

31ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS

This year the 31st Annual Conference of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI), a regional chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA), which took place at the University of South Carolina Upstate in Spartanburg, SC, had a record number of 140 participants that represented ten languages, including Spanish, Japanese, Korean, German, Italian, Russian, Chinese, Portuguese, Polish and Arabic.

The Conference has been sponsored by Atrium Health, Novant Health and Wordfast as well as CATI Gold sponsors Avantgarde Translations, Castillo Language Services, Inc and UNC Charlotte.

During his presentation CATI Chair Javier Castillo said that the CATI has 123 members from NC, 28 from SC and 5 from other states, of whom 7 are students, 126 are individuals and 13 corporate members.

The CATI Board members mentioned the main areas they are going to work on this year are development of webinars, creation of resource pages, improving conditions of interpreters in South Carolina, organizing workshops and socials in NC and SC, increasing inner visibility, membership participation and volunteer work.

Learning The Ropes is one of the CATI's interesting programs, as a part of which more experienced interpreters can mentor other interpreters either face-to-face or via email and phone.

The CATI is working on content and platform of various webinars, which will be available next year, and organizes Socials for interpreters and translators in NC and SC. The idea behind Socials is that many interpreters and especially translators are introverts and this gives them a chance to network, share experiences and knowledge. Any member or non-member may contact CATI to host Social in any city of NC and SC.

The key note speaker of the Conference was Judy Jenner, a Spanish and German business and Legal translator, and a federally court-certified Spanish interpreter. She holds an MBA in marketing and runs her boutique translation and interpreting business, Twin Translations, with her twin sister Dagmar. She serves as spokesperson for the American Translators Association, writes the blog Translation Times, pens the "Entrepreneurial Linguist" column for The ATA Chronicle. She is the co-author of The Entrepreneurial Linguist: The Business-School Approach to Freelance Translation. She teaches interpretation at the University of California-San Diego. Judy flies a lot for her interpreting assignments and her special talent is (trying to) memorize airport codes.

Judy's presentation "10 Habits of Highly Successful Translators" had a lot of useful information for people new in the industry and those who want to advance their career, also for interpreters and even people working in other fields. Judy is as funny as she is smart, but her confidence and positivity are contagious. My takeaway from her presentation was "educate, but be kind and don't be a finger-wagging translator."

For the first time the CATI Conference had a Speed-Networking Table, where individuals, organizations and companies could leave their resumes, brochures, business cards and a Book Swap, where participants could find resources to add to their home libraries and collections.

During the day there were a lot of coffee breaks for everyone to converse, network and create relationships both personal and professional. When found that I am Russian CMI, people asked me a lot of questions about certification and I was very happy to provide them necessary information.

There were three sets of three breakout sessions in fields of translation, interpreting and business skills for the participants to choose.

“Sight Translation: Where Translation and Interpretation Meet” session was presented by Jeannette Houchens, Certified Medical Interpreter (CMI-Spanish), and a Certified Court Interpreter for South Carolina. Sight translation is always a tough issue for the medical interpreters – should we say I will or I will not – depends on a lot of factors. As a trainer myself, I am always interested how other speakers present the same topics that I teach and learn something new from them. Jeannette had offered interpreters a new formula for sight translation - SQ3Rs, which stands for survey, question, read, recite and review.

The session “Trauma Informed Interpreting: The TIMIS Study” presented by Lluís Baixauli-Olmos, who started working at the Classical and Modern Languages Department at Uofl in 2013 as an Assistant Professor in Translation & Interpreting (Spanish). His most recent research work focuses on codes of ethics for interpreters and on memory in consecutive interpreting.

TIMIS stands for Trauma Informed Mental Health Interpreting Services and the idea behind it that trauma informed care requires adjusting the interpreting protocols to suit the client’s needs. Even though the project is still in progress in Louisville KY, the preliminary results are very interesting. The project focuses on the following components of mental health interpreting: adjusting sitting arrangements, how does trauma expressed in language, the issue of power during the mental health sessions, is tolerance to violence culturally determined, how does trauma informed care impacts interpreting, how to prepare for traumatic content, how to intervene in case of incoherent speech and many others. This is a fascinating project and I hope results of the project will be used in future interpreter trainings.

The session “A Conscious Approach to Healthcare Interpreting” was presented by Jeremy Palomo_MBA, CoreCHI, AHEC educator for several healthcare providers with over 16 years of experience in healthcare interpreting.

This evidence-based approach combines the fundamentals of a medical interpreter and social models of human interaction, the ultimate goal of which is to help improve overall experience of interpreter, patient and provider. I think it is a wonderful idea to include social interaction skills into the medical interpreter trainings. Medical interpreter is a relatively new profession and we learn a lot of things through trial and error, but the most important thing is that we are moving in the right direction.

I was leaving the CATI Conference tired, but I was excited that so many people got together with one goal to improve their performance, to share their experience and to be better interpreters.

Gulnara Akbarova, CMI-Russian

Director

National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters