was that of an enjoyer, someone who delighted in its flexibility and invention, rather than that of a guardian always on alert against violations of precedent. In 1974 he was the founding editor of *Verbatim*, a respected quarterly newsletter on language that melded academic treatments of linguistic topics ("Southern Amerind Lexical Contributions") and more amused and amusing stories with titles like "Ooglication in American English Slang" and "Prep School Slangage."

His dictionaries, too, were wide ranging in their intended audiences and level of scholarliness. He wrote a dictionary of advertising terms, a dictionary of synonyms and antonyms, a medical and nursing dictionary, a dictionary of confusable words; at his death he was working on a dictionary of nautical and maritime words.

He wrote or edited books on nicknames, prefixes, suffixes, allusions, slogans and biblical quotations. "-Ologies and -Isms" was a compilation of words used to name or describe "theories, concepts, doctrines, systems, attitudes, practices, states of mind and branches of science" and emphasizing those with particular suffixes: -ology, -ism, -graphy, -metry, -archy, -cide, -philia, -phobia, -mancy and -latry. *Logophile*, for instance: "A lover of words. Also called philologue, philologist."

Mr. Urdang — he had a middle name, his daughter Nicole said, "but he would not rest peacefully if it appeared in print" — was born in Manhattan on March 21, 1927. His father was a high school principal.

He graduated from the Fieldston School in the Bronx and served in the United States Naval Reserve at the end of World War II. According to a story he told his family, on his discharge the Navy gave him a battery of aptitude tests, and he scored in the 99th percentile of all of them, making it impossible for the officer in charge of the tests to recommend a career. It was his wife, Irena Urdang de Tour, whom he married in 1952, who suggested that someone with such an encyclopedic turn of mind would be suited for writing dictionaries.

Though he and his wife divorced in 1983, and they lived apart, she in Saybrook Point in Old Saybrook, Conn., they remained a couple, their daughters said. In addition to his ex-wife and his daughters Alexandra, who lives in Manhattan and Quogue, N.Y., and Nicole, of Buffalo, Mr. Urdang is survived by three grandchildren. His sister, the poet Constance Urdang, died in 1996.

Mr. Urdang graduated from Columbia and did graduate work there in linguistics, studying Russian, German, Latin, Greek, Sanskrit and Polish. He was a lecturer in linguistics at [New York University](#) from 1956 to 1961, and his first job in publishing was as an associate editor in the dictionary department at Funk & Wagnalls. He never did complete a graduate degree, however, stopping short of his dissertation.

"He always said he considered the Random House dictionary his dissertation," Nicole Urdang said. In 1969 he started Laurence Urdang Inc., a company with offices in Connecticut and Aylesbury, England. It published not only *Verbatim* but also some 150 books, his own and others', on words and language.

In 1972 he compiled [The New York Times](#) Everyday Reader's Dictionary of Misunderstood, Misused, and Mispronounced Words. It was a book that was not supposed to be a comprehensive work, just an enjoyable one for word enthusiasts.

Or, as Mr. Urdang put it himself in the introduction:

"This is not a succedaneum for satisfying the nympholepsy of nullifidians. Rather it is hoped that the haecceity of this enchiridion of arcane and recondite sesquipedalian items will appeal to the oniomania of an eximious Gemeinschaft whose legerity and sopsrosyne, whose Sprachgefühl and orexis will find more than fugacious fulfillment among its felicific pages."

Decisions for the Judiciary Interpreter

By: Scott Loos, Education Chair

Spanish judiciary interpreters often have difficulties in managing the various terms for the decisions made by the judges in Spanish and English. As with most legal interlingual balancing, there are often five terms on one side of the page that morph into one on the other side; or vice versa, depending on the history. What follows is an overview and some usage notes on the terminology used in our two languages:

ruling	When the attorneys bring an issue before the judge and want a decision on the law or the cause in general, they are asking for a ruling . Also called a “legal ruling.”	Any of the not-so-legal terms “ decisión or resolución ” work here.
finding	When the judge determines a fact based on evidence brought during a trial or hearing. Also called “ a finding of fact ”	Declaratoria or fallo
decision	When the court makes a determination based on its consideration of the facts and the law. It usually refers to the determination that disposes of the case.	Spanish uses sentencia or fallo , but determinación would work as well. Remember that a sentencia especially and frequently for a fallo , this refers to the disposition of a case.
holding; to hold;	When the court makes a determination about a matter of law that goes directly to its overall decision of the matter. It is noted in the opinion . “This month in an important victory for free speech on campus, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit held that <u>Temple University’s former sexual harassment policy was unconstitutional.</u> ” –Insidehighered.com	Spanish uses the Latinism ratio decidendi ” literally, reason for deciding, translated to Spanish as “ razonamiento decisivo, ” which brings us to “ razonar. ”
opinion	When a court makes a decision in a case, they give reasons for the decision, expressed in a written statement called the opinion .	Spanish refers to a ponencia and therefore a ponente . The ponente is the appellate court judge whose turn it is to oversee the hearing of a case. In general, the opinion is referred to as a dictamen , a fairly broad meaning which refers to the opinion of an expert witness as well. El 17 de marzo de 2006, fueron recibidas las actuaciones en la Corte de Apelaciones del Circuito Judicial Penal del Estado Táchira, a cargo de los ciudadanos jueces José Joaquín Bermúdez Cuberos, Jafeth Vicente Pons Briñez y Gersón Alexander Niño (ponente), la cual declinó el conocimiento a la Sala de Casación Penal del Tribunal Supremo de Justicia, para resolver el conflicto de competencia de conocer planteado. (Venezuela) La sentencia, de la que ha sido ponente el presidente del Tribunal Superior extremeño, Julio Márquez de Prado, reconoce la existencia de esas contradicciones en el veredicto del jurado (Spain) El Tribunal Superior de Justicia dictamina , citando al Supremo, que a los jurados no les corresponde tampoco apreciar atenuantes.

<p>dictum; pl. dicta</p>	<p>The statement of the court expressing an opinion or belief that holds weight due to the status or authority of the person making it.</p> <p>The Court most recently mentioned the Second Amendment in dicta in <i>United States v. Verdugo-Urquidez</i>, 110 S. Ct. 1839 (1990). <i>Verdugo-Urquidez</i> was a citizen and resident of Mexico, and a drug dealer..." "the Supreme Court and The Second Amendment"</p>	<p>Spanish also refers to obiter dictum.</p> <p>Por lo que el fallo en el que hoy se concurre, debió contener un OBITER DICTUM O LLAMADO DE PAZ O REFLEXIÓN que en esencia constituye un llamado de atención para que en lo sucesivo se resuelvan estas solicitudes con estricta sujeción a los plazos que establece la Ley especial de Protección a las víctimas... [Venezuela]</p> <p>La falta de crítica al argumento que constituye el meollo de la resolución -a lo que se agrega o a uno de esos argumentos de por sí suficientes para sustentar el "dictum", en el supuesto que existan varios con tales características- hace que no pueda quedar enervada, en la segunda instancia, al no haber sido objeto de estudio o análisis el eventual error o insuficiencia... (Argentina)</p>
<p>judgment</p>	<p>The final determination by the court as to a case.</p> <p>Defendant, Hatem Naji Fariz, by and through undersigned counsel, and pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 29(c)(1), respectfully requests that this Honorable Court enter a judgment of acquittal on the remaining counts against Mr. Fariz, namely Counts [Federal Court motion]</p>	<p>sentencia is probably the best equivalent; Spanish law normally refers to the <i>sentencia</i> que ...pone fin al pleito o el juicio en lo civil, ...y resolviendo en lo penal la condena o absolución del procesado.</p> <p>La sentencia definitiva de la causa, caratulada como "Hecho punible contra el orden tributario y contra la Ley 71/53 se dio a conocer cerca de las 23:00, tras una larga deliberación del Tribunal integrado por los abogados Carlos Domínguez, Rosa de Jesús Quiñónez y Rubén Morínigo. [Paraguay]</p>

New Treasurer Appointed

ACIA is pleased to announce that President Blanca Lucht recently appointed David Svoboda to fill the Treasurer position left vacant by Sandra Feijoó-Negrón. We wish to thank Sandra for her contribution and likewise to thank David for his willingness to take on the duties of Treasurer.

David Svoboda has a BA in Spanish, and a minor in Mathematics from Ithaca College, 1999. He earned an MA in Translation and Interpretation (English <> Spanish) from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in May of 2004.

In August of 2004 Mr. Svoboda moved to Phoenix, AZ and began to work as a court interpreter for Maricopa County Superior Court. During his tenure he has worked in several different areas of the court and is currently assigned to the criminal trial group. In addition, Mr. Svoboda transcribes and translates audio recordings for Superior Court criminal cases.

Mr. Svoboda also performs freelance translation work, primarily in the Financial Services and Medical Device fields. Prior to obtaining his Master's degree, Mr. Svoboda worked as a freelance translator and medical interpreter.



Sarah Seebeck

PROFILE

*Office of the Federal Public Defender
District of Arizona
Phoenix*



Cathy Betancourt

What is your position and how long you have been with the Office of the Federal Public Defender?

We work as staff interpreters at the Office of the Federal Public Defender, District of Arizona, Phoenix. I've worked here for 7 months, and Cathy has been here for 2 ½ years. Previously, we both worked as staff court interpreters at the Superior Court of Maricopa County for 3 and 5 ½ years, respectively.

How is the office set up: coordinator/administrator, support staff? Senior interpreter/administrator? Administrative duties rotated among staff interpreters?

Because we are staff interpreters who work for the attorneys of the Office of the Federal Public Defender and not for the District Court, our set-up is a little different from the one used for court-appointed staff interpreters. Cathy and I work as a team and are supervised by one of the more senior assistant federal public defenders. There are 20 trial attorneys and each attorney has his or her own support staff. Our administrative duties, albeit minimal, consist of timekeeping, scheduling interpreting appointments and replying to emails. We each are in charge of our own calendar, unless one of us is on leave. We are also responsible for making arrangements with contract interpreters for assignments on cases with Spanish speaking clients and for keeping up with related documentation for payment purposes.

How many interpreters does the Office employ?
Staff or contract?

Our office currently employs 2 full-time certified interpreters, Cathy and myself. Our office employs a receptionist who is a back-up for certain limited interpreting assignments when we are both handling other matters, which is a system that was put into place before either of us came on board. When we get overwhelmed with translation projects or when our interpreting appointments don't allow us time to work on translation projects, we sometimes will contract out translations. We currently have contracts with two federally certified freelance interpreters. We must ask an attorney supervisor for special approval before hiring them for assignments.

What are the qualifications for employment as an interpreter?

In order to qualify for employment as an interpreter at the Office of the Federal Public Defender, one must have at least 5 years of experience and be federally certified. A college education in the field or in a related field is preferred, although not required.

Do new interpreters receive any kind of training before they are given assignments?

There is no formal training or orientation. When I came on as the second interpreter for this office, I observed Cathy for a couple of days and from that point on we constantly consult one another regarding both interpreting and translating issues. We also consult interpreters outside the office when needed. We are both constantly consulting the attorneys in the office to orient us about the Federal system. This was one of the first things we each did when we were new. We are lucky enough to have access to the same information the attorneys do and are able to get whatever information we need to prepare. The attorneys we work with are great about teaching us about what they do so we can better interpret and translate in our current positions.

Does the Office offer on-going training for interpreters? Does the Office expect the interpreters to obtain job specific on-going training on their own?

As staff interpreters we have \$1,400 allotted for training each fiscal year. This allows both Cathy and me to attend NAJIT, ACIA and ATA conferences to receive training and discuss pertinent interpreting/translating issues with colleagues. Our office is very willing to send us to training and has even reimbursed amounts spent on training which exceeded the allotted amount.

Is there education/orientation for staff regarding use of interpreter and/or interpreter issues?

As staff interpreters we have a more direct relationship with the attorneys we interpret for. Therefore, when necessary, we educate them as to potential issues regarding the use of an interpreter whenever they come up. A big part of our job is educating attorneys on how to more effectively work with us.

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We frequently act as in-house experts for the office. For example, we may be asked to evaluate the quality of the translation of a waiver of rights form done by immigration. In addition, the Federal Public Defender is very interested in both assistant federal defenders and staff being educated about cultural issues and how to work with interpreters. We have recently put on related seminars for the office and CJA panel attorneys under the direction of The Federal Public Defender.

At what point in a case are interpreters assigned?

As staff interpreters, we are not officially appointed to cases in court but are assigned on a case for all privileged attorney-client communications as of the day of the initial appearance. Our office keeps a client card which indicates which clients need an interpreter. We start interpreting for Spanish-speaking clients from the initial attorney-client meeting and throughout the entire case. When our office receives notification that we are getting new cases, it usually contains information as to whether the client needs an interpreter. The United States Marshal Service sends the information about new arrests to our office and lets us know if an interpreter is needed and for what language. This information is reliable, for the most part.

How cases are assigned to each interpreter (whoever is available as in a 'pool' or specific cases assigned to specific interpreters for the duration)?

Translation projects are assigned according to current workload (taking into account both interpreting commitments and pending translation projects). Interpreting appointments are assigned after consulting calendars and pending translation projects. Because we don't assign cases to an individual interpreter per se, every time we get a request for a translation or interpreting appointment, we determine who will handle the matter based on availability and other considerations.

Are interpreter cases tracked? If so, how?

We keep a time log of each time we interpret for a client or translate a document for a particular client's case and

what type of proceeding the assignment was related to, such as sentencing, change of plea, etc. This time log includes how much time we spent on the actual assignment. If a case involves particularly technical terminology or if the facts are very unique, we do try to make sure the same interpreter handles the matter each time the attorney meets with the particular client.

What do you consider the most important interpreter issues faced by your Office at the moment?

Indigenous defendants who do not speak Spanish as their native language. This presents a problem because you first have to determine whether a person is not a native Spanish speaker, and then figure out what language they speak. A lot of defendants are reluctant to say they don't speak Spanish because they've heard it will delay their case.

Please feel free to add any comments.

Although we do not interpret for court proceedings on the record, we have a challenging position which involves diverse assignments. We get many different types of documents for translation, which often include plea agreements, attorney-client letters, medical documents, legal documents from Mexico, letters of recommendation, psychological evaluation reports, etc. We also sometimes do tape transcription and translation. We interpret at the Federal courthouse for attorney-client interviews at the lock-up and for video conferences. We also do interpreting in the courtroom off the record when requested. We are sometimes asked to go to hearings with the attorneys for special matters or when the attorney wants us there as his or her private expert. We each do jail visits in Florence and usually we each go once a week. We handle mostly reentry and immigration-related offenses, drug cases, and some fire arms cases. We have also had limited exposure to fraud-related cases. We also interpret in presentence interviews, free talks, and material witness interviews when requested to do so by our office. Our biggest challenge is balancing interpreting assignments, which often arise the day of or even at the last minute, with an ever increasing translation load.



MEMBERSHIP LIST ON THE WEB

Check out the membership list on the web site. It will be up-dated every quarter to coincide with the publication of the InterPRESS. To make corrections or to request that your information not be made public, please contact ekkseegrekzed@aol.com.

PROCEED WITH CAUTION

Recently, a federally-certified interpreter who was hired to interpret for a group of defendants arrested during a raid on a packing plant in Iowa has decided to step out and comment to the world about his experience there.

Ironically, his comments, expressed in a 14—page essay disseminated among other interpreters in the area have received a fairly large degree of media attention. In a field where our work almost never receives any attention from the press—as a matter of course, they cannot even learn that we are interpreters (how many captions have we seen saying “voice of translator” on the TV screen?) this interpreter’s comments have appeared in newspapers, TV pieces and internet debates since he decided to comment on his work.

Whatever the situation with the interpreted subjects, apparently a group of Guatemalans working illegally at a meat-packing plant, the ethical violations committed by Dr. Erik Camayd are relatively plain. The fact that a practicing interpreter opts to express his professional opinions on the likelihood of the interpreted subjects’ ability to understand the proceedings is not out of place. It falls to the interpreter to ensure that the listeners are able to field and process what the interpreter is saying—how many times have each of us interrupted a proceeding asking the English speakers to slow down, not so much because we are unable to follow the source utterance but because we are certain that the speed with which we are delivering the target version is unintelligible?—but the way in which Dr. Camayd has opted to communicate this is ethically defective.

Dr. Camayd mentions that he was originally hired to interpret an orientation on flood evacuation for the employees of a company. Somewhere along the line, this changed to a court proceeding regarding pleas of guilty to possession of forged documents by a group of 400 Guatemalan nationals. It seems that at that point, there might be some suspicion of a proceeding that one might not want to participate in. Comments like “It was very striking to see them shackled...” “They are not numbers, they are individuals, each with a personal tragedy” “She had no emotional privacy...” seem to go to Dr. Camayd’s subjective reaction to the way in

which the proceeding was held rather than the nature of the communication event. Every Spanish-English interpreter working in this country knows that the average Spanish-only defendant has a layman’s comprehension of the legal and courtroom discourse. Considering that Dr. Camayd is a professor at a university with a course of study designed to train interpreters, it seems odd to me that this would come as a surprise to him. I don’t know how many times Dr. Camayd has been in court, but as a rule, one of the first topics addressed in any course on ethics and standards of practice is that the interpreter must be inured to the rather harsh treatment of the criminal defendant by the court system and not become an advocate for those interpreted subjects (in this case, the Guatemalan defendants)

Ethically speaking, this is a fairly simple issue. For one thing, if I were a judge or lawyer in the area in which Dr. Camayd normally practices, I would have extreme doubts in his participation as interpreter in a judicial proceeding in the future. What concerns me even more is that a Ph.D. with a federal certification granted 23 years ago implies to the contracting authority the top of the heap when it comes to identifying a competent interpreter. The impartiality of the interpreter is an issue we are constantly trying to establish for lawyers, since many para-interpreters and other amateurs tend to proudly step up to advocate for the foreign national. This is seen as acceptable in the fields of community interpreting, medical interpreting, escort interpreting, etc. It is not acceptable at all in judiciary interpreting, where one is constantly asked to interpret for a party who is the adversary of someone else in the case. If the individual interpreter is unable to bite his or her tongue or, as Dr. Camayd says, he or she is “heavy hearted” this is probably not the area of interpreting they should go into. “I was impartial throughout” is Dr. Camayd’s comment about his behavior during the event and regrets that he “help(ed) the government put hundreds of innocent people in jail.”

It is our organization’s opinion that if Dr. Camayd, as an academic in the field, wishes to comment on this topic, he is certainly permitted to do so—in an academic forum, in the press, he could offer his services as an expert to those who have doubts about issues in the performance of interpreters—but to comment in such a political and subjective way about a proceeding in which he was retained as the English-Spanish interpreter is not appropriate. This has surely set us back twenty years in the eyes of the interpreted community.



Arizona
Court
Interpreters
Association

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85284

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.aciaonline.org

Future Events

November 1, 2008 Florence, Arizona


Psychosexual Evaluations

Pinal County Superior Court Jury Assembly Room

December 6, 2008 Scottsdale, Arizona

Annual Meeting

Orange Tree Golf Resort



ACIA
162 West Myrna Lane
Tempe, AZ 85284

