

Bridging the gap

Two recent events brought translators and interpreters from ITI's Regional Groups and Networks together with students seeking to learn more about the profession

Cathy Dobson reports:

In March, the Devon and Cornwall Regional Group took part in two events with final year languages students at Exeter University.

At a translation round table, three members of the Regional Group described their paths into the translation profession and the day-to-day realities of the job. Attended by about 40 students, the session sparked a lively discussion. Topics raised included the respective merits of an MA in Translation and the DipTrans, how to develop specialist areas, and the benefits of spending

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time in source language countries and gaining work experience in other fields first. The panel also emphasised the importance of meeting deadlines and having sound IT, negotiation and business skills in addition to excellent language and writing skills.

At the second session, Regional Group members helped judge a student translation project. Working in five different source language groups, the students had been tasked with setting up a fictitious company to translate a text, carrying out all the roles involved in the translation process from project management and translating to reviewing and proofreading. The groups had taken on a varied range of projects, from translating web pages and newspaper

reports to creating subtitles for a political speech (learning how to use the software and create spotting lists themselves). They were very thorough and businesslike and showed an impressive understanding of the work involved in producing professional translations. Choosing one overall 'winner' proved very difficult, as they had all worked to a very high standard.

Once the judging was over and the winning group had received a prize, there was time to chat with students informally over drinks and hand out some goodies and information about ITI. Quite a few of the students were very interested in pursuing translation as a career and it was encouraging to see such enthusiasm for and engagement with language learning and the translation profession.

Both events were organised by Dr Isabel Santafé, Associate Lecturer in Hispanic Studies, and Dr Richard Mansell, Senior Lecturer in Hispanic Studies and MA Translation Programme Leader at Exeter University. Isabel has reported back how much the students appreciated input and praise from a professional perspective. 'I think this is a great example of how to bridge education with the professional world,' she said. We would agree, and look forward to continuing to work with the university in this way in the future.