

CATI QUARTERLY

Summer 2004

The Newsletter of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters

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CATI is a chapter of the American Translators Association. For more information, see the ATA website:

www.atanet.org

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From the CATI President

CATI encourages members to highlight their expertise

By Jackie Metivier



Dear CATI Colleagues: As you enjoy the mountains or the beaches this summer, we bring you this issue of the *CATI Quarterly*.

This issue includes entertaining, useful, and timely information you must act upon. The Board recently approved a new format for the Member Profile Questionnaire that will affect the printed directory as well as the online version.

Ann Sherwin's article in this issue clearly explains the benefits and how you can act now and take advantage of this new method of highlighting your experience to attract new clients. Now residing in the lone-star state,

"Ann Sherwin's article ... explains the benefits and how you can take advantage of this new method of highlighting your experience ..."

Eta Trabing continues with her discussion on how to run a translation / interpretation business from your home. Pay attention, I receive sev-

eral calls every month asking about some of these very same issues.

Ann Olving, a long-time CATI member, delights us with her memories of a trip through Europe where her language skills helped her bridge the communication gap.

I want to thank Alice Bolaños for volunteering with me on behalf of

"The Board recently approved a new format for the Member Profile Questionnaire that will affect the printed directory as well as the online version."

CATI to provide English-to-Spanish simultaneous interpretation at the Hispanic Education Forum for the five candidates running for the North Carolina Superintendent of

Public Instruction position, at the Museum of History in Raleigh, on July 15. The five candidates: June Atkinson, J.B. Buxton, Bill Fletcher, Jeanne Smoot, and Marshall Stewart expressed their opinions on why they would make

the best candidate for the job. Over 100 people were in attendance, the event was televised by WRAL and UNC-TV, and it will be aired on

New CATI directory format offers more latitude

By Ann C. Sherwin



Do you have 5—or 35—years of relevant experience not reflected in your CATI directory profile? Special software or equipment expertise

you want prospective clients to know about? A certificate you worked hard for that doesn't fit our criteria? There's good news: The CATI Board of Directors recently approved a new format for the directory. Now you can submit a biographical paragraph of up to 100 words stating any facts about yourself that you consider relevant to prospective clients.

The change will allow you more latitude in your listing and simplify the tasks of editing and proofreading the printed directory. Database manager Shelley Williamson and webmaster David Heath have worked on the technical aspects, and the new system should work smoothly for everyone.

The contact information in your profile will remain in place, along with your native language, country of origin, working languages, ATA certification, and preferred fields, all with the same limits as before. The headings "Affiliations," "Other Certifications," and "Education" will disappear after a 6-week changeover period, and the information under them can go into the new paragraph if you choose, along with

relevant employment history, publication credits, or a special service you offer that is closely related to translating or interpreting. You can even mention additional language pairs and subject areas here.

What to do next

With your cooperation, we will have the new format up and running soon. The data collection form—the Member Profile Questionnaire you completed when you joined CATI—has been revised, and you will receive a copy of it by e-mail later this month. It is also available for downloading from the CATI website.

Basic instructions for writing the paragraph are

included on the form. We ask that you submit it electronically so that Shelley can import it into the database without retyping. To do so, please go to the members-only section of the CATI website and fill out the online form provided for this purpose. You can either type your paragraph directly into the form or paste it in from a word processor.

Content of your paragraph

Your paragraph may be the first sample of your work that a prospective client sees, so you'll want to write it with care. It must be objective, like a résumé or CV, and contain only information that you can document. In other words, it should

"Now you can submit a biographical paragraph of up to 100 words stating any facts about yourself that you consider relevant to prospective clients."

"Your paragraph may be the first sample of your work that a prospective client sees, so you'll want to write it with care."

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New CATI directory format offers more latitude *continued*

not read like an ad or contain claims about the quality, reliability, or value of your service.

The directory listings of corporate and institutional CATI members already contain paragraphs, but the content guidelines for these are now the same as those for individual members. If you represent a corporate or institutional member, please review your current paragraph and revise it, if necessary, to comply with the new guidelines.

Since you are limited to 100 words, you will need to prioritize. Imagine yourself as the client. What would you want to know in selecting a translator or interpreter? If you are long on credentials, you may not need to mention your membership in the Chamber of Commerce. If your undergraduate and graduate degrees are in the same field, you might choose to mention only the higher one and

save room for experience. (Years of experience are presumed to be

full-time. If you averaged 8–10 hours a week translating or interpreting for four

years, that's one year of experience.)

How to conserve words

You may write in either first or third person. Abbreviations and acronyms are OK, but remember these may turn off readers unfamiliar with their meaning. You can omit definite and indefinite articles, pronouns referring to yourself, under-

stood verbs, and other nonessential words.

Examples

of normal and terse styles are shown in the box below.

Ann Sherwin is an ATA-certified German-English C. Sherwin is translator in Raleigh, NC.

Use exact wording for these credentials

If you list any of the following credentials, please use this exact wording, substituting your language pair or contract level where applicable:

US Federal Court Interpreter Spanish<>English

Consortium of the National Center for State Courts Interpreter Spanish<>English

US State Dept. Contract Conference [or Simultaneous or Consecutive] Interpreter Spanish<>English

US State Dept. Contract Translator Spanish>English

US State Dept. Contract Foreign Language Officer Spanish

For other credentials, please use the exact wording given in your certificate or contract. Any claim of a translating or interpreting credential must include mention of the language pair and direction and the certifying body.

Examples of normal and terse styles

Normal style

After earning a BA with majors in German and Food Science from North Carolina State University and a PhD in Food Science from the University of Minnesota, I was employed in the dairy industry for 10 years and did translations on the side. In 1990 I became a full-time independent technical translator and editor. I am a member of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), an active member of the American Translators Association (ATA), and a frequent presenter at conferences of both associations. My publications include research reports and translations in trade journals. A complete bibliography is available on request.
(100 words)

Terse style

BA German, Food Science, NCSU; PhD Food Science, University of Minnesota. Employed in dairy industry 10 years while translating on side. Full-time independent technical translator/editor since 1990. Member Institute of Food Technologists, active member ATA. Frequent presenter at IFT and ATA conferences. Bibliography of published articles and translations available on request.
(Same information, 51 words, room for 49 more!)

Running an individual translator/interpreter business from home

Part 3: Estimating interpreting costs and preparing the price quotes

By M. Eta Trabing

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This is the third part of a multipart series. Part 4 will deal with your home office, hiring professional help, quality control, preparing the invoice, multiple booking for court cases, delinquent payments, marketing yourself, the client - translator/interpreter relationship, professional ethics, bookkeeping, record-keeping, and filing.



Although much of what has been written under translation estimates is equally valid for interpreting estimates, there are some major differences that you need to be aware of. If you are interpreting for the state or federal courts, you will have to follow their guidelines and fill out their forms or send invoices in their required format, which changes from one jurisdiction to another. You will also be limited to how much and what the courts are willing to pay for. Check this out with the clerk or with the Administrative Office of the Courts for

your state or with the federal court manager in your city. The federal courts will usually reimburse travel costs if you go out of town, and rates vary depending on the town you go to. Some will pay mileage, others not. Some will pay door-to-door, others not. Establish a good working relationship with the people who approve your invoices for payment!

If you are filling out state forms for your interpreting services, be sure to get all the required signatures (judge, lawyers, clerk, whomever) before you and they leave the courtroom.

"If you are filling out state forms for your interpreting services, be sure to get all the required signatures (judge, lawyers, clerk, whomever) before you and they leave the courtroom."

If you are working for an individual or a company that does not have fixed, established prices per hour or per

day, then you can negotiate the fees.

If the price request is for interpretation at a conference or meeting that is out of town, remember to include the following costs:

- Your *daily* fee, plus an *hourly* fee if overtime appears a certainty
- Your travel *time* (if you spend two days getting there and two days getting back, you have spent 4 days in which you could do nothing else to earn a living); the client needs to pay you for this, unless you make another type of arrangement.
- Your *mileage* and *parking* if you are driving your own car.
- If the out-of-town trip includes an overnight stay, the client will have to pay your *hotel, meals, air-*

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From the CATI President continued from page 1

WRAL-TV on Saturday, July 17. Just last month, the CATI Triangle group, the Piedmont group, and the

Check out some of the pictures of the Triangle group social on the website.

"Our next event will be the Fall Workshop in Charlotte. Watch the CATI website for more information when it becomes available."

Our next event will be the Fall Workshop in Charlotte. Watch the CATI website for more information when it becomes available.

and make a habit of visiting it often. We post all events and new information is updated almost every day, thanks to David Heath, our CATI Editor and Webmaster.

So, sit down and relax and enjoy this issue, and just remember to put on sunscreen.

Charlotte-area group held their summer socials.

Please bookmark the CATI website (www.catiweb.org)

Jackie Metivier
CATI President

Running an individual translator/interpreter business from home

Part 3 *continued from page 4*

fare, ground transportation, and parking your car at your home airport – whichever of these expenses are appropriate.

- Ask the client to pay the airfare and send you an e-ticket. And ask the client to have the hotel and car rental, if any, billed directly to them. The idea being not to put all these big expense items on *your* credit card, that *you* will be paying interest on, until you get paid and can pay them off. And what if the client defaults on the payment or is very

“... what if the client defaults on the payment or is very late? Can you afford to pay these expense items? Probably not.”

late? Can you afford to pay these expense items? Probably not. The loss or delay of your fee is bad enough!

- If, during the conference or meeting, you eat with everyone else, which is usually the case, then

your meals are paid for and you only make arrangements for the meals you will eat alone. *Do not* charge the client for your bar bill or wine with dinner!

- Notify your client of your *cancellation fee*. If you have set aside a week for the client and he cancels at the last minute, you will be out a week's worth of

work. The cancellation fee usually includes all expenses already paid by you (especially non-refundable airline tickets, if you bought one), plus a fee that is a percentage of what you would have earned. You can have a sliding scale for cancellations 60 days, 30 days, 20 days, 10 days or less prior to the time of the event; the shorter the cancellation time, the higher the cancellation fee. However, the unwritten rule seems to be: no more than 30% of what you would have earned. Conferences will usually pay this. The courts will *not*. The constant changes in court calendars are something you will have to learn to live with if you want to work there.

- Unfortunately, you will not get reimbursed for all the time you may have spent preparing and studying for the conference – that's an occupational hazard.
- If the interpreting job is *in town*,

remember to include the following costs:

- Your *hourly* fee, plus an *hourly* fee if overtime appears a certainty.

- A *minimum 2-hour fee* just to leave your house. This will cover your travel time when the client won't accept “door to door,” and will cover your sitting around and waiting for everyone to arrive.

- A “door-to-door” hourly fee, if possible. If not the time you spend sitting in rush hour traffic will be time and money lost to you.

- *Parking*, if possible, depending on the client; some can validate

parking tickets so there would be no charge; sometimes parking is free, depending on the place or building.

- Generally, you would *not* charge

for the lunch hour, unless you are interpreting during lunch, which happens, depending on the conference or meeting.

Preparing the translation / interpretation price quote

Any and all price quotes should be submitted *in writing* so that there are no misunderstandings between you and the client. The American Translators Association has a sample contract that you can use; there are a number of examples of different contracts used by both translation companies and individual translators. Some translators don't use contracts – much depends on how you feel about your clients or a particular client. Do you know them well? Do you trust them?

The CATI Quarterly

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

Reader submissions are welcome. Suggested length limits are:

- Articles 1500 words
- Reviews 500 words
- Letters 300 words

Submissions become the property of the *CATI Quarterly* and are subject to editing. For details, see the “Submission Guidelines” at

www.catiweb.org/guidelines.htm

If you have questions or would like to submit an article, please contact the editor, G. David Heath, at

infoexact@mindspring.com

Please contact CATI at (919) 577-0840 for advertising information.

Running an individual translator/interpreter business from home

Part 3 *continued from page 5*

Have you had a good, long-standing relationship with them? Most business organizations pay their bills, even if not always right on time; but when the economy is bad, the translator is usually the lowest one on the totem-pole and may have to wait months to get paid. Life is *not* always fair!

If your client is a translation company, they may set a fixed price or you may be able to negotiate a price with them. Again, it depends on your relationship with this client.

If you write up your own price quote, be sure to include: the word count, or the total cost for a particular project (time + words), the delivery date, the format of the delivery (electronic and/or hard copy), the method of delivery (e-mail, FedEx, etc.), how changes will be handled and charged, and the method of payment you expect (check within

30/60 days, direct deposit, within what time period, etc.).

Add a paragraph about the research you are prepared to do. Ask if the client has any background materials (previous translations, glossaries, etc.) that would help you do a better job for them. Find out whom to contact at the client's office if you have any questions

"... when the economy is bad, the translator is usually the lowest one on the totem-pole and may have to wait months to get paid."

about the materials. Ask if the client requires *you* to prepare a glossary. Then thank the client for the opportunity of being able to present a price quote – hope you will be able to work together, etc., etc., and sign it.

The above can be sent as an e-mail message, or as a letter mailed or faxed, but it constitutes a legal commitment on your part and you will have to stick to it, even if you made a mistake in the calculations. Sometimes, it's too late for

changes and we have to swallow our mistakes and losses!

If the client says you got the job, be sure and get a purchase order number or a written confirmation of your proposal before you start the work. It's a good idea to print out this order or confirmation and have it as a backup for your invoice, along with your estimate. Should this job have to go to collections or to a small claims court, you will have the necessary background.

M. Eta Trabing, translator, instructor, writer, retired interpreter, CATI ex-President, and owner of Berkana Language Center (see www.eberkana.com) has been in the T/I business for about 35 years and now lives in Houston, Texas.

Part 4 of "Running an individual translator / interpreter business from home" will appear in the Fall 2004 CATI Quarterly.

Spanish language certificates at Durham Technical Community College

By Sandra Bonifacio

Interested in perfecting your Spanish or learning the foundations of interpreting? Whether you are a Spanish native speaker, a heritage speaker, or an English-speaking person with a desire to improve your Spanish, Durham Tech has the perfect programs for you!

These two one-year-long programs include the Spanish Language Certificate Program and the Community Spanish Facilitator Certificate Program.

The first certificate provides stu-

dents with the conversational skills, written skills, and the cultural knowledge needed to effectively communicate in Spanish in the workplace, community agencies, or abroad.

The second certificate prepares students to work as paraprofessional interpreters whose goal is to facilitate oral communication between individuals in various community settings (such as hospitals, community agencies, and others). Courses are taught within a cultural context and include relevant community service projects. Both pro-

grams are offered during lunchtime and evening hours to accommodate working students.

For Plans of Study and Course Descriptions, visit Durham Tech's website at <http://durhamtech.edu>

For additional information on the programs, contact me, Sandra Bonifacio, at 919-686-3771 or bonifacios@durhamtech.edu

Sandra Bonifacio
Coordinator, Spanish Certificates at Durham Technical Community College

My experience attending the IJET-15 Japanese/English Translation Conference

By Junko Gilbert



In the past several years I have attended several ATA Conferences, but this year I attended the International Japanese/ English Translation (IJET) Conference for the first time. The primary difference between the ATA Annual Conferences and IJET Conferences is that IJET is exclusively for J<>E translators and interpreters while ATA conferences are for translators and interpreters of all languages. ATA's language division sessions are somewhat similar to an IJET conference.

It is good, of course, to get to know translators of other languages, but as it happens I often find it hard to get well connected because our interests are different and we work with different business and language environments.

IJET-15 was held in Yokohama, Japan on May 22 and 23. I wanted to take advantage of attending this conference, so I stayed in an inexpensive business hotel found in our mailing list posts. I also took this chance to go home and visit my parents. I stayed with them for a few days and flew with them to the U.S. This was their first trip to the U.S. although I have been living here for the past 19 years. Because they do not speak English they did not want to fly alone out of concern for the difficulties they might encounter going through customs or transferring between flights.

The IJET-15 conference was well organized, with three different sessions being held concurrently, four times a day for two days, all somewhat relating to Japanese translation or interpretation.

One presentation that I found very interesting was using text-reading software to check your translation. I have not seen this topic in ATA conference presentations. You can use a text-reading function that often comes with some speech-recognition software, or you can get freeware with this function alone. It lets the computer read your translation (or the original text, if it is an

"One presentation that I found very interesting was using text-reading software to check your translation."

electronic file) and you underline the corresponding original text to ensure that you have not missed any text.

The presenter uses an English program

for this, but someone in the audience said she also uses Japanese software. There are some minor problems with the text-reading function, but you can learn to overcome such shortcomings. This will be a very useful feature. The presenter emphasized that this would help to eliminate errors in our final review stage where our eyes have to shift from the original text to the translated text and back to the original, which can easily result in missing a portion of the text.

I gave a presentation on legal docu-

ments (agreements and contracts). This was the same topic that I presented at the 2001 ATA Conference. Soon after I started explaining the legal terms and usages, and how legal documents are written using, for instance, the auxiliary

verb "shall" instead of "will" or "must," I received objections from the floor. Two

members of the audience disagreed and said that legal documents are not written like that any more. One of them said she lives in Australia and she hadn't seen legal documents written in such an old-fashioned way for a long time. The other audience member who disagreed was a British citizen living in Japan. He said that my handout used an old style or something like that.

I told them that my presentation was based on my experience. I said that I live in the United States and a long time ago there was a movement to simplify legal writing. I did see some documents written with "will" instead of "shall" back then, but I haven't seen anything like that for the past 10 or 15 years.

At the end of the session, the British man came over and gave me a brochure published by Clarity – an international association promoting plain legal language (www.clarity-international.net). He is a contact person of this group in Japan. No wonder he was so vehemently disagreeing with what I was explaining (about legalese). But I may join this group in the future and learn what they have to say. For the time be-

From the Editor's desk

Promoting the skills and experience of CATI members

By G. David Heath



Whenever I take the time to look through the CATI directory and member database I am always impressed by the breadth of the credentials and skills that our professional association encompasses.

I don't mean only the number of languages written and spoken by our members, even though CATI members now offer no fewer than 27 different languages, in addition to English. I also mean their different educational credentials, skills, experience, and areas of specialization, in both translation and interpretation.

Now, with the recent approval of a new directory format by the CATI Board, the association is offering a substantial improvement in the way you can promote your credentials, skills, and specialized experience to potential clients.

The new biography paragraph in

"I am always impressed by the breadth of the credentials and skills that our professional association encompasses."

the CATI directory, which is explained in detail by **Ann Sherwin** in this issue of the *CATI Quarterly*, removes the restriction that was imposed by a predefined list of preferred fields. Now you can describe the credentials, skills, and experience that you consider crucial to your specific customer base.

I encourage you to use this opportunity to promote your skills and experience to potential clients. It should not only help you to increase your business but also enable you to become better known by other CATI members.

Editor's note

Sandra Bonifacio has asked the *CATI Quarterly* to stress that, in addition to all the presenters and volunteers whom she thanked in her Vice President's message (*CATI Quarterly*, Spring 2004), she would like to expressly thank **Jackie Metivier, Michael Collins,** and **Alice Bolaños** for their hard work and dedication to making the recent CATI Joint Conference a success.

My experience attending the IJET-15 Japanese/English Translation Conference *continued from page 7*

ing, I will continue to translate in the "old-fashioned" way, the most prevalent way of writing legal documents in the U.S.

Also at the end of my presentation, an employee of a Japanese law firm asked me if I could give another presentation like that in Japan. I told her I would love to although I'm not a professor of law or anything like that. I like to share my knowledge with others.

The IJET conference registration

fee is similar to the ATA Conference fee. The dinner and social at the end of the conference were pretty good except that there was no place for us to sit and talk. It was all buffet and standing-only dinner. I missed the ATA's dance. I may not always dance, but I like the fun atmosphere anyway. Also, at ATA Conferences we have a chance to congregate with other CATI members.

The IJET Conference is a very good conference for Japanese

translators. I wish I could go to both conferences every year, but sometimes I have to choose between the two for financial reasons. Next year's IJET Conference will be in Chicago.

Junko Gilbert is a Japanese <> English translator and a CATI Board member. She translates a broad range of fields with special interest in accounting, banking, business, law, engineering, and medicine.

Focus on members

A column about CATI members and their activities



Sandra Bonifacio received an award for Excellence in Teaching from the Arts, Sciences, and University Department at Durham Technical Community College this past May. It covered her performance for the academic year 2003-2004. Congratulations, Sandra!

Zilda DePaula reports that right after her story was featured in the *CATI Quarterly* (Spring 2004, page 7) she became the subject of a front-page story in the *South Charlotte Weekly* (April 2-8) under the title "Her accent is on language." To read the story, look for the link under "Latest News" on the CATI website at www.catiweb.org.

Karen Ordanic recently returned from a three-week visit to Croatia. Combining her experience as a National Import and Export Manager and the knowledge of Croatian language, she taught a group of entrepreneurs how to start a small business, write a business plan, and apply for the available grants and loans, and how to import and export.

Sylvia A. Smith, Lecturer in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at NC State University in Raleigh, has been appointed Lecturer of German at the Department of Languages and Culture Studies at UNC Charlotte effective in the fall 2004. At UNC Charlotte she will teach various courses, including Business German.

Joan R. Sutton told *CATI Quarterly* that she recently translated an extensive curriculum document for a graduate of the State University of Minas Gerais, Brazil. It was complicated and tedious, with codes, grades, hours, requirements, and of course, the subjects. It was for a Bachelor of Arts in English. However, she said that it was much easier for her than the previous curriculum that she worked on, which was a Law Degree

Eta Trabing, CATI ex-president, is now a resident of Texas once again. She moved at the end of June, after 2 years in Pensacola, FL. She is now also a member of the Houston Interpreters and Translators Association (HITA) and back in the city where she started her United States experience 40 years ago! Her children and grandchildren seem to be migrating back there, so she had to move there also.

Eta will be teaching what may be her last classes for NC AHEC from August 19 to 25 at WakeMed in Raleigh. She then immediately leaves for Seattle, WA to give a talk on Saturday, August 28, as part of the ATA NW Coast Business of Translating and Interpreting Seminar. On October 2, she will give an all-day course in Miami for FLATA members and friends, and on November 19 and 20 will be talking to the approximately 45 medical interpreters and translators that MedVerse has in Greenville, SC.

If any CATI member comes through TX, be sure and give Eta a call!

Congratulations to **Memuna Williams**, who recently passed the ATA French>English certification exam. Memuna told the *CATI Quarterly* that in March, she started Avantgarde Translations, Inc. Their services include French>English translation and revision, English editing and proofreading, and multi-lingual cultural consulting and project management for full-service translation agencies and other end clients. They specialize mainly in business and legal documents such as agreements, marketing pieces, financial statements, newsletters, correspondence, etc.

In the short-to-medium term, Memuna will continue to work on building Avantgarde Translations, Inc. She will also continue to share her 13 years of experience in the industry through writing and presenting on business-related translation topics as she did at last year's ATA conference in Phoenix and at the New York University translation conference this past June.

She will be presenting on outsourcing and the translation industry at the ATA Conference in October later this year. In the long term, Memuna would also like to be teaching business-related translation topics to university students.

If you would like to let your colleagues know about some of your recent or upcoming activities, please send an e-mail to G. David Heath, *CATI Quarterly* Editor, at infoexact@mindspring.com.

The language bridge and communications

By Anne Olving

Anne Olving, a long-time CATI member and a translator / interpreter with education in the Scandinavian languages as well as English, German, French, Spanish, and Italian, told **CATI Quarterly** that she and her husband had been thinking and talking for several years about returning to Europe to live and work. One spring and summer she was able to take the time off to investigate the living conditions and the labor market.

Her report on the experience, which follows, describes a fascinating travel experience during which she used every language she knows and bridged the communication gap in some of the most improbable places.

It was a beautiful spring and early summer in Europe. I traveled by Eurail from Luxemburg through Germany and Denmark and Sweden, getting off the train to visit friends and relatives here and there. In Stockholm I boarded a Siljan Line ship and sailed overnight across the Baltic to the city of Turku in Finland. The archipelago sparkled in the evening sun and the moonlight shone on us on the upper deck. We stayed there the whole night through. The "night" lasted only two to three hours, the crossing maybe nine or ten. It ended with a lavish Scandinavian breakfast buffet.

Turku is a modern city rich with history and buildings dating centuries back, well worth a visit. The same goes for Helsinki, the capital of Finland.

My ambition was to use the Eurail pass and travel as far north as the Eurail transportation system could take me. I traveled at night, whenever possible, and did sightseeing by day. I traveled by train, boat, and bus. All a part of the Eurail pass.

At nightfall I boarded the train in Helsinki and slept in my comfort-

able sleeping quarters while the train chugged north along the Finnish coast of the Baltic Sea.

Next morning we crossed the border into Sweden and I disembarked at the city of Haparanda, a little gem of a city by the Baltic in Lapland. They had built a starkly modern church out of wood, very dark on the

outside and brilliantly light inside. The eye was drawn toward an unusual chandelier suspended from the high ceiling in the center of the church: a very wide dark ring with all these lit candles. Simple and stunning.

Lunch that day was in a typical Swedish cafe and typical Swedish food: sautéed liver with onions and mashed potatoes and, of course, lingonberry preserves.

The train took me north, north, north and west, west, west. I would have liked to spend time in Kiruna, Sweden's northernmost and largest city with not all that many inhabitants... maybe another time.

Next in my memory is Abisko. This is high up in the mountains and it is a ski resort. On the train were people from all over the world on their way to spend Scandinavian mid-summer skiing in Abisko ... Very advanced skiing on special skis.

Hour after hour passed as the train moved westwards through the mountains. The day was a little dreary, gray, some drizzle... and then, all of a sudden around the bend the scenery changed ... way down in bathing light is this shimmering pearl of a city by the ocean: We are approaching Narvik by the Atlantic Ocean, way up north.

I grew up on the west coast of Sweden and loved the wonderful fresh fish from the ocean. Now we had spent many years in America's heartland, beef-eating country. How I missed that seafood!

"I entered the compartment ... and said, 'Goddag,' Swedish for 'How do you do' or 'Good day.' The older man said 'Guten Tag' and the young one replied politely, 'Bonjour.' "

Here I had it to my heart's content. Early the last morning in Narvik I went to the fish market

and bought seafood as if for a big party. There was a bakery. How could I resist? Loaded down, I boarded the train.

What was I going to do with all this food? I would have to continue my journey straight south, along the Atlantic coast of Norway this time and go to my brother's family in Göteborg, Sweden, some 23 hours away.

On the train, I entered a compartment with two passengers: an older man sitting next to the door facing the train's corridor, and kiddy-corner from him, sitting by the window, a young lad. They sat very quietly, each in their own corner, admiring the Norwegian landscape. There was plenty of room for me, as the compartments are made for six people.

I entered the compartment, looked at the two and said, "Goddag," Swedish for "How do you do" or "Good day." They looked at me – startled maybe. The older man said "Guten Tag" and the young one replied politely, "Bonjour." I asked the German speaker if he spoke any other language. He shook his head sadly and said, "Leider, nein." When asked, the French speaker confirmed that

The language bridge and communications *continued from page 10*

French was his only language.

I told the two men what the other had said and they both laughed. We discovered that the old man was a railroad man from Austria, on his last free journey on the European railroads. The Frenchman came from Marseille and he was on his very first trip outside of France. Then we just talked and talked and I was happy to be the intermediary.

The Frenchman wanted to buy a wedding gift from Norway for his brother, and we found a bearskin rug for him in a gift shop while the train stopped in Trondheim. But I am getting ahead of myself ...

First came the midnight sun and our gourmet supper. The sun does not set at all above the Arctic

Circle during midsummer time; it just has an eerie golden glow. It is dreamily beautiful. I shared my bounty from the sea: cooked sweet Nordic shrimp, the best in the world, we think, some smoked salmon, and that bread from the Narvik baker. A little bit of wine...

"I asked the German speaker if he spoke any other language. He shook his head sadly and said, 'Leider, nein.' "

The Austrian had never had shrimp before in his whole life and he liked the taste. As a railroad man, he had earned one free trip a year on the European trains. This was his last free trip. He would retire by the end of the year. He traveled alone, because his wife did not like to leave home.

"When asked, the French speaker confirmed that French was his only language."

"But," he asked, "how come that a lady like you travels alone?" So I told him how it came about that I had this wonderful experience...

That whole Eurail trip was one big language bonanza for me: Actually, I flew Icelandic and wound up in one of their lounges. There I realized how close Icelandic is to the other Scandinavian languages (Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish). We understood each other surprisingly well. Of course, there was French in Luxembourg, German in Germany, etc.

Then, when I came to Finland: *ouch*, that language is entirely different. I used my little Berlitz dictionary and have never said so many "Kiitos" before in one day. I pointed and said "Kiitos" and it worked. It means "Thank you." They didn't want to speak Swedish, which they are supposed to learn in school, and they could not or would not speak English.

In Abisko (Sweden) people from the whole world came and I tried every language I ever had been exposed to. Lots of fun.

Latest News

Translation Memory Tools Workshop

The next CATI Board Meeting and Fall Workshop will be combined and the planned venue and date are UNC-Charlotte on September 18.

The topic of the workshop will be Translation Memory Tools.

Watch the CATI website for details.



CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF
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