

# TRANSLATIO

No. 4, 2021 FIT Newsletter



## President's message

Kevin Quirk

Dear FIT members,

For so many of our colleagues, December is a time to reflect on what we're grateful for, spend time with friends and family, and plan for the coming year. However, with the new Omicron variant spreading quickly around the world, and with so many unknowns, it may be hard to feel festive or reflective as we head into 2022.

And yet, let us be reminded there is still so much to be thankful for. As I've said before and will say again, when we work together, we are truly stronger! As we can see in this issue, the FIT community around the world is finding ingenious ways to bring people together across borders and language barriers to share knowledge, spread awareness about our professions, and foster community. For that, I am indeed very thankful.

Many FIT member associations held successful conferences this year, whether

in person, hybrid, or virtually, as KATI, OTTIAQ and CTPCBA did this past quarter. You can read more about their efforts in this issue.

They say there's no such thing as bad press, and media coverage of streaming services and subtitle quality in recent months gave member associations a unique opportunity to advocate for our colleagues working in audiovisual translation and subtitling. For far too long, these colleagues in particular have faced deteriorating working conditions and pay. It is time for all language professionals to be compensated for the value of their services.

Our FIT Regional Centres continue to be busy as well, and you can read about news from Latin America and Europe in this issue. You can also read more about an important ongoing FIT initiative to educate the public about the strengths

and limitations of raw machine translation output. MT is an amazing tool, but its benefits and use cases should not be oversold.

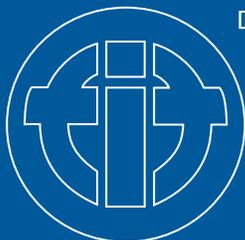
It goes without saying that none of us thought we would still be actively dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic two years on. The world looks and feels very different today than it did in 2019. But wherever you may be in the world, we are in this together. I am very glad to be a part of the FIT family with all of you. Please take good care of yourselves and your loved ones as we ring in 2022. May it be a year of transition that brings us all a little closer together. As always, no matter what, FIT will continue to do everything we can to help and support our members.

Happy reading, be well, and Happy New Year.

Kevin Quirk, [president@fit-ift.org](mailto:president@fit-ift.org)

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# FIT campaign on raw MT progresses

In 2019, the FIT Research Task Force developed a [position paper](#) on machine translation that states, “It is essential that professional translators supply their existing or potential customers with sound information on MT.” Building on this imperative, FIT has authorised a campaign to educate the public about the strengths and limitations of raw MT output, which I currently lead.

An important step in this campaign was the very recent panel discussion on raw MT at [AsLing’s](#) 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Translating and the Computer conference. My fellow FIT Council member Eleanor Cornelius and I organised this panel, taking a non-confrontational approach by assembling a group of professionals representing a diverse cross-section of the translation industry who avoid two extremes: arbitrary rejection of raw MT as never useful versus overconfidence in raw MT as a viable alternative to human translation in all use cases. The titles and bios for each panellist are available on the [AsLing website](#).

Thanks are owed to the first panellist, Guillaume Deneufbourg, who sparked the idea of submitting a proposal to AsLing by asking whether FIT could do something about the fact that the European Commission’s eTranslation service did not initially include a clear disclaimer that it was providing raw MT output that could pose risks if used without post-editing.

The third panellist, Markus Foti, is the head of the EC’s [eTranslation service](#). We were able to recruit him for the panel because FIT is a participating member of [JIAMCATT](#), and FIT Council members have developed a professional relationship with its leadership. Having a figure as prominent as Mr Foti representing machine translation developers on the panel made the discussion much more substantive and nuanced.

After identifying use cases where delivering raw MT to end users



is appropriate and use cases where it is not, much of the discussion was about disclaimers, especially whether there should be a disclaimer on every webpage that uses raw MT output. There is an ongoing discussion among the panellists regarding an idea that occurred to me after the panel had ended: what if FIT and some of its external partners, such as [GALA](#), agreed to ask everyone who delivers raw MT output to end users (i.e., translation “consumers”) to explicitly label every document and webpage as MT (for raw machine translation) or HT (for human translation or post-edited machine translation)? The idea would be to treat this label as a form of consumer protection, analogous to food labels such as GF (gluten free). So far, panellist Deneufbourg supports the idea.

Please let me know your thoughts about this potential form of consumer protection.

Alan Melby, FIT Vice-President, [alan.melby@fit-ift.org](mailto:alan.melby@fit-ift.org)

## Who Am I Reading?

For the seventh consecutive year, the Argentine Association of Translators and Interpreters (AATI) was invited to participate in [La Noche de las Librerías](#) (Bookstore Night), a popular free event organised annually by the City of Buenos Aires’ Ministry of Culture.

Every year, various “lounges” – small stages with giant screens, sofas, and comfy chairs where people gather for a wide range of activities – are set up under the stars along five blocks of the city’s iconic Corrientes Avenue, a classic *porteño* spot lined with bookstores.

The event is a joyous celebration that has become key for helping these businesses stay open in the aftermath of the pandemic. On 23 October, from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m., a series of readings and interviews with writers, translators, and publishers, as well as writing, illustrating, bookbinding and reading jam sessions were held, surrounded by live music and a crowd of shoppers packing the bookstores. The entire publishing industry was represented



– from writers and publishers to designers, translators, illustrators, proofreaders, printers, distributors, bookstore owners, and readers themselves.

As the only institution at the event representing translators, AATI used its platform to spread awareness about translators' rights in a presentation called *¿A quién estoy leyendo?* (Who Am I Reading?) With an exhibition of translated books, a reading of classic works in their original languages and in Spanish, and an open dialogue with the audience, it became clear that each translator has a name, a face and a career – and that physical books are different in every language. Everyone enjoyed seeing the original and translated versions of several works on a screen and was delighted by the readings of Sappho's *Oda a Afrodita* by Pablo Ingberg, Dostoievski's *Memorias del subsuelo* by Alejandro González, and Virginia Woolf's *Al faro* by Daniela Bentancur, as translated by Marcela Alonso.

It was indeed a call to readers to reflect on a question whose answer seems deceptively obvious: am I reading Shakespeare when I read Hamlet in Spanish? Am



I reading Modiano when I read *En el café de la juventud perdida*? No: I'm reading the words of a talented translator, working into Spanish. This awareness can help everyone appreciate the invaluable work translators do to bridge languages and cultures: the translations' authors, who devote months – even years – to recreate a text in another language. In turn, readers benefit as they often realise that they can compare, analyse, and critique translations.

This effort by AATI is also aligned with its campaign #EnLaTapa (#OnTheCover), launched in 2016 to persuade publishers to place translators' names on book covers along with the authors'.

Check out AATI's anniversary [video!](#)

*Estela Consigli, Chair of the Editorial Translation Committee and former VP of AATI*

*Photo by Rosana Famularo*

## 3<sup>rd</sup> conference on translator and interpreter training

The Department of Sworn Translation Studies in the Faculty of Law at the prestigious University of Buenos Aires held its third conference on translator and interpreter training virtually between 21 and 24 September 2021. The welcome address was delivered jointly by Beatriz Rodríguez, head of the department and current president of the Sworn Translators Association of the City of Buenos Aires (CTPCBA), and Marcelo Gebhardt, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Law.

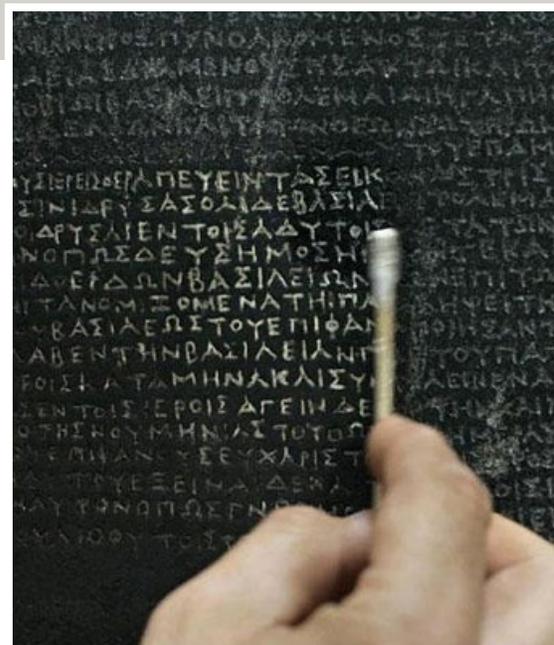
The official opening of the conference was delivered by Alejandra Jorge, a special guest at this and the two past events, in her capacity as chair of FIT LatAm and Council member of FIT, the world's most renowned organisation in the fields of translation, terminology, and interpreting.

More than 1,400 people attended the four-day conference, which welcomed

big-name speakers including Betty Cohen (former FIT president), Bente Christensen (former FIT vice president), Marianne Lederer, Christiane Nord, Amparo Hurtado Albir, José Luis Moure, Aída Kemelmajer, Patrick Zabalbeascoa, Dardo Vecchi, Manuel Ramiro Valderrama, Myriam Seghiri, and África Vidal Claramonte. Their talks covered a wide range of perspectives on and approaches to translation.

The variety of topics and calibre of the speakers meant that the conference proved a great success – both in Argentina and abroad.

*Beatriz Rodríguez, President, CTPCBA*



MARTES 21, MIÉRCOLES 22, JUEVES 23 Y VIERNES 24 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2021 - MODALIDAD VIRTUAL

### III Congreso universitario de formación en traducción e interpretación

FORMACIÓN Y CRECIMIENTO PROFESIONAL: ALIADOS INSEPARABLES

- CARRERA DE TRADUCTOR PÚBLICO -

# Sworn translator training in Argentina

The profession of “public” (sworn or certified) translator has a 100-year history in Argentina and the former Río de la Plata territory. To study the current structure of Argentina’s sworn translator programmes, the Committee of University Relations, Research and Teaching of the Sworn Translators Association of the City of Buenos Aires (CTPCBA) researched the institutional, epistemological, curricular, and professional dimensions of these programmes.

*La formación de los Traductores Públicos en la Argentina* (The University Education of Sworn Translators in Argentina), a new book by María Cristina Plencovich, Lidia Jeansalle, Silvia Bacco, and Diana Rivas, is the fruit of this research and focuses on the formalisation of the sworn translator degree programme in Argentina, how it is taught, the backgrounds of sworn translators, and the general and specific skills taught during these programmes. It also delves into what factors affect the epistemological dimensions of sworn translation programmes and the relationship between theory and practice in curriculum design.

The study highlights the differences between the 23 different degree programmes in Argentina, hypothesising why there is so much diversity while also observing the level of consistency between course contents and competency.

The research focused on the interface between the professional and the academic system and was mainly qualitative but also used some quantitative methodologies. It included a survey of all of Argentina’s sworn translator degree programmes, which were grouped into clusters using multivariate statistical analysis.

This research has filled a gap in translation studies in Argentina and has been presented at multiple national conferences and events.

*Veronica Repetti, Committee of University Relations, Research and Teaching (CTPCBA)*

## La formación del traductor público en la Argentina

María Cristina Plencovich,  
Lidia Jeansalle, Silvia Bacco  
y Diana Rivas (ex aequo)



## SATI turns 65

### Embracing the digital world to create a stronger community

This year, the South African Translators Institute (SATI) celebrated our 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As an association, we’ve truly never felt younger.

As is customary on such important milestones, we took time to reflect on our journey so far, what we have done well, and what we could improve, not only to strengthen our legacy, but to guarantee a stronger future.

This felt particularly relevant in light of a pandemic that has brought so many challenges for language practitioners financially, physically, and psychologically. In response, we have decided to restructure many aspects of the organisation to set ourselves on a path that will keep up with the times and our members’ developing needs.



Part of the strategy is to improve our online presence to reach a wider audience and create more meaningful connections in our community. In line with the call for social distancing, the SATI Office has also moved to a completely digital format: the office staff members could not be further apart geographically (we all live in different provinces, and that says a lot in a country as large as South Africa), but we are closer than ever thanks to our passion and dedication to the cause.

To many more successful years!

*Giulia Gasperoni, SATI*

# KATI holds symposium on future T&I industry

On 3 July 2021, the Korean Association of Translators and Interpreters (KATI) held a symposium with the theme *Expanding the Boundary of the T&I Industry: from Interpreting and Translation to Language Service*. Some 320 registrants attended the symposium, representing not only KATI membership but also academia and prospective T&I specialists in Korea, who joined through Zoom, while presenters and attendees gathered in the hybrid conference hall of Chung Ang University Art Center.

The symposium opened with a keynote speech by KATI's incumbent President Dr Silhee Jin announcing the association's new strategy for the sustainable growth of the Korean T&I industry. The essence of the strategy is to leverage key competencies, which, when added to existing T&I skills, can help create new service realms so T&I professionals can pivot into emerging fields in the language service industry. For instance, by reinforcing the training of non-verbal communication



skills (NVC), such as the use of intonation, posture, facial expressions, voice features, gestures, tone of voice, and so forth, T&I specialists in Korea can offer new services that are in high demand in the local market, such as bilingual moderators for international conferences, investor relations presenters, etc. Ji-hye Lee, a researcher at Ewha Womans University, pointed out that most communication is nonverbal, and Ji-hyun Kang, adjunct professor at Chung-Ang University, highlighted various emerging career paths that can be best served by translators and interpreters trained in NVC skills. The second session of the symposium comprised a panel discussion of T&I specialists who are already actively engaged in new realms of language services in Korea.

## KATI president interviewed by *Guardian*

With the international frenzy over *Squid Game*, a Korean drama series on Netflix, the quality of the subtitle translation has caught the attention of the global media. On 15 November 2021, KATI President Dr Silhee Jin was interviewed by Miranda Bryant, a journalist for *The Guardian*, to discuss the structural issues underlying the subtitle translation market. In the critical article, Jin was quoted saying subtitle inconsistencies were due to “chronic underpayment”, which “discourages the right people from making a start in the market, and in some cases resorting to cheap machine translation solutions with minimal human involvement”. The full article can be found [here](#).

*Minjae Song, Director of PR, KATI*



# 2021 OTTIAQ Annual Conference

Because of COVID-19, for the second year in a row, the annual conference of the Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ) was held virtually.

More than 330 participants attended the event, which had the very timely theme of *Language Professionals and Public Safety: From Global Crisis to Local Action*.

Language professionals know that their working tool – language – plays a crucial role in any crisis to ensure public safety. They also know that emergencies can be unavoidable and are necessarily unpredictable. These situations require crystal clear communication with the public, as understanding becomes essential to protect those affected.

In 2020, certified translators, terminologists, and interpreters suddenly found themselves at the centre of a pandemic. They had to meet the demand for sharing information quickly in all the languages spoken in the many communities that make up our modern, multicultural society.

Language professionals therefore play a role in a chain of communication logistics involving healthcare, the environment, equity and inclusion, access to essential resources, and more. And the current pandemic has presented an opportunity to review and increase our profession's contribution to society in Quebec, in the rest of Canada and throughout the world.

The [2021 conference](#) featured a total of 17 speakers of all stripes who each provided food for thought along the lines of the conference's theme.

## Opening address

The conference opened with Mr Raymond Théberge, Canada's current Commissioner of Official Languages. Mr Théberge took advantage of his participation in the conference to present the main findings of his report entitled [A Matter of Respect and Safety: The Impact of Emergency Situations on Official Languages](#), which was published in October 2020. He highlighted the crucial importance of communicating with Canadians in their first official language during emergency situations to keep them informed and give instructions they can understand and follow.

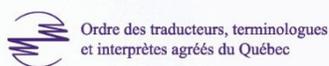


## Closing address

In closing, it was with great sensitivity and a touch of humour and humility that writer and author Kim Thúy delivered a touching story inspired by her personal and professional journey since her arrival in Canada. Ms Thúy shared her love of the French language, her experience working with translators, to whom she has entrusted the translation of her novels into a multitude of languages, and the relationship of trust she still maintains with these language professionals.

OTTIAQ will be holding the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of its annual conference on Friday, 14 October 2022, at the [Palais des congrès de Montréal](#).

*Sébastien St-François, Certified Translator,  
Conference Programme Committee Coordinator*



LE RÔLE DES LANGAGIERS  
DANS LA SÉCURITÉ DU PUBLIC :  
**DE LA CRISE MONDIALE À L'ACTION LOCALE**

CONGRÈS 2021  
30 SEPTEMBRE ET 1<sup>er</sup> OCTOBRE



# TIAT Literary Translation Award

To promote the quality of literary translation in Iran from foreign languages to Farsi, the Translators and Interpreters Association of Tehran (TIAT) plans to begin recognising the translators of novels whose work is of outstanding quality by creating a new literary translation award. In doing so, TIAT hopes to maximise the potential of literary translation in Iran. It hopes to finalise its plan and begin presenting the award in 2022.

A top priority of the award committee is copyright compliance. Iran is not a member of the [Berne Convention](#), so publishers are sadly not officially required to abide by international copyright regulations. However, when it comes to translating works of fiction, some of them do, which is why TIAT is considering a plan to prioritise works translated under copyright

for its award. This, we believe, could set a standard for both publishers and translators to actively consider the requirements of the convention.

To give such an award, certain criteria must be established for judging translators' work. These include social impact, novelty to Iranian readers, and the technical craft of the translation. The decision to grant an award will be heavily weighted towards works that leave a profound mark on society, as will introducing new authors to the Persian readership. These criteria are significant because translation is a unique tool for bringing new perspectives to readers who would otherwise be totally unaware of them. Needless to say, the three quality standards of translation – naturalness, readability, and correctness – are also among the important criteria

for judging submissions. We will look very closely at how well translators use the lexical, morphological, and grammatical potential available to them in Farsi. Precise and novel equivalences are sure to grab the judges' attention.

The awards criteria are being finalised, but completed, book-length submissions will be accepted from both individuals and publishing houses (one submission per individual, three per publishing house). Works must not yet be published in a language other than English and may have up to two translators. Poetry and other forms of prose will not be judged.

TIAT hopes that such an award will incentivise translators and publishers to make an effort to elevate the level of literary translation in Iran.

*Shaghayegh Nazarzadeh (TIAT)*

## Keeping an eye on emerging trends

The translation and interpreting sectors are facing a wide range of pressures coming from various directions. Change is occurring rapidly all around us, as society adapts to and recovers from Covid and as technology keeps on evolving. For translators, interpreters, and the associations that represent them to be able to respond to those challenges and pressures more effectively, they need a clear picture of these developments – a clearer understanding of what is going on both inside and outside the translation and interpreting bubble.

With that in mind, the recently elected board of FIT Europe would like to encourage its member associations and individual translators and interpreters to act as the *eyes and ears of FIT Europe*. We can't do it all on our own. Given the sheer volume of interesting and relevant events taking place (conferences, workshops, webinars, lectures, etc.), we need your input and help. The more information we have, the better we can prioritise our efforts on what really matters for our professions.

So, if you're attending an event – be it a translation/interpreting sector event or

an event out there in 'client land,' to use Chris Durban's now-famous phrase – we'd like to ask you to send in a very short report about the event and how you think it is relevant to our sector.

It is these events outside our sector that are particularly relevant and interesting for shaping policy responses and planning our actions. We've seen in the past how important this approach is:

- Attending conferences and talks on the migration crisis and how EU states were responding paved the way for FIT Europe to host an event on the translation and interpreting aspects of communication in crisis settings.
- Attending the ELRC conference in December 2019 opened our eyes to how MT was developing within EU institutions, and allowed the FIT Europe Board to better coordinate its response.
- Attending the annual European Data Protection and Privacy Conference in recent years has also helped us shape our thinking about GDPR and its relevance to the translation and interpreting sectors, which will culminate in a

conference and report on the topic in the spring of 2022. Our chairperson also attended the 11th edition of the [European Data Protection and Privacy Conference](#) on 2 December 2021.

Sectoral events are just as important:

- Two FIT Europe board members recently listened into the [Translating Europe Forum 2021](#). If you were there, let us know what you thought of this year's event.
- Another board member attended the 25<sup>th</sup> [SCIC Universities Conference 2021](#) on "Interpreting in the new digital age" from 2–3 December.

We'd love to hear from you about:

- What events you've attended
- What changes relevant to the translation and interpreting sectors you are noticing
- How clients at non-translation/interpreting events view our professions

Help FIT Europe. Help our professions. Be #OurEyesAndEars

Send your insights to [info@fit-europe-rc.org](mailto:info@fit-europe-rc.org).

*FIT Europe Board*

# FIT LatAm general meeting 2021

The FIT Latin America Regional Centre held its annual general meeting on 23 October. The meeting was chaired by Alejandra Jorge (chair of FIT LatAm and member of FIT Council) and efficiently co-hosted by Secretary Lidia Jeansalle and the rest of the board.

During more than three hours of intense and enriching discussion, participants exchanged opinions on a variety of topics of interest to FIT LatAm. Among them, they discussed the format, frequency, and formalities of the Regional Centre's webinars and adopted measures to optimise them in 2022.

The chair also reviewed the major achievements of the past year, including the amendment and adoption of the new regional bylaws, which are now more aligned with those of other FIT Regional Centres, the drafting of the Social Media Policy and the first Code of Ethics for associations in the region, and the signing of a cooperation agreement with the International Authors Forum (IAF).

Representatives discussed the importance of presenting their concerns regarding the high annual membership dues to FIT, considering the dire situation that many associations in the region and the world are facing. They decided to study this matter further and evaluate the viability of various proposals.

Members also voted in favour of organising the first Latin American Virtual Forum on Translation and Interpreting and scheduled it for April 2022. It will be a unique online training event bringing together regional experts to discuss key topics for the profession, kindling the flame for future CDP opportunities and helping the region make its voice heard.

Additionally, members shared their ITD celebrations: many associations organised virtual meetings, free training events, and social media campaigns. For instance, the Sworn Translators Association of the City of Buenos Aires (CTPCBA) held a hybrid celebration, with its leadership on-site and live streaming of a joint performance by its theatre workshop and choir, as well as a special recognition for translators who won the Legal Translation Award. The Sworn Translators Association of Cordoba Province (CTPPC) hosted a presentation by keynote speaker Charlie Lopez on the origin of phrases and words, and provided free training passes for CAT tool courses. The Cuban Association of Translators and Interpreters (ACTI) continued advocating for the profession by organising a series of interviews and greetings on TV, radio, and in newspapers for ITD and its anniversary. The many countries represented and their enthusiasm made the meeting extremely enriching.



Alejandra Jorge, chair of FIT LatAm and member of FIT Council

The next FIT LatAm general meeting will take place in Varadero in the days leading up to the FIT World Congress in June 2022. Varadero awaits! Make sure you do not miss such an important gathering!

*Beatriz Rodríguez (CTPCBA), Alejandra Jorge (AATI, FIT Council), Marita Propato (AATI, CTPCBA, ATA)*

