

The Asian Regional Centre of the International Federation of Translators

# FIT ASIA BULLETIN



## The 11<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Translation and Interpreting Forum

*By APTIF11 Organising Committee (Photos by HKBU)*

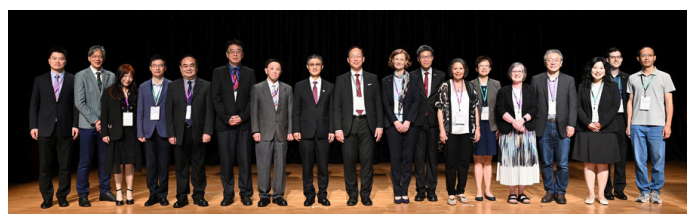
The 11<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Translation and Interpreting Forum (APTIF11) was held from 21 to 23 May 2025 at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU). The forum was co-organised by the International Federation of Translators (FIT) and its Asian Regional Centre (known as FIT Asia), HKBU and the Hong Kong Translation Society (HKTS).

Themed *Culture, Connectivity and Technology: Translating Communities, Transforming Perspectives*, APTIF11 brought together around 400 representatives from the translation, interpreting, language technology, and academic research sectors across Asia and beyond, discussing how artificial intelligence and technology connect

and integrate with language, translation and intercultural communication.

The event kicked off on the morning of 21 May with an opening ceremony addressed by Ms. Alison Rodriguez (FIT President), Mr. Gao Anming (FIT Council Member, Executive Vice President and Secretary General of the Translators Association of China (TAC) and Editor-in-Chief of the China International Communications Group), Prof. Alexander Wai (President and Vice-Chancellor of HKBU) and Prof. Janice Pan (Chair of the APTIF11 Organising Committee, HKTS President, Director of the Academy of Language and Culture, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Professor of the Department of Translation, Interpreting and Intercultural Studies of HKBU).

The opening ceremony was followed by the Honorary Fellowship Conferment Ceremony of the HKTS. Recipients include Prof. Mona Baker of the University of Oslo; Prof. Sin-Wai Chan of St. Francis



Top of page: Participants at APTIF11 opening ceremony.  
Directly above: APTIF11 organising committee at the opening ceremony.

University, Hong Kong; Prof. Sun Yifeng of the University of Macau and editor-in-chief of Babel; and Prof. Tan Zaixi of HKBU. During the three-day event, APTIF11 featured three master lectures, four keynote speeches, and over 40 themed parallel sessions, showcasing more than 200 presentations on the latest developments in the field. The conference also hosted a series of AI-themed pre-conference workshops featuring industry leaders such as NVIDIA, Amazon Web Services, and Microsoft Hong Kong, as well as a public exhibition highlighting exhibitors including Anhui iFLYREC Co., Ltd., Beijing NewClass Digital Technology, Shanghai Yizhe Info Tech Co., Ltd., and Timekettle. In addition, to promote inclusivity, Hong Kong Sign Language interpreting services were provided throughout the four-day programme.

The event concluded with closing remarks by Mr. Xing Yutang, FIT Asia Chair and Executive Deputy Secretary General of TAC and Mr. Yau Waiping, Director of Centre for Translation of HKBU, both highlighting the significance and outcomes of the forum in the context of advancement of technology and extensive application of AI in the profession.

Launched in 1995 under the aegis of FIT, APTIF, formerly known as Asian Translators Forum, is a triennial event aimed at fostering collaboration and exchanges within the region's translation and interpreting community.



Ms. Alison Rodriguez, President of FIT, before the opening ceremony of APTIF11.



APTIF11 organising committee at the welcome reception.



Group photo at APTIF11 welcome reception.



## FIT Asia Board Meeting Convened in Hong Kong

By FIT Asia Secretariat (Photos by FIT Asia)

On 20 May 2025, the second Board Meeting of FIT Asia was convened in hybrid mode at Hong Kong Baptist University on the sidelines of the 11<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Translation and Interpreting Forum (APTIF11). The meeting began with a brief report on the work that has been done at regional level over the past year. Board members then conducted an in-depth discussion on how to build a better regional centre in Asia and empower local T&I communities.

A wide range of topics were covered during the meeting, including institutional arrangements, strategic planning, branding, membership development and organisation of regional events, among others.

Victoria Lei Cheng Lai, a FIT council member, and representatives of the Translators Association of China (TAC) attended the meeting as observers.

FIT Asia, the fifth regional centre of FIT, was established in January 2024 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, aiming to cater to the needs of professional associations within Asia and foster interaction and cooperation among them and with other parts of the world.



FIT Asia board members with FIT President.



FIT Asia meeting in hybrid mode.

### FIT Asia Board Members

- **Xing Yutang (Chair)**, Executive Deputy Secretary General of the Translators Association of China (TAC)
- **Mohammadreza Arbabi (Secretary)**, Chairman of the Translators and Interpreters Association of Tehran (TIAT)
- **Ravi Kumar (Treasurer)**, President of the Indian Translators Association (ITA)
- **Li Defeng (Board Member)**, Associate Dean and Professor of Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Macau
- **Indra Listyo (Board Member)**, President of the Association of Indonesian Translators (HPI)
- **Maroun Mounsef (Board Member)**, Executive Board Member, Association of Certified Public Translators (ACPT), Lebanon
- **M. Zain Sulaiman (Board Member)**, Associate Professor at the National University of Malaysia, Board Member of Malaysian Translators Association (MTA)

# Bridging Professions, Building Integrity: Collaborative Dialogue on Legal Translation and Interpreting in Bali

*By the Association of Indonesian Translators (Photos by HPI)*

On June 11, 2025, a pivotal event unfolded in Denpasar, Bali, where the Association of Indonesian Translators (Himpunan Penerjemah Indonesia – HPI) Bali Chapter, in partnership with Warmadewa University, convened a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) entitled “The Role of Law Enforcement Officers, Notaries, Translators, and Interpreters in Resolving Legal Issues in Society.” Organised as part of Warmadewa University’s community service program, this forum underscored the pressing need for cohesive and professional cooperation between legal institutions and language service providers, particularly in the context of Indonesia’s increasingly diverse legal landscape.



This FGD was spearheaded by I Nyoman Aji Duranegara Payuse, SH., LL.M., a lecturer at the Faculty of Law and head of the university’s community service team, alongside Kuntayuni, SS., MTransInterp, a faculty member from the Faculty of Letters and Chair of HPI Bali. The discussion featured two keynote speakers: Commissioner I Gede Sudyatmaja, SH., M.H., Acting Head of Sub-Directorate IV of the Bali Regional Police’s



Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation, and Indra Listyo, S.Pd., M.Hum., President of the Association of Indonesian Translators (HPI). The session was moderated by Aji Duranegara Payuse, whose academic and legal expertise grounded the dialogue in both theoretical and practical insight.

Participants represented an array of key institutions, including various specialised divisions within Polda Bali (Special Crimes, General Crimes, Cybercrime, and Narcotics), the Indonesian Advocates Association (PERADI) Denpasar Chapter, the Indonesian Notary Association (Denpasar region), and professional members of HPI Bali Chapter, many of whom are active legal translators and court interpreters.

## The Law Enforcement Perspective: Procedural Constraints and Operational Realities

Commissioner Sudyatmaja presented a candid overview of the challenges law enforcement agencies face when navigating language barriers in criminal investigations. He pointed to a critical



procedural bottleneck: the legal mandate requiring the police to conduct preliminary interrogations within 24 hours of a suspect's detention. In cases involving non-Indonesian speakers, the absence of an immediately accessible, verified pool of legal interpreters often places officers in untenable positions.

To address this issue, Commissioner Sudyatmaja called for the establishment of a structured, standardised referral mechanism, through which law enforcement agencies could swiftly and securely access trained language professionals. He also emphasised the need to increase institutional awareness of the distinctions between translators and interpreters, their codes of ethics, scopes of work, and collaboration protocols—insights crucial for avoiding operational misunderstandings and ensuring procedural integrity.



### **The Professional Perspective: Demarcating Standards and Expectations**

Representing HPI, Indra Listyo provided an in-depth exposition on the professional expectations, competencies, and standards required of legal translators and interpreters. Mr. Listyo highlighted the importance of national certification mechanisms—chief among them the HPI's own National Certification Test (TSN HPI)—in shaping the professional landscape for translators, translation editors, and interpreters. He further explained that TSN serves as one of the benchmarks of linguistic and ethical competence, designed to uphold the highest standards in professional translation and interpreting services in Indonesia. What made

## **Upcoming events**

### **19 - 21 August 2025**

20<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Translation (ICT-20), Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia

For registration, visit:

<https://www.felc.unimas.my/ppa20>

### **2 - 3 September 2025**

FIT Statutory Congress 2025, Geneva, Switzerland (member associations only)

### **4 - 6 September 2025**

XXIII FIT World Congress, Geneva, Switzerland

For further details, visit:

<https://fitift.eventsair.com/fit2025>

this FGD especially impactful was the tone and tenor of the discussion. While grounded in the seriousness of the subject matter, the exchange was conducted in a warm, collegial atmosphere, with participants showing a shared commitment to improving interprofessional collaboration.

### **Conclusion: A Model of Professional Partnership**

This FGD set a powerful precedent for how interdisciplinary partnerships can elevate professional standards and reinforce the integrity of public institutions. By bringing together legal authorities, academic experts, and certified language practitioners, the event laid a solid foundation for an enduring alliance committed to enhancing legal communication, safeguarding rights, and supporting the rule of law.

Warmadewa University and HPI Bali Chapter have shown what is possible when institutional boundaries give way to constructive dialogue. It is hoped that this spirit of collaboration will inspire similar initiatives across the archipelago and beyond.

## Bahasa, Bahasa Indonesia, and Indonesian

*By Lucia Aryani, Executive Secretary, Association of Indonesian Translators*

"Do you speak 'Bahasa'?" "Wow, your 'Bahasa' is good!"

If you are an expatriate in Indonesia or have met Indonesians abroad, you may have heard these sentences or similar ones. Ironically, it is usually said by Indonesians, the native speakers. According to the KBBI (the Great Indonesian Dictionary), the term "bahasa" is derived from the Sanskrit term. In English, the translation of "bahasa" is "language."

### Why is it wrong?

Let's rewrite the sentences above in English. "Do you speak language?" "Wow, your language is good!" Isn't that strange?

### Why doesn't anyone talk about this?

Actually, this issue has been brought up many times, especially among language workers. Below are some key points from Tim Behrend's comment, an academic in New Zealand, posted on the Bahtera mailing list.

"The word 'Indonesian' is a product of anti-imperial nationalism that ironically borrowed its name from European languages rather than from its own rich regional linguistic heritage. This intimacy is displayed through the use of a pet name for the local national language that is exogenous in origin-created by foreigners inhabiting a foreign discourse and to serve foreign purposes- but represents a display of pseudo-knowledge of local things and an insider code for those who profit disproportionately as 'trekkers' in the archipelago. At the same time, many individuals who use the word do so as a conscious act of intended respect for local people and culture, because they think that 'bahasa' is what 'orang' call their own language. The earliest citations in the Oxford English Dictionary are from the 1970s, and it was already well-established in expatriate circles in Indonesia by then."



This misunderstanding began with an incorrect assumption by expats, which then became the norm because Indonesians, as the owners of the language, were too hesitant to correct it. They even started using this incorrect term because they thought it was cool to copy what foreigners say.

The Instagram account of BIPA Kemdikbud (Bahasa Indonesia Education for Foreigners, Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia) has also addressed this issue. The use of 'Bahasian', which is equal to the use of 'Languagish' for English might be funny to use in an informal context, but in a formal context, it would certainly be incorrect. Although adding the suffix '-ian' makes the word 'bahasa' sound like an English word, it is still a fatal mistake. 'Bahasa' is a linguistic term, not a geographic one. So, let's use the proper term."

### What should we say instead?

In English, "Bahasa Indonesia" translates to "Indonesian language." If you prefer a shorter version, simply use "Indonesian." You can also use the term "Bahasa Indonesia."

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the definition of "Indonesian" is related to Indonesia, its people, or its language.

In my experience, foreigners tend to accept this information more readily rather than some Indonesians. I hope that, after reading this article, both Indonesians and foreigners will start using the proper term. After all, it is not that hard.



# **FIT Asia Bulletin**

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