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AUSIT 2013 excellence award winners

EUROPEAN UNION:
satisfaction and
challenges for
interpreters and
translators

**PROFESSOR
SANDRA HALE:** 17th
AUSIT member to be
named a Fellow of the
institute

EDUCATION: is
the rhetoric about
foreign language
study misplaced?

In Touch

Summer 2013
Volume 21 number 4

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AUSIT 2013 Excellence Awards

SBS Subtitling and PPU

Preparation: outstanding contribution to the translating and interpreting industry

Catherine Manning Muir: excellence in translating

Charles Qin, Joseph Li Tu and Bruce Leifu Song; Yveline Piller and John Benson: joint winners for excellence in interpreting

Independent & General (I&G) Pty Ltd: outstanding contribution to indigenous interpreting and translation

Christian Schmidt: Paul Sinclair award for outstanding contribution to AUSIT

Up there with the world's best

Monash University is a national leader in the field of translation and interpreting studies, offering courses in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Spanish. Its masters program is one of the few courses in Australia approved at the professional interpreter, professional translator and conference interpreter levels by NAATI.

The masters by coursework is offered in three different streams: translation-only, combined translation and interpreting, and conference interpreting.

The most recent stream has been approved by NAATI at conference interpreter level for five language pairs: English with Chinese, French, Indonesian, Japanese or Spanish. It has also recently been listed on the schools directory of the International Association for Conference Interpreters (AIIC), which includes only interpreting programs that meet AIIC's training criteria.

The translation and interpreting studies program also runs double masters (with France, Italy, China and soon with Japan), two PhD programs in translation, interpreting and intercultural studies, as well as professional development short courses.

A full member of CIUTI

An indication of the quality of Monash's T&I research and training is the program's status as a full member of CIUTI, the international conference of

universities that train translators and interpreters. Monash is the first and only Australian university to achieve this honour, which is limited to institutions that meet internationally recognised standards on curriculum structure, research, academic infrastructure and resources.

Partnerships and internships

The program collaborates with a range of industry bodies, associations, government agencies and international organisations. These, along with cross-faculty partnerships, allow students to undertake professional internships in several areas. There are also plenty of opportunities to engage with literary translation: Monash hosts the **AALITRA Review** and runs an annual summer/winter school in literary translation.

Go to <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/translation-interpreting>

European Union offers satisfaction and challenges for interpreters and translators



Cynthia Cave

Brussels is one place where interpreters and translators are accorded the respect they have earned, reports Patricia Cruise.

THIS YEAR'S Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture was a light-hearted and interesting insight into working as an interpreter for the European Union.

Cynthia Cave, an Auslan interpreter from Brisbane, is currently executive interpreter at Deaf Services Queensland and a member of the national committee of the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association (ASLIA).

Cynthia was born to deaf parents, and signing is her first language. She has spent several years in Brussels working as an International Sign and British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter for the various organs of the EU.

The European Union, which traces its origins to the 1946 Benelux customs union between Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, now comprises 28 member states. It is the largest employer of translators and conference interpreters in the world, and the demand continues to grow with new member states adding further languages (see pages 6-7).

Cynthia outlined the role of interpreters at the EU, the recognition and respect accorded to them as professionals (high), and their conditions of employment (very good, thanks to the International Association of Conference Interpreters, known by its French acronym AIIC).

She noted that the environment is high-pressure and the quality of interpreting and translating is expected to be very high. She appreciates being part of a community of language professionals, and derives great satisfaction from her job. There are sometimes unusual challenges, such as interpreting for only one person who had happened to fall asleep.

In time she has learned how to identify MEPs' political leanings by their clothing (suits and ties for the conservatives, cargo pants for the greenies).

Australia mainly monolingual

Cynthia noted that in Brussels you are likely to hear several languages spoken wherever you go.

She observed that although Australia is a very multicultural country, it remains a mainly monolingual one. There are, of course, significant political, national and historical reasons for this, but it is nonetheless somewhat regrettable given the wealth of language backgrounds of Australians, indigenous and migrant. She called for language policy review to recognise and make more use of our wealth of languages.



In time she learned how to identify MEPs' political leanings by their clothing (suits and ties for the conservatives, cargo pants for the greenies).¹

Don't be shy now



Elisabeth Meister explains why it's worth nominating yourself for an AUSIT award.

I don't remember how many times the AUSIT email asking people to nominate someone else or – gasp – themselves for the AUSIT excellence awards came around before I seriously started thinking about doing it. How about you?

Sure, your first thought is: "Ooh, awards!" You briefly dream of being a star, mark the email for a more thorough read-through later, and then promptly put it out of your mind. After all, you're not really serious about nominating yourself. You may have done a project – a great project, even – but you don't really think you have a chance. As a relatively new AUSIT member, this is the first time you've heard about the awards; you don't even know what the benchmarks are. So you do nothing.

More emails come in and sit in your inbox, making you vaguely uncomfortable. Finally, about three weeks before the 25 September deadline, you decide to look it up: Who's won previous awards, and for what sort of projects? It seems that translation work for an SBS documentary received an award in 2011. Now you're getting interested: you've done a film. This seems similar. Maybe you should?

But like all of us, you're busy with stuff that actually pays the bills, so instead of getting to work on a nomination, you go back to your translations. A few days later, during a free moment, you download the nomination documents

just in case. You realise it's a lot more work than you anticipated, but you also have a more concrete idea of what's involved. Still you keep putting it off.

Finally, two weeks before the deadline, you're starting to get a grip. You were lucky enough to work on a great project. You don't know when the next one will come along, if ever. If you don't grab this chance, you'll probably regret it for a long time to come.

You decide to contact your referees. There's a form they need to fill in, a lot of work for extremely busy people – the writer/director and the producer of the film – and you know you're trapped when they agree to write those references for you. You can't afford to let their work go to waste. You *have* to write this nomination now, and you have to come up with the goods in less than two weeks.

Some parts of the nomination prove easier than others – gathering supporting materials, putting together documents listing what research you did and how your consultation process worked, piecing together the evidence from your emails and notes and files. Others are harder – apart from a description of your project and its context, the panel wants to know how your translation met the client's objectives, what the challenges were and how you overcame them. You need to provide evidence of consultation and research, they'd like to see evidence of measurable outcomes, and – hardest of

all – you're supposed to describe why you are an "inspirational role model for the profession". Praising yourself doesn't come naturally, so the very thought makes you cringe.

However, it helps if someone has already said something positive about your work: an independent outsider's perspective makes it a lot easier to take the rather unusual step of praising yourself in the third person. It also helps that AUSIT proves to be super helpful in answering questions, with very quick replies and good explanations.

So sweat dripping, embarrassment a constant companion, you muddle through. You keep changing things around, improving sentences, swapping words, writing a paragraph here and deleting another one there, until finally you decide you're done.

Having triple-checked all your documents, making sure everything is there, you email them in.

Luckily, AUSIT confirms receipt of your nomination within 45 minutes, so you can stop freaking out about whether everything ended up in a spam folder somewhere. You feel empty, exhausted, excited and vaguely hopeful, and you want to put the whole thing out of your mind or you'll drive yourself mad wondering who else is nominated and what sort of fascinating projects they've done. You keep telling yourself that you've done the best you can. Whether you win or not is out of your hands now.



... If you don't grab this chance, you'll probably regret it for a long time to come. You have nothing to lose and so much to gain.'

But the nomination keeps going round and round in your head, and you realise that in writing it, you've done something you rarely get an opportunity to do: reflect on your work; think about what you do and why; think at length and in depth about how you approach a translation, how that worked out under certain circumstances, and why that was or wasn't a good choice.

Sure, you feel a sense of achievement after you've finished a project, especially a big one; you may even be very happy, and proud, with how it turned out. But you're still way too close to it to think objectively about what you've done. And by the time you've gained enough distance to look back on it, you're usually too busy doing other stuff.

This means that if we learn from experience, we do so only in the moment. We miss out on the bigger picture. We don't dig out the deeper reasons for why something worked well or failed miserably. We often only have a vague idea of which aspects of our work we need to put more work into and why, or, conversely, what we're working harder on than we need to, with no tangible benefits. We usually don't put together a concrete list of why something worked well for a client and how we can repeat this success. We hardly ever analyse the strategies we

employ to overcome the challenges our work presents.

This is precisely what writing an AUSIT nomination will make you do. In asking for all the detail they do, AUSIT makes you sort through your notes and emails from that time, really transport yourself back into the project and the choices you made – but with a very different perspective.

You discover aspects of your project that you previously hadn't really thought about. You realise how much more work you did on this than you remember. You notice just how much consultation you put into it, how much research you did, and on how short notice you did much of it. You recall the choices you made in the process, the agonising decisions to put something this way or that, and why.

You get to re-evaluate your decisions with the benefit of time and distance.

If you're lucky, you'll also get a much more detailed outside assessment of your work. If your referees let you see their references, answering a very specific set of questions that AUSIT provides, you'll suddenly see yourself through your client's eyes – way beyond the brief "Great work, thank you so much!" emails you may be used to, as nice as they are. Your referees may praise you for aspects of your work that you've never even thought about, giving you a better idea of what they value about the way you do your job. And now that you know, you're able to use those

assets for future work, benefiting other client relationships.

In addition, putting together a nomination for the AUSIT awards gives you an opportunity to practise and improve your writing and marketing skills; to convince others that you did indeed do a great job.

Of course, the hardest part is convincing yourself first, especially if you're one of those people who aren't all that comfortable talking about their achievements.

Looking back on a successful project and putting into words why you think you did a great job can really boost your confidence in your abilities and your pride in your work.

The awards are also a great opportunity to see what other projects are out there. We translators as a rule work by ourselves, so it can be not just interesting but inspiring to see what other translators do.

So whichever way you look at it, it's worth nominating yourself – you have nothing to lose and so much to gain.

Sydney-based translator Elisabeth Meister was awarded runner-up in the excellence in translating category at the 2013 AUSIT awards for her work on Cate Shortland's multi-award winning feature film Lore.

A key ingredient in global trade

Kate Ritchie says Australian translators and interpreters play a vital role in furthering trade and investment.

Interpreters and translators are often unheard and unseen, but without them global understanding would diminish and international trade would shrink dramatically. While much of the work that they do is in the community sector – courtrooms, police stations, Centrelink offices and the like – the roles they play in business and diplomacy greatly assist Australia's trade and investment prospects and improve our standard of living.

Chin Communications has been providing specialised interpreting services for Australia's peak dairy industry body, Dairy Australia, in its Greater China Dairy Scholarship Program, interpreting and translating for the all-important China market.

China ranks second in Australia's dairy export market behind Japan, accounting for \$302 million in exports in 2012, growing to \$198 million for the first half of 2013.

Australia's dairy exports to China have more than doubled in volume in the past four years, making China the industry's fastest-growing export market. Indeed, Australia is the world's fourth-largest global dairy exporter behind New Zealand, the European Union as a bloc and the United States. Three quarters of our dairy exports are to Asia.

Charles Qin (second from right) interpreting



‘... in an industry where teamwork is the exception and interpreters are often isolated and unsupported, the three-interpreter team provides a model that is well worth emulating.’

The Chin Communications team of Professor Charles Qin, Joseph Tu and Bruce Song were joint winners of the AUSIT excellence in interpreting award presented on 16 November 2013. That same week, the team was highly commended in the international category of the Melbourne3000+ awards for their translation and interpreting services.

The Dairy Australia scholarship program covers technical and scientific presentations in the classroom and laboratory, cheese-making and tasting, visits to dairy farms, producers, factories and other dairy industry sites, plus formal dinners and speeches with guests from the wider dairy industry. This places an extra level of difficulty on the team: having to work in different settings, for many different presenters, on a wide variety of subjects, involving classroom training, practical exercises, social occasions and site visits.

Qin, who has been working on the program for over eight years, brought Song and Tu into the venture more recently.

Song observed some sessions in 2012, and has translated slide presentations and other content. Qin introduced Tu to the program six years ago; Tu accompanies the group on three-day visits to regional dairy centres, producers, processors and farms.

In addition to interpreting for the presentations and tours, discussions and formal proceedings, Tu’s on-the-road commentary as the group travels through regional Victoria has been very well received.

In an industry where teamwork is the exception and interpreters are often isolated and unsupported, the three-interpreter team provides a model that is well worth emulating. What can be a very difficult and tiring interpreting engagement is broken up between interpreters, ensuring that skilled, experienced talent is always available and the program proceeds fluently. It is a quality that Dairy Australia recognises: it books Chin’s services up to 12 months in advance.

Before the awards ceremony, the international market manager of Dairy Australia, Sarah Xu, said “it has been a wonderful experience to mentor and work with the Chin interpreting team and to see them advance and become experts in the subject – embracing agriculture, science and cuisine. It is a great example to the industry of how cooperation can bring dividends.”

*Kate Ritchie is a director of Chin Communications,
www.chincommunications.com.au*



A new name and a new approach

The association representing Australian translators and interpreters in industrial matters has changed its name to Professionals Australia.

CEO Chris Walton said the change would help the association represent each of the professions and advocate even more strongly on their behalf.

“We are changing our name and the way we operate to focus more directly on the issues that affect our 25,000 members,” Walton told **In Touch**.

“Our old name APESMA just didn’t reflect many of the occupations we represent.

“This is much more than just a name change; it is a stronger commitment to solve the issues that Australia’s professionals face every day,” he said.

Walton said the association’s change in approach was a suggestion from its members, and had been approved after conducting detailed research that supported the case for change.

“By changing our name and our approach, and expanding the services we offer our members, we are trying to grow the organisation. A larger organisation means a stronger voice and better results for members.”

Go to
www.professionalsaustralia.org.au

Don’t miss the next (Autumn 2014) issue of In Touch, which will feature an article from PA on how to avoid being caught by the alienation of personal services income (PSI) rules, and an interview with PA CEO Chris Walton on what he sees as the key issues facing translators and interpreters.

Is the rhetoric about foreign language study misplaced?



There is already an abundance of Asian-language speakers in Australia, argues the publisher of the directory *undergraduate*, Philip Coyte.

One of the enduring mantras about Australian education is the critical importance of foreign language study as a foundation of our engagement with the world or, more particularly, our economic engagement with Asia. You wouldn't want to take issue with that one!

At its most extreme is the sort of sentiment expressed by the respected professional accounting body, CPA Australia. In its **Submission to the Australia in the Asian Century Task Force**, 2012, the CPA recommends that "the study of the Chinese language be compulsory for all primary and secondary students. The objective is for future generations of school leavers to be fluent in Chinese." Phew!

In opposition, Mr Abbott argued that every student should be exposed to foreign languages, starting in preschool, "and a coalition government would work urgently with the states to ensure at least 40 per cent of Year 12 students were once more taking a language other than English within a decade".

Student response

In a very tough labour market for school leavers and university graduates, you would expect students to respond to what they're told are the opportunities and critical needs of the times by embarking on the study of foreign languages. But it's not happening, despite the exhortations and bonus points (in a variety of forms) for Year 12 students for university admission in most states.

Just look, for instance, at the candidature in NSW for the 2012 Higher School Certificate. There were only 104 students out of a total candidature of over 70,000 undertaking non-background Indonesian. (In Victoria, it was not quite so catastrophic, with 540 Year 12 students of Indonesian out of a total VCE candidature of 51,000).

What exactly might they do with these language skills?

You rarely see major employers advertising for graduates in Indonesian, Korean or any other languages to enable them to deal with the national agenda of engagement with the world. Certainly language graduates might be able to apply, along with all sorts of other graduates, for graduate opportunities, but they do so with no particular competitive advantage. Recruitment campaigns specifically for language graduates are not often encountered in this country, aside from school teaching and occasional community language opportunities.

In addition, the data on graduate employment via the annual and comprehensive **Australian Graduate Survey** of Graduate Careers Australia provides an objective and sobering assessment of the demand for language graduates in Australia. In the 2012 survey, the unemployment rate of recent language graduates was nearly 50 per cent higher than for graduates overall, with more than a third still seeking full-time employment four months after graduation (see table).

Furthermore, language graduates were the least likely after visual arts graduates to list their qualifications either as a formal requirement or as important in their actual employment, and the most likely to list them as merely "somewhat important" or "not important".

The employment prospects for graduates with language skills of themselves are not sufficient to prompt a resurgence in enrolments in language courses, and it is misleading to promote languages on their own as a pathway to the opportunities of the Asian century.

However, it may be that languages are an important ancillary capability that have their leverage in association with the primary professional qualification/occupation – whether engineering, accounting or social work – rather than sufficient in their own right.

Ignoring one of our greatest competitive advantages

In addition, the policy agendas to do with the requirements of the Australian economy to engage with Asia ignore almost entirely the great and singular competitive and economic advantage Australia has in dealing with Asia – the abundance in this multicultural country of speakers of Asian languages as their first language.

Are these Asian-born and first generation Asian Australians to be discounted? Are we really saying we need white Anglo-Saxon Australians to acquire Asian language capabilities when we have those very capabilities in abundance in this country?



... Our universities are overflowing with Asian students who are acquiring Australian professional qualifications to accompany their language skills.'

According to the 2011 population census, there are 500,000 Australians who speak either Cantonese or Mandarin at home and 225,000 who speak Vietnamese at home as their first language. And our universities are overflowing with Asian students who are acquiring Australian professional qualifications to accompany their language skills. The rest of us don't have a chance of mastering the skills to equal their competencies in their first language, and our competitive advantage lies more in using their skills and cultural linkages as our great national resource.

It is as much about marketing the humanities

The decline in the study of foreign languages in Australia has gone hand in hand with a decline in the strength and position of humanities in general in Australian universities, and of arts degrees in particular.

Universities themselves seem not to believe in the relevance, flexibility and potential of arts degrees, and increasingly separate out of them the "relevant" subject areas to create boutique or specialist degrees in their own right.

The fashion of the day with universities is psychology degrees. Once essentially a component of arts, they have now flourished as stand-alone degrees of considerable variety. There are as well a multitude of stand-alone communications degrees and a recent proliferation of international studies and global studies degrees incorporating disciplines that once existed within the broader umbrella of arts. In each of these areas you wonder what will happen to the graduates in the labour market with their freshly acquired boutique credentials – although there are going to be so many of them that "boutique" may no longer be an appropriate description.

However, the proliferation of international studies degrees and their popularity – and the associated study abroad/international semesters – may

be the vehicle for dealing with the broader issues of engagement with the world, and Asia in particular, beyond just language skills.

It may be an excellent thing for our engineers to have a capability in Mandarin – but they may end up in Mongolia, the Middle East, Hong Kong or Western Australia in the global context in which we operate. The broader and more flexible understanding of cultural norms and sensibilities, and of the social and political dynamics across a range of countries, that may come via international studies could well be more appropriate than rudimentary skills in one particular Asian language.

At the professional level throughout the world, we might as well admit that English is increasingly the lingua franca – and cultural sensitivities the more crucial ingredient than the particular Asian language of just one of the many countries professionals may be engaged with. Our current issues with Indonesia, for instance, do not flow from a lack of language skills, but revolve around far more basic political and cultural sensitivities.

Opportunity costs

Despite the fact that studying foreign languages is wonderful in itself, just as studying any of the humanities is, the current rhetoric ignores the opportunity costs involved.

The equally prevalent notion of Australia as a clever country, now or in the making, delusional as it may be, goes hand in hand with an emphasis on science and mathematics as its core foundation. Perhaps our competitive advantage which flows from our reservoir of language skills could enable us to focus instead on those scientific and mathematical underpinnings of our clever country notions – and a great many of our engineers may well be more interested in, and suited for, those technical rather than linguistic pursuits.

But there may hopefully be other pathways as well for Australia to succeed in the world, other than as a clever country (what they mean is cleverer than certain other countries) – unless all those Asian students who top our Year 12 exams provide both the clever capabilities and the language skills to carry us through in a competitive global economy.

NOT IN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AND SEEKING FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT FOUR MONTHS AFTER GRADUATION, 2012, PER CENT OF COHORT

Visual/performing arts	46.1
Life sciences	41.2
Social sciences	38.1
Psychology	36.9
Chemistry	36.8
Architecture	36.1
Humanities	34.7
Languages	34.5
Mathematics	34.0
Agriculture	27.4
Physical sciences	25.4
Business studies	25.5
Computer science	25.3
Planning	25.2
Education – initial	25.1
Social work	24.7
Average	24.0
Economics	23.2
Chemical engineering	22.5
Electronic/computer engin.	20.5
Accounting	20.1
Veterinary science	19.3
Aeronautical engineering	18.6
Law	17.0
Building	16.9
Dentistry	16.4
Geology	16.3
Rehabilitation	13.0
Electrical engineering	12.0
Mechanical engineering	11.6
Civil engineering	9.5
Nursing initial	7.9
Surveying	7.0
Mining engineering	6.1
Medicine	1.9
Pharmacy	1.8

Hale Fellow well met



Last month Professor Sandra Hale became the 17th AUSIT member to be named a Fellow of the institute. Her citation, reproduced below, details her remarkable contribution to the profession.

When AUSIT was established in 1987, Sandra Hale was among the first to join the institute, as a student member. She later became one of the first graduates from the Bachelor of Arts in Interpreting and Translation at the Macarthur Institute of Advanced Education (now the University of Western Sydney).

As we learned when she delivered the Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture in Sydney last year, Sandra had come to Australia with her family as a 12-year-old speaking no English, and at first became an “ad hoc interpreter” by necessity. After graduation, she went on to become a professional interpreter and translator, and subsequently educator, researcher and mentor.

Sandra has made, and continues to make, an enormous contribution to the profession both locally and globally. A pioneer in community interpreting pedagogy and research, she is internationally recognised as an authority in this field, where she has helped to maintain Australia’s position as a world leader. Her input is often sought for academic publications, conferences and policy advice, and she is regularly invited by various universities around the world as a visiting scholar. At the same time she continues to practise as an interpreter at conferences and in court, and is as highly regarded by her colleagues in these contexts, as she was in her years as a community interpreter and translator.

Sandra obtained the first PhD in court interpreting in Australia, from Macquarie University, and headed the undergraduate and postgraduate interpreting and translation courses as well as the interpreting and translation research group at the University of Western Sydney.

Then in 2012 she took up a professorship at the University of New South Wales. She is Australia’s second full professor of interpreting and translation (the first was Adolfo Gentile – then at Deakin University – who became a Fellow of AUSIT in 2012). According to her students she is an inspiring teacher, patient and graceful in her endeavours to educate and reform.

While at UWS, Sandra founded the first internationally successful academic journal on translation and interpreting based in Australia, **Translation and Interpreting**, of which she remains co-editor. She is a member of the advisory boards for two other academic journals, and has published numerous books and articles, including several books now widely used as textbooks in the area of legal interpreting.

‘... It is an honour for us, Sandra’s colleagues in AUSIT, to nominate her for the award of Fellow, the highest recognition the institute can bestow on one of its members.’

Sandra has led several important national consultancy projects, among them training the language volunteers for the Sydney 2000 Olympics, and running a training course, funded by the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice, for all the legal interpreters employed by the NSW Community Relations Commission. She is currently involved in several research projects, and is leading the team whose report on the NAATI testing system is expected to result in significant improvements to the national accreditation process.

On a practical level, court interpreters are asking for, and securing, improved working conditions in the courts as a direct result of Sandra’s research and work with the legal community. She is highly regarded in that community as an authority on all aspects of interpreting in legal settings, and regularly advises lawyers and judges on these matters.

In relation to AUSIT specifically, Sandra has always been generous in her support of the institute, especially in the two areas closest to her heart: training and professional development. In another form of mentoring, her contributions to discussions on the AUSIT eBulletin are unfailingly thoughtful and informative. She has always offered PD opportunities to members by inviting them to guest lectures, seminars and conferences, first at UWS and now at UNSW, and presenting professional development sessions across the country; she also gave AUSIT the rights to sell the DVDs and proceedings from Critical Link 5, the international conference on community interpreting which she was instrumental in bringing to Sydney in 2007.

The complete list of AUSIT Fellows and year of nomination

1995	David Connor Mary Gurgone Barbara McGilvray
1996	Terry Chesher Dr Harry Blackmore Bob Filipovich
1997	Armand von Stein Klaus Hermes
1998	Lia Jaric
1999	Marta Barany
2005	Moreno Giovannoni
2007	Annamaria Arnall Yveline Piller
2010	Vince Danilo
2011	Uli Priester
2012	Adolfo Gentile
2013	Professor Sandra Hale

It's not just about the money



Melissa McMahon wonders what it really means to be a professional.

AUSIT describes itself as “the national association for the translating and interpreting profession” and we refer to ourselves as professionals, but what exactly does “professional” mean?

When Louis Vorstermans contrasted being a professional to being a businessperson in the last issue of **In Touch** (Spring 2013), it sent me scurrying to the internet to research the term. I realised I only had a vague, impressionistic sense of what “professional” meant.

Of course, like most words, it has more than one meaning. Sometimes it just means “non-amateur” (“I’m a professional translator”), sometimes “non-amateurish” (“it’s a very professional-looking website”). Behaving with professionalism can mean a range of personal qualities from good grooming to the ability to keep a cool head. These aren’t meanings that really pick out “the professions” as a specific kind of occupation or explain what “professionalisation” is about. We start to narrow things down when we use the term professional to mean a skilled occupation rather than an unskilled one, specifically one involving intellectual skills rather than manual ones and requiring a certain level of education. The idea that a profession is an occupation unlike others goes further than this, however, as Louis’ discussion suggests. When we bring in notions of independence, self-regulation,

public service and a non-commercial orientation we are invoking the concept of the “liberal professions”, and it is worth tracing the history of this concept, because its heritage is still very much a part of the perception and legal status of the professions today.

The concept of the liberal professions was developed in the Middle Ages in Europe with the formation of the universities, and itself refers back to the ancient Roman concept of the “liberal arts” or *artes liberales*. “Liberal” in the Roman context meant “of or befitting a man of free birth”. The liberal arts were the higher forms of learning, such as grammar, rhetoric and logic, that would equip the free man for civic life, marking a distance from the moral, political and physical bondage of the slave. The Middle Ages recognised divinity, law and medicine as the liberal or learned professions, but some education in the liberal arts (extended to include subjects such as geometry and music) was still the foundation for all of these more specialised courses of university study. This organisation of learning still informs our perception of the difference between a university education and a technical one today: above and beyond utilitarian ends or vocational skills, a university education is supposed to develop broader capacities of reflection and expression that are part of an ideal of civic virtue. When many technical colleges were amalgamated with the universities in the late 1980s under the Dawkins reforms, this was perceived as

a step in both the “professionalisation” of occupations like teaching and nursing and the “vocationalisation” of the universities, which were also encouraged to form closer ties with business and industry.

Even apart from the ideal of what an arts education contributes, the notion of performing a public service is a key component of our understanding of the professions (then and today). This aspect is clear in the original professional trinity of divinity, law and medicine, and in other traditional professions such as teaching, the military, engineering and nursing. The public service component is one of the ways that a profession is distinguished from a business, as the professional is not supposed to be motivated by purely financial considerations. We see this idea taken to the extreme in the original understanding of the “honorarium”, the traditional form of remuneration of a professional – “a payment in recognition of acts or professional services for which custom or propriety forbids a price to be set” (Webster). Because of their advanced learning and important function, a great deal of trust is placed in professionals, which is why one of the hallmarks of a profession is adherence to a code of ethics. The professional “professes” or declares adherence to a set of principles that embodies their independence and dedication to the public interest.

Professional independence is not just in relation to commercial considerations but also political influence. The term “liberal” in the liberal professions today most often refers to the self-employed status of the individual professional and/or the self-regulating status of a profession as a group. Not being subject to political directives was particularly important in feudal times. Just as the trades did with the formation of guilds, the professions acquired the right to organise themselves, set their own standards and exclude unqualified practitioners. The development of science, industry and social mobility in the 19th century contributed to a rise in the “professionalisation” of occupations: the development of more formal training paths and specialisation, and the restriction of areas of activity to those with specific qualifications. This trend has continued into the 20th century, to the point that some commentators consider ours to be the age of the professional or the “expert”.

How do translation and interpreting measure up against the “liberal” ideal of a professional? There’s no question that an interpreter in a medical or legal setting is performing a public service and is in a position of trust and responsibility demanding high ethical standards. It’s clear as well that translation and interpreting in general benefit society, even if not every individual translation or interpreting assignment makes a clear contribution to the greater good. Translators and interpreters are certainly relied on for their integrity and discretion as much as their skill. Many of my clients would have the skill to produce an extract translation of their own official documents, for example, but they would lack my “profession” of its accuracy, as an identifiable and accountable member of an accredited group. It’s notable that the traditional trinity of liberal professions – divinity, law and medicine – are all characterised by famously strict confidentiality obligations, and this is also one of the key tenets of our own code.

The classifications under which occupational data is collected agree on the status of our occupation. Both the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) and the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) classify interpreters and translators as professionals.



... When we say we are professionals, we take something from both the “liberal” and the “making a living” senses.’

Neither classification refers to the notions of public service or ethical standards in their definition of a professional, stressing instead the intellectual, scientific or creative nature of the work and the relatively high skill levels required.

What about education and qualifications? Translation and interpreting are currently taught in both “vocational” training institutions (TAFEs) and universities in Australia, but as we all know, the de facto entry requirement to the translating and interpreting profession in Australia is accreditation from NAATI, a government body. It is obtained by passing an examination, starting at a “paraprofessional” level in the case of interpreters. The professionalisation of translation and interpreting faces a tension, or a balance to be struck, between developing higher and more specialised levels of qualification at one end to ensure the best possible service, and maintaining a minimal entry point at the other end in order to be able to meet community needs in situations where access to higher education may be difficult or simply not practical – thus in order to offer the “best possible service” given the resources at hand. As has been pointed out in the recent report on improving NAATI testing (**Improvements to NAATI testing: Development of a conceptual overview for a new model for NAATI standards, testing and assessment**, November 2012, prepared by Sandra Hale with contributions from others), whether the entry path to the translation and interpreting profession is a formal university education or a testing system depends to a large extent on whether the country in question is host to large immigrant and refugee populations. The report also points out that both “ends” can work together and help each other in contexts where there is a mix of needs. Some sociologists have argued that it is more useful to think of occupations as more or less “professionalised” in specific ways rather than simply being or not being a profession.

It may be that in translation and interpreting, the process of professionalisation is an internal and repeated cycle, without this having to compromise progress at the “top end”.

It probably goes without saying that a lot in the understanding of the liberal professions bears the mark of social divisions and class attitudes to things like money and trade. Our understanding of the different aspects of professionalism has evolved as society has become more open and democratic, and some distinctions are no longer clear-cut. We would no longer assume that a university-educated person is more broad-minded or civic-minded than others, for example. Ethical codes are as much a feature of trades associations as professional associations, and always have been. We are not really tradespeople (because our skills are not manual), but we can’t afford not to have technical skills, specifically technological skills. We are not really business people, in the ways that Louis pointed out, but we can’t afford not to have “business skills” such as the ability to promote ourselves, price and sell our work, keep accounts, understand the market and develop good relationships with customers. There is certainly no conflict between the public service model of the professions and a concern with appropriate remuneration. Profiteering is as frowned on now as it ever was, but we no longer live in an era when having to earn an income is a sign of a drop in class in itself.

When we say we are professionals, we take something from both the “liberal” and the “making a living” senses. We mean that we have skills, qualifications and standards that deserve respect and should not be compromised, and we also mean that those skills should be recognised through appropriate financial reward.

Melissa McMahon is a Sydney-based French-English translator.

Excellence all around

‘Love it, leave it or change it.’

Patricia Will reports on the excellence awards.

EVERY YEAR, NOVEMBER finds me crossing the country from the isolation of Perth to whichever state capital is hosting either the AUSIT biennial conference or the excellence awards.

So this year found me heading to Melbourne for the excellence awards and D-Day expo.

The first session I attended was conducted by Eva Hussain of Polaron, a highly successful language service provider employing eight full-time staff and hundreds of freelancers. The session’s intriguing title was “Freelancers and agencies: marriage of convenience or convenient marriage?” Given the often fraught nature of the relationship between agencies and freelancers, it looked set to become an interesting discussion.

The gulf that exists within the membership of AUSIT

The discussion that followed Eva’s excellent presentation of the different roles of LSP and freelancer and the kinds of issues that need resolving was robust and heated at times. But to me it also exposed the gulf that exists within the membership of AUSIT.

There are those who consider themselves to be business people, successful in what they do and confident about negotiating their own rates and conditions with a range of private and corporate clients. Then there are those colleagues working predominantly in the community or government sector who often feel exploited by the agencies that employ them.

While many of the complaints may be justified, I have always felt that there is a victim mentality within our industry that needs to change before all practitioners will truly be treated as the professionals they claim to be.

And if we are sticking with the marriage analogy, then NAATI must surely be the meddling mother-in-law, who always seems to get the blame for all our woes. I don’t think this will ever change until tertiary qualifications become the norm rather than the exception in the profession in Australia, thus rendering NAATI accreditation increasingly irrelevant.

It seems that as with any successful relationship, collaboration is the key. In Eva’s summing up she suggested that we have three options: love it, leave it or change it. I couldn’t agree more.

Diversification in the Language Industry – Success beyond Translation

The subsequent very interesting subtitling presentation by Jing Han and her team from SBS was followed by the launch of a book that provides a welcome and inspiring antidote to all the negativity about the future of our industry.

AUSIT member and award-winning translator Nicole Adams has published **Diversification in the Language Industry – Success beyond Translation** [see review, pages 14-15]. Nicole interviewed colleagues from around the world who describe how they established themselves as successful freelancers and grew their businesses beyond mere translation by seizing the opportunities offered by technology and globalisation, being open to change and exploiting niche markets.

I then headed off to a presentation by Claudia Koch-McQuillan about memoQ, a CAT tool that is becoming increasingly popular thanks to its user-friendly interface and innovative features. I am a Trados user but am always keen to hear what other tools have to offer for improved quality and efficiency in the translation process.

Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture

Following a brief interlude for some lunch and a chat with colleagues, I enjoyed the Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture presented by Cindy Cave, a sign language interpreter at the European Parliament (see page 1).

This young woman’s enthusiasm for her job and her exciting experiences in Europe were a breath of fresh air and made me reflect nostalgically on my own brief spell at the EU in Brussels many years ago. As a new graduate I was fortunate enough to undertake a six-month “internship” at the translation division, which set me off on the road to becoming a professional translator.

It was then time to go back to my hotel for a “nana nap” before heading off to the glitz and glamour of the AUSIT excellence awards gala dinner. And what an exciting evening it was. All award winners and runners-up truly deserved the accolades bestowed on them for outstanding work in interpreting and translation, and are proof that in our profession there is excellence all around us.

Patricia Will is a Perth-based German-English translator who specialises in technical translations and corporate communications.

A new beginning



Linda Karssies has no regrets about expanding her environmental science career into translation.

I, like all Dutch children, was taught the English language from age 12. But even though I frequently read books in English rather than Dutch because they were cheaper, I was not prepared for the moment when as a geography student my lecturer in hydrology introduced himself as an Englishman and announced that – for his convenience – he would teach us in English. The whole group was stunned. I also remember having to give a short English presentation on some laboratory experiments in front of my fellow students. Everybody laughed at me because I spoke about soil monsters (“bodemmonsters”) rather than soil samples.

I had more opportunities to hone my English skills when I did fieldwork in other countries, especially during three months in Scotland. Towards the end of my university degree, while studying in Canberra for six months, I met my future husband. I also picked up some Australian expressions, such as “I am really buggered”, that didn’t go down well in Canada when I lived there for more study in the field of soil erosion.

In the mid-1990s I moved over here and started working in environmental science. The longer I had been away from my own country, the more I started to look at my native language in a different way – from the outside in. But it was when I became a mother, determined to teach my son Dutch, that

I really began to study bilingualism and culture. We acquired a lot of Dutch language materials, and I always spoke Dutch to my son when we were alone. My English-speaking husband was also able to speak some “kitchen Dutch” with us. Teaching my son reading and writing sparked my interest in English and Dutch even more. That effort was well worth it; when we spent three months in the Netherlands, my son blended in well with the other Dutch kids at the local school in Wageningen.

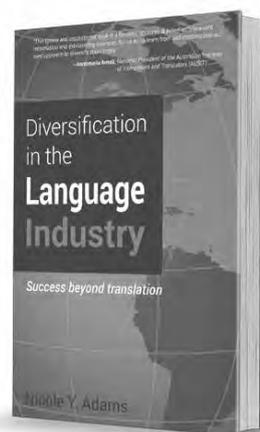
At some point in the following decade I began working a few mornings a week at the Dutch embassy – they were temporarily short-staffed and I had hours to spare. It was then that I realised that my Dutch language skills still held some value in Australian society, not just at home. My Dutch was still of a respectable standard. Then one gorgeous summer evening, overlooking the fishing boats in Bermagui, I realised that my pipe dream of becoming a translator didn’t have to stay that way.

Having learned about NAATI and AUSIT during my embassy employment, I ordered their resources. I bought a bunch of textbooks on translation and studied them. I practised a lot, pestering Dutch friends to proofread my work. I learned a lot on the ProZ website. Finally, I sat the NAATI test and passed!

I still work at the CSIRO 20 hours a week (I manage a soil archive with 70,000 soil samples), so I haven’t really left science. That leaves me 15 to 20 hours a week to devote to my translation business. It can be stressful (those moments when you find an email from Europe late at night, checking out the file formats and the topic before accepting or declining), but overall I am very happy that I have embarked on translation, and my client base is steadily growing. I enjoy the professional development and the chance it offers to get to know my vastly more experienced colleagues. As a parent it is good to be able to work from home, and I just love the deep reading that is required in order to translate. I never regret the choice I made that summer night in Bermagui.

Linda Karssies is a Canberra-based English-Dutch translator. In Touch is always keen to hear about how people got their starts in the profession.

Venturing beyond mere translation



Diversification in the Language Industry: Success beyond Translation by Nicole Y Adams (NYA Communications, 2013).

Reviewed by Barbara McGilvray

In **Diversification in the Language Industry**, Nicole Y Adams has brought together nearly 50 contributors from various countries who share their experiences, advice and suggestions for venturing beyond “mere” translation.

The author herself began freelance translating in 2003, and by 2007 found she was earning more from part-time translating than in her quality management job. So she moved to full-time freelancing, and for four years supported a family of four with translating and editing.

Material on this subject can be found in online journals and blogs, but as far as I know this is the first book published in Australia (perhaps the world) to cover the topic in such breadth. It’s a goldmine for any translator looking for ways to increase their volume of work and income: 300-plus pages of ideas and advice, drawing on the personal experience of fellow translators.

Experienced practitioners will identify with some of the stories and at the same time glean a few fresh ideas. Those new to the field will find a wealth of useful information, suggestions, and tips and tricks of the trade.

The author believes freelance translators are not making enough use of the opportunities presented by social media (Google, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter all rate a mention). And a survey she conducted this year found that while most freelance translators also do proofreading and/or editing, few offer other related services such as copywriting, transcription, terminology management, consulting, training or DTP. She suggests three reasons why a freelancer needs to identify and develop additional skills and talents: to stand out in their particular market; financial need; and because there is a risk of being left behind as clients increasingly expect additional services, not just straight translation.

Interpreters are not included in the book because she sees interpreting as a different profession with qualifications and skill sets not necessarily related to translation. Nevertheless, an article by Eva Hussain is titled “An interpreter’s story”, and there are other contributions likely to interest interpreters, such as a detailed description of linguistic validation in the medical field, ideas for online language teaching, and information about terminology services, voice-over work, and subtitling.

Many of the stories are inspiring, and the message is that diversifying is not something to be scared of: most of us are doing it already, whether we think of it that way or not. There is broad consensus that in our changing industry most translators will need to diversify to remain competitive in the future, or just to survive: it’s an essential risk-management strategy (or life-management strategy, as Annamaria Arnall suggests in her foreword). Some contributors believe it is necessary right now to ensure a steady income in the face of low-price agencies and the competition of low-price practitioners in a globalised industry. But as Anne-Marie Colliander Lind says in her article, “Industry trends and consequences for translators”, a lower price per unit – character, word, line or page – is not a threat if you can increase your productivity. She is one of several in this book who advocate collaborating, building a community, and conquering fear by adapting to change: “disintermediate, differentiate, diversify” is her advice.

It’s comforting to know that translation demand is increasing. Colliander Lind believes the market for individual translators has never been more promising. But its changing nature means that translators who specialise and have expertise in specific subject matter – within one sector or in a

content type such as marketing or technical writing – will be the ones who stay in work as translation becomes more of a commodity. The need to grasp opportunities, to study and learn about new areas, and the importance of working at what we enjoy are recurring themes. Passion and fun are often mentioned. Martina Heine-Kilic describes a “hilarious” voice-over assignment reading “numbers and prize announcements for an online bingo game in English with a German accent” – which incidentally paid more for 30 minutes than the rest of her day spent translating.

The mass of material is organised into chapters, with articles and interviews on different types and aspects of diversification and a few case studies (including Mox’s blog and Translation without Borders). The premise is set out in chapter 2, “Defining diversification: What is it and do we need it?”, and each subsequent chapter is devoted to a specific type of diversification the author has identified: linguistic, extra-linguistic, passive, external and distinctive. These are book-ended by an introduction telling the story behind the book and a conclusion: “Freelance translator – quo vadis?”

The contents pages offer ample information to guide the reader, listing the articles and their authors and the complementary interviews and case studies. There’s also a detailed index – invaluable if you want to dip into the book rather than read it from cover to cover, or if you’re interested in a particular subject or area. For me a glossary would have been helpful as well, to explain some acronyms and technical terms (such as CALL activities, ERP/CRM system deployment, XLIFF, MCIL or respeaking).

Inevitably the quality of the writing is uneven, but this book doesn’t aim to be a literary classic; the style is generally conversational and accessible, although some of the writers communicate more effectively than others. A few pieces are written in a higher register, with footnotes and references to theory and research (and in one case a bibliography).

The quality of the content also varies. The standout for me is an article by trainer and speaker Konstantin Kisin, whose advice includes preaching only what you practise: he would not feel comfortable teaching something he wasn’t doing every day, he says



This book offers something for everyone. You will almost certainly learn something new about the practice of our profession, even if you thought you knew it all.’

(thus turning on its head the cliché that those who are good at something do it and those who aren’t teach it). The trick is “to identify something you do or know extremely well. And when I say ‘extremely well’ I am talking about being one of the best in the world at what you do ...: anything from Norse mythology to working with a specific CAT tool to accounting to negotiating with clients.”

But what is engaging for me may not be for you, and this book offers something for everyone. You will almost certainly learn something new about the practice of our profession, even if you thought you knew it all.

It is first and foremost a practical work, and contributors seem to have been given free rein and minimal editing at most. Some see it as a “how-to” book and provide detailed and comprehensive information about doing a particular job. Others simply describe their career and how they either fell into diversification by accident or went searching for something to complement their translation work – or something completely different in an area that interested them. Approaches range from strictly business-management to “go where the opportunities take you” with no conscious decision to diversify.

Many ideas are repeated, but because they are presented from different viewpoints and in different geographical or professional contexts, the repetition in most cases serves as reinforcement or additional incentive. There are negative as well as positive experiences to learn from, and pitfalls to avoid.

All the contributors began their careers as translators, although some have moved on to other language-related areas. The majority work with European languages, but the stories and ideas are relevant right across the profession. For the interviews, five questions are adapted according to the context and the person interviewed: questions such as what impact the subject’s diversifying strategies and experiences have on their translation business, whether

they have found diversifying from their original translation career enjoyable or challenging, and where they see freelance translators being in five years’ time. Answers to the last question overwhelmingly mention specialising, and many, unsurprisingly, post-editing of machine translation.

Another consequence of the changing market which some translators may find difficult is that not all translations need to be perfect: increasingly, various grades of quality will be required. Oleg Rudavin, a Russian translator living in Ukraine, suggests that “quality matters only for a small proportion of translated documents” and predicts fast growth in the market share of “acceptable quality” and “for information purposes only” translations – a market populated by amateur translators, beginners and various arrangements involving machine translation. He thinks translation will continue to flourish – but not necessarily translators. There has already been a dramatic increase in the volume of work handled through multi-language vendors (MLVs), and the process could eventually be completely impersonalised. Clients will want pieces of earlier translations updated rather than the translation of complete documents, and Rudavin foresees “a relay race” with translators from different time zones connected to a remote cloud-based CAT or TM. Translators Without Borders’ Lori Thicke finds that not enough post-editors are willing to work with machine translation, and points to possible ways of making post-editing of machine translation (PEMT) creative, rather than the thankless task it often is simply because companies don’t properly understand it.

With this timely book, Nicole Y Adams is doing translators and the industry in general a valuable service. It’s not only a useful resource for freelance translators, but with its range of perspectives from around the world it should be a fascinating read for anyone involved in the area of language services – interpreters and translation companies included.

Reaching those you want to work with

The Little Book of Marketing for Translators and The Little Book of Social Media Marketing for Translators by Nicole Y Adams (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013).

Reviewed by Melissa McMahon

If you are like me, you have a clear sense of the value of developing the “marketing” side of your practice, but it also makes you feel a little queasy and you tend to fall back on what Nicole Y Adams calls the “idle” approach. That is to say, you have a couple of directory entries and online profiles, and pretty much leave the rest up to the universe. In my case, I’ve managed to build up enough business to support myself over time, but I don’t doubt that I could get more work and more of the kind of work I want if I took a more active and “directed” approach.

“Direction” is really the key idea in these books. As Adams makes clear, marketing yourself is about highlighting what makes you unique and zeroing in on the subset of potential clients who will appreciate that, rather than being all things to all people. There is no point in reaching more people if they are not the people you want to work with or who want to work with you. This is not just about identifying your specialist skills and the people who need them, but creating an identity (ultimately visual as much as psychological) that incorporates your values and philosophy – a “business vision” that will appeal to those who share your outlook. Once you have an idea of what this is, “direction” is also about developing plans and taking concrete steps to realise that idea.

The marketing approach Adams advocates is “relationship-based”: organised around educating clients and engaging in a dialogue with them. Using social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, forums ...) is a natural extension of this approach, although Adams herself admits she was a “late adopter” who had reservations about the medium. She came to believe, however, that the direct access, exposure and networking opportunities social media offer means there is “no better or faster way to position yourself as an expert in your field”.

Adams gives an overview of some of the online networks available, how they can be used for professional purposes, and how to measure their effectiveness. She also points out automation tools that can make contributions to social media easier to manage, and offers a very helpful “to-do” list if you have, say, 10 minutes or 30 minutes a day to spend on social media. As with targeted marketing, less can be more: it’s better to maintain an active presence on just one or two networks than languish on many.

The books are exceptionally clear and well-organised, aimed at making the information accessible and “actionable”. They also have the advantage of being written specifically with sole-trader translators in mind. If, like me, you are curious about these areas but a little daunted, these books offer a compact overview with a practical focus that works by itself as a “how-to” and also points to other resources if you want to take things further.

These are two of the four books in the author’s “translators” suite, each of which is available for around \$9 from amazon.com

Next issue

- Melissa McMahon reviews the other two “little books” in Adams’s “translators” suite
- Jim Hlavac responds to his critics
- Ben Xuan Xu on when accuracy and impartiality are not necessarily appropriate
- Chris Walton on how to avoid being caught by the PSI rules, and the key industrial issues facing translators and interpreters
- Erika Gonzalez joins the professionalism debate
- John Benson explains portable simultaneous interpreting
- Coral Petkovich’s translation from the Bosnian of Selvedin Avdić’s novel *Seven Terrors* has been nominated for the 2014 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award
- Linguist Rosy Lazzari tours Cuba with Australian musicians

Bridging cultures through storytelling



Nicola Savage recounts the challenges and rewards of her first foray into literary translation through her work on a collection of French short stories.



I first heard about this project when I attended the Melbourne launch of *Jetlag Stories (Australie)* in June this year. I was thrilled to meet three of the authors, and the publisher of Emue Books, a Melbourne-based publishing house that brings lively and humorous contemporary fiction from Francophone European writers to English-speaking readers all over the world.

Jetlag Stories is the fruit of a competition for short story authors who submitted their narratives on an Australian theme, written in French. The book includes the four winners of the Best Francophone Short Story award in 2012.

Following the book launch and discussions with guests who didn't speak French, as well as the publisher, I was asked to be involved in the translation of some of the stories into English. This was a new and exciting challenge for me as someone new to literary translation. Most of my work to date has been in corporate, legal, government and education fields.

As I read the stories, the combination of familiar Australian cultural norms and references to places I know well, written in French, made me realise afresh how much our world view is shaped by language and culture.

Translation theory came flooding back to me. I found myself thinking about Schleiermacher's foreignisation and domestication, and whether I should attempt to move the reader towards the author or the author towards the reader in my translation. How was I to reconcile the need to respect the author's original style

with the different intertextual, cultural and geographic references, and how did I deal with those that were almost transcendent, like Starbucks coffee? There truly is a multitude of challenges to be overcome in literary translation.

There are also rewarding moments to be experienced throughout the process. Collaboration with editors is gratifying; there is often a lively exchange of ideas and suggestions to try and reach a translation that somehow conveys the original meaning or rhetorical device, with minimum translation loss – whether it is the hustle and bustle of Pitt Street Mall in Sydney, the junkie-filled streets of Fitzroy in Melbourne, a bourgeois suburb of Paris or a parallel drawn with a Tintin cartoon character. It was in attempting to transport the reader on a voyage into the perspective of the author that I realised that I was acting as a cultural bridge between France and Australia.

A hint of bitterness still seeps in

This collection of stories also reveals the longstanding love the French have for Australia: the attraction to the sense of the unknown and enigmatic; the amazement because nothing goes in the same direction – neither in Australian mannerisms (much more polite), nor in Australian streets (much prettier). But though the sun always seems to shine, a hint of bitterness still seeps in and spreads from one story to another to unite these uprooted few. The journey is long, families are absent, pain exists even in paradise. You can be expelled, you are reminded that “everywhere else is here” – that the most beautiful dreams come to an end too.

Two of the stories I translated were “And if there was no Australia” (“Et si l’Australie n’existait pas”), about a couple who meet in Paris, fly to Sydney then split up. It is a melancholic and humorous love story between two places with the discovery of Australia as a backdrop; and “Melbourne Comedy”, a story about Jules who lives in the wildest part of Melbourne: all he sees around him are drugs, graffiti, alcohol and loud music, yet in his mind things are different – he has remained a child at heart. Making a new start in Australia, one hot and sleepless night, he lets his imagination run wild ...

I hope that I have been able to contribute in some small way to enriching contemporary literary culture in Australia and to improving cross-cultural understanding between our two countries. I look forward to further literary translation projects in the future.

Emue Publishing favours short and structured narratives, and is keen to publish lively, humorous and poetic texts that cast a critical eye on today's society. Emue has a dual meaning: it means “moved” in French, and it also stands for Ethical & Multicultural Editions. Visit them at www.emuebooks.com

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10 Reasons to engage with Monash Translation and Interpreting Studies

1. Monash is ranked in the **top 1%** of universities worldwide
2. Monash Translation and Interpreting Studies is the only Australian university to be a member of **CIUTI**, the International Conference of Universities Training Translators and Interpreters
3. Our Masters streams are among the few in Australia to be **NAATI approved** at Professional and Conference level
4. The Master by coursework is offered in **10 languages** (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian and Spanish)
5. Our students can study overseas and graduate with two distinct degrees in our **Double Masters** programs
6. We cover a broad range of **research areas** through extensive international engagement across Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Studies and offer **Graduate Research Training** through diverse and innovative PhD programs
7. Training for practitioners is available through our **Professional Development** courses
8. Our unique partnerships and industry engagement across government departments, international organisations and the private sector provide strong **career opportunities**
9. Our numerous **internships** offer valuable experience in the field
10. We actively promote **Literary Translation** through our week-long summer/winter school run in partnership with the British Centre for Literary Translation, and through our partnership with AALITRA, the Australian Association for Literary Translation

<http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/translation-interpreting/>