

National

Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.

Volume 14, number 3 - July 2006



Helping translators deal with isolation

AUSIT fee increases explained

Unusual T/I assignments

Ethics and the NAATI test

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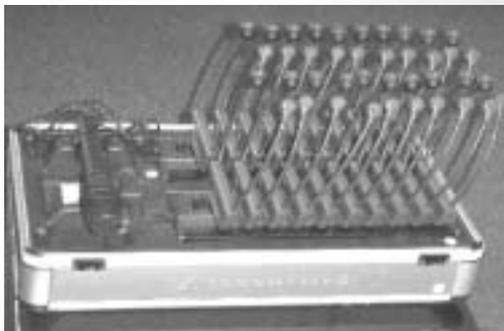
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From the President

Chris Poole elaborates on how AUSIT is pulled and pushed in many directions



Dear Readers of the AUSIT National Newsletter,

What percentage of all our members are you? And what percentage of all 'translators' and 'interpreters' are our members? And would each of you agree with every person who calls themselves a 'translator' or 'interpreter', that they were indeed translators and interpreters? (Let's not even go near the word 'professional'!) And finally, how many of you will finish reading, and retain the information in, this article?

This list hints at the many barriers to becoming a cohesive and strong profession.

There is a mildly soviet pressure to have the *National Newsletter* an upbeat, encouraging, call-to-solidarity-and-support. I feel myself to be a propagandist if I don't also mention our many difficulties. We are pulled and pushed in many directions, and some of the pressure and tension is internal. A reader of this journal alone would not suspect the many disputes and political factors that make AUSIT's journey a slow and winding one. I encourage you all to consider a list of diametrics:

- There is pressure for AUSIT to become an industrial advocate, fighting on behalf of the *particular people* who are members, versus the pressure to establish professional standards and only accept people who meet those standards (and perhaps expel those who don't).
- The importance of setting a bar that is high and implacable conflicts with the need to generate income from

membership fees.

- Setting standards and raising the bar for a profession also involves a high degree of uniformity and consistency (imagine if each doctor nurtured their own theory of the circulation of blood!). This conflicts with the very high degree of diversity of experience of T&I practitioners. There are many of us who see something through a keyhole and who yet believe that they see the whole world.
- The early and late stage contributors: full of enthusiasm at the beginning, only to exhaust themselves struggling with all the tensions above, the last straw often being criticism from members who, by some hallucinatory process, see self-interest behind all the volunteer work done for AUSIT.

The eBulletin gives a reader a better taste of some of the tensions within AUSIT, and it also provides a view of some of the barriers to cohesion and strength. I was dismayed for example to read that people felt there had been no explanation of why fees had gone up. I will try again in the simplest of terms.

AUSIT has grown rapidly in the past few years. Prior to that, the basic administrative tasks required to exist were undertaken on a voluntary basis by some very dedicated members. Goodwill is finite, and with growth, the burden became too much for those individuals. We had to start paying for things that we used to get for free (or at least well below market price).

Fees have gone up so that the professional association can continue to exist. What you 'get' for your membership is the opportunity and the privilege to associate with other professionals.

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Thank you once again to all for your submissions. I would like to remind members that the deadline for the AGM/annual report issue is 10 September 2006.

Special thanks go out to Barbara and Louise for their great proofreading work and to Yveline for her many ideas for articles.

Please send any letters, articles or images for forthcoming editions to:

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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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Front cover photo — Participants at the Wordfast software workshop conducted in the Deaf SA computer room by Claudia Ait Touati on 27 April.

Why the fee increases?

National Treasurer **Louis Vorstermans** comments on the need to invest more in AUSIT

Every organisation goes through cycles of growth and consolidation over time, and it seems to me that AUSIT is presently in a consolidation phase. The focus has shifted from rapidly expanding membership, to increasing the organisation's activities and effectiveness in meeting the inevitable rise in expectations that comes with a larger membership base. Unfortunately, whereas a rapid rise in membership numbers is always accompanied by a rapid rise in income, consolidation and an increased focus on achieving the organisation's strategic goals has had the opposite effect of costing money whilst income remains static at best.

This latter part of the cycle inevitably forces those who volunteered for leadership positions to face the unpalatable task of having to make a decision on increasing membership contributions. The National Council's reluctance to increase membership fees is both deep-seated and understandable, often leading to delays in doing so, and, as was the case in 2004, a timidity in setting realistic levels. After all, we are well aware that many of our members are doing it tough, and we are reluctant to lose members simply because the dues are too high to be affordable.

Anyone who has ever attended a membership function or an AUSIT meeting will be keenly aware of the constant pressure from members based on the 'ought to' principle: AUSIT ought to do this and ought to do that, etc. ad infinitum. Those who are charged with turning the 'ought to' principle into effective action are equally keenly aware of the limited resources they have at their disposal to make this happen.

If there is anyone who thinks this is a dilemma unique to AUSIT, I can confidently disabuse him or her of that notion based on my

own experience with other industry associations. This struggle makes managing most associations a challenge and has often defeated the most stout-hearted and discouraged the most optimistic.

The three of you who actually read my annual report last year will be familiar with my views on the level of AUSIT's current membership contributions and what I believe they should be. However, I too am aware of the tension that exists between the need for a broad-based membership to ensure we can claim a mandate for the profession as a whole, and the need to effectively demonstrate our credibility in achieving our ends (to protect and advance the interests of our members).

As a result, I have reluctantly supported an adjustment to AUSIT's membership dues of Associates to \$99, Members - \$176 and the new category of Senior Practitioners - \$220. When comparing this with current dues, please bear in mind that the above figures also include GST from 1 July 2006. The revised membership dues became effective from 1 July 2006, meaning that any renewals paid after that date must be paid at the new rates. For the 762 who did not read my annual report, I will explain that my reluctance was based on a view that the new rates are still far too low. The increased revenue will still not provide the organisation with the resources needed to successfully fight the battles that are before us, such as pay levels for community interpreters and re-accreditation by NAATI to name but a couple.

I have recommended to the NC that we gradually increase membership fees to a realistic level over a period of five years, and I hope that those who follow in our footsteps will have the intestinal fortitude to implement that strategy. I regard NAATI's recent moves

regarding re-accreditation as part of a strategy to increase its hold over the industry and thus manipulate the cost of services purchased by its shareholders, who also happen to be the biggest buyers of translation and interpreting services in Australia: i.e. the Commonwealth and State Governments.

Cost pressures on our services will get worse rather than better as things progress, and a strong industry voice (AUSIT) is going to be essential if we are to survive and prosper as language professionals. We need to invest more to achieve more, both financially and in other ways, because the harder we try, the luckier we get!

(from page 5)

Letters to the editor

'try and rectify the situation', as comments in the last issue by Uli Priester (NSW), Annamaria Arnall (WA) and Moreno Giovannoni (Vic/Tas) make clear. Broadening the criteria for the main membership category was not a mistake. On the contrary, it reflects the desire for greater inclusiveness that has been discussed repeatedly over the years (and, incidentally, recommended by NAATI).

The membership category changes in place since last year's AGM and the fee structure introduced for this financial year will hopefully bring the beginnings of improvement in AUSIT's financial situation and eventually enable us to employ a part-time paid Executive Officer. Without one we are seriously hampered in working towards our goals and not yet able to provide all the benefits and advantages membership of a professional association should offer.

*Barbara McGilvray, MA
Fellow of AUSIT
Advanced Translator IT > EN*

Letters to the editor

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on a few points in Chris Poole's 'from the President' piece in the May *National Newsletter* (vol.14 no.2), in which he discusses the new membership categories.

Chris says: 'The Member category is for people with NAATI accreditation'. In fact the main criterion for this category is 'NAATI accreditation or Recognition or equivalent qualifications and experience...' (as Moreno also noted in his letter published in the same issue).

This is in line with the original intention of reforming our membership categories to be more inclusive and not exclusively tied to NAATI accreditation, with the aim of eventually representing all T/Is practising in Australia rather than a small percentage as at present. 'Equivalent qualifications' would of course include university degrees and diplomas in T or I from recognised tertiary institutions.

The President also rightly says that the name of our new membership category, Senior Practitioner, is a compromise: it proved impossible to find a title everyone was happy with. I agree with him that 'Practising Member' would have been preferable, but since the category as it stands will not (and cannot) include all members who are practising, it would be misleading and discriminatory. Not all those eligible will want to join the new category, but it does present an exciting new opportunity and should create an 'updraft' effect that will be very positive for the Institute and the profession.

Chris' vertical career path ('each step harder to reach than the last, and fewer people reaching them... meaningful and reliable gateways such as qualifications based on competencies, higher education degrees, the NAATI exam, completion of mentorship,

and consistent performance at the professional level') is pretty much the ideal envisaged three decades ago when the federal government decided to implement the recommendations of the Galbally Report to set standards and benchmarks in T&I and foster the emergence of a profession. The implementation has not got within cooee of the ideal, partly as a result of NAATI choosing to start accrediting from the bottom, instead of from the top, as many of us urged at the time. (Among other things, this would have created a ready supply of mentors, which is something we're still struggling with today.)

I cannot agree with Chris that finally admitting paraprofessionals to full membership necessarily hinders this path, or is unfair to current 'Ordinary Members'. Originally I belonged to the 'exclusive' camp (i.e. we worked hard for our professional level status and paraprofessionals should be encouraged to do the same), but I became convinced some years ago that if AUSIT is to fully represent the profession – and improve its clout in the process – it needs to admit to full membership all practising T/Is who wish to join their national professional association. Now that we have in place a higher membership category for those working consistently as translators or interpreters, who can show evidence of ongoing practice at a professional level and who continue to keep up their skills with regular professional development, it is appropriate to open up full membership to all practitioners.

What doesn't seem appropriate is for the President to be preparing an amendment for this year's AGM with the aim of changing what was passed last year. I hope he will rethink that. If he doesn't, I hope the majority of members will vote against it. There's no need to

(continued previous page)

National Council

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TREASURER	Louis Vorstermans
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NSW	Uli Priester
QLD	Ita Szymanska
SA/NT	Natsuko Wada
VIC/TAS	Lawson Bayly
WA	Annamaria Arnall

Motions passed since the publication of the last newsletter:

Motion #100, dated 28.06.06
That AUSIT sets aside \$2600 for the production and distribution of 2000 copies of three brochures.

Motion #103, dated 29.06.06

That Yveline Piller attend the Associations Forum National Conference on behalf of AUSIT, at a cost of \$594.

Since publication of the last newsletter the following people have been admitted to AUSIT as members or subscribers (motions #98, 99, 106 & 107):

Simona Irde, Overseas;
Bob Munro, NSW;
Violeta Dimitrova Dimova-Nikols, NSW;
Marion Baillat, NSW;
Nicolas Canadas, NSW;
Patricia Eugenia Coley Porras, NSW;
YuChan Hung, NSW;
Cyrille Bouzy, NSW;
Bronwyn Nicola Suzuki, NSW;
Elitsa Georgieva Cafe, NSW;
Miriam Hamidi, NSW;
Michele Miller, NSW;
Wei Song, NSW;
ChienHua Lee, NSW;
Kenny Wang, NSW;
Yan Qian, NSW;
Junko Faith, NSW;
Ziad Elasmr, NSW;
Katriina Paivi Malmberg, NSW;
Mai Thi Tuyet Nguyen, NSW;
Helen Ma-Castles, QLD;
Kerianne Gilbert, QLD;
Veronique Maes, QLD;
Madoka Shirao, QLD;
Yuuka Okazaki, QLD;
Chen Xu, VIC;
Yu Li, VIC;
Katerina Goulos, VIC;
Western Health (Celia Wigzell), VIC;
Laurence Petit, VIC;
John David Little, VIC.

Welcome to all these new members!

Other AUSIT state office bearers

ACT

Vice-Chair	(vacant)
Mins. Secretary	Carole Aubury
Treasurer	Tarja Karjalainen
NAATI RAC	Carole Aubury

NSW

Vice-Chair	(vacant)
Secretary	Stephen Houston
Treasurer	Andrew Bean
M'ship Sec.	Wai H. Kwok
PD Coordinator	Michael Grunwald
NAATI RAC	Paul Sinclair

Qld

Vice-Chair	(vacant)
Secretary	Patricia Avila
Treasurer	Julie Segal
PD Coordinator	Jadranka Brown
NAATI RAC	Patricia Avila Ita Szymanska

SA/NT

Vice-Chair	Daniela Kautsky
Secretary	Marina Morgan
Treasurer	Tanya Avramenko
PD Coordinator	Dirk Pohland
NAATI RAC	Kayoko Todd

Vic/Tas

Vice-Chair	Lyn Bongiovanni
Secretary	Natalia Chernishova-Simoes
Treasurer	Brad Paez
PR Officer	Kate Ritchie
PD Coordinators	Sarina Phan Sompit Watkins
NAATI RAC	Eva Hussain

WA

Vice-Chair	(vacant)
Secretaries	Annamaria Arnall Michele Dreyfus
Treasurer	Diana Rodriguez
Liaison with WAITI	Ella Davies
PD Coordinator	Annamaria Arnall
NAATI RAC	Michele Dreyfus

All these people's contact details are available from the AUSIT website.

Home alone

Vic/Tas Branch chair **Eva Hussain's** tips on dealing with the isolation a freelance translator faces



Translators working from home have got it made, right? There's no boss, no meetings to attend and no office politics. Whilst

there are clear advantages to a home-based business, isolation can become one of the biggest challenges. Being stuck in front of a computer all day is what most of us face on a daily basis, but there are many ways for T/Is to stay connected to the outside world.

1. Get out.

Attend AUSIT PD activities, trade shows, exhibitions, conferences and chamber of commerce meetings. Not only can they provide networking opportunities, but these events can increase your visibility and create public and industry awareness of your services. You'll also be kept abreast of industry trends and developments, meet other colleagues and prospective clients and learn new skills. Whilst the telephone is an important tool, it shouldn't become your sole means of communicating. Schedule meetings with suppliers, clients and colleagues outside your home office.

2. Go back to school.

Attending seminars, lectures and workshops can help you enhance your skills and give you the chance to meet some new people. As a professional, you need to continuously update your skills and knowledge, but participating in professional development activities also demonstrates your commitment to improvement and advancement. You should set

your own objectives at the start of each year and evaluate them periodically.

3. Get involved in AUSIT.

Participating in events and volunteering can serve as a great low-cost marketing tool and create good exposure for you and your business. Working on committees can arm you with extra expertise such as negotiation, leadership and organisation skills.

4. Cultivate friendships.

Running a home-based business can be a great opportunity to develop a close support network.

5. Create personal space.

A computer that's always on can be an enormous distraction. Once the workday is done, turn it off. Scheduling time with your family can be a balancing act. Prioritise your tasks, set goals for your day and schedule fun time.

6. Reduce time wasters.

Instead of getting sucked into the Internet vortex, disconnect and deal with your email offline. If you need to be on the Internet to accomplish your work, be strict with yourself to avoid getting distracted.

7. Be kind to yourself.

Take lunch breaks, go for a walk, book yourself in for a massage.

8. Get help.

If you find that you have too much work for one person, find temporary help until you can regain control. Using professional services for things that you're not an expert on, such as bookkeeping or accounting, is also a good idea.

Ethics questions and the NAATI test

- from the March eBulletin postings

Posted 24 March by Belinda Hercus

I have received this email from someone in China and am wondering if anyone else has received anything similar. It is a request for my opinion on answering an ethics question in the NAATI test from someone in China who failed in the ethics section. On the one hand I am sympathetic to people who are trying to sit for a test in a vacuum. On the other hand, I am very reluctant to have someone take my answer as the 'model answer' or even worse, have it rote learned by thousands pumped through some NAATI test cram school (which it appears do exist in China).

Just wondering what others think of this or if anyone else has been approached with similar questions.

'Hi Belinda,
... I found your e-mail address on the Practitioners' directory. I just sat for NAATI test in December. But unfortunately, I failed in the Ethics section.

The examiner's comment is :
"Inadequate understanding of application of the principles."

I find some principles confusing and overlapping. For example, "If given materials to translate, which is [sic] totally against your religion or ethnic origin, what will you do?"
Will you share your experience, regarding application of principles?...'

26 March — Michael Grunwald

Re: NAATI Ethics questions

May I just add that another problem might be that different markers from different backgrounds/states/ethnicities may actually mark the answers differently!!!

I have been told by one examiner that she would frown upon verbatim recitals of the actual ethics guidelines as printed in the original document – this would be in total contradiction to the Chinese principle of quoting learned sources verbatim to demonstrate one's knowledge – this is why many foreign students have major problems with plagiarism in Australia.

Similarly, overseas applicants are being asked to learn Australian ethics – these differ in many aspects to the 'right' thing to do in their countries – most of

which are far less individualistic and 'supposedly' egalitarian than ours.

While the NAATI guidelines provide information, they do not spell out what the right and wrong answers are in an Australian context!

26 March — Sam Berner

'Similarly, overseas applicants are being asked to learn Australian ethics – these differ in many aspects to the 'right' thing to do in their countries – most of which are far less individualistic and 'supposedly' egalitarian than ours.'

Hear, hear! And pray, for those of us who practice a faith which imposes on them its own ethical dilemmas - what are THEY to do? The job, or eternity. Secular 'ethics' or the sacred writ?

Ethics is based on the concept of 'doing no harm'. The Greeks were bright enough to know that going into the nitty gritty of when, how and where would lead to perdition, so they left it to the individual's own judgment. Do we teach ethics to kids at school (not among other things, but as a concrete subject)?

I can hear a few here take a breath and launch a 'Yes, but...' At the last AUSIT workshop a very experienced interpreter said loudly that 'we are not allowed to have an opinion'. That, of course, already breaches my constitutional right to freedom of opinion. Nevertheless, I have a bigger dilemma. I am under a religious obligation not to let evil/wrong/unfair (whatever) acts that I know of or see pass me by without doing anything to straighten them. Aha? If I can't by deed, then by word and if not by word then through prayer (which is the lowest act and left for the really disempowered). And how, pray, if I have no right to expressing an opinion?

Please, enlighten me again, WHOSE ethics are these? And what is the 'correct' answer to the question this unfortunate Chinese applicant failed? If this was the only available job, would he rather starve or translate? What if translating it caused it to be disseminated and thus led to unrest in his homeland in which many people were killed? And how different would be the answer if he was asked to translate it for an interested government agency who wanted to know what their enemies are saying about it?

And what value are "ethics" without an enforcement mechanism? And who will enforce them? AUSIT? My kippa off to the Ethics Committee, but do you have a legal backing, an act? And while I clip this piece of cloth back on my head, one last question: what about the majority that are not AUSIT members, and from whose quarters comes most of the unpleasant noise?

26 March — Dick Speekman

As I see it, the whole idea of teaching the subject of ethics to an interpreter whose native language is not English and whose cultural background is non-Australian - but who wishes to ply his [sic] profession in Australia - is to show him [sic] the way we are supposed to conduct ourselves in Australia. In fact, this is also part and parcel of the interpreting profession; not just to spout words in the other language but also to bridge the differing cultures at the same time. For this, the interpreter must be more than just vaguely familiar with both.

His/her own religion and background should not at all be involved and has nothing to do with the issue at hand.

26 March — Patricia Avila

AUSIT put together a Code of Ethics in 1996. It's been modified and updated once already (I think in 2005).

The CoE contains 8 main principles that translators and interpreters have chosen as (under the AUSIT tag, I think Dr Harry Blackmore headed the team) their 'umbrella' guidelines on how to conduct themselves ethically and professionally within the Australian context.

It includes the directive that if, for whatever reason, one is not comfortable with an assignment, one should withdraw (very simplistically stated). One main reason might be that one's impartiality is deemed to be impinged on if continuing/accepting a job that totally goes against your religion, beliefs, food choices, etc. And a whole lot of stuff in between....

People familiar with AUSIT's CoE think it's common sense, after all. But it does delineate very clearly what is considered ethical behaviour in the profession. Obviously it is based on behaviours and mores of Australia, not other countries/cultures.

(continued on back page)

Interpreting in practical footwear

In the first of what is hoped to be a regular newsletter section on unusual T&I assignments, **Yveline Pillier** describes her experience on an industrial site

A recent interpreting assignment made me realise how the principles of practice we adhere to sometimes have to be adapted to circumstances.

I was commissioned to interpret on an industrial site, where a technician sent by the overseas manufacturer was to fix and test a winemaking machine and train the Australian staff to operate it.

The six-day assignment started when I picked up the LOTE-speaking technician at 6 am from the airport and drove him to the site, a few hours away. I quickly found that some cultural clarification would be needed, as the technician showed surprise and even shock when the manager called him by his first name. But this familiarity was quickly accepted and reciprocated. The rest of the Australian team seemed a little more guarded, for reasons I discovered later.

Since the technician needed to work on the machine, I had to stand close by to convey his words and those of the team back and forth. The floor of the factory was constantly wet but luckily I had

some casual clothes and practical footwear with me, unlike the usual business garb and heels I wear for my other interpreting assignments. Another unexpected feature I had to cope with in order to save my voice was the level of ambient noise from the machines and bottles. I did that by taking notes and moving to a quieter location to convey the message, but this was not always possible as the parties would often express themselves in half-sentences completed with body language pointing to machine parts, rather than by naming the actual parts.

The technician's findings were sporadic and unpredictable, and the manager could not stay around constantly as he had to attend to other things. I kept taking notes of anything the technician said, but conveying the message directly in the first person some time later to the manager was too confusing. So this led me to break a cardinal rule and to preface my interpreting with: 'The technician said: "I have changed the settings ...etc"'.

I had advised the client of the need for breaks, which I expected would

be during lunch and 'smokos'. Instead, the breaks were dependent upon the very nature of the technician's work, as he might be silently tinkering for long periods before uttering some useful grunt. During lunch, the Australian team and the technician established friendly contact through me and discussed winemaking techniques in other parts of the world. This is when I found out that each side had had a previous negative experience, which had coloured our arrival: the Australians still had bad memories from another overseas technician, whilst this technician had experienced a difficult and lonely assignment in another country. The common point? No interpreter was commissioned for either of these negative experiences.

In the end, it all paid off: the machine worked beautifully and the much-delayed production resumed, the staff were able to operate it independently, the technician was invited to come back, and the interpreter's invoice, calculated on a professional rate, was paid promptly.

Foreign police dogs hit language barrier

British police are drafting in foreign dogs to help with their fight against crime because of a shortage of suitable home-bred alsatians. However, handlers are having to overcome a language barrier before the new recruits from countries such as Slovakia, the Netherlands and Belgium can be set to work.

The dogs responded only to commands in their native handler's tongue, which has meant at least

two forces either sending officers abroad to learn how to speak to them or enlisting interpreters.

<<http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/foreign-police-dogs-hit-language-barrier/2006/06/15/1149964675843.html>>

I've had to translate for a dog before.

We have a client who has sent their prize showdog to Japan for a year to stay with some people over there and we had to translate a list of commands (or rather set out the pronunciation and meaning of the English commands) so that the Japanese people would know how to handle and show the dog.....

Chris Poole

English in a Japanese first-aid class

AUSIT member **Yoriko Waki** combines skills with the Kyoto City Fire Services

In March 2006 I coordinated an ESL class for Year 9 students, in conjunction with the first aid lecture by the Kyoto City Fire Services.

For the last ten years in Japan, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency (in the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) has promoted the idea that civilians should undertake first aid lectures under the guidance of the first aid instructors authorised by the fire service in each city.

I am qualified to teach first aid and am also now working as a secondary school teacher of ESL. In the middle of February this year my students had just sat the senior high school entrance examinations, so they did not have to worry so much about the final exam at our junior high school.

I was constantly thinking of new ways for them to use English in my class, when suddenly I hit upon a great idea! The school would surely support a lesson where students would be learning from their own daily life experiences. Luckily, I was qualified to teach this sort of lecture (first aid). I envisaged a class combining a first aid lecture and the use of contextual English vocabulary and planned the class from this basis.

The first obstacle I had to overcome was that the class had to be three consecutive hours in length. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications stipulates that first aid courses should be so. I consulted with the head of the instruction section about this planning. He soon gave me approval and set aside three hours on 3 March.

The second problem I faced was how to organise the time speaking English whilst practising first aid itself. The Fire Services staff are always punctual, and with few exceptions must also return to work at a set time. I met with a senior

emergency staff member to discuss this matter, for the fire station had never conducted this sort of first aid lecture using English. We finally agreed that while introducing the procedure of first aid with an AED (Automated External Defibrillator), I should translate what a student would say to a sick or injured person (in this case a dummy), and introduce well in advance expressions for practising first aid so that students could memorise these phrases, ensuring they could easily remember them when the proper time came. A translation chart (from Japanese into English) was also needed.

Speaking of translation... firstly, technical terms had to be collected and examined in terms of register; secondly, useful sentences and paragraphs had to be listed. I remember this procedure was normally the first stage in any translation assignment. This time, however, I dared break the rule: I translated the expressions printed on the first aid flowchart issued by the Fire Services from Japanese into English. Then a native English teaching staff member at our school went over my English. The staff member advised me to use concise words or phrases so that students could remember them easily, and best of all, short expressions could be transmitted to other assistants. Phrases such as 'Bring help!' assist students when dealing with emergency first aid situations.

Now the staff at the Kyoto City Fire Services want me to translate the chart and all the first aid instructions for instructors and staff. Japan has increased the number of places for residents of foreign countries recently; the probability of a situation where English might be required has increased as a result. We might end up performing first aid on or with other people who do not speak Japanese, and *we might communicate with them in*

English as a common language, even when an accident happens here in Japan. The staff who asked me to translate the information understand this future need well.

After collecting questionnaires on this first aid plan, I could not go past one of the responses in the 'free answer' section: 'I do not know why we had to do first aid in English at the end of the lecture because I do not think I will ever go abroad in my life.' At the end of the school year I was able to explain to my ESL students that even in Japan, we would have good opportunities to use English whilst performing first aid. Here was the moment when I felt the goal behind all my planning had been achieved.

(from page 11)

PDF text to word docs

Posted by Faith Hunter

Usually you can save the PDF file as a text file and then copy and paste from that. You will however lose all your formatting. So whether this is worth doing depends on the complexity of the document. The PDF format itself was designed to exclude the possibility of copying-and-pasting.

Posted by Daniel Muller

Teresa,
You can use the "text tool" IF you have the full Adobe version (i.e. not the free reader) AND the pdf document was printed from a word processing tool (i.e. not a PDF-ed fax or image).
You could also try to run the pdf file through a "PDF to html converter" ...in theory it might work (if it extracts the text as text and not as images), but I haven't actually tried it yet myself.
Otherwise you may have to run the PDF file (or extracted images or screendumps) through your OCR software if you have any.

Professions Australia

Information taken from Professions Australia Alerts, numbers 368-372

Changes to general skilled migration visas

The Federal Government has announced changes to the general skilled migration visa categories and for overseas students.

The Government has decided to:

- increase the base level of English language proficiency which must be demonstrated by applicants for general skilled migration visas;
- increase the allocation of bonus points to applicants who achieve English language scores at above the base level;
- place greater emphasis on skilled work experience as a major factor in the points test.

The changes have been made following an evaluation of the general skilled migration categories by Dr Bob Birrell and his colleagues at Monash University. An electronic copy of the evaluation report can be found on the DIMIA website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/research/publications/index.htm>. A hard copy can be obtained by calling 02 6264 2794.

Guide for assessment of professional qualifications for migration purposes

An updated version of the Good Practice Guide for the Assessment and Recognition of Overseas Qualifications and Skills for the Purposes of Migration is now available at: <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/PublicationsAndResearch/Default.htm>.

Productivity Commission report - Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth

Migration has been an important influence on Australian society and the economy, affecting the size, composition and geographic location of the population and workforce, according to the Productivity Commission (PC) report on the *Economic Impacts of Migration and Population Growth*.

Recent changes to Australia's migration program include a greater emphasis on skills, increased numbers of temporary immigrants, and more diversification in the country of origin.

The number of Australians leaving this country, permanently and long term, has risen markedly in recent years. But the number has been considerably smaller than those coming to Australia.

The Commission considers it unlikely that migration will have a substantial impact on income per capita and productivity because:

- the annual flow of migrants is small relative to the stock of workers and population;
- migrants are not very different in relevant respects from the Australian-born population and, over time, the differences become smaller.

It also indicates that the overall economic effect of migration appears to be positive but small, consistent with previous Australian and overseas studies.

In terms of the selection criteria of the Migration Program:

- the greater emphasis on skills has been associated with better labour market outcomes for immigrants;
- English language proficiency stands out as a key factor determining the ease of settlement and labour market success of immigrants.

A report in The Australian (May 17 Page 8) raises some issues addressed in the report – the need to better utilise the professional skills of existing migrants, particularly engineers, and the need for changes to the tax system to make Australia a more competitive destination for skilled migrants.

The PC report can be found at: <http://www.pc.gov.au/study/migrationandpopulation/>

[finalreport/index.html](http://www.pc.gov.au/study/migrationandpopulation/finalreport/index.html)

House Economics Committee to inquire into Australia's services sector

The House of Representatives Economics Committee has launched a new inquiry into Australia's services industry. The committee, chaired by Bruce Baird, will look at the current and future directions of Australia's services sector, with a particular focus on future opportunities to expand service exports.

In 2002 the Productivity Commission's research paper entitled *Australia's services sector: A study in diversity* highlighted that services 'account for more than three-quarters of national output and four out of every five jobs'. Given these statistics, the report concluded that 'services dominate economic activity in Australia'.

'Given the fundamental, and perhaps underplayed, importance of the services sector to Australia's economy, it is timely that the Economics committee is undertaking this inquiry,' Mr Baird said.

'The committee is particularly keen to investigate whether there are opportunities to improve Australia's service exports so that when the demand for, or the prices of, our commodities eventually fall we can continue to enjoy strong growth.' The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration is inquiring into where the service export sector now sits in Australia's export (and import competing) environment, focusing on, but not limited to:

- the tourism and education services sectors;
- the impact of the resources boom on the service sector;
- future global opportunities for Australian service exports;
- policies for realising these

(continued next page)

(from previous page)

opportunities.

Further details about the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website at <http://www.apf.gov.au/house/committee/efpa/> or by contacting the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4534 or emailing: efpa.reps@aph.gov.au.

The inquiry represents an opportunity to show the services sector is not just tourism and education. Professions Australia intends to make a submission to the inquiry to highlight a number of issues including the importance of investment in education and skills development to underpin the future contribution of the professional services sector to export growth.

We will work closely with the Australian Services Roundtable in developing our submission.

NSW Bar Association's scheme receives Commonwealth approval

The New South Wales Bar Association has become the first professional body which has developed a professional standards scheme to be prescribed under Commonwealth regulations. Prescription under the *Australian Securities and Investments Commission Regulations 2001*, *Corporations Regulations 2001*, and *Trade Practices Regulations 1974* ensures that Commonwealth legislation cannot be used as an

alternative source of legal action for uncapped damages.

In announcing the decision, the Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer Peter Dutton indicated he welcomed applications for prescription at the Commonwealth level by other professional groups that have worked with the Professional Standards Council to develop strong risk management practices that focus on the best outcomes for their customers. The full text of the Minister's press release can be found at: <http://assistant.treasurer.gov.au/pcd/content/pressreleases/2006/036.asp>

Moving text from PDF files to Word documents

Posted on the eBulletin, 13 June 06:

Is there any way I can copy and paste some words from a PDF file and use them in a Word file?

Teresa Lee.

Posted by Jean-Jacques Portail:

Hi Teresa,

I read this in this morning's *Age* that in fact there are many ways to change a PDF file into a word file.

Apparently the simplest and cheapest (free) way is to click on File > Save As, from the free Acrobat Reader, and then save the text. This can be then be opened in Word for editing. The catch is that only the text content is saved; all formatting, fonts, images, etc. are not retained/converted in the Word document.

There are many commercial programs that will do a full conversion. Use Google and enter "convert PDF to word" and you will have more than 300,000 items. If you leave out the quotes you will have 28 million. For occasional use there are

free programs. See: <http://www.freepdfconvert.com> for a service that requires you to upload your file to their server, and then you can download the converted Word file or have it emailed to you.

Although this service is free, the conversion is excellent. I tested a complex PDF file with multiple graphics, tables, fonts and headers and footers, and all came out exactly as in the PDF file.

You probably think there is a catch with this program, and there is: for non-members, only the first 10 pages are converted. As membership costs \$10 a year, this is still cheaper than any other program I know of.

Posted by Claudia Ait-Touati:

Dear Teresa Lee,
There are a few (pretty good) converters that you can download

off the Internet. Most are shareware, so you will have to pay a small fee.

Depends on how often you would use it of course. I use mine (intelligent converters - PDF 2 word converter) quite frequently. The nice thing is that you don't lose much of the formatting. Very useful for large pdf files.

Posted by Sue Jollow:

Jean-Jacques Portail's reply to Teresa Lee, via *The Age*, part of which is below, raises one concern with me which is my responsibility for the confidentiality of clients' documents.

I know there are a few blurry edges with say clerical staff at agencies handling them but sending files off into mysterious cyberspace is something I baulk at.

For me I usually just want to be able to have the text of a document available in the same format to work from in so far as the characters survive such a conversion anyway, and hope I can do without the formatting.

(continued page 9)

FIT flash - May 2006

The FIT Executive Committee met in Brussels, Belgium, on 18-19 March 2006. This meeting dealt mainly with the FIT financial statements for 2005, administrative matters and membership issues. The meeting was well attended, with FIT council members and observers from France, Germany and Lebanon.

FIT Committee news

The chairpersons of FIT Committees for 2005-2008 were approved at the meeting as follows: Bibliography, Rene Haeseryn; Community Interpreting, Helen Slatyer; Copyright, Bente Christensen; Human Rights, Michael Friel; Court Interpreting and Legal Translation, Liese Katshinka; Literary Translation, Ellinor Kolstad (2006), Lynn Hoggard (2007-2008); Media, Gabriela Scandura; Status of the Profession, Jiri Stejskal; Technology,

Alan Melby; Terminology, Nicole Sevigny; Training, Hannelore Lee-Jahnke; FIT Regional Network for North America, Esteban Cadena; and FIT Regional Centre Europe, Joao Esteves-Ferreira. The Regional Centre Latin America met in Guatemala on 25-27 May: www.agitguatemala.org.

During celebrations of the ten-year jubilee of the International Writers and Translators Centre of Rhodes, the FIT Copyright Committee held a copyright seminar at the Centre on 19-20 July 2006.

The 8th International Forum of the FIT Committee for Court Interpreting and Legal Translation will focus on continuing education, theory and practice. It will be held in Switzerland on 2-5 November 2006: www.forum-zuerich.ais-oeg.com.

XVIII FIT World Congress website launched

The Chinese, French and English versions of the website for the XVIII FIT World Congress, 2-7 August 2008 have been launched at www.fit2008.org. The Congress theme is Translation and Cultural Diversity.

Upcoming meetings

The South African Translators Institute (SATI) celebrates its 50th anniversary on Friday, 25 August 2006 and will mark the occasion by holding a conference that day in Johannesburg, South Africa. SATI has invited the FIT Council to attend.

The FIT Executive Committee will meet in Johannesburg on Thursday, 24 August and the FIT Council will be held in Johannesburg on 26-27 August.

You are all invited to the first ProZ.com powwow in Melbourne, organised by a local translator, me,

Ana Irene Gioino, alias Ana Blyth

Date: September 23rd 2006.
Venue: The Observatory Café, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue South Yarra 3141 Victoria. 9650 5600 T, 9654 3833 F
Time: From 10 am for morning coffee and then lunch.

Including a walk across the gardens (free of charge) to have afternoon tea at the other cafeteria by the black swans lake. The evening is open to improvisation.

ProZ powwows are informal get-togethers of groups of ProZ.com members living in close proximity. Local translators organise the events for local translators.

ProZ.com, the largest website for translators, helps the generally isolated members of this profession to meet via powwows.

The complete information for your FAQs about what a Powwow is and related bits and pieces can be found at this link:

<http://www.proz.com/powwow/861> (Invite a friend!)

This link will also provide you with a lovely display of the translators coming to the event. Not only are local polyglots coming but also some from far away.

And do not miss the multi-voiced virtual conversation going on regarding agenda, expectations, dancing and drinking, the venue and menu at the same link!

Don't be a hermit! Make yourself vocal, social and global. You can bring friends, you can bring spouses or children, you can bring a non-Prozian translator.

I will see you there.

Branch News

SA/NT Branch

Merit Award for the Advanced Diploma of Translating (Japanese)



On Friday evening, 19 May, the Adelaide Campus of TAFE SA held its 2006 graduation ceremony at the Grainger Studio, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra premises, in Hindley St, Adelaide.

AUSIT agreed to sponsor this award in the form of a two-year membership of our organisation. John Hallett, SANT Branch Chairperson, presented the award to Hiromi Waki.

Hiromi is qualified as a Japanese - English interpreter and as a Japanese - English translator, in both directions.

We welcome you Hiromi!



Wordfast Workshop

On Thursday 27 April a successful Wordfast (translating software) workshop was conducted in the DeafSA computer room by Claudia Ait-Touati.

Above and right are photos of Claudia and attendees.



Western Australia branch

1. The WA branch held a PD event in conjunction with the National Playwrights Conference — a major cultural event — on 5th July.

The event was a brainstorming-type seminar between literary translators and other language professionals on the one hand, and playwrights and performing art professionals on the other. Lead by Tom Gutteridge, artistic director of Black Swan, the WA Flagship Theatre, the session discussed ways to establish a process allowing language professionals to alert playwrights about interesting

theatre productions in the countries of their LOTE. Tom says: 'Imagine if English-speaking theatre had never discovered Chekhov, Ibsen, Moliere or Dario Fo! Australia is uniquely positioned with its multicultural population and experienced translators to discover the next Yasmina Reza, Marius von Mayenburg or Presnyakov Brothers, and to take our own writers out to the world'.

2. A state hospital is gearing up to offer employment status to several interpreters (while consulting extensively with us). More details

will be in the State Branch report in the next issue.

3. We started 'Water-cooler meetings' for translators every first Friday of the month. As we sit all day at home in isolation, it's great to know that we can go somewhere to catch up with colleagues. Since its inception earlier this year, this programme has been well received by our members.

New Spanish translation e-book published by AUSIT member

AUSIT member Brian Steel has just released a new e-book on Spanish translation:

Spanish Translation Exercises and Tests - With a Contrastive Analysis of Key Aspects of Spanish Syntax.

The book comprises six chapters of analysis of characteristic Spanish structures and patterns with examples of usage – accompanied by copious supplementary translation exercises (1,200 examples).

A seventh chapter (available for separate purchase with the 1,200 examples, if desired) contains a more challenging selection of translation exercises from various styles of Spanish (with 400 longer examples).

Almost half of the book, of approximately 240 pages (A4 size), consists of examples for comprehension, study and translation.

The work is available for purchase as an e-book at: www.briansteel.net.

Format: nine WORD files, A4 size paper, approximately 240 pages.

Delivery by email.

Correspondence: ompukalani@hotmail.com.

Sample: Copyright © 2006 Brian Steel

Posted at: www.briansteel.net/articsylibros/.

Spanish Translation Exercises and Tests With a Contrastive Analysis of Key Aspects of Spanish Syntax

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Part 1. Academic References and Sources

Part 2. Bibliography of other sources for Spanish examples

Mike Ovington

11 January 1945 - 11 June 2006

The passing of a great ambassador for AUSIT will leave a big gap in the profession

The many AUSIT members who knew Mike Ovington were shocked and saddened to learn of his death a few weeks ago from a heart attack, aged 61.

Mike was born in London, but completed his secondary education in NSW and obtained his BA degree from the University of Sydney. His early career was with the public service, particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. He had postings in Jakarta and Dar es Salaam before becoming Australia's Consul in New Caledonia (1978-80) and then High Commissioner in Vanuatu (1980-82). After a further posting in Rome and various assignments back at head office, ultimately as the head of the languages section, he left Foreign Affairs to pursue other interests, mostly relating to his love of languages.

Mike was an excellent linguist, proficient in French, German, Italian and Indonesian. One major translation in which he was involved in recent years was a German encyclopaedia, which he found challenging and exciting. His involvement in the translating profession in Australia included serving as Chair and Principal Delegate of AUSIT's ACT Branch from 2003 to 2005, and chairing the NAATI RAC in Canberra. But he was always very clear-eyed about NAATI and its relationship with AUSIT and firmly vocal on the subject; our previous President recalls him chastising her for "slavish references to NAATI" in a SWOT analysis she had done of AUSIT during her presidency.

Among his many fine qualities, Mike will be remembered for his organising skills and for his commitment to AUSIT, for which he was a great ambassador. ACT members in particular remember

the enthusiasm and dedication he brought to the complex task of organising the National Conference in Canberra a few years ago. Yveline recalls that whenever she visited Canberra during her two years as President, Mike always made time to meet her and arranged meetings with his colleagues on the ACT committee.

He devoted considerable energy to chairing his small branch, ensuring its full participation in national affairs and contributing extensively to the work of the National Council. He was a fervent advocate of professional development, and after finishing his term as branch Chair continued to serve as PD coordinator for the ACT, during which time he organised a very interesting literary translation seminar last year, among other things. He was always looking for opportunities to join forces with the NSW branch to organise events of interest to his members, and pushed for sessions to be held on Fridays or at the weekend so that more ACT members could participate. He attended PD events in Sydney whenever he could.

In addition to translating, Mike was also very committed to language teaching, notably at the community level.

Those of us who served on AUSIT and NAATI committees with him appreciated his thoughtful contributions and wise counsel. When the membership category reform subcommittee ran into problems in the lead-up to the



last national AGM, Mike was persuaded more or less at the eleventh hour to come to our aid. He worked on that difficult motion with his customary generosity and dedication, subsequently presenting it with considerable skill to the AGM in Sydney. In recent times he was AUSIT's Public Officer, and also represented AUSIT at Professions Australia meetings in Canberra.

Mike was a true gentleman, who treated everyone with kindness and courtesy and could relate to others at any level and in any context, be it NAATI, AUSIT, university students or a new entrant to the profession. He was equally at ease quoting from the best Italian writers and sharing a hearty laugh or a mischievous chuckle.

His passing will leave a big gap in the translating profession and he will be sorely missed by his many friends and colleagues. Our very sincere condolences go to Mike's widow Penny and all his family.

Malcolm Leader, Rafael Pintos-López, George Klim, Yveline Piller, Barbara McGilvray

Jafaikan

by Michael Quinion, from *World Wide Words*, <http://www.worldwidewords.org> on 22/4/06

It's not a word you'll find in any dictionary, but it can be heard on the streets of London. A number of newspaper articles last week used it to describe a new multicultural dialect that is appearing among young Londoners, whether their parents are of Bengali, West Indian, Arab, Brazilian, or English stock. There's no doubt that such a dialect has appeared or that the word exists; the fault lies in linking the two.

'Jafaikan' or 'Jafaican' is a blend of 'Jamaican' and 'African', created because the parents of most black Londoners came to the UK in the 1940s and 1950s from the West Indies, the majority from Jamaica. The blend also includes 'fake' as its middle element - as a slang term it appears online as a mildly insulting reference to black Londoners. It has also been used for a black equivalent of a Trustafarian - a well-off, middle-class young black Londoner of

West Indian ethnicity. It looks like a black-on-black derogatory formation that has echoes of 'wigger', originally US but now also British, for a white person who imitates black culture. It seems that journalists have misunderstood the street usage and have applied it wrongly to the dialect.

A team of linguists are investigating this emerging speech form, as a three-year project led by Professor Paul Kerswill at Lancaster University. They prefer the neutral term Multicultural London English (MLE). That's because its vocabulary is not wholly West Indian, though it's based on Jamaican patois and contains few words of direct African origin. However, the popular 'neng', meaning excellent, is ultimately from the Mende language of West Africa, albeit filtered through generations of Jamaicans (it's certainly not an Australian expression, as an inventive etymologist claimed in the

Guardian).

Professor Kerswill commented in an article in *New Scientist* in December 2005: 'A clear new vernacular is emerging in inner London, linking ethnicities, and forging shared identities - often around music like rap, hip-hop, grime or *bangra*.' One important shift is in pronunciation - older long London vowels are becoming shorter, so that 'face' sounds like 'fehs'; the traditional glottal stop in which 't' is swallowed in words like 'butter' is now less obvious.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of MLE is that it seems to be displacing Estuary English, the slightly older dialectal pattern formed in London as a mixture of traditional East End speech and standard English. This became almost standard in the 1990s among radio and television personalities who wanted to sound classless and in touch with ordinary people.

Ethics questions and the NAATI test (from page 7)

NAATI takes AUSIT's CoE as the basis for 'testing' candidates' knowledge and application of ethics principles.

My suggestion to anyone who has not been successful in this area of the test would be to read the AUSIT CoE on our website, or purchase the NAATI Ethics Booklet, which contains not only AUSIT's CoE but Codes of Ethics of other professional associations of practitioners, (3 or 4, from memory).

It's not difficult to become acquainted with these guidelines, like someone has already suggested. Some agencies even attach AUSIT's CoE as an inherent document to be signed by contractors on accepting the job.

On the other hand, people who fail this part of the NAATI test perhaps have no idea of what AUSIT suggests as ethical guidelines. We wouldn't want them let loose as practitioners, at least not in Australia.

and... presumably there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers on the test,

provided the candidate demonstrates good knowledge of the AUSIT Code of Ethics and provides a sensible answer to the proposed situations.

Now, answers that do not demonstrate that the candidate has a clue of what's in the CoE may of course be cause for failing that part of the test.

Even if the markers are from different cultures/backgrounds, etc, the AUSIT Code of Ethics is one...based on Australian expectations, and the answers are not supposed to be verbatim.

26 March — Barbara McGilvray
Sam Berner wrote:

'...At the last AUSIT workshop a very experienced interpreter said loudly that "we are not allowed to have an opinion"...[see entry on page 7 - ed.]

'Please, enlighten me again, WHOSE ethics are these?...[ditto - ed.]'

If we're talking about the ethics questions in the test, none of the above

should be a problem. A candidate might choose to explain how/why his or her position/culture/religion makes a difference and as long s/he also demonstrates how the given situation might be handled as a result, that's what matters. The examiners are looking for intelligent answers showing that the candidate is familiar with the ethics principles set out in the AUSIT and other T&I codes and knows how to apply them in given hypothetical situations (not how to quote them verbatim). Arguments for and against other relevant hypothetical possibilities etc. are all welcome as part of the answers.

Presumably the interpreter who said we are not allowed to have an opinion was referring to the requirement not to allow personal opinions to interfere with impartiality in doing the job.