

# CAPTIONS

Official Newsletter Publication of the Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters  
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3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2006

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## Continuing Education

by Ana Acosta

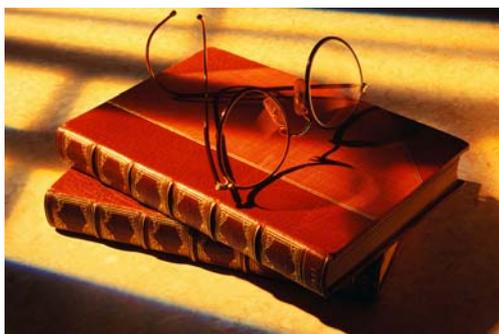
Continuing Education ("CE") is a hot topic among Colorado court interpreters. Effective September 1, 2005, according to Chief Justice Directive 05-05 specifying Continuing Education and Professional Practice Requirements, all certified and active roster interpreters must complete 24 hours of approved continuing education and 48 hours of professional interpretation practice during each two-year period.

To better understand the Directive, CAPTIONS interviewed Emy López, State Court Interpreter Program Administrator.

Emy tells us that the CE program was modeled after guidelines by the National Center for State Courts and the practices being followed in other Consortium member states. It responds to a need to provide a structure to the CE requirement. She points out that CE is necessitated by our Code of Ethics and quotes the final canon: "Interpreters shall continually improve their skills and knowledge, and advance the profession through activities such as professional training and education, and interaction with colleagues and specialists in a related field."

**The directive indicates that accepted CE activities are those specifically approved by the Court Interpreter Program (CIP) for credit. What are the things you will take into consideration before authorizing these credits for a specific seminar, workshop, or self-study activity?**

"The purpose of continuing education is to better the skills of the interpreter. This can take place through courses specifically related to the modes of interpreting, to vocabulary enhancement, to the understanding of the judicial processes, and to a number of other subjects. For that reason, requests will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis. Some providers' courses will be accepted based on the type of event that they traditionally host. Other courses will be accepted individually, and those who would like to participate in a group or self-study will have to fill out a detailed form that will outline the objectives of the study. As soon as the reconstruction of our site is completed in the next couple of weeks, all of these forms will be posted online under the State Court Interpreter Program's website at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/chs/hr/interpreters/courfinterpreterpage.htm>."



[According to the directive, every CIP approved class instruction hour shall be counted as one credit hour of continuing education, up to a maximum of 16 credit hours per educational activity.]

**Is your office planning on organizing CE opportunities for interpreters?**

"The one course that the Colorado Interpreter Program will be offering is the required Ethics Course. It will be a four-hour course that covers the ethics and protocol that must be followed in the Colorado State Courts. At this time, the first class is tentatively planned for January 20, 2007, and another session will be offered in the fall of 2007."

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## FROM FUJIAN TO DENVER

### Meet Rose Yan, Cantonese Interpreter

by Isabelle Houllbrèque

Rose Yan, a Chinese Interpreter and CAPI member, was born in southern China in the province of Fujian. She left communist China for Hong Kong with her family at age three. At the time she spoke only Amoyese (also called Taiwanese). In her kindergarten class she was considered intellectually "slow".... until she learned to speak Cantonese (the language spoken in Hong Kong). She learned to write with a brush, preparing her own ink for class. Later, Rose went to an exclusive British high school where all the classes were in English (except for Chinese literature and history). This was a very strict and proper school. In the English classes, you would be fined for speaking Chinese!

Rose was accepted at the University of Oregon in the Biology Department. She remembers the culture shock when she first arrived and was confronted with dorm life and hippies! Rose had come from a conservative, protected environment. In addition, Rose had to work to pay for the cost of college. She balanced work in a fast food restaurant and later in the "Bamboo Pavilion" making egg rolls, sushi, and fried rice with studying biology and computer science. Later, Rose lived with a professor's family and cleaned house for them.

A few years later, Rose graduated from Northwestern University in Chicago and worked as a Medical Technologist in Chicago for 8 years. She and Andrew (who is also Chinese) were married and moved to Denver. She was a "stay at home mom" and raising two daughters. The first time she interpreted was in her church, working from Mandarin to English.

In the early 1990's, Rose started interpreting in the courts. As her reputation grew, she received calls from New Mexico, Texas, Illinois and Hawaii interpreting for depositions and immigration courts. She also interprets locally in hospitals and schools. She has passed the written English part of the Federal Court Interpretation exam, passed the Lionbridge (formerly Berlitz) test for immigration and, in Colorado, she is on the list of Professionally Qualified Interpreters for Cantonese (she shares this list with one other

person only) and is the only conditionally approved interpreter in Mandarin.

The United Nations considers Chinese one of the most difficult languages to interpret (along with Russian, Arabic and a few others). When interpreting to and from Chinese and English, both the left side and right side of the brain are used. In some language combinations, only one side is used. Rose tells us that the word order is completely different in Chinese. There are no genders. For example, if someone says "He killed him" or "She killed her" in Chinese, you have no idea if the killer or the victim is a man or woman. The words for "he" and "she" and "him" and "her" and "it" are the same. (Not so in written Chinese where the Chinese character will identify female, male and animal.) There are no verb tenses in Chinese. Verbs are not conjugated but are accompanied by qualifiers such as yesterday, already, tomorrow and if to determine the tense. Mandarin and Cantonese are completely different languages and people who speak only one of these languages do not understand each other. Incredibly, they share the same written language!

I asked a friend\* to give me an example. "Hello, where are you going?" In Mandarin, this would be, Ni Hao, Ni Qu Na Li? In Cantonese, this same phrase would be Lai Hou, Lai Huai Bing Duo? And now, here is how this phrase is written and understood by both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers:

你好，你哪里？

Rose says that many defendants ask for legal advice and consider her to be a legal counselor rather than an interpreter. They are very respectful, very polite and very thankful, but often offer her gifts, money and lunch. She must continually remind them that she is the interpreter, that she must abide by a code of ethics and cannot accept anything from them. The people she interprets for speak little or no English and do not understand the legal system. In traffic

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cases, they don't understand plea bargains. "When charges are lowered from say, speeding to defective vehicle, the defendants insist at the podium that their car runs perfectly well." Another problem is that the Chinese are chatty and will talk to you while you are interpreting simultaneously. "I once made a significant mistake because the defendant would not stop babbling in my ear. I had to request that the judge accept a correction in my previous interpretation".

Rose says she enjoys working as an interpreter because she finds that it enables her to serve her countrymen and, it offers her an outside world, different from her role as homemaker. We are honored to have Rose as a colleague and friend here in Colorado and wish her well in her career.

\* Thank you Ling Ling Coe

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## POINTERS ON COURT INTERPRETING FROM THE BENCH

***Judge Gilbert Gutierrez, from the Weld County Courts in Greeley, Colorado, submitted the following article when asked for his perspective on the use of language interpreters in his court.***

*The following is a summary of an article that appears in the New England Law Review entitled "Protecting the Rights of Linguistic Minorities: Challenges to Court Interpretation", 30 NENGLR 227 (1996), that mirrors my opinion about court interpreters based on my experience as an attorney and judge.*



The trial judge has the duty to supervise and conduct judicial proceedings in a manner that ensures that all parties receive a fair and impartial trial. This duty includes ensuring that the interpreter performs his or her duties accurately, fairly, impartially, and ethically. The professional court interpreter plays a unique role in the legal system in promoting equal access to the courts.

A court interpreter should speak loudly and clearly. The interpreter's rendition should reflect pauses, hesitations, the rate of speed of the witness, and should be delivered in a manner that reflects but does not exaggerate the tone and emotions of the witness. I prefer simultaneous interpretation in all judicial proceedings.

An interpreter must be knowledgeable of court proceedings. When an interpreter is faced with a "runaway witness" the interpreter must be able to follow the judge's directions in controlling such a witness. The court interpreter must not correct factual errors made in questions put to the non-English speaker. The court interpreter must not correct the testimony of non-English speakers, even if errors are obvious. The qualified court interpreter should always refer to himself or herself as "the interpreter" when addressing the court.

A court interpreter is obliged to stop the proceedings whenever he or she is unable to understand the word or phrase or needs clarification. If an error occurs in the interpretation during any proceeding and the court interpreter realizes the error, the court interpreter must immediately correct the record.

The interpreter must interpret what the attorney or attorneys say to the Judge as well as the Judges' response when ruling on an objection. A bilingual Judge should not act as an interpreter and should conduct all proceedings in English. A judge must be sensitive to many different aspects of ethical conduct in the proper use of court interpreters.

Unqualified court interpreters prevent the fact-finder from hearing the "true voice" of the witness, and in doing so, prevent the fact-finder from fairly evaluating the manner and demeanor of the witness and his or her testimony or prevent the defendant from assisting counsel in his or her own defense. Professional court interpreters provide a meaningful opportunity for a non-English speaking party or witness to fully and fairly have access to the judicial system.

# PICNIC



Some of the CAPI members who attended the picnic.

Over 35 people attended the CAPI Summer Picnic at Sterne Park in Littleton on Sunday, August 13. It was a beautiful day and many families came with their children. The food was excellent. Many thanks to David Fletcher (and CAPI financing) for the delicious chicken, home baked bread and drinks. People brought a number of delicious side dishes and desserts. The conversations were interesting, the volley games intense! Special thanks to Hilda Gerke, Silvia Ruiz, Isabelle Houlbreque and Susana Cahill for their help in organizing the successful event!

## INTERPRETER NEWS

Congratulations to **Rosemary McCoy** and **Jorge Espinosa** who became American citizens in a ceremony held at Civic Center Park in Denver on Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>!

We're sorry to announce the passing of **Jamie Mckenzie** who worked as a freelance interpreter in the Denver courts in 1994-1995.

Welcome...to Sebastián Galeano, the son of interpreter **Teresa López** and her husband Giovanni Galeano. Sebastián made his entrance on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:19 p.m., weighing 8 lbs, 3 oz (3,700 kgs). Big sister Sofía is very excited and quite a big help!

Denver County Court is sorry to see **Samir Farah** leave as Staff Interpreter. In his short time in the Denver office he made a very big impression. He will be missed, but will still be working as a freelancer in the Denver Metro Area. Thank you for all you have done for our interpreters, Samir!

### *MARK YOUR CALENDARS!*

Be sure to join us on **December 9** for the **CAPI Holiday Party**, at the Mercury Café in Denver.

This and other information for Interpreters will be posted when available on CAPI's website... [www.coloradointerpreters.org](http://www.coloradointerpreters.org).

Check back over the next few months to see a dramatic change in CAPI's website!

## INTERPRETER QUANDARIES

In this interactive column CAPTIONS welcomes interpreters to share an ethical dilemma that they have experienced, and readers are encouraged to send in their comments and suggestions. We'll include some of your comments in the next issue. Please send ethical dilemmas or comments to [captions@coloradointerpreters.org](mailto:captions@coloradointerpreters.org).

### Follow-up to "¿Cómo está la niña?"

by Julia Davis

In the last issue of "Captions," the dilemma of "la niña/the girl" was presented. In summary, the article pointed out the problem of interpreting la niña as "the girl" in some contexts because in English, "the girl" insinuates a certain amount of distance or even dislike between the speaker and the girl, while in Spanish people commonly refer affectionately to a girl - even their own dear daughter - as "la niña." Thus we are left to ask, if "the girl" is not a suitable interpretation in those contexts, then what is the correct interpretation? [For the complete article, [click here](#).]

The crux of this question goes back to one of the fundamentals of interpretation: **focus on the meaning**, not the individual words. To quote my esteemed colleague, Cathy Bahr, "Don't be married to the words. They are just our lovers."

So, if we ask, "What is the meaning?" and "What is the English equivalent?", we can see that one solution is to use the corresponding relationship as the English interpretation. For example, if you're interpreting at an ER visit for people that you know are mother and daughter, you can certainly interpret "La niña has a high fever" as "my daughter has a high fever," because that's what an English speaker in the same situation would say that conveys the same meaning and tone. Most of the time, this is a great solution.

But what if you don't know the relationship between the speaker and the girl? In the previous article we mentioned the scenario of

an interview between two adults relating to suspected child abuse. Let's say that you know that the English speaker is a social worker, but you haven't yet learned who the Spanish speaker is. (If only it were feasible to always get the background information on our cases!)



The social worker asks: "Do you know why we're here?" and the other adult answers, "Because of what la niña said," or "because of what happened to la niña." Now you have a dilemma, because you don't know what connection this person has with the girl: is the adult a relative of the girl, or the alleged perpetrator, or both? Or

is he or she a witness to the allegations that indeed may not know the girl very well?

The Oxford Bilingual Dictionary gives a very simple suggestion - **use either the word "child", or the child's name. If the child's name is not known, use the corresponding pronoun**, she or her (or he, him, or his). In other words, the answer "because of what la niña said" is rendered, "because of what she said." And "because of what happened to la niña," is correctly interpreted as "because of what happened to her."

This simple but handy technique makes it possible to give an accurate interpretation with nothing omitted and - as is equally important - nothing added. In addition, it may afford the opportunity for the principal parties to the conversation to clarify who the "she" or "her" is in relation to the Spanish speaker, which will help the interpreter if la niña comes up again.



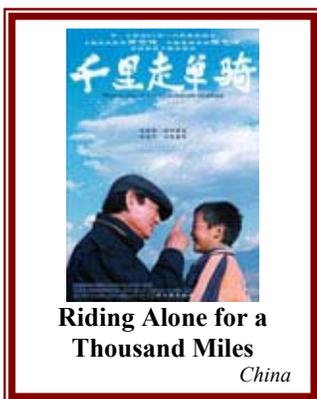
## 2006 INTERNATIONAL FALL MOVIE PREVIEW

by Samir Farah

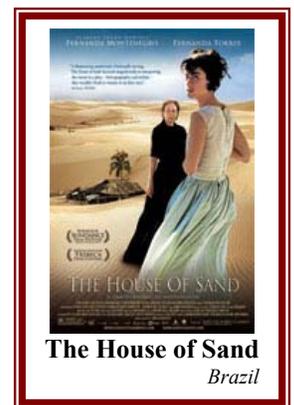
The end of summer is good news for film buffs. It means the start of the season where the best movies of the year are usually released. It is no secret that the fall season is when the studios and independent art distributors promote their best films in search of Oscar consideration.

Denver will kick off this year's fall season with a retrospective on filmmaker **Pedro Almodovar**. Ten of his best films will be shown throughout the month of October including: *Bad Religion*, *Flower of my Secret*, *Matador*, *Women in the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, Oscar-winner *All about my Mother*, and his new movie *Volver*.

**Brazil** will be represented by *The House of Sand*, the new film of acclaimed Brazilian director Anrducha Waddington (*Eu Tu Eles*). **Russia's** official entry for best foreign film will be *The Italian*, the journey through the Mediterranean of an abandoned child. Zang Yimou,



**China's** best living director is back with *Riding Alone for a Thousand Miles* mixing Japanese and Chinese actors for the first time. The Winner of this year's Berlin Fest is **Iran's** *Offside*, a film about the fight for women's rights in that country. After six years of absence, **French** director Luc Besson (*The Professional*, *The Big Blue*) returns with a black and white thriller called *Angel-A* set in Paris. **Argentine** filmmaker Fabián Bielinsky (*Nine Queens*) makes a comeback with *El Aura* a huge success in his native country. Winner of numerous prizes at Cannes, the **Turkish** film *Climates* will be released in October. Aside from all this, expect



new movies from Ridley Scott and his brother Tony, Darren Aronofsky (*Requiem for a Dream*), Brian de Palma, Alfonso Cuarón (*Y tú Mama También*), Martin Scorsese, Alejandro Gonzalez-Irriñatu (*Amores Perros*), Clint Eastwood, Sofia Coppola, Chris Nolan (*Memento*), Agnieszka Holland (*Antonia's Line*) and many more.

To wrap things up, the Denver International Film Festival in November will gather more than 250 films from around the world at the Starz Film Center. Visit [www.starzfilmcenter.com](http://www.starzfilmcenter.com) for more information!



Be ready, and prepare to enjoy a great season of quality time in front of the silver screen!

## ACCESSING THE FUTURE: *Technology and Language Access, Education and Services*

by Silvia B. Ruiz and Lee A. Trujillo-Lopez

The Nebraska Association for Translators and Interpreters (NATI) is a strong organization with members who are willing to lead and offer invaluable assistance to newcomers, as well as to their own community. The 2006 NATI conference, held in early August, was a professional development seminar which offered interpreters the opportunity to continue their education on different subjects, while at the same time networking with colleagues.

Two brave Colorado interpreters arrived safely at the conference site in Lincoln, Nebraska, despite the wind, sun, rain, and tornado warnings in their eight-hour road trip heading through the plains of Nebraska.

The conference workshops covered a broad range of subjects that were both useful and challenging for working interpreters and translators. Of particular interest for the Colorado participants was a question and answer session on the state of the profession in Nebraska with a panel of judges, state coordinators and interpreters. Clearly, Colorado and Nebraska face similar problems regarding interpreter certification, ethics, hourly rate, and the shortage of certified interpreters. Nebraska is using what is termed as qualified interpreters. Often, these colleagues have to travel an hour or more to go to rural areas for a 15 minute hearing. Because of this, they are trying to get paid not only for the miles, but for "windshield" time.

One of the funny highlights of the conference was a wonderful skit presented by the organizers mocking the use of a new translation gadget used by the state police, to assist them during traffic stops, with several pre-programmed scenarios. In the skit, the gadget failed to relay the answers of the Mexicans in the vehicle, and of course all three were "arrested" for giving false information, in addition to other charges. Sound familiar?

Based on our experience, we believe that attending workshops outside Colorado has not only the benefit of improved knowledge and further training, but also gives us an insight on our neighbor's struggles, which are not much different from ours.



Back row: Silvia Ruiz, Janet Bonet (former NATI president)  
Front row: Natalie Malmberg (NATI president), Holly Mikkelson and Lee Trujillo-Lopez

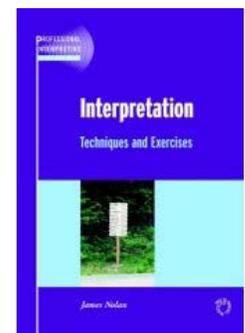
### **New Book on Interpretation...**

#### **Book Description**

This book provides a structured syllabus and an overview of interpretation accompanied by exercises in the main aspects of the art. It is meant as a practical guide for interpreters and as a complement to interpreter training programs, particularly for students preparing for conference interpreting in international governmental and business settings.

#### **About the Author**

James Nolan is Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service and Deputy Director of the Interpretation, Meetings and Publishing Division of the United Nations. He previously served as a UN Senior Interpreter and as Head of Linguistic and Conference Services of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. Mr. Nolan is a graduate of the School of Translation and Interpretation of the University of Geneva and of New York Law School. He has taught interpretation at Marymount Manhattan College and New York University.



[It is important to keep in mind that at least two of the 24 continuing education credit hours that interpreters shall complete in a compliance period must be earned at an ethics workshop approved by the Court Interpreter Program of the State Court Administrator's Office.]

**What method should interpreters use to keep track of CE credits? Sometimes we do not receive certificates of attendance. Where and how should we record this information?**

"It is the interpreter's responsibility to maintain records of their own credits. One of the forms that will be posted online is the *Compliance Form* on which interpreters will track their credits. The most important thing for interpreters to ensure is that their courses are pre-approved. This information is maintained by the Interpreter Program and will be used as confirmation during the reporting period. Some events that have received pre-approval will also have an acknowledgement of attendance, and that should be turned in with the compliance form, but it is not necessary for all events. Providers are given the information necessary to ensure that attendees receive credit for their course."



[Continuing Education requirements apply to all interpreters on rosters – certified, non-certified, or staff – that are maintained by the state. Aside from the 24 hours of continuing education credits, interpreters shall complete a minimum of 48 hours of professional interpretation assignments during each reporting period. Professional practice must consist of law-related assignments. Interpreters must maintain documentation to verify compliance with minimum continuing education requirements for a three-year period.]

**What constitutes a reporting period or compliance period?**

As per the Directive, "The first continuing education compliance period for interpreters certified or for those who are on the active roster as of September 1, 2005, will end on January 31, 2008. For all others, the first compliance period is for a period of at least two years following the date on which the interpreter passes the oral certification exam or is added to the active roster, ending on January 31. For example, if

an interpreter passes the oral certification exam in November 2005, the continuing education compliance period for that interpreter would end on January 31, 2008. Subsequent compliance periods are two-year periods beginning February 1 and ending January 31."

**What happens if an interpreter fails to comply with the continuing education and professional practice compliance?**

"If it is determined that an interpreter has failed to comply with these requirements, the case will be referred to a three-member subcommittee of the Court Interpreter Oversight Committee. This subcommittee will try to contact the interpreter and develop a compliance plan. If efforts to communicate with the interpreter fail, or if a compliance plan cannot be negotiated, or a compliance plan is developed but

not completed to the subcommittee's satisfaction within a six month period, the interpreter will be removed from the interpreter directories maintained by the Colorado Judicial Department. For interpreters certified by the Colorado Judicial Department, non-compliance will cause certification to lapse."

**Based on the experience you acquired as a managing court interpreter and the insight you have gained through your position as State Court Interpreter Program Administrator, what are the areas we need to work on and the changes we need to make?**

"Interpreters must be very well-rounded. Simply studying vocabulary is not the only way to make us better interpreters. It is necessary to know the environment in which we work, the skills needed to improve our interpreting in all modes, and the law that is addressed during our assignments. As the Colorado Court Interpreter Program Administrator, I have been continually impressed by what is going on in the interpreting profession around the country. I am also extremely excited about the progress that Colorado is making on the national scene. Many states are modeling pieces of their program on practices that Colorado has in place, and we hope that the Continuing Education piece becomes one of those models to follow."

## MENTAL EXERCISES FOR WORD PEOPLE

Try putting these into your target language:

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The farm was used to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture.
5. He'd be able to lead if he would get the lead out.
6. The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present,! he thought it was time to present the present.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
13. They were too close to the door to close it.
14. The buck does funny things when the does are present.
15. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
16. To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
17. The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
18. After a number of injections my jaw got number.
19. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.
20. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.
21. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?



## Aren't Words Wonderful?

by Ron Olson

A word's meaning is determined by the context in which it is found. So a single word in English may result in any number of different words or even whole phrases in the interpreter's target language. Take a look at the words below, and how their meanings change based on the context in which you find them.

**DISCOVERY:** One would think that that this word refers to what happens when one finds something new. In court, however, "discovery" is the body of evidence that must be shared with both sides of a legal case, and attorneys like to object to the other side's "discovery violations."

**TO ENDORSE:** This word can also be spelled "indorse". In standard English it could mean to sign the back of a check, or to enthusiastically support someone for a political position. When in court, "to endorse a witness" means to announce on the record that you may call a certain person as a witness.

**RECORD:** For a Judge the "record" is the official documentation of what has happened in court. To a doctor, this word refers to the file that a medical office has on a certain patient. To an athlete, a record is the best possible achievement at a given task, but for a music lover, a record plays the sounds she likes to hear from her more youthful days.

**SUSPENSION:** This is a fun concept to interpret. When speaking about a driver's license, suspension is to be avoided at all costs, but when referring to a sentence that is given by a judge, a suspended sentence is desirable. "Suspension" may also merely be a description of something that is hung from above, or a liquid mixture of chemicals.

These are just a few of the colorful words we meet every day in our trade. Find your own favorites and share them with other interpreters in the weeks ahead.