

National Newsletter

THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS INC.
Volume 15, number 2 - May 2007

All the news
from the
Critical Link 5
Congress in
Sydney



plus get set for

AUSIT Excellence Awards 2007

XVIII FIT Congress



POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM IN TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING

The Department of Linguistics at Macquarie University in Sydney offers a Postgraduate Diploma in Translating and Interpreting and a Master of Translating and Interpreting in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, French, Spanish, Thai and in Auslan interpreting. Both programs are NAATI approved at Translator and Interpreter level and provide professional development and postgraduate qualifications for translators and interpreters.

In addition Macquarie offers a Master of Advanced Translation, a Master of Conference Interpreting and a double degree - Master of Translating and Interpreting with Master of International Relations.

Overseas student exchanges are available for students at universities in Asia & Europe such as the École de traduction et interprétation at the University of Geneva.

For more information about the academic program, please see our website:
<http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/postgraduate/coursework/tip.htm>

or contact the Translation and Interpreting Office: tel: 02 9850 6782
or email: translate@ling.mq.edu.au

President's message

President Uli Priester summarises recent AUSIT activities and achievements

Joint PD recording wrapped up

A joint solution with ASLIA and NAATI on continuing Professional Development points recording was the big issue at the beginning of this year. The benefits will be tangible for all colleagues who want to opt in to the new AUSIT membership categories and the NAATI revalidation scheme – there won't be multiple sets of PD requirements to fulfil. Based on previous work, AUSIT played a crucial part in this positive outcome; we can be proud of the achievement. Our effective cooperation with ASLIA and NAATI is another great bonus.



AUSIT Excellence Awards

Currently we are busy preparing for the AUSIT National Excellence Awards in Sydney. The Vic/Tas branch has been the trailblazer with two very successful Victorian award events. Vic/Tas members continue to put in a great deal of work to make the Awards in November a wonderful national event.

Vic/Tas, NSW and Qld members are working on the financial side of the Awards; that is, finding and securing sponsorship. NAATI and a number of private organisations have been approached — or will be in the very near future. SBS Radio is our media partner for the project, while sections of the Cumberland newspaper group will support us by publishing interviews and illustrating what translators and interpreters do.

If you have a contact at your local or ethnic community newspaper anywhere in Australia, or would be prepared to make contact in order to publicise the Awards, the committee would be pleased to hear from you. Please get in touch with Michele Miller: telephone (02) 9451 5725, mobile 0403 164 134, or email <millerm@optusnet.com.au>. I am hopeful this exercise will contribute towards raising the profile of the profession, something we have

been chasing for many years without lasting success.

AUSIT is learning new tricks along the way which will be essential for its long-term survival. Learning to regard itself as a business-like organisation, highlighting the great work done by members, and approaching bigger organisations for sponsorship are skills we need to keep ourselves afloat.

I am hoping we will be able to establish a headquarters (however small) for AUSIT in coming years with a permanent address and staff who know what we did yesterday and why we did it that way. We need an executive manager who puts into practice the decisions of the National Council. Our aims must be pursued in a continuous and focused, even relentless, manner. We will continue to rely on volunteer work, like many other small organisations, but our office bearers should not be expected to neglect essential parts of their lives to attend to AUSIT matters.

Based on the experience gained in preparing for the awards, I am much more optimistic now than a few weeks ago that we will be able to turn AUSIT into a sustainable professional organisation that matters in the long run.

Critical Link Five

Thanks very much to the organisers of CL5 for bringing such a significant event to Sydney. I only had the opportunity to attend on the last day of the conference, but if the events of that day were indicative of the preceding days (which they were, I am told), the conference was an absolute success.

I was asked about the price for attending the conference, which was considered a bit on the high side by some. I think it all boils down to a calculation of how the costs can be met for a high-calibre event. This is one point where low remuneration for community interpreters becomes a factor, preventing some from attending a conference which would have had so much to offer them.

Many thanks to those who represented the organisation so well at the AUSIT stall.

DVDs for sale

Some colleagues have been filming a number of very good PD events in Sydney in the last couple of years. Capturing these events on videotape hasn't exactly been simple. The audio signal is the biggest problem because people don't like to wait for the microphone when asking questions or making contributions. A Herculean editing effort provided one set of DVDs ready for CL5 and they proved to be a great seller. Here is another example of how we can make good use of our collective knowledge and experience. The DVDs will be a very valuable resource for all T/Is, but colleagues living and operating away from the metropolitan centres in particular should also benefit. There are more to come, I'm told. Two Australian universities and one English one want to license our DVDs (wow!). Thanks very much to our camera and sound operators, the editing and post production people.

TIS contract

A group of colleagues have been in touch with TIS after the new interpreter contract was foreshadowed, asking questions about the level of payment on offer and future increases. The proposal is essentially a collective agreement, although in the guise of an individual contract. The choice offered by TIS is 'take it or leave it', not 'which sections of the contract would you like to have changed?' Lobbying of this nature is part of what a professional body should do in my opinion. I hope we will hear more about it in the future.

Summing up

There are many issues which remain unattended to, for instance a framework for cooperation between AUSIT and tertiary institutions. It would open so many new opportunities. We'll get there, hopefully. Much needs to be done but from my point of view we are on the right track.

Critical link 5 congress attracts record numbers

Report from Associate Professor **Sandra Hale** (Congress Chair), **Uldis Ozolins**, **Barbara McGilvray** (with some background material adapted from the Critical Link website).

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Thank you once again to all for your submissions. Special thanks as always to Barbara McGilvray for her amazing proofreading skills. I would like to remind members that the deadline for the **August 2007** issue is **15 July 2007**.

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

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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.

This newsletter was printed by Bounty Print and distributed by Mailing Advantage.

The Critical Link 5 Congress held at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Parramatta (Sydney), 11-15 April, was a resounding success. It attracted the largest number of delegates since the inception of the Critical Link congress series in 1995 with a total of 489 delegates, including 301 from Australia and 159 from 27 other countries. International delegates came primarily from the USA, New Zealand and the UK, followed by Canada, The Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Spain, China, Denmark, France, Ireland, Japan, Finland, Israel, Malaysia, the Solomon Islands, Austria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa and Switzerland.

The local attendance was impressive, with every Australian state represented except Tasmania (215 NSW, 31 Vic, 26 Qld, 13 NT, 7 WA, 6 SA and 3 ACT delegates). Although most delegates belonged to the interpreting profession, a considerable number represented other disciplines, in particular the legal and health-related professions. The program was a mixture of lectures and plenary panel discussions with ample audience participation, workshops, papers and posters.

The congress provided all delegates with the opportunity to meet new people, forge fruitful working relationships, and share their knowledge and experience with the rest of the world. The general enthusiasm that was evident will hopefully lead to renewed commitment to implementing changes that will improve the quality of interpreting and the status and working conditions of community interpreters.

Adding to the success of the congress were many pre- and post-conference activities, including social events at the Roxy Theatre and Old Government House and various tours. Overseas and local delegates showed strong interest in Australian interpreting institutions, with visits organised before and after the congress to the Health Care Interpreter Service, SBS,

the Sydney NAATI Office, Macquarie University (Sign Language workshop), and TIS (in Melbourne). A report on the gathering of members of professional associations organised by Terry Chesher will be published in the next newsletter, along with further details of the extremely active participation of AUSIT members at the congress. Terry represented AUSIT on the organising committee, and Willya Waldburger helped significantly by running the AUSIT stand throughout the congress: it attracted a great deal of interest and a number of new members (and renewals from former members). Between 60 and 70 DVDs of our PD events were sold or ordered, and information brochures about the NSW and WA DVDs were snapped up, as well as the various AUSIT brochures.

Stephen Houston also recorded the plenary sessions on video, and the DVDs will eventually be available through AUSIT. A selection of the papers will be published by John Benjamins Publishing Company. Other papers will be available on the Critical Link website, as with previous Critical Link congresses. (Visit http://www.criticallink.org/English/conference_papers.htm to access papers from CL1, 2, 3, and 4.)

The idea of Critical Link originated in the early 1990s with a group of Canadian interpreters and interpreter educators. They saw an unmet need to bring together interpreters in the community sector who had no regular international meetings, and who in many cases didn't even have regular contact with other community interpreters in their own countries. Unlike conference interpreting, in community interpreting there was little research, not much training and a varied ethos and understanding of the interpreting role. It was also well established in only a few countries, but changing migration patterns and forced movements of peoples around the world meant that soon many more countries would have to face the need

to provide language services. Sign language interpreting and interpreting in indigenous languages were also growing, though somewhat unevenly.

The first Critical Link conference in Ontario in 1995 drew delegates from over 20 countries, and its centrepiece was a stirring debate on the role of community interpreters, with sharp divisions between those favouring a role in language transfer only and those who wanted an activist and advocacy role to overcome the racism, prejudice and under-servicing that beset clients not proficient in the dominant language. And there was just as much debate over the concept of 'community interpreting' itself.

The next three conferences - in Vancouver 1998, Montreal 2001 and Stockholm 2004 - each brought growth and development in two directions:

- An ever-widening attendance from

many countries newly 'discovering' community interpreting and keen to share their experiences. Virtually every western European country was represented as the relevance of language issues increased, but they were also joined by countries from the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe.

- An ever-growing sophistication in presentations, reflecting the growth in quality of research, management, testing, service provision, technology and the professionalisation of the field. The publication of selected papers from each conference has given more prominence to community interpreting within the broader fields of interpreting studies and applied linguistics, while at the same time most presentations and papers deal with recognisable nitty-gritty issues of practice and professionalism.

Critical Link is the major international forum for community interpreting, and the widening and deepening of contributions and networking continued at Critical Link 5. This was a very good opportunity to measure how far Australia has come in interpreting compared with other countries. Many Australian innovations (e.g. a national accreditation system, training, strong language services) continue to be admired, and in some cases are used as models by other countries, but there has been substantial growth overseas recently in research, provision of services, and the examination of quality issues and specialised areas of interpreting (e.g. mental health, indigenous interpreting, gender issues, video and technological aids, professional development opportunities).

Two AUSIT role models excel at CL5

Among the great bunch of AUSIT members at the Critical Link congress demonstrating to the local and international community interpreting representatives the talent we have and the work being done in Australia, two role models stand out.

Terry Chesher represented AUSIT on the congress organising committee, and in that capacity put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to help ensure the success of the congress. But quite apart from that, her colleagues present at the closing plenary session of the congress were thrilled and proud to hear the Australian speaker on the plenary panel, Michael Kakakios (Principal Policy Officer, Primary Health and Community Partnerships Branch, NSW Health Department), begin his address by praising Terry's pioneering work in the NSW Health Department.



Terry set up the Translation Unit at the NSW Department of Health and ran it for 15 years, quietly and persistently putting in place and into practice innovative and inspiring policies and principles (team translation and consultation with the relevant community and professional representatives, fair pay rates for translators, to mention just a couple), thus contributing substantially to the education of both employer and user. Many of the procedures and principles were also adopted in other states. It was appropriate, unexpected and exciting to hear this well-deserved public acknowledgement in front of an audience of local and international practitioners, scholars and educators.

Sandra Hale was responsible for securing the congress for Australia and having it underwritten by the University of Western Sydney. Sandra is a home-grown star in the T&I

constellation: she was among the first batch of graduates from the T&I course at UWS and is now a PhD and Associate Professor in charge of interpreting and translation, as well as heading the newly established Interpreting and Translation College Research Group there. She is an internationally esteemed scholar in the field of court and legal interpreting, yet remains generous in sharing her knowledge with colleagues as well as students. She frequently posts useful information and contributes to discussions on AUSIT's eBulletin, and gives freely of her time to present seminars in our PD program.



She is also known for her healthy and constructive criticism of the NAATI system where appropriate; such criticism is appreciated coming from such an authoritative source. She works hard against considerable odds to ensure with her colleagues that the UWS T&I courses retain their NAATI accreditation, overcoming substantial obstacles put in their way from time to time by the University or NAATI: witness their survival where a number of courses throughout Australia have been forced to close down. Sandra has high hopes that CL5, with its theme of shared responsibility for quality in community interpreting, will lead to improvements in conditions and in the recognition of the work of community interpreters. We are seeing a first step with the ABC Radio National interviews on the Law Report program in the follow-up to CL5.



Critical Link 5 Congress introductory address

Sharing the responsibility for quality

By **Dr Sandra Hale**, A/Prof in Interpreting and Translation, University of Western Sydney

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

As the chair of the congress, and on behalf of the University of Western Sydney and the organising committee, I would like to welcome you all to the fifth Critical Link congress.

Let me begin by acknowledging the support of the following organisations in making this congress possible:

The College of Arts of the University of Western Sydney, represented here this evening by the Dean Professor Wayne McKenna.

Major Sponsors:

- The Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW
- The Arab Bank of Australia
- Congress Rental and
- The Sydney West Area Health Service, Health Care Interpreter Service

Associate sponsors:

- Centrelink
- Language Line Services

- Macquarie University
- NAATI (The National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters)
- Shared Web Services
- (TIS) Translating and Interpreting Service and Not-for-Profit Sponsors
- NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service.
- The International Medical Interpreters Association

CL5 is the first one to take place in the southern hemisphere and it is symbolically held in Parramatta, the place where the first Reconciliation conference took place in 1805. Today, Parramatta is the heart of multicultural Australia, with over 50% of its population born overseas.

Being able to communicate in the country in which one lives and to access basic services is a fundamental human right. The denial of this right leads to total social and political disempowerment. Community interpreters are the critical link between the mainstream community

and minority language speakers. However, there is little use in providing interpreting services if such services are not of a consistently high level. Providing interpreting services that are not of a high quality only gives the illusion of meeting a need, with consequences that can in fact be far more damaging than if the service had not been provided.

There are many factors that impinge on quality in interpreting. In choosing the theme of this congress: 'Quality in Interpreting: A shared responsibility', the organising committee believed that in order to achieve improvements, it was time that all participants involved in interpreted events took some of the responsibility for quality.

Despite the many great achievements around the world, and the tireless work of a core group of people (many of whom are here today), much remains to be done to achieve a consistent improvement in the quality of interpreting services in the community. Although different countries are at different levels of development, no country has achieved an optimum position.

Australia has much to be proud of and is often held up as an example to the world. We have come a long way in the last 30 years. We can boast of a national accreditation system, of comprehensive service provision in the public sector and of some of the oldest formal university degrees. However, there is so much more that needs to be done. As in most other parts of the world, pre-service training is still far from being a reality; there is little incentive for formal education; those who use interpreting services very rarely understand the complexities of the process or the role of the interpreter, and working conditions and remuneration levels are generally not commensurate with the high level skills and vast knowledge necessary for quality interpreting. The fact that many practising interpreters have been unable to afford to register for this conference is evidence of this sad reality.

My involvement with the field of interpreting goes back to 1979 when I arrived in Australia as a non-English-speaking migrant. Firstly, as a non-English speaker, I experienced the helplessness and isolation associated with the inability to speak the host country's language. Then, as an ad hoc, untrained interpreter, I was confronted with the difficulties of the task. Later, as a student of the first cohort of the Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation at what is now UWS, I was able to gain a deeper appreciation of the interpreting process and to obtain much-needed knowledge and guidance to practise at a professional level. As a practitioner, I enjoyed the rewards of facilitating communication between people who would otherwise not have understood each other, but also experienced the many frustrations associated with the practice. As an educator, I have enjoyed imparting what I know to others and witnessing the making of excellent professionals, but have been deeply saddened by the vast exodus of many of our best graduates from the profession, who have left community interpreting to retrain into other better recognised and remunerated professions. As a researcher, I have been able to discover much that can be

of great value to the improvement of the practice, but am concerned that the results of research are not being widely applied to the training and the practice.

All of these issues impinge on quality in interpreting. Research has shown that the quality of community interpreting practice needs to improve in order to offer equitable services to those who need to speak through interpreters. The reasons for this are many. Although there are excellent, qualified, competent interpreters out there, there are also those who lack the necessary knowledge and skills to provide quality services. I am convinced that for the practice to improve, and for the status of the profession to be raised to the level of other professions, formal pre-service training and in-service professional development should be mandatory and adequately rewarded. We cannot afford to lose our best qualified interpreters to other professions. I am also convinced that for training to be adequate and effective, it needs to be based on the results of sound research and supported by tertiary institutions.

There is also a need for mutual understanding of each others' roles and needs. Interpreters need to learn about the requirements of the settings in which they work and the needs of the professionals with whom they work, and those professionals also need to learn about the role and needs of interpreters. The best interpreters will not be able to provide quality services if unrealistic demands are placed on them; similarly the best lawyer or doctor, for example, will not be able to render their services adequately if the interpreter is unaware of their needs and the interpretation is of poor quality. Education is needed on all sides.

I am also convinced that in order for quality to improve, interpreters need to be offered suitable working conditions and remuneration. For all this to happen, a concerted unified approach needs to be taken, which leads us to the theme of the conference.

There is little point in researching community interpreting if the results will not be read and implemented by practitioners and educators. There is also little point in offering

training courses if they will not be accessed by those who will practise. And there is little point in producing highly competent, skilled interpreters if they will not find satisfying, well-remunerated employment, if those with whom they work do not understand what is expected of them, and if adequate working conditions under which a quality service can be rendered are not provided.

Quality in interpreting cannot be the sole responsibility of interpreters. All parties need to assume responsibility: each speaker needs to assume responsibility for what they say and how they say it; employers need to assume responsibility for providing suitable conditions and remuneration, the different systems need to assume responsibility for ensuring that minimum standards are demanded, educational institutions need to assume responsibility for providing adequate resources and support, researchers need to assume responsibility for making their research relevant, applicable and accessible to practitioners, and interpreters need to assume responsibility for their own education and professional development.

We want this conference to represent a turning point in community interpreting. We hope that it will provide the opportunity for all of us to take stock of the situation, to seriously evaluate what has been done, where we're at, and where we go from here. We hope that by coming together we will be able to collectively develop concrete plans to implement changes for improvement.

No-one can deny the difficulties and complexities associated with achieving this goal. However, we cannot become complacent. We have a moral, if not a legal obligation to provide equal access of services to those who are linguistically disadvantaged. We have a very full and exciting program ahead of us which will provide the opportunity for us to hear and learn from each other. We are optimistic that CL5 will help us renew our commitment to quality of community interpreting and allow us to collectively find solutions to the many issues that are now hampering its progress.

AUSIT DVDs run out the door at CL5

Critical Link Five AUSIT DVD sale
– What a Success!

Critical Link, the fifth international interpreters conference, was held in Parramatta, Sydney on 10-15 April. The conference, 'Quality in Interpreting: a Shared Responsibility', attracted some 500 representatives from all over the world as well as Australia, and put our country on the map with regard to the interpreting profession.

CL5 was a great success for the conference organisers as well as for AUSIT — the institute had a strong presence in the exhibition hall with an AUSIT national table which attracted several new memberships. AUSIT members assisted at the stand and all AUSIT delegates were well recognisable with their AUSIT badges.

As part of the conference, AUSIT organised a pre-conference gathering which was attended by a large mix of international and local guests, reinforcing the institute's image.

The conference also served as a great opportunity to launch AUSIT's range of DVDs — the ones on hand almost sold out! DVDs from the Western Australian and the New South Wales branch were sold during the conference. This illustrates that there really is a need for this type of material to assist in professional development, both nationally and internationally. The

New South Wales DVDs are based on recordings of AUSIT workshops held in Sydney and run by translators and interpreters for their peers. The DVDs from WA feature invited guest lecturers as well as in-branch events. AUSIT extends thanks to John Benson, Stephen Houston and others, including the workshop presenters, who gave so much of their time to make this project such a success. AUSIT looks forward to more productions from all states.

This was the first time that AUSIT had had a presence at such an international event and the institute gained further recognition and awareness within the national and international market, as well as promoting its membership and workshops through the sales of the DVDs.

AUSIT aims over the next year to build from the achievement and success gained through Critical Link and to further increase awareness of our organisation and what it can offer members.

AUSIT thanks all those members who assisted at the conference and those who helped in the recording and preparation of the DVDs. This was a truly inspiring event.

Shared PD scheme – milestone in the AUSIT/ ASLIA /NAATI relationship

NAATI & ASLIA Boards adopt AUSIT PD points scheme

16 January 2007 marks a historical date for three of the most relevant T/I industry stakeholders in Australia.

Representatives from the National Executive bodies of AUSIT, ASLIA and NAATI immersed themselves in a robust, insightful and intensive three-hour brainstorming session in Sydney.

The result is that the three organisations (AUSIT, ASLIA and NAATI) can now rely on a meaningful, viable and user-friendly system for practitioners to report Professional Development (PD) activities which will count *both* towards meeting membership category requirements and/or obtaining NAATI revalidation.

What does this mean?

It means that shortly colleagues will use only one common document for reporting PD activities across the three entities.

As a result of the positive contributions from all involved and the groundwork on PD undertaken by AUSIT in the last few years, an agreement was reached by NAATI and ASLIA to adopt AUSIT's 'log book' as the sole basis for

reporting PD requirements over a period of time.

Upon browsing through the original logbook one of ASLIA's representatives remarked: 'We'd accept it wholesale!' which is a credit to Annamaria Arnall and all those involved in the logbook's production from the start.

The logbook can be used for the purpose of opting-in for re-confirmation of AUSIT and ASLIA membership, as well as for applying for NAATI revalidation, which, as we all know, is a reality from July 2007 onwards.

For practitioners who decide to opt-in for the AUSIT PD reporting system and/or are seeking NAATI Revalidation, this is a significant move towards reducing the time and effort required for filling in forms and other time-consuming and cumbersome reporting tasks; time which can be better spent with family, growing our businesses, finishing assignments, etc.

NAATI welcomed AUSIT and ASLIA's feedback. The opportunity to hear our point of view was like opening a window onto some of our practitioners' realities and needs, since we serve the Australian community in cities and

regional centres.

This was also an invaluable opportunity to work towards a smooth transition into our profession's new reality: *PD is essential for any serious practitioner* (so say our clients, insurance companies, like-minded professional associations, etc).

We are happy to help those colleagues who choose to formalise their PD reporting and/or revalidate their NAATI accreditation.

There is more work to be done, and our National Executive will keep our membership informed on the progress of this important undertaking.

AUSIT thanks NAATI and ASLIA for this opportunity to share views.

We are proud of this initiative and of setting the pace through positive leadership in matters that affect our membership as we step into the future.

More information will be forthcoming as a dedicated group of colleagues beaver away at refining the AUSIT logbook.

Patricia Avila
AUSIT General Secretary

AUSIT National Council

May 2007

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Congratulations to Barbara McGilvray

AUSIT would like to congratulate Barbara McGilvray on winning the NAATI Accolade of Excellence for NSW for her contributions to the translating and interpreting profession.

New Senior Practitioners

AUSIT would also like to extend congratulations to the following members on becoming Senior Practitioners:

Ilke Brueckner-Klein (Qld)
Bob Desiatnik (NSW)
Tea Dietterich (Qld)
Charles Qin (Vic)

The application form on the AUSIT

website <www.ausit.org> (click on 'News') contains all the information needed to apply for this category.

Since publication of the last newsletter the following people have been admitted to AUSIT as members or subscribers:

Odile Blandeau, NSW
Lidia Elicegui, WA
Elizabetha Fermanov, NSW
Julieri De Florio, NSW
Minjung Angela Lah, Qld
Ian McKenzie, NSW
Joanna Menda, Vic
Makiko Takeuchi, NSW
Willya Waldburger, NSW
Yue Ying Wang, Vic
Joobin Zarvan, NSW

Congratulations and welcome.

AUSIT Excellence Awards 2007

Get your entry in now!

Awards committee member **Kate Ritchie** says the Awards are now open for business

The curtain has been raised on what will be the biggest event for interpreters and translators in Australia – the National AUSIT Excellence Awards 2007.

You may have followed the Vic/Tas Excellence Awards over the last few years. AUSIT's 2005 event in Melbourne received extensive media coverage as the first awards for interpreters and translators were announced at a gala dinner in Melbourne attended by close to 200, opened by the Minister and wrapped up with dancing and glamour. There is no need to despair any more – the Excellence Awards are coming to you!

The Excellence Awards National Team has been working away during 2006 putting the finishing touches to the expanded Excellence Awards; entries are now open. The Awards Committee is now beavering away negotiating sponsorship deals and venue arrangements for our night of nights later in the year.

Plenty has been written about the Awards in 2004 and 2005 in Bannelong and the National Newsletter, in NAATI News, on the AUSIT website, on SBS and in ethnic press – there is no shortage of role models through

previous entrants, projects and profiles featured. If you wish to be in the running for an Award, there are plenty of ideas for others to refer to when in telling us about those special assignments, or recounting normal day-to-day work done with excellence.

Previous Award entries include translations of community information brochures and books; interpreting for presidents, court verdicts, surveillance recordings, a film festival event; interpreting in a health setting; educational videos, training programs, multilingual multimedia projects and lots more. It is fascinating to see the wide scope of activities that interpreting and translating impact upon and the benefits business and the community derive from them. The T&I industry is enhanced by promotion of our work and the individual entrants and award recipients are able to use the Award in their marketing too. There can only be one inaugural National Award Winner – so get in now!

How to enter

Three Award Categories are available: two for practitioners – Excellence in Interpreting and Excellence in Translation; and a third category – Outstanding Contribution to the

T/I Industry, which has a broader focus. The AUSIT website has all the information: entry criteria, forms, fees, background information, judges comments on previous entrants, the hows and whens, (do we still need to say 'why'?) – download what you need then start filling in the paperwork and writing your entry.

A couple of important changes to note: Anyone who meets the criteria can enter directly. You do not need to wait for someone to nominate you. At the same time, we are accepting nominations for all Awards. If you know an interpreter or translator or organisation who has done something worthy of an Award, you can nominate them with or without their knowledge and we'll then tell them 'Guess what, you've been nominated for an Award for the ... Assignment you did!' Or you can just enter yourself directly: follow the instructions in the Entry Kits available on the website.

The qualifying period for entries is for work completed or undertaken since November 2005. In addition, entrants gain PD points.

Oh, one more thing - don't miss the Gala Dinner in Sydney!

SBS Radio proud supporter of 2007 AUSIT Excellence Awards

As a national multilingual and multicultural broadcaster, SBS Radio recognises the importance of high quality translation and interpreting services.

'SBS Radio is proud to be a supporter of the 2007 AUSIT Excellence Awards,' says newly-appointed Director of Radio, Paula Masselos.

SBS Radio is the world's most linguistically diverse radio network and has grown up with multicultural Australia. Every week it broadcasts

more than 650 hours of programming across the continent in 68 languages - more than any other broadcaster in the world.

SBS Radio has played an integral role in the settlement and integration of millions of migrants into the Australian community since its inception in 1975.

Now SBS Radio is at the dawn of an exciting new era. Digital Radio, to be introduced in 2009 will enable SBS Radio to offer more languages and a greater range of programming options.

Every hour a different language program can be heard, and all of these programs are available on demand from the SBS website at <www.sbs.com.au>.

'SBS Radio would like to congratulate AUSIT for their commitment to promoting and rewarding high quality translation and interpreting services through this worthwhile initiative,' added Paula.

Get on radio - language talent sought to represent AUSIT

As you have read, AUSIT has again been joined by media partner SBS Radio to promote the AUSIT National Excellence Awards 2007. This partnership is an unprecedented opportunity for AUSIT to raise awareness for the interpreting and translation profession across the major LOTE's throughout Australia.

Is your voice the one for your language group?

We are now looking for members who are willing to make themselves available as spokespeople to the radio program in their native language. Volunteers will receive relevant written materials to assist in preparation. While no previous media experience is needed, you would be expected to familiarise yourself with the materials provided, the AUSIT website, and to speak on behalf of AUSIT and the Excellence Awards.

Stories needed

In order to make the offer of your voice appealing we want to hear about interesting experiences at your work – stories that would appeal to SBS listeners. These can be good news stories about interpreters and translators and the important work we do. But don't forget, as well as telling

your story the aim is to promote the AUSIT Excellence Awards 2007. For the broadcasters to want to interview you, you will need to make your contribution interesting.

This is how it works

We will liaise with SBS and provide them with a list of AUSIT talent, contact details and story outlines. When an SBS broadcaster intends to do a program segment on the Awards, they will get in touch with you to agree on a suitable interview time and discuss the angle on the topic. Your input will be welcomed by the broadcaster.

Typically interviews are done over the telephone and mostly off-air, then broadcast after being edited (don't worry about *ummhs* and *ahhhs* - they get cut out). There may be occasions when you get invited to the studio, but this would depend on your location and is for you and the broadcaster to decide.

How much time is required?

Most likely you will only need to spend a couple of hours, including your preparation time.

AUSIT's Publicity Objectives

The SBS audience represents a

vast number of LOTE speakers who are likely to be the beneficiaries of translation and interpreting services provided by us. One of the PR objectives is to make listeners think about the services they have received and found outstanding, and to motivate them to visit the AUSIT website in order to nominate a particular interpreting or translating assignment. It is also important to raise awareness about the challenges interpreters and translators face.

Remember

Every one of the SBS Radio programs is available through audio-on-demand via <www.sbs.com.au> after it has gone to air. That includes your interview.

Applying

In preparation, please review the information on the AUSIT website: <www.ausit.org> – under Excellence Awards.

To apply, send a brief biography, contact details and an outline of your story to: <kate@chincommunications.com.au>.

Kate Ritchie

Excellence Awards Committee

WA Branch news (This was the only branch news submission received for this issue)

On 18 March AUSIT's WA branch was invited to share NAATI's tent at the Harmony Week festival. We enjoyed talking with NAATI officials and members of the multicultural community, as well as having an opportunity to answer various questions regarding the profession. Just three days later NAATI's 30-year celebration dinner was well supported by AUSIT members and other professionals and stakeholders in the T&I industry. In all, it was a fine month for nurturing good will amongst different groups working in the field.

The legalese course at the UWA Extension is under way, and is proving to be popular. "Though AUSIT did not participate in the handling of the actual course fee, payment conditions and so on, we realised we could have been more effective in communicating information such as the group fee discount. This is something we should be looking at, if similar external events like this are held in the future. We have also been communicating with WAITI on its initiative to oppose the Department of Health's new Consent to Treatment forms. The issue

of consent forms (as well as other issues concerning hospital interpretation) has been known to AUSIT for some time, and is a recurring topic of discussion on the eBulletin. Those who have concerns or suggestions regarding this issue are encouraged to raise it with their state committee or on one of the eBulletin forums. We are investigating the new developments in WA with interest, and I will certainly report to you with more details in the future.

Yutaka Kawasaki
WA Branch Chair

Getting more buck for your T&I bang

AUSIT member **John Benson's** rules for negotiating better rewards

I am rotten at haggling. I couldn't negotiate my way out of a paper bag. Hell, once I suffered the ultimate business indignity by accidentally negotiating the price up while trying to purchase some jewellery at the Istanbul Grand Bazaar.

The Turkish salesman thought it was the funniest thing to happen since Nero burned the entire place down a thousand years ago.

The thing is there is nothing wrong with talking about money. Translators and interpreters are grossly underpaid in this country given their level of skill and training. How do we change this? Well I can tell you one thing – simply lobbying the government or creating industry awareness is not going to produce a magical change in the rates people offer us.

'Goodness those translators are shamefully underpaid, I think I'll use some of my departmental budget to help them out!' is not a thought likely to cross any government bureaucrat's mind any time soon. It would be a different matter of course if we were in the business of trucking wheat across Iraq.

The hard truth is that we are all going to have to force higher rates upon the market. We are going to have to push and holler and drag those vanilla-

brained bureaucrats, businessmen and private clients into the modern age where interesting, cultivated people like us are well-remunerated and respected (in that order) and CPAs are put back in their place as the polyester suit wearing living dead that they really are.

So we have to learn to negotiate better. Here are a couple of rules which I've learned and put to surprisingly good use lately:

Your 'published rate' should not be the rate you want to actually earn – it is the (high) starting point for the negotiation.

If you want to earn \$100/hour, start at \$120 and then tell the client that you're offering them a 'special' reduction because they're a new client, you want to establish a relationship, you had sausages for lunch etc. Any explanation will do – just make it look as though you're 'giving' something to the customer (waive travel costs, whatever). This creates an emotional obligation (basic psychology) on their part to accept the quote.

Do not be afraid to walk away from the job – the phone will ring again I promise! If people complain that your rate is too high, even after you've cut them the 'special deal' above, then have a calm and reasonable speech ready explaining

to them the value of your services. Actually write it out in point form and rehearse it. Make it a juggernaut of calm logic which no reasonable person can dismiss. Your skills, experience, the consequences of mistranslation in business, health or any other field, and comparisons with rates in other fields (I always point out that a mechanic earns about \$70 per hour to change the oil in my car).

If the client is *still* making a fuss about your price, they are probably not the sort of client you want to be working with. My experience is that it's the *hardasses* who still won't pay six months after the job is done. Politely refer them to a colleague. Walk away.

Okay, some of you will be laughing at my clumsy Anglo-Irish efforts at haggling. Yes, buying and selling is infinitely more complicated and delicate than this. But I've found just these two rules have made a giant difference to both the type of work I accept and the rates I can charge.

I'll give one heart-warming example: I recently did some work for a Federal Government department. Sadly, as the bureaucrat explained to me, he was constrained by his 'budget' to \$X/hour. It was impossible to change it – take it or leave it. This was *half* what my published rate was. I went through my rehearsed speech as above. He agreed he needed quality interpreting – and we settled on \$X/hour + 50%.

So much for 'take it or leave it'.

Most of us are quiet, introspective people – pedantic even. We're not naturally good at negotiating, but we are going to have to learn. It is only when we are *all* prepared to walk away from underpaid work that we'll receive the respect and remuneration that AUSIT was founded to achieve.

Many thanks to uber mentor Chris Poole, who put me on the path of commercial realism.

Translators and interpreters are grossly underpaid in this country given their level of skill and training. How do we change this? Well I can tell you one thing – simply lobbying the government or creating industry awareness is not going to produce a magical change in the rates people offer us.

Occupational Hazard

A short work of fiction by **Patricia Avila**

She sneezed loudly three times, and hoped not to have missed anything said by the doctor or the patient.

This always happened to her whilst interpreting in hospitals, they kept the air conditioning so cold it made her sneeze, especially in small private consultation rooms like the one she was working in now.

'Bless you!' the psychiatrist said. She thought the patient had also said, 'Salud!' in Spanish.

'I'm sorry', Teresa replied. 'I hope I didn't miss anything'. She smiled, 'Please go ahead with what you were saying'.

'It's okay Teresa', said the doctor with a smile, 'we're about to finish today's consultation anyway'.

'No importa, estábamos por terminar', she repeated in Spanish, turning towards the patient, and thinking, I must try to keep alert, this job has been going for a long time now. She was feeling very tired today.

That's one of the hardest things sometimes for an interpreter, to keep the momentum going after a long job. Sometimes two interpreters are needed for especially intense jobs.

After a few more utterances between the patient, the doctor, the nurse and the interpreter, they all left the room; Teresa was already looking in her bag for her car keys, ready to go to her next job.

She looked in her diary: I only have forty minutes to get to my next job from here. I'd better hurry up, she thought. Where is my car? I wonder where I parked it? she wondered as she walked down the hallway towards the sliding doors at the exit of the hospital's Acute Mental Health Section. Red section, that's right!

'Hi Teresa', everyone had said as she walked down the corridor. She smiled to herself thinking, How nice everyone is at this hospital. In other places she worked they made her do things she

didn't really appreciate. A common complaint amongst colleagues was how interpreters were sometimes treated more like a nuisance than a member of the health provision team. What a breath of fresh air to be treated with courtesy, she thought and rushed towards the car park.

Once more, the familiar warm feeling of having helped someone who didn't speak English as their native language came over Teresa. She derived a great deal of professional and personal satisfaction from her work as an interpreter.

Community interpreting had been her life since coming from El Salvador twenty years ago (exhausted, bruised and frightened at what was happening over there during the civil war which had ravaged her country for twelve long years).

Many lives had been lost over there, some of them in unimaginably violent circumstances. Demonstrations and armed confrontations were everyday occurrences at the time, martial law had been declared on and off; no one knew when they would fall victim, not only to the war, but also to the shock waves of violence and destruction which always accompany armed conflict.

A hot, dirty, overcrowded ambulance speeding down a dark road with no medical staff on board is no place to give birth to a child. Her youngest daughter had been born in just such a Red Cross Ambulance one midnight in 1981, when the existing martial law in San Salvador, the capital city of El Salvador, did not allow civilian vehicles to circulate on the roads after 6.00 pm. Luckily one of the other pregnant women in the ambulance was a country midwife and had assisted in the critical moments of Teresa's delivery minutes before they reached the hospital.

'I don't know how we survived the war', Teresa would often relate to close friends. 'The sense of dread and foreboding in those days stayed with

Other AUSIT state office bearers

ACT

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Secretary	Ursula Hoffmann
Treasurer	Tarja Karjalainen
PD Coordinator	Malcolm Leader
NAATI RAC	Carole Aubury

NSW

Chair (acting)	Andrew Bean
Secretary	Stephen Houston
Treasurer	Hania Geras
M'ship Sec.	John Yang
PD Coordinator	Hania Geras
NAATI RAC	John Yang

Qld

Chair	Ita Szymanska
Vice-chair	Jadranka Brown
Secretary	Sam Berner
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PR Officer	Silke Gebauer
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NAATI RAC	Chris Poole

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Chair	Yutaka Kawasaki
Secretary	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.

you 24/7', she'd confess.

She had sought asylum in Australia after her work as an interpreter had led to her persecution in her own country; she had been accused of 'helping the enemy' for simply speaking English, 'the language of the imperialists'.

She had survived captivity and torture, but she and her children were now enjoying the benefits of living in a country at peace. And she was working as an interpreter, the work she loved so much.

The shock of having to identify her own father's bruised and tortured body had caused her to forget all the English she knew for a while; not a word in English came out of her mouth for months afterward. Her father was the one who had taught her English since she was a little girl.

Only after about three years in Australia had she learned not to break into a cold sweat every time a car exhaust backfired. To her, this sounded like shots from the small gun they used to frighten her when they fired at the ground around her to make her 'dance or die'.

During the early days of the war her father, a famous and totally apolitical architect, had been kidnapped and killed, apparently by common thugs taking advantage of the political turmoil and insecurity rampant at the time. Her spiritual counselor and friend, Archbishop Oscar Romero, whom she loved so much from the time he gave her and her sister their first communion, had also been executed in cold blood in those days. She grieved for these two beloved role models for a long time.

She had seen a number of dead bodies during the course of her interpreting work for surgeons in operating rooms, and even during autopsies aimed at establishing which of the warring factions might have murdered the victims lined up on the cold stainless steel slabs in the coroner's mortuary.

The shock of having to identify her own father's bruised and tortured body had caused her to forget all the English she knew for a while; not a word in English came out of her mouth for months afterward. Her father was the one who had taught her English since she was a little girl. But she did recover and soon went back to communicating just as well in English as she did in Spanish.

She had interpreted for many famous people back in her country, including Al Gore, when he was a minor politician visiting politically troubled El Salvador, and Dan Quayle, the former spelling-challenged Vice-president of the USA.

I'll do it for my children, she'd thought, when the option to migrate to Australia was offered to her back in the mid-nineties. She ached at the thought she would have to leave family and everything behind to escape persecution. But she accepted her lot.

Their stories are so vivid and familiar, she'd think when interpreting for survivors of the war in El Salvador, they always remind me of the dreadful scenes I witnessed as an interpreter. Although she knew she was safe in

Australia, she often had nightmares about the ravages of the war.

'She's an expert interpreter, she's always been good', a Brisbane Barrister once remarked in chambers after Teresa had kept her professional composure during the heart wrenching murder-and-failed-suicide trial that at times had some members of the jury in tears.

'I've worked with many interpreters, but I have never seen anyone keep so together through such horrific testimonies', a juror had said to his colleague at break. 'She just kept interpreting through the lot - cool, calm and collected... it's amazing to watch her work'.

Teresa knew her clients held her in high regard as a professional and linguist and she felt a healthy pride at their confidence in her ability to remain objective.

* * *

'... And you were saying?' the psychiatrist urged the patient.

The question startled Teresa and brought her back from her day-dreamy memories to the cold hospital consultation room and the interpreting job at hand.

'Very well, we'll pick up where we left off then', he continued.

'Muy bien, continuamos entonces', she delivered in Spanish, turning towards the Spanish-speaking patient.

She saw no one there.

'Doctor, please wait for the patient', she pleaded. 'You know I'm not to continue interpreting without her being in the room', she smiled.

'It's okay Teresa', was his response, 'it's you I need to talk to today'.

'Me? Why?', she said, as she fiddled with the ties of her hospital gown and reached for the tissues, feeling another sneeze coming on (despite the nice warm feeling of her feet inside the fluffy pink hospital slippers).

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2008 XVIII World Congress of FIT

As the host of the XVIII World Congress of FIT, Translators association of China (TAC) warmly invites you to attend this grand educational and networking event for translators and interpreters around the world. The Congress will be held in Shanghai, China on 4-7 August, 2008, right before the Beijing Olympics. The theme of the Congress is 'Translation and Cultural Diversity'.

Founded in 1982, TAC is the only national association in the field of translation in China, with association, organisation and individual members throughout China. TAC joined FIT in 1987.

An electronic version of the Pre-Registration Form can be downloaded from the Congress website <www.fit2008.org>. If you are interested in attending the Congress or want to know more about it, please fill in this form and send it to us via post, email or fax.

For more information about the Congress, please visit the website (in English, French and Chinese), or send an email to <fit2008info@gmail.com>.

Sincerely yours,

Huang Youyi

Vice President, FIT

Vice President and Secretary General, TAC

Congress Topics

1. Translation and culture
2. Translation and literature
3. Translation and languages of limited diffusion
4. Translation service and translation technology
5. Teaching and training in translation and interpreting
6. Translation of professional texts
7. Consecutive, simultaneous and community-based interpreting
8. Terminology and lexicology
9. Professional associations and their administration
10. Translation studies
11. Translation in publishing
12. Multimedia translation

I. Submission details

- I. All proposals should include the following information:
 - Your name and professional association, company or employment status, or university
 - Your address, telephone number, fax number and email address

- The title, type and language of your presentation (in Chinese, English or French only)
- The most appropriate topic heading for your proposal
- An abstract in Chinese, English or French of not more than 300 words

II. Deadlines

- Abstract submission: 30 September 2007
- Notice of admission or rejection — 30 December 2007
- Full text submission — 30 June 2008
- Publication of Congress proceedings — December 2008

III. Submission

Please submit your proposal preferably by e-mailing it to <fit2008papers@gmail.com>, or posting it on a 3.5" floppy disk or CD-R as an RTF or Word file, together with two papers copies to:

2008 FIT World Congress Secretariat
c/o Translators Association of China
24 Baiwanzhuang Street
Xicheng District, Beijing 100037, China.

AUSIT recently received the spring catalogue from John Benjamins Publishing Company <www.benjamins.com>, a company specialising in textbooks and resources for T/Is. Journals they publish include: *Interpreting – International journal of research and practice in interpreting*; *Target – International journal on translation studies*; and *Babel – the FIT International journal of translation*. They also publish an online *Translation studies bibliography*.

Some of their other titles include: *Bridging the gap – Empirical research in simultaneous interpretation*, *Computers and translation – A translator's guide*, *Conference interpreting – Current trends in research, selected papers from CL 2, 3 and 4*, *(Multi)media translation*, *Perspectives on localisation*, *The practice of court interpreting*, *Scientific and technical translation*, *Topics in signed language interpreting*, *Translation and the law*, *Translation and medicine*, *Training the translator*, and many more.

Should you wish to find out more information from the catalogue, please contact AUSIT by telephone or email.

Important dates

Thursday 31 May 2007

Introduction to Wordfast workshop in Adelaide
Contact Claudia Ait-Touati to book on 0439 884 685 or <rat4cat@bridgeonline.com.au>

Saturday 30 June 2007

PD session in Canberra: The Code of Ethics – Issues and ideas for interpreters
Contact Angie Hoffman <ahoffman@goldweb.com.au> or Tarja Karjalainen <tarja@webone.com.au>

7-9 September 2007

2007 ASLIA Conference – Transitions.
See <www.aslia.com.au>. Send expressions of interest to <info@aslia.com.au>

For international events, try the UK's Institute of Translating and Interpreting (ITI) website. Their International Calendar of Events is available at <www.iti.org.uk/ice/index/asp>.

Fifth FIT Asian Translators Forum - Translation and Cultural Dialogue

In Indonesia **Suzan Piper** networked and learned more about the role of FIT

The fifth FIT Asian Translators Forum was held recently in Bogor, Indonesia on 11 and 12 April 2007. Entitled 'Translation and Cultural Dialogue' it was hosted by the HPI (Association of Indonesian Translators). In attendance were 160 participants, including FIT President Peter Krawutschke, HPI President Benny Hoed, and other organisers, speakers and participants. There were 54 overseas participants, including a group of approximately 10 Australians made up of practitioners, students and academics such as practising translators Harry Aveling and Barry Turner (who both gave papers). On 14 April I attended the meeting and social event organised by the HPI of its 'bahtera' egroup, and also a ProZ powwow meeting. More on this later.

For those (like myself previously) who may have been unaware of the full role of FIT, the International Federation of Translators (Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs) was founded in 1953, shortly after the Second World War. It has a membership of over 90 national translation organisations in more than 60 countries, including Australia. It holds world congresses every three years and regional fora such as the Asian Forum, with the Asian region covering 17 member countries including Australia. FIT publishes the scholarly journal *Babel* (downloadable free from the AUSIT site) and has also made available a FIT translators card. This is similar to the press card carried by journalists and is particularly pertinent to T/Is working in troubled regions.

The 18th FIT World Congress will be held in Shanghai from 4–7 August,

2008, right before the Beijing Olympics! The theme of the Congress is 'Translation and Cultural Diversity'. The deadline for submissions of abstracts is September 30, 2007. More information can be found on the congress at <www.fit2008.org>.

Various papers were presented in Bogor over three to four parallel morning and afternoon sessions, with papers on scholarly and training topics, diplomatic, business and legal issues, cultural differences and activities and technology. It was fascinating to gain a fuller understanding of some of the similar and different challenges each country faced. Topics ranged from mobile phone software and website translation, culturally appropriate names for the Beijing Olympic mascots (fuwa not friendlies), publishing translations, language translation during military peace operations, translating in museums and domesticating and foreignising approaches in Japanese-English translation.

One inspiring talk was given by Jiri Stejskal from the American Translators Association (or ATA) on its public relations initiative; its key message being to inform clients that:

- You cannot risk getting it wrong.
- Qualified translators are crucial to your mission.
- The cost of poor translation is immense – whether in national security, business, law or healthcare.
- Hire a professional translator – 'Go Pro'.

This national initiative is being achieved through national media and also school outreach programs, pro bono projects at conferences and other events, client education (see the ATA 'Getting It Right' guide to buying translation, available for download from the ATA site) and using the above for local media coverage

Further information on this initiative can be found on the ATA site: <www.atanet.org>, including news clips, and information on the pro bono component: In 2006 the ATA's pro bono project comprised assistance by volunteer translators and interpreters to the City of New Orleans during and after the disaster there. According to the ATA, the project not only highlighted the critical role that translators and interpreters play in a disaster, but also gave the ATA volunteers an opportunity to make a difference.

Like all conferences a lot of the value from attending the FIT forum came from networking: meeting new colleagues or face to face encounters with others previously only known through the Internet. As an Indonesian interpreter and translator I had great fun at the bahtera egroup and ProZ gathering two days after the FIT forum. Bahtera <bahtera@yahoo.com> was founded in mid 1997 as an online forum for Indonesian translators similar to the AUSIT ebulletin. It began with 10 members but now has over 1,200 who are extremely active in their postings. ProZ <<http://www.proz.com/>> is one of several international web platforms for assisting and sourcing language professionals.

I returned to Australia stimulated by the papers and glad of the opportunity to extend my network of colleagues. Virtual contact has now been strengthened by new and deeper face-to-face friendships, which – donning my small businesswoman's hat - also have the potential for translating (bad pun I know) into new opportunities in this global era.

Topics ranged from mobile phone software and website translation, culturally appropriate names for the Beijing Olympic mascots (fuwa not friendlies), publishing translations, language translation during military peace operations, translating in museums and domesticating and foreignising approaches in Japanese-English translation.