Special two-issue feature: Machine translation

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Successfully hosted by AUSIT in Brisbane this August
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PLUS MORE …
… including an app to assist remote interpreting; Auslan communications for emergencies; and farewelling a leading light of Aboriginal interpreting

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that an article in this issue contains the name and an image of a deceased person.

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Letter from the editor

A big "Thank you!" to the many members who responded to the appeal for proof readers in our Winter issue. We now have a good stable of proofers, several of whom have already been called upon to ensure this Spring 2017 issue's 'i's are dotted and its 't's crossed.

In this packed issue, you'll find the first instalment of a two-issue feature on the thorny and topical issue of machine translation; a report on FIT World Congress 2017, successfully hosted by AUSIT in Brisbane in early August (an event which has stimulated discussion, elicited great praise, evoked reflection, and even inspired poetry) ... and much more. Enjoy!

Contributions welcome

If you're interested in writing or adapting an article or other material to submit, don't hesitate; we're always on the lookout for new topics, and interesting angles on old ones. Take a look at *In Touch*'s Submission Guidelines (you'll find them under 'Contribute' at: https://ausit.org/AUSIT/Publications/In_Touch_Magazine.aspx); email the editor or a suitable Editorial Committee member if you have any questions; check the submission date (this page, first column); then go for it.

Contents

Kunmanara is a substitute name for someone who has died.

AUSiT30 THREE DECADES OF PROFESSIONALISM

AUSIT member and SBS producer May Hu receives an Order of Australia medal

This year's Queen's Birthday Honours List saw AUSIT member May Hu awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for "her service to the broadcast media, to women, and to the multicultural community of Victoria".

Born in Shanghai, May came to Australia with her family in 1988 to study English. The following year, after the Tiananmen Square Massacre, May took up the offer extended to Chinese students by Bob Hawke, then prime minister, of permanent residency.

May soon realised she would need to gain Australian qualifications to carve out a professional career for herself here, and she completed a graduate diploma in interpreting and translation at Deakin University in 1992. After graduating she took up the position of Head of Group Mandarin at SBS Radio, and has worked there as a producer, journalist and broadcaster ever since.

That year May also joined AUSIT, inspired to do so by other early members who had been her teachers and classmates at Deakin, including Uldis Ozolins, Adolfo Gentile and Leong Ko. Over the intervening 25 years she has served the organisation in a number of roles, including that of Vic/Tas delegate on the National Executive Council.

Although May's title at SBS is producer, she sees the role as essentially that of translator, as the main duty is to trans-edit SBS's radio news broadcasts into Mandarin. May sees 'news trans-editing' as a distinct and important professional skill, and is a passionate advocate of the need for formal courses and PD sessions in this discipline.

Throughout her career as a radio producer May has also worked in T&I, including for the Victorian Government—first in its Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA), then for the Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS).

For the OEA May translated brochures on small business policies, and on settlement services available to newly arrived migrants. However, as her duties at SBS increased, time constraints limited her T&I work mainly to telephone interpreting.

May was particularly in demand during elections, interpreting for both the state and the federal electoral commissions. She feels this informed her work for SBS, as it gave her first-hand experience of how NESB voters feel, and what difficulties they face.

Having semi-retired from SBS in 2013, May now has time to take on court, police and conference interpreting. She finds great satisfaction in assisting NESB clients in court, knowing that without her skilled interpreting, they are at a disadvantage.

Throughout her busy career May continued to study, graduating from Monash University in 2008 as a Master of Communication and Media Studies, and went on to mentor students on RMIT University's Master of Translating and Interpreting program.

May has received several other awards during her career, including the Old People Speak Out (OPSO) National Award in 2002 for her program *Love Across Borders*, and the Victorian Multicultural Commission's Award for Excellence in Multicultural Affairs (Arts/Media) in 2006; and she was inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2010.

May is also involved with many community and cultural organisations, including the National Australian Chinese Women Association, which she founded in 2012, and the National Council of Women of Australia.

Interviewed on SBS World News after the Honours List was announced, May expressed gratitude for "the opportunity to help Chinese migrants better understand [Australia] and integrate".

Congratulations May!

May is grateful to have the opportunity to help Chinese migrants better understand Australia and integrate.

News in brief

(a summary of T&I-related items that have recently appeared in the national mainstream media):

9 July: Gene Gibson: Wrongful conviction shines light on lack of translators

An examination of Indigenous language disadvantage in Australia's justice system, spurred by the Gene Gibson case. *ABC TV News*

12 July: The future of translation is part human, part machine

A PhD candidate studying translation technology predicts that "while computer translation had rapidly improved, it may never replace ... human translator[s]." *Cosmos*

22 July: Aboriginal leader [Kunmanara*] Lester dies at 75

Australia loses a luminary Aboriginal interpreter and activist (see also 8 Aug and page 17). *SMH*

28 July: Chinese museum offers $19,000 for every word decoded from mysterious ancient prophecy texts

The National Museum of Chinese Writing is offering a substantial reward for every word deciphered on their collection of Bronze Age Shang dynasty 'oracle bones'. *news.com.au*

28 July: Machine translation faces final frontier: Worldly wisdom

Google's research chief predicts that to produce perfect output, neural machine translation (NMT) will not only need extensive knowledge of language, it will also "need to understand the world" (see also pages 6–9). *computerworld.com.au*

8 August: [Kunmanara*] Lester: More than 500 people travel to South Australia's far north for leader's funeral

A state funeral is held for Kunmanara* Lester at his birthplace in South Australia's remote APY Lands (see also 22 Jul and page 17). *ABC TV News*

9 August: Language brokering: When you're the only one in the house who speaks English

Children acting as translators for family members: how it affects family dynamics, and what effects it has on the children. *ABC Radio National*

11 August: Man Booker winner David Grossman lays Israel's soul bare

A review of David Grossman's prizewinning *A Horse Walks into a Bar*—translated by Jessica Cohen—notes the lack of celebration, or even acknowledgement, of "the art and craft of translation" in Australia. *The Australian*

1 September: Pump up the bass and 'shake the dust off the floor' the deaf are here to dance

A discussion on the accessibility of live music for Deaf people, including live Auslan interpreting of lyrics. *SMH*

11 September: Enthusiastic interpreter steals the show at press conference

Viewers are captivated by the performance of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter during a Hurricane Irma press conference; the original article in the New York Post explains that his dramatic facial expressions and gestures are integral to ASL. *news.com.au*

25 September: Chinese police to play by Australian rules under new deal

A new set of rules for Chinese police questioning suspects in Australia includes a stipulation that interviews must be recorded on video by Australian authorities, with an independent translator. *SMH*

2 October: Melbourne teen needs custody interpreter

An article on a teenage boy's arrest for attempted murder focuses on his hearing impairment and his need for Auslan interpreting in custody. *Nine News*

4 October: Bonjour! Google launches new 'Babel Fish' translator earphones

Google claims their new product, earphones dubbed 'Pixel Buds', can auto-translate in real time, facilitating conversation between two people speaking in different languages. *Nine News*

13 October: China's Most Popular App Apologizes After Translating 'Black Foreigner' As The N-Word

WeChat's messaging service has issued an apology for this offensive translation, and an assurance that they have "fixed the problem". *Gizmodo Australia*

* Kunmanara is a substitute name for someone who has died.

REMEMBRANCES:

Sadly we say goodbye to two colleagues and members of AUSIT who have passed away this year. Their personal and professional contributions to this industry are remembered here by their colleagues, and will not be forgotten.

JOHN CRONE

John Crone: "a true gentleman and a gentle soul"

Long-time AUSIT member and former member of the Vic/Tas Branch Committee and National Council John Crone passed away in Melbourne this April.

John was an accredited Chinese>English translator with a background in journalism and a longstanding interest in Australia's relations with Asia and the rest of the world. From 1990–97 he worked for Radio Australia, with responsibility for Chinese language programs broadcast in China and South-East Asia.

An active member of the Victorian branch of the Australian Institute of International Affairs, in 2013 John founded a charitable endowment fund to award travel grants to young Australians, in order to deepen awareness of Asia. He was also a board member of the Australia China Business Council for several decades, and was active in developing the organisation's website and contributing content, as well as being on hand with his camera at every event.

John worked tirelessly for AUSIT over many years, in many roles. For the Vic/Tas branch he was a meticulous treasurer and organiser of PD activities—including national conferences and the 1996 FIT World Congress in Melbourne—and he was instrumental in developing the national Excellence Awards program. John was also an outstanding networker, and through his contacts and industry knowledge he worked hard at securing funding and government grants.

In 2006 AUSIT recognised John's work with an Honorary Award for his "voluntary contribution to AUSIT, his dedication to the profession and the achievements he has helped us accomplish over the years."

*by **Melissa McMahon,** drawing on the tributes of numerous colleagues*

Sarina Phan: *"John was a true gentleman and a gentle soul. I had the privilege of working with him for AUSIT, at both branch and national level, over several years. As a friend and colleague, I'm sure other Vic/Tas committee members will agree, we enjoyed John's company immensely during many late dinners (usually after committee meetings). We shared jokes and general issues over a glass of wine, and John was generous in giving other members rides home. John was always there for anyone who needed advice, support, or just a chat over a cup of coffee. My friend you will be dearly missed. Rest in peace!"*

ANDREW BELL

Andrew Bell: "a rare voice of optimism, forward thinking and vitality"

I consider it an honour and a privilege to have been asked to write a few words in memory of Andy Bell, who sadly passed away suddenly on 24 August at the age of just 54. A long-standing AUSIT member and volunteer, Andy was a highly respected and dedicated professional and a much-loved colleague. Originally from the UK, Andy worked as a police officer and then an ICU nurse before moving to Australia permanently in 2001 and becoming a professional translator specialising in medical translations from Scandinavian languages. By creating the Watercooler community, which became one of the very first Facebook groups for translators and the model for so many others, he encouraged professional solidarity and knowledge-sharing among translators worldwide. He led the group with transparency, openness and fairness, making it a safe and welcoming space for beginners and seasoned professionals alike. Translation and interpreting colleagues from all over the world have reacted to the news of his sudden death with great sadness, and have paid tribute to his warmth, generosity of spirit and inspiring personality.

Andy was a strong advocate of continuing professional development and lifelong learning who took every opportunity to add to his already extensive specialist knowledge. At the time of his death he was completing a degree at the University of Western Australia, while continuing to work full time as a professional translator, editor and copywriter. As a mentor, he was extremely generous with his time and insights, and always a great source of practical advice.

Andy was a devoted family man who always spoke of his wife and children with love and pride. A passionate cyclist and valued member of his local cycle club, he would often get up at 4.30 am to fit in a 40 km cycle ride before starting his working day! Endowed with a great sense of humour and a superb intellect, Andy was a wise, sincere and kind colleague and friend who will be greatly missed. He leaves a lasting impression, and a valuable legacy to our professional community.

Please join me in expressing our sincere condolences to his wife Liz and children Poppy, Erin and Eddie in Albany, and his son Olav in Norway.

*by **Trish Will***

Andy was interviewed by Speaking of Translation for a panel on work/life balance in 2013, part of an ongoing series of podcasts for translators. Listening to the interview, Yoko Onuki was moved to respond on the e-bulletin: *"He was one of the rare voices of optimism, forward thinking and vitality in this industry. Listening to his interview, I had to ask myself where I left my original passion for—and joy of—translation, and turned my job into just a daily toil. It made me really think how I should reorganise my business and behave as a true professional in this increasingly de-professionalising industry. There must be a way and there is a way. Andy was practising it."*

The episode is being re-run in his memory: https://speakingoftranslation.com/2017/09/07/worklife-balance-rerun-in-memory-of-andy-bell/

Let's talk machine translation

In the following introduction and four articles, published over two issues of *In Touch*, a team of translation technology researchers—**Stephen Doherty**, **Sheila Castilho**, **Federico Gaspari** and **Joss Moorkens**—set out to inform readers about the strengths and limitations of state-of-the-art machine translation technologies. Without advocating either the use or the avoidance of these technologies, they wish to promote awareness and informed discussion among the translation community of the challenges and opportunities presented.

An introduction to machine translation, in 763 words!

by Stephen Doherty

Machine translation (MT) systems come in many shapes and sizes. At its most basic level, an MT system performs a simple transfer of a source text into one or more target texts.

The quality of MT can vary significantly across language pairs and domains, with best results achieved in repetitive domains (such as technical support documentation) and within language families for which high-quality data is plentiful. Human involvement before (pre-processing) and after (post-editing) the MT process also greatly improves the final output quality.

With its roots in wartime code-breaking, the most widely established traditional approach to MT—involving the creation and usage of linguistic rules—is known as rules-based MT (RBMT). In this paradigm, language- and direction-specific rules are created in order to govern the transfer of the source text into the target. This approach has an advantage in its rich linguistic knowledge, but is limited by its language- and direction-specific nature, and also by the high cost involved in creating and validating rules and dictionaries.
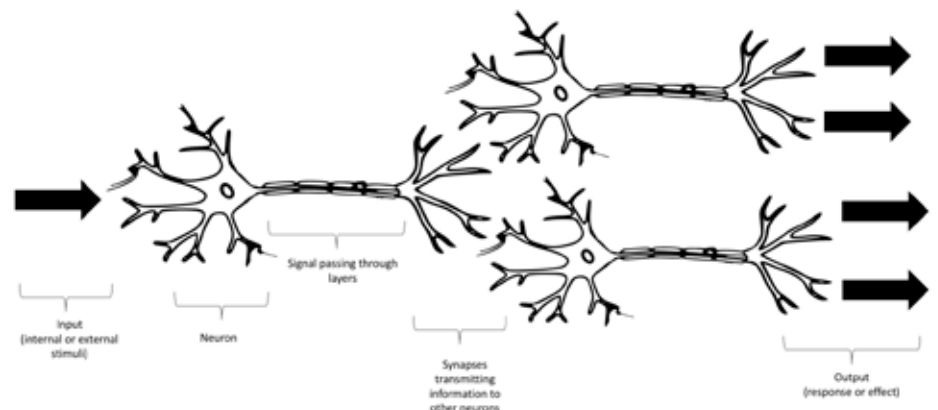
In contrast, in the more recent paradigm of statistical MT (SMT)[1], translations are generated on the basis of statistical models of probability which are derived from an analysis of bodies of monolingual and bilingual language data, called corpora. Once sufficient data is available SMT can work with any language pair and direction, and can even use another language such as English as a go-between (known as a 'pivot' language) to reach smaller language communities.

This universality is a significant advantage for SMT; however, its limitations are its lack of linguistic knowledge and its dependency on the quality of the data on which it is 'trained'. Interestingly, much of the data used to train SMT systems is translation memory data from professional (i.e. human) translators!

Currently the prevalent approach to MT is to utilise the best of both worlds; that is, to combine two types of MT system in order to overcome their respective limitations and provide higher quality output than either approach could achieve on its own. The most popular combination is RBMT with SMT, in which rules are used to pre-process and post-edit while the translation itself is carried out by SMT.

However, making recent headlines across the globe is neural MT (NMT). Carried out by

Input (internal or external stimuli)   Neuron   Signal passing through layers   Synapses transmitting information to other neurons   Output (response or effect)

artificial neural networks, this paradigm is based on the biological structure of the human brain. The idea is to take a more humanlike approach to solving complex problems, including translation, pattern recognition and decision-making.

This is achieved by using a computer to simulate how interconnected brain cells process complex information. A neural network, made up of interconnected layers of nodes that carry out the processing, approximates the intercommunication of the brain's neurons via synapses (see diagrams below).

NMT's strengths lie in: its outperformance of SMT while using only a fraction of the memory SMT requires for processing; its ability to translate the semantic meaning of entire sentences rather than working with individual words, clauses and phrases; and its lower reliance on corpora for its training.

NMT can also make use of deep learning (a form of machine learning) so that the system learns from itself, thus automatically and incrementally improving its translation quality over time. A common saying in neuroscience is "neurons that fire together wire together, and neurons that fire apart wire apart". In other words, associations form when similar information is processed over time; and as a result the processing itself becomes more efficient.

NMT's dynamic means of processing complex information has significant advantages over earlier, more computationally rigid paradigms that were limited in their ability to adapt and learn over time. Limitations do exist in NMT, in terms of its quality and in the technical expertise required to adopt this emergent paradigm. However, as with other MT paradigms before it, the open-source community has made toolkits and systems freely available online, with services such as OpenNMT from Harvard University taking an early lead.

Popular online MT systems such as Google Translate, Microsoft Translator and Facebook, which were until recently hybrids based primarily in SMT, have begun to move to NMT. However, we must remember that while it is in many ways a considerable improvement over the previous generation of hybrid systems, NMT is not a panacea: the quality of its systems is still far from perfect, and they require some degree of human intervention (such as pre-processing and/or post-editing) to approach the quality of professional translation.

Only time will tell how disruptive this 'disruptive' technology really is …

[1] An accessible description of the leading contemporary SMT systems used in the industry can be found here: http://goo.gl/fDw37r

Information being processed by the human brain's neural network (below left), and by a computer-based neural network (below right).

The roles of humans and machines in translation: legal and ethical considerations

by Joss Moorkens

Due to the explosion of digital content in recent years, there is now significantly more text requiring translation than ever before, and there is no end in sight. And with machine translation (MT) systems concurrently proliferating and diversifying, clients are increasingly pondering whether to use professional (i.e. human) or machine translation, or indeed a combination of the two.

The rule of thumb is that the proportion of MT used in any translation task should roughly correspond to the 'perishability' of its content. For example, online travel reviews that will be quickly superseded by newer reviews can be considered highly perishable, and literary materials for print much less so. There are, of course, many liminal cases in which MT may be used to a greater or lesser extent.

Meanwhile professional translators are increasingly employed on a freelance basis, and the demand is constantly for more throughput at a lower cost. As a result, MT is being used in more and more scenarios, which in turn leads to incremental improvements in its quality.

Input layer

Output layer

Layers of information processing
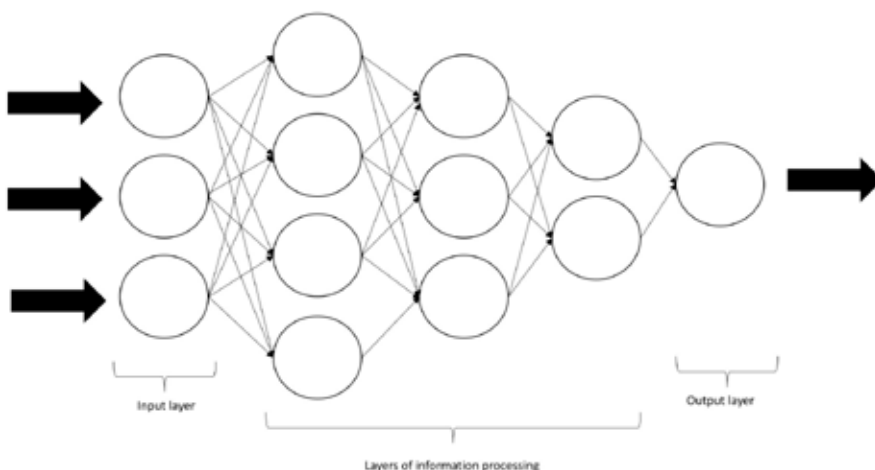
Since the early 2000s, statistical machine translation (SMT) has been the dominant paradigm in MT. An SMT system computes the most statistically likely translation, basing its choices on 'training' it has received on professional translations.

Such systems rely on the assumption that the linguistic corpora (i.e. bodies of linguistic data) on which they are trained are of the highest quality. SMT training has typically been carried out on publicly available data sources, although it is now increasingly using privately owned translation memories (TMs).

Data dispossession, already rife in the digital domain, also occurs across the length and breadth of the translation industry. Although translators may have legitimate claims to ownership, depending on their jurisdiction, as creators of derivative works and maintainers of databases, TMs are inevitably handed over to clients and employers (although copies are often retained). Considerations of data ownership have been brought into sharper focus recently with a great deal of media coverage on machine learning and neural networks.

Although SMT has been under development for many years, along with an ecosystem of associated tools, the relatively recent paradigm of neural machine translation (NMT) quickly reached, and has now surpassed, SMT quality levels for many language pairs and text types. The launch of Google's NMT system and its accompanying fanfare, for instance, led to media hyperbole about the gloomy outlook for professional translation.

However, NMT is far from perfect; despite increased fluency and morphological accuracy of translation, NMT output has consistently been found to contain omissions, mistranslations and unnecessary additions.

The increasing application of machine learning across many domains has highlighted problems caused by basing algorithms on too few data points, and the dangers of relying wholly on computers trained on imperfect and/or biased data. And although artificial intelligence has developed considerably, machines cannot make conscious, ethical decisions, nor can they evaluate risk.

Although the 'black box' of NMT can have unpredictable results, and is unavoidably loaded with the biases of its training data, like machine learning in general it certainly does have appropriate and beneficial uses. However, the hype surrounding it could lead to overuse by a translation industry which already struggles with commodification of creative work.

As a result, translators—who lack social cohesion as a profession, due to geographical dispersion and isolation—could find themselves losing agency, and their status being reduced to—or even below—that of the machines they indirectly help to create.

There are no obvious solutions to these issues, other than introducing education and legislation as to where MT use is appropriate or inappropriate; allowing translators to decide whether their work may be repurposed for machine learning; and instituting a system for payment of royalties on translated materials.

Quite aside from these copyright and agency considerations, the negative connotations for the future of translation may effectively dissuade many who might otherwise have trained as linguists, causing shortages. Already the case for some language pairs, such shortages can have devastating economic and societal repercussions, both short- and long-term, across communities and societies.

Post-editing machine translation: threat or opportunity?

by Federico Gaspari

Translation agencies, language service providers and freelance translators—including many readers of *In Touch*—are increasingly being asked to post-edit machine translation (MT) output. There are two main reasons for this, neither of

which should come as a surprise. Firstly, clients and buyers alike are always looking for ways to reduce costs; and secondly, MT has become a viable alternative for certain language pairs in specific text types, especially if followed by human revision.

This scenario seems rather bleak for technical and specialised translators, as the long-held fear that machines will replace them appears to be turning into a reality, with the majority of translators being neither prepared nor willing to offer post-editing (PE) services. On the other hand, those who *are* willing are turning this perceived threat into a lucrative professional opportunity, diversifying their portfolios of services to meet clients' needs.

Opportunities to acquire PE knowledge and skills are increasing, both in formal settings—where a growing number of academic and training programs for translators include modules devoted to translation technologies and even PE itself—and in more informal contexts, such as conference workshops, webinars, distance courses and continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities.

Some readers of this magazine may be wondering whether offering PE might do more harm than good to their reputation and business prospects; this brief article aims to provide a few basic practical pointers for those who are interested in understanding more about PE.

In a nutshell, PE involves fixing—or minimising the adverse effects of—the errors found in raw MT output. PE differs both from translating—even when utilising computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools—and from revising translations made by (human) colleagues; therefore not all translators can—or want to—become post-editors, just as some excellent literary translators do not enjoy working on technical texts, and vice versa.

The errors to be fixed in MT output vary depending not only on the language pair in question, but also on the specific type and quality of the MT system involved, and of course the brief. In contrast to light or partial PE, full or complete PE consists of removing or correcting all the problems identified in raw MT output, so that the quality of the final, revised target text is equivalent to that of a professional translation. It remains to be seen if this is possible, even if the MT output is of

a relatively high standard to begin with.

Then there are the questions of time, effort and remuneration. The assumption is that certain subtle stylistic—if not strictly grammatical or syntactic—errors may not be caught or adequately addressed by the post-editor, due to the need to rely excessively on raw MT output that is often very different to what a human translator would have proposed.

there appear to be ample opportunities ... to carve out niches and become involved in lucrative and interesting work

To identify the ideal skillset for post-editors, we can save time and effort by first establishing which parts of the MT output need to be corrected, and how. Accurate and efficient touch-typing is certainly imperative, as PE is not a linear process, so dictation software cannot be used. However, given its novelty, there is little consensus on the other qualities desirable in a post-editor.

For example, while excellent knowledge of the target language is a must, some argue that proficiency in the source language is not indispensable, especially if the candidate has good subject-matter knowledge in the specialised domain of the translation.

The argument is that if the quality of the raw MT output is at least reasonable, so as to justify complete PE, most of the errors to be corrected are likely to concern local target-language phenomena such as incorrect agreements, inconsistent register and stylistically inappropriate lexical choices. In such cases, careful checking of the input text may be unnecessary—or even counterproductive, as it would slow down the overall translation process—thus making proficiency in the source language potentially unnecessary.

Other outstanding thorny issues include the fair and transparent pricing of PE services. With the growing demand for PE reaching more and more language pairs, the approaches used to calculate rates vary considerably.

While some rates are time-based, and others word-based as per standard professional translation, others still are worked out on a pro rata basis of the full translation fee depending on the quality of the raw output and, hence, on the amount and extent of the PE required.

Regardless of how they are calculated, PE rates also vary substantially between countries, as well as depending on the type of client, the language pair, the length of the text to be post-edited, and so on.

Another task related to PE concerns MT system evaluation. By correcting MT output, post-editors become aware of the most frequent errors made by the systems for which they are post-editing, and can feed this valuable information back to the systems' developers, ideally grouping similar or related problems into specific reports. This feedback will show where each system requires adjustment to increase the accuracy of its output.

However, as with giving any such diagnostic feedback, doing this presents a plethora of dangers. Post-editors are effectively providing MT developers with ammunition to improve their systems to such an extent that, in the long term, not only translators but even post-editors may become unnecessary. The feedback process may also not be remunerated adequately, or at all.

In looking ahead, despite the reasons why MT and PE may be seen as threats by professional translators, the situation is still very much in a state of flux. As with the disruption caused by the advent of CAT tools, there appear to be ample opportunities for interested parties to carve out niches and become involved in lucrative and interesting work as a direct response to current developments.

Dr Stephen Doherty is a senior lecturer and the Program Co-Convenor in Interpreting and Translation Studies and Linguistics at UNSW, where he teaches translation technology, and media and specialised translation. He is currently investigating the cognitive aspects of human and machine language processing, with a focus on translation and language technologies.

Dr Federico Gaspari is a professor at the Università per Stranieri "Dante Alighieri" di Reggio Calabria. He holds a PhD in machine translation from the University of Manchester, and is currently researching machine translation at the ADAPT Centre, Dublin City University. He is also a member of the editorial and advisory boards of the journals New Voices in Translation Studies *and* inTRAlinea.

Dr Joss Moorkens is an assistant professor in the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies at Dublin City University and a researcher at its ADAPT Centre. He is co-editor of a book on translation evaluation to be published in 2017 by Springer, and has also authored a number of journal articles and book chapters on issues relating to translation technologies.

FIT together:
FIT World Congress 2017

This August, 701 registrants from 48 countries gathered in Brisbane over three days to enjoy 145 papers … plus networking events (220 dined at the gala dinner, and a whopping 613 took the Brisbane River paddle wheeler cruise), workshops and panels, a trade exhibition … and that special energy that is generated by a community with common interests coming together to share their knowledge and enthusiasm.

This was the second triennial congress of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs organised by AUSIT, the first having taken place in Melbourne in 1996; and the evidence—from evaluation forms as well as feedback—suggests that AUSIT easily holds its own (or better) in the pantheon of FIT Congress organisers. Speakers and attendees alike gave high praise to the diversity of participants, the beauty of the location, and AUSIT's excellent management of the event.

A recurring theme in the feedback was appreciation of the Indigenous opening to the proceedings: a captivating 'Welcome to Country' by the Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dancers, followed by a moving presentation on Indigenous language interpreting in Australia by the Northern Territory's Aboriginal Interpreter Service, led by Director Colleen Rosas ('Don't be shame! Building the confidence to be an Aboriginal interpreter'). A highlight of this session was the personal statements from Indigenous interpreters Maggie Napurrula Burns, Nadyezhda Pozzana and Theresa Napurrula Ross on how and why they work to keep their communities well informed, and above all to ensure the survival of their respective languages.

Dr John Jamieson (Senior Translator, NZTC International: The Translation Centre):

"*I doubt that anyone in the auditorium will forget the video showing the speaker's mother teaching kids to read, illustrating the letter 'm' as two anthills, and then getting the pupils to write it with their fingers on each other's backs. This was indeed diversification with a capital 'D'.*"

Main image: the Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dancers perform a 'Welcome to Country'

Above, top: Theresa Napurrula Ross of the Northern Territory's Aboriginal Interpreter Service

Above, bottom: a child learning to read and write

Another highlight was the first signed keynote in FIT's more than 60-year history, delivered by Jemina Napier. As delegates watched her sign, a disembodied interpreter's voice rendered the address into speech from offstage.

Professor Jemina Napier (keynote, 'Disruption and Diversification in the Deaf World and its Impact on the Sign Language Interpreting Profession'):

"For me there were many highlights of the conference. I enjoyed a range of different papers, but will focus on a key theme that I noted throughout the conference—that of 'power'. This began with the first presentation, from the Northern Territory's Aboriginal Interpreter Service, which stressed the power of family connections among their interpreters. Anthony Pym in his keynote ('Translators do more than translate') talked about the power of fidelity in translation choices, and Helen Tebble and Luigi Zolio ('Interpreting Humor') revealed the power of humour in rapport building in medical consultations. A panel that focussed on intra/interpersonal skills required of interpreters facilitated by Della Goswell also highlighted the fact that rapport building gives power to disenfranchised Deaf people, and especially to Deaf leaders. Sandra Hale ('Interpreting Challenging Situations in a Police Interview. The Difference Training Can Make to Achieving Accuracy') gave an overview of a study of interpreted simulated police interviews, and I was struck by the power that interpreters have to negatively impact on the outcomes of police interviews, especially if they are not adequately trained. Finally, my own keynote presentation highlighted that language is power: I chose to present in Auslan in order to have more impact on the audience when talking about sign language interpreting, and it seemed to work. But it made me think about the lack of power that our interpreting clients have; they don't always have the choice of which language to use. So as interpreters we are in a powerful position, and we should be mindful to acknowledge and respect that. It was a great conference, and gave me a lot of food for thought."

Dr Glenn Flores (keynote, 'Dissatisfied, Misdiagnosed, and at Risk to Die'):

"FIT 2017 produced several major highlights for me, beginning with the memorable performance by the Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dancers. This was an exciting, educational, and entertaining way to set the stage for the conference, and the performances were superb. The opening session on the Aboriginal Interpreter Service cogently and dramatically called attention to the urgent priorities and unmet needs for language services in Australia's Aboriginal community. I was humbled and overwhelmed by the positive response to my presentation, both during the conference and in the considerable number of tweets and re-tweets, and was honoured and delighted to be part of the panel on 'Eliminating Language Barriers in Healthcare', which drew insightful questions and a vibrant discussion by attendees in the audience."

Professor Michael Cronin (keynote, 'Why Translation Should Not Cost the Earth: Towards Geocentric Translation Studies'):

"In 1987 at the FIT Congress in Maastricht the most popular button badge among delegates was 'Translators Mean Well'. This punning combination of good intentions and unintended consequences appealed to the puckish pragmatism of the translators, interpreters and scholars present at the gathering. As a professional delegate and junior scholar, I found dwelling in and between the two worlds of practice and scholarship illuminating. Thirty years later, on the other side of the world, I found myself at another FIT Congress and was reminded once more of the gift of multiplicity— multiple languages, multiple cultures, multiple perspectives. Again, generosity and curiosity were the signature tunes of the presentations, contributions and exchanges. In thirty years the Cold War has given way to the Climate War, the geopolitical balance of power has shifted from West to East, and the two concomitant realities of the physical and the virtual were present in the omnipresent twitter feeds at the congress. However, the currency of conversation had held its value and as always, the most arresting insights came from coffee conversations in the bright plaza outside the conference centre. As the congress showed, translators still mean well, and the unintended consequences are usually happy ones."

Silvia Bacco (presenter, 'Quality Assurance in Translation: A Must to Attain Our Profession's Sustainability'):

"This was my first FIT Congress in my professional life. As I come from a distant city in the centre of Argentina, I had to make a very long trip to reach Brisbane, but the outcome of my lecture made me forget the tiresome part of the voyage. Indeed, attendees took pictures of my presentation, congratulated me and contacted me—once it was finished, and also afterwards via e-mail—to know more about the subject I had talked about. I was also happy to learn that I was one of the only two Argentine lecturers participating in the congress. From the academic point of view, I was satisfied to note that translators and interpreters are becoming aware of the need to strive for excellence when performing their tasks. Regarding the organisation of this huge event, I can truly say that "quality was really assured". See everybody in Varadero (Cuba) in 2020!"

Nicola Thayil (freelance translator):

"*The most topical keynote address from my point of view was from hugely influential social media commentator Dr Sarah Kendzior ('Dissent and Dictatorship in the Digital Age'). She spoke about language, politics and digital media, and emphasised caution towards automation and reliance on digital media in our disrupted world: human mediation is vital. These points seemed to be echoed in the many discussions about neural machine translation and artificial intelligence, and what threats these present to translators and interpreters. The overarching message was: embrace technology in order to improve productivity and accuracy, and rest assured that more data won't necessarily deal with the complexity of communication. As Chris Durban highlighted in her session ('Disruption and Premium Markets—the Wetware Strikes Back'), we should emphasise the work of the human brain—or 'wetware' (vs soft- and hardware)—the contextual understanding, flow and style that a machine cannot produce to the same extent. Wetware is capable of the creativity, understanding, and personality that allow truly effective translation, localisation or transcreation.*"

Elizabeth Frizell (T&I master's student, UNSW):

"*The FIT Congress offered an array of eminent speakers from all round the world. In any given timeslot, there was a choice of up to 10 different presentations to attend, but the excellent organisation of the event made it possible to move between different presentations on the half hour without ever missing a start or conclusion. For me, what was most interesting was to see how even seemingly obscure topics (each appearing on its face to be relevant only to a particular language pair) in fact yielded ideas and approaches that are relevant generally to the disciplines of translation and interpreting. For example, in her presentation on the translation of Norwegian literary texts into Hungarian ('Translating Literature Between Languages of Limited Diffusion'), Eva Dobos provided some useful insights into how challenges such as the use of repetition and politeness forms may be addressed.*"

NAATI staff:

"*FIT was the type of excellent and inspiring opportunity to learn and understand more about the industry here and overseas that we need more of in Australia.*"

Below: ASLIA committee members Zane Hema and Kahli Timms

Full details of FIT 2017's program and speakers are still available on its website (fit2017.org).

Plans are underway to produce the proceedings of the congress.

Photographs by Olga Raevskaya

The work that went on behind the scenes was, of course, immense, and profound thanks are offered to:

AUSIT organising committee members Sam Berner, Vanda Nissen, Tea Dietterich, Silvia Martinez, Max de Montaigne, Elisabeth Kissel, Guan Zhen, Rona Zhang, Caroline Crepu, Ana Vasilesvskaya, Alison Rodriguez and Annick Bouchet;

ASLIA organising committee members Zane Hema, Kahli Timms and Cynthia Cave;

all the members of the AUSIT QLD Branch and the AUSIT National Council;

student volunteers from the University of Queensland;

French interpreters Sabine Bouladon and Karine Bachelier, who offered their services for free;

Adolfo Gentile, for his general wise advice; and

our many sponsors and exhibitors.

found at the translators' congress

by Jacqueline Buswell

language is power they said
a few words interpreted at the right time
can save lives, win the day

some languages are mightier than others
a participant in the economy of global attention
can´t win a stoush on Twitter
in a minority language
          hunger strikers have tried in Uzbek

translators now are not only tasked
on how to bring the foreign to you
or carry you to the unknown
but, facing a new competitor,
wonder if machines might seize
the vocabulary and syntax
and run with the money and the words

governments change your laws, your currency
and even your alphabet
agents spread contradictory
rumours and falsehoods
the citizen seeking truth and accountability
dies a slow death
from overload and confusion

the English language has a way
said the linguist
 – when people talk to the point –
of adding softeners, like apologies

speakers might avoid the direct, the explicit
and communicate with baffling evasion

Q: Is there a supermarket near here?
A: I´m not 100% sure.

at the art gallery the curator
puts forward the usual metaphor about
sardines in economy class
but delivers something fresh for Premium
where they float in extra oil

*the shade from the hill comes over
and talks in language*
Rover Thomas may have heard
the talking as he painted
I saw a quiet space on the canvas
room to listen

Remote interpreting: iipher app set to assist interpreters

Congress Rental was a major sponsor of the recent FIT World Congress 2017, hosted by AUSIT in Brisbane. The company's national operations manager, Campbell Bartlett, tells us about their new app, iipher, designed to facilitate remote interpreting.

ncreasing globalisation has led to the growth of interpreting work around the world, while technological advances are opening up new opportunities for interpreters.

Gone are the days when an interpreter would facilitate communication between two clients with a phone in each hand. The development of remote interpreting technologies and apps is providing more flexibility, greater choice and a wider reach for interpreters; and our new app, **iipher**, delivers even more benefits than its earlier counterparts.

iipher allows interpreter users to call two numbers simultaneously. The interpreter can easily switch between two languages, and can mute either call with the press of a button, to ensure that each client only hears what's being said in their own language. Thus **iipher** can facilitate remote communication with two clients simultaneously, making remote interpreting accessible, efficient and instantaneous.

Apart from allowing interpreters to work easily with clients who are in different locations, **iipher** can facilitate interpreting between clients who are in the same location, but don't have access to interpreting services.

Australia's 2011 Census recorded that over 650,000 Australian residents either did not speak English well, or could not speak it at all. Indigenous groups in Australia's remote communities speak over 100 languages, with many dialects, and some community members speak little or no English. In the past, use of interpreting services in such circumstances has involved substantial transportation and accommodation costs.

Remote interpreting hugely reduces the cost of accessing language services for such communities. Therefore, as Aboriginal interpreter Derek Hunt showed in his recent article (*In Touch*, Autumn 2017), it is an important development in the interface between Australia's legal and medical systems and remote communities. And from an interpreter's perspective, it allows access to untapped markets.

Interpreters have raised concerns over the quality of interpreting carried out by remote interpreting technology. However, **iipher** has been developed by a team of experts with over 30 years of industry experience to provide a high-quality, seamless service. It ensures excellent reach across the globe, provided the user has a suitable internet connection.

This technology dramatically cuts costs for interpreters as well as for clients. The app is free to download, and interpreters pay only for the calls they make, at Skype rates. Apart from the app's application in remote communities, interpreters can also use it to avoid travelling shorter distances, thus saving time and money on uncharged travel to and from venues. And each new account comes with $5 of free credit, allowing potential users to test it out before incurring any costs.

With ever-advancing internet technologies, we have seen many markets disrupted by apps which provide new spins on existing ideas. Take eBay and Amazon for example, which are now firmly established in the retail market, despite having no bricks-and-mortar presence. History has shown that early adopters of a new platform can reap the benefits, with consumers eager to move to a more technologically advanced and convenient platform.

iipher's global reach and cost effectiveness make it the perfect app for interpreters to connect to clients around the world, increasing opportunities for both freelancers and organisations providing interpreting services. Try it out for free today!

Congress Rental is a specialist company that focuses on the congress and conference markets, providing simultaneous interpretation (SI) equipment and conference microphones, as well as voting and audience response, silent auction and event apps.

Campbell Bartlett is Congress Rental's national operations manager.

AUSIT would like to extend a big "Thank you!" to Congress Rental for its contribution to FIT World Congress 2017.

Auslan Communications for Emergencies

A grant was awarded last year to the National Auslan Communications for Emergencies Project, designed to improve the engagement and resilience of Auslan users in Australia's Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing population. The project was delivered over 12 months by **Julie Judd**, a member of Vicdeaf's Emergency Services Interpreting Team (ESIT), with management by Vicdeaf's Director of Language, Partnerships and Innovation Brent Phillips.

Many AUSIT members will have vivid memories of the Queensland floods of 2010–11, during which the AUSIT e-bulletin circulated reports of affected colleagues, including the distressing news of three members losing their homes.

This event marked an important step forward in public awareness of the interpreting needs of the Deaf community, due to the decision taken by the Queensland Government to provide English>Auslan interpreting at emergency-related media conferences.

In order to be effective, such decisions also require the support of media, as we discovered when some commercial broadcasters re-framed footage in such a way that the signer was cut out of the image.

There have, unfortunately, been enough natural disasters in Australia and around the world since then—including, of course, the current cyclone-related devastation in the Caribbean and the southern states of the USA—for the general public to deepen their understanding of sign language interpreting.

During the floods caused by Cyclone Marcia in 2015, and again during Cyclone Debbie earlier this year, Australian television audiences were fascinated by the expressive performance of Auslan<>English interpreter Mark Cave, now dubbed #SignGuy on social media.

Media attention gave Mark, who works for Deaf Services Queensland, the chance to explain the importance of facial expression and dramatic gestures when signing, as a means of conveying grammar and also affect.

An article listed in our 'News in Brief' section (page 4) reports similar viewer interest in the interpreting of an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter during a Hurricane Irma emergency news conference in September.

And when interpreting is in the public eye, it can highlight the importance of using trained professionals for this work. During live news conferences broadcast in Manatee County, Florida to inform residents of mandatory evacuation orders as Hurricane Irma approached, a county employee who uses ASL to communicate with a family member, but has no interpreter training, was brought in to fill a gap.

Deaf viewers, none the wiser after a garbled stream of sign spelling that appeared to warn them of 'bear monsters' and pizza, were left scrambling to find out what he was supposed to have conveyed to them.

With no formal training available up until now for English>Auslan interpreters called on during emergency broadcasts in Australia, there is clearly a long way to go. However, progress has recently been made on this front. A grant was obtained last year by Australia's state-based service organisations for Deaf people, led by Vicdeaf, from the federal government's National Emergency Management Projects (NEMP) program.

Julie Judd summarises the project's aims and outcomes here:

The project aimed to improve the ability of Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing people whose preferred language is Auslan to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural hazard emergencies, by:

- improving the ability of English<>Auslan interpreters to effectively interpret live emergency announcements broadcast on television
- improving the ability of television broadcast services to facilitate Auslan-interpreted live emergency announcements broadcast on television
- improving the ability of emergency services to communicate with Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing Auslan signers before, during and after natural hazard emergencies.

Improving the ability of Auslan<>English and Deaf interpreters: training

An Australia-wide survey was conducted with Auslan<>English interpreters experienced

in working in the media for natural hazard emergencies.

Interviews and focus groups were conducted with members of the Deaf community across Australia. Participants were asked about their communication preferences, and also their experiences during past natural hazard emergencies, in order to identify issues Deaf people face in each phase of an emergency: before, during and after.

Materials from PD workshops delivered by ESIT over the past two years were used to design a one-day foundation training program that is recommended for rollout to Auslan<>English and Deaf interpreters nationally.

In addition, a short, in-depth training course was developed, in partnership with Monash University, for Auslan<>English interpreters already experienced and skilled in working with the media on emergency announcements, as well as Deaf interpreters.

Deaf interpreters are often used in the USA and the UK, as their delivery of signed language is considered more culturally and linguistically relevant to Deaf viewers. Deaf interpreters may work off a teleprompter displaying English text (sight translating), or more commonly are 'fed' information visually by a sign language interpreter who can hear.

Each of the state-based service organisations has committed to supporting the participation of interpreters from their state in the training course, and earlier this year three interpreters (two Auslan<>English and one Deaf) from each state completed the course.

Improving the ability of the media: guidelines

Through the interviews and focus group consultations, Deaf and Deafblind individuals reported a lack of access not only to live emergency broadcasts, but also to information televised to the public in relation to emergency situations; in particular, news broadcasts which include commentary additional to that of live media conferences.

The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) and FreeTV were consulted on the issue of including Auslan<>English and/or Deaf interpreters in live emergency announcements. Both industry bodies have now amended their notification to broadcasters on their websites to state that:

"Where an Auslan interpreter is present at a news conference or official briefing regarding an emergency, [licensees] will include the Auslan interpreter in frame where it is practicable to do so."

Contact was also established with the ABC to explore the feasibility of having regular daily news broadcasts include signed interpreting, as occurs in several other countries around the world.

Improving services: procedures and practices

Regarding T&I services, the project recommended that:

- a national specialist team be established to coordinate the translation, production and distribution of material for organisations involved in emergency situations, to be uploaded to social media pages and websites during all phases of natural hazard emergencies

- T&I agencies produce video material in accordance with the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) guidelines for interpreting or translating English into Auslan

- emergency and recovery service organisations develop procedures to produce Auslan translations of prepared material, and provide English>Auslan interpreting during the response and recovery stages of emergency situations, including adherence to best practice protocols in the appointment of T/Is to ensure OH&S requirements are met.

State-of-the-art media equipment used at Monash University to train Auslan>English and Deaf interpreters for natural hazard emergency announcements

Website

The national guidelines, strategies and resources developed by the project were combined with related projects carried out in Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales to compile the National Auslan Communications for Emergencies website:

 www.auslanemergency.com.au

The site includes up-to-date and accessible Auslan and English language emergency-related resources for Deaf, Deafblind and hard of hearing Australians; state-based information on Auslan<>English interpreters; and best practice guidelines and training strategy resources for use by television broadcasters and emergency service organisations.

Julie Judd is a practising English>Auslan conference interpreter with over 30 years' experience in the field. She holds a Bachelor of Education in LOTE (Auslan) from La Trobe University and an MA in Auslan-English Interpreting from Macquarie University, and has trained in diagnostic performance analysis (interpreting) with Northern Colorado University. In addition to coordinating the National Auslan Communication for Emergencies Project in 2017, Julie has delivered workshops and reflective practice training sessions to T/Is nationwide. Julie is currently chair of ASLIA (the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association) and vice president of ASLIA Victoria.

English>Auslan interpreter Mark Cave feeding information in Auslan to trainee Deaf interpreters who are practising reformulating it to ensure linguistic and cultural accuracy for Deaf viewers

Language Matters: a mock trial highlights the need to establish an Aboriginal interpreter service in South Australia

Fanny Jacobson, executive assistant at the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc. (ALRM)—a community legal centre servicing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of South Australia—reports on a mock trial recently staged by ALRM in collaboration with the Law Society of South Australia (LSSA).

L–>R: Inawinchi Williamson (as the judge); John Tregenza (as the defence lawyer); Lorraine King (as the prosecutor); Tjinkuma Wells (as the sheriff); Chief Justice Chris Kourakis (as the defendant); Sam Osborne (as the interpreter)

The theme for NAIDOC 2017, Our Languages Matter, gave ALRM a perfect opportunity to focus on the dearth of Aboriginal language interpreters available to our state's criminal justice system.

Community consultation had recently revealed that to compound the problem, some officials from organisations such as SAPOL (South Australia Police), as well as the state's Courts Administration Authority (CAA) and Department for Correctional Services (DCS), apparently see no need for interpreting in the courtroom, often failing to arrange for interpreter services despite knowing that an Aboriginal language speaker with little or no English will be appearing in court.

To address these issues, we proposed a mock trial in which roles would be reversed by presumption of fluency in an Aboriginal language (we chose Pitjantjatjara). The judge, defence lawyer and prosecutor would all be Pitjantjatjara speakers, and the proceedings would be carried out in Pitjantjatjara language, despite the defendant speaking only English.

We called the event Language Matters— referencing the NAIDOC theme while also reflecting the legalese for criminal charges— and engaged with community elders, Pitjantjatjara language speakers, members of the judiciary, the CAA, and Aboriginal writers and filmmakers to produce it.

Language Matters—staged in a courtroom at the Adelaide Magistrates Court on 28 July 2017, with permission from the CAA— brought together Aboriginal community members and representative bodies with key members of the judiciary and other representatives of the criminal justice system. The Chief Justice of South Australia, Chris Kourakis, agreed to act as the defendant, and attendees included the president of LSSA, representatives from the state's DCS and its Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation agency,

and a significant delegation of Anangu (speakers of the Pama-Nyungan Western Desert Languages (WDL)).

Court was called to order and the defendant was sworn in by the sheriff. Predictably, the defendant was unable to understand the charges laid against him, let alone the court processes, and appeared perturbed until the arrival of an interpreter (from the proposed South Australian Aboriginal Interpreter Service).

The interpreter explained the charge to the defendant: breaching his bail conditions—an order to wear sunglasses at all times, a prohibition on drinking coffee, and an order not to come within 100 metres of any coffee shop— and also explained some of the scathing comments that had been made by the judge, such as the idiomatic "You are like someone with donkey ears" (meaning "You don't listen").

The defence lawyer stated that his client was highly privileged and unused to having to obey

orders. The prosecution pointed out the defendant's lack of respect for the law, and asked for a stern sentence.

Thus, through humour, we showed how easy it is for a defendant to become confused when unable to fully understand what is being said.

The mock trial was followed by a forum to discuss the need for improved Aboriginal interpreter services in South Australia. During the forum, the Chief Justice observed that "even though this was acting and I had the translations it was extremely confronting, listening and trying to work out what was happening in another language" and acknowledged that "in a formal, real setting it would be even worse".

The importance of discipline-specific training for different interpreting streams—such as legal, health and education interpreting—was discussed. The Chief Justice agreed with this, stressing the cultural differences that interpreters must bridge, and said that he thought it might be necessary for court interpreters to be employed directly by the CAA.

Another key issue raised was the need for gender balance within the provision of interpreters, and also for gender specificity to be allowed in interpreter requests, as the gender of those involved in dealing with an issue is highly significant for Anangu in terms of women's or men's business.

The event was recorded on video, creating a resource that ALRM (and other bodies) can now use in their advocacy for improved interpreter services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island language speakers.

The short-term goal of Language Matters was to highlight the need for an improved Aboriginal interpreter service in South Australia, and to engage senior members of the judiciary, as well as government officials and ministers, in dialogue with Anangu on this issue. We hope that this message will be heard and understood by the state and federal governments.

Our ultimate goal is to achieve a well-funded, reliable Aboriginal interpreter service in South Australia. Increasing the number of interpreters in the system and streamlining their training will be of enormous benefit to the state's Aboriginal communities, and will go a long way towards ensuring justice without prejudice for Australians whose first language is an Aboriginal language.

Frances (Fanny) Jacobson is executive assistant for the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc. (ALRM). She holds a bachelor of science degree with honours in logopaedics (speech pathology and audiology) from the University of Cape Town, and a master's in social work from the University of South Australia.

Farewell Kunmanara* Lester—"the man who put the 'Y' in APY"

WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that the following article contains the name and an image of a deceased person.

A leading light of Australian Indigenous interpreting, Yankunytjatjara Elder Yami Lester OAM, died on 21 July 2017 at the age of 75.

Yami Lester was born in the early 1940s at Walkinytjanu Creek in the far north of South Australia, on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara—APY—Lands.

In 1953, when Yami was around 10, a 'black mist' descended on the APY Lands. Exposure to this toxic cloud—now acknowledged to have been fallout from nuclear testing, conducted by the British Government at Emu Field in the APY Lands in 1953 (as well as later at Maralinga)—caused him to lose his sight over time.

When his failing sight forced him to give up working as a stockman, Yami turned to social work and court interpreting, and was instrumental in the establishment of the Institute of Aboriginal Development, which promoted Aboriginal education and language.

Recognising the crucial role played by interpreting in maintaining Indigenous culture

and language, Yami went on to become one of Australia's most significant Indigenous interpreters, and one of its most passionate campaigners for Indigenous rights, to date.

Yami Lester fought long and hard for recognition of the damage done by the nuclear testing and compensation for those affected by it, and his efforts led to the McClelland Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia (1985).

However, it wasn't until a few months before his death that the federal government agreed to cover the health care costs of all those at, or near, the sites during the testing—support that comes, as Yami pointed out at the time, "Sixty years too late … Most of our people have passed away. They were young ones then … they're older ones now, a few of them still living now today."

Yami Lester also played a pivotal role—as an organiser, cultural adviser and interpreter—in the campaign for Indigenous land rights, including decades of negotiations that culminated in the highly symbolic handback of Uluru–Kata Tjuta National Park in 1985.

In 1981 Yami Lester was awarded an Order of Australia medal (OAM) for his services to Indigenous affairs.

Yami's three children, Leroy, Rosemary and Karina Lester, have followed in their father's footsteps, all becoming interpreters and also anti-nuclear and Indigenous rights activists.

Yami Lester OAM was farewelled in a state funeral at his birthplace, Walatina Station on the APY Lands, on 8 August. A tribute published on the APY Council's website honours "the man who put the "Y" in APY, who spoke up for his people, his language, and his law."

Permission for the use of Yami's name and image was granted by his immediate family.

Helen M Sturgess is the editor of In Touch. *She works as a freelance copywriter and editor, and is also a practising visual artist.*

* Kunmanara is a substitute name for someone who has died.

17

AUSIT's Kevin Windle receives prestigious international translation award

At FIT World Congress 2017 this August, AUSIT member Kevin Windle was awarded FIT's Aurora Borealis Prize for Outstanding Translation of Non-Fiction Literature.

The prize is designed to "promote the translation of non-fiction literature, improve the quality thereof and draw attention to the role of translators in bringing the peoples of the world closer together in terms of culture".

According to its jury, this win signifies global recognition by Kevin's peers that he is "the best of the best, [and his] work, translating into English from nearly a dozen different languages, and across a wide range of subject areas, is described by his supporters as 'reliably brilliant'."

Growing up in Kent, England, Kevin was encouraged to study languages by his mother, a highly competent linguist whose German language skills were utilised in wireless interception during the Second World War.

After taking Russian and Slavonic Studies to PhD level, Kevin embarked on an academic career in this field. It was punctuated in the 1980s by a six-year stint working for the BBC Monitoring Service in the UK, after which he joined the School of Language Studies at the Australian National University (ANU).

Over the intervening 26 years Kevin's roles at ANU have included Head of School, Assistant Dean and Associate Professor; and he is now Emeritus Fellow in Translation Studies and Russian.

Central to Kevin's academic career has been the translation of an enormous volume of mainly non-fiction material from Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, German, Ukrainian, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian into English.

He has also coedited *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies*[1], written and co-written many articles on translation, and worked on two dictionaries.

When asked, Kevin singles out three translation projects as particularly interesting:

• Although Sergey Aksakov is recognised as one of the great Russian novelists of the 19th century, his *Notes of a Provincial Wildfowler* (1852)[2] hadn't been rendered into English until Kevin did so in 1998.

He greatly enjoyed tackling Aksakov's "wonderful descriptions of nature and landscapes" and "detailed portraits of a wide range of bird species". As the language was "lyrical, but also highly technical" the translation required great care and attention to detail, yet was "well worth the effort".

• *The Master and the Devil: A Study of Mikhail Bulgakov* (1990)[3] by distinguished Polish scholar Andrzej Drawicz is, according to Kevin, "a superb study of the life and works of the renowned Russian writer". He found its translation required detailed knowledge—presumably on the part of Kevin as well as Drawicz—of Bulgakov's "life and times and cultural milieu, as well as the writers, editors and theatre directors he had dealings with".

• Captain Alexander Zuzenko (1884–1938) was a Russian revolutionary sailor, journalist and communist agent who led strikes and demonstrations in Australia, from where he was deported twice. Collaborating on a collection of documents originally written about Australia for the Communist International[4] by Zuzenko and others[5], Kevin was sufficiently intrigued by Zuzenko's story to research further and write his biography[6].
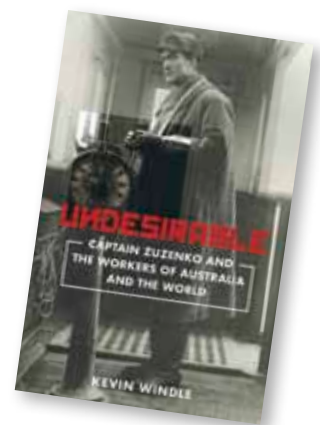
In recent years Kevin has also been awarded the inaugural AALITRA Translation Prize (2014) and second prize in the John Dryden Translation Competition (2015), and shortlisted for the NSW Premier's Translation Prize in 2009.

Congratulations Kevin!

[1] Kirsten Malmkjær and Kevin Windle (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (Oxford: OUP, 2011).

[2] Sergey Aksakov, *Notes of a Provincial Wildfowler* (with translator's introduction) (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1998).

[3] Andrzej Drawicz, *The Master and the Devil: A Study of Mikhail Bulgakov* (Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

[4] The Communist International, abbreviated as Comintern and also known as the Third International (1919–43), was an international communist organisation that advocated world communism.

[5] David Lovell and Kevin Windle (eds.), *Our Unswerving Loyalty: a documentary survey of relations between the Communist Party of Australia and Moscow, 1920–1940* (ANU E-Press, 2008). http://epress.anu.edu.au/oul_citation.html

[6] Kevin Windle, *Undesirable: Captain Zuzenko and the Workers of Australia and the World* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2012).

Member profiles

SAAD TLAA

Saad Tlaa has been a member of AUSIT since 2014. He is an Arabic<>English interpreter, and is based in Adelaide.

Saad has been practising since 2014. His main areas of practice are the fields of health, legal and social interpreting.

TIM MARTYN

Tim Martyn has been a member of AUSIT since 2013. He is a French> and Spanish>English translator, and is based in Sydney.

Tim has been practising since 2011. His main area of practice is clinical research.

Q&A

Q1
How did you come to be a translator and/or interpreter?

Q2
Tell us about a project you have worked on that was especially interesting or challenging (within the bounds of confidentiality of course).

SAAD TLAA

A1

It all started more than 25 years ago, when I was studying architectural engineering in Manila, in the Philippines. One of my friends went to the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] to apply for refugee status, and there was no interpreter that day, so he asked me to help him. I went along, and everything went well. After I graduated I worked in a human resources office, and part of my job was to interpret and to translate documents.

When I came to Australia in 2011 I wanted to work as an architect, but my overseas qualifications and experience weren't fully recognised, so I had to study for another two or three years. I didn't find it easy, and when I developed some health issues, my doctor advised me to shift my line of work. I decided to use my language skills, so I took a course at TAFE SA. Now I'm an interpreter, helping both the Arabic-speaking community and also my new country, Australia.

A2

On one interpreting call, I was assisting a health professional to discuss a health issue with a patient. The patient kept asking a lot of questions and I was doing my job, interpreting each question and answer, but then the health professional lost his temper. He started answering the patient in an aggressive way, and not giving me any time to interpret what he was saying. I found it impossible to continue working in this atmosphere, so I told him that if he wasn't going to give me time to do my job, I would rather withdraw. I explained the situation to the patient, and I withdrew.

TIM MARTYN

A1

I studied psychology at university, and had a career in English language teaching before ever considering becoming a translator. I'd studied French at school and had spent a few years working in French- and Spanish-speaking countries to build up my language proficiency, but I'd been motivated to study languages out of interest rather than as a career move. After looking into the translation profession and realising it would be a good fit for me, I enrolled in an MA in translation, and began working as a translator in 2011.

A2

I often work on adapting questionnaires, tests and other psychological assessments developed in the USA, so that they can be used in clinical research in Australia. This work mainly involves adapting spelling, etc., but stimuli that are used to elicit responses from patients may also need to be adapted or changed.

One of the most interesting projects I've worked on was an adaptation of a test designed to measure cognitive impairment in patients with Alzheimer's disease. Images of everyday objects were used as part of the test, and I had to consult with a speech pathologist and a neuropsychologist to decide which images had to be changed for use in Australia.