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The Noongar Moorditj Minang Jinna men's dance group, AIWA interpreters and Smoking Ceremony fire at AUSIT National Conference 2021 (see pages 4–5), photo: Catherine Pfammatter

Image: this page

Conference, Day 1 lunch, photo: Vida Jafary Ark

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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.

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Letter from the editors

In our last issue of 2021 we bring you:

- the second part of our feature on **identity, opportunity and cultural appropriation**
- the last parts of our features on **speech-to-text interpreting** and on **Auslan for performance**
- **AUSIT National Conference 2021**, and a related **AUSIT role** filled by a student member
- some **reading suggestions** for a relaxing summer
- and a variety of other T&I-related items.

Happy reading and happy summer!

Hayley and Helen



بڼه راغلاست! خوش آمدی!

Welcoming Afghan interpreters and their families

In May, as some of you will recall, AUSIT – along with a number of other organisations from the international language community – signed an open letter addressed to the Secretary General of NATO, asking him to encourage NATO members to provide urgent assistance to locally hired interpreters who had worked with NATO-led forces in Afghanistan and were facing grave risk as a result of the impending final withdrawal of troops ([read the letter here](#)).

We are pleased to report that, after much lobbying and a great deal of suffering, a number of these interpreters and family members have been assisted to resettle here in Australia.

AUSIT would like to welcome our Afghan colleagues into our professional association with the intention of aiding their adjustment to life in Australia. With this in mind, we are offering them free membership for the upcoming year.

We encourage any AUSIT members or stakeholders who know the whereabouts of any of the relocated interpreters to please pass on this message, or put us in contact, so that we can officially extend this offer and give our colleagues and their families a warm welcome to Australia.

AUSIT National Council, contact us [here](#)

Contributions welcome

To make a submission:

- 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

NAGM 2021

At the **National Annual General Meeting** on 27 November reports were delivered and accepted, and a new National Council was formed:

National President: Erika Gonzalez

Vice-Presidents:

Despina Amanatidou (Events & PD)

Vesna Cvjetanin (Communications & PR)

Saeed Khosravi (Ethics & Professional Practice)

Secretary: Miranda Lai

Treasurer: Han Xu

Immediate Past President: Sandra Hale

News in brief

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

As the situation for locally hired Afghan staff – including interpreters – and their families descended into total chaos and misery, the world watched on. See:
[1](#) / [2](#) / [3](#) / [4](#) / [5](#) / [6](#) / [7](#) / [8](#)

31 Jul: [Si, Oui, Hai: Interpreting joy and heartbreak at Tokyo Games](#)

The Tokyo Olympics/Paralympics interpreting team, with a focus on its polyglot chief, Alexandre Ponomarev. [usnews.com](#)

5 Aug: [Mike Webb, Qld Auslan interpreter ... in quarantine after Covid-19 exposure](#)

The high-profile practitioner's situation highlights the risks posed by face-to-face work during a global pandemic. [news.com.au](#)

19 Aug: [Elderly translator helping COVID-19 messaging get out in NSW](#)

An 83-year-old Assyrian and Arabic speaker volunteering in Sydney's 'LGAS of Concern' just wants 'to help his community and to keep the Assyrian language alive'. [9news.com.au](#)

1 Sep: [Lack of non-English languages in STEM publications hurts diversity](#)

US graduate students call for government to improve scientific communication around the world by widening linguistic diversity in STEM publications. [miragenews.com](#)

10 Sep: [Greater diversity needed in ... sign language translation and interpreting ...](#)

The Association of Sign Language Interpreters (UK) urges people from diverse backgrounds to enter the profession, to improve access for 'diverse deaf communities'. [phys.org](#)

16 Sep: [Lorde's Te Ao Mārama 'resonating globally', Māori translator says](#)

Translator Hana Mereraiha is excited to be helping te reo Māori reach 'new territories, ... lands, ... dimensions even'. [1news.co.nz](#)

20 Sep: ['Denied a voice': how Australia fails migrant victims of domestic violence](#)

'The same cultural and language barriers that make migrants vulnerable hinder their ability to seek justice.' [theguardian.com](#)

20 Sep: [Acclaimed author Jhumpa Lahiri's book on translation to come out next May](#)

Lahiri's upcoming book 'will highlight her work as a translator.' [thestar.com.my](#)

27 Sep: [How To Become A Translator](#)

Interviews with three freelancers cover their education, how they get work, and how they approach their translations. [forbes.com](#)

30 Sep: [Putin accused of using attractive translator to 'distract' Trump at meeting](#)

... according to US officials. [news.com.au](#)

30 Sep: [Evaristo and Faulks among writers calling for translator cover credits](#)

Bestselling authors urge colleagues to ask their publishers to put translators' names on book covers. [thebookseller.com](#)

1 Oct: [The ones in control: why translators deserve a better deal](#)

A look at the often invisible work of translators, their importance as 'the ones who control the way a story is told', and the most translated books in the world. [smh.com.au/books](#)

7 Oct: [Netflix's 'Squid Game': Actors, translator weigh in on subtitle debate](#)



Squid Game star Lee Jung-jae, photo: Elle Taiwan, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Critics claim the translations from Korean for subtitles 'have watered down the cultural significance of the show'. [foxnews.com](#)

8 Oct: [Interpreter services helped in Amber Alert 911 call](#)

An interpreter helps find a car stolen with a baby inside. [newschannel5.com](#)

20 Oct: [As an interpreter, I do so much more than translating](#)

An interpreter gives a vivid description of interpreting in an emotionally charged situation while still at school, and discusses aspects of her chosen career. [sbs.com.au](#)

26 Oct: [Why Technology Will Not Replace Professional Translators](#)

An international translation service's CEO puts forward a convincing argument. [forbes.com](#)

4 Nov: [Is Essential Patient Information Lost in Translation?](#)

A doctor in a US children's hospital sees consistent assessment for interpreter needs as essential. [medpagetoday.com](#)

11 Nov: [The Rise Of Translators And Interpreters In The Gig Economy](#)

The demand for language professionals, including T/Is, 'has increased exponentially with advances in technology'. [forbes.com](#)

AUSIT National Conference 2021

19–20 November, Rendezvous Hotel, Scarborough Beach, Perth, on Whadjuk Noongar country

Around 70 registered attendees flocked to Perth and another 140 logged on for AUSIT's two-day annual National Conference and related events. **Isabel von Prollius** (vice-chair of the event's Organising Committee) and **Sophia Ra** (a member of *In Touch's* Editorial Committee and an online attendee) give an overview of AUSIT's first ever hybrid conference here.

DAY 1

The Conference commenced on a warm Friday morning on the beach, with a Welcome to Country and a Smoking Ceremony, plus traditional men's and women's dances organised by and featuring members of Aboriginal Interpreting WA (AIWA).

The event was then formally opened via Zoom by AUSIT's National President Erika Gonzalez, with a speech that acknowledged all attendees, domestic and international, and thanked the Organising Committee for all their hard work on this hybrid experience.

The weekend's program of presentations and workshops revolved around the role of interpreters and translators in connecting different worlds and helping people move between them. Sessions were divided into three streams: translation and technology, interpreting and skills, and shaping the T&I profession.

Keynote speakers

Journalist, literary translator and public service interpreter **Anna Aslanyan** grew up in Moscow, lives in London, and says she 'feels most at home in books'. In her presentation 'When Words are Not Enough' Anna addressed how translators and interpreters not only communicate with words, but act as cultural mediators. She presented many examples involving the use of T&I services by well-known historical figures.

Nina Sattler-Hovdar has three decades of experience in translation and transcreation. In her plenary session 'Transcreation: Taking Words into Another World', Nina introduced the concept of transcreation (a combination of translation and copywriting). She explained the challenges and the purpose of the discipline very clearly, and with some of her illustrations she had the room laughing out loud.

Cindy Kennedy is a professional speaker known to wow audiences with her powerful storytelling. In her workshop 'The Language of Wellbeing',



Cindy got us all off our seats to work together. Her aim is to help small business owners build sustainable foundations of wellbeing, connection and service for both their businesses and their lives. Many attendees left saying they could, and would, implement Cindy's suggestions and ideas in both their work and their personal lives.

Some of Friday's sessions

Heather McCrae, presenting on 'How to become a Technical Translator', was very engaging. She shared a wealth of information and practical tips on how to get into this field, find reference materials, and keep up to date with technical developments. Her passion for her work really shone through.

Han Xu's session on 'Initiating effective coordination in Interpreted Lawyer–Client Interviews' examined the perspectives of lawyers and interpreters, eliciting reflection on the differences between initiating effective coordination and interfering in conversations – for example by summarising, advocating, or excluding one party from side conversations by not interpreting them. (Side conversations that are not interpreted were also addressed by presenters Sophia Ra and Vesna Cvjeticanin.)

Gala Dinner and members recognised

To round off the first day, 50 delegates joined the Organising Committee for sunset drinks on the hotel deck overlooking the Indian Ocean, followed by the Gala Dinner.

During dinner, two WA members were officially recognised for their long-term commitment to AUSIT: former national treasurer **Diana Rodriguez-Losada**, and **Michele Dreyfus**, a Branch Committee member for 15+ years, many of them as treasurer. The Organising Committee also thanked Chair Catherine Nicholson Pfammatter for her tireless work.

Many of us stayed at the hotel and made the most of the evening, then met again in a local cafe for breakfast before Day 2 commenced.



'Words travel worlds; translators do the driving.'



Above: the Gala Dinner; left: the Noongar Moorditj Minang Jinna men's dance group and AIWA interpreters, with Organising Committee members and attendees around the Smoking Ceremony fire

Below left, from left: Sally Wals, AUSIT member Patricia Will, Heather Glass (Professionals Australia and Babel International College), Catherine Pfammatter, AIWA CEO Deanne Lightfoot, Diana Rodriguez-Losada

DAY 2

Some of Saturday's sessions

Avril Janks's presentation 'Smiling Face language: Emojis in texts for translation' struck a chord with those of us who have faced the dilemma of translating texts peppered with them. She covered the origin of emojis, where to find official descriptions, and how they can be misinterpreted, and used differently in different cultures. She really got us talking, comparing emojis on various devices and discussing what some of them mean, how they may not be used in other languages, and so on.

Joel Snyder's presentation 'Audio Description: If Your Eyes Could Speak' introduced us to the intricacies of this discipline, which caters to people with no or low vision. He used clips of the Iranian movie *The Color of Paradise* – first without the visuals, then with audio description but no visuals, and lastly with the visuals – to demonstrate how audio description provides not just captioning but also emotional cues, with a focus on the senses.

New RSI initiative

One of the event's sponsors, Congress Rental, provided their remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI) platform Congress Remote, plus expertise, to facilitate RSI by CI (conference interpreting) students. The Zoom chat box showed attendees to be very impressed with their performances.

Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture 2021

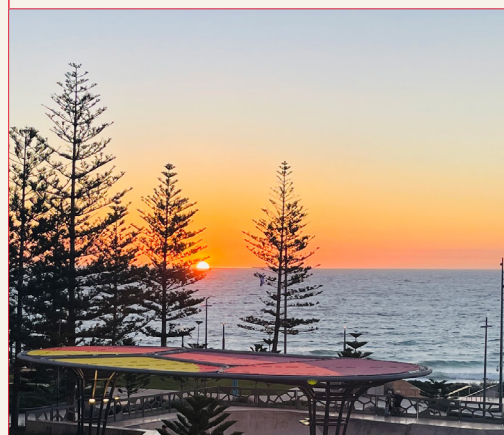
The 2021 JBML was given by **The Hon. Dr Tony Buti**, WA Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests. Dr Buti addressed key aspects of living with languages in a multicultural society. He underlined the increased visibility T&I services have gained during the pandemic, the need for governments to work with linguistically diverse communities to improve communication lines, and the importance of language equity in accessing public information and concluded: 'Words travel worlds; translators do the driving'.

The Conference's closing lunch overlooking the Indian Ocean gave in-person attendees the opportunity to debrief on the weekend's sessions, compare notes on what we were taking away with us, and swap contact details before setting off back towards our daily lives.

Reflections

Isabel: *I stayed at the hotel (even though I live nearby) so I could really immerse myself in the Conference, get a good night's sleep away from my three kids, and have a few drinks with colleagues. I particularly enjoyed Avril Janks's session. I'd often wondered why there was an emoji of an exploding head, and fortunately a colleague at my table solved the mystery – it means 'mind blown'!*

Sophia (attended online): *I got to enjoy the Conference at home, in my track pants. There were some frustrating technical glitches, but on the other hand all sessions were recorded and will be available to attendees. The new initiative of RSI by student interpreters was absolutely fantastic for both attendees and the students involved. I did miss having face-to-face chats with other attendees during tea breaks and lunchtime; but with that said, the hybrid experience was liberating, kind of strange, but enjoyable!*



Day 1: sunset over Scarborough Beach (all photos by the Organising Committee)

Thank you for making it happen!

On behalf of all attendees, a huge 'Thank you!' to the **Organising Committee: Catherine N. Pfammatter (chair), Isabel von Prollius (vice-chair), Elisa Michelini, Nora Pucci, Sally Wals, Mary Street, Vida Jafari Ark, Aida Oye Gomez, Kamran Afshar and Nasrin Alkhani.**

The **OC**, in turn, extends its thanks to: **Sam Berner**, who provided wise counsel along with spades of technical and moral support as the conference deadlines drew near; **Despina Amanatidou** and **Amy Wang** for their roles in establishing the conference program; **Rebeca Paredes Nieto**, who steered the Education Committee's RSI project and provided invaluable technical support during the conference; **Natasha Brown**, who – assisted by **Aida Oye Gomez** – managed the WA Branch's Young Translator of the Year competition while the rest of the Branch Committee focused on the Conference; and our four can-do student volunteers – see also page 22.

Translating and performing lyrics: Auslan for songs

[Click here to watch an Auslan version of this article](#)



Following up on their article on the intricacies of Auslan interpreting for theatre in our Autumn 2021 issue,* **Linda Beales** (left) and **Christy Filipich** give us another fascinating insiders' view – this time, into Auslan interpreting for singing.

How would you translate ... 'Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious' into any other language?

Music often finds its way into Auslan interpreting assignments.

While some – such as live concerts and musical theatre – will obviously involve music, many others – graduation ceremonies, weddings, school assemblies and so on – feature a song or two; and of course the national anthem is likely to be played at many events.

So, how do we interpret an auditory experience into a visual one? As with all T&I-related questions: it depends.

For the purposes of this article we're assuming we know ahead of time that there will be a song (or two) to sign, but it's not unusual for this information to be missing from the job booking or preparation materials. And we'll use the term 'translation' along with this assumption of time to prepare, although – as with signing for theatre – an element of interpreting always comes into the live performance of the translation.

The first thing we do is find out the name of the song and the artist. Next, whether it will be played from a recording or sung live; and if the latter, by a solo vocalist (to a backing track or a live band) or a choir ... all factors that will impact the quality of the audio we'll be

listening to on stage. If possible we identify the exact track, to ensure we're rehearsing to the right materials – there's nothing worse than perfecting 'Somebody to Love' by Queen, only to realise during the opening bars that it's Justin Bieber's (totally different) song of the same name!

OK, we have the exact recording and lyrics that will be used. Now, we need to consider the event and the audience: a bunch of four-year-olds at a Wiggles concert, or a music festival (if so, what genre?); a heartfelt rendition of a couple's favourite song at their wedding, or a solemn occasion with grieving family members. Knowing this will affect the translation choices we make.

The translation process is similar to that used in interpreting for theatre, with the additional challenge that very few songs are in plain English. Most are full of figurative language, metaphor and repetition, so one of the many choices we make is how closely to follow the English, and whether a 'free translation' that focuses on meaning is preferable. The context of the song and the audience are paramount. In a mixed cohort where people may be singing and signing at the same time – such as a school assembly – staying close to the English may be the best choice; however, many songs

simply don't make sense if signed literally, much as they wouldn't if translated literally into any spoken language.

What if the words aren't in English, or are nonsense? How would you translate the *Mary Poppins* song 'Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious' into any other language?

One of the authors had to tackle this very challenge when the musical came to her town. She considered a few options: making up a 'nonsense' sign; signing each part of the word; or fingerspelling (spelling it out letter by letter on the hand).

This is where the context of the song came into play: although the word is nonsense, Deaf audiences would be aware of it from watching the popular 1964 Disney film (with captions) or reading the books by PL Travers. With no way of introducing it ahead of time, Deaf audiences might not recognise a made-up sign as the translation for that word; and signing a sequence of words such as 'super – California – fragile ...' would just be confusing. So in this instance, she decided to fingerspell the word ... but imagine keeping up with the speed at which it's sung! Weeks of rehearsal were required.

Auslan has no written form. When working on a translation, we need a way to capture it so we can repeat and improve upon it, so many

Below: Linda rehearsing to sign during the Australian national anthem at the State of Origin Game II (QLD Maroons v NSW Blues), Optus Stadium, Perth in June

Where did the guitar come from?!

Auslan interpreters will use a gloss: a way of using English words and symbols to capture a visual-gestural language. Most of us work from a basic system which we tweak according to individual preferences, similar to a shorthand you may use when note-taking. For example, the first three lines of 'Lonely Room' from the musical *Oklahoma* might look something like this (DS is short for 'depicting sign', a dynamic use of handshapes and movement to depict objects and actions):

The floor creaks – FLOOR DS:uneven-floor
The door squeaks – DOOR DS:door-off-hinges
There's a fieldmouse a-nibblin' on a broom – MOUSE DS:run-across-room*

* *This alternative rhyme was a translation choice, due to the time required to do one rather than the other and the time available in the actual song.*

While a gloss is useful, filming yourself and watching back is another important part of the translation process; and having a second set of eyes in the form of a Deaf Consultant is vital. When we sign a song, we hear the music and know the words; even if we turn down the sound to watch our own translation, we don't experience it as a Deaf person would, which makes their feedback and input invaluable.

We now have the English words translated to Auslan signs, but we also need to convey the rhythm, beat and genre of the song. This can change a beautifully crafted translation: performing it at the speed of a rap song will differ greatly from the slow, stretched-out delivery of a power ballad. Our posture and expression will shift to portray the characteristics expected of someone performing in a particular genre, and our production will be snappy and fast or slow and elongated, to match the rhythm.

One unique challenge of interpreting songs for audiences that can't hear them is the nonverbal passages. Most songs don't have lyrics throughout; there's usually a musical intro and an ending 'outro', plus – depending on the genre – a variety of interludes that break up the lyrics (pre-chorus, bridge, guitar solo and so on). Once again, the context is key.

An intro can be used to inform the Deaf audience of the name of the song, the artist and why it's being played. For example, 'This song is "Stairway to Heaven" by Led Zeppelin, it was the deceased's favourite song.'

It can also be used to 'set up' the song, by signing a description of the setting or introducing characters – for example, 'There's a castle on a hill, a war is being fought below, and a soldier is walking slowly up the hill' for 'The Queen and the Soldier' by Suzanne Vega.

Any instrumental section or solo in a live band performance can be used to direct attention to the band or individual members.

When choosing whether to mime instruments, it's important to consider how it would fit with the rest of the translation. For example, does miming a guitar solo make sense while signing a sad ballad in first person?

I know there'll be no more tears in heaven ...
DS:playing-guitar, DS:playing-guitar

'Where did the guitar come from?! Are you playing it in heaven?' Feedback by a Deaf Consultant can ensure that the song maintains a cohesive story.

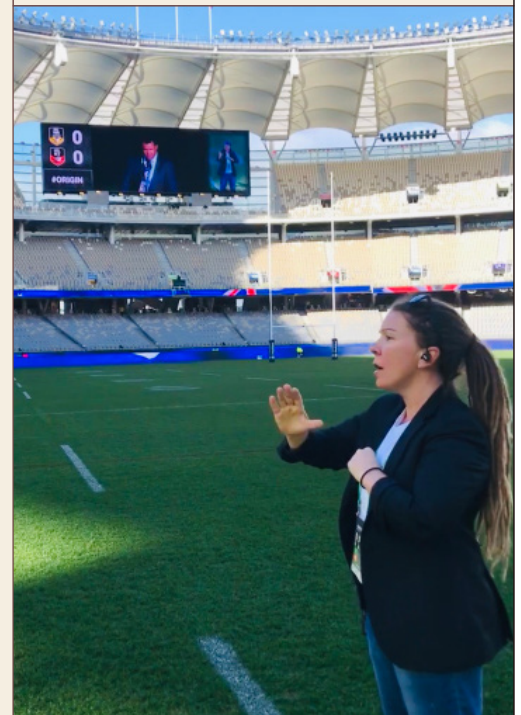
The translation process is rarely linear; these steps occur back and forth or at the same time, for as long as is required to perfect the translation ... after which we have to rehearse, repeating the finished translation in time with the song, again and again and again.

However, once it's showtime ... all bets are off! Anything can happen on the night: the live band performs faster or slower than expected; the vocalist ad libs, or forgets the words; or the choir sound great, but it's hard to distinguish individual words.

Most importantly, the vibe – the general overall feel of the combination of performers and audience – has a *huge* impact on what happens on stage. When we have no Deaf live audience, or a different demographic than expected, it can be hard to perform with the appropriate passion. For example, a Wiggles concert at which we expect to be signing to excitable Deaf four-year-olds turns out to be

for Deaf grandparents. With our audience sitting sedately in their seats wondering what Rosie the Dinosaur is all about, our translations – incorporating dance moves – of the silly songs can feel jarring.

Just like theatre, this is where the interpreting part comes in: we still need to be on our toes and ready for anything that may come up!



Linda Beales has worked in secondary and tertiary educational settings, won the ASLLA (WA) Interpreter of the Year (Education – Secondary) award in 2006, and is currently studying for a graduate diploma in Auslan–English interpreting.*

Christy Filipich has two decades of experience across a wide range of fields. She holds master's degrees in T&I and in disability (specialisation: sensory disability) studies, runs workshops and trains interpreters, and has interpreted for theatre groups and companies of all shapes and sizes.*

* For fuller bios see our [April 2021 issue](#), page 9.

Read a recent ABC article on 'the art of signing at music festivals' – including the challenges posed by interpreting sexually explicit material such as the 2020 hit song 'WAP' by Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion – [here](#).

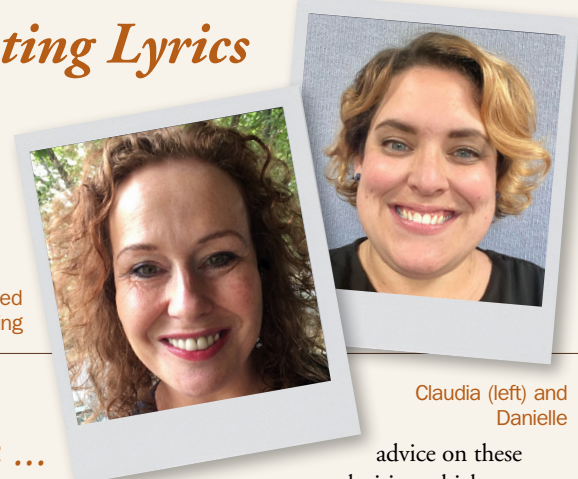
See the book review overleaf for more on this topic.

Translating for Singing: *The Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics*

by Ronnie Apter and Mark Herman

reviewed by Claudia Schneider (spoken word) and
Danielle Pritchard (Auslan)

Cover reproduced
courtesy of Bloomsbury Publishing



Claudia (left) and
Danielle

This practical guide is written by two talented and experienced practitioners who have been co-translating operas since 1978, as well as poetry and children's books.

Ronnie Apter is a poet, a translator of both poetry and opera, and an associate professor of English, while Mark Herman is a literary and technical translator, a playwright, lyricist, musician and actor, and a chemical engineer.

Translating for Singing can be described in one word: comprehensive. The content is thoroughly researched and backed by translation theory, providing analyses of historical and contemporary translations; and the fact that both authors have

... nuanced advice on ... complexities which are unique to the creation of singable translations.

performance experience gives an additional layer of authority in the latter chapters.

Within each sub-chapter the authors provide historical quotes and context – as well as lived examples from their extensive translating experience – to reinforce what is being explained. The thorough inclusion of quotes throughout can sometimes affect readability, but doesn't detract from the abundance and value of the knowledge being shared.

The chapters include discussion on translation and music, singable translations, adaptation and re-translation, censorship and taboos, verbal delineation of character, verbal and musical form, music and meaning, and more.

The section beginning with foreignisation and domestication is a particularly rich practical resource, including information on translating foreign words, rhyme, repetition, nonsense words, slang and jokes.

The many examples given, both historical and contemporary, allow the reader to understand the musical and verbal constraints of the translation process. These examples include musical and translation samples, providing both literal and singable translations of each text. Apter and Herman provide nuanced

advice on these complexities, which are unique to the creation of singable translations.

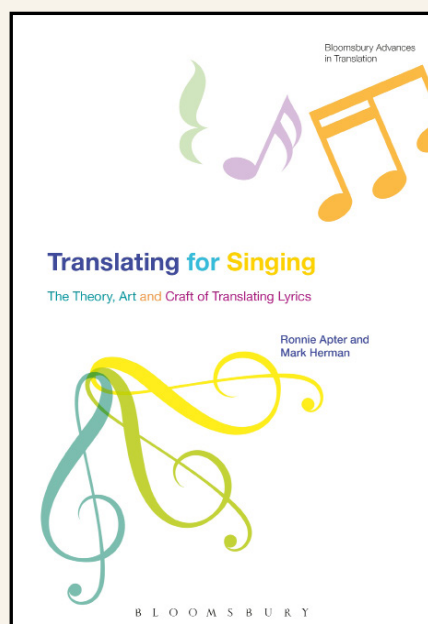
While the focus is mainly on lyrics, music and singing, there is a lot of useful information that is relevant to sign language interpreting and translation. The history of the relationship between literal and singable translation brings to mind the theory of dynamic equivalence, and highlights the challenges the translation process entails, no matter the medium.

For anyone who aspires to translate song, or poetry for that matter, this comprehensively researched guide will be a valuable addition to your book collection, while the sizeable bibliography is a great jumping-off point for seeking further useful resources.

The authors end with a plea for more and better translations of performances into English. Their book will, we feel, have translators reaching for it time and time again, and help us attain that goal.

Claudia Schneider is a freelance translator and subtitler. She holds a master's degree in T&I studies from Monash University, and an advanced diploma in music performance from Victoria University. In her spare time Claudia plays the double bass and sings.

Dani Pritchard holds a graduate diploma in Auslan–English interpreting from Macquarie University. She has over ten years of experience in Auslan–English interpreting and translating across various domains, including for stage work of all kinds, and particularly enjoys the challenge of interpreting live comedy and children's theatre.



Exciting opportunity ... or logistical exercise?

Few of us have been able to negotiate the last two years without having to cancel or change plans – especially those involving travel. Melbourne-based Swahili–English interpreter **Dorothy Prentice** kept a level head as an exciting assignment developed into a logistical exercise.



My saga, which is somewhat amusing, begins with an unexpected email.

20 May:

The email says, ‘The Supreme Court of Tasmania requires the services of a NAATI-qualified Tanzanian Swahili interpreter from 19 July to 3 August 2021.’

‘*Kumbe!*’ (Swahili for ‘Wow!’) – this is only the second time in my 12-year career that I’ve been asked to travel interstate for an interpreting job. I’d love to take it up but I have to decline, as I’m already booked for a conference in Sydney from 19 to 22 July. (You’re probably getting an idea of what’s going to happen!)

29 June:

The Sydney conference is cancelled due to (guess what!) COVID. If only I could have known, I could have taken up the Hobart assignment!

6 July:

Another email asks again if I’m available for the Tasmanian trial. ‘*Kumbe!*’ again – I guess the Sydney hotspot has also rendered the interpreter they’d lined up in the meantime unavailable.

Feeling humbled, excited and apprehensive, I email my availability, then reach out to more experienced colleagues for help with pricing (court appearance, travel, accommodation, per diems, etc.), and emails fly back and forth with them (thank you so much!) and with the court.

I book the flight with some trepidation ...

8 July:

My services are formally requested. I work on a cost assessment, send it to the court, and plan to fly early on 19 July, ready for the directions hearing that afternoon. I book the flight with some trepidation because of the possibility of COVID wrecking the plans ... wait for it ... !!

15 July:

With COVID again raising its infective head in Melbourne and the threat of a lockdown (how to translate *that* into LOTE?!), I contact the court and ask if they think I should come sooner. They’re keen, so I go ahead and book a flight (another one) for that afternoon.

I pack rapidly – including my two dictionaries, glossary, notepad, headphones, swanky clothes (you have to look professional in court don’t you?), my NAATI lanyard, and of course my trusty copy of *Recommended National Standards for Working with Interpreters in Courts and Tribunals* (RNS) – and head for the airport ...

Just in time! While I’m checking in, Victoria announces that a lockdown will start that evening, then Tasmania locks Victorians out from midnight – so I breathe a sigh of relief when I actually touch down in Hobart.

I’m required to fill in a permit before leaving

the airport, and can declare that I haven’t visited any of the exposure sites known at this point.

I contact the court personnel on arrival in Hobart, and they’re very grateful that I’ve made the effort to travel early.

So, I’m in Hobart, mask free, everything free, and I start to enjoy myself (despite being a bit lonely). However, the saga doesn’t end here!

16 July:

An SMS from the Tasmanian Government returns me to restricted movement and masking up, as I’ve been in Victoria since 8 July.

I set out to try to get my second AstraZeneca jab, as I’m missing my 12-week booking while I’m away ... but no luck. The two GP practices I try are far from welcoming once they know I’m from Victoria – ‘Don’t come in!’ ‘Go away!’

Then when I try to get a test, just in case, I can’t get a booking anywhere.

(I don’t want to sound unkind about Tasmania – I realise they’ve been free of COVID for a long time, and want to keep it that way.)

On the other hand, a visit to the Supreme Court building is most welcoming, with the court staff bending over backwards to make sure that when I start interpreting I’ll have all that’s necessary to facilitate the process. They

continued on page 14, column 3

Some summer reading



For many of us the last two years have felt like two decades, yet at the same time flown by with little time to rest ... so we're hoping all our readers will be able to take some time off over summer to relax, refresh and recharge. With this in mind, our **Editorial Committee** has drawn up a list of T&I-related summer reading. Titles included range from captivating memoirs and witty, wise essays to mind-bending language puzzles, and from page-turning fiction to fascinating historical overviews.

image: Creative Family/Shutterstock.com

Irreverent, humane, witty and wise ... complex and captivating ... elegant prose ... a profound tale ... deeply moving and mesmerising ... painful family secrets ...



Fifty Sounds (2021) by Polly Barton – winner of the 2019 Fitzcarraldo Editions Essay Prize

Literary translator Polly Barton attempts to exhaust her obsession with the country she moved to at the age of 21. From *min-min*, the sound of air screaming, to *jīn-jīn*, the sound of being touched for the very first time, from *hi'sori*, the sound of harbouring masochist tendencies, to *mote-mote*, the sound of becoming a small-town movie star, *Fifty Sounds* is a personal dictionary of the Japanese language, recounting her life as an outsider in Japan. Irreverent, humane, witty and wise ... an exceptional debut about the quietly revolutionary act of learning, speaking, and living in another language.



Intimacies: a novel (2021) by Katie Kitamura

A taut and electrifying story about a woman caught between many truths. An interpreter has come to The Hague to escape New York and work at the International Court. A woman of many languages and identities, she is looking for a place to finally call home. Drawn into simmering personal dramas, she confronts power, love

and violence, both in her personal intimacies and in her work at the Court. She is soon pushed to the precipice, where betrayal and heartbreak threaten to overwhelm her, forcing her to decide what she wants from her life.



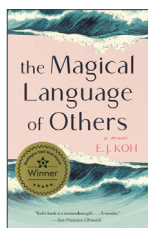
The Godmother (2019) by Hannelore Cayre, translated from the French by Stephanie Smee (original published 2017) – winner of the CWA Crime Fiction in Translation Dagger award and (in French) the European Crime Fiction Prize and Grand Prix de Littérature Policière

After her husband's sudden death, an underpaid translator who specialises in police phone taps is wedged between the costs of raising her daughters and her ageing mother's nursing home fees. Happening upon an especially revealing set of wiretaps, she makes a life-altering decision ... and embarks on an entirely new career path as 'the Godmother'. With a gallery of drug traffickers, dealers, police officers and politicians more real than life itself, and an unforgettable woman at its centre, this bestselling novel casts a piercing and darkly humorous gaze on everyday survival in contemporary France.



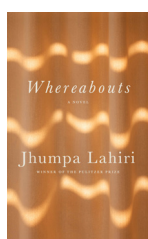
***The Kimono Tattoo* (2021) by Rebecca Copeland**

'I jostled her shoulder and noticed that her skin was cold to the touch ... her entire torso was covered in tattoos from her collar bone to the midline of her thighs ... of kimono motifs – fans, incense burners, peonies and scrolls.' This ghastly scene was the last thing Ruth Bennett expected to encounter when she agreed to translate a novel by a long-forgotten Japanese writer. *The Kimono Tattoo* takes readers on a journey into Kyoto's intricate world of kimono design. As Ruth struggles to unravel the cryptic message hidden in the kimono tattoo, she is forced to confront a vicious killer along with her own painful family secrets.



***The Magical Language of Others* (2020) by EJ Koh – winner of the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award**

A powerful and aching love story in letters. After living in America for over a decade, Eun Ji Koh's parents return to South Korea for work, leaving 15-year-old Eun Ji and her brother behind. Overnight, Eun Ji finds herself abandoned in a world made strange by her mother's absence. Her mother writes letters in Korean, seeking forgiveness and love – letters Eun Ji cannot fully understand until years later. A profound tale of hard-won selfhood and our deep bonds to family, place, and language, introducing in Eun Ji Koh a singular, incandescent voice.



***Whereabouts* (2021) by Jhumpa Lahiri, self-translated from the Italian (original published 2018)**

A haunting portrait of a woman, her decisions, her conversations, her solitariness, in a beautiful and lonely Italian city. A rare work of fiction, *Whereabouts* brims with the impulse to cross barriers. By grafting herself onto a new literary language, Lahiri has pushed herself to a new level of artistic achievement. A dazzling evocation of a city, it captures a woman standing on one of life's thresholds, reflecting on what has been lost and facing, with equal hope and rage, what may lie ahead.

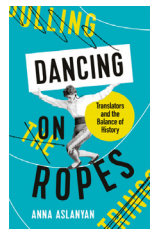


***Languages in the Crossfire: Interpreters in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939)* (2021) by Jesús Baigorri-Jalón, translated from the Spanish by Holly Mikkelsen (original published 2019)**

Drawing on archives, interpreters' memoirs and their own children's testimonies, this book sheds light on the important role played by interpreters during the Spanish Civil War. It offers a historical overview of the ways in which interpreters on both sides mediated the myriad linguistic, cultural and ethical difficulties of wartime communication to facilitate dialogue across a range of settings, including combat, hospitals, interrogations, detention camps and propaganda.



***Dancing on Ropes: Translators and the Balance of History* (2021) by Anna Aslanyan**

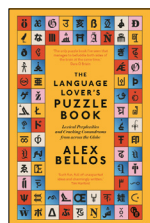


Would Hiroshima have been bombed if Japanese contained a phrase meaning 'no comment'? Who, or what, is Kuzma's mother, and why was Nikita Khrushchev so threateningly obsessed with her (or it)? Join veteran translator Anna Aslanyan to explore hidden histories of cunning and ambition, heroism and incompetence. Meet the figures behind the notable events of history, from the Great Game to Brexit, and discover just how far a simple misunderstanding can go.



***Anne's Cradle: The Life and Works of Hanako Muraoka, Japanese Translator of Anne of Green Gables* (2021) by Eri Muraoka, translated from the Japanese by Cathy Hirano (original published 2014)**

Muraoka's Japanese translation of LM Montgomery's beloved children's classic was the catalyst for the book's massive and enduring popularity in Japan. This bestselling biography, written by Muraoka's granddaughter, tells the complex and captivating story of a woman who risked her freedom and devoted her life to bringing quality children's literature to her people during a period of tumultuous change in Japan.



***The Language Lover's Puzzle Book: Lexical perplexities and cracking conundrums from across the globe* (2021) by Alex Bellos**

A fascinating, hugely entertaining collection of puzzles for crossword addicts and language lovers of all stripes that celebrates the amazing diversity of the world of words and language. Featuring a huge variety of ancient, modern and even invented languages, it will introduce you to unusual alphabets and scripts, curious vocabularies and phonologies, and global variations in simple behaviours like counting, telling the time, and naming children. Whether you are a crossword solver, a code breaker or a Scrabble addict, these puzzles are guaranteed to twist your tongue and sharpen your mind.



***Homesick: a memoir* (2019) by Jennifer Croft**

The coming-of-age story of an award-winning translator, *Homesick* is about learning to love language in its many forms, healing through words, and the promises and perils of empathy and sisterhood. Amy and Zoe grow up in Oklahoma. Zoe suffers from debilitating and mysterious seizures; meanwhile Amy flourishes intellectually, showing an innate ability to glean a world beyond the troubles in her home life, and exploring that world through languages first. Amy's first love appears in the form of her Russian tutor Sasha, but when she enters university at the age of 15 her life changes drastically and with tragic results.

‘I’m an activist, not a translator’: Tofighian on translating Boochani

In early 2019, Behrouz Boochani’s book *No Friend But the Mountains* won both the Victorian Premier’s Prize for Nonfiction and the Victorian Prize for Literature. Boochani had smuggled the text – in chunks as it was written, via text messages – out of one of Australia’s notorious offshore immigration detention facilities. Intrigued, *In Touch* emailed Boochani’s Sydney-based translator Omid Tofighian to request an interview. The book shot straight into the bestseller lists, Omid’s inbox must have been overflowing, and no interview came about; but earlier this year, mulling over content for this identity-related feature, Editorial Committee member Jen Plaistowe reached out again.

Omid (right) and Jen (far right)



As discussed in the previous issue of *In Touch*, the call for diversification of the literary translation industry is gaining momentum.

We’re beginning to realise that the identity of the translator *does* matter; and that to ensure messages and stories from different cultures are transmitted effectively, we need to actively seek out and employ a range of voices and perspectives.

In mid-July I was lucky enough to chat with Omid Tofighian, an Iranian–Australian academic, writer and activist who strives to reveal aspects of Australia’s coloniality that many of us prefer not to acknowledge.

Omid is best known for translating and co-creating *No Friend But the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison* with Boochani, a Kurdish–Iranian journalist, writer and cultural advocate who fled Iran in 2013 and travelled to Australia by boat from Indonesia seeking protection.

Held in the Australian-run Manus Island Detention Centre (officially called Manus Regional Processing Centre), Papua New Guinea from 2013 until its closure in 2017,* Boochani used hidden mobiles to report – via

text and voice messages – from inside what he refers to as Manus Prison.

He used WhatsApp to send his book, in chunks written in Farsi, to activists based in Australia. His first translator – Moones Mansoubi, a community arts and cultural development worker – compiled most of the messages into chapters and sent each on to Omid as a PDF. Omid and Boochani then carried out the translation and editing process together via text and voice messages.

Boochani layers his personal observations and experiences with political satire, philosophy, poetry, humour, psychoanalytic critique, and Kurdish and Iranian storytelling traditions, taking the book far beyond simple memoir or autobiography.

Instead he creates a work of ‘horrific surrealism’ (a term coined by Omid) which challenges the reader to engage – both emotionally and intellectually – with Australia’s colonial character and its systemic, institutionalised abuses of people seeking asylum.

Although Omid was one of the activists who translated, edited and reworked Boochani’s messages, he told me he wasn’t a translator. This intrigued me and, rather than encouraging him to embrace the label and join the club, I asked him to explain his reasoning.

I actually think I was in a stronger position because I wasn’t a translator.

Jen: You translated a book’s worth of text, and won numerous literary awards. Why do you still not self-identify as a translator?

Omid: I’m an activist and academic, not a translator, because rather than having an interest in language itself, I see my languages as tools with which to uncover injustices that the Australian government distorts and covers up. Before meeting Behrouz, I was already collaborating with people seeking asylum and working on stories by displaced and exiled peoples. I translated other articles and pieces written by Behrouz before attempting the book project, during the process, and after it was published, and also created the subtitles for his co-directed film.

I actually think I was in a stronger position because I *wasn’t* a translator. I had no training and didn’t appreciate the norms or formalities of the field – this left me free to experiment

and do what I felt was right.

Another reason that I was more of a 'co-creator' or 'activist' than a 'translator' is that I had a close and unique working relationship with the author. I presented him with philosophical, cultural and religious concepts that shaped the way he was viewing the events around him on Manus Island, and as a result the way that he wrote the book. For example, in order to translate a complicated Farsi neologism into English, I suggested that we adapt the term 'kyriarchy' to create 'The Kyriarchal System'.

Behrouz and I then used this new term to describe the interconnecting social systems built around domination, oppression and submission in the prison (and associated with Australian

displacement and exile; we moved first to the US and – after a series of problems which impacted our status there – we applied, and were accepted, to migrate to Australia.

I've witnessed and experienced different forms of violence and injustice in Australian society, including while working in the tertiary education sector – racism is a part of everyday life. Due to both my research and my encounters, I have a good understanding of how coloniality operates here. The disappointment and rage that I feel towards institutionalised abuse and inequity fuelled my passion for this project. Despite the fact that I'm not of Kurdish heritage (my ethnicity is Persian) and have never been held in detention,

intended subconsciously. This approach helped keep the translation extremely close to the original and, with his guidance, I was able to make adjustments so the English expressed meanings that were hidden or hinted at in Farsi.

Jen: Omid, thank you so much for talking to *In Touch*. Your voice, experiences and language skills shine through in *No Friend But the Mountains*, and we look forward to your next publication.

... his goal was not to produce an impartial translation ...

border violence in general); and – in other parts of the book – to reflect on the broader political and socio-cultural situation in Australia. The Kyriarchal System became central to our analysis of what he was going through, and what was going on around him. The translated term is critical, for example, in his description of the role of interpreters in the detention facility:

On many occasions I witnessed a prisoner speaking with one of the officials representing the Kyriarchal System and the official not ever acknowledging the humanity of the interpreter. Do people making a speech ever address the amplifier? (page 315)

Jen: It's interesting that you mention the experience and insight that you brought to the project, as last year, the selection of a white writer to translate Amanda Gorman's poem *The Hill We Climb* sparked a great deal of debate about the lack of diversity in literary translation.

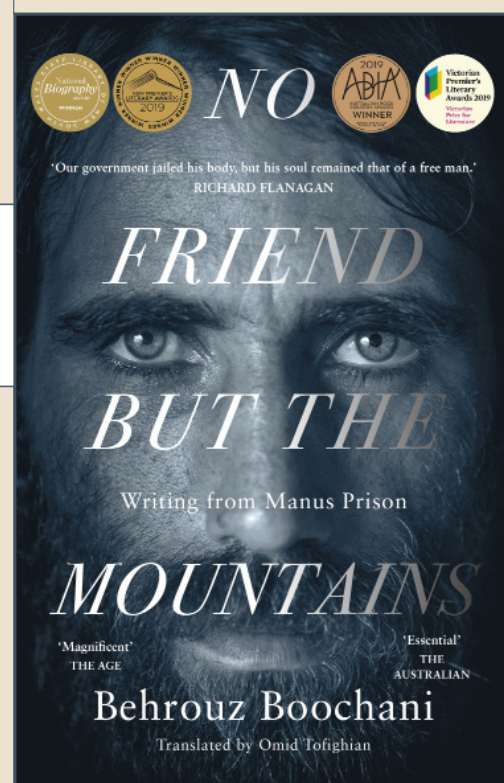
Omid: I definitely brought my own experiences to the creation process as – like Behrouz – I was born in Iran, and to a family from a marginalised and persecuted community. My family also experienced

I wanted this project to be a success in order to shine light on practices that the government tries to deny, and that many Australians would rather not see.

Jen: How did you approach the translation of the parts of the book that you couldn't relate to?

Omid: Behrouz is influenced by many writers, musicians and poets, with various cultural, philosophical and political perspectives that differ from my own. I did a lot of research and reading while I was working on the book. I'm not of Kurdish heritage, and so couldn't always appreciate the tone, symbolism or underlying assumptions of Kurdish words and storytelling devices. This is complicated further by the fact that Behrouz was writing in Farsi, the official state language of Iran.

I was lucky to be able to consult with Behrouz and to seek his guidance wherever my rendition didn't capture the essence of the original. For example, I once emphasised an idea that I thought featured prominently in a section of the original. When I ran the translation past Behrouz, he said he hadn't even noticed that he'd emphasised that idea. My intuition proved right, and matched what Behrouz



Whether anyone else could have produced such a stunning rendition of Behrouz's work will remain a topic of debate but, after speaking with Omid Tofighian, I argue that very few others could have pulled it off. Omid's personal and professional backgrounds meld in a way that allowed him to understand many of the author's experiences; and his goal was not to produce an impartial translation, but to play a part in creating a haunting book that would make Australia's settler-colonial society sit up and pay attention.

continued overleaf

WA Specialised Interpreting and Translating Course Provider

About Us

Babel International College (BIC) is a registered training organization in Australia. (Registered Training Organization 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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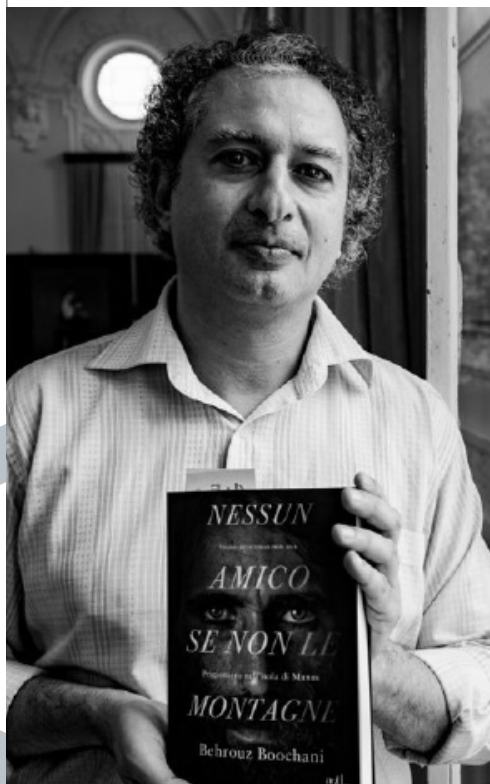
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Omid hopes that many more refugees and migrants will follow Behrouz Boochani's example and share their stories in ways that will cause systemic change. The success of *No Friend but the Mountains* should inspire writers – and people who engage in acts of translation – for generations to come.

** Behrouz Boochani remained in detention on Manus Island until 2019, when he was moved to PNG's capital, Port Moresby. From there he managed to escape Australia's offshore detention system by leveraging an invitation to participate in the Word Christchurch Festival 2019 in New Zealand. The following year he was granted refugee status there, allowing him to stay indefinitely and to apply for residency.*

ACT-based Indonesian>English translator Jen Plaistowe is the Chair of AUSIT ACT, and a member of In Touch's Editorial Committee. She also speaks Spanish, and Latin America is at the top of her international travel list. Jen dreams of being a literary translator one day, and says that talking with Omid was a reality check in terms of the time and skill required to do the job well.

Omid with the Italian translation of the book



continued from page 9

assure me they know of and follow the RNS (Sandra Hale will be pleased!), and that one of their judges was even involved in its development.

17 July:

I'm becoming resigned to a continuing lonely sojourn in Tasmania ... when a phone call and email from the court announce: 'Crown not proceeding with the trial.' It's all over!

I quickly make a flight booking, pack my few possessions, and I'm safely back in Melbourne – home, sweet (although locked down) home – that afternoon.

I won't be out of pocket, as the court will pay my costs for those few days in Hobart; and I got a credit for my unused 19 July flight – thanks Qantas! – so I have a trip to Tassie to look forward to in less complicated times.

And the lesson from this saga? You never know what can happen with an interpreting assignment!

Dorothy Prentice grew up in Melbourne. She studied medicine, and after marrying and having children, went to Tanzania as a missionary. Dorothy learned and used Swahili there over a period of 20 years. On returning to Melbourne she embarked on a new career, and has worked as a Swahili–English interpreter since 2009.

Grants, awards and competitions



John Dryden was Britain's first poet laureate (as well as a literary critic, translator and playwright). Portrait: [National Portrait Gallery](#), public domain via Wikimedia Commons, artist unknown

AALITRA Translation Awards 2022: Arabic

The Australian Association of Literary Translation's biennial awards are for translations of selected texts in two categories: prose and poem. The focus language for 2022 is Arabic. A panel of experts in Arabic literature and translation will choose a winner and a runner-up in each category. AALITRA will release all other details in early 2022.

Medal for Excellence in Translation 2022

The Australian Academy for the Humanities awards the medal plus \$1000 biennially, for a book-length translation into English. Entries can be in any genre (including scholarship), any language, any period. Works by Australian citizens or permanent residents can be nominated by publishers (Australian or overseas), other individuals or translators themselves. Nominations open in February.

John Dryden Translation Competition 2021–22

An annual competition for unpublished literary translations into English (poetry, prose or drama, any period, any language; all nationalities and places of residence). Prizes: £350, £200, £100 + a year's membership of the British Comparative Literature Association + winning entries will be published in *Comparative Critical Studies* journal and on the Edinburgh University Press website. Deadline: 7 February.

Translation Fund for Literature

If you – or an author you work with – are pitching a translation to a publisher (including overseas), check out these \$5000 Australia Council for the Arts grants towards a translator's fee and/or author's advance. There are two rounds per year; the next round opens in early March and closes on 12 April.

... plus other upcoming:

European Society for Translation Studies Open Access Prize 2022 (submissions: 1–15 January)

Japanese Literature Publishing Project Translation Competition (TBA – for translations from Japanese into English + one other language)

PEN America Literary Awards (TBA – for works published in the USA)

Read Russia Prize 2022 (TBA – biennial, for Russian-to-English translations)

... and for students:

AUSIT Translation Competition 2022

Entries are invited from students at any of AUSIT's 11 educational affiliate institutions. The languages to be featured in 2022 will be announced soon.

World Literature Today Student Translation Prize (closes 10 January)



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Languages: Korean and Mandarin offered in 2022

Location: TAFE NSW Ultimo

Duration: 1 year part time – a mix of face-to-face and online evening classes

For more information, email ultimoesol@tafensw.edu.au

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131 601



TAFE NSW

Speech-to-text interpreting, part 2: some practical insights



In our April issue, Spanish–English T/I **Nancy Guevara** introduced readers to the concepts of speech-to-text interpreting (STTI) and respeaking, and compared the process used to create live subtitles using respeaking with traditional simultaneous interpreting. She follows up here with some practical insights that will be of use to any colleagues considering adding STTI to their professional skillset.

I'd like to share what I've learned so far from my professional practice, from my industry connections and from my network of colleagues and researchers.

The industry:

One of the very first things I became aware of was that STTI is located at the intersection of two distinct industries: media accessibility and language services. I knew this in theory, from both published research papers and my own program of study, but it has been very interesting to almost physically 'feel' myself to be in this position when engaged in STTI.

Given that live captioning has been the domain of media accessibility companies, most of the work comes from subtitling agencies. With these agencies, the main challenge has been to explain what is involved in simultaneous interpreting, why preparation material is of the utmost importance to the success of multilingual subtitles, and how live interlingual subtitling differs from intralingual captioning in terms of working conditions (for example, swapping with a co-interpreter more often).

However, Language Service Providers (LSPs) are now receiving more and more requests for live captioning. With LSPs, it's the other side of the coin that needs to be explained: how captioning works, what technology is required, and what information is needed for us to be able to provide the service. As experts in the field, we're best placed to educate our clients

and bring together these two industries. In doing so we not only help expand accessibility further through multilingual captions, but also maximise the work opportunities created by the demand for this service.

The technology:

As with remote simultaneous interpreting, the technology and hardware I use are crucial in ensuring I'm delivering a high-quality STTI service. In terms of software, two applications are essential for creating captions/subtitles: a speech recognition engine (if I'm respeaking) and a captioning platform. Captions are displayed to viewers as a transcript, either via a URL, on a floating window that resembles a subtitle box, or embedded into the live stream as subtitles (for example via YouTube Live, Zoom or other platforms).

I also need to get the audio source from whatever meeting platform the client is using (Zoom, MS Teams, or a more specialised web streaming platform), plus when working with interpreters I need a second call for their audio.

Some agencies assume the interpreter's audio is all I need, so I have to explain that I also need access to the live visuals. This is so I know who's speaking and when, and can indicate speaker changes. Also, given the rapid speed at which some people speak, I may need to refer to what's shown on the screen so I can keep up; for example, if the speaker is talking about stats and figures shown on a slide, I might caption: [READS SLIDE]. If the visuals show proper nouns and speaker names, this can help me with spelling; and when an interpreter has

This ... expanding area ... will bring plenty of new opportunities.

technical issues, I can often pick up and live-translate until they are ready to continue.

At the moment I'm doing all my respeaking work remotely, from home. When on site I use an interpreting booth if there is one. If not I wear a steno mask (a soundproof device with built-in microphone), and can work while sitting among participants. For remote work, my setup varies depending on what platform the client is using and which agency hires me – some agencies have their own captioning software; with other clients we use independent applications. In terms of hardware, a high-quality noise-cancelling headset with a microphone suitable for voice dictation is essential. I've tested several setups, and what currently works best for me (see labelled photo, right) is: an ultrawide screen, so I can have everything I need open on a single monitor; a second laptop for when I need to connect with my booth partner (usually via Jitsi), or join two different calls (for example, via Zoom); and a compact external keyboard with tactile feedback for when errors need correction, or a term isn't recognised by the speech recognition software; and as I often need to meet up with clients, a good webcam to make sure I look professional.

Interested in a course in Conference Interpreting in 2022?

APPLY NOW TO MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

The *Master of Conference Interpreting* at Macquarie University is the only one of its kind in Australia. The two-year course is:

- a full degree in conference interpreting focusing on advanced consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills and techniques
- endorsed by NAATI at the *Certified Conference Interpreter* level
- featured on the Schools Directory of AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters
- taught by experienced practitioners and trainers, NAATI certified conference interpreters and/or AIIC members
- delivered in a purpose-built interpreting lab with soundproof ISO compliant booths
- offered in the following languages paired with English: Chinese (Mandarin), French, Japanese, Korean and Spanish.

The curriculum is adapted to the contemporary changing realities of the conference interpreting industry and fully integrates the use of new technologies enhancing the work of interpreters, and also focuses on new modalities (e.g. Remote Simultaneous Interpreting).

Are you already a qualified and certified interpreter? Are you interested in taking your skills to the next level? Enquire today about the possibility to receive credits for prior learning and/or experience for up to one year.

For detailed information about our T&I program and courses, please visit:

mq.edu.au/departments-of-linguistics/study-with-us/translation-and-interpreting-program

Contact us via email translate@mq.edu.au or call (02) 9850 6782



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The delivery mode:

When we first started offering the service, we were excited about the possibility of interlingual STTI and were very keen to experiment with different types of live events. We now know that certain very complex or highly specialised events are very difficult for one person to simultaneously live-translate and caption. In fact, recent studies suggest that – depending on the event, topic, density and availability of preparation material – more accurate results are achieved when an interpreter is employed to act in between.

In such cases we caption the interpreter's rendition of a live event, to ensure a higher level of accuracy and completeness of content. The setup in this mode of delivery could be, for example: a Zoom call to connect to the interpreter, an online streaming platform to connect to the original audio source (with low volume in the background), the captioning software and the speech recognition software.

Academics in Europe are currently researching the accuracy achieved by different modes of captioning. Early studies suggest that when automatic speech recognition is used with machine translation to generate multilingual captions, accuracy is low compared to captioning with human input. Further research is currently being conducted on the accuracy of various modes of delivery.

The working conditions:

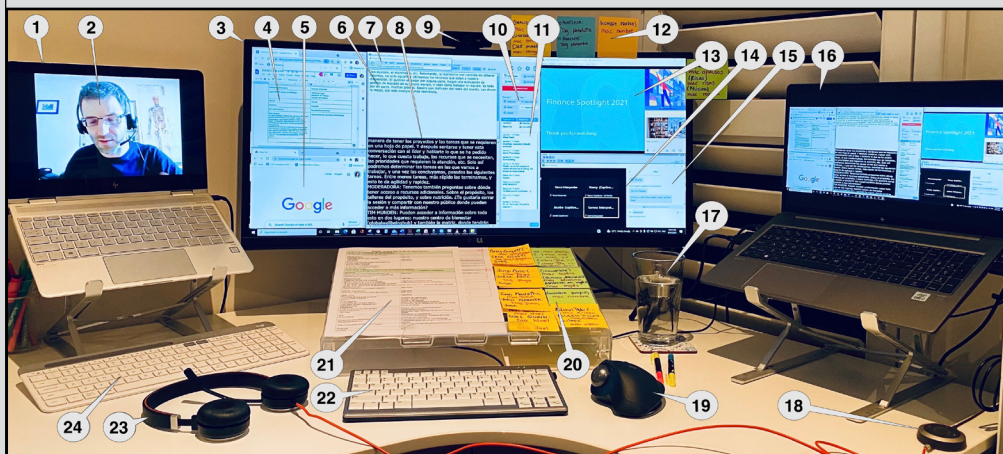
STTI is a very demanding activity which requires a highly specialised professional skillset and approach. Given the demands and challenges of creating captions/subtitles in a real-time setting, the cognitive load is huge and fatigue can kick in fast. For intralingual STTI the recommendation is to work in pairs for events that will last longer than 30 minutes, taking turns every 15 minutes. For interlingual

STTI the same applies for all events, regardless of duration, given the high cognitive load involved.

During my first two years of professional practice I've had the pleasure of covering remote events – including product launches, press conferences, corporate meetings, NGO events and academic conferences – for major agencies and high-profile clients. This is an expanding area that will bring plenty of new opportunities. Given that STTI is still in its infancy, there are currently not many training programs available, but they are being developed as I write. As mentioned in my previous article, a good place to start is the [ILSA \(Interlingual Live Subtitling for Access\)](https://www.ilsa-project.org/) project website.

Nancy Guevara is one of the world's first qualified interlingual STTI interpreters, having completed both intra- and interlingual respeaking programs (English and English-Spanish). For a fuller biography see our [April issue](#), pages 10–11.

Image published with the permission of Ai-Media and Jacobo Currais



My setup during a recent event:

(1) second laptop (2) my co-STTI, Jacobo (3) ultrawide screen (4) run sheet / prep notes (5) open internet tab for quick searches (6) captioning platform: input field into which I dictate; my co-STTI then edits any errors I miss (7) speech recognition software (8) live output to check what the audience is receiving (9) webcam (10) captioning platform control buttons: handover, standby, edit access (11) chat window for communicating with co-STTI and tech support (12) notes: common macros I use in captions, e.g. [UNKNOWN TERM], [INAUDIBLE] (13) video of event streaming live in background, with volume low (14) Zoom call to connect with interpreters, and (15) chat window to communicate with them (16) main laptop, all apps open (17) lots of water (respeaking really dries your throat!) (18) on/off and volume control for headset microphone (19) ergonomic mouse: precision trackball helps to quickly edit errors live (20) notes: event-specific macros (21) printed prep document with relevant terms, such as proper nouns and speaker names (22) ergonomic keyboard (23) headset with microphone (24) back-up keyboard with dual connection to both laptops.

Community translation: moving forward through adversity



Most of us anticipate few, if any, positive outcomes from ‘the pandemic’; but the spotlight it has shone on the importance of providing effective interpreting and translation of public messaging may be one. **Mustapha Taibi** is an author and academic in the field of community translation. He reflects here on recent developments that have resulted from this unexpected attention.

This might be only an insider’s impression, but it seems that everyone is talking about translations and the importance of ensuring quality and effectiveness.

We’ve heard comments by government officials, community leaders, the media, educators and translation end users, among others; and all seem to agree on the important role that translation plays in communicating public health messages (well, practically all; there are always a few people who see translation as an unnecessary expense).

Translators, and our work, have been in the spotlight recently – not only for the significant role we play in facilitating communication during crises, but also because of translation or production errors that garner public attention.

When something goes wrong, everyone looks around for the cause ... and most end up pointing at the translator. What people outside our industry don’t know is that a lot of other stakeholders are involved in the production of translated materials, and any of us can affect the quality of the outcome:

- **Governments and government agencies:** Do they recognise the importance of translation? Do they allocate the necessary funds?
- **Education providers:** Do they provide adequate training? Do they offer professional development opportunities for those languages where translation training is unavailable?
- **Public services:** Do they ensure materials are prepared with a diverse audience in mind? Do they provide translators with clear and detailed

... everyone looks around for the cause ... and most end up pointing at the translator.

instructions about the purpose and audience of the content to be translated?

- **Language service providers (LSPs):** Do they always assign the job to qualified translators with relevant experience in the type of text at hand? Do they seek further instructions from the client when those provided are insufficient? Do they pass on the full brief to translators? Do they have a revision step in place?
- **Translators:** Have we received the necessary training? Do we undertake only those tasks that we are qualified to take on? Do we seek further information from the client or the agency when unsure of the nature and purpose of the task? Do we follow the translation brief? Do we undertake the necessary research to produce a quality translation? Do we check our translation sufficiently before hitting ‘send’?
- **Production team:** Have they checked – with the translator or another qualified person – whether the text is properly presented in print, online, or on screen?
- **Community users:** Have they been consulted or involved in the development of communication strategies and messaging content? Has their feedback been sought on the translated materials?

I’ve been pleased to see that, as a result of

communication challenges during the pandemic, things are moving forward: awareness of the importance of community translations has increased, and some tangible initiatives have started to emerge. In 2020 AUSIT convened a working party to develop Recommended Protocols for the Translation of Multilingual Community Communications.* The resulting document outlines steps and strategies for organisations commissioning translations of public messages. This year, AUSIT joined forces with the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia (FECCA) and the federal Department of Health to produce a number of deliverables intended to cover some of the key points mentioned above, and thereby improve the quality of multilingual health care messaging:

- Identifying shortcomings in the current situation: gaps in training available and translator credentialling; flaws in current translation processes relating to public health messaging; and quality issues in existing COVID-19 translations.
- Developing language-specific style guides for community translations in general, and also for health care translations in particular.
- Developing a revision template and revision guidelines for revisers of community translations.

Spreading the TED

In July, seven-year-old Gold Coast girl Molly Wright gave the youngest TED Talk to date. When it went viral, Australian Multilingual Services were engaged to help share Molly's message around the world, and *In Touch* asked **Simon Johnson**, general manager at AMLS, to tell us about this unusual assignment.

- Drawing up guidelines for community review panels (community members providing feedback on translated health messages).
- Providing training and building capacity for community translators, revisers and community review panellists.

The importance of three key elements – training, revision and community feedback – cannot be stressed heavily enough.

Training – both before commencing professional practice and also during (i.e. professional development) – is essential to any profession.

Translation revision (not only self-checking by the translator, but also the application of another pair of qualified eyes) is a decisive step: both failure to revise and poor revision can lead to the typical translation howlers that raise eyebrows and, more importantly, undermine trust in translated public messaging.

Community feedback is also a must, both for producers of public messages and awareness materials, and for the translators and LSPs involved. Translations may be appropriate in terms of accuracy and language, but we also need to find out whether they are accessible, suitable and appealing to the target community (in terms of language, style, design, cultural appropriateness, and so on).

While enduring the varying privations and stresses that the pandemic is inflicting on each of us individually, as a professional community we can take *some* solace in the inadvertent boost it has given to the public visibility and appreciation of our industry.

Mustapha Taibi is an associate professor at Western Sydney University, where he teaches T&I, pragmatics and intercultural communication. He leads the International Community Translation Research Group, and is editor-in-chief of the international journal [Translation & Interpreting](#). Mustapha wrote the first book on community T&I published in Arabic, co-authored [Community Translation](#), and has published numerous chapters and papers. From 2008 to 2015 he served on NAATI's NSW Regional Advisory Committee.

* As reported in recent newsletters, AUSIT secured a grant from FECCA to further develop the Protocols, and has been trialling a Community Review Panel process in November. The collaborative project will wrap up in December.



Molly on stage with 12-month-old Ari, courtesy of the Minderoo Foundation

Molly has been dubbed 'the next Greta Thunberg' since giving her now world-famous presentation 'How every child can thrive by five'.

In it, Molly urges parents, carers and educators to put aside electronic devices and engage with infants and young children in meaningful and attentive interactions, as frequently as possible from the womb to the age of five.

Child psychologists have proven this deeply reciprocal and attentive engagement behaviour, typified by what they call 'serve and return' interactions, to be essential during these formative years. Critical for optimal neural and psycho-social development, it contributes to ensuring children feel cared for and important, and fosters strong self-confidence and the best prospects for future success in all areas of life.*

Our team was approached with an urgent deadline for recreating the TED Talk video with

children's voices in Urdu, Hindi and Indonesian. Our dedicated panel of translators completed the script translations at record speed and, working with sound recording studios that we have on our books in India, Pakistan and here in Australia, we were able to find children's voice actors to professionally record them in each language.

Our technical team synced each recording to the video, then overlaid it with clapping and laughing from the original theatre audience, so the final videos looked and sounded as if Molly was presenting in the target languages.

Simon Johnson has over two decades of experience working in the translation industry. He holds an honours degree in political and economic science, and has a background in the digital media industry.

* A quick Google of 'serve and return interaction' will find plenty of academic research (dating back to the 1990s) and social media content on this topic.

‘Well, you’re a publisher now!’: setting up a small press



Photo by Jamie James

A lifetime can span several careers. Some of these we choose and study for, while others follow a family business or tradition, or result from life events – opportunities or misfortunes. Last year, when literary translator **Jacqueline Buswell**’s new book of poetry was launched by a bespoke press she’d set up herself, we asked her to tell us more.

A migrant delivery rider in Italy once told me, ‘At home I had my own company, employees, a house. Here, I’m a rider’.

As a lover of language I’ve been lucky: journalist, teacher of English as a second language, translator, interpreter, librarian, poet ... and now publisher.

The opportunity to add the last came about thanks to an apparent setback. A publisher had prepared my mother Nita’s book of poetry *Me in the Middle*, but when the press sent a copy to proof, Nita was adamant that the font was too small. ‘I can’t read that, tell him to change it.’ When the publisher refused to change his house style, Nita declared that she wouldn’t proceed. We hadn’t signed a contract, and the publisher kindly sent us the file he’d prepared. All we had to do was change the font!

I’d assumed responsibility for the project, with family support, and we were under pressure from the author (‘Hurry up with this book, I’ll be dead by Christmas!’); so rather than look for another publisher, I decided to do it myself.

I was fairly confident of my editing skills, and had dealt with printers; plus I was working in a translation agency where preparation of documents for publishing was commonplace, and could count on their assistance. I knew about ISBNs and ebooks, and looked into how to organise them. Riverton Press* launched *Me in the Middle* by Anita Buswell in January 2018, just after my mother’s last Christmas.

After the launch someone said to me, ‘Well, you’re a publisher now!’

I went on to publish a book of poems of my own, *sprinting on quicksand*, and also republish my mother’s 1996 rural memoir, *The Salmon of Ashmont*, before embarking on a group project, *Journeys: Australian Women in Mexico*.

What began as an idea over a glass of wine became – with financial support from the Australian Embassy in Mexico – a real book, with sale proceeds going to Mission Mexico, a charity in the Chiapas region. Over several months we three editors – based in Mexico City, Sydney and Canberra – discussed elements of style, the length of dashes, how to present Spanish words, the cover ...

Journeys was designed and printed in Mexico. The main difficulty this caused was the shipping of books to Australia. Many publishers routinely print in Asia, but I like to support Australian business, so I used a printing co-operative for *sprinting* ... and a printer in my mother’s hometown for *Me in the Middle*.

Riverton Press aims to publish poetry, memoir,

family history, local history and works in translation. I’ve agreed with an author that its next project will be a translation of her book from the Italian. I’ve also been approached by a memoir writer and by a translator of poetry from Spanish to English, and in turn I’ve approached authors about two essays: one on our colonial history during the time of Governor Macquarie, the other on violence against women in Mexico.

The COVID pandemic has certainly made marketing more complicated for a small publisher. We launched *sprinting* ... with restricted numbers in Sydney in 2020. This year three launches for *Journeys* – in Sydney, Canberra and Mexico – achieved their commercial purpose ... but only the live one in Mexico looked like any fun!

While preparing *sprinting* ... I realised I had to set up a website, and that was another learning curve. I’m only a beginner on the career path taken since my mother’s ‘Hurry up with this book’. Funnily enough, with COVID lockdowns, I’ve learned not to rush.



Jacqueline Buswell is a Spanish>English translator and holds a master’s degree in creative writing from the University of Sydney. Ginninderra Press published her first book of poems, Song of a Journey-woman, in 2013. Jacqueline established Riverton Press in 2018, and published her second book of poetry, sprinting on quicksand, in 2020. Her occasional blogs can be found at: www.rivertonpress.com

* Named after the farm on the Murrumbidgee River where Jacqueline grew up, between Wagga Wagga and Narrandera, NSW.

Cultivating a Mindset for Success

As language professionals, we have access to a seemingly infinite smorgasbord of courses, workshops, masterclasses and books designed to help us hone our skills as translators, interpreters and editors, to maintain our working languages, and to improve our business skills. T&I practitioner and trainer **Jennifer Nielsen** takes a look at mindset, an often overlooked factor in success.



Although it's true that we need to continue developing our industry-specific and business skills throughout our careers, it's difficult to leverage them to build a successful business unless we also focus on cultivating a mindset that is conducive to success.

To do so, we must first become conscious of any limiting beliefs we hold about ourselves and/or our profession and money. This is the work that will provide a solid foundation for finding our own personal version of success.

You can assess how strong a foundation you have by asking yourself:

Does my *business* work for me, or do I work for my *business*?

Be honest with yourself. Is your work contributing to swinging the needle towards your larger personal and professional goals? Or are you stuck on a hamster wheel of urgent and important tasks? Despite the fact that many of us became freelancers because we wanted to manage our own time and be our own bosses, we can find ourselves experiencing decision fatigue, overwhelm and even burnout if we've become stuck in habits that don't serve us, and all the skills we learned in formal programs of

Does my *business* work for me, or do I work for my *business*?

study or years of work have failed to prepare us for entrepreneurship.

The key to maintaining sanity and growing our business intentionally lies in mindset: what we believe is true about our profession, money and ourselves. By taking a conscious look at our beliefs and where they have come from, we can begin to identify the ways in which we self-sabotage and limit ourselves from doing, having and being all that we want. Our beliefs are often not actually based in reality, but instead are only ideas that we have adopted, or that have been instilled in us by our families, the media, and/or the society in which we live and work.

To develop a mindset for success, we must first become aware of this self- and societal programming around what we believe is true or possible in our lives and businesses, in order to deconstruct these ideas and decide which serve us well and which hamper us. We can then replace any counterproductive beliefs with new habits, internal dialogues and attitudes that will help to move us forward, take effective action, and leverage the skills we have invested so much in acquiring. This is the hard work of being an entrepreneur, and it's

definitely not what I thought it would take to be successful.

In the process, you will find that you will begin to attract the right people and clients: those that will help you to move towards your goals, gain self-confidence, and have a more positive relationship with both your work and yourself. Remember, as Dr Joe Dispenza says in his audiobook *Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself*, 'Your thoughts are incredibly powerful. Choose yours wisely.'

Jennifer Nielsen is a Spanish>English translator and remote interpreter, translator coach, trainer and speaker, as well as the mother of twin boys. Based out of Denver, Colorado and Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, she is president of the Colorado Translators Association and former president of the Mexican Translators Association. Jennifer is passionate about using her 10+ years of experience in T&I, localisation, education and copywriting to help clients and colleagues build intentional businesses that work for them, and not the other way around.

* Dr Joe Dispenza, *Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself: How to Lose Your Mind and Create a New One* (2012).

Student Conference Volunteer



From its inception in 1987, AUSIT has offered student membership to anyone enrolled in a formal T&I program. As a result, new entrants to the profession in Australia are often already engaged and connected with their industry body. Student members can participate in the organisation in many ways. Below, *In Touch* interviews WA student member **Melissa Tan**, one of four student volunteers who helped ensure last month's Perth-based AUSIT National Conference 2021 was such an enjoyable and successful event (see report, pages 4–5).

Hours (total):
1–2

Voluntary?
Yes

AUSIT member for:
7 months

T&I study completed:
1 year

Q1: What did you do at the Conference?

I helped with the setup of the NAATI and Aboriginal Interpreting WA booths, and the distribution of any materials the speakers had prepared for the in-person attendees. I was also occasionally a Zoom moderator, and this left me free to attend most of the sessions.

Q2: Have you volunteered in other areas of your life, and if yes, how?

Yes, I have. I've helped out at various events, such as university Open Days and the Perth Japan Festival, but my longest volunteer role was as a teacher for a Japanese language club at my former high school, run by its alumni. The club held a one-hour after-school revision and extension class once a week throughout the academic year for the school's current students of Japanese. I volunteered for two years, and it was such an eye-opening experience to see the students develop a deep passion for Japanese, it played a massive part in solidifying my love of sharing culture through language.

Q3: How do you feel you have benefitted from volunteering at the Conference?

I feel that I was able to create very meaningful connections with some of the other attendees. Being given the opportunity to talk to practising translators and interpreters about their own experiences, I was able to learn so much about what it's like working in the 'real world'. There's only so much you can learn on a translation course, so it was great talking to people who are already working in the field and hearing their stories.

Q4: Have you taken on any other AUSIT roles or tasks, and will this experience encourage you to put your hand up again in the future?

I haven't, but I will definitely be putting my hand up again. Somewhere down the road I would love to give the role of PD Coordinator a go – at branch level, then who knows, maybe even at national level!

Q5: What advice would you give to other student members who are wondering if/how they can contribute?

Volunteering is a great way for student members to begin contributing to AUSIT, along with helping develop your interpersonal skills. It also provides you with the invaluable experience of connecting with fellow translators and interpreters from all language pairs. A notable encounter I had was with Japanese–English T/I Heather Glass. We share the same language pair, and I had heard so many great things about her and her work, so finally getting the chance to talk to her was unforgettable. I was also lucky enough to attend her speech on the second day of the Conference. I learnt a lot while volunteering at the Conference, so if there are other student members wanting to grow and network with professionals, I highly recommend putting your name down for whatever opportunity arises in your state branch!

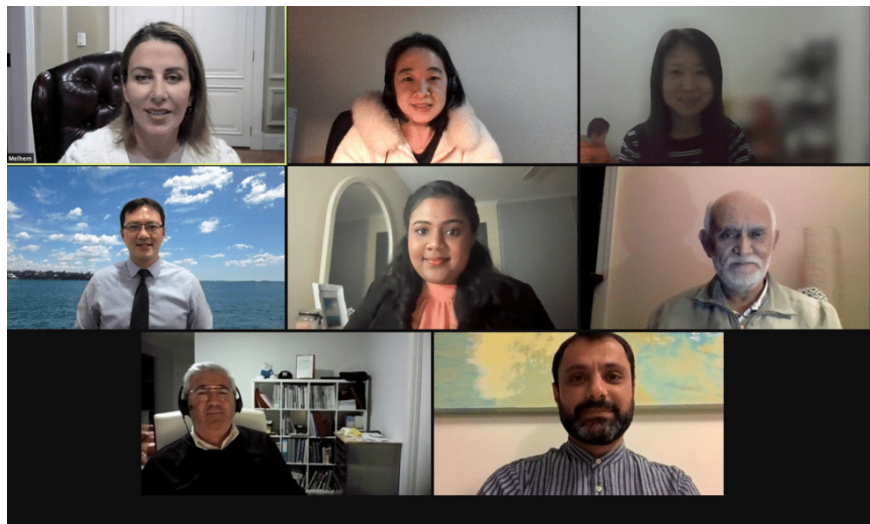
After the Conference, Organising Committee Chair Catherine Pfammatter told *In Touch*:

Four UWA MA students assisted us: Amy Harris,

Claire Liu, Melissa Tan and Zoe Womack. Their 'can-do' attitude was hugely appreciated! All were attending a conference for the very first time, and reported that the experience was invaluable.

Health care translation during COVID: three quick questions for Translation Service Manager Eva Melhem

Our short Q&A series speaks to **Eva Melhem**, Translation Service Manager at Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD), working with the culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Sydney's 'LGAs of Concern'. We asked Eva how the public health service's response to the pandemic has impacted her translation team.



1. How has the pandemic changed your operations?

With forty-nine per cent of Western Sydney's residents speaking languages other than English at home, information must be provided in many languages to ensure access to health care. When the pandemic began we had to quickly move our day-to-day operations online, adopt digital tools such as Zoom and Teams, and transition fully to working from home. Most of our translators already do so, but managing operations this way was new. The pandemic has seen a decrease in demand for some of the normal translation work, but a huge increase in COVID-related materials, in formats such as print, audio, video and social media tiles. With no access to our multimedia department studios, translators have been self-recording audio files on their own mobile devices. We've translated information on COVID-19 screening, testing clinics, symptoms, hand hygiene, physical distancing, home isolation and other measures to slow the spread – in health alerts, hospital signs, social media tiles and SMS messages – into up to 26 languages; facilitated the production of multilingual videos with subtitles and voiceovers; and translated key points from the NSW Premier's daily press conference – in as little as four hours! WSLHD emphasises health literacy and consumer engagement in resource design, so we usually engage consumers to review our translated resources and check they are linguistically and culturally appropriate for the target communities; but with

the urgency of demand during the pandemic, we haven't been able to do this. With the working-from-home policy now extended to the end of the year, the pandemic will have long-term impacts on how we operate in the future. Despite working conditions that are far from ideal, we've demonstrated resilience and ability to adapt to challenging conditions.

2. What does a typical work day look like these days?

I start my day by checking for new requests and enquiries from service users and files from translators, then plan the rest of the day with the Translation Project Coordinator via a conference call. I review the English content in new requests, then hold conference calls or online meetings with clients to discuss target audience/languages, cultural appropriateness of the material for translation, and the most appropriate formats to communicate with specific CALD communities. I then prepare the materials for translation, organising a team of translators, checkers and typesetters to work on each project. I ensure the project scope is well defined, set the budget and timeline, and monitor progress to ensure the team are all on the same page. Once a project is finalised, the information is distributed widely within our communities via local councils, community organisations, other LHDs and social media. In addition to project management, I'm responsible for the overall management and day-to-day operations of the Translation

Service, including: processing translation data; preparing reports on translation utilisation and statistics; recruiting translators to cover emerging languages; financial management; representing the service at state-wide committees; reporting to senior management on translation service provision; and service planning.

3. How have you organised your team to meet the fast turnaround required?

We've adopted a rapid response strategy, and worked tirelessly around the clock to ensure our projects are delivered on time and our vulnerable communities are kept informed of the latest changes in local restrictions, venues of concern, testing clinics and vaccination centres. We've set new records for delivering translations: usually, a small to medium document takes a few days, but during the pandemic we've turned projects in multiple languages around within just a few hours. Our translators have shown incredible understanding and cooperation. To shorten turnaround times, we not only email to notify them of incoming jobs, but also text. This has proved very convenient and has helped speed the process up. In the past we controlled the communication between translators and checkers working in language pairs, allowing little liaison, but recently we've been asking translators, checkers and typesetters to liaise with each other so we can meet the urgent deadlines.

Screenshot: Eva (top left) in a Zoom meeting with some of her translators

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:

ILGIN YILDIZ

translator

English>Turkish

Istanbul, Turkey

2013

2017

literary/non-literary translation (including history, popular science, contemporary philosophy), plus subtitle translation for streaming platforms

FRANÇOISE MATTHEWS

both

French–English

Sydney, NSW

2000 (interpreting) / 2007 (translating)

2008

interpreting in criminal courts

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

I always enjoyed the wide range of foreign works in translation published in Turkey, and during an internship with a literary magazine while at university, I tried my hand at translating an essay about the relationship between Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt. I struggled with the jargon and the cultural references, and the couple were so mysterious to me, I had to do extensive research about them and the cultural and historical context of their relationship ... thus learning that translation involves becoming familiar with figures, places and histories, before rewriting with fidelity to the source text. I was fascinated by the process, and loved the space it gave me to grow intellectually. I continued to translate for magazines, and in 2013 I quit my editing job to translate books full time.

A2

A recent project – translating *The Courage of Hopelessness* by Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek – was intellectually stimulating, as I had the chance to really prepare for it. I already knew his work (in both English and Turkish), so I was no stranger to his ideas on contemporary politics and thought, as well as his narrative and linguistic choices. I studied translations of earlier works (by talented practitioners whose work I also know well), watched his YouTube videos and listened to his speeches. The translation process itself took more time and effort than I'd foreseen but I didn't mind, as I love the book and wanted to make its journey into my native language as smooth as possible. I enjoyed every minute of the process, although – as usually happens – I've since found a few mistakes I'd like to correct and sentences I'd like to rework before any second edition is published. Translating this book taught me a lot about both my own practice, and how I navigate my native language.

A1

Translating and interpreting came late into my life. I was a teacher for many years, then became a second-hand and antiquarian bookseller. The trigger was the Sydney Olympics,* when preference was given to qualified interpreters over bilingual volunteers. I became more and more interested after I qualified and started my new career (I also became a professional translator). I got hooked on my first trial, and decided to go back to university. These days I spend most of my time working in criminal courts. Of my three careers, this is the one I enjoy most.

A2

I interpreted for the defendant in a murder trial in Broome, WA – a Frenchman accused of killing a local man. The crime had taken place on Christmas Eve, and almost everyone (most of the witnesses, the accused and also the victim) had been drunk and involved in various fights on the evening the murder had taken place. Each witness was asked what time they'd started drinking that day, what they'd been drinking, and how much they'd consumed. Most of them couldn't remember much of the night. When the police had found the Frenchman – sleeping under a bush – on Christmas Day, he'd still been highly intoxicated. Even though he was found guilty, it seemed that he had no memory of fighting with the victim (and maybe still doesn't). For the sentencing there were police everywhere, as they anticipated trouble, and the courthouse – a small heritage building from the 1880s – was a security nightmare. Indeed, the court had to be evacuated when a commotion erupted, with screams and a member of the victim's family lunging at the Frenchman. Four weeks of trial came to a very abrupt end!

* Read Françoise's article on interpreting at the Sydney 2000 Olympics in our [Summer 2020 issue](#) (pages 22–23).

