



# NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 16, number 3 Spring 2008



**2008 AUSIT Biennial Conference**  
**Excellence Awards news**  
**Working as a subtitler**  
**Interpreting at the top**



Member organisation  
Federation Internationale  
des Traducteurs  
International Federation of  
Translators

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## From the editor

I would like to remind members that the deadline for the summer issue is **10 February 2009**.

Thanks to all contributors, especially proofreaders Sue Jollow and Barbara McGilvray.

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

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COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Top: The 2008 AUSIT Biennial Conference. Bottom: Jorge Cziment (centre) with President of Peru Dr Alan Garcia and former Prime Minister of Australia John Howard.

# President's Report

## Sarina Phan on the success of AUSIT's Biennial Conference and the new National Council's strategic plan for the future



Dear colleagues,  
**W**elcome to the Spring edition of the AUSIT National Newsletter. AUSIT members should

all be very proud of the huge success of our recent 'Get Connected' conference in Brisbane. From the moment I entered the foyer of the Abel Smith Lecture Theatre I could feel the wonderful energy around — friends were saying hello, giving each other hugs and kisses; delegates were looking for new friends; businesses were looking for new customers; and members of the organising committee and their team of volunteers in AUSIT T-shirts were all getting an adrenalin rush. The show was about to begin!

This truly was a fantastic conference! We had a record crowd with over 200 delegates and the atmosphere was one that I've never felt at an AUSIT event before. For more details, check out the report on page 4 from the amazing team led by Sam Berner!

On a less exciting but equally positive note, I am happy to report that I am back for another year to serve as AUSIT President. This past year has gone very quickly and from my previous reports you can see the National Council (NC) has worked extremely hard and achieved some great things. Importantly, all the great work carried out by the previous NC provides members of the new NC with a plan and a clear direction regarding what needs to be done in the next 12 months. We have put together a Strategic

Plan\* outlining clear key objectives and naming those responsible for carrying out the tasks involved. I encourage you to all to familiarise yourself with the plan and see what you can do to contribute and help strengthen AUSIT. \*See the 'National Office' page in the members' area of the AUSIT website <[www.ausit.org](http://www.ausit.org)>.

I have also asked NC members to prepare a brief introduction of themselves, making it easier for members to approach them — be it for support, to contribute ideas, or to simply get to know them. These are the people who not only have a vision for themselves as practitioners but who all share a common vision for AUSIT's growth.

The **new NC members** are:

President:	Sarina Phan (VIC)
Vice President:	Eva Hussain (VIC) (Qld)
Secretary:	Ilke Brueckner-Klein
Treasurer:	John Crone (VIC)
Imm. Past Pres:	vacant

**Principal Delegates**

ACT:	Malcom Leader
NSW:	Somsak Patradoon
Queensland:	Tea Dietrich
SA:	Michela Schirru
VIC/Tas:	Andre Bevez
WA:	Ella Davies
National PD Team:	Sam Berner (Qld), Claudia Ait-Touati (SA), Trish Will (WA), Max De Montaine (Qld) and Willya Waldburger (NSW).

I look forward to another successful year working with you all at AUSIT.

*AUSIT Senior Practitioner Sarina Phan is a T/I in Vietnamese and English. Beginning her interpreting career in 1990, Sarina has worked extensively in her preferred legal domain for more than 10 years. She is one of the few recognised Vietnamese and English conference interpreters and was instrumental in bringing simultaneous interpreting into the court system in Melbourne.*

*Sarina's commitment to the T&I profession includes serving as Chairperson of the Vic/Tas Branch from 2001-05. Sarina has been involved in the development of many of AUSIT's PD programs, and of major events such as AUSIT's 2004 Biennial Conference and the Vic/Tas Excellence Awards. Sarina's favourite past-times are watching her son's basketball games and catching up with friends and colleagues over coffee or dinner. She considers shopping, a massage followed by a relaxing lunch with her mate Eva, or jogging to be very therapeutic!*

# Meet the rest of the 2008-09 National Council



**Vice-President**

**Eva Hussain** is a linguistic consultant and trainer with over 15 years experience in the communication sector. Eva is tertiary-educated in the field of Computer Programming, with a NAATI professional accreditation in interpreting and translating in Polish. Between 1995 and 1997 she managed the Polish headquarters for Interwest, an international telecommunications service provider. Eva has also worked as Operations Manager of Interactive Telemedia, and more recently Business Development Officer of the City of Port Phillip.

Eva is a former Chair of AUSIT Vic/Tas, a founding member and former President of the Polish-Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the former President of the Australian-Polish Community Services, and a current member of the Polish Society of Economic, Legal and Court Translators.



**Secretary**

**Ilke Brueckner-Klein** is a NAATI-accredited professional German <-> English translator and an AUSIT Senior Practitioner. Ilke grew up in Germany where she was trained as a T/I in English, Italian, and Spanish. After several years as a bi-lingual personal assistant she migrated to Australia in 1997 and since then has been self-employed as a full-time professional translator. Her business — Klein Corporate Contracting Pty Ltd - The German. Ilke's Translation Services — has offices in both Brisbane and Melbourne. She has been Branch Secretary for the VIC/TAS Branch (2001-2003) and National Secretary (2002-2003). More recently, she was PR Manager for the AUSIT 2008 Biennial National Conference and is Assistant Secretary for the AUSIT QLD Branch (as of 2008). Ilke enjoys the geographical flexibility her translation business offers her, but spending hours in front of a computer screen requires some physical outlet, so chances are you'll see her zipping around Melbourne on a commuter bike, or on a fast road bike in hilly Brisbane .



**Treasurer**

**John Crone** joined AUSIT in the aftermath of the 1996 FIT Congress in Melbourne — an outstanding achievement for AUSIT. The issues discussed were those he had been facing as Head of the North Asia Department at Radio Australia, the ABC's external service which broadcasts in a range of Asian, Pacific and European languages. Besides his commitment to AUSIT, John is also involved with the Chinese Language Teachers Association of Victoria, and the Australia-China Business Council, where he works as a Chinese-English translator. Earlier this year AUSIT'S National Council began outsourcing its administrative operations with the aim of providing a more efficient service to members and establishing itself as an energetic, forward-looking organisation. John looks forward to helping secure the long-term success of the new administrative arrangements over the coming months.



**ACT Principal Delegate**

**Malcolm Leader** took up freelance translating from French to English after a long career in the Australian Foreign Service, which included seven postings abroad. He has been Chair of the ACT Branch of AUSIT and its Principal Delegate for the past four years.



**Qld Principal Delegate**

**Somsak Patradoon** is NAATI-accredited as a professional Thai <> English translator/interpreter, professional Chinese>English translator, paraprofessional English<> Chinese interpreter, and paraprofessional English>Chinese translator. His experience encompasses 10 years of private sector accounting, 12 years of community training/teaching, and 16 years of public service accounting. In addition, he has been doing T&I for government bodies including the Dept of Defence, AFP, NSW Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW Department of Health for 22 years, and has done voiceover and subtitling for ABC TV, SBS, and other clients. Somsak has also done court interpreting in New South Wales in federal, supreme, district and local courts, and done conference and simultaneous interpreting. He is currently a pre-candidate member of AIIIC.



**NSW Principal Delegate**

**Tea C. Dieterich** is a NAATI advanced translator and interpreter and holds degrees in Translation, Interpreting and Cultural Studies for Spanish, English, German and French. Recruited by the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Tea came to Sydney in 1997. In 1999 she founded Multimedia Languages and Marketing (MLM) in WA. Tea has been instrumental in promoting the rights of Aboriginal people to access interpreter services. In 2000 she established the Kimberley Interpreting Service, an Indigenous language interpreting service in WA which provides NAATI-accredited interpreters. In 2002 she moved to Cairns where she opened another branch of MLM. She is currently working with the Queensland Department of Justice to establish an Aboriginal interpreter service in Qld. Tea is a member of Brisbane Marketing, the German-Australian Chamber of Industry and Commerce, the German-Australian Business Association, the Australian Institute of Export, and the Inner West Chamber of Commerce.



**SA/NT Principal Delegate**

**Michela Schirru** had a typical Italo-Australian upbringing in Sydney then went to Germany when she was 19. A year abroad turned into 12 years of moving between Germany and Australia, during which she completed a degree in T&I in Cologne and an MA in Communication Studies at the University of SA. Michela worked as a conference T/I in Europe and a freelance researcher for the BBC. She and her family settled in Adelaide seven years ago and, in addition to raising two girls, she has made a career as a T/I in German and Italian.

Michela joined AUSIT to better understand our industry, and help raise our profession's profile, and because she believes in the importance of adequate and ongoing training. The greatest perk for Michela has been finding so many fantastic colleagues out there!



**Vic/Tas Principal Delegate**

**Andre Bevez** had ample exposure to a range of European languages during his formative years in a migrant neighbourhood of Melbourne. He completed a BA at Monash University with major sequences in German and Slavic Studies — including Ukrainian—the language of his own heritage — and Ukrainian now forms a significant part of his activity as a translator and language trainer. Andre's interest in the theory and practice of translation stretches back to the early 1990s, and he and his wife Anne have managed a translation business since 2002. Andre has been a member of AUSIT since 2004. He joined the VIC/TAS Branch Committee in 2007 and became Chairperson in October 2008.



**WA Principal Delegate**

**Ella Davies** was born in the former Yugoslavia and is thus comfortable with living in a multicultural society. Although formally educated in accounting, Ella was always somehow drawn to the interpreting field. In 1993 she started her official interpreting career when she was employed as a T/I by the European Union Administration in her city. Ella migrated to Australia in 1996 and continued interpreting for the community in the languages of the former Yugoslavia (Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian). She has also worked for a chartered accountant, as a booking officer, and as a language services coordinator for most major hospitals in Perth. In 2005 she began running her own T&I agency, WA Interpreters Pty Ltd. Although small, it has built a good reputation with both clients and interpreters. She has been a member of the AUSIT WA branch committee since 2005 and is their principal delegate for this year.

Ella is passionate about the interpreting industry in Australia and is working to enhance the profile and standing of language professionals within the community

# AUSIT 2008 Biennial National Conference — 'Get Connected'

## The University of Qld hosts the most successful conference yet

**M**ore than 200 conference participants, including fellow interpreters and translators, academics, students and industry stakeholders, convened at the University of Queensland on 14-15 November for the AUSIT 2008 Biennial National Conference. It was the second time this national event, which attracts language professionals from across Australia, New Zealand, and the United States was held in Brisbane, the 'River City'.

AUSIT Queensland hosted this year's Biennial Conference, giving local and interstate participants the chance to enjoy some relaxed Queensland hospitality. Under the banner 'Get Connected', academics, experienced professionals, and business and industry stakeholders debated and explored the rising importance of the translating and interpreting profession — debates increasingly relevant in a state such as Queensland with the current high numbers of import/export relationships in the resources, service and health industries. **Major Sponsors** were the School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland, and Multicultural Affairs Queensland, Department of Communities. **Event Partners** were NAATI, Congress Rentals, TIS, and Qld Health, and **Trade Exhibitors** were Queensland State Library, Absolute Translations, QTIS, the Institute of Modern Languages, Arabic Language Services,

and Multimedia Languages and Marketing. The Conference organisers proudly presented a relevant and interesting program, covering a wide range of aspects of the profession: from Indigenous interpreting in the remote Kimberley region, to United Nations level simultaneous conference interpreting, literary and medical translations, translation training, accreditation, and much more. Many of the sessions were interpreted simultaneously into AUSLAN, German and Japanese, so participants got a feel for what it's like to be at a UN-style conference whilst remaining in the St. Lucia University campus. Congress Rentals, Australia's leading conference interpreting equipment supplier, generously provided the state-of-the-art equipment and technicians as part of their sponsorship; having technicians in situ ensured smooth and professional simultaneous interpreting of all plenary sessions. Senior NAATI Conference Interpreters Felicity Mueller and Claudia McQuillan, both AUSIT members and members of the prestigious International Association for Conference Interpreters (AIIC), left their usual international conference circuit to show their peers and colleagues what they do during the Beijing Olympics and other international events. AUSIT strongly recommends the use of AIIC interpreters for conference interpreting and is very proud to count several AIIC interpreters among its members.

One of the program highlights was

Henry Dotterer, founder of the global translator marketplace Proz.com. Henry flew in from New York on Thursday and dazzled conference delegates early on Friday morning with his inspiring keynote speech 'Change in the translation industry – and what it means to you'. He talked about all the controversial realities: from automated translation to free human translations, and from the new Google Translation Centre to TMS Systems. He predicted the industry outlook for the next three to five years and described how translation practitioners can benefit from and deal with it. He listed industry trends — from VLTM (Wordfast) to TAUS data sharing — gave a realistic appraisal of what is happening, and showed there is no turning back. His encouraging and inspiring message was that we should not fear the rise of MT (machine translation) and HT (free human translation), but instead recognise their benefits and integrate them (with good management) into your work to reap benefits by being fully up to date in your industry. Love it or hate it, this was a message we needed to hear.

The Conference also featured a strong Indigenous content, with a variety of workshops dedicated to exploring training Indigenous interpreters in remote locations, skills training, issues in Indigenous language translations, and a presentation by the Kimberley Aboriginal Interpreter Service (KIS). Five KIS interpreters, together with linguist Keeley Palmer from the Mirima Language and Culture Centre and KIS Coordinator Dee Lightfoot, travelled from Kununurra and remote East Kimberley communities to participate in the Conference.

The Jill Blewett Memorial Lecture was given by Adolfo Gentile on the interesting yet very important issue: 'Interpreters and translators and human Rights'. We thank Adolfo for sharing his commitment, experience, and expertise in this enriching and pertinent speech.

For more information on the other inspiring plenary sessions and workshops, please check the website program at <[www.ausitconference.org](http://www.ausitconference.org)>.

Networking was high on the agenda with all participants encouraged to 'grab' anyone they wanted to talk with, ask questions of, learn from, and make contact and share ideas with — including presenters, keynote speakers, conference committee and the National Council.

The Conference dinner was held on



Left to right: AUSIT's Dr Mirna Cicioni, Dima Rashid, Sompit Watkins, Sam Berner and Jadranka Brown at the Conference dinner.



*Left to right: PR Manager IlkeBrueckner-Klein, Conference Manager Vicky Zeng, AUSIT President Sarina Phan, AUSIT Qld Vice-Chair Ita Szymanska, Chair of the Organising Committee Sam Berner, AUSIT Qld Chair Tea Dietterich, AUSIT Qld Treasurer Julie Segal, AUSIT Qld's Veerle Vanderplasschen, Conference Administrator Alison Rodriguez, and AUSIT Qld Secretary Rona Zhang.*

the Friday night in Brisbane's historic Powerhouse overlooking the Brisbane River. Some 110 attendees enjoyed a relaxing evening in the avant-garde ambience — some even danced the night away. It was a welcome break to kick up our heels and let our hair down, and a fantastic opportunity to foster relationships, get to know a different side of our industry colleagues, and enjoy a great drop of Australia's fine wines and Queensland's freshest gourmet food.

Overall, there was a fantastic buzz and endless energy throughout the entire two days. While generous breaks were allotted between the different presentations and talks to let us 'Get Connected', it seemed there was just never enough time to mingle; however, there certainly was enough delicious food to balance all the food for thought the Conference provided.

Thank you to all participants for coming and making this Conference the success it was. Thank you to all our Sponsors, Event Partners and Trade Exhibitors for assisting us in making it all happen in the first place.

Ilke Brueckner-Klein, PR Manager of the Organising Committee  
 Sam Berner, Chair of the Organising Committee  
 Tea Dietterich, Chair of the QLD Branch

Photographs courtesy of Janek Motylinski, Dima Rashid and Somsak Patradoon.



*It's stakeholders enjoy one of the Conference's many relevant and interesting sessions.*



*DJ Lennie Pocio (left) and KIS interpreter Ronnie Jimbidie belt out some Elvis.*

# Connected – but where to now?



Henry Dotterer from Proz.com speaking at the Biennial Conference on future trends and where the T&I profession is heading.

It was a real privilege for AUSIT 2008 Biennial National Conference participants to listen to keynote speaker Henry Dotterer's thoughts on *Building international communities online – where to?* Not only did Henry speak well (it makes a difference), but he is obviously very 'plugged in' to the professional zeitgeist and has a good idea of where the profession is going, and of tactics to respond to the challenges ahead. And as a Proz.com member, it was nice to put a face to the name at the bottom of my *Monthly Newsletter* email.

When I first came across Proz.com in late 2001, I couldn't get over what a fabulous idea it was. I never bought into the image of the translator as a lone worker at the computer desk with a pile of dictionaries and a liver complaint. I didn't find it stressful or isolated, and one of my favourite pastimes was to chat to other translators and muse over lexis, syntax, textuality, layers of meaning, and the relative values of why one word was preferable to another in a translation. Indeed, when I first began my telephone bill was huge as I constantly rang colleagues for their

thoughts on doubts and inconsistencies, and other non-translator colleagues when I needed a monolingual's advice on terminology in architecture, chemistry, mining or law, or just some fresh eyes on a persistent problem (and this in the UK where they charge by the minute!). Now all that activity has moved online.

Proz.com is an ideal forum for translators to get connected and pool knowledge, glossaries and resources. The site is useful in many ways other than for just knowledge sharing, and Henry talked of the Proz.com website's on-going development as it responds to members' feedback, the incorporating of new ideas, and technology driven change. Today's translator also needs to be responsive to change, and Henry offered some very sound strategies for facilitating and embracing such change.

As Proz.com is a virtual network, new translators can easily connect to and learn from others, get help, training, jobs, information on potential clients, and articles on translation issues. As Eva Hussain, from Polaron Language Services in Melbourne, reminded us,

the mean age of T&I practitioners is closer to retirement age than we might like to dwell on (read forty as the new adolescence). It behoves us all to put something back into the industry by nurturing new talent. Specialisation is in itself one of the strategies for stepping up and moving with the times — become good at something and then teach it to others; become the person people seek out when they want to know about that subject. In a global marketplace we can be up against some steep competition, so practitioners need to set themselves apart. One thing that hadn't occurred to me, obvious as it is, is that I am an exporter! Many thanks to Vince Kelly from Austrade for pointing this out (and giving exporters a bag of suggestions on how Austrade can offer practical help).

Proz.com links its members directly to the global arena: translators in different time zones and disparate economies are competing for the same jobs. Undercutting, and the downward pressure this is thought to have on rates, seems to be the biggest concern for many. I have occasionally wondered whether the fear might actually loom larger than the threat. Henry felt that, in his experience and looking at the data, the situation is not as straightforward as it sounds. Outsourcers, says Henry, do not always choose the lowest bid; in fact they rarely do so because they know that quality and reliability are important considerations.

In a rapidly turning world, whoever stands still, moves backwards. The keynote lecture set the focus for the conference — looking at where we are heading as a profession and how we can cope with the paradigm shift underway. Farzad Sharifia of Monash University eloquently reminded us of the translator's sometimes precarious position, taking as a case in point the political discourse between Iran and the USA, where translations are picked up by the media and skilfully skewed and weighted according to thinly veiled agendas. Heather Glass of Government Skills Australia presented a paper on the T&I Training Package Project, looking at how future generations of T&I practitioners will learn the necessary skills and what these might be. Adriana Rozada of AR Translations, and Claudia McQuillan from McQuillan and Associates, both mentioned the European Standard EN15038; something we will no doubt all be hearing much more about. Professor Sandra Hale from the University of Western Sydney gave

us a sometimes amusing, sometimes daunting look into the interpretation of, relevance of, and reliance on the Code of Ethics. I never imagined anyone might deliberately throw the Code of Ethics out the window as redundant and go out of their way to rail against it at every turn — perhaps this was the exception that proves the rule.

Machine translation, free human translation, the Google Translation Project, and data-sharing are all here to stay, and Wayne Tseng from ETranslate in Melbourne showed just some of the latest technologies in

action and how they could have a positive impact on the translator's workload. Aaahh technology... it's making some of us nervous, enthralled others. Is it a problem we need to worry about? Translation is about identifying potential problems and coming up with strategies and textual sleights of hand to overcome them. We are a profession of problem solvers. The verdict on the 'where to' of translation? It was positive. And we have every reason to be too.

*Alison Rodriguez*

## Post-conference morning tea at Southbank

Responding to popular request, the QLD Committee organised a post-conference activity for Sunday 16 November; the following T&I practitioners were present: Annamaria Arnall, Ella Davies, Sarah M. Dillon, Michele Dreyfus, Maurite Fober and company, Diana Rodriguez-Losada, Somsak Patradoon, Rosanna Perino, Michela Schirru, Veerle Vanderplasschen and Patricia Will, .

When I arrived at Chez Laila along the river at Brisbane's Southbank on a beautiful Sunday morning, our table for 10 was, to my surprise, already attended by about 7 relaxed T&I practitioners, happy to be there and enjoying some down-time after a busy conference. The atmosphere was good and the surroundings so beautiful. The Brisbane River brought along a

refreshing wind and the trees protected us from the sun, which made it a perfect setting for some great conversation on our much-loved profession. We were enjoying our brekkie and a nice cup of chai or coffee, but our table soon proved too small as more excited AUSIT members arrived from the post-NAGM, keen to join us.

This Sunday morning gathering ended up being a great way to unwind after a busy weekend and a chance to sit down, relax, enjoy life and 'get connected' with fellow T&I practitioners. We chatted about our professional and personal lives and the conference theme 'Get Connected' really came into its own.

*Veerle Vanderplasschen  
Proud AUSIT QLD Committee Member*

## Conference comments

'...I must congratulate you on organising such a successful event. Thank you again for the opportunity to present ourselves in the conference. It definitely has extended our profile further...Certainly, I am keen to explore future collaboration with AUSIT QLD in a number of different areas.  
*Wayne Tseng, ETranslate, Melbourne*

'...I was particularly interested to hear the experiences of interpreters in Aboriginal languages in the Kimberley and Torres Strait, which is something that doesn't normally cross my path.'  
*Mary Heath, Translator, AUSIT QLD*

'Great Conference!! I'm feeling very inspired and have a much clearer picture of what is required to move my business forward.  
*Linda Wiederkehr Translation Service*

'I want to express my thanks for a remarkable event that was brilliantly organised... your efforts were highly visible.'  
*Janette Kodaih, Translator Spanish>English*

'I'd like to thank you all for hosting a stimulating, fun and enlightening conference. I came expecting to schmooze with colleagues, make some new friends and hear some interesting speakers - I surprised myself by coming home with a notepad full of ideas: the EU standard, Certified Pro, loose collaboratives (sounds like something for a colorectal surgeon!), AUSTRADE and even the possibility of starting an agency...'  
*Andy Bell, translator, WA*

'I wanted to thank you for the wonderful conference you organised. It was a real success, the best AUSIT conference I've attended.'  
*Prof. Sandra Hale, UWS*

'Is it OK for us to sing our own praises?' .....well:

'Thank you all miracles and legends (...). The amount of positive comments I heard and overheard during these past two days were staggering. But lest we become too full of ourselves, (we should) document what went right (and why) and what did not go THAT right (and why). AUSIT has a short memory. We need to make it longer.'  
*Sam Berner, Chair, Organising Committee*



# The 2009 AUSIT National Excellence Awards in SA

## More opportunities for industry and peer recognition with two new categories

The Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators will be presenting the second National Awards for 'Excellence in Translation', 'Excellence in Interpreting' and 'Outstanding Contribution to the T&I Industry' in 2009, with the Awards being hosted by the SA/NT branch.

This year, we are pleased to introduce two new categories:

**'Outstanding contribution to Indigenous interpreting'** and **'Outstanding contribution to AUSIT'**.

The AUSIT National Excellence Awards recognise exceptional work by individuals and organisations operating in all sectors of the translating and interpreting (T&I) industry. They encourage best practice, professionalism, quality, innovation, and outstanding contributions to the T&I industry.

The 2009 AUSIT National Excellence Awards are open to all Australia-based practitioners with NAATI accreditation or equivalent qualifications, and

organisations with an interest in translation and interpreting.

### How to participate

*Have you used T&I services?*

If you have come across a performance or initiative that you think merits recognition, you can nominate the respective practitioner or organisation. AUSIT will then invite your nominee to make an Awards submission, in which means they will need to provide details of the nominated project in accordance with the entry requirements.

*Are you a professional?*

Surely you have done work in the past that needs or deserves recognition? We tend to work anonymously in our profession and there are therefore many benefits to participating in the Awards, regardless of whether your submission wins. An entry or an AUSIT Award gives your initiative/activity role-model status and helps you gain recognition, which ultimately means greater business opportunities.

### Awards Presentation

The AUSIT National Excellence Awards 2009 Presentation Gala Dinner will be held at the Adelaide Town Hall on 6 November 2009. To book your ticket, download the booking form at <www.ausit.org> or email <awards@ausit.org>.

Prices for the four-course Gala Dinner are:

AUSIT members — \$100 plus GST  
Non-members — \$125 plus GST  
Corporate table prestige packages for 10 guests — \$1,300 plus GST

This is your opportunity to be in the spotlight. The top submissions in each of the five categories will be recognised with a national 'Excellence' award or 'Highly commended' award. Additionally, high-calibre entries from the host state SA/NT also have the opportunity of winning a regional award. If you are a resident of SA or NT, you may even win two awards in 2009! Go to the AUSIT website to find out more. Previous winners, award presentation photos, criteria, media coverage, backgrounds to finalists' projects, comments from the jury, and entry guidelines are all there.

Nomination and entry forms are available from [www.ausit.org](http://www.ausit.org) (under 'Excellence Awards'). To prepare an entry or to nominate someone, download the relevant nomination kit, fill in the form, and return it to:

AUSIT Awards  
PO Box 143  
Coonalpyn, SA 5265

Nominations close: **1 September 2009**  
Submissions close: **22 September 2009**

## Make the most of AUSIT's interactive Yahoo eForums

Join the eBulletin, AUSIT's electronic forum for professional exchanges with over 300 subscribers, where you can ask and answer questions, share your own views on T&I or other language matters, get involved in discussions, and gain an overall view of what the current issues are in the profession. You can also talk to your colleagues in your own language group by subscribing to a specific language T/I forum. Email groups are available for Arabic, Baltic/Nordic, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Indonesian/Malay, Japanese, Korean, Macedonian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian/Ukrainian, South Slavic, Spanish and Vietnamese. Other aspects of professional life are discussed in the groups: AUSIT Constitution Review, Literary Translation, Medical T&I, Overseas Members, Pay and Conditions, and Translation Technology. It's particularly important for you as members to belong to your own Yahoo language group(s), otherwise you'll miss out on any job opportunities that are sent out for your language(s).

Go to the home page of AUSIT's website [www.ausit.org](http://www.ausit.org) and scroll down till you find the link to more information about these Yahoo groups. See you online!

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# Interpreting at the top

## Jorge Cziment, AUSIT Senior Practitioner, was a fly on the wall for three days at last year's APEC leaders' meeting in Sydney

The moment George came into the room he winked at me. I suddenly felt overwhelmed: this was no ordinary George, but the most powerful man in the world by any name. He was George Bush, President of the United States.

He went around the room, said hello to the other twenty Heads of State present, and came to where I was sitting with Dr Alan García, the President of Peru. We immediately stood up. Bush began to speak in Spanish: 'Hola, ¿Cómo estás?...' with a strong Texan accent. He then continued with more small talk, but suddenly got stuck with a Spanish verb and looked at me before continuing in English.

There I was, all of a sudden, interpreting at the top — at the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Sydney meeting in September 2007. For three days I was to whisper-interpret everything that was said into the ear of the President of Peru, and stay always at his side, as he did not speak much English.

The first day was the Friday, declared a public holiday by the Government. We left the Shangri La Hotel, where the President was staying, in the official Peruvian Presidential five-car motorcade. President García rode in a white limousine after the motorcycles and the police car, while I was in the last car with members of the Peruvian press. On arrival at the Sofitel Hotel, where the meeting with Ju Jintao, the President of China was to take place, I had to run from my car to be next to Dr. García, who was already on the escalator to the first floor where the meeting was to take place. That is when, under the flashes of the photographers present, I hastily introduced myself, and told him that I would interpret everything said from one language to the other. I sat to his right on a huge long table; on the other side, the Chinese delegation was already seated, with Ju Jintao and his interpreter just in front of us. The Chinese President started talking. It was quite a long statement. Then he paused. I

waited for the translation into English but, lo and behold, his interpreter rendered it directly into Spanish. I somehow felt relieved and sat back watching. The interpreter took notes all the time and fortunately his Spanish was quite good. Statements (mainly from the Chinese President) were long, and the meeting ended with the signing of a Chinese-Peruvian cooperation agreement.

Later that day at the Opera House Dr. García decided he would read his speech in English at the closing of the business summit, probably confusing the team of simultaneous interpreter colleagues waiting in remote interpreting booths for his speech in Spanish.

Later that day I had a face-to-face interpreting assignment between Presidents García and Putin, who had his interpreter. Putin did not need translation into Russian of my interpreting of García, but he never spoke in English — his interpreter did that.

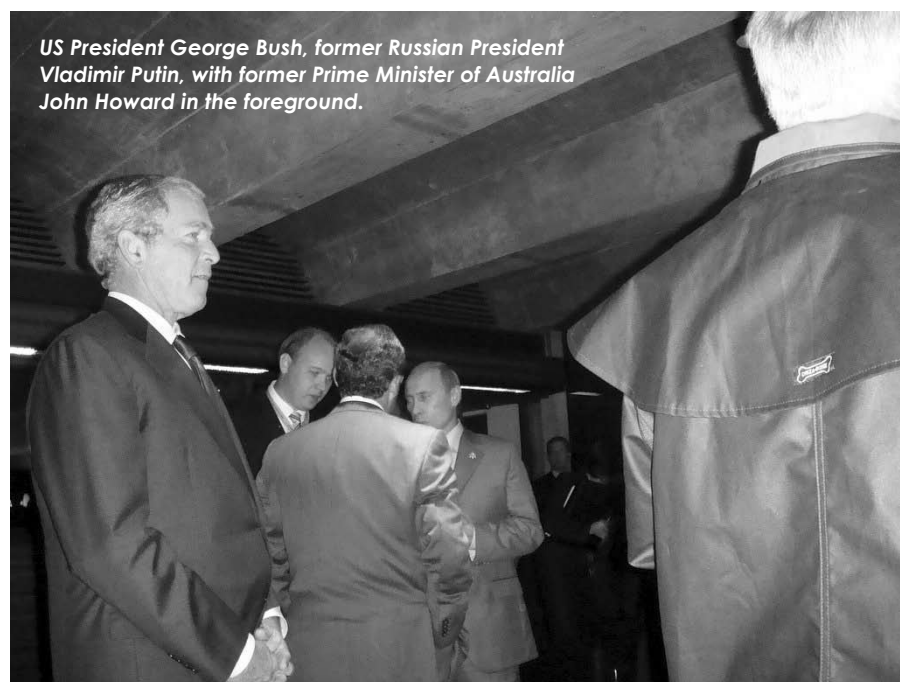
Cocktail hour at the Opera House was something special, especially when Prime Minister Howard asked not only

the President of Peru what he would like to drink but, in true Aussie style, and to the amazement of the Peruvian Minister of Foreign Affairs (who did not seem to be happy with the idea) what I would like to drink. Short private meetings with very important business executives took place then and later at the hotel.

The last meeting of the day was with the Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who brought his Spanish-French-English interpreter with him. There was no need for either of us to work, as Dr. García spoke French, having spent many years in France. I suddenly wondered if the next two days would be as easy as this.

Saturday's events took place mainly at the Opera House. The highlight of the day was lunch at Guillaume, a restaurant occupying one of the sails of the Opera House. There were three tables with seven Heads of State at each. President García was accompanied by the Heads of State of New Zealand, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Japan, Malaysia and Singapore. Only four interpreters were present, all of us starving behind our respective clients as we were not there to eat. Immediately after lunch, the official photograph was taken of the leaders in national costume. Australia's 'national costume' on this occasion was a very practical all-weather Driza-Bone long coat. Small talk followed between President García and Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, about the garment and if it was leather or fabric.

*(continued on page 10)*



*US President George Bush, former Russian President Vladimir Putin, with former Prime Minister of Australia John Howard in the foreground.*



Top: The official APEC leaders photo.

Bottom: The author (right) with President of Peru Dr Alan Garcia.

Heavier stuff after lunch was two hours' simultaneous interpreting for the first leaders' retreat. It was my turn to sit in one of the provisional remote simultaneous interpreting booths, located temporarily in the famous Green Room of the Opera House; I had to follow the proceedings in front of a monitor. A colleague and I interpreted into Spanish for the Peruvian President, and rendered his speech into English for everybody else (Mr Bush included). Curiously, the President of Mexico had his own pair of (local) interpreters in another booth. Suddenly Chilean President Michelle Bachelet decided to speak in Spanish not English, which caught us all by surprise. Fortunately President Gloria Arroyo, a fantastic Spanish-speaker, spoke (of course) in English.

Sunday's events took place mainly at Government House, a stone's throw away from the Opera House. President García spent a while admiring the paintings on the walls of the grand residence, while everybody else walked and talked (pre-lunch drinks in hand) around the gardens. I offered to interpret for any head of state he chose to speak to, and I am sure I sounded like my mother when she asked me to go out and play with other kids in the footpath. Instead, he asked me to sit with him at a table on the terrace overlooking the gardens and tell him about my life in Australia, my Peruvian friends and how they survived in Australia. He insisted on my having a drink. Under 'presidential orders' I asked for a chardonnay. Former Prime Minister Howard then invited all to

the table for the closing APEC lunch. This was to take place around three tables on the terrace overlooking the gardens, but the weather was not auspicious so it was served inside the residence, in the Arcade Room at a huge oval table. Over coffee and light conversation, including talk about the then recently released film 'The Queen', Mr Howard mentioned that it happened to be the 58<sup>th</sup> birthday of Dr Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia. Immediately a door opened and a birthday cake was brought in. All present sang 'Happy Birthday'. Dr Yudhoyono was pleasantly surprised. He was seated between US Trade Representative, Ambassador Susan Schwab, who was standing in for President Bush who had departed the day before, and Hu Jin Tao, President of the People's Republic of China. Right after lunch, for the second leaders' retreat I did two more hours of simultaneous interpreting in a makeshift booth while watching them on a monitor.

I finally said goodbye to Dr. García after his last meeting with the Korean President, at the Westin Hotel. It was again 'light duties' for me as the latter's interpreter moved directly between Korean and Spanish.

I found the whole experience a revelation. Travelling through the locked-down city centre was swift and smooth in those motorcades, with no traffic to worry about. We could hardly see Sydneysiders through the steel barricades. Some waved at us, but I am sure most of them were amazed at seeing their city locked down and paralysed. Australia spent many, many millions of dollars in security, including on the constantly hovering helicopters, the ubiquitous police, the anti-riot squads and snipers on the roofs, and yet nobody asked me to open my handbag at any time, nor asked me why I was taking photographs. I had actually enquired about taking photos and was told I could take them unless somebody told me otherwise. I took many, including short video clips.

Although on several occasions I've had the chance to work for very prominent people in Australia and overseas, I never forget that we interpreters belong to the service sector and are supposed to be as invisible and unobtrusive as possible. The fact that I could take the photos without anyone raising an eyebrow is proof I achieved this.

At the AUSIT 2008 Biennial Conference, AUSIT offered simultaneous interpreting (SI) for the first time thanks to our AUSIT and AICC members, conference interpreters Felicity Mueller and Claudia McQuillan, and Congress Rentals, a Bosch Solutions interpreting equipment provider. AUSIT highly recommends the use of AICC members as conference interpreters and is proud to have Spanish, Malay, German and Chinese AICC interpreters among its membership.

# Simultaneous conference interpreting

## What is simultaneous interpreting ?

This is interpreting which needs to happen simultaneously (as the speaker is speaking), be it for a conference, a training session, a business meeting or when governments from different countries want to discuss issues.

Consecutive interpreting occurs after each client has spoken.

## Why do you need equipment for it?

Simultaneous interpreting equipment facilitates the process. It allows the Interpreters (usually seated in a sound-proof booth) to listen to the speaker/presenter and convert his/her speech simultaneously into the delegates' languages. The delegate can listen to his/her choice of available languages through a wireless headset, thus following the proceedings of the meeting in his/her own language in real time.

## What kind of equipment is available for use in a meeting?

Simultaneous interpreting equipment is usually available with an **infra-red system**. Infra-red light from emitters fills the room, allowing delegates to listen to their choice of languages via wireless headsets from anywhere in the room. Unlike a radio frequency, an infra-red signal does not leak through walls and doors. This is particularly useful for confidential meetings.

As in any other area of the audio-visual industry, simultaneous interpreting equipment is available in analogue or digital technology, with analogue technology the older of the two. Given the advancements in the industry, digital technology is currently the best solution as it offers superior quality audio which is free of interference from other audio-visual equipment such as powerful lighting transformers, other wireless frequencies, etc. The new generation Bosch digital interpreter consoles and conference microphones are also **immune to mobile phone noise**.

The delegate therefore has an easy-to-use headset which provides pristine CD-quality audio. For interpreters the equipment is also very easy to use, thus ensuring they are free to concentrate on their interpreting.



AICC interpreters and AUSIT members Claudia Koch-McQuillan (left) and Felicity Mueller interpreting during the Biennial Conference.

## Why are high-quality interpreter booths important to the SI process?

Simultaneous interpreting is a very intense process for the interpreter, which is why it is imperative that all other distractions be minimised to allow the interpreter to concentrate on what the speaker/presenter is saying. These distractions may take the form of unwanted noise from the meeting room environment, a cramped booth with not enough space for two Interpreters (the standard requirement for SI), not enough ventilation, etc.

## What is on-site technical support?

At every event with SI there should be an on-site technician specialised in the SI equipment to monitor all language channels and ensure smooth functioning of all the equipment.

Technicians need to all be qualified, either directly from Bosch/Philips or through a rigorous internal training program. Full system checks should be

undertaken prior to all events and the equipment then should be re-checked each day prior to the start of the day's event. Ideally, technicians would always be available on-site at least one hour prior to the event, and earlier for the first day. Technicians are trained to solve problems and resolve issues. They pay particular attention to detail, ensuring that cabling is hidden and tidied away and cables crossing walkways are taped down, preventing any safety hazard. SI equipment technicians constantly monitor the interpreters' input and output to ensure any issues are rectified immediately, often before delegates know a problem exists.

Omar Loiola Pereira  
**Congress Rentals**

**For purchase of SI equipment, contact event partners of the AUSIT 2008 Biennial Conference:**

Tel: (02) 9808 6466

E: omar.pereira@congressrental.com.au

# Working as a subtitler

## NSW Branch Professional Development event

One area requiring special linguistic skills is subtitling, which was the focus of a recent NSW Branch Professional Development event held on 4 September and coordinated by Stephen Houston. The two speakers were Dr Jing Han, Chief Subtitler for SBS Television and Clémence Duprat, who is working as a captioner for the deaf and hard of hearing at CSI (Captioning and Subtitling International), writing captions for ABC programmes.

Dr Han came to Australia in 1988 and has worked as a subtitler since 1996. In that time she has subtitled over 200 Mandarin programs including major Chinese films such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Hero*, and *Beijing Bicycle*. In 2006 she became Chief Subtitler for SBS. She also teaches translation and interpreting at the University of Western Sydney. Her article is an abridged version of a talk she first gave at the FIT World Congress 2008 and repeated at the NSW PD event in September.

Clémence Duprat has a Master's degree in audiovisual translation (English and Spanish) from the University of Toulouse. She worked for four years as a translator at CinéCim, a Paris post-production company. She has subtitled films from Spanish and English into French and also from French into English for international film festivals. (The interview with her will appear in the next edition of the *AUSIT National Newsletter*.)

## Cultural and linguistic challenges in subtitling Chinese films

Subtitling is a highly specialised craft. It is quite different from standard textual translation. The mission of the subtitler is to render speech into a reading format on a visual medium. The audience needs to read to understand the flow of the story and match what they hear, screen by screen, as for page by page when reading a book.

### Subtitling constraints

Subtitling is governed by three principal constraints: reading speed (duration), spatial constraint, and the absence of tools used in print media such as footnotes or endnotes to provide explanations of concepts and ideas which don't exist in English.

First of all, people almost always speak faster than they read. The average reading speed for English viewers is 12 characters per second, which virtually means that a screen duration of one second allows only one to two words in the corresponding subtitle. So, the transportation of a spoken medium to a reading one leaves the subtitler short of time from the outset.

Secondly, the physical size of the medium — a TV or cinema screen — can only fit a maximum of two lines of text of limited length in each subtitle without impinging unacceptably on the pictures on the screen.

Thirdly, the absence through impracticality of explanatory tools such as footnotes poses a particular challenge in subtitling Chinese films for English viewers. Many cultural concepts, historical references, folk customs, metaphors and proverbs that appear

in Chinese films don't exist in English. The transmission of culture-specific references within restricted duration and text means something has to give, but not the flow of the story.

### Other significant constraints

Consistency in the flow of subtitles is of paramount importance. Such consistency is created and maintained by accurate timing. Timing encompasses in-times (when the subtitle comes in) and out-times (when the subtitle goes out). Accurate in-times are vital in subtitling, as they synchronise the subtitle's appearance on screen with the onset of speech. This synchronisation establishes an immediate link for viewers between what they are reading at that moment and the particular speaker they are hearing. If the subtitle comes in too late or too early, a gap is opened up between it and the speech to which it refers. Viewers are thrown off balance and the flow of subtitles is broken.

The viewer cannot go back to the previous subtitle while watching a film the way the reader can go back to the previous page while reading a book. Blocking, or breaking the speech flow into discrete and self-contained blocks of subtitles according to the rhythm and pauses of the speaker's delivery, is an effective subtitling tool. Self-contained blocks mean each block of subtitle should contain either a sentence or a well-defined part of the sentence in terms of meaning and syntactic structure. The same words may have a different meaning or effect depending on how they are blocked.

SBS Television has over 25 years of experience at producing world-class English subtitles for non-English films and TV programs. Its subtitling unit is one of the largest subtitling departments in the world. The unit has developed practical and high-standard subtitling guidelines and a comprehensive style guide.

The best subtitles are the best possible translations created under all the constraints intrinsic to subtitling. They should effectively convey the meaning of the original speech and they should be highly readable without requiring too much mental juggling. To make comprehension instantaneous, subtitles should have grammatical and lexical structures which are as straightforward as possible. High quality subtitles don't stand out, but rather blend in with the audio and visuals of a film. In short, subtitles are most effective when they recede into the background of the viewer's consciousness and are processed effortlessly.

Whilst constraints on subtitling follow stringent rules and make subtitling a highly challenging task, they also provide what I call a licence to be creative.

### Differences between Chinese and English

Chinese and English are two highly differentiated languages. They share no common linguistic and cultural ancestry. They have completely different syntax, lexical structure and vocabulary.

Chinese is a very concise language. Being ideograph-based, Chinese takes less space in its written form and is of shorter duration in its spoken form than English. There are no articles or

prepositions in Chinese and there are no singular or plural forms. The verb system in Chinese is much simpler and less 'wordy' than that in English. English verbs carry variations to express tenses, to comply with singular or plural forms, or to be in agreement with the subject, whereas in Chinese, verbs don't change forms at all. So, the verb 'to be' is the same with any nominative case; for example in Chinese you say 'I be', 'They be', 'You be'. Also, in Chinese there are no tenses. Time is simply indicated with temporal adverbs.

Another significant difference is that Chinese is topic-prominent whereas English is subject-prominent. While the subject is central to English, the topic can stand on its own in Chinese. So in Chinese 'Raining' (下雨了) is a complete sentence. But in English, one has to say 'It is raining'. Pronouns can also be dropped in Chinese when they are contextually or pragmatically inferable. Tackling the shortage of time and space is a constant challenge in subtitling Chinese films into English.

Chinese culture and history are unique and share few similarities with the culture and history of English-speaking countries. Such uniqueness causes great difficulties and challenges in cross-cultural translation and transmission, as often there are simply no equivalents to be found in the English language.

Difficulties arise not only from vocabulary, but also from cultural experiences and concepts that don't exist in the target language. Comprehensive knowledge of Chinese history and culture is absolutely vital in subtitling Chinese films. The period from 1949, when the People's Republic of China was established, to 1976 when the Cultural Revolution ended and the reform and open-door policy began, proves to be particularly tricky for translations. For a period of nearly 30 years China was virtually cut off from the outside world, particularly the western world. The debut film of American-based Chinese actress and film director Joan Chen is based on some events from that period. Its English title is *Xiu Xiu – A Sent-Down Girl*, which makes no obvious sense to viewers, as to be 'sent-down' is a concept only existing in Chinese culture for that particular period. During the Cultural Revolution, city-dwelling middle and high school graduates who were labelled 'educated youths' were 'sent down' by Chairman Mao and the Communist Party to settle in the countryside and receive re-education

from peasants in order to cleanse themselves of any bourgeois thoughts and habits.

**Intelligent Condensing**

Given the time and spatial constraints in subtitling, condensing is not only necessary, but an essential tool in keeping up with the flow of the story. Condensing doesn't mean simply cutting dialogues short or finding shortcuts by omissions; it weighs up all sorts of alternatives to pin down the most expressive and concise form to convey the original meaning. The guiding principle is that the amount of time available for each subtitle determines the degree of condensation necessary, and not vice versa. In practice, verbal redundancy is avoided and the visuals are used to supplement the verbal.

One of the most challenging Chinese films to subtitle is *Hero* by Zhang Yimou. The story is set around 221 BC. All the dialogues are written in the style of Classical Chinese (文言文), which is much more concise and compact than modern Chinese. Classical Chinese has a unique syntax in which subjects, verbs and objects are often dropped when the meaning is inferred. The extensive use of literary and cultural allusions and Chinese idioms also contributes to its brevity. Furthermore, the film is superbly made, with every single shot scrupulously edited. Concise exchanges are neatly placed in shots finely cut between camera changes, giving the dialogue a crisp and rhythmic feel. However, this also means that the time available for each subtitle is severely restricted by camera changes and often there is no room for expanding the available subtitling time. Condensing of dialogues is required throughout the film. The table below is an example to show how much condensing is required.

Chinese Speech	Duration (in secs)	Literal Translation	Subtitled Version
要何封赏?	2:02	What kind of reward would you like to request?	Name your reward.
为秦杀贼, 不求封赏。	2:21	I killed the traitors for the Qin Kingdom. I didn't do it for a reward.	I did it for Qin, not for a reward.
大秦之下, 必有封赏。	2:17	Achievements must be rewarded. This is how I rule the kingdom.	Under my rule there must be rewards.

The key to intelligent condensing is to preserve the essence of the original meaning. Achieving this requires a thorough comprehension of the source language and a keen ability to identify the key messages in the context. Below are some condensing strategies I have used in subtitling.

**Dismantle the original sentence structure and reshape it to convey the key meaning**

Chinese Speech	duration	Literal Translation	Subtitled Version
先父留下遗愿 求贵馆一幅宝墨。	3:19	My father left a will when he died. He wished to acquire a calligraphy scroll from your school.	My late father wished to acquire a calligraphy scroll.
书法剑术 都靠手腕之力 与胸中之气。	3:18	Both calligraphy and swordsmanship rely on the strength of the wrist and spirit in the chest.	Both brush and sword rely on strength and spirit.

**Avoid verbal redundancy and omit the information that is contextually inferred**

Chinese Speech	duration	Literal Translation	Subtitled Version
你折腾我一个人 还不够, 你还折腾他们?	3:02	It wasn't enough to pester me, you had to pester them as well?	Did you have to pester them as well?
没有功劳也有苦劳, 没有苦劳也有疲劳。	2:20	Even if I didn't achieve anything, I tried hard. Even if I didn't try hard, I shed sweat.	Even when I failed, I tried and sweated.

### Wordplay and puns

Puns, wordplay, parodies are often used in films to create comic effects or intellectual games. They pose one of the greatest challenges to subtitling, or to translation in general. As Lander observes, 'Many if not most puns will be untranslatable, but the effect can often be reproduced by transferring the wordplay into a different setting in the same text'.

Homonyms are often used in Chinese for comic effects and are most difficult to copy in English. For example, 作协 (Association of Writers) is a homonym for 做鞋 (making shoes). In the comedy *Stand Up, Don't Bend Over*, a writer moves into a new apartment. His next-door neighbour is a thug. Here is the dialogue when they first meet:

Chinese Dialogue	Subtitles
- 你在哪上班啊? - 作协。	- Where do you work? - At FW.
- 噢, 做鞋的呀。 - 不是, 作家协会。	- Oh, footwear factory. - No, Federation of Writers.

But some homonyms simply can't be transferred. In the black comedy *Crazy Stone*, a newly rich property developer's treasured BMW is crashed. He points at his car and says 'Bie-Mo-Wo' in Pinyin, which means 'don't touch me'. This just cannot be mirrored in English. So I leave it as 'This is a BMW'. In this particular situation, this alternative is adequate, as it is common knowledge that BMWs are expensive cars and should not be freely 'touched'.

### Culture-specific references

Many cultural and historical terms and concepts in Chinese would make no sense if translated literally. The approach I have adopted is to highlight the essence of the concept or reference and omit specific referential information which won't register with the English viewers. In *Beijing Bicycle*, there is a reference to a highly popular Chinese film *The Story of Qiu Ju* by Zhang Yimou. Qiu Ju, a simple country woman, refuses to give up until justice is done over her husband's injury.

Chinese Speech	duration	Literal Translation	Subtitled Version
我说你们那儿的人是不是都有点'秋菊打官司'的劲?	3:02	Is everyone from your home village like what is shown in 'The Story of Qiu Ju'?	Are all you country folk so pigheaded?

However, important referential information can be lost in translation. For example, in *Crazy Stone*, the playboy Xiaomeng tries all sorts of tricks on his dad to get his money and openly enjoys doing it. He tells his friend:

与爹斗其乐无穷。

Fighting with my dad brings me endless pleasure.

This is in fact a parody of what Chairman Mao allegedly said: 'Fighting with people brings me endless pleasure'. Without the assistance of a footnote, this cleverly crafted message cannot be conveyed. However, in the original script, this allusion isn't meant for translation, but plays to the assumed knowledge of the audience. If the assumed knowledge isn't there, then perhaps it should not become incumbent upon the subtitler to find a substitute.

Rendering Chinese text into English within the subtitling framework whilst remaining faithful to the original and staying in synchronisation with the audio and visual flow on the screen is certainly not a straightforward task. Any translation is an interpretation. By being obliged to choose a particular word or sentence, a subtitler is bound to leave other possibilities or alternatives unexpressed. In subtitling Chinese films such a choice depends on many factors, including the balance between foreignisation and domestication. In practice, I advocate the 'middle way' between maintaining the Chinese flavour where possible and ensuring that the translation is comprehensible and idiomatic in English.

### Dr Jing Han

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© From the full length paper published in the XVIII FIT World Congress Proceedings 2008

## Conference sponsor SLCCS expands

The School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies at the University of Queensland was very pleased and proud to be the major sponsor of the AUSIT 2008 Biennial National Conference.

Our School has a long-standing and growing commitment to T&I, both as a vital part of our student training and as a research area in its own right.

As one of Queensland's earliest educators of Japanese T&I, the School of Languages has shown a continued strong commitment to translation and interpreting studies. The Master of Arts in Japanese Interpreting and Translation (MAJIT) is the leading Japanese T&I program in Australia and the only program accredited by NAATI at Conference Interpreter and Advanced Translator levels. This program is also at the cutting edge of flexible on-line delivery with specialist instructors throughout the world giving our students the benefit of their professional experience and expertise.

In recent years, the introduction of the Master of Arts in Chinese Translation and Interpreting (MACTI) has strengthened our graduate T&I program and has become recognised as a leading Chinese T&I program in Australia. From 2009 will have a new intake of students in both semesters to meet the demand.

SLCCS plans to expand the range of T&I instruction at postgraduate level, especially in languages and areas where specific industries are showing a great need for practitioners. In addition, at the undergraduate level the School already has many courses in translation and has been considering a recommendation to embed such courses in the major sequence across all of the languages we teach. Honours students are also interested in T&I and many of the school's programs have reformulated their honours courses to allow students to begin a specialisation in T&I at this level.

For all of these reasons and more we are keen to expand the links we have with professionals working in T&I and have therefore been very pleased to strengthen the association with industry partners and AUSIT in Queensland.

Associate Professor Alfredo Martínez Expósito, PhD, FAHA  
Head, School of Languages and Comparative Cultural Studies  
Contact info: [www.slccs.uq.edu.au](http://www.slccs.uq.edu.au)

# AUSLAN interpreter resorts to strike action!

What would cause a person to withhold their services from a particular language group, thereby disadvantaging the latter by not providing them with interpreting or communication? This particular interpreter, who is the only NAATI-accredited interpreter in the Riverina area of NSW (so there is no back-up of service provision), was made to take drastic action — she worked for six months for the local Health Care Interpreter Service and had not been paid for any work done or any travel and expenses. Numerous phone calls and emails had gone backwards and forwards to the booking service, but each response was, 'You will have the money tomorrow, or it will be in the bank on Friday'. These statements were repeated countless times until a final email was sent stating, 'From today onwards do not book me for any HCIS interpreting jobs as I will not make myself available until I have been paid all outstanding wages'.

Were this the first time this situation

had occurred, it may have been not treated as seriously; however, this had happened with other HCIS's in Sydney and thus became an untenable situation. My right to be paid for services rendered is the obligation of those who book me, so an extreme stance had to be taken. Did this resolve the situation? No! It didn't even cause a ripple in the HCIS system. Yet when I contacted my local Member of Parliament Daryl McGuire and forwarded all my communications and responses I got an immediate reply. I was paid within 12 hours of this contact, which was great, but consternation was still the preponderant feeling as I didn't know why money was now available to pay me whereas 12 hours beforehand it hadn't been.

What does this prove? Well, relying on people and organisations to do the right thing at times can cause great stress. This distress can and, no doubt does, cause interpreters to withdraw from their chosen vocation and profession and instead choose a path

with more financial security. This is not a good outcome and must be taken into consideration by all government departments and organisations who abuse interpreters in this manner. It is an unethical practice as well as being immoral. If I as an interpreter acted in this unprofessional and unethical way I would never have any work. However, my service is always of the highest possible standard. My ethics and professionalism have been tested to the extreme but I have not succumbed to lowering my expectations or service delivery. I have stood my ground and am proud to say that we can overcome these obstacles as long as we remain calm, in control and follow the processes. I encourage all other interpreters who I know are facing similar situations to not sit back and accept what is done to you. Stand up for your rights as professionals and be counted worthy!

Marleen Blake  
AUSLAN Interpreter  
Riverina NSW

## International Japanese-English Translation Conference IJET-20

第20回日英・英日翻訳国際会議

Organised by the Japan Association of Translators (日本翻訳者協会)

**Date:** February 14-15 (Sat-Sun), 2009

**Venue:** North Sydney Harbourview Hotel (next to North Sydney railway station)

**Website:** <http://ijet.jat.org/en/ijet-20>

The annual International Japanese English Translation conference (IJET) was established by the Japan Association of Translators (JAT) in 1990 and has since evolved into a highly successful event that brings together language practitioners from all over the world.

The next conference, IJET-20, will be held in Sydney on 14-15 February 2009 and is shaping up as a very special event. The Consul-General of Japan in Sydney will open the conference, the keynote speaker is social anthropologist Dr Fiona Graham, the Japan Foundation is lending its invaluable support, and the organising committee has searched far and wide for speakers that the T&I world will really want to hear.

In terms of general sessions involving the participation of both T&I practitioners and industry professionals, there will be a number of streams covering Literature, Business/Finance, Translation Tools, Medical/Pharma, Legal, Interpreting, and other topics of interest such as patents, subtitling, client acquisition, user perspectives, AQTF (Australian Qualifications and Training Framework), manga, building a collaborative online J<->E dictionary, translation workshops and panel discussions, not to mention a 'Twenty-Twenty' event made up of short presentations. Add to this a *zenyasai* giant-catamaran cruise on the harbour, a banquet in an historic university setting, and plenty of opportunities for socialising and extra-curricular activities, and you have an event you won't want to miss. Note that attendance at the conference counts as a professional development (PD) activity for practitioners required to collect PD credit points.

Registrations are now open; early birds can catch the discount (deadline 31 Dec). Head on over to: <http://ijet.jat.org/en/ijet-20>. Click on the 'Register' link to sign up. Applications for advertising are now also being accepted, with details on available packages to be found on the site. There is also a list for participants of IJET-20 who want to discuss the conference or just e-mingle. Non-participants are also welcome to join.

Michele Miller (on behalf of the IJET-20 Organising Committee)

IJET20 mailing list – [IJET20@lists.jat.org](mailto:IJET20@lists.jat.org) and <http://lists.jat.org/mailman/listinfo/ijet20>



AUSIT National Excellence Awards 2009  
in the Translation & Interpreting Industry  
Adelaide Town Hall, 6 November 2009

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