

linguistics specialist and an Arab journalist.

"I've been turned down by a few firms on the grounds that my translation fees were too high," says Khalesi. "These firms would then get the job done for a cheap price by an Arab who perhaps had only a high-school education. Later they'd come to me and ask why their proposal wasn't accepted."

"A contract drawn up in ungrammatical Arabic can be insulting to a potential customer. He may take the attitude that anyone who doesn't respect his language doesn't deserve the job."

Khalesi warns against relying on one person to do translations. "No less than three specialists work on any translation we do," he notes. "First the expert - doctor, lawyer or engineer - works on the text, then the linguist or Arabic specialist. Lastly, I go over the contents before it goes to the typist."

Arabico carries out cross-cultural orientation sessions and holds one- or two-day seminars three to four times a year on a university campus or in a large hotel.

Khalesi recalls being asked by Hughes Helicopter to lecture to US technicians it was sending to Iraq. "Aside from the general discussions on how to cope with Middle Eastern bureaucracy, ethnic groups in Iraq and Arab etiquette, I listed a series of do's and don'ts for handling Arab management."

"For instance, I told them never to directly criticise an Arab's performance on the job. An American is frank. If he were to tell his Arab counterpart that he's doing the job wrong, the Arab would take it as a personal insult."

"The best solution is to use indirect speech, make up a story stating you've seen someone else in a similar situation doing the wrong thing and how he could improve."

Khalesi also emphasises the need to forget about punctuality in the Arab world. He advises businessmen never to set up more than two appointments in a day, and to be sure they are several hours apart.

Role-playing is a vital ingredient of Arabico's orientation seminars, with participants acting as the successful and

unsuccessful American. Many clients return from the Middle East to tell Khalesi his advice has saved them in awkward situations.

"I always warn American men not to be surprised if their Arab clients touch or hug them. The worst thing they can do is push an Arab away in embarrassment," notes Khalesi.

Arabico's activities include writing advertisements and handling the graphics for US firms advertising in the Arab press. It has also dubbed Arabic over English in company films.

A rather different assignment was researching the water table of a region of the Middle East for an agricultural firm. More recently, it has started hiring interpreters for this year's Olympics in Los Angeles.

Pat McDonnell, California

Credit for Turkish dam

A consortium of Swiss banks has assembled Switzerland's largest ever export credit package, in support of two of the country's leading engineering firms which are involved in the massive Atatürk dam project.

Seventeen banks led by Union Bank of Switzerland have raised SF573.4mn (\$264.1mn), of which UBS accounts for 18.61 per cent. Of the total, SF479.8mn is covered by the Swiss export guarantee authority, whose Austrian and Italian counterparts are covering SF45.7mn and SF47.9mn respectively. In addition, there is a German loan of DM280mn (\$107mn) from the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW).

BBC Brown Boveri and Company is providing six 300-MW generators, and its West German subsidiary will supply all the transformers and part of the command installations.

An Italian subsidiary, Tecnomasio Italiano Brown Boveri, will provide two 300-MW generators and part of the electrical installations.

The Escher Wyss group is to provide six Francis turbines. Some of its work may be contracted out to other companies, a company spokesman says.

Work on the Atatürk project will employ 1,000 workers for seven years, and involves relocating 57 villages and 50,000 people. Six months ago the contract for the civil works was won by a local consortium led by Palet Insaat and including Energi Su and Seri Insaat.

The UK-West German consortium of Wimpey International and Hochtief was originally awarded the contract in 1980, but was subsequently unable to raise the necessary finance and the project was retendered early last year.

The Atatürk scheme will furnish 8bn Kwh a year, doubling the country's production of electricity and lessening its dependence on electricity imports from the Soviet Union. At present, Turkey exploits only 10 per cent of its potential energy from natural resources.

The new hydroelectric basin will irrigate an area of 8,000 square kilometres: as UBS points out, this is equivalent to a quarter of all the arable land in Switzerland.

John Parry, Geneva



More irrigated land once the dam's built

Kuwait in Asia

The 1983 results of Kuwait Asia Bank show that it has continued to move with caution, a policy it has no intention of giving up in 1984.

"The bank will continue its conservative policies in lending, investments, foreign exchange and money-market activities in 1984," says chairman Salah Fahad al-Marzook.

"While the high capitalisation of the bank at the moment precludes high returns on average equity, we are confident that a steady growth trend in quality assets will result in a greater return over time. The alternative of rapid growth to achieve higher return, we believe, provides greater risks than the directors are currently prepared to accept."

He notes that the bank will face increasing challenges in 1984. "The economic and political environment of the areas in which the bank operates continues to be troubled. The need for rescheduling and restructuring of debt for many developing nations, as well as corporate customers in those nations, will continue to affect money market activities and, in turn, our bank. A resolution of the current economic problems in both the Philippines and Hong Kong will be a welcome development for both our present and future business."

The bank was created in 1981 and started operations in Bahrain in January 1982 and in Singapore six months later. The bank's share-holders are Kuwait's Public Institution for Social Security, Kuwait International Investment Company (KIIC), 11 other Kuwaiti financial institutions and insurance companies, the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, the National Bank of Bahrain and Al-Ahli Commercial Bank.

The bank was created with the express purpose of giving its shareholders a presence in the Asian market. In March last year the authorised share capital was increased from \$30mn to \$150mn, and the paid-up capital rose to \$100mn.

In February this year the bank issued its first money-