November 7, 2008, Friday

ATA Language Technology Division Meeting

Attendees:

Dierk Seeburg

Naomi Sutcliffe de Moraes

Cathi Rimalower

Brooks Haderlie

Evan Cohen

Rosana Wolochwianski

Michael Wahlster

Jesus Garrido Muro

Laurie Gerber

Alan Melby

Dierk Seeburg opened the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Dierk reviewed the accomplishments for 2008:

There are 15 language technology sessions at the conference
The division put out 4 newsletter issues, under the editorship of Lisa Carter. (the maximum number; on par with established divisions.)
The division maintains a listserv for division news and other topical discussion.
An LTD networking event is being held at ATA for the first time.

Discussion:

Some meeting participants were not aware of the newsletter, and the listserv. Naomi collected names and emails to add attendees to the list.

Attendees were reminded that the newsletter is posted on the LTD division webpage, accessible from the ATA website. The division website and newsletter is publicly accessible and Naomi encouraged attendees to spread the word about this information resource to their colleagues inside and outside of ATA. New issues of the LTD newsletter are announced in the general ATA email update, as well as on the LTD listserv.

Goals of the listserv include discussion and information sharing on tools, conferences and trends of interest.

LTD's role in developing the LT session program consists largely of inviting and proposing presenters and encouraging division members to submit presentation proposals. Selection of sessions from the submissions and proposals is done by the TAC (Translation and Computers) committee chaired by Alan Melby.

Updates and new business:

Newsletter

Newsletter editor Lisa Carter has handed over the reigns to our new editor, Roomy Naqvy. The layout person Cindy Gresham will continue in that role.

Division Election

The term for the current division officers will expire at next year's annual ATA conference. The division needs to prepare for officer elections by forming a nominating committee by March 2009. Attendees were encouraged to volunteer for the nominating committee, and Evan Cohen did so.

Alan Melby reported on this year's Tools forum session. The session was divided into two parts – the first session was aimed at individual translators. The second aimed at project managers. Alan held a lunch with the tools vendors today. Many of the attendees at the meeting requested copies of the handouts. These may be made available on the division website.

Alan also reported on discussions with tool vendors about training sessions at ATA. Last year, Trados held a one or two-day hands-on training session. This year Wordfast did the same. Naomi suggested that ATA provide the time and space for all tools vendors to conduct hands-on training sessions with their tools, in which translators install the tools on their own computers.

Various logistical complications were discussed:

> who would pay for the meeting room rental,
> how much members would be charged to participate,
> whether it is practical to have participants install and set up tools during a short (half day or less) session.
> How to get the vendors to cooperate/agree to a schedule
> That it may require participants to come a day earlier or stay later at the conference with the associated expense and time away from home

Alan will look into the availability and the cost of arranging the space.

The LTD was asked to poll members to assess the level of interest in such sessions.

Alan reported on the technology survey he conducted with Jost Zetsche. The survey was sent to ATA members and 7 FIT member associations internationally. There were 800 responses from ATA members and 400 from the FIT member associations. This survey was presented as "phase 1". Jost is compiling the results. The last question of the survey was whether people would agree to participate in a more detailed "phase 2" survey. Two-thirds of the respondents agreed. Alan would like to solicit feedback on a draft of the phase 2 survey early next year before it is circulated.

ATA 2009

Dierk encouraged attendees to propose language technology sessions for next year's conference – the 50th ATA conference. Approximately two-thirds of those present do plan to attend next year's conference.

Division Website

ATA makes a $500 grant available to divisions for division website improvements and program activities. Dierk suggested that the division focus on improvements to the website, such as posting reports or other information. Discussion on the listserv may be a good way to develop ideas that can turn into such postings. The group suggested topics for such postings: Tools, Security standards, and Industry trends.

Webmaster Michael Wahlster mentioned that articles could be tagged by topic on the website so that they would be easy to find. Moreover, they are accessible and indexed by search engines, so ATA members and others could find them.

Dierk suggested that the division needs to publicize the website and its resources in a better way.

Michael mentioned that there were an average of 375 unique hits per month on the LTD website, which is considerably higher than the German language division website with 150 hits per month. However, the German Language Division listserv has an average of 660 messages per month, so this is where information exchange happens.

AMTA collocation in 2010?

Laurie Gerber reported that the AMTA (Association for Machine Translation in the Americas) is considering holding their conference in/near ATA in 2010. Feedback was sought on whether this was a good idea.

Adjournment

Dierk asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made, seconded, and voted on unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.