

AUSIT

Volume 30 < Number 3 > SUMMER 2022-23

INTouch

MAGAZINE OF THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

Special feature

Literary translation, part 1:

Co-translation
< pages 12-13

Less translated
languages
< pages 14-15 & 18

いづ見ても
かわらぬ石の
色かたち
くの心も
かくぞあるし

AUSIT Haiku Competition

A novel and creative outlet for
translators and interpreters

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Interpreting movement

An occupational therapist explains
how T&I services assist her work

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Translation masterclasses

Why they are valuable, and how to
go about organising one

< pages 16-18

Text complexity

How does it affect quality of
translation?

< page 21

Plus more ...

... including the AUSIT National
Conference 2022, plus what it
takes to organise such an event;
the Paul Sinclair Excellence Award
2022; an obituary for an AUSIT
veteran; a literary prize for an AUSIT
member; and more recent research

< In Touch

Summer 2022–23

Volume 30 number 3

The submission deadline for the
Autumn 2023 issue is 1 February
Read our [Submission Guidelines here](#)

T&I editor

Hayley Armstrong
intouch@ausit.org

Content editor + design and production

Helen Sturgess
editor@ausit.org

Cover image

AUSIT member Epperly Zhang comes up with a novel way for T/Is to put their experiences into words: haiku (see pages 4–5) [iStock.com/helovi]

AUSIT contacts

Suite 154
16 Beenleigh Redland Bay Road
Loganholme
QLD 4129
Telephone: 1800 284 181
email: admin@ausit.org

www.ausit.org

Access In Touch online

www.ausit.org/in-touch-magazine/

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past and present.

< Editorial Committee

Hayley Armstrong (Chair)
intouch@ausit.org

Tania Stuart
tacastupi@gmail.com

Xiaoxing (Amy) Wang
amyxwan@gmail.com

Christy Filipich
christy.filipich@gmail.com

Nicola Thayil
nicola_sav@yahoo.com.au

Sophia Ra
s.ra@unsw.edu.au

Claudia Schneider
claudiaschneider@bigpond.com

Jemma Ives
info@jittranslation.com

Lavinia Napaltjarri Heffernan
Lavinia.Heffernan@naati.com.au

Vera Gu
verasnake@hotmail.com

Cristina Savin
cristina@poliglotttranslation.com

Letter from the editors

As another year draws to an end, the *In Touch* team brings you our last offering of 2022.

Alongside our regular columns, this issue includes:

- how a novel competition for creative AUSIT members came about, and a chance to read the winning entries (see pages 4–5)
- the first in a two-part special on literary translation – with an article on co-translation and another on AALITRA's celebration of less translated languages (see pages 12–15 &

18) – plus a callout for contributions for the second part of this special (see below)

- translation masterclasses: what they are, and why you might want to organise one for your specific language pair (see pages 16–18) ...

... and also: a report on AUSIT's biggest annual conference to date; the 2022 recipient of the biennial Paul Sinclair Excellence Award; and an obituary for a much-loved member of the NSW Branch.

Wishing you a restful and enjoyable festive season and summer,

Hayley and Helen

Calling NSW Branch members!



[iStock.com/Wavebreakmedia](https://www.iStock.com/Wavebreakmedia)

The NSW Branch will host AUSIT's 2023 National Conference, and we need volunteers to assist in all areas

Whatever your skillset and however much time you have available, your contribution will be invaluable.

To register your interest or find out more about the roles available, contact the NSW Branch Committee [here](#)

Do you have a passion for literary translation?

In Touch is seeking ideas and contributions for the second part in our two-part special!

Are you a literary translator, or an academic or student with a particular interest in this area? Do you have an opinion or experience that you would like to share with interested colleagues and stakeholders across the broader T&I field?

We'd love to include your reflections, observations and ideas in our April issue.

How? Check out the box to right ->

Contributions welcome

To make a submission in this or any area:

- take a look at our [Submission Guidelines](#) *
- if you have any questions, email the editors or an Editorial Committee member *
- check the submission date *
- go for it!

* this page, first column



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Traducteurs International Federation of Translators

AUSIT

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News in brief

(a review of T&I-related items that have appeared in the media since the last issue of *In Touch* went to press):

3 Aug: WA Goldfields' first Aboriginal-language dictionary produced by husband-and-wife linguists [ABC News](#)

8 Aug: What it takes to pass NAATI test? Exclusive talk with NAATI official Anas Ahmad [sbs.com.au](#)

13 Aug: Rushdie Attack Recalls 1991 Killing of His Japanese Translator [nytimes.com](#)

18 Aug: Hidden gems: Translators and interpreters in Australia play a critical if seldom seen role [theconversation.com](#)

22 Aug: Legal translation is becoming essential for firms [lawyersweekly.com.au](#)

22 Sep: Deaf culture, and science communication [ABC Radio National](#)

23 Sep: Interpreters: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly [news.griffith.edu.au](#)

30 Sep: More Ukrainian interpreters ready to help bridge language barriers [afndaily.com.au](#)

30 Sep: The Australian community translators fighting coronavirus one word at a time [sbs.com.au](#)

12 Oct: Darwin Nunez, translation troubles and how players get to grips with a new language [theathletic.com](#)

18 Oct: 'We'd have lost lives': absence of translators in Shepparton flood response criticised [theguardian.com](#)

19 Oct: Meta Has Developed AI for Real-Time Translation of Hokkien [gizmodo.com](#)

24 Oct: Baby book translation to Yawuru language keeps language alive for future generations [National Indigenous Times](#)

27 Oct: Arabic-to-English book translations grow since 2010 [middleeastmonitor.com](#)

27 Oct: Ottawa probing language interpreter injury, says third to be hospitalized [ctvnews.ca](#)

28 Oct: Shortage of Auslan interpreters in Canberra is a real problem [abc.net.au](#)

1 Nov: Lack of NC court interpreters hurt Spanish-speakers. Now, US Justice Department closes probe [independenttribune.com](#)

2 Nov: In "In Flow of Words," War-Crime Interpreters Tell Their Own Stories [newyorker.com](#)

4 Nov: 'This is not just about me': Geetanjali Shree becomes first Indian writer to win International Booker Prize [SBS News](#)

4 Nov: There are two ways to translate the Bible, and both are right [churchtimes.co.uk](#)

5 Nov: From Subtitles To Indies: Darcy Paquet Captures The Best Of Korean Cinema [forbes.com](#)

5 Nov: Bringing musicals to the deaf community [canberratimes.com.au](#)

5 Nov: Lost in translation, no more: Two writers capture Montreal's unique linguistic identity [theglobeandmail.com](#)

7 Nov: How translators help remove barriers to voting for Indigenous communities [pbs.org](#)

8 Nov: JCB Prize 2022 shortlist: Is a creative translation good? [lifestyle.livemint.com](#)

9 Nov: Lost in translation? The role of local language in anti-racist practice [bond.org.uk](#)

10 Nov: Mothers reveal how language barriers impact prenatal care, as experts call for interpreters to be permanent hospital staff [ABC News](#)

[see also recent research, page 19]



image: iStock.com/FG Trade Latin

10 Nov: Federal review launched into visa program for Afghans who assisted ADF, amid Taliban threat [ABC News](#)

10 Nov: Oldest known sentence written in first alphabet discovered – on a head-lice comb [theguardian.com](#)

10 Nov: Climate activist wants to translate climate science into 100 languages [The Jerusalem Post](#)

10 Nov: 5 Parameters You Must Check While Translating Your Press Release [themagazineplus.com](#)

11 Nov: NSW Parliamentary to be translated into Auslan, in groundbreaking first steps towards accessibility for Deaf community [miragenews.com](#)

AUSIT 2022 Haiku Competition

AUSIT members are always looking for new ways to enjoy and explore language. When Victorian Branch PD Coordinator Epperly Zhang suggested the branch run a haiku competition, her colleagues on AUSIT's national PD Committee were quick to spot an initiative that could be expanded to a national scale. Read about Epperly's idea, enjoy the winning haiku, and hear what the judges had to say about them.



As witnesses to a wide variety of human interactions and communications, T/Is come across many stories; yet some of the most fascinating and compelling go unheard, or cannot be told.

My idea was to use haiku – a rather creative medium – to give air to some of those important experiences.

Originating in Japan, haiku is the shortest form of poetry in the world. In English versions, each complete haiku is comprised of three unrhymed lines of five, seven and five syllables.

We used AUSIT's E-Flash system to contact all members and invite them to 'submit a haiku that captures a moment or tells a story in your life as a translator or interpreter.'

We received a huge number of entries: 40, all of which were reviewed by our panel of judges:

- Rob Scott, President, Australian Haiku Society
- Jean Deklerk, VIC Branch Committee member
- David Shield, AUSIT member.

*Finally, summer.
Sounds of cicadas, chirp tap;
Fingers on keyboard*

WINNER:

Neelu (Neel Kamal) Kaur
NSW Branch

The entries were judged on three criteria:

- Form: written in English, consisting of three lines of five, seven and five syllables
- Theme: focus on the writer's life as an interpreter or translator
- Creativity.

The prizes were:

- Winner – \$30 book voucher from Dymocks
- Runner up – a book on haiku (generously donated by judge Rob Scott)
- Third place – free access to a future PD event organised by the Victorian Branch.

Judges' comments (winning haiku, above):

What sets it apart is its thematic use of

nature and blending that with something so relatable to interpreters and translators.

Strongly appeals to the senses with sounds and touch. It portrays an enjoyable scene punctuating the familiar everyday life of a translator.

There are no boundaries to haiku – its material is often everyday life, including work. One of the key aspects of haiku, both Japanese and non-Japanese, is the effective use of juxtaposition. This haiku connects the longing for summer with the drudgery of work – something we can all relate to – without labouring the point. The well-observed staccato effect of the cicadas and the keyboard provide such a lightness of touch that we can

***On my mobile phone
Awaiting the next client
In utter silence***

RUNNER UP:

Yoko Knox
NSW Branch

Like the winning haiku, this is another phrase broken up into fragments. This haiku can only be read one way, but it is constructed in such a way that everything is linked, leaving the reader with the not too subtle suggestion about the true nature of an interpreter's task. I also like the use of lowercase letters throughout the poem, a popular technique in modern haiku, designed to remind the reader that they are not simply reading a sentence of prose.

simultaneously enjoy the fruits of both. Of the three winning haiku, this one has the most structural integrity, forcing the reader to join the dots.

Judges' comments (runner up, above):

Very relatable with a good sense of melancholy, good structure and just oblique enough for the style.

When I was approached to judge these poems, I agreed to do it partly because of my shared experience with translators and interpreters. In life, we are often drawn to things that recall something from our own experience. It is the same with haiku. It is a purely subjective response, but it immediately puts us on safer ground, including when talking about what makes a good haiku. This haiku stood out for me because I have met this person a thousand times, grabbing a moment of quiet. The mechanics of translating is a 'noisy' business. The process of sifting through a jumble of alternative utterances is mentally taxing. But the content

can also be jolting, propelling us into an unfamiliar mindset. It is crucial that interpreters guard against this in order to safeguard the integrity of the translation. The silence in between clients is necessary. And precious. This haiku could be improved, as it is essentially one phrase broken, albeit skillfully, into three fragments. But it captures a stark reality with great clarity. Beauty is not always a visual thing, it is something deeply felt.

Judges' comments (third place, below):

Three lines sketching an image of the workings of the minds of T/Is.

Epperly Zhang completed a master's degree in translation studies at the University of Melbourne, and is a Chinese<>English translator. She is also currently enrolled as a PhD candidate in interpreting studies at RMIT University, as well as being PD coordinator for AUSIT's Victorian Branch, and is passionate about helping bridge communication gaps between people through translation and interpreting.

***endless strings of words
and imagery fill my head
flowing in and out***

THIRD PLACE:

Carmen Esplandiu Feliu
NSW Branch

HONOURABLE MENTIONS:

***A jumble of words
are brought to life through context
A story is told***

Emily Ni Pualwan

***I am the mirror
that blends the words of your thoughts
So you can be heard.***

Ysolda Eckhardt

***Names numbers and time
Sliding words back-and-forth move
Endless bridges stand***

Daniela Severi

***Dead letters coming alive
with my toiling keyboard touch,
I find joy here and now.***

Jai Heon Shim

***Through a mobile phone
A lonely interpreter
Helps new arrivals***

Victorine Daniel

***From the shaking bridge
Through rocks and waters tussle
I see patterns form***

Avril Janks

AUSIT National Conference 2022

25–26 November, University of Queensland St. Lucia Campus, Brisbane, on Turrbal and Jagera country

Last month around 323 registered attendees gathered in Brisbane, and another 137 logged on, for AUSIT's annual National Conference and related events. *In Touch* Editorial Committee members **Jemma Ives**, **Sophia Ra** and **Cristina Savin** all attended in person, and put together this overview of AUSIT's biggest ever conference to date.

The campus was carpeted with fallen jacaranda blossoms (photo: Jemma Ives)

DAY 1

The Conference commenced bright and early on the Friday morning, with a welcome address by one of the co-chairs of the Organising Committee (OC), Nancy Guevara, and a message from the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Leanne Linard MP. In her formal opening, outgoing National President Erika Gonzalez thanked the OC for their dedicated work and urged us all to work together to make the T&I profession sustainable, because when we're united, we can achieve great things. Kenny Gee did a great job stepping in at the last minute to pass on a Welcome to Country message from Turrbal songwoman Maroochy, and play the didgeridoo. The two-day program of presentations and workshops focused on reconnecting across a variety of different areas after the challenging pandemic years. Sessions were divided into three streams: teaching and translation, interpreting, and workshops and panels.

With live on-screen captioning provided by Ai-Media, remote simultaneous interpreting (in Mandarin, Korean, Indonesian, Spanish and Arabic) by student volunteers using Congress Rental's Network platform, and Auslan interpreting by Deaf Connect, delegates were extremely impressed by the accessibility of the event. The conference app Whova proved very effective for connecting, both during the conference and to continue the many unfinished conversations over following days.

Keynote speakers

Sociolinguist and interpreter educator **Dr George Major** leads the New Zealand Sign Language–English Interpreting and Deaf Studies programs at Auckland University of Technology. Her fascinating plenary 'Not one-size-fits-all: the complexity of the interpreter role' detailed how her research shows that the interpreter role is a dynamic rather than a static entity, with subtle, moment-by-moment changes in

participant alignment, interactional management and presentation of self which help interpreters achieve communicative goals and ensure understanding.

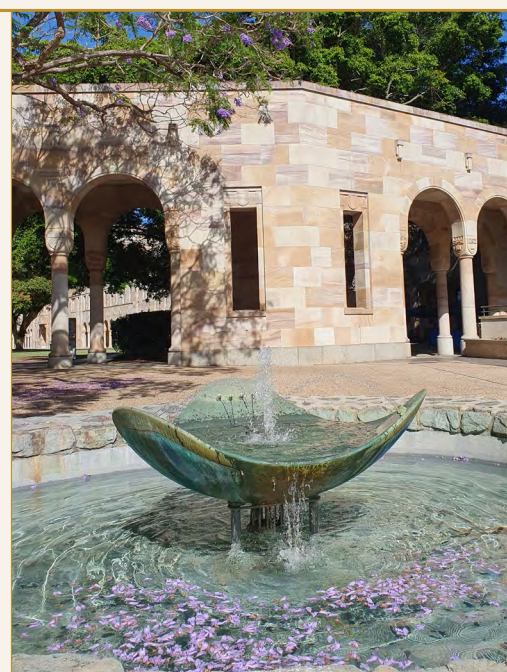
Prof. Minhua Liu sits on the advisory boards of several peer-reviewed journals and is co-editor of the international journal *Interpreting*. In her plenary 'The interpreter's aging: A unique story of multilingual cognitive decline?' she extolled the benefits of stimulating and cognitively challenging occupations such as interpreting in the delay of cognitive decline, and recommended doing a crossword puzzle every day as excellent targeted cognitive training!

Prof. Felicity Meakins is a linguist specialising in Australian Indigenous languages, morphology and language contact. In her plenary 'Power and Perspective: Australian History told in Indigenous Languages' she argued that Australian history should include detailed historical accounts told in the first languages of Indigenous historians and witnesses, using examples to demonstrate that accounts given in second languages (Kriol and pidgin English) omitted important information present in the speakers' first language, in this case Gurindji.

Some of Friday's sessions

On the panel titled '**Evolution**', representatives of several of the event's sponsors (**Connecting Now**, **LEXIGO**, **NAATI**, **Congress Australia** and **Ai-Media**) joined translator **Janet Saba** to discuss ways to further integrate technology in everyday T&I work. The session was enhanced by being able to witness such technology – including remote simultaneous interpreting via Zoom (Congress Australia) and live captioning (Ai-Media) – in use throughout the conference.

Alejandra González Campanella's session 'Going the extra mile: empathy and compassion in interpreter work with vulnerable clients' examined tensions which can arise between a prescriptive code of ethics and human compassion when interpreting for survivors of trauma. She advocated passionately for trauma-



informed interpreter training for practitioners, to guide them towards best practices in terms of protecting both themselves and vulnerable clients.

Gala Dinner

To round off the first day, 220 delegates joined the Organising Committee for the Gala Dinner in the ballroom of The Westin, Brisbane. After two years of pandemic restrictions, we enjoyed a 'real' face-to-face party and wonderful performances by a bellydancer and Greek dancers. With our dancing shoes on, many attendees partied until midnight.

During dinner, the biennial Paul Sinclair Excellence Award was presented (see page 8).



photo: Majida Toma

'As privileged bilinguals, we have a responsibility to ensure access to information ... we are not tools, but human beings.'



DAY 2

Some of Saturday's sessions

Willya Waldburger and **Vesna Dragoje**'s session 'Sydney Health Care Interpreter Service: Reorientation – focusing on strengths, capacity and agility through COVID' looked at the pandemic's impacts on our industry. While deeply affected by isolation and loss of income, the spike in demand for T&I services (around vaccination types, eligibility requirements and certificates, at-home care guides, etc.) highlighted our powers of resilience and adaptability.

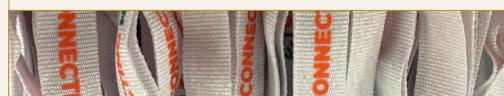
Issa He's inspiring talk on 'How Community Engagement and Research Empower Translation' focused specifically on how to best impart fire safety knowledge, communicate risks and enhance bushfire preparedness in CALD communities: how to prepare for the fire season, plus what to do on high fire risk days and when a fire occurs. Positive outcomes of research for both communities and the T&I industry include recognition of the need to develop translation, creative and communication services for CALD fire safety campaigns.

Sam Berner's session 'Ethics for a Different Time' was both inspiring and entertaining. She called on translators to first ask 'Why?' before asking 'How?' when translating community resources – urging us to adapt, protest and push back against badly written, patronising source texts and translate 'only if the information empowers your audience.' Noting that we, as privileged bilinguals, have a responsibility to ensure access to information, Sam ended with a reminder that we are human beings, not tools.

Anthea Banks, Curtis Taylor, Diane Brand and **Gail Yorkshire** – representing **Aboriginal Interpreting WA (AIWA)** – spoke from the heart about the importance of building capacity and understanding with and for Aboriginal people, and reached the hearts of all of us in the audience. Over 40 Aboriginal language groups, plus many Kriols, are serviced by translators and interpreters working for AIWA. They work hard to ensure understanding of COVID messaging in the community by prioritising the safety of the people. AIWA works directly with the WA Government's Pandemic Coordination Centre to raise awareness of the need for messaging in appropriate language. To best serve local communities, there is a need to break down medical script into plain English and combine the AUSIT Code of Ethics with cultural protocols. By the end of the session, all hearts in the auditorium were beating in unison.

Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture 2022

A riveting JBML oration was given by **Dr Lucas de Toca PSM**, First Assistant Secretary, Vaccine Policy, Implementation & Primary Care Response (National COVID Vaccine Taskforce). Addressing the topic of connecting with multicultural communities during the pandemic, Dr de Toca highlighted the gaps in servicing CALD and Indigenous communities, particularly in the early stages. Noting that there had been no system in place to interact with multicultural, peak and grassroots organisations in order to ensure messages were fit for purpose when communicating vital health measures, he described the steps taken to establish the CALD COVID-19 Health Advisory Group – steps based on partnership, trust, honesty, transparency, collaboration and co-design. The role of interpreters as frontline workers conveying new and essential information about restrictions and vaccines is recognised formally in the vaccination program.



Top: outgoing National President Erika Gonzalez addresses attendees (photo: Zhen Guan), and above: the Organising Committee (photo: Jo Maho), pictured with friends, were careful to make sustainable choices such as cotton tote bags, lanyards made from recycled plastic bags (photo: Zhen Guan) and plastic-free name tags

Reflections

Cristina: *As a translator, the reflections of Mark Saba (CEO of Lexigo) on how we can adapt to technological changes particularly resonated with me. Mark listed three ways in which we can use technology to our advantage: we constantly evolve as humans, we see change in languages, and we increase our motivation through specialisation, capacity and scope.*

Sophia: *Having attended online last year (as I said in my report, in my track pants!), I really appreciated the opportunities for face-to-face networking and the social atmosphere of the Friday evening. I meant to take photos for these pages, but I was too busy talking!*

Jemma: *I've been to a few AUSIT conferences and enjoyed them all, but I think this was the best yet. There was such a buzz of positive energy, and it was really special to meet people we've only seen on screen for the past few years. I'm really looking forward to 2023 in Sydney!*

continued overleaf

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continued from previous page

Paul Sinclair Excellence Award 2022

During the Gala Dinner, the recipient of the Paul Sinclair Excellence Award for outstanding contribution to AUSIT was announced.

This biennial award, established in 2009 by AUSIT's National Council (NC), honours the late Paul Sinclair's contribution to both AUSIT and the T&I profession in general.

Nominations are invited from members of the NC branch committees, and the final decision is made by the NC via an anonymous vote.

The winner receives an engraved trophy organised by Paul Sinclair's widow, Dalia Ayalon Sinclair. This year, Dalia was able to attend in person to present the award.

The Paul Sinclair Excellence Award 2022 was awarded to outgoing National President Erika Gonzalez for 'her leadership as National President of AUSIT 2020–22, and her distinguished contribution to community engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic.'

Erika's contribution is detailed more fully in her citation (see opposite page).

Thank you for making it happen!

On behalf of all attendees, a huge "Thank you!" to the **Organising Committee: Sam Berner, Nancy Guevara and Leisa Maia (co-chairs), plus Renata Oliveira-Munro, Haifaa El Kadi, Elisabeth Kissel, Mariam Elliott, Macarena Paz-Kotek, Elisabeth Kissel, Mariam Elliott, Mradula Diamond, Rebeca Paredes Nieto and Carina Mackenzie and** (all in group photo on page 7) plus **Zhen Guan, Han Xu, Andrea Ballesteros and Andrea Dallape.**

The OC, in turn, extends its thanks to the **National Communications Committee** for its support, and also to outgoing **National President Erika Gonzalez** for her oversight.

AUSIT's new National Council

During AUSIT's National Annual General Meeting, held on the afternoon of Day 2, the National Council for the coming year was confirmed:

National President: Angelo Berbotto (replacing **Erika Gonzalez**)

Vice-president (Events & Professional Development): Amy Wang (replacing **Despina Amanatidou**)

Vice-president (Communications and Public Relations): Vesna Cvjeticanin

Vice-president (Ethics and Professional Practice): Saeed Khosravi

National Treasurer: Han Xu

National Secretary: Miranda Lai

Immediate Past President: Erika Gonzalez (ex officio)

AUSIT NEWS

AUSIT member wins literary prize

Congratulations to AUSIT member Rosario Lázaro Igoa on being awarded second prize for fiction in Uruguay's Premios a las Letras (National Literature Awards) 2022.

cráteres artificiales (artificial craters), written in Spanish in 2020 and published in 2021, is Rosario's third book of fiction.

The collection of short stories grew out of Rosario's experience of viewing the world 'through glass' – specifically, the windows of her Adelaide home, while caring for her baby. The themes she explores include the body, the nebulous line between life and death, and the feelings that arise in intimate relationships and are always, says Rosario, 'tinged with the ambiguity of existence.'

Listen to an SBS interview with Rosario about the book [here](#)



cráteres artificiales

Rosario Lázaro Igoa



criatura editoria

Cover reproduced courtesy of Criatura Editoria, artwork: Gabriela Sánchez



Paul Sinclair Excellence Award for outstanding contribution to AUSIT 2022: Erika Gonzalez



CITATION

Dr Erika Gonzalez has been an AUSIT member for many years and has served the organisation in various positions: as National Professional Development Coordinator; Vice-president (Events and Professional Development); and over the last two and a half years, as National President. In this role she has displayed expert and empathetic leadership in times of great uncertainty and turmoil, steering the association towards a new chapter with over 2,000 members, and pivoting changes in the administrative processes that have translated into smooth operations and a better overall experience for the membership. She was also the driving force behind changing banking providers based on ethical performance and social accountability, despite the complexities involved in making changes of this scale. In short, Erika has worked tirelessly to advocate for the profession with the various stakeholders and wherever an opening has presented itself.

Erika's active search for opportunities to represent our profession culminated in AUSIT's participation in the federal Department of Health's CALD COVID-19 Advisory Group, the taskforce which oversaw the dissemination of health and vaccination information to CALD communities. From this position Erika patiently and strategically made known to the government the various obstacles that translators face in the translation and delivery of health messages. These issues include problems with the source text, the absence of collaboration between commissioners and translators, and the absence of revisions by other qualified translators and community checkers, to name just a few.

Erika's lobbying for better quality translation has been unwavering. As a result, AUSIT was invited to present a work plan on how to establish and implement community review panels to support appropriate translations of COVID-19 vaccination information for multicultural communities. The project was carried out in collaboration with the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils in Australia (FECCA), the national peak body representing Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as advocating on issues that affect how ethnic communities relate to government, business and the broader society. AUSIT was tasked with developing a training outline to address capacity building for community translators, translator reviewers and community review panellists. AUSIT was also responsible for trialling the implementation of community review panels in three languages (Arabic, Chinese and Spanish). With Erika's guidance, AUSIT formulated a strategy that focused on the development of a holistic plan to ensure efficient communication with CALD communities, particularly in relation to messages of importance to public health. The project also included the development of a training framework consisting of translation protocols and translation style guides as well as revision templates.

This project, which led to a major advancement in community translation within Australia, came to fruition as a direct result of Erika's strength and dedication.

Erika is a deserving recipient of the Paul Sinclair Excellence Award.

Vale Thomas Kis-Major

(10 October 1931 – 21 August 2022)



Long-time AUSIT member **Thomas Kis-Major** passed away peacefully on 21 August at the age of 90 – after a long battle with Parkinson’s and heart problems – with his wife of 43 years, Carla, by his side. His long and eventful life is commemorated here by his family and colleagues.

Annamaria Arnall of AUSIT’s WA Branch:

I had the privilege of collaborating with Thomas on a large number of Hungarian projects; the last one as recently as two years ago. I always admired his outstanding professionalism and linguistic skills. In Hungary he studied journalism; then he became a business entrepreneur in Mexico, where he embraced Spanish as his second mother tongue. He was a wonderful colleague and friend, a fantastic intellect with a brilliant sense of humour. Rest In Peace.

The following excerpts – from a speech given by Thomas at the Mexican Consulate in Sydney in 1993 or ’94 – flesh out his early years a little more:

What did I not do in Hungary before ’56! I was the youngest member of the [communist] party at 14 (!) and started writing newspaper reports. (Now I am the oldest officer at Centrelink.) I joined the party paper at 15, left school and sat a private exam for the Sixth Form (how I extracted the permit for that is another story). They kicked me out of the newspaper three months later, when the boss found out my age.

I got a job through my uncle who was a director of an export company, but two years later you find me at a trade union school as an instructor. From there I volunteered to Sztálinváros [the first ‘Socialist city’ in Hungary, built in the 1950s on the site of the former village of Dunapentele

... he had a smile for everyone ...

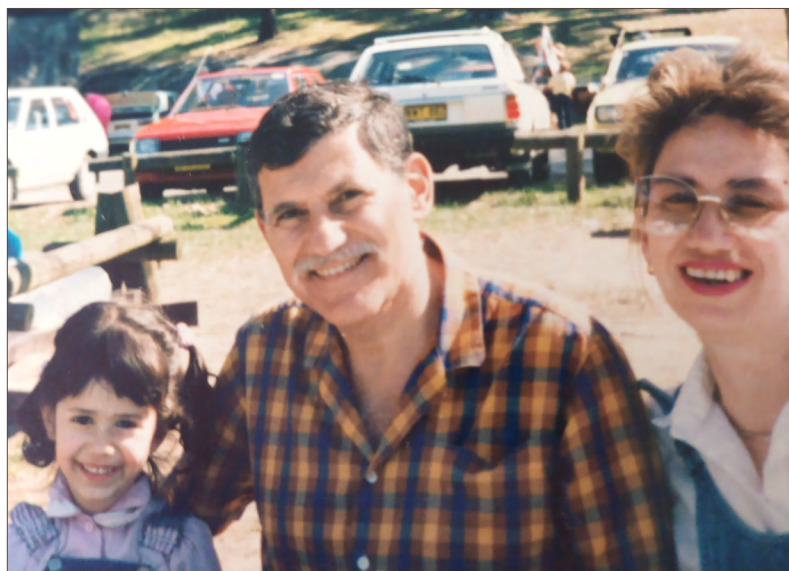
and later renamed Dunaiújváros] and after a short course became an electrician ... They recruited me to the trade union daily Népszava ... as a reporter.

I sat a pre-uni exam and was accepted by the Faculty of Law (I was interested in international law). I was preselected as the first foreign correspondent of the paper, but before my move to Geneva and my thesis and last exams the [Hungarian] Revolution [also known as the Hungarian Uprising, 23 October – 10 November 1956, against the country’s then communist government and policies imposed by the USSR] changed my fate.

I wrote editorials and articles in favour of the revolution, and was the only one who did not go back to work from a strike after the Russians came back. I would have probably ended up in jail as others had I not fled the country with Lilla, my lady friend, and her two-and-a-half-year-old son, János. (How, that is of course another story.)

On arriving in Vienna, I got married to Lilla and found a job with the UN as an interpreter. Soon we got our visas for the US ...





Thomas later became a successful businessman in Mexico City, and it was there that he met Carla, his second wife, in August 1979. As Carla says:

It was love at first sight – since that date we were never apart for 43 years.

The couple married in January 1980. Carla describes Thomas as:

... intelligent, well read, an excellent business person who was liked and appreciated by both his friends and his translating colleagues ... he had a smile for everyone ... he was extremely hard-working and a perfectionist in his translations, sometimes not getting to bed until around 6 am ... he loved languages, and spoke eight: Hungarian, Spanish, German, Italian, French, English, Portuguese and Russian.

Thomas and Carla migrated to Australia in 1983, along with Monica (Carla's daughter from her first marriage) and their six-month-old baby Fiorella, and have been based in Sydney ever since. According to Carla, Thomas always wanted to be a translator.

Lia Jaric of AUSIT's NSW Branch:

Thomas joined the branch in about the early '90s. Terry Cheshier, then a branch committee member, organised a get-together in the Journalists' Club meeting room around then, and Thomas and some others turned up. It was a pleasant, successful social event. Since that first appearance, Thomas and his wife Carla attended almost all AUSIT NSW meetings and functions (St Jerome's



Opposite page: Thomas in around 1980 in Mexico City (left) and the same year in Zurich (right)
This page, clockwise from top left: with Carla and Fiorella in Lane Cove Park; sharing a beer with Juan (János) on a visit from Mexico; and with Monica and Fiorella in recent years

Day, Christmas dinners and so on). People who worked with Thomas, checking his translation assignments, much appreciated both his work and his pleasant personality.

Thomas was a member of both AUSIT and its Spanish equivalent, ASETRAD, and with his wide experience he was able to work across all fields of translation, from engineering to health care, and law to business.

In commemorating their father, Fiorella says she misses:

... his European intellectualism ... his voracious appetite for literature ... his enjoyment of fine wine and classical music ... his rebellious nature and his communist heart ...

while Monica describes him as:

... a man who believed in his children and what they could fully accomplish.

Thomas is survived by his wife Carla, his stepson Juan (János), stepdaughter Monica, daughter Fiorella and son-in-law Brendan, his grandchildren Marcos, Marissa and Claudia, and great-grandchildren.

The Kis-Major family would like to request that any donations made in Thomas's memory are to Sydney Jewish Museum or Shake It Up Australia (funding Parkinson's research).



Co-translation: a ‘push-pull’ process

In 2021, Chinese↔English translator **Jun Liu** joined Nicky Harman – a leading British translator of contemporary Chinese literature – as co-translator on Chinese author Jia Pingwa’s latest novel, *The Sojourn Teashop* (暂坐, *Zan Zuo*), to be launched in the UK next year by Sinoist Books. Through the process Jun gained invaluable insights on literary translation (both general and specific to her language pair), as she explains below.

Jia Pingwa (贾平凹) is one of China’s foremost writers focusing on the countryside and history. For the first time, in *The Sojourn Teashop*, he applies his literary talent to a group of businesswomen struggling to maintain their integrity in a contemporary urban setting.

In her [blog](#), Nicky Harman calls our co-translation a ‘push-pull’ process: as I see it, I push the source message forward with as much context as possible, and she pulls out of that the most suitable solution for British readers, as she is more familiar with them.

Part of the book’s challenge lies in the numerous historical, religious, cultural, gastronomic and other specialised terms – all needing extensive research – that it contains. With each chapter’s draft, I sent Nicky photos, links and suggestions, and if we couldn’t agree on a particularly difficult point, we shared our views via video call until a satisfactory solution was reached.

Our process went through three stages. In the drafting stage we had the Chinese alongside the English, to ensure we carried every nuance of meaning in the original over into the English. Next we worked on the resulting

English-only copy, to establish distinctive voices with authentic expressions and stronger literary flare. Finally, with our editor, we worked on style consistency via whole-book read-throughs. When translating the term 活佛, a title in Tibetan Buddhism, I preferred the precise Tibetan term ‘*tulku*’, but Nicky went for the

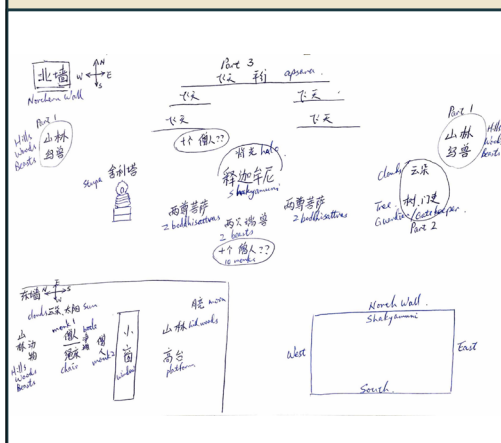
forward. While it’s crucial to make each character stand out from the crowd with their own tone, register and vocabulary, we also spent a great deal of time figuring out how to identify them. In Chinese, it’s perfectly normal for the narrator to call every character by their full

*... be faithful to the story, not the words;
and always consider your readers.*

more popular yet inaccurate ‘Living Buddha’. After a long discussion, I realised that the characters in the novel use the term without knowing its religious meaning, and few of our readers would know about Tibetan Buddhism, so Nicky’s version was more appropriate. This illustrates two guiding principles in literary translation: be faithful to the story, not the words; and always consider your readers. The book features more than 20 named characters whose dialogue pushes the plot

name – which usually consists of two or three symbols, with the family name first and given name last – but to do so in English would sound extremely formal and slow the narrative down. So what could we do? Using each character’s family name alone could be confusing (for example, in the case of a dialogue between two women named Xi Lishui and Xin Qi), and might also be jarring in English, as people (and women in particular) aren’t often referred to in this way.

Jun's diagram of the mural on the northern wall (below), and the cover of the English translation (right), reproduced courtesy of Sinoist Books, to be published in 2023



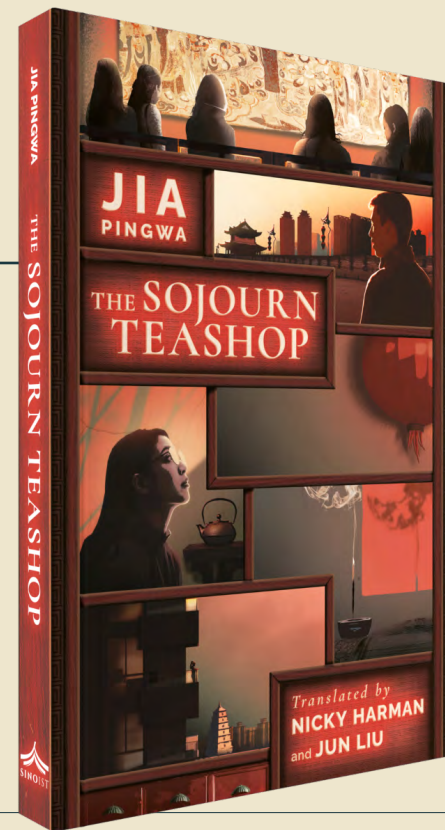
mental picture precedes meaningful translation. Many important events take place in a room that has Buddhist murals on the walls. The northern wall is especially complicated, so I noted down each element on a piece of paper to figure out how the Buddha is flanked by *bodhisattvas*, *apsaras* (see caption below), and other figures and symbols from Buddhist belief systems. The author uses north and south, east and west to describe where each item is in the murals. We changed this to left and right, above and beneath, which we felt would help English-speaking readers find their way around better.

In Chinese, verbs are not conjugated to indicate time, and this ambiguity gives translators into English the freedom to experiment with tense. Although the novel is set in 2016, we chose the present tense throughout the story, as we felt this would better engage readers.

Through this project, I have come to see a work of fiction as an organic body with evolving plots and characters. Instead of translating verbatim, I believe we translators should immerse ourselves in the story, walking and breathing with each character.

Nicky describes what readers find in the pages as 'the tip of the iceberg', with our carefully weighed decisions based upon extensive research making up the unseen rest of the icy bulk. I hope readers will enjoy the read, thereby (although unknowingly) appreciating the bulk of the iceberg.

For more information please check out my [blog](#), or this [video](#) that Nicky and I made about our work.



Jun Liu is an Auckland-based Chinese<>English translator and a member of NZSTI (the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters). She has translated and co-translated some 30-plus books published since the 1990s, working with native English-speaking translators to introduce the works of Chinese writers such as Lao She and also Uyghur author Alat Asem to the rest of the world.

Using only the given names pulls the English reader closer to the story, but this is problematic: two-character names such as Xin Qi are almost never shortened in China, and we didn't want to break this basic rule.

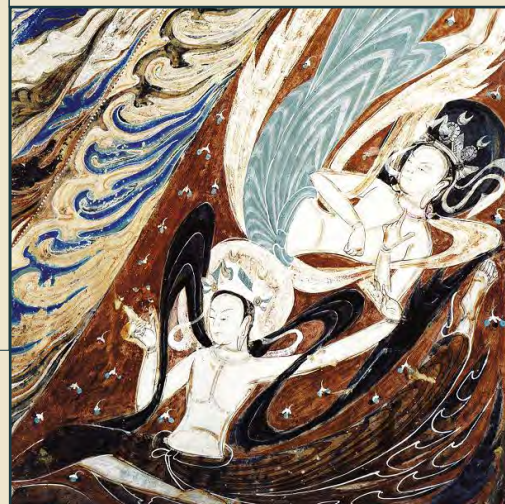
Our solution was a compromise: we shortened three-character names to two – so for Xi Lishui, we called her Lishui; while for two-character names such as Xin Qi, we used their full name throughout the novel.

For the characters in this book, building connections is crucial to their success, and the way they address each other in dialogue indicates these relationships. For example, the Chinese suffix '-jie' (meaning 'older sister,' and added to an older woman's name) and prefix 'xiao-' (meaning little or young, and used for a younger person) are endearments that indicate closeness, so we kept these in the English text. Having tackled the tricky names, we also considered other issues of general importance to literary translation.

This book is composed of scenes, and a clear

Pingwa compares his female characters to *apsaras*: female spirits that occur in Hindu and Buddhist cultures. He feels that modern women want to fly into paradise like *apsaras*, but are dragged down by worldly concerns and pursuits.

Image: flying *apsaras* in a mural, Magao Caves, Dunhuang, China (unknown author, public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

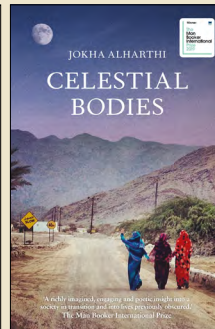
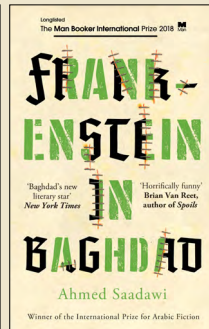
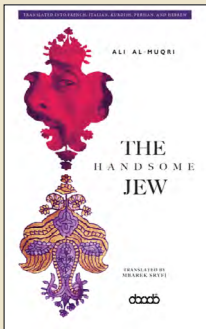
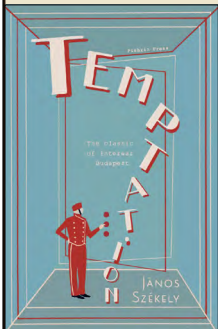


Celebrating less translated languages: a look back at our journey

In Touch Editorial Committee member **Cristina Savin** is also the Associate Editor of *The AALITRA Review*. Cristina and the Review's Editor **Lola Sundin** recently put together a Special Issue with a focus on less translated languages and literatures, accompanied by a special event chaired by Cristina. Cristina and Lola tell us about the Special Issue and event, and how and why they came about, below.



Lola (top) and Cristina



Temptation by Janos Szekeley, translated by Mark Baczoni, cover reproduced courtesy of Pushkin Press

The Handsome Jew by Ali al-Muqri, translated by Mbarek Sryfi, cover reproduced courtesy of Dar Arab

Frankenstein in Baghdad by Ahmed Saadawi, translated by Jonathan Wright (shortlisted: Man Booker International Prize 2018), cover reproduced courtesy of Oneworld Publications

Celestial Bodies by Jokha Alharthi, translated by Marilyn Booth (winner: Man Booker International Prize 2019), cover reproduced courtesy of Sandstone Press

Why are we showing you these four translated books? Because they were all ordered by Cristina after the event 'Celebrating less translated languages and literatures,' held on 13 October 2022 to mark the publication of a Special Issue of *The AALITRA Review* on this subject.

Why a Special Issue?

Let us go back in time a little, to 18 months ago. It had become clear to us that within the

field of literary translation, the attention being given to the flow of translations was increasing, especially from languages that are less often sources in the international exchange of linguistic goods into English.

While *The AALITRA Review* has always been active in promoting languages and literatures from around the world, we felt that a Special Issue (our first ever) would both add value to the increased interest in less translated languages and literatures, and also be a valuable tool for their broader dissemination.

Having conducted preliminary research and found no evidence that any other literary journal had dedicated an issue specifically to this area, we launched a callout for content.

But how did this idea of a Special Issue emerge in the first place?

The seed had, in fact, taken root in Cristina's mind in 2018, when Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk received a Nobel Prize in Literature for (in the words of her Nobel citation): 'a narrative imagination that with encyclopaedic passion represents the crossing of boundaries as a form of life.' The timing coincided with an ever-increasing focus on less translated languages within the field, evidenced by activities such as translation forums, translation workshops and conferences that were taking place around the world.

Various scholars have also explored the status and reception of less translated languages.



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Michael Cronin, for example, interestingly (and quite logically) states that ‘all languages ... are potentially minority languages’ because ‘the notion of a minority language is not a static but a dynamic concept’ that is ‘always relational, one is a minority in relation to someone or something else.’

This sentiment is shared by Cynthia Groff, who points out that ‘the adjective “minoritized” seems more appropriate for describing these languages and people groups, especially in light of the active minimization of languages and the lack of legitimization and protection in language planning ... Speakers of minoritized languages may not necessarily be numerical minorities in their region.’

More recently, Olga Castro has described the concept of cultural diplomacy: a support policy offered by source-culture institutions to help disseminate literatures abroad. The presence of less translated literatures in English has the potential to be a powerful diplomatic asset, contributing to the consolidation of their status and enabling them to access the world literary systems.

One recent example of cultural diplomacy is the research project ‘Showcasing Australian Literature in China Through Translation,’ carried out by Drs Leah Gerber and Lintao Qi from Monash University. By interviewing publishers from both countries and holding events that showcased publishers and translators, the project forged new bridges between Australia and China.

Through the creation and dissemination of our Special Issue we hoped that we could contribute – even if in a limited way – to this trend.

The outcomes

The response to our callout from scholars, translators and authors around the world,

representing languages spanning many continents, was simply outstanding. After careful consideration, the editorial team chose to publish four articles, seven translations with commentary pieces, and four book reviews – all categories already established in the journal. In addition, we introduced two new features: a ‘translator testimonial’ and a special feature in the form of a virtual ‘fireside chat’.

(A translator testimonial is an in-depth, holistic reflection on the translator's experience,

*... all languages ... are
potentially minority
languages ...*

encompassing collaborations with publishers, authors and funding bodies, and highlighting successful initiatives – in this case, ones that have enhanced the visibility of less translated literatures in the English-speaking world.)

The translations chosen cover a splendid variety of languages and genres:

- a Greek poem in the form of a drama, written by Tasos Leivaditis and translated by Nick Trakakis
- an excerpt from an Arabic novel authored by Alia Mamdouh and translated by Hend Saeed
- an Azerbaijani short story by Ataqam in Anne Thompson-Ahmadova's translation
- a Montenegrin lesbian vampire trope by Aleksandar Bećanović, translated by

Will Firth

- a Hungarian satire penned by Frigyes Karinthy and translated by Mark Baczoni
- an anonymous Mallorcan cuckoldry play translated by Richard Huddleson
- Iryna Byelyayeva's modern take on a selection of famous Ukrainian poems written by Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko.

The Special Issue also contributes a wealth of information on the rich linguistic diversity offered by translated literature, both in Australia and overseas. Sonia Mycak introduces us to the Australian-Ukrainian literary field; Jozefina Komporalý gives us an excellent account of the source-oriented agency in Hungarian/Romanian-to-English translation; Tania P Hernández-Hernández takes us on an exciting journey into Mexico's rich linguistic diversity; Ágnes Orzóy reflects on the habitus of Hungarian and English literary translators working in different sociocultural fields; Nadia Georgiou and Golda Van Der Meer offer a detailed and informative account on Modern Greek and Yiddish poetry; and finally, Mihaela Cristescu gives us a glimpse into the minds of various Romanian translators over a fireside chat.

Many readers will have some awareness of how journals are brought to publication – from the perspective of a contributor, a member of an editorial team, or perhaps even both! The months spent in preparation for the Special Issue – receiving many thought-provoking pieces, reaching out to reviewers with the hope that they would share our excitement about the submissions, and going back and forth with contributors to negotiate revisions – were worth it for the bubble of joy and achievement we experienced when all the effort culminated in publication.

Publication and dissemination of our Special Issue, however, are not the only achievements

continued on page 18, column 3

The translation masterclass: a rare opportunity in PD

A French-into-English translation masterclass run by **Yveline Piller** in 2020 inspired translator **Angelo Berbotto** to facilitate such valuable language-specific opportunities for his peers translating into English from Portuguese and Spanish. He recently ran masterclass webinars in each language with the help of colleagues **Juliana Frantz** and **Gabriela Church** (Portuguese) and **Cintia Lee**, **Rebeca Paredes Nieto** and **Rosario Lázaro Igoa** (Spanish). Angelo and Yveline share what they have learnt along the way below, so that colleagues working in other language pairs can do the same.

Angelo (top) and Yveline



What is a translation masterclass – can you give us a brief overview?

Angelo: It's a collective translation workshop in a specific language pair and direction.

Yveline: The name was chosen to depict a group of professionals working together. No one has seniority over other participants.

Angelo: A text (about 250 to 300 words) is chosen and sent to participants, who each translate it and send it back. Anonymised versions of these responses are used to trigger discussion during the Zoom masterclass (MC). The aim is to create one agreed 'best' version.

Who can participate?

Angelo: Any AUSIT member, regardless of whether they're a translator or interpreter; and they don't need to be certified in the class's language combination and direction.

What inspired you to organise a masterclass?

Angelo: Participating in two or three sessions of Yveline's French-into-English masterclass.

Yveline: As a long-standing translator, I'd often had an acute desire to talk with colleagues of similar experience – to bounce ideas off them,

*This language-specific
type of PD is
rarely offered.*

discuss translation options and get feedback – in short, to learn from each other. Once you're in professional practice as a translator, there are few options to develop your skills apart from self-study, and we already spend most of our time in professional isolation.

I often thought of organising live meetings, but there were many drawbacks, including room hire, geographic restrictions, and simply finding the right format. Who would stand as 'teacher'? How would the discussion run? Would participants be willing to expose their work to other professionals? Who would give the feedback, and on what authority?

Then COVID-19 happened, and live meetings were replaced by online alternatives. This new way of getting together helped me solve all the

problems of live classes.

Once participants have sent in their versions, how do you prepare for the masterclass?

Yveline: A great deal of care is taken to ensure participants don't feel vulnerable in exposing their work and potential shortcomings to colleagues. This is achieved by limiting participation to those who have translated and returned a source text I send them before the Zoom meeting – spectators cannot join.

From the translations I receive, I randomly pick two to send out to all respondents, to use as a basis for discussion. These sample translations remain anonymous. During the Zoom class, the attendees discuss the options for each sentence as a group, and together craft a translation that draws on the best of everyone's ideas. The final product is always very satisfying, as so many professional ideas come together.

Angelo: After taking part in another French-into-English MC led by Monique McLellan in February 2022, I adapted Yveline's model a little. As you can see in the sample below, I created a worksheet that consisted of the

... care is taken to ensure participants don't feel vulnerable in exposing their work and potential shortcomings to colleagues.

source text (ST) paired with randomly selected paragraphs from all the versions received (TT1, TT2, etc.) – so the difference from Yveline's model is that I used more versions. Then I emailed the worksheet together with the Zoom link to everyone who sent me a translation. As in Yveline and Monique's MCs, that's the rule ... only those who send in a version get the worksheet and link. This also ensures quality discussions, as a contribution from someone who has engaged with the ST is far superior to one from someone who has passively read it.

What is the structure of the masterclass?

Angelo: This is an evolving feature. In the

Portuguese MC we had a group of about 20, and it was a bit hard to cover the entire text and manage this big group – so for the Spanish one, which was a similar size, we used Zoom's 'breakout room' feature (and I'm grateful for the support of my fellow translators, named in the intro – it took a team effort to run the event smoothly). We had each group of about five participants concentrate on one paragraph each during the first hour, trying to agree on a 'best' version which they then typed into the 'Group TT' box, providing feedback as to their reasons if they wanted. Each group then chose a delegate to explain their challenges and

decisions to the plenary in the second hour.

Yveline: At times, after we've completed the group translation, I've also asked someone to give a short presentation on a feature that came up during the discussion, for a 'deep dive' into a single point that we were unfamiliar with.

What are the benefits for participants?

Yveline and Angelo: The main pluses of masterclasses are:

- they offer a very beneficial source of learning for very little work
- they're simple, enjoyable and informal, and reduce professional isolation
- they involve supportive, collaborative teamwork towards joint goals
- they offer a new and easy way to network and get to know colleagues working in the same language pair, including their talents and specialities
- they count towards PD points
- participation is flexible and open to all AUSIT members
- participants can choose to practise into their B language and improve their skills without undue pressure
- there are no time or money commitments (unlike formal courses or qualifications)

continued overleaf

Translation Brief (Spanish masterclass):

Please translate the following newspaper article into English. Your translation will be read by educated English-speaking readers living in Australia.

Below are examples of the versions sent in, the anonymous samples returned, and the results of the group work: two titles suggested for the article (left), and a sentence from the body of the article.

ST01 (title)	La cerilla más peligrosa	ST03	Aquí muchos quieren la responsabilidad política, pero no sus responsabilidades.
TT1	The most dangerous match	Group 2	
TT2	The most dangerous match of all	TT1	Many here crave the political responsibility, but not the actual responsibilities that come embedded with it.
TT3	Adding fuel to the fire	TT2	Here many want the political responsibility but not its responsibilities.
TT4	Playing with fire	TT3	There are many in Spain who seek political power but shy away from the responsibility that goes with it.
TT5	The match that burns the most	Group TT	There are many here who want political power but not the responsibilities that go with it.
TT6	The biggest fire hazard		Reasons: Decided not to double up with "responsabilidad" and chose "political power", due to the different connotation (sounds clumsy in English).
TT7	The most dangerous fire starter		
Group TT	Group 2: Adding fuel to the fire Reasons: Sounds good in English Does not seem to lose context Title of article needs to make people read it: catchy Things catching fire is a connecting thread Group 4: The spark that starts the fire		

For newly certified practitioners and students it's a great learning opportunity

continued from previous page

- participants have similar concerns and interests
- there are no geographic restrictions: participants have joined from all over Australia, plus New Zealand and elsewhere overseas.

How was the feedback for the masterclasses that you organised?

Angelo: Overwhelmingly positive. This language-specific type of PD is rarely offered. Both the Spanish and the Portuguese participants were excited about it, and many said they would gladly take part in another.

Yveline: I ran 14 classes before taking a break for family reasons. The feedback was excellent, and I've received many requests to resume the classes, which I hope to do soon.

What's involved in organising a masterclass? What are the steps and the time commitment involved? Are there resources available?

Yveline: It's simple to organise: most of the preparation is sending out emails and selecting a suitable text for translation.

Angelo: For the Portuguese MC the feedback was that the text wasn't very challenging, so for the Spanish I chose a newspaper editorial that involved a number of challenges for the translator – as you can see in the sample – about domestication / foreignisation and what to do with cultural references.

For resources, I would suggest the presentation Yveline gave at the AUSIT Conference 2020, and also my recent Webinar 'How to Host a Translation Masterclass' (see links at end).

Yveline: There's also a start-up kit to simplify the job for the organiser. It includes email templates, plus a selection of source texts that can be used to work from English into any LOTE (see link at end).

Would you recommend that practitioners in other languages organise their own masterclasses? If so, why?

Angelo: Absolutely. It's a great way to find out what strategies colleagues use to translate challenging passages, and also to experience working with texts that differ from the usual types of translation commissioned by your clients, plus it's an opportunity to network. For newly certified practitioners and student members of AUSIT it's a great learning opportunity, as it offers them glimpses into how more experienced practitioners think.

Yveline: Definitely. I encourage members from other language groups to try it out once. No need to commit long term in the beginning, but going from the French group experience, you'll find it fun and worthwhile. I'm happy to answer any questions and share my experience.

If you have any questions, or would like Yveline to send you a start-up kit, email her [here](#)

You can access Yveline's 2020 presentation [here](#) and Angelo's March 2022 webinar [here](#) (with password: AUSIT!3030AB##)

J. Angelo Berbotto is a Spanish<>English and French>English translator based in Sydney. After working as a solicitor for 17 years, Angelo is now concentrating on expanding his translation practice. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Translation and Interpreting program at UNSW, and is a member of AUSIT's Ethics & Professional Practice Committee.

With a lifelong interest in languages, and after a long business career spanning several countries, Yveline Piller transitioned into the T&I field. A former national president of AUSIT, she was made a Fellow of AUSIT in 2007 and was joint winner of the AUSIT Excellence in Interpreting Award in 2013. Yveline has also tutored for the Master of Translation and Interpreting program at UNSW and mentored new practitioners, and currently serves on AUSIT's Communications Committee.

continued from page 15

that have resulted from this process. We have forged new literary connections across the globe, and these became tangible via the accompanying event we held in October. Organised online by Monash University, it featured a panel of two accomplished translators, Hend Saeed and Mark Baczoni (both contributors to the Special Issue), and was chaired by Cristina.

Hend Saeed – a translator from Arabic into English as well as a literary agent and consultant – shared her wealth of knowledge on the different cultural contexts of Arab languages and dialects, while Mark Baczoni – a translator from Hungarian into English and an interpreter – gave the audience an in-depth taste of the many challenges and joys of working with a less translated language.

We were delighted to see a wide range of countries of origin across the audience, indicating a continuing interest in the subject of less translated languages. The number of insightful questions received by the panellists, and the enthusiasm with which others followed up, suggests this may someday become a 'major' field.

You can read the Special Issue of The AALITRA Review [here](#)

Cristina Savin is a French>English and Romanian>English freelance translator and an editor. She completed a Master of Translation degree at Monash University, and has been working freelance since 2017. Cristina has worked across a wide variety of settings, including law enforcement, authentication of artwork, health care, medical, education, literature; and most recently a subtitling project for the European Union.

Lola Sundin is a lecturer in Translation and Interpreting Studies at Monash University, a Japanese–English interpreter and a Japanese>English translator. Her research focuses on how societies are, and can be, represented to new audiences through translation of literary works.

Translating informed consent in maternity care

Researchers: Dr Şebnem Susam-Saraeva and Dr Jenny Patterson

Institutions: University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh Napier University

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Our project, which ran throughout 2022 in Scotland, UK, examined informed consent during pregnancy, labour and birth in parents with limited English proficiency (LEP).

It is often difficult for parents with LEP to access adequate information in their own languages during perinatal care, and this greatly contributes to poor maternal health outcomes.

The main objective of the project was to understand informed consent from an interdisciplinary perspective of midwifery and translation and interpreting studies. To this end, the researchers organised a series of expert focus groups and interactive workshops, inviting researchers and practitioners in both disciplines to take part.

The project aimed to create an environment in which the concept of informed consent in multilingual and multicultural settings in Scottish maternity services could be viewed through different perspectives.

The findings of the project were disseminated through an online colloquium in October 2022 which can be accessed [here](#), and practice-based events with midwives and student midwives which can be accessed [here](#). Two international peer-reviewed publications are also forthcoming. Four main areas of focus were identified:

- Resources (or the lack of) in terms of time, as well as antenatal and perinatal education material (audiovisual or text based).
- Issues around quality of interpreting, such as the varied medical knowledge of the



interpreters, differences in nuance; continuity and trust between midwives, parents and interpreters; and whether the interpreters are seen as 'tools' rather than members of a team.

- Cultural awareness on the part of healthcare staff, combined with the health literacy of parents and how they relate to experts and medical institutions.
- Power differentials between all parties involved – where the power is located in maternity care; the shame or fear that comes with not understanding a language; and conflicts due to cultural expectations.

The project's recommendations emphasised continuity of care (across both midwives and interpreters); quality training and regulation of interpreters; and improved access to and resources for antenatal education for parents with LEP.

You can watch Drs Susam-Saraeva and Patterson presenting detailed information on their research at Maternity & Midwifery Hour (recorded 16 Nov 2022) [here](#), or listen to the podcast [here](#).

The gift of the tongue: investigating spoken-voice intervention for interpreting students

Researcher: Vera Yingzhi Gu

PhD supervisors: Dr Jim Hlavac and Dr Hui Huang

Institution: Monash University

Although voice and speech are fundamental communication tools, spoken-voice management and development doesn't always feature prominently in professional interpreter training programs.

My thesis is dedicated to the effects of spoken-

voice intervention on interpreting students' vocal performance during interpreting.

The empirical study explores the effects of intervention in four groups of students in the Mandarin-English language combination:

- English = B-language
- three groups with different levels of exposure to speech intervention, plus a control group
- five students per group.

The intervention approach yielded a highly positive outcome ...

A mixed-method study design was applied, with both quantitative and qualitative data reflecting the learners' performances in consecutive interpreting.

The students' interpreting was recorded at two specific moments during their training, and three external assessors – a voice coach, an interpreting instructor and a lay assessor – evaluated their performances. The results led to the following conclusions:

- 1) The intervention approach yielded a highly positive outcome, with the spoken-voice intervention groups all giving significantly better vocal performances during the delivery of interpreting than the non-intervention group. However, the level of improvement varied across the different intervention activities, regimens and instruction approaches.
- 2) In both pre- and post-intervention assessments, a significant positive correlation

WA Specialised Interpreting and Translating Course Provider

About Us






Babel International College (BIC) is a registered training organisation in Australia. (Registered Training Organisation No.: 41560). BIC is also approved by the Australian Skills and Quality Authority (ASQA) to recruit international students (CRICOS Provider No.: 03522E).

As a NAATI endorsed course provider, the programs offered at BIC have been specifically designed to cater for the needs of the communities and students who are interested in careers as interpreters and translators. With dedicated trainers and caring administrative staff, BIC provides students with a nurturing atmosphere which is conducive to success in their studies and future career development.





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-  info@bic.wa.edu.au
-  www.bic.wa.edu.au



was discovered between students' spoken-voice performance and their overall interpreting performance: the higher a student scores on spoken-voice performance, the higher they will score on overall interpreting performance.

3) The spoken-voice intervention activities and metacognitive instruction yielded outstanding intervention effects, significantly raising the spoken-voice awareness and spoken-voice skills of the three intervention groups.

4) Certain aspects of spoken-voice dynamism – including vocal confidence, audience connection, expressiveness, posture and alignment, and pace and pauses – are particularly amenable to improvement via either spoken-voice training activities or a spoken-voice awareness-raising approach. These skills can also be converted relatively easily into genuine improvements in the quality of students' interpreting if they are aware of underlying issues and consciously work to overcome them.

5) Undesirable speaking habits – including poor posture and alignment, shallow breathing, physical and speech muscle tension, mumbling, high and unchanging pitch, inconsistent speaking pace, and non-functional pauses – negatively affect students' interpreting performance. Spoken-voice attributes such as voice projection, breathing skills, speaking clarity and modulation of pitch range were more effectively improved with explicit instruction. Moreover, unchanged attributes – including physical tension balancing, speech muscle tension, body movement, and resonance and timbre – may benefit from long-term intervention, delivered through either consistent spoken-voice training or conscious self-monitoring during interpreting assignments.

The findings also indicate that metacognitive instruction embedded in the spoken-voice intervention approach yields a highly positive outcome, with significant levels of improvement in the three intervention groups.

Based on the conclusions above, this study recommends incorporating metacognitive instruction into interpreter training. It is not only beneficial for students' speaking-voice skills, but may also enhance students' interpreting skills.

If you would like a list of references, any further information about this study, or a copy of Vera's full thesis, you can contact her by clicking [here](#)

Text complexity and its impact on the quality of translations in Australia

Project team leader: Professor Jan-Louis Kruger

Institution: Macquarie University in collaboration with All Graduates Interpreting & Translating

Samples from Text 1

Translators and language service providers know this: easier texts are easier to translate well.

Clients like government departments, however, do not always realise what impact text difficulty has on the quality of translations, particularly in minority languages where there is a shortage of qualified translators.

With this in mind, the Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University together with All Graduates Interpreting & Translating recently conducted a short study into whether translation quality and/or translator productivity are affected by the level of difficulty of the source text (with readability used as the measure of difficulty).

Translators from English into six languages (three translators per language from Arabic, Hakha Chin, Chinese, Spanish, Swahili and Vietnamese) were asked to translate three texts each, at three different readability levels.

To create the material for translation, three different texts were each modified to three readability levels (using established readability measures). Thus from Text 1 we created Group 1: texts 1A (difficult to read), 1B (moderate) and 1C (easy access); and from Texts 2 and 3 we created Groups 2 (texts 2A, 2B and 2C) and 3 (texts 3A, 3B and 3C) - see samples from Text 1 in the box at the top of the next column.

Each translator then translated three texts on three consecutive days – one from each group and one from each level. So, for example, Arabic translator #1 may have translated 1C on their first day, 2A on their second and 3B on

1A (difficult): The greatest inequities in access to cancer treatment exist for rural patients, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal ...

1B (moderate): Cancer patients who live in the country do not have equal access to medical treatment. Regional patients, like those in Aboriginal and non-English-speaking communities, and ...

1C (easy access): Not all cancer patients have equal access to treatment. It's a problem especially for those who live in the country, for Aboriginal and non-English-speaking communities, and for ...

their third, while Arabic translator #2 translated 3A, 1B and 2C, and Arabic translator #3 translated 3C, 2B and 1A.

Each translator recorded the time the task took, and also the cognitive task load they experienced. Their translations were then assessed by independent quality checkers.

There was a clear and statistically significant difference in translation quality between the three levels of readability, with high readability texts resulting in higher quality translations.

Translators also reported significantly lower cognitive task load when translating the high readability texts as compared to the low readability texts.

On these short texts, there was no significant difference in the time translators spent on the translations at the three levels, although on average the low readability texts took longer than the high readability texts to translate.

It is hoped that this preliminary evidence will be useful in convincing clients of the need to simplify texts before sending them for translation.

The final report of the study can be found [here](#)

THREE QUICK QUESTIONS

Language for movement: three quick questions for occupational therapist Tessa Armstrong

Tessa Armstrong has worked as an occupational therapist (OT) in public hospitals, both here in Australia and also in the UK. We asked her about how OTs make use of interpreter services.



The pegs in front of Tessa are used in stroke rehabilitation, to improve hand and finger strength. Patients clip them onto the metal bars across the container, or the metal pole attached to it, to practise reaching and grasping. The colours of the pegs indicate level of difficulty.

1. Do you ever ask an interpreter about cultural issues, to help you better understand a patient? If yes, do you do so with the patient present, or not?

As an OT I frequently complete cognitive assessments in conjunction with other information-gathering and functional assessments, to determine a patient's thinking skills and ability to live safely at home. In many instances the context of someone's language needs and culture can have an impact on how their assessment score is understood. Some assessments are very language based, so it's important that the cognitive assessment used is appropriate to be interpreted. The interpreter service is vital in ensuring that the assessment is interpreted without influence or coaching, so that it results in a true representation of the patient's cognitive function. Interpreters often provide very useful information regarding the relevance of assessment components to someone's cultural circumstances, and this guides us in scoring and interpreting the results of these assessments. I usually discuss these cultural issues with the patient present; however, if the assessment is specific to cognition, I speak with the interpreter

privately beforehand. This is because reviewing cognition can often be a sensitive topic for patients, and having that background from the interpreter prior to the assessment means the therapist and interpreter can conduct the assessment in a sensitive way that also meets the patient's needs from a cultural perspective.

2. Can you share an example in which use of an interpreter improved a patient's outcome?

Hospital environments can be overwhelming, and interpreters can greatly assist in providing familiarity. While working in England I had a Greek patient who was experiencing an acute episode of confusion (delirium) due to an infection. She'd lived in England for many years, but didn't speak any English. She was also blind, and these factors combined to create a very disorienting experience for the patient. It was very difficult for her to understand the context and what was going on around her, and this perpetuated her delirium. We organised for a Greek interpreter to attend at the same time each day, to complete a joint physiotherapy and OT session. With our facilitation, the interpreter would discuss recent events with the patient, and where she was and what

was happening, to assist her recovery from the delirium. After medical treatment and with this daily orientation intervention she recovered quickly: with therapeutic input she was able to return to walking and completing her personal hygiene independently, and therefore to living in her own home with assistance from community services.

3. Does the increasing use of telephone interpreting have a significant impact on your work?

In some instances, telephone interpreters can be very useful. In a hospital emergency department, for example, they can help health professionals gain information quickly, in order to inform both diagnosis and discharge planning. There are other instances however, particularly in physical assessments such as hand therapy, where telephone interpreting is less effective. In this type of therapy the patient needs to copy movements or actions that I demonstrate. Given that a telephone interpreter can't see what I'm doing, it's difficult for them to understand exactly what I'm asking the patient to do, and this impedes my ability to communicate effectively with the patient. For this reason, when physical assessments are required I would always prefer to use face-to-face interpreting if it's available.

Co-chair: National Conference OC

Photo: Jospheen (Jo) Maho

If you attended AUSIT's National Conference in Brisbane last month, you may have wondered how much work went into organising it. One of the co-chairs of the organising committee was Queensland-based translator and speech-to-text interpreter / live subtitler **Nancy Guevara**. In the run-up to the conference, *In Touch* piled just a little more on Nancy's plate by asking her to tell us about the role.

Hours per week: 10 to 15 • Voluntary? Yes • Time in this role: 8 months
AUSIT member for: 10+ years • Previous AUSIT roles: none

Q1. What drove you to get involved in organising a national conference?

I've attended the conference many times, and have always admired the determination and passion of those involved at the organisational level. So when I was asked if I wanted to join the organising committee (OC), I jumped at the opportunity to use my previous experience in project and events management (at Macquarie University, organising on-campus events) to make a positive contribution to AUSIT. Working remotely, I rarely have the opportunity to work in a team environment and interact regularly with colleagues, so this was a chance to connect with other AUSIT members and work together on a major project.

Q2. What were your main tasks as co-chair of the OC, and how was the workload distributed over time?

I was initially providing project management support, and became co-chair in around March. I was in charge of overseeing some of the biggest organisational tasks: sponsorships, plus collateral and project management. Apart from directly managing these tasks, I was in charge of tracking activities, communicating with key stakeholders, coordinating efforts with my co-chair, and assisting the rest of the team in the various

subcommittees. We worked tirelessly throughout the year. The workload was steady: there was always something to do, with milestones to be reached on a monthly basis. During the last few weeks the workload increased, with the sorting and organisation of the final details and logistics to be completed. The last few days were particularly intense: coordinating volunteers, supplies, venue arrangements, sponsors' booths, catering, final registrations, name tags, etc. ... lots and lots of details to oversee and little tasks to carry out. (I probably put in a lot more hours than expected because sometimes I get obsessed with details and want everything to be perfect.)

Q3. How many working parts are involved in the process?

Sponsorships (including developing a prospectus and taking care of collateral and exhibition booths); the program (including the call for papers and selection and preparation of the program); logistics (including venue, catering, transport and accommodation); registrations (including pricing, the registration process, lists and name tags); online streaming (including technical arrangements, RSI, live captioning, filming on site and broadcasting) and marketing and communications (including logo, website, PR, and communication with all stakeholders). Every single component comes with very specific requirements and challenges, and in my opinion it's very important to have a vision and some guiding principles to help bring all these parts together and facilitate decision making.

Q4. How did the team set yourselves up for success?

It wasn't easy – with little to go on, we had to do a lot from scratch. As a multicultural team with differing views and degrees of experience, we had to discuss, compromise, and sometimes vote if agreement couldn't be reached. We had our ups and downs, but what helped us succeed was our shared commitment and passion, our willingness to talk and seek consensus, our humility and solidarity, and most importantly our strong desire to make a positive contribution to AUSIT, its members, the profession and the industry as a whole. Crucially, we created subcommittees and divided tasks to ensure we covered all bases. We did encounter communication issues and other obstacles, but we managed to overcome them and come together as a team to solve problems. There were lots of things we could have done differently, but what we were able to achieve fills us with immense joy and satisfaction.

Q5. Any other comments?

Although the role is unpaid, the experience and knowledge I gained, the friendships I formed, the contribution I was able to make to the association, and the satisfaction of a job well done made it all worth it. Despite all the challenges, it was a great learning experience and I absolutely loved it!



MEMBER PROFILES



NAME:

Translator or interpreter (or both):

Language(s) and direction(s):

Location:

Practising as a T/I since:

Member of AUSIT since:

Main area(s) of practice:

MARIA LUCINDA JORGE

interpreter

English⇄Portuguese

Perth

2019

2022

mainly health care, plus education and community

DAVE DECK

currently translator only; formerly both

Indonesian, Malay>English; previously also English>Indonesian & interpreting Indonesian–English

Canberra since 2021; previously Melbourne

1993 (+ informally: from the mid-1980s onwards)

1995

now in (semi-)retirement, just small jobs – typically personal documents – for private clients

Q&A

Q1

How did you come to be a translator and/or interpreter?

Q2

Tell us about a project you have worked on that was especially interesting or challenging (within the bounds of confidentiality of course).

A1

The first five decades of my working life, first in Johannesburg and then here in Western Australia, were centred on the legal system: I spent some 18 years working for top legal firms in Johannesburg as a paralegal secretary, then moved to Perth where I did exactly the same type of work for another 32 years. However, I'm a native Portuguese (European) speaker, and although my work demanded that I be fluent in the English language, I've always spoken Portuguese at home and with most of my friends, and am frequently asked to interpret and translate – for family and friends, and also sometimes at work. When I ceased working in the legal industry in mid-2019, therefore, there was an almost automatic transition into interpreting. I find my new role exhilarating, and although it's sometimes very emotional, it's mostly very satisfying.

A2

Although impartiality is an ethical requirement, I feel it's also important to show empathy when people are suffering. I was interpreting in a local hospital, for a female patient who I'd never met before. As she was wheeled into the operating theatre, I wished her all the best and said that although my interpreting engagement was at an end, I would wait to see how she was once the medical procedure was over. Her gratitude for this gesture of care simply blew me away! I did worry whether this was an ethical breach, but I've checked with AUSIT's Ethics & Professional Practice Committee and they say that as I made it clear that I was switching roles, it was fine.

A1

By a somewhat roundabout route: having completed a BA majoring in Indonesian and Malayan studies in the late '60s, I joined the Royal Australian Air Force and did several stints as an Indonesian instructor at what is now the Defence Force School of Languages. One aim of the DFSL courses was to train personnel to a level (below NAATI professional level) where they could be effective as T/Is in Defence contexts. Before leaving the RAAF in 1993 I'd used my DFSL instructor experience to successfully sit NAATI accreditation tests as a translator and interpreter in Indonesian, and in fact was informed of my first interpreting job on my last day with the RAAF! About a decade later, I decided to add the Malay>English translator accreditation to my 'repertoire', and it now represents a significant percentage of my translation work.

A2

Two years ago I discovered that a Christian NGO I'd been supporting – inter alia, active in Indonesia – was looking for volunteers in several fields, one of which was translating reports from its Indonesian partners. The first such job entailed translating a 22,000-word report on a project trialling community-based rehabilitation of persons with psychosocial disabilities; I was later asked to transcribe and translate a 54-minute interview with one of the project's directors. Apart from the translation being required at a few days' notice (a challenge in itself!), the subject matter (psychosocial disabilities) was at once interesting and linguistically challenging.

