

Session 2:

Summary of discussion

*Rapporteurs: Aletta Stevens and
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The following points were made in discussion during Session 2, 'Using the aids'.

- (1) Warming-up time of WP: Word processors are ready to operate without delay except when switched on for the first time in the day, when they may need up to 15 minutes to warm up.
- (2) Choice of printer: Prospective buyers were advised to consult their WP salesman. There may be problems of compatibility with word processors, requiring an interface. Consideration should be given to the method of paper feed-in, the speed of printing, the type of print wanted and the noise factor.
- (3) WP as an aid to translation: It was confirmed that word processing assists translation as well as typing. It allows greater freedom in editing and can also be used to compile glossaries, though some members of the panel still prefer manual methods. It was suggested that translators growing up with word processors would develop different techniques as a result.
- (4) Mathematical symbols on WP: It was reported that various daisy wheels are available.
- (5) Screen colour: It emerged that focus and a steady glow are more important factors than colour, which is a matter of personal choice and adjustment. Many WPs have brightness control. Those interested were referred to the Health and Safety at Work publication on the subject.

- (6) Graphics on WP: No direct experience was reported. At present it may still be quicker to do graphics by hand or to cut and paste. This is a new and rapidly developing field, however, and it may soon be possible to use word processing.
- (7) Use of electronic typewriters to double as teleprinters: No experience was reported.
- (8) Use of microcomputers with WP package: It was felt that limitations in the software would tend to slow down translation and peripherals, e.g. printers, would add considerably to the initial cost.
- (9) Split-screen OCR and diacritical marks: Experience was reported with Wordplex split-screen, background/foreground mode, and with Mitsui (£8,000) and Hendrix (£6,000) OCR. It was acknowledged that the serious problem of reading accents had not yet been solved.
- (10) The role of the 'parser': No experience was reported.
- (11) Layout and word processing: It was generally agreed that exact reproduction of complex layout was appreciated by clients, but there was some disagreement as to the usefulness of word processing in producing this type of material faster and better.
- (12) Justification for WP: Translators seeking a reasoned case for the cash outlay on word processing were advised to consult the Translators' Guild or read the chapter by Lanna Castellano in the Translator's handbook (edited by C. Picken, published by Aslib, 1983). They should bear in mind the increase in job satisfaction and volume of work likely to result from acquiring a WP.

RAPPORTEURS

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