

Up-skilling for translators, editors and other communications professionals (with a nod to academic researchers and a wink to historians)

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- Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting 2007. Building Bridges, Constructing Networks (METM07).
- Madrid, Spain, 25-27 October 2007 .
- <www.metmeetings.org/pagines/metm07.htm>.

In just three years since its inception, Mediterranean Editors and Translators (MET) has held three successful international events, run a number of workshops in the Barcelona area and Madrid, and established itself as a leading organization for language and communications professionals who work with non-native users of English. Its third annual meeting, METM07, was organized in Madrid by Catherine Mark, an editor at the Centro Nacional de Biotecnología, aided by a team of colleagues. The event kept 70 wordface experts from 14 countries busy during three days of workshops, plenary sessions, panel presentations and posters. METM07 was fortunate to receive support from the Real Jardín Botánico, which provided the venue through the auspices of Spain's Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas and the Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología. The Universidad Pontificia Comillas in Madrid also kindly provided classroom facilities along with computer and technical support. The program was capped off by a 1-day excursion to Toledo (a highlight for science translators) to learn about the city's multilingual heritage as a center of knowledge transfer to Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries.

In the inaugural plenary session Joy Burroughs-Boenisch, an author's editor, translator and researcher in academic writing by non-native users of English, reminded the audience that English is no longer the property of native speakers but is now used as a second language around the world, and identified some of the implications this has for communications service providers. The plenary lecture, titled "Cross-cultural differences and similarities: What do we really know about cultural differences in written communication? A realistic review of the contrastive rhetoric literature," was delivered by Ana Moreno, a specialist in contrastive discourse analysis at the Centro de Información y Documentación Científica (CINDOC, CSIC) in Spain. She explained that until recently, research in contrastive rhetoric was often marred by confounding variables and design flaws such as a failure to take into account the level of expertise or proficiency of the writers being studied. Her overview of studies in this discipline was a warning to researchers to read critically and consider how robust the study design was as we ponder the validity of the conclusions.

Workshops were offered at METM07 on corpus-guided editing and translation, a genre analysis approach to translat-

ing research articles, punctuation skills to improve text flow, effective communication with clients, statistics for editors and translators, appropriate citation practices and strategies to detect potentially inappropriate practices, and information ordering to improve text flow. Panel sessions discussed the benefits of computer-assisted translation tools, useful internet and computer tools, approaches to working with authors, and negotiating with clients. The program took an innovative approach to poster presentations by allowing presenters a chance, during a plenary session immediately before the poster viewing opportunity, to briefly explain their results and what they meant for professional practice in applied settings. Further details of the METM07 program can be seen at http://www.metmeetings.org/pagines/events_METM2007.htm.

At the general assembly attendants received information on MET's questionnaire for monitoring members' needs and interests in continuing professional development, the target-language engineering corpora being developed with the Universidad Politècnica de Catalunya, and the model revision-and-review protocol (reflecting European translation standard EN 15038) which has been piloted in the translation of MET's Charter from Catalan to English. These projects are a clear reflection of MET's determination to offer members training in practical skills that will keep professionals at the cutting edge of competitiveness in a language services market characterized by rapidly evolving challenges.

The year 2008 will be a busy one for specialized translators and editors in the Mediterranean region. Plans are being made for the Fourth Regional Meeting of the Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME) in Bahrain in November. The European Medical Writers Association (EMWA) will hold its Annual Spring Conference in Barcelona on 28 April to 3 May, with a focus on translation. This event will feature speakers from MET and EMAME, and the Asociación Española de Redactores de Textos Médicos (AERTeM) also hopes to meet during this conference, which would provide an excellent opportunity to network for medical writers and translators working with both English and Spanish. In July MET will participate in a seminar about author's editing in Barcelona organized by the European Association of Science Editors (EASE). An intense year of continuing professional development activities will culminate in Split, Croatia, at METM08, MET's fourth international meeting, on 11-13 September. This event will be organized with assistance and support from members of the *Croatian Medical Journal* editorial staff.

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