

Meeting of the Council of Oriental Medical Publishers (COMP)

Monday, 6 November 2000

9:30am - 4:30pm

Catamaran Hotel, San Diego, CA

Attendees (as stated): Z'ev Rosenberg, Bob Felt, Miki Shima, Jane Bruss, Chia-Feng Chang, Dolina Hueisin Wang, Jessica [not readable], Sabine Wilms, Xun Liu, Philippe Rivere, Mara Hansen, John O'Connor, Dan Bensky, Greg Bantic, Ken Rose, Peter Deadman, Mazin Alkhafaji, Charollete Furth, Reiko Shinno, Lyn Kuschinski, Steven Rosenthal, Honora Wolf, Jack Miller, Douglas Eisenstrark, Al Stone, Andy Ellis, Michael Fitzgerald, Shelley Ochs, Nigel Wiseman.

Moderator: Z'ev Rosenberg, L.Ac., MSOM

NOTE: unless noted, agenda presentors are from the United States of America

Z'ev Rosenberg opened the meeting by welcoming the group which was comprised of an existing COMP "working group" along with writers, sinologists, philologists, publishers, educators, practitioners and president of oriental medicine educational institution. The following countries were represented: England, United States, Taiwan, China and Japan. The agenda and time frame were reviewed, noting that the designated speakers were present and that the agenda was fluid enough to accommodate open discussions.

Bob Felt, per the agenda, provided background as to COMP's history as a trade convention that provides a way to label books, articles and other oriental-based materials (covering scholarly, cultural, medical, and technical subjects) that are published for the consumer market. Comment was made that much discussion had already taken place in the field of Asian studies and the consensus is that 'Oriental' is derogatory and that 'Asian' should be used instead. Continuing, Bob proposed that the group discuss the following: frequency of meetings, topics to be covered (ie. peer reviews), communication protocols, in general, as well as for proprietary information, the desire for a more formally structured organization with projects that utilize participants and meet the needs of participants. A request was made for a list of interests as publishers, writers and additional professions represented. Several organizations were mentioned as guidelines: Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR) and Society of Scholarly Publishers (SSP).

A discussion followed which included comments concerning the: need for a place to post presumed rights- an E book- where someone could post their acquisition of publishing rights, for instance; need for more translators, need for more material for the clinicians, scholar/academics and educators; need to consider including other disciplines in COMP meetings; interest in conducting seminars for peers or consumers; need to meet needs of participants by utilizing current technology, such as the web; need to formally organize before any project list be developed; the need to brainstorm projects in order to determine if there is a need to formally organize.

Dan Bensky, per the agenda, formally proposed a type of "Clearing house" website or cross-referenced, on-line database of terms which would be non-juried. It would be referenced to

the original language(s). The purpose would be to assist each other in the effort to bring oriental medicine to the west. For example in the first row, the pinyin word for peace, an1, would be listed with the corresponding translations alongside, such as the version determined by Bensky or Wiseman/Ellis or Unschuld or Maciocia or Ochs, etc. There would be a columnar notation with each translators name. The result would be a listing of terms along the left side of the screen (in a column) followed by corresponding columns for each translator. The discussion then turned to identifying the possibility of the database from a technical perspective. Bob Felt, a systems analyst, discussed the specs, hardware and software concerns, including but not limited to: unicode capabilities/issues and ascii issues; number of terms impacting number of records; content of the record; relational databases for cross-referencing; upload techniques; host sites; number of dedicated servers potentially required; which Chinese character would be standard; would tonal marks be included or numerically identified; what could/would people want in terms of output; should the databased be locked; should people be able to download a specific translators glossary, thereby impacting the financial remuneration of a translator. The following attendees mentioned an interest in researching the possibility of the on-line database: Dan Bensky, Al Stone, Miki Shima, Ken Rose, Nigel Wiseman.

Phillipe Riviere, Vancouver, BC, per the agenda, presented a paper on Dr Leung Kok-Yuen who was trained prior to 1949. Mr. Riviere paper was identified as a 'Source text'. Dr Leung Kok-Yuen a Vietnamese national, moved from Lyon, France, to the state of Oregon in 1969. Since then he has continued to conduct seminars on oriental medicine throughout the world. His knowledge base included academic and historical books where he assimilated both the theories and wisdom of the medicine. Dr Leung Kok-Yuen identified 4 periods in the growth of chinese medicine:

1. Theoretical beginnings from 2200BC to 770 BC + use of medicinal liqueurs (*Yidi*) + development of the prescription branch (*fangji xue*)
2. Formation of a structured body of theories from 221BC to 220AD (*Neijing*)
3. from 220 AD TO 1368 AD edition of the most important texts of Chinese medicine (for example, *Shanghan lun & Jingui yaolue*)
4. from 1368 to 1911the modern era of Chinese medicine with the production of numerous (and sometimes inaccurate) theories
5. After 1911, (most of the time) production of a theoretical mixture between Western and Chinese medicine

Philippe Riviere gave Z'ev Rosenberg the list of 94 books considered by Pr Leung as essential for studying all the field of Chinese medicine. The first list has 40 books and the second list is a reference of 54 texts.

Nigel Wiseman, Taipei, Taiwan, per the agenda, discussed the existing COMP designations: original document; functional translation; connotative translation; and denotative translation. His position was that the constructs of a book- preface, introduction, footnotes, bibliography, etc- should identify the type of work, including the authenticity of the sources. Also, the designations were confusing or not clear at the very least... and misspelled. A discussion began with the following compiled comments from identified participants:

Charlotte: as a historian, there is always an issue when comparing the old and new perspective; footnotes address these issues.

Ken: the label identifies the artifact of knowledge; as an author it provides a 'status of my work' so that I can write/say things without being misconstrued; the labels are a transient need which is necessary because of dealing with a heterodox of traditions and then translating them for contemporaries; perhaps both short and long designations would be beneficial.

Dan: the designations are welcomed; the original Chinese words are compilations anyway; the preface of the book states the designation which does not interfere with the body of work. What other designations does Nigel propose if the current are confusing?

John: the designations are precisely the problem for the copyright page; the bibliography provides the more in-depth information.

Z?v: there needs to be a standard designations to provide a continuum for the translations which are used by clinicians, educators and students.

Bob: a description needs to reside in the preface; glossary needs to be freely available; translators need to have categories in which do place their work; I? open to new labels if anyone has suggestions; the functional translation, connotative translation, and denotative translation indicate the range of interpretation from weakly tied to the original source to a precise mapping from source to translation; there needs to be an indication that the work was designed for the source text or a target audience.

Andy: the labels are clear and understandable; keep in mind that clinicians fall into 2 categories: those that are interested in historical precedence and those that are not; some clinicians are following Maslow? hierarchy of needs with survival being primary.

Shelly: labels help the purchaser make a buying decision.

Nigel: the designations do not bind to any specifics nor describe the relationship of texts; there is no designation that stipulates that the work is not a paraphrase or free translation; no one could determine whether the work was close to the original or distant to the original; perhaps designating that a work is a compilation instead of a translation because one rarely translates a book from cover to cover; perhaps a designation needs to be identified that defines whether the work is source oriented or target audience oriented; there is an implication of a value judgment if we use a glossary.

Marta: when I translate the goal is not for efficacy in the clinic; I translate for a target audience.

Phillipe: clinicians and teachers need mainland China books.

After the lunch break, Miki Shima asked to address the group on the issue of correctly transmitting of oriental medicine to west. His position was that the COMP group has a tremendous responsibility to the schools and an opportunity to impact clinicians and students. He proposed that the group needed to be `run' by 10 working people, not 25 sedentary people. Also, he proposed nominating people to board positions and establishing by-laws, fee schedules- such as a sustaining membership- and including the international community so that COMP is solid and fully representative. A discussion began with the following compiled comments per identified participants:

Dan: prefer the amorphous organization for 6 to 12 months in order for everything to shake out; the group should be open and clear with a free exchange as opposed to how to use the information.

Bob: proposed a type of sign-off instead of a structured organization; the exam board have already set a defacto standard; standards not setting one book or another in commercial ascendancy, is the way to solve language issues on exams.

Ken: offered to present/publish the organizational proposal in his journal; the content of books recommends to educators what oriental/ Chinese medicine is so we should take responsibility.

Z?v: an advisory board is necessary at the very least; COMP is the standard resource which institutions make use of.

Miki: an official board has consequences; there would be the social responsibility to do the job right.

Andy: would the group be oriented towards publishing of Chinese Medical information or reviewing opinions regarding needs of the educators.

Miki: published books set standards for curriculum development; the schools are oriented towards graduating students who can pass state licensing exams and national boards; there was a lawsuit against the state by a student who didn't pass the exam due to discrepancy in pulse names; however COMP is structured it is important to get input from the UK, Australia, China, Japan and Taiwan.

Peter: the production of a database terminology will ease the issues of discrepancy; I don't want to make curriculum recommendations to the academic institutions.

Shelley: The California State Acupuncture Board provides a list of reference books that it uses for the state exam. The Ellis/Wiseman books are not on that reference list. The list contains books by authors who all use different translations for Chinese terms and all of those different translations are used on the exam, depending merely upon which book the question was taken from.

Nigel: the database web site might be useful for board exams.

Bob Felt, per the agenda, presented a paper of “Reader? Rights: Peer Review in Chinese Medical Publication.” This was a discussion of peer journal standards that could be applied to Chinese medicine without altering its nature. It concluded with a statement that the reader wants to know the ‘Who’, ‘What’, ‘Quality’ and the ‘Nature’ of the clinical claim; the writer needs to know the guidelines. Also, outcome trials instead of RCT improves the perception of Chinese Medicine claims/case studies in the marketplace. A discussion began with the following compiled comments per identified participants:

Bob: inter-rater studies are cheap and a boon to education standards; Rosa Scher and John Allen “manualization protocols” are another extremely useful approach.

Fred: schools should conduct studies and use standardized forms for evaluation of printed material.

Ken Rose, per the agenda, presented a paper on the rationale for conducting a comprehensive review of the English language literature of traditional Chinese medicine along with an outline of proposed guidelines for the conducting of such a review. He proposed that writers, translators and publishers are responsible for the content of the “artifacts of thought” that constitute the transmission of Chinese ideas to the west. His proposal was based on his opinion that as a writer he needed to “Bring it alive” and as a martial arts practitioner he clearly understood the underlying constructs. He indicated that the act of writing and translating is not neutral and public exposure welcomes judgment of the spin that the writer puts on the material. Therefore, it is justifiable to conduct a critical review of translated works. The term “Critical” means looking closely at the finished work, being careful and exact in the evaluation and judgment. The purpose of an ongoing critical review of the English language literature of traditional Chinese medicine is: to provide all members of the field, the public that it serves, and the policy makers and regulators who oversee it, with a thorough appraisal of the material foundation of the subject that permits informed judgment making as to the adequacy of texts that have and will serve as standards of instruction and examination. A discussion began with the following compiled comments per identified participants:

Richard: along with a standard “Check off” form there needs to be a comment space for any and all concerns that the reviewer found.

Fred: the faculty and students should review the books; he suggested that it might simplify the learning process to produce books with the Chinese on one side and the English on the other side.

Marta: there could be an open forum that is transparent, neutral, open and non-judgmental; there should be a determination on whether the contents are clinical or historically accurate.

Charlotte: there is an ongoing process for reviewing textbooks/books called state of the field reviews; there is a synthetic and a scholarly methodology.

Bob: a review is a consensus creating mechanism; there needs to be a statement of principles, the goal of the translator and neutral screening.

Miki: it is minimally safe and effective to review the books; the bureaucrats decide which books to use as the standard for state exams.

Peter: it is a bit of a minefield; it is critical to declare any particular interests; conducting a state of the field review will be useful; the book selection should be even.

Z?v Rosenberg, per the agenda, presented his position on ``Recommendations for Translated Texts and Methodology of Translation for the Doctorate Program''. He indicated that Pacific College of Oriental Medicine (PCOM) will provide a doctorate program in the fall of 2001, which will require the learning of the Chinese language. He is the architect of the track which will focus of the Classic texts, *Nei Jing*, *Nan Jing* and *Shang Han Lun*. As an educator and practitioner he stated that source materials are critical. As an educator he is responsible for knowing the subject matter and communicating it to students- and if he doesn't know how can his students know. His position as an educator is one which requires him to be knowledgeable of and conversant in Chinese and to have access to the Chinese characters, the pinyin and definition of the terms. He proposed that it is not useful for the students to learn only a translation. They need to learn the characters and pinyin. For example, currently students do not know `qing' and `huo', or `clear' and `turbid', in relation to fluids. Consequently there could be a confusion and lack of understanding which can impact patients. He proposed that a definitive explanation/translation is limited and potentially not adequate; a dictionary and glossary is needed. He proposed that books produced include the: 1. classic text with original characters with pinyin directly underneath; 2. an English translation dictionary and glossary; 3. footnotes to other texts; 4. commentary. A discussion followed regarding the use of complex versus simplified characters. The consensus was that the: majority of the Chinese speaking world uses simplified characters; the classics would be historically accurate published with complex characters (with simplified characters for comparison); student of Chinese language would have an easier time moving from complex to simplified characters instead of the opposite process.

The meeting was closed at 4pm.