

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER

— 1 —

AGM 2025

— 2 —

MORE ABOUT THE 2025 AGM!

— 3 —

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD
MEMBERS

— 4 —

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD
MEMBERS

— 5 —

A MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM
OUR DEPARTING BOARD
MEMBERS

— 6 —

FOLLOW US ACROSS CANADA
THE HIDDEN LOGIC OF
HUNGARIAN

— 7 —

UPDATES FROM THE UK: CHANGES
COMING TO COURT INTERPRETER
SERVICES

FREE ENGLISH/CHINESE
DICTIONARIES AVAILABLE!

SPECIAL OFFER: AI RESILIENT
BOOK AT JUST 99 CENTS!

— 8 —

INTERPRETING AND AI: ADOPTION
IS GROWING, BUT CHALLENGES
REMAIN

TheVoice

June 2025

stibc.org

The STIBC's 44th AGM



STIBC Society of Translators
and Interpreters of British Columbia

AGM

Annual General Meeting



June 7th, 2025

06.00 - 10.00 PM

The 44th STIBC Annual General Meeting took place on June 7, 2025, from 6 to 9 PM. We were thrilled to welcome so many members in person for an evening filled with community connection, important updates, and shared accomplishments. The evening featured elections, light snacks and refreshments, and the opportunity to celebrate our work together over the past year. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the event a success!



MORE ABOUT THE 2025 AGM!

As many of you know STIBC held its 44th Annual General Meeting and Election on June 7th at the stunning VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver. We were thrilled to welcome a huge turnout of guests, with approximately 120 members and all office staff in attendance. VanDusen Garden provided a beautiful and welcoming atmosphere for members to reconnect, exchange ideas, and celebrate our shared accomplishments.

During the break, attendees enjoyed an assortment of snacks and beverages while engaging in meaningful conversations and networking. The evening featured important organizational updates, elections, and opportunities to hear from both the Board and the Executive Director about the exciting direction STIBC is heading. If you would like to see some highlights from the evening please visit our [stibc_official](#) page on Instagram!

We're extremely pleased to welcome our newly elected board members. Oriol Moalem Duran joins us as Secretary. Winnie Smrekar and Osama El Bietar have been elected as Directors at Large, and Osama El Bietar have been elected as



Directors at Large, and Majid Noroozi joins as Associate Director at Large. We look forward to the energy and perspective they will bring to the board.

We would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event special. Special thanks go to our dedicated staff—Office Manager Sarah Buston and Administrative Assistant Kamile Dias—as well as the entire board for their efforts in organizing this meaningful evening.

Of course, we would like to express our deep gratitude to our outgoing board members. Renato Da Silva Pereira, our outgoing Secretary, is thanked for his meticulous attention to detail, his instrumental work on STIBC's new Language Proficiency Exam, and his sharp and timely insights. Tanja Krzman, outgoing Director at Large, is recognized

her tireless contributions to HR matters, her involvement with the On-Dossier Certification Committee, and her more than ten years of dedicated service to the board. Ruoxi (Luke) Yin, also stepping down as Director at Large, is appreciated for his commitment to protecting our membership from scams, his consistently positive attitude, and his valuable, constructive presence on the board.

And lastly to you, our valued members we offer our sincerest appreciation, without you none of this would be possible. Here's to another successful year ahead, and to the continued growth of our vibrant and committed professional community.

[Click here to watch the AGM video](#)



WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Osama El-Bietar



Osama El Bietar is an accomplished conference interpreter, translator, and educator with over 35 years of experience working in Arabic and English across legal, oil and gas, petrochemical, military, and community-based contexts. A long-time advocate for professional language services, Osama has provided interpretation at more than 600 major events worldwide, including sessions with global dignitaries such as former U.S. President George W. Bush, former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, and former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell, as well as proceedings at the UN Court of Justice and WIPO. He is a sworn translator certified by the Ministry of Justice in Kuwait and has been an approved translator for both the British and Canadian Embassies in Kuwait since 1993.

Osama holds a Master's degree in International Teaching and a Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature, and he is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. He was the founder of CanTranslate, established in 2004—a language services firm recognized for delivering high-quality, culturally informed translation and interpretation solutions.

Beyond his work in language services, Osama brings valuable experience in community leadership, education, and program coordination. He has held roles with organizations such as Killarney Secondary School, the Muslim Association of Canada, and the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, where he led parent, youth, and newcomer engagement programs. He also contributed to curriculum development efforts through the World Bank's education reform initiatives.

As a newly elected Director at Large on the STIBC Board, Osama is committed to supporting members through mentorship, training programs, and professional development opportunities led by qualified experts. His goal is to strengthen the Society's offerings and enhance the visibility and impact of language professionals across British Columbia.

Majid Noroozi



Majid Noroozi is an associate member of Farsi language. He completed his Bachelor's degree in English Language Translation at Khayyam University (Iran) in 2004.

He established his own translation office in 2006 and continued to work till 2022 as translator.

During his professional career, he has been serving as Registrar and Area Coordinator at Society of Translators and Interpreter of khorasan Province (Iran) for a period of 12 years.

Majid joined STIBC in 2023 as an Associate Member.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Oriol Moalem Duran



Oriol grew up in Spain, where he graduated university with a degree in translation. After 20 years of working in the language industry, first as a freelance translator and later as a localization program manager, he landed in beautiful BC 3 years ago, where he returned to freelancing. He joined STIBC in early 2024 as an associate member and recently became certified as an English>Spanish translator. Oriol is very excited to join the Board and learning more about translating and interpreting in BC and Canada. He looks forward to serving this community of language professionals.

Winnie Smrekar



Winnie came to Canada from Hong Kong, China to pursue her studies at the University of Calgary. She has since called this country home. As a certified court interpreter, she is passionate about the role she plays as a language professional. Driven by a strong belief in the power of collective effort to make a meaningful difference, Winnie is honoured to join the STIBC Board of Directors. She looks forward to contributing to the advancement of STIBC's mission and goals.

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **SILVIA XALABARDÉ (President)**
- **TRANG (ANGIE) NGUYEN (Vice President)**
- **BENJAMIN CROMPTON (Registrar)**
- **LEYLI NIKNAFS (Treasurer)**
- **ORIOLE MOALEM DURAN (Secretary)**

- **NAVDEEP S. ATWAL (Director at Large)**
- **OSAMA EL BIETAR (Director at Large)**
- **WINNIE SMREKAR (Director at Large)**
- **IRYNA IUDINA (Director at Large)**
- **JAGJOT ARORA (Director at Large)**
- **MAJID NOROOZI (Director at Large)**

A MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM OUR DEPARTING BOARD MEMBERS

Renato Pereira



Dear STIBC Board and Members,

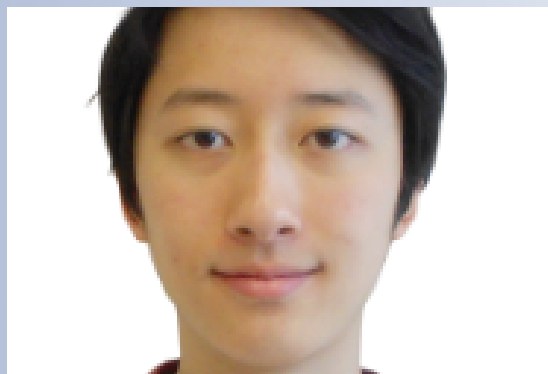
As I wrap up my term as Secretary, I'd like to extend my heartfelt thanks for all the trust, collaboration, and encouragement I received over the past two years. It has been an honour to contribute to STIBC's growth as a more active, creative, and responsive organization—one that advocates for our translators and interpreters to be recognized, trusted, and supported at both the provincial and national levels.

Much of what we've accomplished has been possible thanks to the dedication and commitment of our incredible Board team. Their partnership, experience, and camaraderie helped me rise to the many challenges we faced together during my time in this role.

Although I'm stepping down as Secretary, I remain committed to supporting the Board and our Society however I can. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

Warm regards,
Renato Pereira

Luke Yin



Dear STIBC,

I would like to express my sincere thanks for your support and for the opportunity to be part of this professional community. I truly appreciate the work you do and the resources you provide to translators and interpreters in BC.

Warm regards,
Luke Yin

Tanja Krzman



Dear STIBC,

I'm truly grateful for the sense of community and support I've found through STIBC. Thank you for being such a valuable part of my professional journey.

With appreciation,
Tanja Krzman



Follow us across Canada

by *Arianna Dagnino*

Dear Fellow Translators,
Ten days ago, Dr. Stefano Gulmanelli and I (both STIBC certified translators) left Vancouver in our car, beginning a reporting coast-to-coast journey across Canada that will take us all the way to Newfoundland. Along the way, we're documenting our travels through our bilingual (English/Italian) newsletter, *Canadiensis* — rich with stories, encounters, and reflections on this vast and diverse country.

We're inviting all our fellow translators to follow us as we drive eastward. Our aim is to capture not only the beauty of the landscape but also the voices and experiences of the people we meet. The newsletter is free to subscribe to on Substack (just choose the basic option): <https://canadiensis.substack.com>

If you have suggestions for people we should meet or places we shouldn't miss along the way, we would love to hear from you.

Looking forward to your feedback!

Interested in contributing an article? Feel free to reach out to us at office@stibc.org.

The Hidden Logic of Hungarian

By *Alexandre Gnes, STIBC*
Certified member

I've been living in Hungary full-time for over five years now, but my journey with the Hungarian language began back in 2011. In 2022, I passed the C1 (advanced level) language exam, and last year, I successfully completed the exam on Hungary's constitution. Over this time, I've come to know and appreciate this remarkable culture on a deeply personal level.

I run a small translation company in Keszthely, a lakeside town on the western shore of Lake Balaton. Recently, I caught myself thinking like a Hungarian — a quiet but profound realization that inspired me to write this short reflection for the newsletter.

For linguists and translators accustomed to Indo-European languages, Hungarian offers both a rare challenge and a uniquely enriching experience. Its agglutinative grammar, absence of grammatical gender, and distinctive expression of possession provide rich insights into the relationship between language structure and cognition. Hungarian's agglutinative nature relies on a clear, logical chain of suffixes, each serving a precise grammatical purpose. These affixes attach to stable word roots in a predictable order, reflecting a morphological transparency that can sharpen a translator's analytical instincts. The lack of grammatical gender is another welcome departure from many Indo-

European norms. In Hungarian, adjectives and verbs are not required to match the gender of their subjects. A phrase like "jó ember" (good person) applies equally to men and women - a

simplicity that lightens the grammatical load for learners and translators alike. Hungarian also handles possession in a notably different way. Rather than using a direct equivalent of "to have," it employs existential structures and possessive suffixes — "van egy könyvem" translates literally to "there exists my book." This reflects a worldview in which possession is seen less as a permanent right and more as a temporary relationship between people and things — echoing communal values rather than individual entitlement. Vowel harmony is another hallmark of Hungarian, where suffixes adjust to match the vowels of the root word. This phonological elegance mirrors the country's natural harmony, especially evident around Lake Balaton. That same sensitivity to balance also appears in the way Hungarian treats paired body parts (like eyes and hands) not as separate units, but as integrated wholes. The word feleség (wife), which literally derives from fél (half), beautifully encapsulates a cultural ideal of marital unity. Unlike many European languages, Hungarian dialects are relatively uniform. While regional variation in languages such as German or Italian can hinder mutual intelligibility, Hungarian underwent a successful language reform in the 19th century — led by figures like Ferenc Kazinczy — that prioritized enriching vocabulary and refining stylistic norms rather than resolving dialectal disputes. This cohesion supported the development of a national standard that remains remarkably stable today. For translators, learning Hungarian is more than a technical exercise — it's an invitation to engage with a fundamentally different way of thinking. Its structures offer a fresh lens for understanding how languages shape perception, encode values, and frame human relationships. In a globalized profession where surface fluency is often mistaken for mastery, Hungarian reminds us to dig deeper — to approach language not just as code, but as culture, worldview, and quiet logic. And for that reason alone, it is a language well worth exploring.

Updates from the UK: Changes Coming to Court Interpreter Services



The UK Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has released its official response to the House of Lords Public Services Committee's recommendations for improving translation and interpreting services in the UK's court system. These updates come after an extensive public inquiry, and new measures are set to take effect in October 2026.

According to the MoJ, only 0.7% of trials in 2024 were delayed due to the absence of an interpreter. However, they acknowledged that challenges remain and outlined several changes to be implemented under upcoming supplier contracts. These include increased transparency through more accessible service data, stronger collaboration with industry stakeholders, and new welfare support obligations for language service providers. The MoJ also plans to enhance the complaints process, including the use of "mystery shoppers" and escalated feedback review.

Regarding interpreter qualifications, the MoJ clarified that not all assignments will require Level 6 credentials. Instead, Level 6 qualifications will be required for professional-level court interpreting, while Level 3 qualifications will be sufficient for community-level assignments, such as non-evidential hearings or telephone interpreting. Quality assurance processes will also be reinforced through a risk-based assessment model, with priority given to interpreters working in higher-risk or unfamiliar settings.

Interpreter compensation remains a major point of discussion. The MoJ rejected the Committee's recommendation to increase minimum pay rates and reimburse travel expenses, stating that current rates are competitive when compared to other government departments. Interpreters will continue to receive a two-hour minimum rate per booking. However, starting in October 2026, the MoJ will introduce improvements such as earlier cut-off times for cancellations, allowing more assignments to qualify for late-cancellation fees. Additionally, pay will be linked to the Consumer Price Index and adjusted annually.

The response has sparked criticism among interpreters. The UK Court Interpreter Initiative, supported by the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI), has called for strikes on June 12–13 and July 17–18, 2025. The group argues that the current subcontracting model undermines both interpreter working conditions and the quality of service in the justice system. Their demands include an increase to a three-hour minimum rate, compensation for travel time and expenses, equal pay across all languages, and the elimination of "mystery shopper" assessments.

Free English/Chinese Dictionaries Available!

A community member is offering a donation of English/Chinese dictionaries — including general, medical, and business editions, ideal for interpreters and translators. Contact *Eva Chan* at evachan656@gmail.com Or call 604-723-0722 to request photos or more details. Special thanks to Eva Chan and Antonia Poon for this generous initiative!

Special Offer: AI Resilient Book at Just 99 Cents!

I'm excited to share that my new book, *AI Resilient*, is now available on Amazon for only 99 cents until the end of June. This book aims to help professionals navigate the fast-changing world of AI in knowledge-based careers.

If you're interested, don't miss this limited-time offer!
[Amazon Link](#)

by Joe

Interpreting and AI: Adoption is Growing, but Challenges Remain



While AI adoption has surged among translators, previous research by Slator noted a slower uptake among interpreters—partly due to the limited number of AI tools designed specifically for interpreting. However, new data from Slator’s 2025 Linguist Survey, featured in the Language Industry Market Report, reveals a shift: 55% of interpreters surveyed reported using AI tools in their work over the past year. By comparison, 76% of translators said the same.

The most common use of AI among interpreters was looking up terminology during delivery (19%), followed by extracting named entities and key terms from reference materials (8%).

As language AI continues to improve in accuracy and reliability, broader adoption in interpreting may follow. Still, the Slator Pro Guide: AI in Interpreting (Jan 2025) highlights important concerns. For instance, automatic speech recognition (ASR) tools can add visual distractions, increasing cognitive load. Additionally, using general AI assistants like ChatGPT or Gemini for live terminology research may raise confidentiality issues.

Despite these risks, some interpreters report significant productivity gains. As noted by Katharine Allen (Director of Language Industry Learning at Boostlingo) in *SlatorPod* #235:

“As an interpreter and trainer, the level of productivity advancement—and the ability to hone my skills that these tools give—is off the charts already.”

Editor:
Sarah Buston
Kamile Dias
Benjamin Crompton



STIBC

**Society of
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