Date: 23rd January 2002

Time: 9.15am-12.45pm

Venue: Muni Arts Centre, Pontypridd

1. ENGLISH/WELSH TRANSLATION IN WALES TODAY

1.1 BACKGROUND

As a direct consequence of the Welsh Language Act 1967, the Welsh Office appointed its first full-time translator, thus paving the way for the past 30 years of development in professional English/Welsh translation in Wales. The next major development resulted from local government reorganisation in 1974 when the councils of the newly formed Aberconwy Borough and counties of Dyfed and Gwynedd set up their own translation units. Gwynedd County Council added a new dimension to its translation unit's work by developing a simultaneous translation service which enabled the council to operate bilingually - both internally and externally - with both languages being accorded full equal status from the very start.

1.2 THE FOUNDING OF CYMDEITHAS CYFIEITHWYR CYMRU
(The Association of Welsh Translators)

Given the inadequate nature of the terminological resources available at the time, Welsh Office translators and those employed by local government soon felt the need to meet and agree on common terms. Meetings held with the encouragement of the Welsh Office led to the establishment of **Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru** (**CCC**) in October 1976. Our twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations in November 2001 provided the occasion for us to honour two scholars, Bruce Griffiths and Dafydd Glyn Jones, the editors of the **Welsh Academy English-Welsh Dictionary**, as Joint Presidents of the Association in recognition of their invaluable contribution to improving the resources available to translators in Wales. Until the Centre for the Standardization of Welsh Terminology was established in

Bangor, the Academy Dictionary was the only major resource available in this field.

The demand for translation services continued to increase gradually during the 1970s and 1980s and by 1985 there were some 56 full- and part-time translators in Wales, most of whom were members of CCC and attended its annual conferences to discuss translation issues and participate in terminology sessions led by Bruce Griffiths.

During the 1980s the demand for translation services increased to a remarkable extent and commercial translation companies involved mainly with English-Welsh translation began to emerge. Lord Gwilym Prys Davies stated in his report in 1996 that:

> ".... translation is an industry in Wales which is growing at a tremendous pace without being subject to any control whatsoever. Anyone can set up his or her own business to offer a translation service for a fee without having any recognised qualification to do the work."

> *The Panel for Official Welsh: Report. (Welsh Language Board 1996)*

1.3 DEVELOPMENT OF CYMDEITHAS CYFIEITHWYR CYMRU

With the introduction of its assessment procedures and the publication of a directory of its members, CCC was the only professional organisation which sought to bring some kind of order to the field of translation. In 1989, the Association introduced its assessment systems for Basic and Full Membership of the Association.

Grant aid from the Welsh Language Board since 1997 has enabled CCC to build on this work (**Appendix A**). In 1997, only 5 applications were assessed, whereas some 50 candidates are now being examined or assessed annually. Requests are, however, still being received from various quarters for CCC to increase its activities in this field, as in many others, due to the need to maintain standards.

With the development of bilingualism as a result of the 1993 Welsh Language Act and the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999, the demand for translation services is likely to increase yet again. It is vital for CCC's structures to grow in line with the industry but, within the resources currently available, such development is not feasible.

A further important development to bear in mind is that the Welsh Language Act 1993 not only afforded

equality to the Welsh language but to the translated version as well. As Lord Gwilym Prys Davies explained:

> "Under the 1967 Act, a Minister could declare, as was done in a great many instances, that when a discrepancy arose between an English version and a Welsh version of any statutory form, the English version would prevail. Therefore, it was not necessary for the Welsh translation to be exactly accurate. But as a result of the 1993 Act, when there is a discrepancy between versions, both versions must be considered in order to decide the meaning of the text. Therefore, ensuring accurate translations will be more important than ever. They will need to convey an exactly equivalent meaning because, should there be any discrepancy, only the court can ultimately decide the meaning of the text.
>
> *The Panel for Official Welsh: Report. (Welsh Language Board 1996)*

One of the recommendations made in that Report was that this would require the establishment of "a permanent body .... to create terms and to standardize Welsh terminology for use in official documents". Unfortunately no funds were made available to establish a national centre along the proposed lines.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING RESOURCES

The accurate use of terminology is only one aspect of a translator's task and very competent translators are needed to meet the demands of administrative and legal translation. Experienced translators are comparatively few and far between, as the Assembly has found in its efforts to recruit staff to its own Translation Service, and old hands able and willing to present structured training to future translators are in even shorter supply. Neither on- or off-the-job training of translators has yet received appropriate consideration by any funding body able to provide adequate resources. While various courses on written translation, simultaneous translation and subtitling are offered by various universities in the federal University of Wales there remains a need for structured training programmes for the professional development of English-Welsh translators.

Given the type of experience and expertise required, the supply of simultaneous translators is very limited, mainly due to the difficulty of acquiring the requisite skills unless the translator is working for a public body which provides this service and is prepared to offer training. It is exceptionally difficult for a freelance translator to develop this skill independently.

1.5 A TRANSLATION STANDARDS BODY

The Welsh Language Board has already approved about 200 Language Schemes and will depend on the services of various translators to fulfil the targets set by such schemes. The Board employs no experienced translators and neither Board members nor staff possess any expertise in translation. More importantly, no body exists to monitor translation standards even though the number of complaints

received suggests that there is a real need for such a body. **Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru** might be able to utilise the expertise of its members and offer an advisory service in this respect.

1.6 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMERCIAL TRANSLATION SECTOR

Many public bodies rely on the services of commercial translators, many of whom are freelance translators operating as sole traders. Very few translation agencies employing more than 8 translators currently exist in Wales. This results in much work being sent out of Wales to various translation agencies who distribute the work among various freelance translators working in Wales and who then retain a substantial percentage of the payment without having any expertise at all in the Welsh language or its culture. The Association, given more resources and with better marketing of the services offered by its members could enlighten prospective customers on this point.

1.7 DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR TRANSLATION PURPOSES

The action taken to develop IT to further bilingualism has so far occurred on an *ad hoc* basis. While the Welsh Language Board have funded projects conducted by **Canolfan Bedwyr** and the **Centre for the Standardisation of Welsh Terminology** to develop vital resources such as **CySill** (a Welsh language spellchecker) and **CysGair** (a fairly elementary dictionary) and are currently working on a project to computerise **The Welsh Academy English-Welsh Dictionary** and a project in machine translation, the field needs to be reappraised before any further developments are embarked upon. For example, consideration should be given to the creative use of computer developments such as voice recognition software to facilitate, promote and improve the quality of textual translation. Similarly, video conferencing systems could be developed to make simultaneous translation available on a far larger scale. Developments such as these could be vital to the success of community translation services.

1.8 A TRANSLATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR WALES

Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru has for some time been calling for the development of an all Wales strategy for translation because of the vital part it has to play in the development of bilingualism. Were it not for translation, the Welsh language would not have attained its current position in public administration and the growth of bilingual education would not have proved possible. A systematic study needs to be made of the contribution of translation to the process of strengthening the position of the Welsh language and bilingualism.

In October 2001, the Welsh Language Board agreed that a strategy for translation is needed in Wales, and CCC's role within such a strategy needs to be defined. An outline of what the Association would like to see developed within such a strategy is enclosed. (**Appendix B**)

2 THE CULTURE COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Translation can contribute to each one of the themes mentioned in the current review.

2.1 Families and Communities

Translation is vital to the development of corporate language policies and community development. We have already touched upon the contribution made by translation to Welsh Language Schemes.(See 1.5) A pilot project, undertaken jointly by CCC and Menter Môn, showed how the provision of translation facilities within the voluntary sector enabled both the Welsh speaker and the non-Welsh speaker to participate in community activity and work for the benefit of that community. Within 12 months of offering the service the take up from community councils increased from 4 to 12. The comment made by a Chairman of one of the Community Councils, where some frustration had been experienced because members were not able to participate in their chosen language, was that the introduction of simultaneous translation facilities "had improved democracy".

It would be worthwhile to build upon the experience of this pilot project and develop, in conjunction with Local Authority Councils, Community Action Unitary Councils and the Mentrau Iaith, a community translation service. Such a project could include other vital aspects of developing community use of the use of Welsh Language e.g. improve your Welsh courses and simultaneous translation courses.

2.2 Community Development

Translation is one of the developing cottage industries. Entrepreneurship needs to be developed within this group by providing specialist training in business and IT skills. Also, as mentioned above, a network of sole traders needs to be developed in order to increase output and increase employment opportunities.

2.3 The Promotion of Bilingualism and THE MaintainANCE OF National Consensus and Good Will

It is vital on all fronts that quality translation services are available to ensure good will towards the Welsh language. A great deal of work needs to be done increasing awareness of the contribution which bilingualism can make to promote a democratic, accountable and entrepreneurial community. Once that good will has been ensured CCC has a role to play ensuring that the translation services on offer are of the required standard.

2.4 Public Investment and DELIVERY Structures

Over the past four years since CCC first started receiving grant aid from the Welsh Language Board there has been a development in its procedures and an increase in its membership. The Board has now

agreed that a strategy needs to be developed for the field of translation. Translation has made an unique contribution to the growth of bilingualism in Wales but we now need to take an objective look at this and consider the necessary conditions so that we can develop new methods of using translation to strengthen the position of the Welsh language and promote bilingualism.
(Appendix B).

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APPENDIX A

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Up to April 1997, when CCC received its first grant from the **Welsh Language Board**, the Association's only source of income was the membership fees. All its activities were conducted on a voluntary basis.

Since 1977 the level of grant has increased as follows:

1997 – 1998 Basic Grant - £9,170:

                  Administrative Officer Fee + office equipment

Project Grant - £5,500:

            To develop CCC's administrative systems and to run Simultaneous Translation introductory sessions

1998 – 1999 Basic Grant – £9,170:

                  Administrative Officer Fee + activities

Project Grant - £4,500:

            Development of an Introductory course in Simultaneous Translation course

1999 - 2000 Basic Grant - £29,355:

> Appointment of a full-time Administrative Officer
>
> Part - time Development Officer

2000 – 2001 Basic Grant - £44,764

> Employment of a full-time Administrative Officer
>
> Employment of a part-time Director

2001 – 2002 Basic Grant - £55,000

> Employment of full-time Administrative Officer
>
> Employment of part-time Director

Membership fee was increased from £10 to £40 between 1997 and 2000.

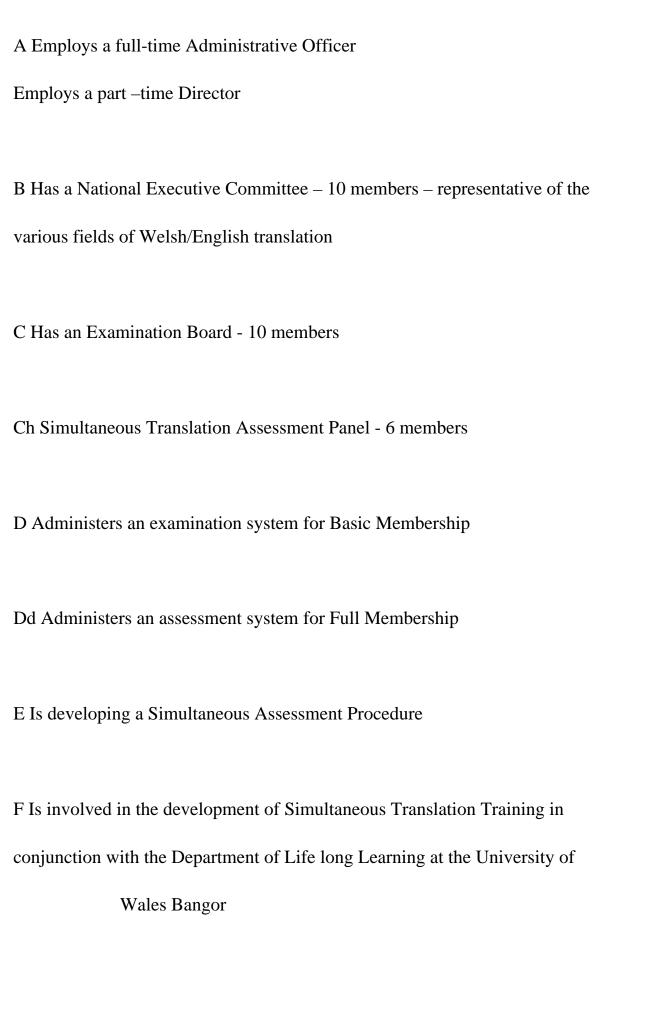**Current Membership fees:**

Full Members: £100

Basic Members: £60

Friends: £40

During the last four years CCC has developed from an Association where its activities were run by a handful of active members into an Association which:

A Employs a full-time Administrative Officer

Employs a part –time Director

B Has a National Executive Committee – 10 members – representative of the

various fields of Welsh/English translation

C Has an Examination Board - 10 members

Ch Simultaneous Translation Assessment Panel - 6 members

D Administers an examination system for Basic Membership

Dd Administers an assessment system for Full Membership

E Is developing a Simultaneous Assessment Procedure

F Is involved in the development of Simultaneous Translation Training in

conjunction with the Department of Life long Learning at the University of

Wales Bangor

Ff Organizes 2 national conferences each year

G Organizes 10 workshops each year

1997: 74 Members and Friends

1999: 113 Members and Friends

66 available for commercial work

22 unavailable for commercial work

26 friends

2000: 130 Members and Friends

80 available for commercial work

30 unavailable for commercial work

20 friends

2001: 142 Members and Friends*

107 available for commercial work

20 unavailable for commercial work

15 friends

INCREASE IN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

1989 – 1997: 26 assessments

1997 – 1999: 23 assessments

1999 – 2000: 31 examination candidates, 1 assessment application

2000. - 2001: 40 examination candidates, 2 assessment applications
2001. - 2002: 43 examination candidates, 2 assessment applications

APPENDIX B

OBJECTIVES

**A Gather information about the current state of English – Welsh/
English – Welsh translation**

B Promote Professional Translation Standards in Wales

C Define the potential role of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru as a Translation Standards Body

CH Define the potential contribution of Translation within the Welsh Language Board's own overall Language Strategy

D Define the partnership between Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru and the Welsh Language Board

A GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE CURRENT POSITION

1 Consultation with Translation Departments and Units

2 Consultation with Key Institutions:

- The Assembly
- The Court Service
- *Syniad*

3 Commission a survey of the field in order to establish:

3.1 How many translators operate and in what capacity:

- textual translation
- simultaneous translation
- translation of subtitles

3.2 How many work as:

- free lance translators or sole traders
- within a translation company
- as employees of institutions

3.3 The demand for various translation services

- Simultaneous translation into English
- Simultaneous translation into Welsh
- Textual translation into Welsh
- Textual translation into English
- Translation into other languages

- Translation of Subtitles for media purposes
- Court service translation
- HTML translation

- Percentage of work from outside Wales

3.4 Which institutions in Wales seek translation services by approaching agencies outside Wales and why this occurs.

1. **Commission a study of translation in Wales as a means of increasing the use of Welsh and its normalisation and the reinforcement of Welsh as a community language.**
2. **Survey of the use of translation within successful language planning strategies in countries which promote bilingualism.**

B PROMOTE PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATION STANDARDS IN WALES

1. **Assessment and Training**

   1.1 Assessment and Approval of Translators who wish to

   practice.

   1.2 Publication of an official list of translators and interpreters

   1.3 Development of a Structured professional development training scheme for professional translators

   1.4 Development and Accreditation of Professional Translation Courses in conjunction with Further Education and Higher

Education Colleges and also Local Authorities, The Assembly and the Court Service

e.g Full time Translation Training Courses on the same basis as the Teachers' Training Courses with students having hands on experience during placements at Local Authority, Assembly level.

1.5 Development of translation modules as part of Courses in Bilingualism aimed at Language Animators and Language Officers.

1.6 Investment in the development of Training Resources

(cf. the increase in resources available for teaching Welsh as a second language over the past thirty years)

1.7 Development of a training programme to create a pool of instructors experienced in professional translation to run translation courses

1.8 Development of Mentor Schemes

2 Development of Resources for Translators

2.1 Funds to create a Welsh - English version of the **The Welsh Academy English – Welsh Dictionary**

2.2 Development of a national centre with adequate resources for developing terminology

2.3 Development of a Professional Translation Standards Body

2.4 Development of Information Technology to create a translation bank to serve local authorities, health trusts, voluntary sector and to facilitate simultaneous translation services.

1. **Development of Codes of Practices for use by both translators and employers**

4 Publication of Guidelines on Conducting Bilingual Meetings using Simultaneous Translation Services.

C DEFINE THE ROLE OF CYMDEITHAS CYFIEITHWYR CYMRU
AS A TRANSLATION STANDARDS BODY (IN ORDER TO FULFILL
B 1-4)

CH DEFINE THE TRANSLATION STRATEGY WITHIN THE OVERRAL
LANGUAGE STRATEGY OF THE BOARD

1 Contribution of Translation

1.1 Translation of Texts

1.1.1 Bilingual documents present the Welsh

language as encompassing all aspects of life

1.1.2 Welsh translations can serve as examples
for those lacking confidence in their written
Welsh and thus encourage more people to draft
their own Welsh versions

1.1.3 In terms of 1.1.1 a 1.1.2 above it is
important that the translations are of a high
standard.

1.1.4 The provision of a Welsh version of
committee minutes and reports can serve as a
means of improving the confidence of Welsh
speakers to use the language, especially where
simultaneous translation services are provided

1. **Simultaneous Translation**

1.2.1 Enables Welsh speaking communities to
continue conducting their activities through the
Welsh language since the simultaneous
translation service would provide an English
translation for the non Welsh speaking members

1.2.2 Promotes mutual understanding between
the two linguistic groups and encourage joint
participation in community activity

1. Nurtures the confidence of Welsh learners and others

   lacking in confidence to use the language

   at public level and in new situations

   In order to ensure that a positive use is made of simultaneous translation services both Welsh speakers and non Welsh-speakers need to be made more aware of its true potential.

2 Consider the potential of both textual and simultaneous translation for the development of teaching resources for bilingual education

D DEFINE THE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CYMDEITHAS CYFIEITHWYR CYMRU AND THE WELSH LANGUAGE BOARD