

# informatio

Volume 32

October 2003

Number 3

Welcome to this special issue of *InformATIO*, distributed both to ATIO members and associates and to provincially accredited court interpreters. We designed it to tell you about the profession—if you’re not a court interpreter—and about the Association—if you’re not yet a member. Discover the amazing extent and variety of court interpretation in Ontario; mark your calendar to attend our court interpretation events; but most of all, we hope that you’ll share our commitment to bring to this vital segment of the language professions the respect it deserves.

Fabrice Cadieux, President, ATIO  
MAG-accredited court interpreter

## " You tried to choke him? "

By: André Moreau, C. Tran., C. Conf. Int.(Canada)

"You tried to choke him?"

"Yes, sir, your Honor."

"Ever been arrested before?"

"No, sir, your Honor."

"What have you to say for yourself?"

*Jurgis hesitated. What had he to say? In two years and a half he had learned to speak English for practical purposes, but these had never included the statement that some one had intimidated and seduced his wife. He tried once or twice, stammering and balking, to the annoyance of the judge, who was gasping from the odor of fertilizer. Finally, the prisoner made it understood that his vocabulary was inadequate, and there stepped up a dapper young man with waxed mustaches, bidding him speak in any language he knew.*

*Jurgis began; supposing that he would be given time, he explained how the boss had taken advantage of his wife's position to make advances to her and had threatened her with the loss of her place. When the interpreter had translated this, the judge, whose calendar was crowded, and whose automobile was ordered for a certain hour, interrupted with the remark: "Oh, I see. Well, if he made love to your wife, why didn't she complain to the superintendent or leave the place?"*

*Jurgis hesitated, somewhat taken aback; he began to explain that they were very poor – that work was hard to get –*

Is this instance of court interpretation based on a transcript of a recent criminal proceeding involving sexual harassment in the workplace? Absolutely not. This is an excerpt from Upton Sinclair's muckraking novel, *The Jungle* (1906). The point of this story is that court interpretation is not an innovation designed to meet a new need unexpectedly arising from an official multiculturalism policy. A century after Jurgis, policymakers cannot plead that they need more time to grasp the scope of the problem and devise a solution.

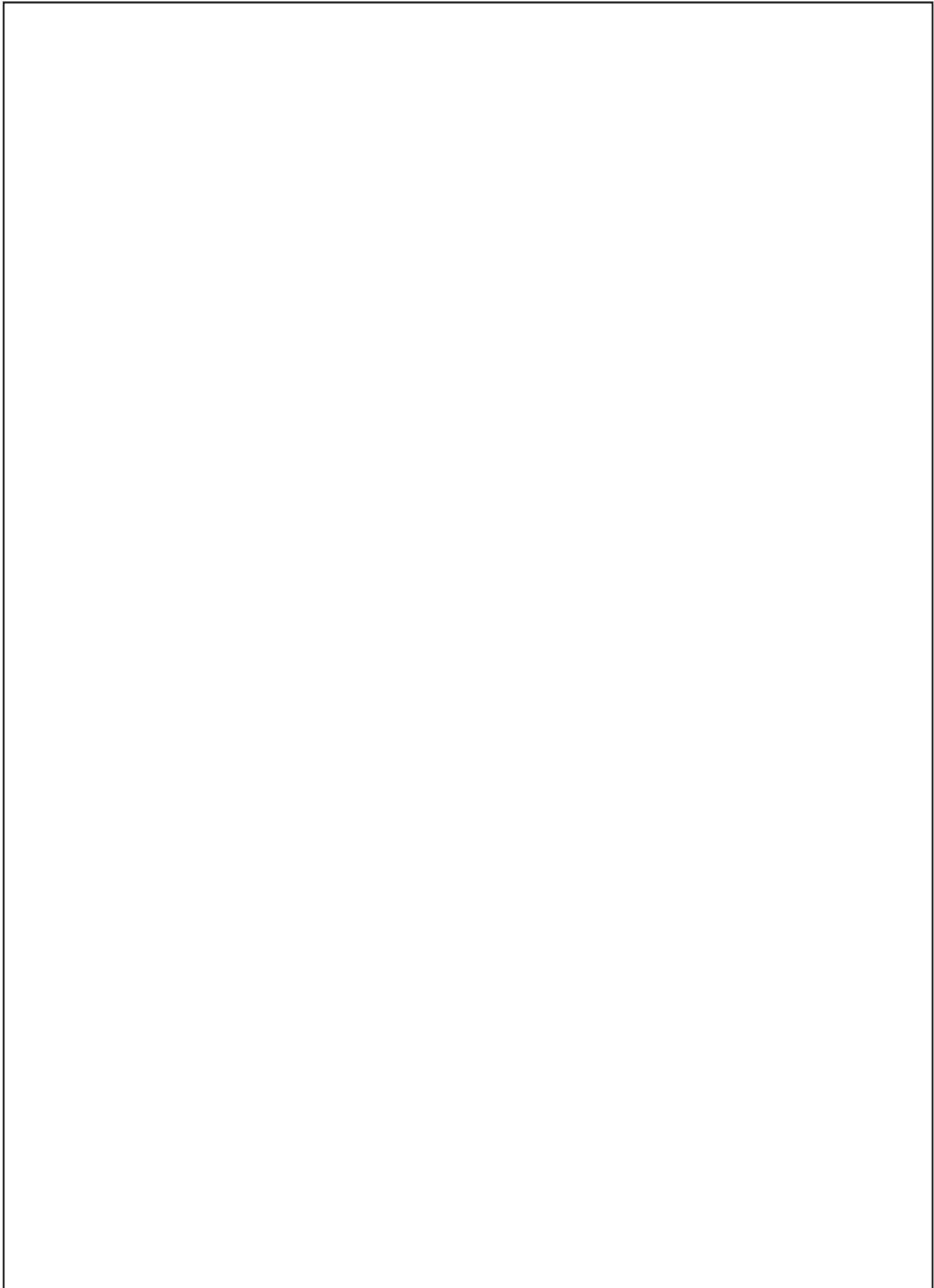
In the multilingual community that Ontario has become, court interpretation is a vital component in the effective functioning of the justice system. Furthermore, in addition to being a practical necessity, quality court interpretation services have been found by the Supreme Court of Canada to be a right guaranteed by the Charter.<sup>1</sup>

For a general overview of the function of court interpretation, see [Protecting the Rights of Linguistic Minorities: Challenges to Court Interpretation](#) by Charles M. Grabau and Llewellyn Joseph Gibbons who state:

*Injustice is doubtless being done from time to time in communities thronged with [linguistic minorities], through failure of the judges to insist on a supply of competent interpreters. The subject is one upon which the profession are in general too callous, for no situation is more full of anguish than that of an innocent accused who cannot understand what is being testified against him [or her].<sup>2</sup>*

Continued on page 3

André Moreau was an early member of the ATIO Court Interpretation Committee and played a key role in the advent of the CTIC Court Interpretation Examination. He received the first ATIO Volunteer Award in 1998.



## “You tried to choke him?”

Continued from page 1

In Ontario, freelancers who are accredited by the Ministry of the Attorney General provide almost all court interpretation services in scores of languages. The Ministry pays for interpreters' services. On the average, court interpreters earn \$20.00 per hour. In the course of a typical working day, they may be called on to travel from courthouse to courthouse, over distances of up to 79 kilometres one-way with no payment for time spent traveling. Offers of work are sporadic; advance notice is sometimes less than an hour. Even the few freelance court interpreters who get enough assignments to work full-time (5 days x 6 hours x \$20.00) can hope to earn only about \$600 per week. Finally, there has been no increase in rates paid to freelance court interpreters since April 1, 1993, a period of over ten years.

Court interpreters pride themselves on providing a valuable service to Ontario's communities and to the justice system but, as you can imagine, there is growing discontent in their ranks. To make ends meet, some court interpreters have been driven to choose other occupations. In my opinion, the ensuing turnover in the ranks of court interpreters is compromising the Ministry's ability to provide quality services to the Courts and the public. In the long term, as victims of crime find their access to justice curtailed, the public will become increasingly skeptical of the justice system's impartiality and relevance.

1 See *R. v. Tran - Whether accused's right to assistance of an interpreter breached Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, s. 14*. <http://www.canlii.org/ca/cas/scc/1994/1994scc67.html>.

2 *New England Law Review*, Volume 30, No. 2

---

# Court Interpretation: A Renewed Focus

By: Maha Takla, Director, Court Interpreters

Court interpreters are a vital part of Ontario's public institutions and also a renewed focus of ATIO's work. Under my leadership, and with the full support of the Board of Directors, the Court Interpretation Committee is launching a series of initiatives to raise ATIO's profile in the court interpretation community and also make court interpretation better known within the Association, while improving services to court interpreters and helping to improve conditions in the profession.

The origins of the Court Interpretation Committee date back to the 1980s, and over the years, this group of committed volunteers has achieved important milestones in the development of the profession of court interpretation. The most important was probably the introduction, several years ago, of the nationwide certification examination administered under the aegis of the Canadian Translators and Interpreters Council (CTIC).

Modelled on the longstanding examination used by the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia, the comprehensive CTIC examination includes written tests of legal terminology, ethics and translation as well as a tough oral portion including sight translation and consecutive and simultaneous interpretation. The 2002 examination was administered across Canada in 12 languages. Successful candidates earn the title of Certified Court Interpreters.

This title is protected by law in Ontario and elsewhere and is gaining growing recognition in British Columbia, for example, Certified Court Interpreters are recruited on a

preferential basis by the court system and receive higher remuneration than non-certified interpreters. Our priority is to make this reserved title better-known and increase its attractiveness both to clients (not limited to the court system, but including also areas such as workers' compensation and the immigration and refugee system) and to professionals.

To that end, we are planning public relations campaigns including targeted print advertisements (similar to our campaign focusing on foreign-language translators which ran in 20 community newspapers with a readership of 300,000 and our ad targeting business executives scheduled to reach many more readers this fall) as well as direct mailings to the legal community and other users of court interpreters' services.

We're also developing events for court interpreters, both for professional development and as networking opportunities. Following on two successful visits to the Ontario Centre for Forensic Sciences, we have planned a tour of the office of the Chief Coroner and a visit to the Supreme Court of Canada this fall (see invitations on page 5). We're also looking into more substantive training programs such as delivering the diploma program in court interpretation from Vancouver Community College via distance education.

In such efforts, we seek to reach out to all court interpreters. This special issue of *InformATIO* is being distributed to provincially accredited court interpreters. We hope to pursue a productive dialogue and partnership with our colleagues, especially the members and leaders of the Court Interpreters' Association of Ontario (CIAO), whose perseverance in working for the improvement of our profession is an inspiration.

# “I’m a Court Interpreter”

By: Mohamed Jama, MAG-accredited court interpreter

A moment of reflection: Oh! Yes; so, I’m a court interpreter. “A coooooourt interpreeeter?” Sexy...eh? Naaah! That is not the point, though. A more relevant question is, what makes the strange creature dubbed court interpreter tick: good command of more than one language? Strong moral sense? Impartiality? Astuteness? Powerful memory? Articulateness? Honesty? Unshakeable resistance to intimidation?

Surely, these are all essential qualities, but they don’t define an interpreter. Perhaps we can turn to the Merriam-Webster dictionary which, tracing the word “interpreter” to its Latin origin, associates it with the terms “agent” and “negotiator.” Now, I’m playing with fire here. Negotiations belong to the realm of diplomats, lawyers, politicians and, in some cases, police officers. The word “agent,” too, doesn’t help at all even though it is a distant cousin of the word “interpreter.”

So, what am I? How should I define my profession? With these queries, words like “communicator,” “bridge,” and “receiver-transmitter” ring a bell. More precisely, I’m a medium for breaking down language barriers to help a court dispense justice. Thus, an interpreter is always walking on a knife’s edge since he could send an innocent person to jail or get a murderer off the hook by making a mistake. You don’t need to be a pundit to fathom the tension such thoughts trigger in the interpreter’s mind.

Therefore, besides being highly proficient in the source and target languages being used, an interpreter should keep his ego on a leash. Indeed, it is a cardinal sin for a court interpreter to behave as if he is bidding for the Nobel Prize for Literature. Resisting the temptation to play the star isn’t an easy task. That is why strong self-restraint constitutes an interpreter’s forte.

The road can sometimes be rough and bumpy for even the most highly accomplished interpreter. The culprit could well be an incompetent lawyer pouring out his frustration on the interpreter or the occasionally suspicious judge, if not a malicious witness rebuffed earlier after asking for what you can’t deliver: legal advice! There are also the moments when evidence for or against a case proves difficult to grapple with.

This is particularly true if the source or target language is from a culture with a different level of technological development. In this respect, forensic evidence such as DNA is a real difficulty. Nor should we ignore the problems inherent in structural differences between languages. Thus, in the final analysis, one might wonder if the court interpreter isn’t, to paraphrase Albert Camus, trying to do the job of the prophets without having their skills.

## ATIO Goes to Court

By: Michel Trahan, ATIO Board Secretary  
Translation: Lise Cloutier, C. Tran. (Canada)

Earlier this year a delegation of ATIO Board members, myself included, visited the Ottawa Court House located at 161 Elgin Street. Our courteous hostess, Elizabeth Burbidge, Court Interpreter-Translator, gave us a warm welcome and showed us the offices of the court interpreters and support staff. During our tour, she explained what it is like to work as a court interpreter, who the employees are and how they do their job. After a short Q&A session, she led us to the courtroom. Unfortunately, no trial was scheduled during our visit. However, she showed us how a court interpretation session takes place, where everyone sits, etc. As we listened to her tell a few stories, we quickly realized how challenging her profession was. We could almost hear the lawyers giving their oral arguments! I can honestly say that the whole experience made a big impression on me.

### Inside...

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Court Interpretation: A Renewed Focus . . . . .            | Page 3 |
| “I’m a Court Interpreter” . . . . .                        | Page 4 |
| ATIO Goes to Court. . . . .                                | Page 4 |
| Join Us! . . . . .   | Page 5 |
| Did You Know? . . . . .                                    | Page 5 |
| Translation Examination Review . . . . .                   | Page 6 |
| MS Office isn’t Only Officious—“Keys” to MS Word . . . . . | Page 7 |
| Congratulations to Newly Certified Members . . . . .       | Page 8 |
| Calendar of Events. . . . .                                | Page 8 |

# JOIN US!

## Take in a “behind the scenes” tour of the Office of the Chief Coroner

Gain a better understanding of technical and medical terms in use at coroner’s inquests, gain insight into new or emerging legal terminology related to the ever-changing world of laboratory research and police investigation, and get a chance to network with your colleagues!

**Friday, October 31, 2003, 10 a.m.**  
Meet in the lobby of the Office of the Chief Coroner building at 25 Grosvenor Street, Toronto (north of College & Yonge—west of Yonge)  
Informal lunch after visit may be arranged on the spot  
RSVP at 1 800 234-5030 to give us an idea of numbers

## Come on out for some networking, refreshments and information about court interpreting!

Join us for a round table discussion on interpretation work ethics and the role of the interpreter, and for information on ATIO membership and the MAG accreditation process.

**Saturday, November 22, 2003, 10 a.m.**  
Glendon College, Albert Tucker Room, 317 York Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Refreshments will be served  
RSVP at 1 800 234-5030 to give us an idea of numbers

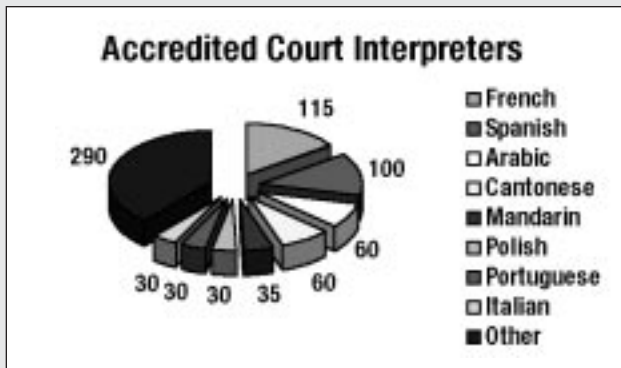
## Take a FREE tour of the Supreme Court of Canada!

Now you don’t need a Charter case to enter the imposing halls of the country’s top court and take a guided tour providing insight into how decisions that define justice and profoundly influence the law in Canada are rendered. Don’t miss this opportunity to meet your Ottawa-area colleagues!

**Wednesday, October 29, 2003, 1:30 p.m.**  
Meet at the main entrance of the Supreme Court of Canada, 301 Wellington Street  
Refreshments will be served  
RSVP at 613 241-ATIO to give us an idea of numbers

# DID YOU KNOW?

## Ministry of the Attorney General



- The most requested languages include ASL (American Sign Language), Vietnamese and Somali.
- The busiest time of year for court interpretation is the fall.
- Most court interpreters find out about the profession by word of mouth.

## Immigration and Refugee Board

- The Immigration and Refugee Board contracts some 400 interpreters in Ontario for its proceedings, including a number of ATIO members.
- The most frequently used languages include Spanish, Tamil, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Farsi, Arabic, Russian and Ukrainian.
- Many African languages are used at hearings, including Kinyarwanda, Twi, Shona, Ndebele and Zulu.

## Workplace Safety and Insurance Board

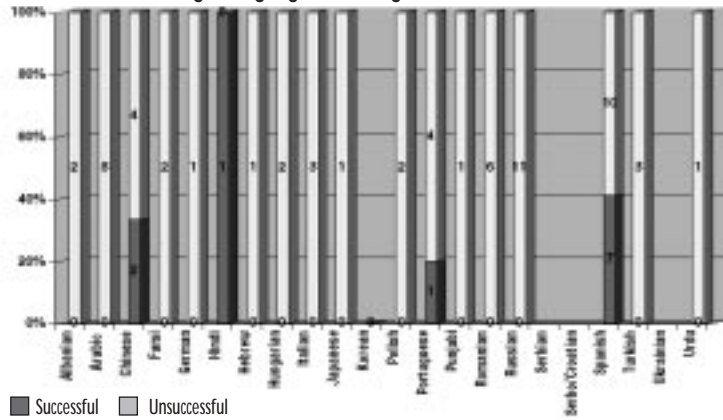
The vision of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) is to eliminate all workplace injuries and illnesses in Ontario. The WSIB holds many appeal hearings on compensation decisions and frequently uses interpreters for these proceedings.

- Number of languages used: about 60.
- Most frequently used languages: French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi, Polish, Vietnamese, Greek, Tamil, Arabic.
- Number of interpreters contracted: several dozen.
- Unusual fact: specific languages are concentrated in specific industries, e.g. Italian and Portuguese in construction.

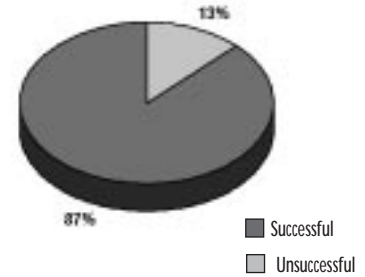


At the 2003 Annual Meeting this spring, the Board undertook to review the certification examination process in translation. As part of that review, we are publishing detailed results on success rates in each language combination. We will communicate our conclusions later in the year.

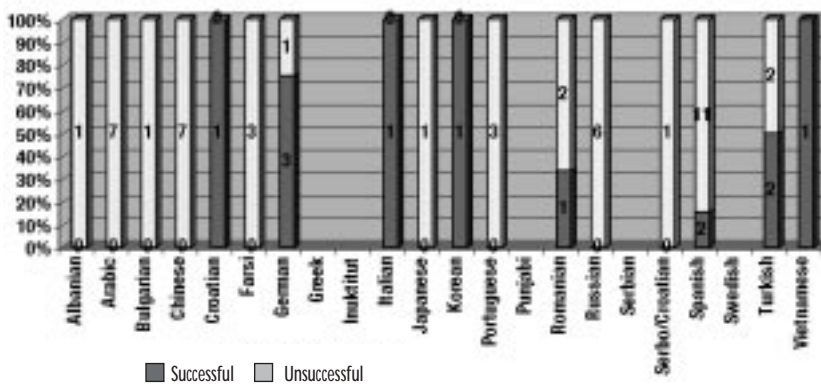
ATIO - Foreign Languages into English: Successful/Unsuccessful



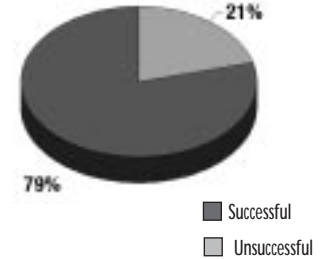
Foreign Languages into English  
All Associations



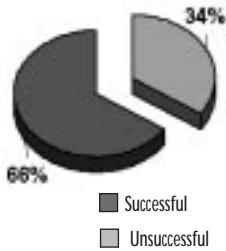
ATIO - English into Foreign Languages: Successful/Unsuccessful



English into Foreign Languages  
All Associations



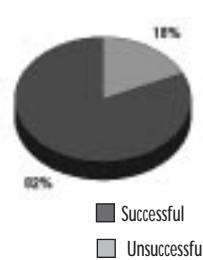
English into French  
All Associations



French into English  
All Associations



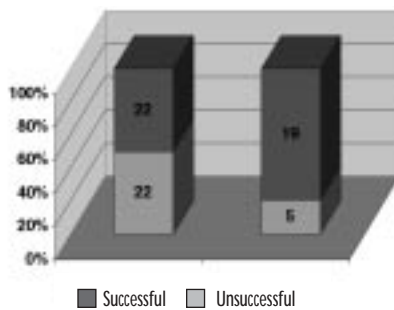
French into Foreign Languages  
All Associations



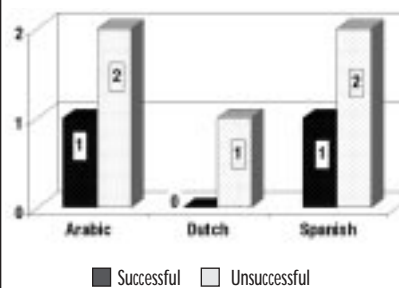
Foreign Languages into French  
All Associations



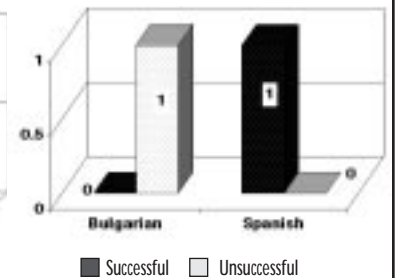
ATIO Official Languages  
Successful/Unsuccessful



ATIO French into Foreign Languages  
Successful/Unsuccessful



ATIO Foreign Languages into French  
Successful/Unsuccessful



## MS Office isn't Only Officious<sup>1</sup>— “Keys” to MS Word

By: Dr. William O. Bergerson

Revised by: Carlos Chalhoub, C. Tran. (Canada)

The first article in this series offered general suggestions for standardizing/optimizing one's interaction with Microsoft Office (*InformATIO* 32:2). As an impetus for transforming theory into practice, future installments will focus on specific features.

Between the inexact extremes of mouse and voice recognition, two keyboard input options with “guided-missile accuracy” exist:

- i) **MENUMODE** (aka “Underlined Access Keys”); and
- ii) **KEY COMMANDS**

Both allow one's fingers to remain on the keyboard, but Menumode obviates the need for rote memorization since underlined characters “point the way” and is thus better suited to lesser used functions. Take a few minutes to get a feel for **MENUMODE**<sup>2</sup> by using it to generate a comprehensive list of **KEY COMMANDS** (take note of the underlined keys while performing the exercise):

- 1) Press “**Alt** [“Cmd”] + **f**” to pop up the “**T**ools” sub-menus.
- 2) Hit “**m**” twice in succession to bring up the “**M**acros” screen.
- 3) Press “**Alt** [“Cmd”] + **a**” to activate the “**M**acros in” sub-window.
- 4) Use the “**Up**” or “**Down**” arrow to highlight “**W**ord commands.”
- 5) Press “**Enter**” or “**Return**” (“**M**acro name” sub-window is activated).
- 6) Type “**i-s-t**” to jump near the desired macro name; then press “**Down**” arrow once thus highlighting **L**ist**C**ommands.”
- 7) Press “**Enter**” or “**Return**” to bring up the corresponding submenu.
- 8) Hit “**a**” to select the “**A**ll **W**ord **C**ommands” button.
- 9) Press “**Enter**” or “**Return**” to generate a new document containing a table of all word commands and currently assigned shortcut keys.

Save the resulting file and think of it as a “dictionary” for MS Word. Learning software is, after all, not unlike mastering a foreign tongue and although Menumode and Key Commands will seem cumbersome at first, effort invested will lead to proficiency!

Experiment using related Key Commands to see how logically they're grouped (e.g. try those associated with “**O**utline”). Add “neologisms” (i.e. new shortcuts) to your “dictionary” for frequently used functions (via **T**ools > **C**ustomize > **K**eyboard). See if you can create one for direct access to “**W**ord **C**ount,” such as “**Alt** [“Cmd”] + **w**” !

<sup>1</sup> excerpt from material presented to the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual MICATA (Mid-America Chapter of the American Translators Association) Spring Conference in Kansas City, MO, USA May 3, 2003 © 2003 Dr. William O. Bergerson

<sup>2</sup> not implemented in Office v.X for Mac; otherwise [bracketed] key references apply to Macintosh keyboard.



### *InformATIO*

Published by:

**The Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario**

1202-1 Nicholas Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B7

Tel: (613) 241-2846

1-800-234-5030

Fax: (613) 241-4098

E-mail: info@atio.on.ca

Web Site: www.atio.on.ca

**Circulation:** 2000

**Printer:** Plantagenet Printing

**Graphic Designer:** More In Typo Ltd.

**Editor:** Michel Trahan

**Editorial Assistant:** Catherine Bertholet

#### **Editorial policy:**

The Editor of *InformATIO* reserves the right not to publish, or to edit with the author's consent, any article submitted or commissioned for publication. Any opinions expressed (except in articles signed in an official capacity) are those of the authors and are not endorsed by the Association.

#### **Special thanks to:**

William O. Bergerson, Denis Bousquet, Fabrice Cadieux, Carlos Chalhoub, Lise Cloutier, Owen Evans, Dominique Forget, Yuri Geifman, Danielle Harwood, Mohamed Jama, Roxanne Lepage, André Moreau, Rita Prashad, Christopher Rutledge, Maha Takla, Jean Pierre Thouin, Michel Trahan, Cheryl Tucker.

## Louise Voyer FINANCIAL SERVICES

Group Insurance plans for ATIO members  
Life Insurance, disability, critical illness,  
dental and medical, etc.

87 Lilloco Drive, Ottawa ON K1V 9L7  
613-737-3433 fax 737-0015  
[www.iosphere.net/~lvoyer](http://www.iosphere.net/~lvoyer)  
[lvoyer@iosphere.net](mailto:lvoyer@iosphere.net)

### CERTIFIED THROUGH CTIC CONFERENCE INTERPRETATION EXAMINATION

#### English-Spanish

Maurice Behaine  
Jose Antonio Sanz Moral

#### French-Romanian

Dana Carciumaru

### CERTIFIED THROUGH CTIC TRANSLATION EXAMINATION

#### English-Vietnamese

Nghi Do

#### Polish-English

John Kwak

### CERTIFIED THROUGH CTIC COURT INTERPRETATION EXAMINATION

#### Russian/English

Yuri Geifman



## Calendar of Events



### ✓ OCTOBER 2003

Saturday, October 18, 2003: **Creating Partnerships**  
Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association  
(UMTIA/ATA)  
Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Information: [www.umtia2003conference.org](http://www.umtia2003conference.org)

### ✓ NOVEMBER 2003

November 5–8, 2003: **American Translators' Association annual conference**  
Phoenix, Arizona  
Information: [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org)

November 21–23, 2003: **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Federation of Translators**

November 20, 2003: The Translations of Harry Potter

November 21, 2003: Translators' Copyright

November 22, 2003: Copyright and the standard

Closing ceremony

Paris, France

Information: [www.fit-ift.org/english/50th.html](http://www.fit-ift.org/english/50th.html)

Thursday, November 27, 2003: **OTTIAQ Annual**

**Conference:** The World is Our Oyster: Language

Professionals and Market Internationalization.

Mount Royal Center, 2200 Mansfield Street

Montreal, Quebec.

Information: [www.ottiaq.org](http://www.ottiaq.org)