

A BENCHMARK CREATED FOR THE INDIAN TRANSLATOR COMMUNITY

A REPORT ON

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE & TRANSLATION INDUSTRY OF INDIA

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES, NEW DELHI , APRIL 17-18, 2009

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The 1st National Conference on "Language and Translation Industry of India: Opportunities & Challenges" jointly organized by the Indian Translators Association and LinguaIndia Foundation successfully concluded on April 18, 2009 creating a benchmark for the language and translator community of India.

The warm-up activity to the conference began on April 16, 2009 with the pre-conference workshop dedicated to Quality Standards, Terminology Management, Professional Practices and CAT Tools, hosted by Instituto Cervantes, New Delhi. The workshop was inaugurated by His Excellency Miguel Angel Ramirez Ramos, Ambassador of Cuba in India who emphasized the need to create awareness about quality standards, terminology management, professional practices and CAT tools in translation. The Cuban Ambassador also took the opportunity to explain about the initiatives of Cuban government in promoting language and translation activities in his country and expressed his desire to intensify co-operation with India in these areas in order to further open gateways to cultural exchange between both countries.

The workshop that witnessed presence of more than 150 participants was chaired by Ms. Ana Isabel Reguillo, Academic Head of Instituto Cervantes in New Delhi who explained about the mission of Instituto Cervantes in promoting quality education in Spanish language and culture studies in India and throughout the globe. Further, the workshop included some highly interactive sessions by experts of international repute including Prof. Roger T. Bell (University of Westminster, UK) who actually brought the otherwise hot and dull afternoon alive through his sessions on Professional Practices in Translation. The sessions were then continued by experts from Austria that included Dr. Gabriele Sauberer (TERMNET), who shared her knowledge on Terminology Management and Quality Standards in Translation; Dr. Peter Jonas (LICS) explained in detail about the EN 15038 standard; Ms. Anja Drame (INFOTERM) dealt with standardization in terminology. The workshop ended with an exclusive session on CAT tools by Conference Convenor Mr. Ravi Kumar who emphasized the need to integrate with the translation technology. This was followed by a demonstration of a newly developed CAT tool called "Heartsome": a new generation cost effective CAT tool that fully supports Indian languages.

The National conference that received Institutional support from the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore; Instituto Cervantes, New Delhi and the International Federation of Translators (FIT), Montreal began on April 17, 2009 and witnessed presence of more than 200 delegates that included academicians, bureaucrats, corporate representatives, translators, language professionals and agency owners. The conference began with a lamp-lighting ceremony carried out by the Chief Guest, Prof. Ramadhikari Kumar, Rector, Jawaharlal Nehru University who applauded the efforts of the Convenor, Mr. Ravi Kumar and his team in creating such a vibrant, visible and forceful platform as the Indian Translators Association which makes it possible for members of the language and translators community to share knowledge and views on various aspects of translation. Prof. Ramadhikari Kumar who has been actively involved in teaching translation and interpreting in Jawaharlal Nehru University, described to the learned

audience the opportunities that existed in the field of translation. He further emphasized the need for joining hands to create well trained human resources and inculcate quality consciousness and professional practices in them if Translation Industry of India was to be harnessed properly. The inaugural address was delivered by Special Guest, Prof. Sankar Basu, Dean, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. Prof. Basu, who is also the recipient of the Order of Friendship Award (the highest award conferred by the Russian Government), gave an insight into the present scenario of the Translation Industry in India. He further expressed his happiness over the initiatives taken by LinguaIndia Foundation and Indian Translators Association in uniting academics, translators and practitioners and hoped that, in future, such events would be organized more frequently and that level of engagement with Indian Translators Association from the academic side would increase. During the inaugural session, the guest of honour Prof. Mahendra Benipuri shared his thoughts and memories on the writings of his father the late Rambriksh Benipuri, a great Hindi writer and one of the founders of the Socialist Movement in India.

The co-organizer of the National Conference, LinguaIndia Foundation, for the first time initiated and conferred the Rambriksh Benipuri Awards in the national and international categories. The honour in the national category was for Prof. R.P. Bhatnagar (Ex-Professor and Chairman, Department of English, University of Rajasthan) a well known academic, writer, translator and pioneer in translation studies in India. The award in the international category was given to Prof. Roger T. Bell (ex-Professor of Linguistics at University of Westminster, UK and Honorary Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Linguistics, London) a pioneer of Translation Theory and Practice. The award giving ceremony was followed by an English Translation reading of "Raziya" a short-story written by Sh. Rambriksh Benipuri, by Mrs. Swati Das, Head of Department, Delhi Public School. The translation as well as the reading was done in such a way that the message of the writer Rambriksh Benipuri was transmitted to the audience with full emotion that touched most of those present in the IIFT auditorium, where the conference was being held.

The National Conference also witnessed the presence of Prof. Dr. P.P. Giridhar, Head, National Translation Mission, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Govt. of India who presented the Showcase of the National Translation Mission and highlighted initiatives that the Government of India has taken to promote translation activities in the country. Further, the audience had the chance to listen to the views of Mr. N.L. Lakhanpal (IAS), ex-Director General - Foreign Trade and the Chief of ZeitGeist-Advisorate who gave an eye opening talk on "Asia in the context of Globalization" and stressed the need for quality translation that will help India/Asia to effectively adapt to the globalization process. This session was further enriched by a talk given by Ms. Marielle Morin, Director of French Information Resource Centre (FIRC), Embassy of France who described the activities of FIRC in promoting translation activities in India especially in the context of the translation of literary books from French to Indian languages and vice-versa.

The second day of the National Conference started with a special interactive session on Machine Translation with talks by experts including Dr. V.N. Shukla, Director, Special Applications, C-DAC, Noida; Dr. Vijay K Malhotra, Computational Linguistics expert; Mr. Ravi Kumar, President Indian Translators Association and Managing Director, Allied Modlingua Services Pvt. Ltd. and Dr. P.P. Giridhar, Head-National Translation Mission. After very fruitful discussions, all the panelists agreed on the need to develop indigenous technology and design memory-based affordable CAT tools to empower Indian translators and language professionals and add value to the growth process of the Indian Translation Industry.

In another session, Mr. Uma Shankar B.R., Deputy General Manager-Robert Bosch Engineering and Business Solutions (RBEI) shared experience of his company which supports the translation requirements of its clients

including its parent company Robert Bosch GmbH, the world's leading global supplier of technology services. Mr. Shankar's presentation addressed the challenges of serving a large clientele, with an unpredictable order inflow and managing a large team of in-house translators and meeting demands of customers without compromising on the quality as well as turn around and yet ensuring continuous workflow to its in-house team. His experience was well received as an effective model of translation project management applicable to small and medium as well as large scale service providers.

The conference also witnessed dedicated panel discussion on interpreting services in India chaired by Prof. S.P. Ganguly and Co-ordinated by Prof. Anil Dhingra who emphasized the need for setting up an Interpreting School that imparts exclusive training in Simultaneous and Consecutive Interpretation.

In addition, the conference witnessed the presence of experts of international repute like Prof. Manju Dhariwal, LN Mittal Institute of Information Technology, Jaipur (Translation for propagation of Culture and Values: A story from Buddha's life); Prof. Om Gupta, Dean Jagannath International Management School, New Delhi (Translation for Whom: Linguist of the original language or reader in the foreign language); Prof. S.M. Mishra, Deputy Director, Indian Council for Historical Research, New Delhi (Challenges of Language and Translation of Neighborhood: Immediate and Global); Prof. Jeevaratnam Gurusamy, Avinashilingam University for Women, Coimbatore (Translation as a form of cross- cultural communication); Prof. Hem Chandra Pande, Ex-Dean, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (Online English-Hindi-English Dictionaries as CAT Tool: an assessment); Prof. Sanjay Singh Baghel, ARSD College, University of Delhi (Indian Advertising Industry and Hindi Advertisement); Prof. Vashini Sharma, Central Institute of Hindi, Agra (Cross-Cultural Communication and Transcreation); Mr. L.N. Baijal, Founder, True Translations Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai (Transcreation in Advertising); Mr. Shreyas Munshi, Researcher in Linguistics, Mumbai (Innovative Phonetic Symbols and Transliteration); Mr. C.M. Rawal, Vice-President, ITAINDIA (Transcreation, Transliteration, Terminology, Tools & Techniques: Coordination); Dr. Tulika Chandra, Asia – Pacific Institute of Management, New Delhi (Application of Best Suited Teaching Methodologies in Translation: Especially Indian Folk Tales); Mr. Samrat Yadav, CEO, Total Internet Solutions, New Delhi (Automate internationalization of web applications); Mr. Hemanga Dutta, Research Scholar, JNU, New Delhi (Literary translation and its limitations in the wider spectrum of cross-cultural communications).

It is important to note that the conference witnessed presence of young entrepreneurs like Mr. Arun Kumar, Founder of Transwelt – Terminology Made Easy and a considerable number of translators and academics coming from different parts of India including the remote north east. For participants like Mr. Lochan Makhija, Guwahati; Mr. Himanshu Sharma, Sonapat; Mr. Mohd. Shamsuddin, Shantiniketan; Mr. Ankush Chauhan, Shimla; Ms. Latha Narayanan, Bangalore; Ms. Amita, New Delhi; Mr. Vinit Sharma, Udaipur; Mr. Maheshwar Ghankot, Secunderabad; Mr. Soumick Bagchi, Gwalior; Ms. R. Sudha, Madurai; Ms. Amrutha Joshi, Pune; and Mr. Ranjit Singh Padda, Gurdaspur, the conference proved to be an eye opener as it gave an opportunity to learn many new things that are generally not covered in the academic curriculum.

The conference ended with a thanksgiving note by the Convenor Mr. Ravi Kumar, Founder President of Indian Translators Association and Elected Council member of International Federation of Translators, who expressed his sincere thanks to all participants, speakers and sponsors and members of the organizing committee for having made this conference a grand success. Keeping in consideration the overwhelming support from Translators Community of India, Mr. Kumar also assured to the audience that focused conferences at regional level will also be initiated by the Indian Translators Association in due course of time and more efforts will be made to reach a larger audience. At

the end, Mr. Kumar extended his special thanks to ITAINDIA Patron, Mr. R. Viswanathan (currently, Ambassador of India to Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay) who has been a constant source of inspiration for Mr. Ravi Kumar and his team since 2005 when the Indian Translators Association was still in the formative stages. Mr. Kumar also took the opportunity to express his gratitude to CIIL-Mysore; TERMNET- Austria; FIT-Montreal; Instituto Cervantes-New Delhi; RBEI-Bangalore; ZeitGeist-New Delhi; Heartsome-Singapore; LinguaIndia Foundation-New Delhi and Transwelt- Bangalore for having extended their active support to the conference.

National Conference 2009

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