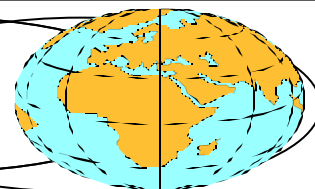
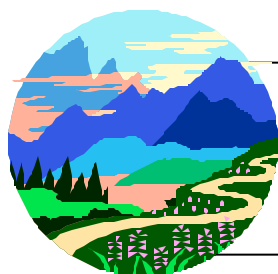


THE CRITICAL LINK UN MAILLON ESSENTIEL



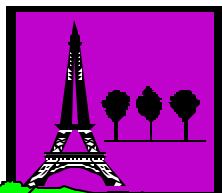
A Newsletter for Interpreters in the Community across the World

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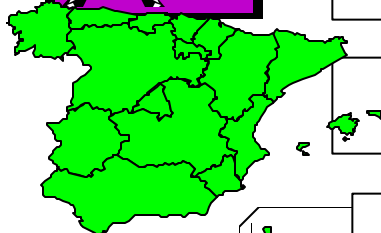


GETTING READY FOR VANCOUVER*

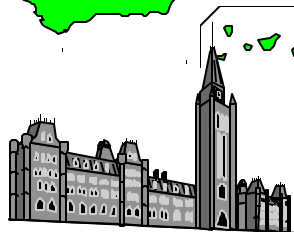
Les préparatifs de Vancouver vont bon train...



La concertation européenne



Community Interpreting in Spain



**THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA STRIKES
ANOTHER BLOW FOR INTERPRETATION**

**Distance Education Introductory Program in
Court Interpreting**

This bulletin is co-ordinated, printed and distributed with the support of the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, Ontario, Canada.

*Critical Link 2 - National Organising Committee - Comité d'organisation national
Silvana Carr, Dini Steyn (British Columbia), Isabelle Hemlin (Quebec), Terese Szlamp-Fryga (Alberta), Diana Abraham, Aideen Dufour, Nathan Garber, Brian Harris, Roda Roberts (Ontario)

GETTING READY FOR VANCOUVER

With three keynote speakers and 60 other presenters from 12 countries committed, and with **over 200 paid-up registrations received so far**, it is now certain that the *Critical Link 2* conference in Vancouver from May 19 to 23 of this year will be truly international and that it is going to be no less of a milestone than its Geneva Park predecessor.

The presenters come from Australia, Austria, Belgium, China (Hong Kong), Denmark, Germany, Malaysia, Netherlands, South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as many parts of Canada. There is a waiting list for available program slots, so many countries may be added later. Also, we are considering a fourth keynote speaker.

We thank the participants whose early payment of registration fees has helped us tie up arrangements in plenty of time. The Canadian postal strike last fall and the spectacular but catastrophic ice storm in Eastern Canada after Christmas were, to say the least, unhelpful, yet they had much less effect on our operations than they would have had in the era before fax and e-mail.

Others who helped us last time have rallied round again. First and foremost, the Government of Canada, through the Community Support and Participation Program at Canadian Heritage, and the Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation of the Government of Ontario. The former gave us a generous grant to tide us over the initial costs, and it is thanks to the latter you continue to receive this bulletin. New sponsors include AT&T from the private sector. A great deal of volunteer work goes into the organization of a conference like *Critical Link*

2. This time most of it has fallen on the shoulders of a very able team in Vancouver whom we hope you will meet in May.

Meanwhile the Program Committee has selected a high-quality slate of presenters. And again we have arranged with Benjamins of Amsterdam, to print and sell the proceedings. Sign of the times: we are also thinking of making some of the papers available on the Internet.

I said above that *Critical Link 2* would be as important a milestone as its predecessor. In this sense the Geneva Park meeting set up milestone 0, the point from which the road ahead should be surveyed and measured. Though there have been important regional meetings since then (see Michel Sauvêtre's European round-up in this issue of CL), it is *Critical Link 2* that will best enable us to gauge development in a worldwide perspective. We have focussed the program on standards and training because they are matters of practical urgency, highly debatable, and the former entails the latter. However, if you look at the program closely, other strands are discernable: not only distance interpreting for example, but even distance training for interpreters (see the Update by Silvana Carr on page 7); portents of a shift from consecutive to simultaneous; the spread of our movement to new parts of the world (China, Southeast Asia). All this holds out the promise that *Critical Link 2* is going to be a very lively and inspiring forum.

See you in Vancouver!

Brian Harris for the National Organising Committee
January 1998

Les préparatifs de Vancouver vont bon train...

Avec trois conférenciers principaux, soixante conférenciers et animateurs de douze pays, et **plus de 200 inscriptions déjà réglées**, la deuxième édition du *Maillon essentiel* sera tout aussi internationale que la première et constituera un jalon tout aussi important.

Les conférenciers proviennent d'Australie, d'Autriche, de Belgique, de Chine (Hong Kong), du Danemark, de l'Allemagne, de la Malaisie, des Pays-Bas, de l'Afrique du Sud, du Royaume-Uni et des Etats-Unis, ainsi que de plusieurs régions du Canada. Plusieurs conférenciers étant inscrits sur une liste d'attente, d'autres pays pourraient se joindre à nous en fin de course. Nous considérons aussi ajouter un quatrième conférencier principal.

Nous remercions les participants qui ont réglé tôt leur inscription, nous permettant ainsi de conclure rapidement les arrangements essentiels. La grève postale canadienne de l'automne dernier et la terrible tempête de verglas qui a récemment paralysé l'est du Canada auront somme toute eu peu d'effets sur notre activité, grâce à la télécopie et au courrier électronique.

Les intervenants majeurs qui nous avaient appuyés lors de notre première conférence sont de nouveau au rendez-vous. Il s'agit principalement du ministère fédéral du Patrimoine, à qui nous devons une généreuse subvention de démarrage, et du ministère ontarien de la Citoyenneté, de la Culture et des Loisirs, qui assure la diffusion continue du présent bulletin. Soulignons que AT&T figure dorénavant parmi nos parrains du secteur privé. Enfin, nul ne doit oublier l'énorme tâche à caractère largement bénévole qui sous-tend toujours l'organisation d'un tel événement, et dont l'accomplissement revient cette fois à une formidable équipe de Vancouver, que vous aurez tous, nous le souhaitons, l'occasion de rencontrer en mai.

Le Comité du programme a sélectionné une brochette de conférenciers de haut calibre et s'est de nouveau entendu avec la maison Benjamins pour la publication et la vente des Actes. Modernité obligeant, nous envisageons de diffuser certaines communications via Internet.

Cette deuxième édition du *Maillon essentiel* est aussi cruciale que la première. Pendant que la rencontre de Geneva Park constitue le point 0 de notre mesure d'évaluation, et bien que plusieurs réunions régionales d'importance aient été tenues depuis (voir les actualités européennes signées Michel Sauvêtre dans le présent numéro), la rencontre de Vancouver permettra de mieux apprécier nos progrès dans une perspective mondiale. Le programme de notre rencontre a été axé sur les normes et la formation, car ce sont là deux éléments urgents et d'ordre pratique qu'il importe de débattre et que les deux sont interreliés. Mais d'autres tendances se dessinent, notamment l'interprétation à distance et la formation à distance des interprètes (voir *Update* par Silvana Carr, page 7); le passage de la consécutive à la simultanée; et l'évolution de notre mouvement vers d'autres parties du globe (Chine, Asie du Sud-Est). Enfin, cette deuxième édition du *Maillon essentiel* suscitera sûrement un débat fort animé et des plus profitables.

Brian Harris
Pour le comité d'organisation national

janvier 1998



France

La concertation européenne

Michel Sauvêtre
ISM Interprétariat, Paris

Prolongeant la rencontre de Strasbourg en octobre 1995, une enquête a été réalisée en 1997 sur les thèmes du recrutement et de la formation auprès de 40 organisations (13 pays concernés) pratiquant l'interprétariat en milieu social.

La synthèse des réponses sera adressée très prochainement aux participants. Elle a pour objectifs d'aider chacun à se situer dans une pratique en pleine recherche et de provoquer une motivation sur des points forts et des pistes de travail qui se dessinent.

La formation restera très certainement la préoccupation centrale. En effet l'enquête révèle que dans 85% des cas ce sont les services d'interprétariat eux-mêmes qui doivent se charger de la formation de leurs interprètes. Hormis quelques rares pays, il n'existe pas de formation reconnue pour les interprètes issus de l'immigration, en particulier sur les aspects médicaux et sociaux.

Nous avons eu connaissance en 1997 d'un certain nombre de rencontres entre services d'interprétariat. A Göteborg et Amsterdam entre Suédois et Hollandais. A Bologne au



niveau italien, à Berne entre Suisses et à Oslo entre pays nordiques. A Hambourg, un colloque sur la communication en milieu hospitalier a fait se retrouver diverses expériences ici où là également dans le cadre de modules de formation, des observations, voire des interventions réciproques se sont essayées.

Enfin la concertation en Europe a commencé de se donner une forme juridique. Des organisations de quatre pays viennent de créer une association du nom de BABELEA (Babel European Association), avec pour objectif : "Dans les pays de l'Union Européenne et les Etats associés, agir par un interprétariat de qualité pour que l'égalité des chances soit facilitée dans la vie quotidienne à toute personne ne maîtrisant pas la langue du pays d'accueil."

Vaste programme auquel pourrait s'associer un maximum de partenaires.

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"Europeans Start Cooperation"

Michel Sauvêtre
ISM Interprétariat, Paris

As a follow-up to the European conference on cultural interpreting held at Strasbourg in October, 1995, a survey of recruiting and training was conducted in 1997. Forty organizations in 13 countries were contacted, all of them providing interpretation in a social services setting.

A report based on the replies will be sent out soon to all the participants. Its purpose is to help them determine where they stand in a profession that is still seeking its way; we want to motivate them to adopt what are coming to be seen as the stronger features and the better working methods.

Training is undoubtedly the main focus of our concerns. The survey reveals that 85% of service providers have to take care of training their interpreters themselves. Except in a very few countries, there is no recognized training for interpreters from the immigrant communities, and especially there is neglect of the social and medical aspects of their work.

I know of several meetings of representatives from interpretation services which took place in 1997. The Swedes and the Dutch met at Gothenburg and Amsterdam, the Italians got together at Bologna, the Swiss at Berne and the Scandinavians at Oslo. A conference at Hamburg on communication in hospitals was the occasion for sharing various experiences and experiments. Scattered attempts have been made to set up training modules, observe practices and even launch cooperative actions.

Last but not least, a move is afoot to put European cooperation in the field on a sound legal basis. Organizations from four countries have founded an association called the Babel

European Association (BABELLEA). Its mandate is the following: "To strive throughout the countries of the European Union and its Associated States for quality interpretation services so that there may be equal opportunity in daily life for every immigrant who does not speak the language of the receiving country."

This is an ambitious mission statement, but one broad enough to attract the largest possible number of partners.



Spain

Community Interpreting in Spain

Prof. Roberto Mayoral Asensio

Pl. Licenciado Vidriera, 4, 3º 018008-Granada

Community interpreting is not well known in Spain. Part of the work is done by us intérpretes jurados (sworn translators) and we at the University of Granada have tried to get a little bit further organizing placements for our students at the Police Departments. These practicums been quite successful. We are also discussing the idea of creating a volunteer translators and interpreters organization for helping immigrants and other needy people in cooperation with non-governmental organizations in Granada



Canada

The Supreme Court of Canada Strikes Another Blow for Interpretation

Brian Harris from material supplied by Isabelle Hemlin

For the second time in three years the Supreme Court of Canada has handed down a decision which gives significant support to the movement for better-quality interpretation services throughout the country.

The first case concerned court interpreting. This was the 1974 Tran case, in which a Vietnamese speaker who knew no English had been convicted of sexual assault in Nova Scotia, a province on Canada's Atlantic coast. The conviction was quashed and a new trial ordered on the grounds that during a key part of his trial his interpreter had provided only short and sometimes inaccurate summaries of the testimony instead of full and immediate translation. Surely there cannot have been many cases in legal history where the crucial importance not just of interpretation but of *quality* interpretation has been recognized at such a high level. Lending weight to the decision was first the fact that it was a unanimous ruling by all seven judges who heard the appeal, and secondly that they issued an unusually long (72 pages) judgement in which they laid down standards applicable to *all* Canadian court interpreting. They said:

"The constitutionally guaranteed standard of interpretation is not one of perfection... However, the translation must be continuous, precise, competent and immediate... An accused who does not understand and/or speak the language of the proceedings -- be it English or French -- has the right at every point in the proceedings in which the case is being advanced to receive interpretation which meets this basic standard."

Of course the Canadian legal system is particularly sensitive to interpretation issues because the country is bilingual and because court interpretation is mandated explicitly in the constitution (Section 14 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982.) Indeed the general standard of French and English interpreting has for some years now been much improved, thanks in part to monitoring in the courtroom by critical lawyers and judges who are themselves bilingual. However, it is much more difficult to monitor interpreting in overseas languages, some of them — like Vietnamese in the seventies or the Somalian languages in the nineties — virtually never heard in the courts before. The Supreme Court judgement in effect put the courts on notice that the same standards apply to all languages.

Now comes another Supreme Court ruling affecting interpreter services which is potentially just as significant. However it concerns a different working context and a different part of the country, and *prima facie* it is about money not about quality. It started back in 1990 with the government of the province of British Columbia refusing to fund a \$150,000 program to pay for visual language interpreters at medical sites. The

counter-claim, of course, was that the interpretation was essential to effective medical treatment and ought to be paid for as part of the public health services. The government's refusal appears all the more niggling when one considers that British Columbia is a relatively rich province and that a poorer province like Quebec has been providing free visual and tactile interpreting as an adjunct to medical services for over a decade. Anyway, the case eventually made its way to the Supreme Court, whose judges also said outright (and unanimously again) that the BC government's refusal was niggling, especially in proportion to the overall costs of the health system. Basically, however, the argument that prevailed was that refusal to supply an interpreter infringed on the citizen's constitutional right to equal treatment, that is to say to treatment of equal quality.

This second judgement has its limitations. First, the judges made it clear that they were only considering visual language. They distinguished it from spoken language because, so they said, the hard of hearing do not have the alternative of learning English or French. On the other hand they did not (as I have heard suggested) close the door to payment for voice interpreting: they simply left that question open. The second limitation is that in this case it is a matter of providing a service and not of the quality of the service.

Nevertheless, one can foresee repercussions on quality for a simple reason: obliging the government to pay means that people will be able to afford professional interpreting instead of having to rely on volunteers. With payment for professional services comes a demand for consistent standards and for training. That, in a nutshell, is the economic underpinning for rising

standards of community interpreting everywhere.

References

Supreme Court of Canada rulings can be accessed on Internet.

For the British Columbia case (Eldridge v. Attorney General of British Columbia) in English see

<http://www.droit.umontreal.ca/doc/csc-scc/en/rec/html/eldridge.en.html>

Pour le jugement en français dans l'affaire de la Colombie-Britannique, voir

<http://www.droit.umontreal.ca/doc/csc-scc/fr/rec/html/eldridge.fr.html>

For the Tran case (R. v. Tran) in English see

<http://www.droit.umontreal.ca/doc/csc-scc/en/pub/1994/vol2/index.html>

Pour le jugement en français dans l'affaire Tran, voir

<http://www.drpot.umontreal.ca/doc/csc-scc/fr/pub/1994/vol2/index.html>

New Publication



TIS In Europe 1976-2001

Determining the origins, size, nature and Outlook of Telephone Interpreting Services in Europe. Original Research and *Vade Mecum*. (Handbook) Based on research undertaken by Dr. Tom Pointon (UK) and Dr. Uldis Oxolins and Dr. Chris Doucouliagos, (Australia), this publication would be of particular interest to anyone involved in the growing use of, and demand for, telephone interpreting services.

For further information contact:

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Email: drtomp@msn.com

Canada - British Columbia


Distance Education Introductory Program in Court Interpreting

Silvana Carr, Vancouver Community College

As announced in the March 1997 issue of the Critical Link, Vancouver Community College received funding to develop and test a distance delivered course for court interpreters. The principal funders are the Office of Learning Technologies and the Law Foundations of British Columbia, Ontario and the Yukon. Delivery of the pilot course was delayed, but is about to be launched this spring.

In order to permit a precise external evaluation of the project, the pilot course is being offered only to students in British Columbia and in the Yukon, and is limited to six languages: Cantonese, French, German, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese. Once the pilot is completed, the course will be made available to any interested individual.

The screening of candidates for the pilot course is scheduled for February 13-15, 1998. The screening procedures will test the candidate's mastery of both languages as well as aptitude for interpreting. Successful applicants may register for the course which they can complete, in the comfort of their home working at their own speed, between May 1st and November 14th, 1998. The course will be packaged as a self-study course with audio cassettes, video cassettes, assignments and telephone and e-mail tutor support. Distinctive features will be language-specific audioconferences and two videoconferences.

The curriculum was developed by Vancouver Community College in partnership with the Open Learning Agency. The course will be featured on the Knowledge Network program Open Learning Now on March 9, 1998 (7:00 and 11:30 p.m Pacific time).

As the need for trained interpreters increases, not only in large metropolises but also in smaller communities having no access to traditional training, interest in the course is high, both nationally and internationally. Can distance delivery technologies replace the traditional, one-on-one interactive training of interpreters? We look forward to evaluating the results of this pilot project with a view to further development of the concept.

For further information, call Silvana Carr at Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus, Box 24785, Vancouver, BC V5N 5V2, Fax (604) 871-7166 or Dini Steyn, at the Open Learning Agency, 4355 Mathissi Place, Burnaby, BC V5G 4S8.


From across the Pacific

We note that ***community interpreting*** will be one of the topics to be addressed at **Building Bridges - The Fourth Language International Conference on Teaching and Interpreting**

Shanghai, China, December 1998