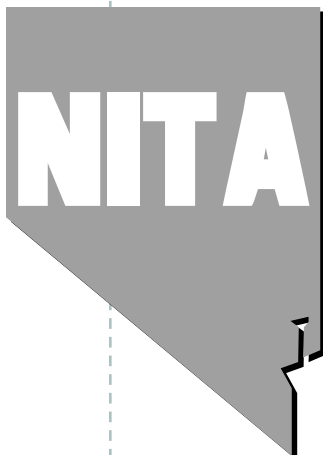


e-NITA Newsletter

First Quarter 2010



Karen Tkaczyk,
NITA's president

Volume 2, Issue 1

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About NITA:

NITA was founded in 2008 to help elevate the quality and availability of language services in the state of Nevada. Its goals include advocacy for the profession, political action for legislation (certification), among others. NITA offers its member professional development opportunities, free quarterly meetings with presentations, voting rights in board elections, networking and much more.

Special points of interest:

- > Reno and Vegas holiday get-togethers held
- > Membership up to 68!
- > First professional development event held in Vegas
- > Annual meeting in Reno finalized
- > Court interpreter certification report

Note from the president

By Karen Tkaczyk

2009 was an exiting and successful year for NITA. Membership grew and we had a full schedule of events in northern Nevada, providing training for translators and interpreters, and networking opportunities. To keep in touch with all our members, who can't always attend events, we have the outstanding website and this quarterly newsletter.

For 2010 our aim is to continue in the same vein in the north-west of the state and to expand our events to the Las Vegas area. We held social events in Las Vegas in 2009, but now we will add free educational meetings and perhaps at-a-cost workshops too if there is enough interest. Thankfully, a number of you in that area have stepped up to offer to help our Vice President organize events, so we should get going there pretty soon. Please remember that the more volunteers we have, the more events there will be.

Grace Blaylock resigned from the board for personal reasons, and shortly after that we appointed Álvaro Degives-Màs as a Director. Thank you to both of you! Our Treasurer also gave us notice of intent to resign from that role, so we thank Rossana Bertani-Roach for her hard work as a founding member of NITA, and look forward to her continued help in other areas.

I look forward to 'meeting' more of you in person or on the website's Forum this year, and I wish you all a year full of well-paying, quality conscious clients!

First NITA Professional Development in Las Vegas a Success

By Judy Jenner

More than 30 NITA members and friends joined us for NITA's first-ever completely full professional development event, held in Las Vegas. After holding informal coffee shop get-togethers for the better part of a year, we implemented our members' request and organized the February 6 event. Because it was the first event of its type in Las Vegas, NITA was able to offer the event completely free of charge. I was excited to see how much interest there was in the workshop, and because of limited capacity, we even had to start a waiting list. I regret that several interested folks did not have the chance to attend the workshop and hope to see them at an event soon!

I presented the "Entrepreneurial Linguist" seminar, which teaches linguists how to run their businesses more efficiently and includes lessons on marketing, economics, accounting, entrepreneurship, and more. The presentation focuses on working with direct clients. I'd like to thank DaVinci Executive Office Suites for working with us to obtain a reasonably priced room and to NITA member-volunteers Giuseppina Gatta and Roxane Dow, for helping me set up, get people signed in, taking pictures, and much more! Attendees included court interpreters, bilingual professionals, translators, and students.



Images from the February 6 workshop.



Translator Profile: Chinese->English Literary Translator Robert Dorsett By Judy Jenner

In December 2009, I had the pleasure of attending a reading organized by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. It featured well-known Chinese novelist Er Tai Gao, who published "In Search of my Homeland" about his twenty years' of forced hard labor in China for publishing an essay about the subjectivity of beauty. I was fascinated by the story and by the fact that the university had invited one of the two Chinese->English translators who completed the translation to come to the reading. Robert Dorsett, who lives in northern California, read from his English translation and graciously agreed to an interview that was conducted via e-mail. Thanks for your time and insight, Robert! Read on about Robert's most interesting background and his life as a literary translator.



How did you become a translator and a language professional?

I have always been interested in good literature, especially nineteenth century English and American prose and poetry. It was very natural for me to look for good writing in other languages. While I was in college, I studied German and ancient Greek. Later, I was drawn to Chinese literature because of its unbroken history of about 4,000 years, and to the Chinese language because of the ideograms, which give a dimension that doesn't exist in other modern languages.

Please briefly describe your educational background.

I have a bachelor degree in Chemistry and Biology from Rutgers and a Doctor of Medicine from the University of New York. I did my residency in pediatrics at Cornell. After I left medicine, I returned to school and received a MFA in creative writing from NYU.

What was the transition like from being a medical doctor to a literary translator?

It was a smooth transition. I was already writing, and I had published original poems and essays as well as translations of Chinese prose and poems in magazines. I reached a time in my life when I wanted to try a different field. I felt it was the right time for me.

Do you think it is necessary to have a translation degree to be a literary translator?

I do not think it is necessary but it can be helpful. Getting a degree at a university affords an opportunity to learn from established writers as well as from your peers. In addition, the relationships you form are important, because breaks in publishing usually come to new writers from people who know and trust them. Being a student also opens up other classes in the university. I audited a seminar on Milton and was able to take a seminar on modern literary criticism with Harold Bloom.

How did you meet Er Tai Gao?

I only met Er Tai after I started work on his book. Now he and his wife Maya are my good friends. It is my honor and privilege to have translated a manuscript from such a fine and important writer.

How long did the translation of his book take?

HarperCollins told me that they wanted the book within six months. I knew a translation that would do justice to a work with a scope like this would take about twelve months, so I suggested they contact David Pollard, a well-known sinologist from the University of London, and ask him to do half of the chapters. We got it done in six months.

What was the process of approaching publishers like?

I was very blessed. The writer and editor, Eric Olsen, who was intimately involved at the inception and with the promotion of this book and also in general with the work of Gao Ertai, called me.

Is this your first book translation? Did you encounter any resistance?

Yes, this is my first book translation, however I did not encounter any resistance. Throughout, Eric was a valuable support. Both Ertai and his wife, Maya, were very open and helpful.

What are the most important characteristics of a literary translator?

What it means to be a literary translator changes with circumstances: whether the author is living or not, whether the author understands any English, whether the work is prose or poetry etc. For a complex work, such as Gao Ertai's, there is no such thing as a literal translation. First, I get to the point when I am satisfied I fully understand the original text and only then do I start making decisions about the English. I feel it is necessary to scrupulously complete the needed background work and to seek support. The important characteristics are knowledge of the language to be translated, knowledge of the conditions within which the work was written, cooperation with others, sensitivity to language, and, above all, skill in English. (continued on next page)

Translator Profile: Chinese->English Literary Translator Robert Dorsett By Judy Jenner

What is the most challenging aspect of working on this book?

This book has a very wide scope. It encompasses Buddhism, Chinese history, politics, art, philosophy and more. For the chapter Facing Walls I had to consult a Sanskrit/Chinese dictionary. Gao Ertai also uses a very wide and precise vocabulary.

What do you enjoy most about your second career?

I enjoy finding the exact word. Translating is like working out a complex puzzle.

How do you keep your source language skills current?

I make the reading and translation of Chinese part of my daily routine.

Which reference source do you use the most?

I consult a wide variety of reference books but I use the Far East Dictionary more than the others. I like it better than Mathews because it uses standard Romanization (pinyin).

What's the best advice you could give a beginning literary translator?

The best advice I have is to communicate with the author whenever possible, to take time to understand the social, historical and psychological conditions in which the work was written, and to remember that it is the translator's task to realize in English the author's intentions.

Holiday Get-Togethers Held in Reno and Las Vegas

On December 16, NITA held its first-ever casual get-together for the holidays. The idea behind this low-profile event was to decrease everyone's stress level during the holidays and to simply get together for a cup of coffee with colleagues and friends. No RSVPs were necessary, and everyone was welcome. Both meetings took place at coffee shops. Enjoy the pictures!



Above: NITA members Giuseppina Gatta, Judy Jenner, Janice Kennedy and Esther Scholte-Patterson in Vegas.



Above and right: NITA members and friends, including Gladys Paulino, NITA president Karen Tkaczyk and NITA member Graciela Flores enjoying the holiday social in Reno.



NITA Member News

To be included, please e-mail news to vicepresident@nitaonline.org

NITA member Álvaro Vergara-Mery has some great news. Read all about it on page 7.

The American Translators Association recently selected NITA President Karen Tkaczyk as one of the speakers at its upcoming SciTech professional development event to be held in March in San Antonio, Texas. Congratulations, Karen! Karen will also be presenting at the Tradulínguas technical translation conference to be held in May in Lisbon, Portugal.

NITA Vice President Judy Jenner was recently selected as one of the "Women to Watch 2010" by the leading business weekly In Business. Judy will present her "Entrepreneurial Linguist" workshop at the Northern California Translators Association on April 10, and in Chicago at the Chicago Area Translators and Interpreters Association on May 1. During her working vacation in Europe in the summer, Judy will give workshops in Vienna, Austria, Prague, the Czech Republic and in Munich, Germany.

Court Interpreter Certification Orientation Workshops in Reno and Las Vegas

A Participant's Perspective

By Judy Jenner



After much hesitation, I decided to take the first step towards becoming a certified court interpreter in the state of Nevada. I wasn't sure if I was ready in terms of the knowledge of the local court terminology, but I realized that my long background as a legal translator is a significant plus. The certification process is quite challenging, and the failure rate for those who take both the written and oral exam for Spanish in the first year is 95%. That sounds astronomically high, but is explained by the fact that there is no barrier to entry and no proof of language skills is required to be admitted to the written part of the exam, which immediately follows the two-day orientation workshop.

The certification process is expertly organized in the entire state (!) by one hard-working professional, Andrea Krlickova, who graciously came to Reno to speak about the certification process during our December quarterly meeting. She has once again volunteered to donate her time to address interested linguists during September's planned first day-long workshop in Las Vegas. As of 2009, the Supreme Court of Nevada only administered a certification program for Spanish. As of 2010, other languages have been added. We get quite a bit of questions about this process. NITA is not involved in this process in any way. The entire program and certification process is managed by Andrea and the Supreme Court of Nevada. Please visit their website at: <http://www.nevadajudiciary.us/index.php/forinterpreters/537-the-2010-orientation-workshopwritten-examination> (link is also available on the NITA website). The orientation workshop, which everyone must attend as a first step, is held once a year, in January. I attended the Las Vegas session, and Andrea and trainer extraordinaire Agustín de la Mora also braved a massive storm to hold the two-day training session in Reno. The written exam is given on the third day and requires a score of 80% to secure admission to the difficult oral exam, where simultaneous, consecutive interpretation, and sight translation will be tested.

Agustín de la Mora, originally from Mexico City, is one of the country's most well-known federally and state-court certified court interpreters. He has more than 20 years' experience and has been training court interpreters around the country for years. Agustín and Andrea conveyed, in 16 hours, the basics of court interpretation. It was a most interesting workshop, but please note that this orientation workshop is not a class on interpretation. It shows you tips and tricks, includes memory and technique exercises, and gives you pointers on how to become an interpreter. The hard work is up to you, and the workshop is language-neutral, so you will not be doing any actual interpreting. Both Agustín and Andrea were extremely well prepared to address this diverse group of people. Although most attendees had no formal educational or work background in interpretation, there were a few very experienced court interpreters in the group, who shared their significant knowledge with fellow participants. The workshop attracted a wide range of interested professionals, including court employees, bilingual office workers, community interpreters, and much more. The State of Nevada's fee for this workshop, \$175, includes a handsome folder with a wealth of documents that is handed to participants at the beginning of the workshop. In order to properly prepare for the written exam, Andrea had previously e-mailed participants with informational material and practice exams. The website also has a good list of resources. I felt well-prepared for the exam, which mainly tests English-language

Andrea graciously allowed NITA to cater the first morning's breakfast. I brought tasty treats for the 60 attendees and told all those in attendance about our organization and about the importance of belonging to a professional association. Immediately after the workshop, we were able to welcome our first new member, Andrea Willard! Welcome, Adriana! After a hectic three days, Andrea and Agustín headed to Reno, where they were able to meet with NITA co-founder and director Álvaro Desgives-Más, who's also a respected Spanish->English court interpreter.



Below: Andrea gives the overview and introduction.



Above: NITA-sponsored breakfast.

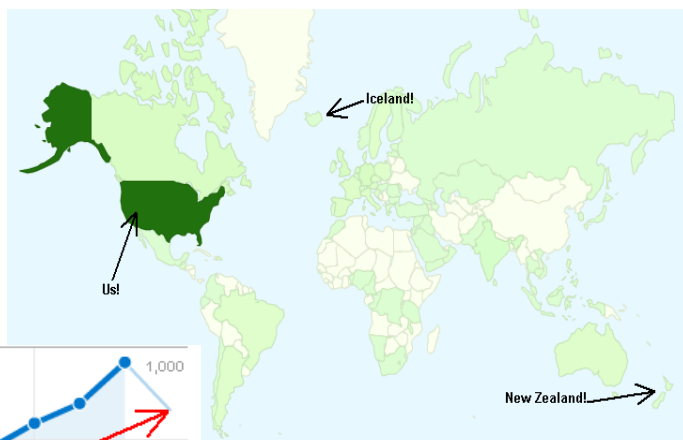
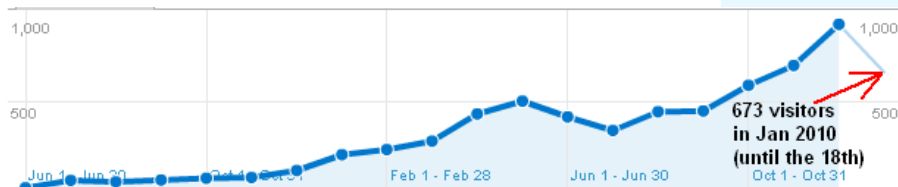


Above: The PPT presentations were well thought-out and informative.

Left: Agustín talks about common complaints about interpreters.

Fortunately, [NITA OnLine](#) is increasingly reaching a wider audience: not just in Nevada but in the US and beyond. This Google Analytics snapshot displays traffic to our site in green, including visits from any country over the previous 30 days. The US is shown in dark green, originating the most visitors by far (see map on right).

Although the site went live [in July of 2007](#), in late January 2010 we surpassed the milestone of 1,000 unique monthly visitors, who went to our site looking for specific information or were just curious about us. The following snapshot shows the clear progression in monthly numbers of unique visitors:



Of course, that growth in traffic matches our growing membership. And it mirrors above all the hard work that the all-volunteer Board puts into NITA. Our goal is to provide more and more opportunities for professional growth.

The site is designed to support that broader effort as much as possible. It has a **Forum**, open exclusively to our membership, to consult peers or informally share any issue with fellow linguists. It also has a **Public Directory**, to help you market your services as a professional linguist. Another popular destination is the **Recommended Links and Resources** section. It also has fresh content, posted regularly in **Latest News**, to keep you abreast of interesting developments. And there's the Calendar of Events, and... There's no room in one Newsletter to convey the NITA site! Come see for yourself and, if you like what you see, help us spread the word about it. On the other hand, if there's something that *doesn't* work for you, or you have a great idea that you believe can help us grow the site, by all means: **tell us** about it. Remember: we're just a click away. You can find us 24 hours a day, anywhere in this world where there's Internet, at www.nitaonline.org See you at NITA OnLine!

Join us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn!

NITA is now part of the social media revolution with presences on both Facebook (search for NITA Online on www.facebook.com) and Twitter (@nitaonline at www.twitter.com). Join our page, read what's new with NITA, and follow our tweets! We are currently looking for an internet-savvy volunteer to manage those small projects, so if you are interested, please let us know! Don't forget to join the NITA group on LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com)!

Connecting Worlds Workshop Spring 2010

NITA wants to remind you that we are offering the 40-hour Connecting Worlds workshop for the fourth time in two years. NITA founding president and Connecting Worlds trainer Tracy Young recently finished teaching a class of bilingual staff at Carson Tahoe hospital. It was a full class with 11 participants, and all of them passed their exam, which means that they now hold the Connecting Worlds certificate for medical interpretation. Pending national health care interpretation certification, this is the highest degree of training currently available.

Note for southern Nevada members: we are still working on having a Connecting Worlds (CW) workshop in Vegas in the latter part of 2010. Thanks for your interest and inquiries as we discuss the logistics and the cost of bringing a trainer to Las Vegas. We will keep you posted on our progress.

Sign-up deadline for the April/May workshops, to be held on five Saturdays in Reno, is **March 1**. Please contact Tracy Young with any questions (t.young@nitaonline.org or (775) 772-9319).

Where: St. Mary's, Regional Hospital Reno, Nevada

When: Saturdays April 10, 17, 24 and May 15 and 22, 2010, 8 am–5 pm

Cost: \$400.00; \$350.00 for members of NITA, CHIA, ATA, NCIHC, NAJIT. Includes pre-test, course, training materials, snacks, certificate of completion.



Opinions wanted!

Professional development

What types of seminars or events would you like to see? The board would love to hear your input.

Please e-mail us!

Annual NITA Meeting in March/September Las Vegas Workshops

NITA Annual Member Meeting

The annual NITA member meeting, which will include two great presentations as well as board elections, will be held at UNR on Saturday, March 6, 2010, starting at 2 p.m., concluding at 4:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

- Peter Sexton from UNR will present on “English-Language Accent Reduction”
- NITA president Karen Tkaczyk will provide tips and tricks on “Better Written English”.

All current NITA members are eligible to vote in the board elections. Thanks to our fantastic webmaster, you can vote online. Check the website for details.

After the meeting, join us for an informal, no-host happy hour at Chocolate Bar.

Quarterly Meetings in Reno June 5, and in Las Vegas September 11

We are currently in the planning stages for the upcoming quarterly meetings. We are trying to arrange

remote hook-ups so that we can members all over the state can ‘attend’ the meetings.

One-day Conference

We are hoping to hold our first one day conference this year. It will likely be a two-track program with presentations for both translators and interpreters, both beginners and experienced professionals. We have yet to decide if it will be in Reno or Las Vegas, or if there is enough interest for us to hold one in each city, so let us know if you want one and where!

Watch this space for news!

Coffee with NITA: Las Vegas



Left: NITA member Vincent Hamon and friend of NITA Carmen Navar at Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf on January 23, 2010.

On **January 23**, eight NITA friends and members attended our casual afternoon at Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf. It was an interesting afternoon of getting to know each other, exchanging information, and of talking to fellow like-minded professionals. A special thank-you to NITA member Janice Kennedy for helping spread the word about NITA in southern Nevada!

Mark your calendars!

Because of their popularity, the next southern Nevada NITA coffee get-together is scheduled for Saturday, March 20, at 4 p.m. at Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf across the street from UNLV in the Runnin’ Rebel Plaza, where we have reserved the private room. Please check our website and watch your e-mail for more information. We hope you can join us!

This informal get-together is open to all NITA members, friends, and anyone interested in the profession. Feel free to pass this information on to all your friends. Organized by NITA Vice President Judy Jenner.

Board Reports—Some of the Decisions Made at Recent Meetings By Karen Tkaczyk

NITA Board meetings are held monthly in Reno, Nevada. All current NITA members are welcome to attend the meeting and bring their ideas and suggestions. Southern Nevada board members attend via Skype.

December Board Meeting (Held on December 5, at UNR in Reno)

- Awarded volunteer of the year award to Álvaro Degives-Màs
- Approved Connecting Worlds session at Carson-Tahoe hospital in January
- Discussed Nominating Committee for 2010 elections

February Board Meeting (Held on February 3, 2010, at the South Valleys Library in Reno)

- Approved 2010 budget
- Broached how to handle remote hook-ups so all quarterly meeting can be seen from Reno and Las Vegas
- Considered holding our first one-day conference later in 2010



Next board meeting: March 6, 2010 at UNR in Reno. All agendas and minutes are posted at www.nitaonline.org.

Incorporated 2008

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Conference Report from Guadalajara, Mexico By Alvaro Vergara-Mery

My presentation at the XIII Congreso Internacional de Traducción e Interpretación San Jerónimo 2009 went very well, with an attendance of roughly 120. I spoke about the medical health care interpretation certification process currently underway in the US. Since Mexico does not have any kind of certification for interpreters or translators, the interest was substantial. 60% of the audience was students interesting in pursuing an interpreter career, half of them in the medical field. They are looking at the US model and they understand the value of certification and the advantage of having a nationally and possibly internationally recognized credential. I responded to several of their questions and then I held some meetings after with some people really interested in developing something similar in Mexico.

I also talked to them about my experience as a medical interpreter working in a hospital setting and shared some interesting anecdotes, which they enjoyed. They are aware of the importance of certification in the medical interpreting setting. There were so many questions that my session ran long; but that's a good thing!

The conference is great, very relaxed and informal but yet very sought after. The number of participants is limited, and unfortunately the conference was at capacity by the end of September. The Congreso itself is part of the FIL (Feria Internacional del Libro/ International Book Fair), a massive cultural event. I met a lot of people and it was great for the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (one of the two bodies that is initiating certification) to send someone. Conference organizers made me promise to return in 2010.

The Universidad de Baja California in Mexicali, Mexico has invited me to give this presentation at their conference next April 2010. The Universidad de Puebla has also extended me an invitation to me, which we will discuss more in detail in the upcoming months.

Note from the editor:

Many thanks to our contributors, including NITA president Karen Tkaczyk, NITA member Vince Hamon, Robert Dorsett, Álvaro Desgives-Más and Alvaro Vergara-Mery. I am also very grateful to NITA member Claudia Grady, who has agreed to do the layout starting with the next issue.

Our NITA newsletter is published quarterly. The intention of this newsletter is for it to be a great source of fantastic information for our members about what is happening in the languages world both in Nevada and beyond. The Board welcomes all contributions from members. Articles should be roughly 250 words and include a short biography and a picture. If you wish to write a piece, or would like to help with the creation of the newsletter, we would very much like to hear from you! Submissions might be edited for content, length, and/or style and grammar.



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Royal Academy of Spain Publishes New Grammar Based on published articles; compiled by Vince Hamon

Can rules be imposed on a language spoken by 400 million people stretching from Madrid to Manila?

The Spanish Royal Academy, the ultimate worldwide authority on the Spanish language, thinks so and has come up with a "New Grammar of the Spanish Language." This is the first publication of its kind since 1931 and has been 11 years in the making. It marks the first time a grammar from the Academy explains in detail the peculiarities of Spanish as spoken in Latin America instead of solely focusing on the Spanish spoken in Spain.

The nearly 4,000-page tome in two volumes is published by Espasa. It was put together by the Spanish Royal Academy and 21 sister organizations in Latin America and other countries where Spanish is spoken, such as the United States and the Philippines. Since the two present volumes may be too much for some people, two other versions are available: a 750-page manual for students and teachers, and a simplified 250-page version for the general public.

To accurately reflect the wide diversity of the Spanish language, academicians analyzed 307 newspaper and magazine headings and about 3,800 literary works.

Although the work presently consists of two volumes, eventually a third one will be published. The first volume deals with morphology; the second one with syntax and the third one will focus on phonetics and phonology. This last volume will include a compact disk with samples of phonetic variations.