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National Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 13, Number 1 - January 2005

Inaugural AUSIT T&I excellence awards

by Kate Ritchie and Silke Gebauer

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All award recipients. From left: AUSIT Vic/Tas Chairperson Sarina Phan, David and Laraine Connor, Peter Horton LOTE Marketing, Katherine Danylak, representing Better Health Channel, Department of Human Services, and Ismail Akinci, All Graduates

The work of Melbourne full-service consultancy LOTE Marketing has been recognised with an Excellence Award for their talking book *Every Child Is Important*, published in seven languages.

The award was one of three announced and presented to the Victorian and Tasmanian translating and interpreting industry by AUSIT at a gala event on 13 December 2004. The language service provider All Graduates also won an Excellence Award for their work in creating the Online Booking System, whilst the Web Communications Unit from the Department of Human Services was Highly Commended for its work in

creating the Health Translations Online Directory.

Although the Excellence Awards are an initiative of the AUSIT Vic/Tas branch, AUSIT aims to conduct both regional and national awards in the future.

The function in Melbourne attracted around 90 guests, including the Chief Magistrate Ian Gray and Deputy Chief Magistrate Jelena Popovic (who was also a juror for the Awards). Others in attendance were Mr Phong Nguyen, Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, representatives from the Victorian Office of Multicultural Affairs, Victoria and Federal

(continued on page 4)

From the president



To achieve results and increase our impact on the challenges facing the T&I profession, AUSIT must focus on two areas—growth and structure. Growth is achieved through increased membership and a higher profile; the last few months have been rich in events around the country to raise them both.

In late October the National Conference (organised jointly by AUSIT and ASLIA Vic) offered a two-day smorgasbord of presentations in Melbourne. In December Victoria's Excellence Awards were launched, an initiative which hopefully can be extended nationally over time.

The T&I profession celebrated in November with a high-profile and well-attended function in Adelaide. Sponsored by AUSIT, NAATI, TAFE and many local industry stakeholders, the event featured the State Minister for Multicultural Affairs, who described a particular interest in language services. The presentation I made on AUSIT's directions seemed to generate interest, with the stock of membership forms on our display table dwindling rapidly.

At the November Professions Australia conference in Canberra there was discussion of familiar topics: higher education, professional indemnity, ethics, and registration. Our PA membership once again delivered benefits through valuable information received on ACCC authorisations, a process which could help us represent T&Is operating as contractors (see more in the Pay and Conditions report on page 6 of this issue). Another Canberra meeting with a senior DIMIA representative provided an opportunity to raise several important T&I issues.

Queensland is scheduled to host the next National Council meeting in March 2005. The NC will take the opportunity to meet with members in remote parts of the state. In the meantime, the Queensland Writers' Centre has extended membership on a mutual basis, providing AUSIT access to new benefits.

'Looking ahead, a key project in 2005 is the formation of a Board of Professional Conduct, which ... will serve as a place where complaints between practitioners and clients are heard by our peers.'

In NSW an AUSIT presentation at the Sydney Technical Writers' Conference last October helped form new links with the writing profession, with sincere interest and ideas for cross-pollination emerging between our two fields. The NSW committee has offered to host the 2005 NAGM; NSW members will also project-manage the membership reform proposal.

In Perth, the Services Industry Skills Council held a workshop as part of a series of national consultations to help define the skills required in the T&I field and develop training modules.

Structurally, we are also moving ahead. Not surprisingly, filling the positions of administrators has been a very time-consuming exercise, given the low pay/high workload ratio we can offer. A review of our computerised operations has been undertaken to streamline functions, while new financial processes and sources are being explored, including Victoria's sponsorship-seeking efforts and new advertising strategies for our publications. AUSIT's contributions within formal structures such as the NAATI RAC committees and the revalidation of accreditation project are being coordinated in order to present consistent industry views.

As a result of the recent NAGM elections, the Executive Committee welcomed our new General Secretary Lynne Honan, who

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The editor reserves the right to edit or not to publish any item submitted for publication. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editor or those of AUSIT and its executive.

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replaces Tineke Millard. Tineke provided outstanding support during the past twelve months.

Looking ahead, a key project in 2005 is the formation of a Board of Professional Conduct, which we hope to begin soon on a trial basis. The board will serve as a place where complaints between practitioners and clients are heard by our peers. Confidence in the process of this much-needed service will be increased through special attention to impartiality and confidentiality.

As always, we have major challenges and important projects before us. If you wish to assist with any of them, do contact me on <actyve@iprimus.com.au>. Membership support and encouragements have helped your national and executive teams achieve much in the last twelve months. This natural momentum will carry us into the New Year with a further boost of motivation and energy.

Yveline Piller
President

From the editor

Thank you to everyone who contributed articles and images for this issue.

As I was trawling through the Internet looking for articles for this issue, I came across several websites of interest to T&Is. For a discussion of problems encountered when working with source documents containing errors try these two URLs:

<<http://www.proz.com/topic/16900?start=15&print=1>>

<http://www.einst.ee/literary/spring2000/10_kross_80.htm>

For a review of CAT translation software (although the author's English needs a little work) try the following site:

<<http://www.geocities.com/fmourisso/CAT.htm>>

Special thanks go out to Yveline, Moreno, Lynne, Barbara and Louise for their help in preparing this issue.

Remember, the deadline for the next issue (due out at the end of March) is 5 March 2005.

Bradley Dawson
Editor

AUSIT National Council Members January 2005

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The following resolutions have been passed by the National Council since the last newsletter.

Resolution No 64 of 28.9.04:

To take out association liability insurance with the company AON, i.e. their \$1,000,000 cover option for the cost of \$2,875.96 per annum.

Resolution No 65 of 20.10.04:

That, as a regular part of its budgetary process, the National Council allocate to Branches each financial year an amount to cover basic overhead/operational costs for that year, this amount being separate from allocations that Branches may seek from the National Council, through usual budgetary processes, for Branch activities and programs. In FY 2004/2005 the amount for overhead/operational costs will be \$2,500 for each of NSW and Vic/Tas and \$ 850 for each of the other Branches.

Resolution No 66 of 14.12.04 :

That the following persons be admitted to AUSIT membership or associate membership:

Kieu McKenzie QLD; Gulcin Cribb NSW; Demetrio Padilla NSW; Walid Haddad QLD; Nadia Abraham QLD.

Resolution No 67 of 14.12.04:

That the allocations made under National Council Motion No. 65 of 20.10.2004 are not to be reduced or affected in any way by amounts actually held in Branch bank accounts at the time the payments are made.

Resolution No 68 of 14.12.04:

That, in the absence of any other process of reimbursement and as requested by the ACT Principal Delegate at the 2004 post-AGM meeting, the ACT Branch be granted, before 31 December 2004, an allocation of five hundred dollars (\$500-00) to help cover its operational expenses incurred during FT 2003/2004.

Resolution No 69 of 4.1.05:

That the following persons be admitted to AUSIT membership or associate membership:
Kieu McKenzie QLD; Gulcin Cribb NSW; Demetrio Padilla NSW; Walid Haddad QLD; Nadia Abraham QLD; Timothy Milnes WA; Ms Francesca Solinas-Leung VIC/TAS; Ms Liana Papoutsis VIC/TAS; Elizabeth Ambrose VIC/TAS; Miss Yukari Mitsuhashi; Ms Dongmei Chen.

The following persons have been admitted as associate affiliate or student members:

Ann Groth NSW; Yuriko Yoshikawa NSW; Jose Herrera NSW; Dragan Cvetkovic NSW; Pedro Diaz VIC/TAS; Isabelle-Noelle Sury VIC/TAS.

Congratulations and welcome to all new members!

Inaugural AUSIT T&I excellence awards

continued from page 1

Police, many T&I agency operators and academics, practitioners and nominees.

Translators and interpreters don't occupy the limelight very often and their work is not well understood in the community and business sectors. These awards are seen as a way of recognising the vital roles T&Is play, raising awareness of the profession and praising outstanding achievements.

The awards process was finalised through 2004 with the help of focus groups, workshops and industry-wide consultation. A decision was made to launch the awards with one category only—Outstanding Contribution to the Translating and Interpreting Industry—as this best highlights how cooperation between practitioners, service providers, clients and end users leads to successful outcomes. Instead of honouring individuals or organisations on the basis of their reputations or other unquantifiable virtues, only specific initiatives that could be measured against a set of pre-defined criteria were considered.

The key selection criteria for initiatives recognised by AUSIT within this particular award category include innovation, role model value, benefits delivered to users and/or practitioners, and the level of impact initiatives had on the industry as a whole. To make the award process as inclusive as possible, both self-nomination and nomination by third parties were permitted. Every eligible submission underwent the same stringent evaluation process.

Now that the inaugural event has been so successful, two new awards, specifically tailored to the work of translators and interpreters, will be determined in 2005: 'Excellence in Translation' and 'Excellence in Interpreting'.

The judging process was overseen impeccably by a panel of high-calibre jurors: Adolfo Gentile, former Head of the School of Languages, Interpreting



Presenter Prof. Mary Vasilakakos, RMIT University (right), with Silke Gebauer and the winner in the Small Team/Individual category, Mr Peter Horton, Director, LOTE Marketing, for the talking book 'Every Child is Important'.

and Translating at Deakin University, former Chair of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), President of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs from 1999 to 2002 and a current member of the Refugee Review Tribunal; Jelena Popovic, a magistrate for 15 years, a member of the Adult Parole Board for 5 years, currently a Deputy Chief Magistrate and, as the daughter of post-war migrants, one who has fostered an interest in the provision of appropriate interpreting services in court; Di Taylor, manager from 1994 to 2000 of the renowned International Language Company, a language provider with a portfolio of blue-chip and government accounts; and Dr Rita Wilson, coordinator of the postgraduate Translation Program at the Monash University School of Languages, Cultures and Linguistics, and author of several publications on translation and research in fields such as literary translation, intercultural studies, narrative and new media.

'We were delighted with both the quality of the submissions received and the high calibre and totally professional approach of the jurors,' commented Silke Gebauer, Chairperson of the Awards Committee. 'This was a first for AUSIT and for the interpreting and translating industry in Australia as a whole. While the feedback so far has been tremendous, we still have work to do for the awards to gain awareness in the business community and amongst the public.'

Honorary award for David Connor

AUSIT recognised David Connor with an Honorary Award for lifetime achievement. An accredited professional translator in a number of European languages, David Connor is one of the institute's founding members and a former AUSIT Vic/Tas and national office-bearer, who for many years has served the translating and interpreting industry in a variety of roles.

Excellence award for LOTE marketing

The talking book *Every Child Is Important* won in the 'Small Team/Individual' sub-category.



David and Laraine Connor with AUSIT Excellence Awards Chairperson, Silke Gebauer. David Connor was presented with an Honorary Award for Lifetime Achievement.

The book was produced by LOTE Marketing for the Australian Childhood Foundation as part of the 'Every Child is Important' campaign, which works to elicit social commitment to children.

A key component of the multicultural strategy recommended by LOTE Marketing to reach parents in CALD communities, the talking book is published on CD Rom in seven languages (Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, English, Macedonian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese) and explores a number of important topics about children and being a parent, with the audio content able to be printed out and used as handouts.

'The Talking Book is [at the] cutting edge in parenting education in Australia because of the user-friendly packaging. It has proven to be a cost-effective way to get information to more people,' said Joe Tucci, Executive Director of the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Another of the book's exemplary aspects is

its use of translators and interpreters with the highest NAATI qualifications in script translation, audio recording and language checking; the content was also focus-group tested prior to publication.

and online, but use of online bookings (for interpreting) is already at 60%; this is its greatest recommendation.'

An interpreter in a high demand language who does from 30 to 50 assignments for All Graduates per month—most of which are booked online—said: 'I wish other agencies would use similar booking systems. It allows me to plan better and to make healthier decisions when accepting jobs.' Access to the password-protected booking section of the site <www.allgraduates.com.au> is by application.

Highly commended award for the Department of Human Services

The Web Communications Unit of the Department of Human Services received the 'Highly Commended' award for its work on the Health Translations Online Directory.

This searchable online Australia-wide catalogue of translated health information <www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au> was developed by the team managing the Better Health Channel in Victoria, and has enhanced online access to quality-assured health information in languages other than English for health practitioners and intermediaries. The directory includes more than 800 English language resources, with over 9,000 multilingual documents in 61 languages. Translated material accessible via this site must comply with a number of minimum standards: each translation is completed and checked by an accredited translator.

Details on the nomination process and submission criteria for the 2005 Awards will be publicised in early 2005. More information on the winning initiatives will be available soon on the AUSIT website <www.ausit.org>.

Start planning your submissions now. Direct queries to:

Kate Ritchie at <awards@ausit.org>, or Silke Gebauer at <silkegebauer@aol.com>.

[See page 13 for details on FIT awards nominations—Bradley]

Excellence award for All Graduates

All Graduates' Online Booking System won in the 'Organisations' category of the AUSIT Excellence Awards.

A first in Australia, this innovative web-based system allows clients to post interpreter booking requests online, enabling accredited interpreters registered with All Graduates to log on and access these bookings in real time. Both clients and practitioners using the online facility lauded the new system for its flexibility, the opportunity to double-check booking details, and other added benefits, such as access to background information on the organisation requesting the booking, thus allowing interpreters to better prepare for assignments.

Other benefits include the more efficient administration of bookings. A major client and user of the All Graduate Online Booking System observed: 'The current contract still has a dual system; that is fax

Pay and conditions - where are we headed?

by Yveline Piller

This article contains material from the October 2004 Report of the National Pay and Conditions Review Sub-Committee presented in Melbourne (see the original at <www.ausit.org>).

Upon its launch a year ago, the National Pay and Conditions Review Sub-Committee was provided with a website section, a small budget, a Yahoo discussion group, a regular newsletter feature and an issue of our quarterly newsletter dedicated to pay and conditions.

A range of topics was addressed during the year, with many issues arising without notice. The work of the sub-committee produced the following:

Representations to Centrelink regarding the new interpreters' contract.

- Meetings with the new TIS directors in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane.
- Assistance to individual practitioners on issues with employers.
- Representations to NAATI and DIMIA against the allocation of 60 points to overseas migration applicants.

'Individual practitioners are exposed to external forces against which they are powerless. To expand their work options and reduce their dependency on certain employers, they must receive assistance and encouragement to develop new skills.'

- Support for the Sydney Deaf Society in negotiations with CRC on use of two interpreters for long assignments.
- Addressing the long-standing issue of driver licences with the NSW RTA and the ACCC.
- Setting up a database of employers' contracts to provide an overview of conditions and be prepared as contracts come up for renewal.
- A comprehensive review of pay and conditions in South Australia.
- Interviews in the press and radio media on issues attracting notice within the industry.
- An analysis of costs and suggested fees for interpreters in John Gare's draft paper 'Interpreter Fee Calculations'.

Where to now?

The task ahead is by no means an easy one. Two directions are being investigated:

1. The creation of a registered organisation, leading to the establishment of an employment

award. Meetings with the ASU and the Australian Writers' Guild highlighted the complex, lengthy, and very expensive nature of a process which is subject to difficult negotiations with unions and employers and requires sustained efforts from enough interested members.

2. ACCC authorisation. The ACCC sometimes grants immunity from the application of Trade Practices Act provisions on collective bargaining and boycotts. This option, whilst more affordable and less lengthy, requires dedicated, well-paid people to negotiate on our behalf and help us organise accordingly.

The state of the industry should also be analysed to help identify the best courses of action and to obtain political support. The picture is uncertain and messy: T&Is work both as employees and contractors; work for both federal and state bodies; are sometimes covered by awards, sometimes not; and work under awards which may or may not be applied. They are often ignored by the process which should support them.

Individual practitioners are exposed to external forces against which they are powerless. To expand their work options and reduce their dependency on certain employers, they must receive assistance and encouragement to develop new skills.

Finally, if we want to progress, many more members need to become actively involved, as funds will be required from AUSIT for industrial relations or legal advice.

*Yveline Piller
Chair, Pay and Conditions Review Sub-Committee
December 2004*

Six good reasons to change our membership categories

by Uli Priester

At the post-AGM meeting of the National Council on 24 October 2004 the decision was made to take the next step in the process of reforming the AUSIT membership categories. A national steering committee is to be formed to consider the arguments which have been put forward by members so far and to suggest a schedule for a general membership ballot on the plan.

What is proposed?

A three-tier membership structure:

1. Associate members (all interested in the industry, new T&I practitioners)
2. Full members (PD & minimum practice requirement)
3. Certified practising members (PD & higher minimum practice requirement)

The same membership criteria and rules shall apply for student applications.

What are the advantages of the proposed new structure?

- A clear distinction is drawn between T&Is who are currently working and those who have previously obtained NAATI accreditation but no longer practice nor continue to develop their knowledge and skills;
- A clear distinction is also drawn between regular T&I practitioners who earn a living in the industry and those who work occasionally;
- Professional development and practice requirements for full members & certified practising members will enhance the standing of the profession;
- AUSIT membership will indicate

a degree of commitment to the quality of work, ethics and professionalism;

- AUSIT members will automatically fulfil the benchmarks of the planned NAATI revalidation scheme;
- The structure opens a career pathway for new T&Is.

Who will be disadvantaged?

The new membership categories will apply to those who join AUSIT from the date of its implementation and those who wish to voluntarily join the new scheme.

No members will automatically lose or forfeit their current membership privileges if and when the new categories come into force. A 'grandfather clause' of ten years is proposed.

Who will be in charge?

Practitioners will provide their own assessment of words translated and/or hours interpreted. AUSIT will not ask for business turnover figures or tax returns.

What constitutes PD?

PD refers to all activities which contribute to maintaining language and T&I skills; a catalogue of such activities will be published. A PD points system is currently being tested.

Why bother?

NAATI has accredited tens of thousands of people over the years. If we want to be taken seriously as a profession and paid appropriately for our efforts, it makes sense to set ourselves apart. The profession has a mixed reputation, deserved or otherwise. In the future, rather than just relying on NAATI accreditation, T&Is taking their work seriously may seek membership in AUSIT primarily because they want to take advantage of the skills development

opportunities offered and the professional standing that AUSIT membership indicates to the public.

... and that can only be good.

'NAATI has accredited tens of thousands of people over the years. If we want to be taken seriously as a profession and paid appropriately for our efforts, it makes sense to set ourselves apart.'

Are your editing skills at the required level?

by Bradley Dawson

Should I put the comma here, or here? Why bother with a semicolon: can't I just use a colon? Em dash? What's an em dash? I don't exactly know what a dangling participle is, but it sounds ugly. How do I rid my translation of them? What about spelling? Do I still cater to that dwindling minority of people who don't want to use US English?

This article is the beginning of a regular feature designed to help AUSIT members who translate either to or from English, and to improve readers' general writing skills. While English is not everyone's native, or target, language, all T and I practitioners need to be able to communicate effectively in its Australian version. Some agencies no doubt employ in-house editors, typesetters and proofreaders to check over any material translated by subcontractors, but many individuals, businesses and even governmental departments may not. People might argue that our job as translators shouldn't extend this far, but unfortunately, in many cases it must since our work may often be viewed by the client as the final product.

As professionals, we must all attempt to keep up with changes in usage within our target and source languages. Every translator and interpreter should own, or have access to, specialised dictionaries of legal, medical, scientific, business and other terminology (or have the addresses of online versions in the 'favourites' section of their web-browser), have close at hand a copy of *The Macquarie dictionary* or some similarly regarded local and target language dictionaries, as well as a grammar book and a thesaurus in both languages. As one who edits all sorts of written works—from prose, to technical writing, to journalism—one publication I find myself practically chained to is the latest edition of the *Australian Style manual for authors, editors and printers* (John Wiley & Sons Australia 2003). This fabulous resource book covers Australian

English grammar, inclusive language, spelling and punctuation, abbreviations, the use of numbers and measurements, methods of citation, titles and forms of address, and provides a mountain of guidance on cultural and linguistic issues for anyone faced with the task of preparing material for publication in this country. At around \$45 I think it is a bargain every translator or interpreter should invest in.

We translators and interpreters all know how easy it is to change the meaning of a sentence with incorrect or inappropriate word selection. We also have to be aware of how misplaced punctuation can change the meaning of a word or sentence, or create ambiguity, and how in both fiction and non-fiction 'unorthodox' punctuation can characterise a particular author. Allowance should be made for this when moving across languages. In government, corporate and other types of information documents, however, a translator should follow 'orthodox' usage.

So where do we start? In this issue I want to tackle several areas of sentence punctuation which seem to be a constant problem for all writers—the placement of colons, semicolons and commas—as well as the use of capital letters, variants in English spelling and inclusive language. For reasons of space, the rules governing usage listed below are not exhaustive.

Colons

The colon can be used after a clause to introduce additional explanatory information, or indented material such as dot-point series examples, block quotations, formal statements, dialogue and questions.

We were worried: our client had not rung back at the agreed time.

The article contained the following information: grammar references, punctuation and capitalisation.

The question is this: do you refer mistakes back to the client?

The minister began: 'Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen ...

FIRST VOICE: And what did you do next, my dear?

Semicolons

The break provided by a semicolon is stronger than that of a comma, but weaker than that of a full stop. The semicolon links two clauses which could remain separate sentences but have a close logical link. The semicolon may also be used to separate a series of clauses that contain commas and it can replace the conjunction *and*.

We expect the motion to be passed next month; the committee can then be set up immediately.

The conference participants came from Melbourne, Victoria; Sydney, New South Wales; and Adelaide, South Australia.

Commas

Comma placement is often a matter of judgement and style, but there are some general principles governing usage.

Commas are used to eliminate ambiguity:

He was not killed, mercifully.

Commas separate items in a list; sometimes a comma is needed between the last two items to ensure clarity:

The council should seek the support of agencies, government, non-government organisations, and community and industry groups.

Adjectives in English either evaluate (an *awful* translation), describe (a *long* article) or define (a *French* word). In a string of adjectives preceding a noun, commas are required between adjectives of the same type:

The orator spoke in a clear, low, resonant voice. [all descriptive]

Success will depend upon hard-working, committed local members. [two descriptive, the third definitive]

She is a collector of fine old red wines. [evaluative, descriptive, then definitive adjectives—no commas required]

Introductory clauses

An introductory adjectival or adverbial clause is separated from its subject or the main clause by a comma:

Late and flustered, she drew many looks as she moved into the room.

After the proposal had been discussed at length, a press release was issued.

But a comma is not used where an adverbial clause follows the main clause:

A press release was issued after the proposal had been discussed at length.

Apposition

Words, phrases and clauses are in apposition when they provide explanatory information about something already mentioned. Commas can be used to isolate appositional expressions:

This will exacerbate, not resolve, the problem.

The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators, or AUSIT, has more than 800 members.

A pair of commas is often needed in long expressions if they share an element of a statement:

The members were concerned about, but could not individually deal with, the issue of pay and conditions.

Capitalisation

Initial capitals should always be used for proper nouns and proper names (specific people, places and organisations). When organisations' names are shortened, but retain a specific element, capitals are also retained. If they are reduced to a generic term, capitals are omitted.

Recommended capitalisation practice:

Attorney-General's Department (specific); Attorney-General's (shortened but specific); the department (generic)

The Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs ... a matter for Immigration ... the department

The National Gallery of Australia ... the National Gallery ... the gallery

The Australian Government is answerable ... The government proposes ...

The Victorian Government ... the government is responsible

The word *Commonwealth* always begins with a capital letter when referring to Australia.

The adjectives *federal*, *state* and *territory*, and the noun *parliament* require a capital only when they form part of an official title:

... the Federal Court of Australia ... the Federal Court ... the court

a federal government initiative ... a federal responsibility ... The Australian Capital Territory ... the territory's total population ... the state government ... the Commonwealth Parliament ... Parliament House ... the debate in parliament continued

Rottnest Island (specific); the island (generic)

Titles

The official titles of the heads or chief executives of many Australian institutes are capitalised:

the Governor-General ... the Prime Minister of Australia ... the Leader of the Opposition ... the Minister for Defence

When used generically, most of these titles can be presented in lower case:

The minister's view is that ...

Exceptions are the current incumbent Australian monarch, prime minister and treasurer, and foreign heads of state. All these are capitalised, even when abbreviated or used generically:

Tomorrow the Queen will open parliament.

the Prime Minister of Australia ... the Prime Minister, Mr Howard, has announced that ... the Prime Minister

President Bush announced that ... the President

Variable spelling

Australian English is positioned somewhere between US and UK English spelling and can use either. I am over forty and prefer UK spellings to US, although the latter are just as acceptable in most situations these days.

UK spelling	US spelling
civilise, dramatise etc	civilize, dramatize
travelled, modelling	traveled, modeling
colour, honour*	color, honor

* Note that *Labor* is the official spelling for the *Australian Labor Party* and related terms—such as Labor voters—whereas *Labour Party* is used in both New Zealand and Britain.

So as not to offend any client sensibilities,

I would tend to err on the side of UK spelling. When in doubt, especially with words like *liv(e)able*, *p(a)ediatrician*, *ag(e)ing*, *f(o)etus*, *judg(e)ment*, *catalog(ue)* etc., consult a dictionary such as *The Australian Oxford dictionary* or *The Macquarie dictionary*. The main thing is to be consistent throughout a document translation. Which brings us to a point of constant frustration: the default use of US English spellcheckers in word programming software.

In the past I have tried to make my default spellcheck language UK or Australian English, only for Microsoft Word to revert to US English the next time I opened it. To correct this, you first have to make sure your version of Windows (or its equivalent) is set to the language you want.

For Win95, 98, NT, 2000 and XP:

1. START/Settings/Control panel/Keyboard/Language (or Input Locales)
2. Choose the language you prefer and set it as default (using a UK English keyboard will reverse the position of the keys “ and @).

Now open Word; a new document will be displayed and no text should be selected.

1. Tools/Language/Set language
2. Choose your preferred language and click ‘default’. Exit Word.
3. If prompted on exiting Word to save changes to the Normal.dot template, say ‘yes’.

Tell your UK or Australian English-speaking friends about this so that they may feel less threatened by US linguistic imperialism.

Use of inclusive language

Nothing annoys me more than reading sexist language. Although many languages don’t accommodate this distinction, contemporary Australian English does, and under current legislation such as the federal *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*, ‘it is generally unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, national and ethnic origin, gender, or physical or mental disabilities ... When referring to an individual, that person’s sex ... should only be mentioned if this information is pertinent to the discussion.’

When you as a translator don’t wish to use sexist language, but have no other

choice given the original text, you can either notify the client and ask them to amend the text (if possible), explaining where readers may take offence, or add a translator’s note to indicate that this is the author’s use only. On most occasions, however, gender neutrality and/or inclusive language can and must be used in a translation or interpreting assignment. Use of the generic masculine pronoun or occupational title is now totally unacceptable and must be avoided in all cases where there are references to unspecified individuals.

Previously a sentence might have been written thus:

Every translator must choose his words carefully.

My own prejudices would have me immediately assume the author was a literary dinosaur or a sexist older man (or woman) and I would be extremely unlikely to read on. The sentence can be rewritten in several ways:

- Recast it in the plural
Translators must choose their words carefully.
- Leave out the pronoun
Every translator must choose words carefully.
- Recast the sentence to leave out the pronoun
Words must be chosen carefully by every translator.
- Use the gender-free pronouns *you* or *they*
You must choose your words carefully.
They must choose their words carefully.
- Use the alternative pronouns *his* or *her* or *her/his* (or *his/her*)
Every translator must choose his or her words carefully.
Every translator must choose her/his words carefully.

Not all alternatives flow for every sentence, but there is plenty of choice. As there now is with gender-neutral titles. Any title ending with the suffix *-man* is to be avoided like the plague. Gender-free terms for most working roles are included in the Australian standard of occupations (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997).

Gender-specific term	Gender-neutral term
policeman	police officer
fireman	firefighter
foreman	supervisor
chairman	chairperson or chair

All professional practitioners must be aware of cultural sensitivities and choose their words accordingly. This may even include replacing the word *mankind* with *humanity*, or *manned* with *staffed*. I remember once being correctly pulled up for blindly using the term *Christian name* in a translation I did for the Jewish museum.

By the way, here is an example of an unsightly dangling participle:

Rushing to finish the translation assignment, her new pen ran out of ink.

And em dashes look like this: ‘—’. They should be used to show abrupt change, introduce an explanation, or set apart parenthetical expressions with more emphasis than parentheses.

But I’ll write more on these in forthcoming issues, where I also want to address usage of *that* versus *which*, contractions, possessive apostrophes, dashes, hyphens, quotation marks, round and square brackets, abbreviations, conventions for using words instead of numerals, measurements and currencies, and methods of citation, amongst other linguistic quandaries. I welcome readers’ comments on whether this article is useful or relevant, as well as questions on any matters related to English usage, and will reprint those comments/questions along with any answers I am able to supply in subsequent newsletters.

Translation - Getting it Right

by Andrew Bean

Our new 'Getting it Right' brochure appears to have been well-received and seems popular.

Its origins were a pilot study done by the NSW branch to assess how well AUSIT is known in our marketplace. The results confirmed what we suspected—namely that very few of our potential clients have heard of us. With permission from the copyright holder of a similarly entitled brochure produced in the UK, we decided to produce an Australian version bearing the same title. This was first released at a NSW branch meeting in August 2004 and has since been put on our website where it can be accessed through the 'Consumer Guide' tab. A facility has been included to record the number of hits received, which are on the increase.

The brochure is specifically aimed at potential clients without experience in using translators and uses an easy-to-read 'Frequently Asked Question' format, covering where to find a translator, how to pay the right price, how to prepare the job before giving it to a translator, how to work effectively with your translator and what to do when you receive your completed translation. Bulk copies of the brochure version are now held by the Northern and Southern National Administrators (Uli Priester and Moreno Giavonnoni); anyone wanting copies should contact them.

In the absence of suitable mailing lists

The brochure uses an easy-to-read 'Frequently Asked Question' format, covering where to find a translator, how to pay the right price, how to prepare the job before giving it a translator, how to work effectively with your translator and what to do when you receive your completed translation.

AUSIT Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators

**Need a document translated?
Not sure where to find a translator? Or what to do when you have?**

EASY! go to

www.ausit.org

- Click on **Consumer Guide** and browse through "**Getting it Right**",
- Then **Find a Translator or Find an Interpreter** gives you access to over 1000 accredited, experienced professionals catering for just about any language.

AUSIT – We're only a click away

and the resources to use them we have identified Chambers of Commerce, or COCs, institutions and associations as the most cost-effective sources for drawing the attention of potential and first-time customers to 'Getting it Right' and hence to accessing AUSIT translators.

In general, COCs allow only their members to advertise or promote a product/service on their websites, but do accept paid advertisements in their newsletters. German is the language of

the largest number of registered AUSIT translators, and we have therefore placed an advertisement in their forthcoming January/February 2005 newsletter (see left). We also found that the Australia-China Chamber of Commerce (in NSW) was happy to provide a link from their website to ours. This reads:

From time to time you may need to have documents translated or require the services of a translator in Australia. There are good reasons for using a professional. The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators (AUSIT) have produced a brochure entitled 'Translation - Getting it Right'. It addresses such questions as where to find a qualified translator, how to pay the right price, how to work effectively with a translator etc. It can be downloaded at

<<http://www.ausit.org/eng/howpage.php3?id=648>>.

The same website provides access to AUSIT professional accredited translators and interpreters.

(This address links to the 'Consumer Guide' tab. Our site has since been modified and in future the web address given in such notices will link directly to 'Getting it Right'.) We have a similar insert in place with the ASTC (Australian Society of Technical Communicators) and are currently in discussion with Austrade to do the same.

In 2005, depending on the success or otherwise of our advertisement with the German Chamber of Commerce, and subject to National Executive approval plus the availability of funds, we hope to place similar advertisements in other COC newsletters. We also plan to approach selected institutions and associations with a view to them providing a link to the brochure on our website.

Professional development - not just talk

by Dick Speakman



'It is not good enough for court interpreters to claim that the law works differently in their country of origin. As professionals, they must make it their business to know the differences, or otherwise stop embarrassing their colleagues.'

Several weeks ago I was winding my way through the far southwestern interiors of NSW and Queensland. Whenever my car radio managed to pick up a station at all, I would sometimes hear an item broadcast 'in the public interest'. It sounded like some sort of Queensland government message.

Named 'Beachwise', the segment purported to publicise a campaign aimed at teaching children how to stay safe while playing on the beach and in the sea. The commercial contained lots of undoubtedly valuable information about the well-known 'slip-slop-slap' effort, about life savers and staying between the flags and contained various details about jellyfish and insect stings. However, as I listened it occurred to me how odd it was that no mention was made at all of learning how to swim. Pretty crucial information, I should have thought, when discussing safety in the water.

During my years as secretary of AUSIT SA in Adelaide, similar thoughts often occurred to me whenever I picked up the phone and responded to queries from members. There were calls from people—NAATI-accredited professionals and AUSIT members—sometimes posing their questions in accents thick enough to render them all but incomprehensible. When wandering around the various Adelaide courthouses, I was often similarly confronted with accents as thick as mud. Not infrequently, I also encountered pronunciation in courts which was downright embarrassing. Having obtained NAATI accreditation, translators and interpreters must make it their business to further improve their linguistic skills. If this requires further study of English, or lessons in elocution and voice production, so be it.

I am afraid that one only needs to look at some of the postings on the AUSIT e-bulletin to discover that standards for translators are hardly any better. Not

withstanding some obvious typos that were made in haste, there is plenty of appalling spelling, bent grammar and atrocious idiomatic use, as well as flawed syntax. All this occurs against a background of prattle and much time-wasting on the finer points of professional ethics and cultural differences, with much squabbling in general about 'pay rates'; it's as if we were in the Painter & Dockers Union and selling our time only.

To be sure, professional ethics and cultural awareness are important. Regardless of whether we are translating or interpreting, we need to know more than linguistics and to be capable of more than simply substituting a line in one language for a line in another. Language professionals need to adapt sufficiently and to be at ease within their living and work environment to function at the required levels.

Just as it is not good enough for a T&I to ring me and ask questions about AUSIT in barely comprehensible English, much the same applies to interpreters working in the courts who know little or nothing about court procedures, legal concepts, expressions and terminology. It is not good enough for them to claim that the law works differently in their country of origin. As professionals, they must make it their business to know the differences, or otherwise stop embarrassing their colleagues.

As for translators, I just cannot believe that there are still some who have not bothered to come to grips with even the most rudimentary computer programs and procedures and who are, to all intents and purposes, computer illiterate.

Be aware of Internet advertising schemes

by John Gare

Many AUSIT members are currently listed in the Australian Business Pages Directory, or APBD at <http://www.abpd.com.au>.

I have not paid for my entry in the past, but a letter recently arrived for me dated the following Monday requesting a reply by fax within seven days and notifying me of a new inclusion cost of \$175.00 plus GST. I don't know how customers are supposed to know of the existence of this directory, so I don't know why you would pay for their services in preference to the Yellow Pages.

If you check the directory at the above address you will discover an involved and time-consuming search process in which the intending consumer first has to navigate an alphabetical search for classification and then toss a coin as to whether to look through 'Translations' or 'Translation Services', before being confronted by a choice of ten pages to try in an alphabetical search for a translator by trading name (not by language). If you think I am exaggerating, try it. APBD say invoicing will be subsequent only to the correct return of their 'Listing Advice Notice', but I would really like to know how to be removed from this directory at this stage.

I am contributing this article because there seems to be a rash of this sort of practice happening now.

I also received an unsolicited telephone call on behalf of the Melbourne Business Directory telling me it was time to update my entry. They are located at <http://melbourne.ecityguide.com.au/directory>. As is my rude wont, I told the caller I wasn't interested if I had to pay for the listing. Out of curiosity, I looked them up, and my decision was vindicated when searches under both 'Translations' and 'Interpreting' returned the response: 'No businesses

'Out of curiosity, I looked them up, and my decision was vindicated when searches under both 'Translations' and 'Interpreting' returned the response: "No businesses found matching your search criteria."'

found matching your search criteria'.

And finally, there is the Online Directory under the patriotic web address <http://www.aussie.com.au/> and promoted by Business Pages Pty. Ltd. of Melbourne. Their directory is only marginally more user-friendly than that of APBD and again gives no information about language or direction.

Where they 'excel' is in the pricing area. Their snail mail communication to me in small print dated 20 October 2004 informed me that upon accepting their 'standard' listing I will be bound to 'the terms and conditions overleaf', which in

turn state that 'as the initial subscription is for two years, you will be liable to pay \$2,898 (plus GST), payable in two instalments of \$1,449 (plus GST) at the start of each year.' Again, I recognised the names of many AUSIT members in this listing. Personally, I have sent the Online Directory an e-mail asking them to remove my entry from their directory(ies).

Is there anything else we could or should be doing?

Nominations for FIT 'Best of the best'

Nominations from FIT member associations for prizes to be awarded at the August congress in Finland close on 1 February.

Prizes will be awarded in the following categories:

- Astrid Lindgren Prize for outstanding translation of children's literature
- Aurora Borealis Prize for outstanding translation of fiction
- Aurora Borealis prize for outstanding translation of non-fiction
- Karel Capek Medal for translation between languages of limited diffusion
- FIT Prize for best periodical (of a member association or section/chapter thereof)
- FIT Prize for best website (as above)
- Pierre-Francois Caille Medal for outstanding service to the world of translation.

If you have a suggestion for an AUSIT nomination in any category, please let Barbara McGilvray know at bmcg@bigpond.net.au.

Activities of the NSW Branch

(Note: This was the only branch report received for this issue)

During the last quarter the branch organised two social events and one professional development session, 'Systemic Functional Grammar and Text Analysis', presented by Mira Kim from Macquarie University. The event was well attended and a translation practice session with Professor Eddie Ronowicz is planned for Feb. 2005.

Our 'Getting it right' brochure is proving to be a great instrument for raising the profile of the profession. The brochure explains the translation process, possible pitfalls encountered within, and how to find a translator who can do the job. The AUSIT website features as a good source of information, but the overall tone of the brochure is objective and impartial. Some NSW members have been using 'Getting it right' to market themselves: it has been uploaded onto the website of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in NSW and an advertisement about the brochure has been placed in the forthcoming newsletter

of the German Chamber of Commerce. We will approach other associations in 2005 with the same idea in mind.

Last year AUSIT was invited to participate directly in NAATI's Regional Advisory Committees (RACs). The NSW branch welcomes this development and has suggested the following items for discussion in the nation-wide RACs:

- Effective measures for raising the profile of the T&I profession
- Focussing the next TIAD on the business community
- Question the need for testing in languages with a high degree of market saturation
- Incentives for paraprofessional practitioners to upgrade their skills

Our branch has implemented a membership admission procedure which adheres to the specific constitutional requirement for three AUSIT sponsors. If the applicant cannot fulfil the condition,

he/she may provide the names of referees from the local T&I industry. Branch committee members will sponsor the applicant if they are satisfied that a positive track record in the industry is evident. Otherwise the applicant can become an Associate Affiliate and build their membership from there. Implementation of this procedure became unavoidable after the NSW branch received a number of applications seeking to exploit AUSIT membership under the DIMIA 60-points migration scheme.

The branch has been following efforts in WA and Victoria to develop competency-based training and assessment for T&Is and will continue to contribute to this process.

The branch agreed to host the 2005 National AGM in Sydney.

*Uli Priester
Chair
NSW Branch*



Pictured at a celebration of the profession held in Adelaide in November and sponsored by NAATI, TAFE, AUSIT and other major stakeholders are AUSIT SA office bearers and the National President. From left: Daniela Kautsky - Vice-Chair, Marina Morgan - Secretary, Tanya Avramenko - Treasurer, Yveline Pillar - National President, Natsuko Wada - PD Co-ordinator, and John Hallett - Principal Delegate

Centre for translation and interpreting research, Macquarie University

A new Centre for Translation and Interpreting Research (CTIR) has just been established in the Department of Linguistics, Macquarie University. The Centre will support basic, applied and practically-oriented research, as well as particular commissioned projects designed to assist outside bodies (e.g., government departments) in formulating policy and in allocating and targeting appropriate resources in the area of translation and interpreting. (see more next issue)

Magistrates now 'Your Honour'

From 6/9/04, Magistrates of the Magistrates' Court of Victoria are to be addressed in court as 'Your Honour' not 'Your Worship'.

See the link to the new practice direction on the court website:

<[http://www.magistratescourt.vic.gov.au/CA256902000FE154/Lookup/Chief_Magistrates_Directions/\\$file/pd604.pdf](http://www.magistratescourt.vic.gov.au/CA256902000FE154/Lookup/Chief_Magistrates_Directions/$file/pd604.pdf)>

New postgraduate I&T course at UWS in 2005

University of Western Sydney
Graduate Certificate in Interpreting and Translation

A six months full-time or one year part-time course offered on-campus as well as by distance mode. Credit may be granted based on prior relevant postgraduate studies. Applicants must have an Australian Bachelor's degree or equivalent overseas qualification, and must be fully bilingual in ANY language combination. However, language specific classes are run only in Arabic, French, German, Italian, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Spanish or Vietnamese, subject to demand.

More information on
<<http://handbook.uws.edu.au/HBOOK/course.asp?course=1602.1>>.

This degree articulates into the Graduate Diploma in Interpreting and Translation
<<http://handbook.uws.edu.au/hbook/course.asp?course=0A74>> ,

the Master of Arts in Interpreting and Translation
<<http://handbook.uws.edu.au/hbook/course.asp?course=1558.1>>

and the Master of Arts in Translation and Linguistics
<<http://handbook.uws.edu.au/hbook/course.asp?course=0A59>> , with credit towards any of these courses granted based on common units.

For more information contact the Course Advisor:
Ms Jeni Ryde
T (02) 9772 6258
F (02) 9772 6373
E j.ryde@uws.edu.au

Classified advertisements

Due to retirement, the business name Abbey Translations is available. It was established about 5 years ago and has been promoted continuously by a website, a regular ad in the Melbourne YP and direct mail with a brochure. Price: \$1200. Further enquiries: Rolf Bueskens, Tel. 03-54286366 or abbey@gisnet.net.au

Why not use some space in our new 'Classifieds' section?

Members can advertise items such as dictionaries, literature, computer hardware and software (subject to copyright law), services and businesses for sale or barter/swap.

The cost for advertising in the classifieds section is very affordable—if you are interested, please contact me, Bradley Dawson, by email or telephone for details.

Books available

Translation publication: UQ Vanguard 2004, Triad Series #3

Now in its third year, *UQ Vanguard* is a 160-page professional publication which includes linguistic translations and essays about translating, as well as short stories, poems, artwork and photography, all related to the theme of translation.

This year's issue includes contributions by:

- Alfredo Martinez (Director of Postgraduate Studies, School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies, University of Queensland)—excerpt from a translation into Spanish of Hilda Doolittle's *Helen in Egypt*;
- Kevin Windle (Head of the School of

Language Studies, ANU)—a translation into English from Polish of *Love Thy Saviour* by Jerzy Lutowski (part one of a three-part play);

- Vladislav Nekliaev and Russian Rossetti—an essay entitled: 'Translating the Untranslatable';
- Agnieszka Boruc—an essay on 'The "Accuracy" of Translation';
- Siobhan Brownlie (Lecturer, University of Manchester, UK)—a translation into English from French of *Visit to the Museum* by Jean-Marc Doumenc;
- Sarah Holland-Batt—a translation of poetry: 'Translation - Four subjects'.

The publication also includes artwork by Martin Hurley, Sean S. Davey and Cameron

Stelzer (among others), as well as work from many others, including translations from Turkish, Russian, Hungarian, and Chinese.

AUSIT members can purchase a copy of *Translation* directly from *UQ Vanguard* for \$12.95 (p & h included). Please send a money order or cheque made out to 'UQ Vanguard' and post it to:

UQ Vanguard
c/o Clubs and Societies
UQ Union
University of Queensland
St Lucia, 4072.

Please direct any inquiries to uqvanguard@uq.edu.au.