Interpreting in the 21st Century

EDITED BY Giuliana Garzone
and Maurizio Viezzi

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Interpreting in the 21st Century: Challenges and opportunities
Edited by Giuliana Garzone and Maurizio Viezzi

Interpreting in the 21st Century

Challenges and opportunities

Selected papers from the 1st Forlì Conference
on Interpreting Studies, 9–11 November 2000

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Foreword

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The First Forlì Conference on interpreting studies in November 2000 is a milestone in the history of Italian interpretation research. If the contributions to the Trieste Symposium in 1986 came predominantly from interpreting scholars working outside Italy, fifteen years later the balance has been decidedly redressed. Much water has flowed under many institutional bridges. Interpreting and translation studies are now autonomous academic disciplines. There are now in Italy two full professorships of interpreting studies with the prospect of more to come in the near future. A dozen or so associate professorships and roughly the same number of research assistants promise to carry interpreting research well into the future.

Institutional recognition of the importance of interpreting studies is vital. Interpreting staff on short-term contracts rarely have the opportunity to defend and assert the needs of interpreting pedagogy and interpreting research in an academic context which has frequently, hitherto, hovered between hostility and indifference in most of Europe. It is comforting to reflect that Italy might well be right out in the forefront in this field.

Conference interpreting no longer holds uncontested sway either in the lecture hall or in the researcher's study. Its very specific requirements continue to be respected and investigated but other new and exciting opportunities have opened up prompted by the energy and initiative of some of the conference participants. A Eurocentric view of interpretation has been overtaken by events. There will, thanks to the EU, always be a need for conference interpreting from and into the official languages of all EU members, but by 2010 there will almost certainly be more EU citizens with Arabic, Hindi, Turkish or Urdu as their mother tongue than citizens with Estonian or Slovene. May we be certain that they will master the official EU languages to an extent enabling them to benefit to the full from their civic rights? By no means. In their dealings with the state, in courts of law and in hospitals or surgeries, they will have the right to demand expert, not improvised linguistic assistance.

The conference speakers underline what form the social demands for language services may, in future, take. The salad bowl has already, in Europe, replaced the melting pot as a model of integration. If the Trieste conference in 1986 fundamentally took stock of the state of health of conference interpreting, Forlì 2000 casts its net wider into the third millennium.

Introduction[*]

Giuliana Garzone and Maurizio Viezzi

This volume contains selected papers from the 1st Forlì Conference on Interpreting Studies, *Interpreting in the 21st Century. Challenges and Opportunities*, which was held at Forlì on 9–11 November 2000. With the 20th century drawing to a close, the Conference organisers felt that the time was once more ripe for an international event where scholars from different countries and backgrounds might discuss interpreting as a discipline and as a profession. The idea was to examine the current situation and future prospects, as in the historic conferences held in Venice in 1977, in Trieste in 1986 and in Turku in 1994, to name only the most important.

This idea was confirmed by the success with which the initiative was received, with more than 130 registered participants, coming from over twenty countries.

This keen interest and the number of high-quality papers proposed by participating scholars made it possible to plan a conference covering most of the main areas of interpreting studies, the parallel-session format being complemented by invited lectures and panels. The aim of the conference was to take stock of the situation, at the turn of the 21st century, in research, training and the profession. The focus would be not only on achievements and shortcomings, but also on changes under way and elements of transition as well as on the outlook for the future. This was accomplished with sessions addressing the whole gamut of topical issues in the field: research paradigms and methodology, interpreter training and quality in interpreting. Moreover, a panel and two sessions were devoted to the changing profile of the interpreting profession. These focused on the rise and spread of new modes of interpreting, broadly falling under the heading of "dialogue interpreting", as well as the increasing importance of interpreting for the media. Taking these aspects into consideration seemed appropriate because of the accelerating pace of change and expectations of further evolution in the near future. Presentations focusing on these new perspectives did not deal only with professional and pedagogical aspects, but also with relevant research issues.

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Papers in the opening section of this volume mostly concern conference interpreting, addressing theoretical and methodological issues.

As has long been recognised in the literature, since its early stages the "young" discipline of interpreting research has found itself, by necessity, at a crossroads between several different sciences. Owing to the extremely complex nature of the phenomena investigated, it had to borrow some of its instruments of analysis from other sciences — mainly psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and translation studies, as illustrated by Alessandra Riccardi in her paper.

In this context, it comes as no surprise that interpreting should have been beset by difficulties in finding its own autonomous and well-defined identity. But these uncertainties seem now to have been left behind. At present, there is every sign that the discipline is mastering the full range of instruments it relies on, and has been able to generate methods and principles of its own. The emergence of a more complex and comprehensive approach has contributed to overcoming the distinction, highlighted by Moser-Mercer (1994a: 17), between preference for the methods of the experimental sciences and a "liberal arts and general theorising" perspective. There is today a wealth of different perspectives, which in many cases combine the methodologies and instruments of the sciences and those of the arts into specific new approaches. In certain respects, one may say that the discipline has now come of age, although it cannot be denied that much work remains to be done, before thorough understanding of the issues addressed can be achieved.

Against this background, research paradigms which are not specifically natural-science oriented cannot simply be dismissed as "general theorising approaches". Far from being purely personal and impressionistic, they rely on accurately defined methodologies borrowed from the linguistic sciences, which in turn have witnessed some important evolutions, looking beyond grammatical well-formedness to include semantic, pragmatic and rhetorical aspects. In their work in this area, interpreting researchers have worked meaningfully on the development of reliable, precise and scientifically viable instruments to be used in the collection and analysis of data. This is apparent in Robin Setton's proposal of a rigorous methodology for work on interpreting corpora. Setton's basis is a composite of linguistic analysis at different levels, including the pragmatic and cognitive dimensions, ultimately aimed not only at shedding light on the psycholinguistic process involved in SI, but above all formalising them in a model.

In this kind of research work, reliance on extensive corpora of authentic material from conferences has provided a solid basis for analysis, the collection of texts and the criteria adopted for their transcription having received considerable theoretical attention. This is highlighted in Marco Cencini and Guy Aston's paper, which discusses encoding standards in interpreting research, putting forth a proposal specifically developed for oral language transcription and data collection in this field of investigation.

On the whole, scholars seem now to realise that in the past research was sometimes unsuccessful and often unsatisfactory not so much because it resorted to inappropriate procedures, but, rather, because it lacked a sound epistemological basis.

In the light of this new awareness, even the "old" paradigm based on introspection, which attracted so much criticism at one point in the history of interpreting research (e.g. Gile 1990), has been redeemed and is now seen in a different, more favourable perspective. Introspection was once looked upon as the naive, fact-distorting method of its pioneering stage. However, to some degree, it has always been a factor in all investigations into language-based activities. Thus, in relatively recent times introspective/retrospective methods have been used in translation studies — for example, in *Think Aloud Protocols* (e.g. Krings 1986; Kussmaul 1995). There have also been proposals to adopt similar approaches in SI — only *retro*spection actually being possible, since the simultaneous mode prevents actual *intro*spection in the course of the performance. This method is illustrated in Gun-Viol Vik-Tuovinen's experimental study. Accurately planned protocols elicit retrospective comments from interpreters at the end of their performance. Data collected in this way are used to gain insights into the techniques and tactics of simultaneous interpreting, as well as to highlight differences in behaviour between novices and expert professional interpreters.

Similarly, rigorous methodological assumptions and sophisticated instruments for statistical elaboration contribute to making empirical research ever more meaningful and effective. This emerges very well from Peter Mead's paper, the only contribution in this section devoted to the consecutive mode. Mead tries to ascertain possible causes of pauses and disfluencies in deliveries recorded in an experimental setting, by analysing retrospective explanations provided by the interpreters (students and professionals), thus adopting a procedure which is to some extent conceptually similar to that expounded by Vik-Tuovinen. Also in this case, such explanations — while subjective by definition — can be a useful source of information about components of the interpreting process, at the same time offering indications as to possible training priorities.

Within the framework of linguistics-based research, the "generalist" approach may be fruitfully accompanied by a "particularist" approach, focusing on specific languages and/or language pairs, which appears as most promising, although it has so far attracted surprisingly limited theoretical attention. A contrastive approach can not only provide useful insights into lexico-grammatical processes involved in translation and interpretation as well as possible interference mechanisms, but also help highlight regularities in interpreters' behaviour. Laura Salmon's paper provides an interesting example. Starting from the assumption that interpreting is a translation-based activity in which all problems are magnified, it offers a systematic, in-depth study of Russian proper names, discussing the basic theoretical principles to be relied upon when translating them. Here, as in all other areas of her/his work, an

interpreter needs to be thoroughly familiar with relevant theory so that, when problems arise, s/he will be able to tackle them with ease, even in the severely time-constrained conditions under which s/he works.

In so far as quality is the ultimate concern — possibly together with process comprehension — in all interpreting research, it is understandable that there has long been a thriving branch of the discipline which has specialised in the study of quality-related issues. In actual fact, over the past few years, interest in this crucial aspect of interpreting seems to have intensified — publications on quality have multiplied and there has even been the first ever conference entirely devoted to interpretation quality (*I Congreso internacional sobre evaluación de la calidad en interpretación de conferencias*, organised by the University of Granada in Almuñécar, April 2001).

The most significant studies on quality published in the past few years are presented in Franz Pöchhacker's paper, which classifies works on quality according to the methodology adopted: corpus-based observations, measures of performance in experimental settings, surveys (investigating interpreters', users' or clients' points of view), case studies. What is particularly significant in Pöchhacker's paper is that both conference and community interpreting are considered, the author's goal being to discuss quality in an overall perspective with a view to stimulating exchanges between researchers in the various areas of interpreting studies. Indeed, while it is true, as Pöchhacker himself wrote (1994c: 242), that interpretation quality is best viewed "under the circumstances", the study of quality requires a general framework within which every instance of mediated translinguistic and trans-cultural communication can be analysed (whether inside or outside a conference setting, in the simultaneous or consecutive mode, involving A into B or B into A, etc.). By attaching equal importance to conference and community interpreting, Pöchhacker's paper implicitly rejects the elitist attitude often displayed by the group of professionals Sergio Viaggio calls the "boothed gentry".

The aspiration towards a unified, all-embracing definition of quality is also the central issue in Giuliana Garzone's paper, which starts by pointing out the lack of a sufficiently general theoretical model to encompass the different dimensions and variables involved in the concept of quality, leaving an area of epistemological uncertainty. Against this background, the paper suggests that a possible solution might be the concept of norms, as defined by Gideon Toury ("a category for descriptive analysis of translation phenomena", 1980: 57). This could provide a flexible framework for research on interpretation quality, and afford a heuristic instrument to account for variability in criteria and standards — not only as perceived and applied by interpreters and users, but also with reference to the situation and the social (sub-)groups involved in the interpreting event.

Sylvia Kalina's paper puts greater emphasis on contingent professional, on-the-job aspects contributing to the quality of an interpreter's performance, stating

clearly that discussions in this area cannot be based on target text viability alone. Attention should also be paid to a whole range of factors which may have an impact on quality. This goes very much along the lines of "quality under the circumstances", as suggested by Pöchhacker. Once again, what seems to be needed is a general framework or set of criteria covering all such factors and hopefully providing ways to measure them or, at least, to gauge their significance and relevance.

If — as Pöchhacker's paper highlights — research on the general aspects of the profession (e.g., quality) has broadened its horizons to take into account different professional profiles and interpretation modes other than consecutive and simultaneous, the last few years have seen the growth of new branches of the discipline which deal exclusively with these modes and profiles, relying on *ad hoc* categories and instruments of analysis.

As was emphasised insistently in the course of the Conference by speakers and participants alike, this is probably the most important single element of novelty in the field: the recognition that interpreting is not only conference interpreting, although this has been the traditional focus of the discipline from the outset, and that other modes have neither lesser importance nor lesser dignity.

Special attention was set aside for public service interpreting (PSI) and community interpreting. Interest in these specialties has been mounting and it has become clear that a considerable research effort is needed in this area, which is characterised by considerable diversity.

This has been in response to profound changes, taking place in Western society, for which the interpreting profession, focused as it was exclusively on conference interpretation in formal settings, was ill equipped. 'Hybrid' modes such as semi-consecutive and *chuchotage*, used to a certain extent on the free-lance market, were seen as marginal. Interpreting in non-conference settings — liaison interpreting, escort interpreting, business interpreting, court interpreting etc. — had always existed, but had traditionally accounted for only a fraction of the total volume of professional interpreting services, at least in Europe. These modes carried no prestige and were simply considered as poor relations to 'the real thing' (i.e. conference interpreting), requiring no skills other than language proficiency. They were therefore thought to deserve neither specialist training nor specific research work.

In the last few years this scenario has changed radically, owing to the dramatic increase in the quantity and range of contacts between languages and cultures, not to mention the number of ethnic groups involved. These changes have been brought about by social factors, with growing numbers of people settling or seeking asylum outside their country of origin, or have been favoured by technological advances, the virtual environment providing an interface for peoples and languages which had little contact with each other in the past. The ever increasing demand for cross-cultural and cross-linguistic mediation in a wide range of settings has ushered in a new era in interpreting. New needs have become apparent and much research

work is required in order to shed light on formerly unheeded problems and situations and develop new theoretical and practical instruments to cope with tasks and contexts which were not previously part of the (professional) interpreter's brief. For instance, community interpreting is mostly dialogue interpreting, with the language mediator involved in triadic exchanges (Mason 1999b; Mason 2001). This contrasts with the provision of a 'voice-over text' in simultaneous interpreting (Pöchhacker 1994b). Against this background, research has moved away from its traditional areas of investigation — information processing, memory, cerebral and cognitive organisation of interpreting, quality, linguistic specificity, analysis of text types in the conference setting — to take advantage of research paradigms developed by yet other disciplines, hitherto ignored, such as discourse and conversation analysis, intercultural studies, sociology and ethnomethodology.

The socio-cultural, linguistic and cognitive characteristics of community interpreting are illustrated exhaustively in Helge Niska's paper, which discusses the problems inherent in the organisation of interpreting services and recruitment in this branch of the profession. With the emergence of new interpreting modes, the traditional interpreter training system has had to face unprecedented demands. The needs of community interpreting services for certain languages are often so urgent that untrained bilinguals are employed for tasks which would require at least some specific preparation, with a view not only to efficiency and reliability in getting the message across, but also to guaranteeing interpreter neutrality. Recent research (e.g. Roy 1990, Wadensjö 1997, 1998) has shown that this is a very difficult requisite to achieve, even more so for untrained "natural interpreters" and, above all, when the parties involved are migrants or refugees (see Rudvin forthcoming). Hence the need for special intensive courses, with a view to avoiding potentially devastating problems as a result of poor language mediation by 'natural interpreters' — e.g., inappropriate treatment for critical medical cases, or a defendant's inability to plead her/his innocence. In such circumstances, lives may depend on the interpreter and the role s/he plays in the encounter.

Even when training courses are held in universities or other academic settings, the inherent characteristics of community interpreting entail an approach that is inevitably very different from the traditional European, AIIC-inspired, conference-interpreting oriented model. This is immediately apparent in terms of languages involved, with 'mainstream' European languages such as English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish no longer providing a sufficient basis. In addition, new concepts have also to be applied in aptitude testing, to adapt to the new intensive training courses and final accreditation test introduced in some countries — for example, Sweden.

The need for increasing professionalisation is again a central issue in Bernd Meyer's in-depth study of some aspects of interpreter-mediated encounters in medical care, which examines multilingual doctor-patient communication. Meyer's

study is based on field data from Germany and Turkey. In an examination of briefings for informed consent before surgery and/or anaesthesia, two features are discussed. The first is the use of modals, an area where interpreters are shown to oversimplify communication, often shifting from a modalised to a non-modalised formulation and relegating the patient to a passive role. The second feature is doctor-patient interaction characterised by partial linguistic transparence, i.e. encounters where the foreign patient to some extent understands the doctor's language. Such cases require special skills on the part of the interpreter. This again brings into question the problem of professionalisation, in a context where training is subject to a variety of constraints (urgency, rarity of the languages involved, lack of prestige and low pay for PSI). While research work undertaken in this area may be expected to contribute to improving the quality of interpreting services offered in this sector, this will only be achieved through an increased involvement of professional interpreters.

Within the framework of PSI, an area subject to special rules is legal interpreting, which covers a wide range of situations and assignments, and where the position and status of the interpreter may vary greatly — from interpretation in the courtroom to language mediation at the police station. As Erik Hertog notes in his paper, one of the main problems in most European countries is, again, that the growing need for legal interpreting services is not matched by an adequate professional training system. The Grotius Project, described in detail by Hertog, may be a useful instrument to tackle this problem as it aims at promoting specific standards in Legal Translation and Interpreting by providing a number of recommendations on issues such as interpreters' standards, selection criteria for training, and codes of conduct. Hertog also launches an appeal — the 'Forlì appeal' — to all CIUTI schools, to "start thinking about the establishment of EU accredited courses in Legal Interpreting". A possible structure for such courses is also suggested.

In the context of PSI, a case apart is signed language interpretation. This involves intersemiotic, rather than — or in addition to — interlinguistic communication. Similarities and differences in relation to spoken interpretation are illustrated in detail by Jane Kellett Bidoli. With the Italian situation in mind, it is emphasised that signed language interpretation, in the past provided only occasionally and informally, has now gained wider recognition at an institutional level. The interpreter for the deaf is now a fully-fledged professional figure, for whom specialist courses have been introduced. Incidentally, an element that emerged from the debate during the conference is that signed language interpretation seems to be a promising area in terms of employment prospects, as assistance for the deaf in schools and other institutional settings is now mandatory in many countries.

Another 'new' area of the profession is interpreting for Peace Support Operations (PSOs). In Italy this is now provided by a professional figure (formally defined as a 'translator/interpreter'). The activity involved is ultimately similar to that of in-

house interpreters working at the Ministry of the Interior. Claudia Monacelli's paper reports on the first one-year interpreter training course — officially designated as a course for 'cultural mediators' — organised by the Italian Army. The course design takes into account the future role to be played by trainees who will be required to work not only in a military context, but also, indeed mainly, in the 'grey area' of civilian operations, such as investigations, trials, humanitarian aid, infrastructure reconstruction and the repatriation of refugees. Such duties largely fall within the scope of the definition of PSI, requiring ethical expertise as well as linguistic and interpreting skills.

The last part of this section of the volume is devoted to an area of the profession, media interpreting, which is offering ever more working opportunities to interpreters outside the conference hall. Here, working conditions are very different from those of conference interpreting, as the three papers dealing with this topic illustrate, while all modes of interpreting, simultaneous, consecutive, dialogue and signed language, are required. The *media interpreting* heading includes numerous and diversified settings, situations and participation frameworks, ranging from face-to-face communication, with the interpreter actually taking part in the TV programme as a ratified participant in the original interaction, to 'voice-over' in a live broadcast event. There is, however, one common denominator: the final user of the interpreting service is the viewer.

The diversity of situations and modes in media interpreting offers interesting prospects for research. Different — often new — analytical instruments and quality parameters are required. For interpreters, performances to be broadcast live are much more stressful from the psychological and physical point of view than conference interpreting, as Ingrid Kurz convincingly demonstrates on the basis of objective parameters (skin conductance level and pulse rate).

The differences between conference and media interpreting are thoroughly discussed by Gabriele Mack, whose considerations are based on the application of Dell Hymes' *SPEAKING* model to a very large corpus of TV interpreting performances. Conference interpreters, whose ultimate goal is 'the faithful transmission of meaning, even at the expense of form', do not easily adapt to media interpreting and are often replaced (with ethical implications, writes Mack, still to be investigated) by other, more adaptable 'mediators'. This is a clear indication that what is expected or required of TV interpreters is at variance with the 'norms' of conference interpreting.

That interpreting itself may be part of the show is indeed the case in what Delia Chiaro calls *ad hoc* interpreting, often used in TV chat shows and variety shows. Compères often provide language mediation, both conducting and interpreting interviews with foreign celebrities. Chiaro's paper suggests that, while these performances may be rather questionable if conference interpreting quality criteria are used, they prove quite acceptable to the audience. Results of the author's questionnaire-based survey show that, irrespective of the compère's interpreting style or mistakes, her/his performance is more often than not given a pass mark. A possible

explanation is that respondents' opinions are coloured by the TV personality's charisma. The findings of this survey may pave the way for a completely different approach to the whole issue of quality for interpreting on the air.

In the last few years, this diversification of professional profiles, each requiring specific skills, in addition to the basic linguistic and cultural abilities any interpreter should master, has put the training system under severe strain.

The need has emerged to re-think a number of aspects which had previously been taken for granted, starting from some very basic procedures, such as selection of candidates at the stage of admission to interpreter training programmes.

As regards university training courses, admission procedures are extremely varied. In some schools there are entrance exams, in others there are none; in some countries schools have to comply with admission rules which they are not in a position to modify. In this context, identifying or developing a tool for aptitude assessment should ensure that prospective trainees can be appropriately advised as to their chances of success. This would enhance the effectiveness of the training system, saving some students unnecessary and often frustrating difficulties. Clearly the problem lies in identifying what to assess and how. Mariachiara Russo and Salvador Pippa believe that paraphrase, i.e. oral text processing within the same language, might prove an efficient predictor of aptitude for conference interpreting. Their paper provides convincing arguments in this respect, describing the linguistic-cognitive model on which the working hypothesis they have been testing with a group of ninety students is based. Their work is still in progress and time is needed to test the predictive value of paraphrase thoroughly by observing the "school-efficiency" of the students enrolled in the study.

School-efficiency is also, necessarily, a function of the various components of training and the emphasis placed on them. In his paper Sergio Viaggio notes, for example, that at school the pragmatic aspect of interpreting is often underrated or neglected — which amounts to underrating relevance (his words).

This is indeed a crucial issue in training, and one that it is difficult to come to terms with. Students are easily made aware that interpreting is a form of communication, that it does not take place in a vacuum, that the interpreter is called upon to meet very specific (although sometimes implicit) needs, etc. It is much more difficult, though, to use UN or EU texts for practice and have students behave *as if* they were working at the General Assembly or at the European Parliament, or *as if* they were translating for delegates depending on the interpreter's text to understand the speaker's words. Such practice actually involves no *bona fide* communication, with all the (strategic and pragmatic) consequences this may entail. The problem seems to lie not in neglect of or insufficient attention to pragmatic and communicative aspects, but in the "situational fiction" students are more often than not confronted with. The problem needs to be addressed, possibly by more frequent exposure of students to "real" communication contexts where they could refine their "sense of situation"

and develop appropriate strategies in response to perceived communicative needs.

Practice is not all students need, however. This is clearly stated by Francesca Santulli, formerly a professional interpreter and interpreter trainer, who draws on her current experience of lecturing in linguistics to trainee interpreters. The "sink or swim" times are long gone and trainees need something more than simply spending countless hours speaking in the booth or flipping the pages of their note-pads. If they are to become professional text producers, professional communicators, experts at cross-linguistic and cross-cultural communication, then they need to know how language(s) work(s), how communication works, how linguistic and cultural transfer works. Some 10 years ago, in Elsinore, Franz Pöchhacker (1992) gave a paper entitled "The role of theory in simultaneous interpreting" and basically focused on the role of *interpreting* theory. We would submit that theory should not be confined to interpreting theory, but should encompass a wide range of topics related to language and communication, starting from general linguistics. As an example, how important linguistic awareness may be with a view to developing a note-taking technique is illustrated in the second part of Santulli's paper, where she analyses note-taking as a system (the "third language").

Needless to say, the usefulness of theory in interpreting training will depend on the extent to which trainees' specific requirements are effectively addressed. This aspect is also stressed by Christopher Garwood, who, in his paper, underlines the need to overcome the relative lack of attention to rhetoric and public speaking, as well as to text and discourse analysis which often besets interpreter training practice.

Training could also benefit from the introduction of new technologies, with *ad hoc* software programmes to be put at the students' disposal. This is indeed the new frontier, as shown in the paper by Laura Gran, Angela Carabelli and Raffaela Merlini. When everyone and everything seems to be going digital, at least in this part of the world, there is no reason why interpreting and interpreter training should be lagging behind. As new technologies become more readily available and their cost decreases, they will become a crucial factor in training, provided they are used as a means to an end and not for their own sake. If properly used, online tools might help guide individual students through a learning process suited to their characteristics and requirements, making more time and resources available for classroom work. It goes without saying that the integration of computer-assisted and traditional learning will require careful planning and awareness of each student's needs, not to mention the ability to adapt to the new instruments. It will be the researchers' role to provide new, better and user-friendly learnerware, and the schools' role to incorporate it into courses.

This volume is closed by the panel discussion, summarised by Amalia Amato and Peter Mead, which was held on the last day of the Conference. It seems to us that this book of selected papers could have no better conclusion. The final round table is especially meaningful, in that it touches on many of the main themes dealt

with in the course of the Conference, offering a synthesis. This look ahead at the future of the profession, including its relationship with research and training; it thus provides an appropriate focus on the results of the Conference.

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The sheer variety of subjects and approaches in this volume of Selected Papers testifies to the intensity of current research on conference interpretation as well as on the different aspects of dialogue and media interpreting.

Although interpretation research is still based on a number of different paradigms, the scholars involved now show a growing sense of belonging to an independent, self-respecting research community, which is gaining increasing recognition in the global scientific community. This could be felt tangibly in the course of the conference and, we believe, can also be perceived in this collection of contributions.

Of course, there is still ample scope for optimisation in research and communication, in a discipline which has just found its way and is continually subject to strong pressures from an ever more rapidly changing world.

However, the endeavour researchers devote to their work is complemented by the commitment of universities and other training institutions. In addition, professional associations, supra-national and international organisations are becoming increasingly involved in research and in quality control. This general background gives reason to believe that the discipline has much to offer the academic and professional worlds.

The profession has changed profoundly and has now come to terms with its new identity. The interpreter's status is becoming less sharply differentiated between conference interpreting and other settings.

At the same time, links between research and the profession are becoming stronger, as researchers make an increasingly important contribution to shaping the future of the profession. The growing importance of community interpreting and other modes of interpreting in face-to-face communication, and the development of a thriving line of research in this area, have directed researchers' attention to pragmatic and cultural aspects of interpreting. These, in turn, open up new perspectives in conference interpreting research. Against this background, all those involved in the interpreting process — professionals, researchers and trainers alike — are now more aware of its sociolinguistic complexity. This concept highlights the interpreter's human involvement in the communicative event made possible by her/his input, whether in a public service or conference setting.

Note

Focus on research

Interpreting research

Descriptive aspects and methodological proposals

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Since the 1950s, when the first publications on conference interpreting appeared (Herbert 1952; Rozan 1956; Paneth 1957), research in interpretation has followed different research paths. According to Pöchhacker's analysis of bibliographical data (1995a), the number of works on interpreting in the 6-year period 1989–1994 was double that of the previous 36 years (1952–1988), offering clear evidence of the increasing interest in interpreting research.

In the past, research in interpreting was characterised by different trends as a result of the interdisciplinary work often needed to cope with its multiple dimensions. Thus, the most easily recognizable approaches to the study of interpreting have been the cognitive-psychological, the neurophysiological or neurolinguistic, the translational, the linguistics-centered, the intercultural and the sociological. Such approaches, often interrelated, lead to a more holistic approach to interpreting.

Against the background of the developments of the 1990s, this paper will examine how research has answered some of the questions raised in the past by Shlesinger (1995b) and addressed in the foreword to the Turku proceedings (Gambier et al. 1997:1–7), such as "Will interpretation research develop as a discipline *per se* (Gran)? Or as a sub-discipline of Translation Studies (Pöchhacker)? Will it stabilise temporarily as a fuzzy set of associated activities based on different paradigms?" (Gambier et al. 1997:7). In other words, are interpreting studies to be considered currently an application field for linguistics, cognitive sciences, translation or cultural studies, or have they developed into an autonomous research discipline?

1.   The influence of cognitive sciences

Cognitive sciences, in particular psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics, provide very useful background knowledge for a better understanding of the principles of

language comprehension and production in interpreting, or of how and where language knowledge is localised within the brain structures. These disciplines can help explain what happens during the interpreting process, even though they cannot give definitive answers, because the experiments they are based on and the models that have been developed so far are concerned with simpler speech situations than those involving SI. They can give provisional answers and useful metaphors, and help explain, especially for teaching purposes, how interpreting is carried out and why it is such a complex enterprise.

1.1   Psycholinguistics

As a complex cognitive activity, interpreting was used in the 1960s and 1970s as an experimental paradigm to verify cognitive hypotheses on information processing and language production. However, probably because of its complexity as a cognitive task, it has not so far elicited the kind of interest from other disciplines that it would warrant, "[…] perhaps it is precisely this cognitive complexity that has until now discouraged such inquiry" (Massaro and Moser-Mercer 1996:2). Language processes, especially lower-level ones, generally operate unconsciously and are not open to conscious introspection. Therefore, psycholinguistic models of basic principles on which speech production and comprehension rely are useful tools for shedding light on parts of the interpreting process which would otherwise remain unperceived. Cognitive sciences provide interpreting with useful insights, even though they too are in flux, and models adapting to new experimental findings are continuously developing, based on assumptions which have to be revised as soon as new evidence arises. An example from speech recognition models may clarify the difficulty encountered in adhering too closely to a single psycholinguistic model for explaining speech recognition during interpreting.

The speech stimulus fades rapidly and word recognition involves lexical access within what is known to be the lexicon, the mental dictionary where all information about words is stored. Psycholinguistics postulates that lexical access takes place on the basis of a pre-lexical code, the acquisition of which is a complex task because of difficulties encountered in segmenting speech and because of the way in which sounds vary depending on the acoustic context in which they occur. Nevertheless, most of the time, speech recognition is very fast and accurate and appears to be effortless. A recurring question in the word recognition models is whether processes interact or whether they are autonomous (or independent, or modular). Models of spoken word recognition differ in the degree of interaction they allow between levels of processing.

At present, the cohort model of Marslen-Wilson (1987) is the best account of what happens in spoken word recognition (Harley 1995). The present revised version (Marslen-Wilson 1987) has developed from the earlier one (Marslen-Wilson

1975), which permitted more interaction between the various levels. The central idea of the model is that as we hear speech, a cohort of candidate words is set up. Items are then gradually eliminated from the cohort until only one is left. This is then taken as the word currently striving for recognition. In the earlier version of the model, context could not affect the access stage used to activate lexical items, but it could affect the selection stage — when one item is chosen from the cohort — and the integration stage — in which the semantic and syntactic properties of the chosen word are utilised. In the later version of the model, context cannot affect selection but only affects integration, because experimental data suggested that the role of context is more limited than was originally thought when a more inter-actionist approach was chosen (Harley 1995).

TRACE (McClelland and Elman 1986) is another model of spoken word recognition often quoted in the literature. Compared to the cohort model, it is a highly interactive connectionist model, emphasising the role of top-down process-ing, that is the role of context in word recognition. TRACE is based on the idea that top-down context permeates the recognition process. Hence, lexical context can directly assist acoustic-perceptual processing, and information above the word level can directly influence word processing. While this model could appear useful to explain recognition processes in SI, the results it gives are not consistent with experimental findings suggesting that context plays a much more limited role than was previously assumed in psycholinguistic literature. The fact that context does not contribute to the first stage of speech perception, but only subsequently, could explain the importance of good acoustic transmission and perception in simulta-neous interpreting, as well as the disruption caused by bad pronunciation or technical difficulties. Further research is needed, however, to answer more complex questions and explain, for example, subsequent stages of speech recognition in interpreting. What mechanisms come into play when an interpreter gradually adapts to adverse conditions, such as speakers with strong foreign pronunciation or unknown words? Concomitant cognitive processes, such as those that come into play during interpreting, can at present find only tentative explanations.

An interesting question for SI raised by these models is the amount of speech needed to activate the relevant representation from the mental lexicon for starting recognition. In Klatt's LAFS (Lexical access by spectra) model (1989), contact can be made after the first 10 milliseconds. Other models need larger units of speech and will obviously take longer to get started. In the cohort model, early information (the first 150 milliseconds) is used first to access the word. In other models it may be the stressed syllable or the more reliable part of the word that is used to make first contact. All of these models, where a subset of lexical entries is generated by initial contact, have the disadvantage that it is difficult to recover from a mistake (mishearing), something which does occur fairly frequently in SI. Models such as TRACE do not present these problems, because each identified phoneme — the

whole word — activates some of the lexical entries that form the set. A consequence is that these sets may be very broad and, therefore, require longer processing times (Harley 1995). The LAFS model could be useful to explain how we recognise unknown words, which the other two models do not explain because they assume a matching between what is heard and an internal representation of the word. In LAFS, familiar words are recognised by a process avoiding explicit recognition of any of these below-the-word intermediate representations, but unfamiliar words and names are processed phonetically by a special network that works in parallel with the normal process (Klatt 1989).

In conclusion, psycholinguistics can offer models which may help describe the process, but these are still in the process of being refined because of modifications in the assumptions on which they were first based. Marslen-Wilson's cohort model for speech recognition has changed from a more interactive to a more modular model, while the TRACE model is more interactive but presents some pitfalls. The Massaro model (1975, 1978) for speech recognition, often quoted in interpreting literature, reflected the trend of the 1970s and is based on an analysis by synthesis approach for feature detection, which was further developed by Moser (1976, 1978) in relation to SI. Such models of speech perception were later criticised because they provide no satisfactory explanation as to how the process gets started (i.e. where the lexical hypotheses come from) and because they require too much cognitive processing (too many sequential decisions per unit time) (cf. Klatt 1989: 181). To counteract the latter, an initial analysis must be found to reduce the set of lexical candidates to manageable size without rejecting the correct word, but no practical system has yet been able to do this in continuous speech (Klatt 1989: 217). Massaro later developed another more interactionist model (1996, quoted in Massaro and Shlesinger 1997), the FLMP (Fuzzy Logical Model of Perception), where word information and context jointly influence word recognition. It has not yet been determined whether the results of the FLMP apply to SI as well, although it is expected that they will (Massaro and Shlesinger 1997: 35).

At present, drawing on psycholinguistics findings, it is possible to elaborate a basic model of SI, although it would be fairly general and could not account for or include all SI-specific features and variables. Nevertheless, psycholinguistics can help gain more insight into single stages of the bilingual comprehension and production processes, or at least go some way towards explaining them. At the same time, co-operation with psycholinguists could be of mutual benefit to check existing theories of cognitive processes through the comparison of the results of monolingual subjects with those of interpreters. However, it will take longer to design psycholinguistic experiments for SI, even though, as Frauenfelder and Schriefers argue, experimental techniques from psycholinguistics could be "fruitfully applied to research on SI" (1997: 83).

1.2 Neurolinguistics

Neurolinguistics has greatly contributed to an understanding of how language knowledge is structured in bilinguals compared to monolinguals. Experimental research on cerebral organisation of language functions has shown that the left cerebral hemisphere is deeply involved in the decoding and production of language components, while the right hemisphere is active in the interpretation of implicit meaning and prosodic features. However, the way the two hemispheres interact during language comprehension and production is the object of ongoing research and its results shed more and more light on the complex mechanisms underlying language processes. Neurolinguistic findings applied to interpreting may help recognise differences in foreign language (L2) acquisition patterns and advise students as to what linguistic and extralinguistic components they should concentrate on during different periods of their training during which the interpreting process is acquired, accelerated and partially automatised.

Studies by Gran and Fabbro (Gran and Fabbro 1988, 1991; Fabbro et al. 1990, 1991) perfectly illustrate the mutually advantageous nature of collaboration between disciplines. The success of their research lies in the convergence of interests on interpreting problems seen from different angles, neurolinguistics on the one hand and interpreting on the other. Bringing together interests in mental functions and their interaction in the interpreting process and in language representation in the brain from a clinical point of view (i.e. studying aphasia, dyslexia etc.), Gran and Fabbro began experimental studies with techniques such as dichotic listening, verbal-manual co-ordination and dual tasks, which forcibly activated or inactivated one or the other cerebral hemisphere (Gran and Fabbro 1988, 1991; Fabbro et al. 1990, 1991). Their studies (Fabbro et al. 1987; Gran 1992; Fabbro and Gran 1997) revealed, for example, a more symmetrical involvement of the cerebral hemispheres during dichotic listening in subjects exposed to a period of intense linguistic training such as simultaneous interpreting. In particular, compared to first-year SSLMIT students, fourth-year interpreting students showed the dominance of the left hemisphere for their mother-tongue (L1), but a significantly greater involvement of the right hemisphere for L2. The greater involvement of the right cerebral hemisphere has been subsequently interpreted as a modification of the attentive strategies required during the complex process of SI (Fabbro and Gran 1994, 1997). The simultaneous activation of both cerebral hemispheres could thus be tentatively explained as a strategy to contrast the cognitive strain caused by SI. A further experimental study with dichotic listening (Gran and Fabbro 1991, Fabbro and Gran 1994, 1997) examined cerebral asymmetries in interpreting students and professional interpreters during the recognition of semantic and syntactic errors. The results indicated a greater involvement of both cerebral hemispheres in professional interpreters compared to interpreting students: "the typical lateralisation for

language functions to the left hemisphere, which is normally found in mono-linguals, tends to diminish concurrently with greater proficiency in a foreign language and as a result of training in the particularly complex task of simultaneous interpreting" (Fabbro and Gran 1997:24). Furthermore, professional interpreters showed significant superiority in the recognition of semantic errors, while students recognised more syntactic errors. A possible explanation of these results was the greater attention paid by professionals to meaning, while students tend to stick "to the superficial structure of discourse" (Fabbro and Gran 1997:24). Neurolinguistic research in interpreting has highlighted differences in cerebral organisation of language functions between bilinguals at different stages of language proficiency and interpreting training and thus, for teaching purposes, its findings help explain the inevitable graduality of the learning process which requires an unconscious process of "cerebral re-organisation of linguistic and attentive strategies" (Fabbro and Gran 1997:21).

Further research within the neurolinguistic approach to SI was carried out by Paradis (1994) who developed a SI model in which he integrated findings from studies on information processing, on the cerebral language organisation of bilinguals and on neuroanatomical and neurophysiological mechanisms of language and memory. Paradis' model is based on two previously developed hypotheses, the Subset Hypothesis (Paradis 1981) and the Threshold Hypothesis (Paradis 1984). It gives a dynamic description of SI, showing the simultaneity of the processes of language understanding and language production, and explains possible overlappings. The role of memory and linguistic competence is also taken into account. This model has been partially criticised by Moser-Mercer (1997a) and the author himself has observed that empirical evidence is required to confirm his theoretical construct, but his aim was to contribute a model "[…] within which specific hypotheses can be tested, including those of the participation of the left hemisphere in the processing of the grammar of both languages, irrespective of the task" (1994:333).

Individual differences in knowledge and language representation make it difficult or almost impossible to design comprehensive models for SI. Therefore, models will always be of a very general nature, resembling the cognitive metaphor in favour at a given time or in a given research community, such as the information flow model, the modular model, the connectionist approach or the neural-network approach. Nevertheless, such metaphors are needed for their explicative value and to enable the step by step construction of a theory of interpreting.

2.   The influence of translation studies

While reflections on translation date back to ancient Rome, those on interpreting were almost non-existent until the second half of the 20th century and it is hardly

surprising that theories of translation have to a great extent influenced the development of interpreting studies. After Schleiermacher's treatise "Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens" in 1813 (in Störig 1963: 438–70), German translation scholars set aside the traditional distinction between oral and written translation (*Übersetzen* and *Dolmetschen*) and, following Schleiermacher's proposal, they divided translation into pragmatic and literary/philosophic translation, the former also including interpreting. Text typology, and not the channel through which translations and interpreting were performed, became the distinctive feature within translation studies. This line of thought was also accepted within the *Translationstheorie* (Reiß and Vermeer 1984). The *Translationstheorie* has explicitly pointed out that what it affirms for translation can also be extended to interpreting (Reiß and Vermeer 1984: 6).

The influence of translation studies on interpreting studies has been analysed by several researchers (Stenzl 1983; Pöchhacker 1994a; Toury 1995; Shlesinger 1995b; Kurz 1996; Kalina 1998; Setton 1999), who considered translation and interpretation two sub-disciplines within the more general framework of *Translation* (Gile 1995a, 1995b, forthcoming; Salevsky 1991, 1992, 1993; Pöchhacker 1994a). Pöchhacker (1994a: 32–44) has produced the most detailed study of this subject, examining SI within the postulates of the *Allgemeine Translationstheorie* (ATT), which is the fusion of the *Skopostheorie* (Reiß and Vermeer 1984) and the *Theorie über translatorisches Handeln* (Holz-Mänttari 1984). Since his analysis, based on a corpus of 154 source and target texts, indicates that the autonomy of the *Translat* (this definition includes both translations and interpretations) in the target culture is not a viable postulate for SI, Pöchhacker suggests a SI-specific text model (1994b: 167). The author stresses the interlinkage between target-cultural acoustic and source-cultural visual components (1994b: 172) and lists some of the elements which corroborate this assumption, such as "temporale Bindungen an den A-Text, Interferenzen, Einbrüche des Originals, die Verschränkung des Z-Textes mit den visuell wahrnehmbaren Komponenten des Ausgangstextes" (1994a: 216). Pöchhacker compares the interpreted text (IT) to an *oversound*, a sort of *voice-over* the original speech (1994a: 242). In fact, the spatial-temporal setting of the communicative event always has an impact on the IT in terms of interferences or contaminations which may crop up almost imperceptibly, whereas the presence and the perception of the speaker or of video material influences the reception of the output.

3.   The Interpreted Text (IT) — A new text type?

Shlesinger has examined some of the peculiarities of ITs and recognised, for example, that shifts in cohesion "introduced by simultaneous interpreting are intrinsic to the process itself". Her results reveal extensive shifts in every category of

cohesion examined (1995a: 211). Moreover, she has underlined the peculiar nature of intonation used in SI: "The intonation used in simultaneous interpretation appears to be marked by a set of salient features not found in any other language use" (Shlesinger 1994: 226). More recently, Riccardi (2000) has pointed out the hybrid character of ITs, a result both of growing intercultural communication and of the international setting in which SI takes place. Following this line of thought, it is possible to go even further and define the IT as a new text type. The features quoted by Pöchhacker as characterising the non-autonomous nature of the IT in the target culture can be seen as some of the elements conferring upon an interpreted text its unique nature.

In the past, ITs have been evaluated against the background of monolingual parallel texts, but the IT presents elements not to be found in original texts because it is steeped in a bilingual or multilingual environment. Lexical and morpho-syntactic interferences, filled pauses or plan changes can be kept to a minimum, but the imprinting given by the Source Text (ST) through its rhythm and pauses is very difficult to avoid and will never completely disappear. An IT, even the most excellent interpretation with interferences reduced to a minimum, will always reveal its relation to the source text (ST) and the event in which it takes place. The international character of a conference suggests, for example, the adoption of the same terms or of an international jargon in all the interpreted languages, in order to ensure coherence between the language versions produced.

Given the specific features of ITs, instruments and methods of analysis elaborated for original texts and translated texts need to be revisited by interpreting scholars, and new proposals are required to cope with the interpreting setting and the distinctive features of interpreting. The following section presents a descriptive sheet for the IT, which reflects the current stage of an ongoing investigation on quality and evaluation in interpreting (Riccardi 1999a, 2001).

4. A descriptive sheet for IT

In March 2000 in Saarbrücken,[1] it was suggested (Riccardi forthcoming) that the relay-interpreting text (RT) could be considered a minimal-reference text to account for the specific features of an IT because the problematic elements or the sources of disruption of the SI-text are overemphasised in the relay situation. The specific features of the RT have been worked out following the guidelines on relay interpreting elaborated during the International Seminar "Teaching Retour and Relay Interpreting", held in January 2000 in Prague. The seminar was organised within the *European Masters in Conference Interpreting* programme. Participants were interpretation trainers from European countries and representatives of the language services of the European Commission and the European Parliament. During the working sessions, relay interpreting was discussed in depth and the

conclusions achieved were examined against the background of a simulated relay session. There was general agreement as to the specific features characterising a RT.

The following features were considered the most important: production begins as soon as possible after ST onset and finishes almost at the same time, even at the cost of omitting text portions. Depending on the circumstances, the RT should feature the highest possible degree of constant speech rhythm and clear pronunciation, especially in case of proper names, numbers and acronyms. Marked intonation and pauses are to be kept as short as possible. Internationalisms are tolerated or sometimes even preferred, especially if they help obtain output clarity and rapidity. Special emphasis should be given to logical connections, suitable terminology and culture-bound terms, providing short explanations of the latter whenever possible.

These were the salient features kept in mind while devising a descriptive sheet for IT. The sheet was divided into four macro-areas: delivery, language, content and interpretation. Each macro-area includes various categories, providing a description of ITs from different points of view. The macro-areas delivery and language contain categories to describe the IT as an autonomous text within the communicative event, while the macro-area content considers the semantic relations between ST and IT. The last macro-area, interpretation, aims at highlighting interpreting-specific features such as interpreting strategies. Depending on the objectives of the analysis, further categories may be added (the number was limited for practical reasons). A global description or evaluation may be obtained only by taking into account the four macro-areas without analysing single categories. The sheet may be used for all interpreting modalities (consecutive, simultaneous, relay), from B-C languages into A and also from A into B.

Macro-area: Delivery

This area encompasses categories which point to phonation, articulation and prosodic features.

1. Pronunciation and phonation — the category also includes mispronunciations such as phoneme exchange. Description: standard, altered, heavily altered.
2. Output — this category points towards production speed and rhythm. Description: standard, fast, slow.
3. Prosody — this category encompasses word, clause and sentence accent as well as intonation. Description: standard, monotonous/sing-song, erroneous.
4. Non-fluencies — it includes several elements distributed in two classes:
   a. filled pauses (ehms, ah, etc.) coughs, glottal clicks, audible breathing;
   b. false starts, repetitions.
   Description: few, frequent, many.
5. Pauses — long, silent pauses that are not correlated to source-text pauses. Description: few, frequent, many.

Macro-area: Language

This section examines the adequacy of lexical, terminological and morphosyntactic choices within the communicative event.

1. Standard lexicon — both the word and collocation level are considered. Description: correct, overemphatic, understated.
2. Technical lexicon — both the word and collocation level are considered. Description: correct, overemphatic, understated.
3. Morphosyntax and syntax — to describe the presence or absence of concordance at clause and propositional level, as well as propositional links (connectives). Description: few, frequent, many.
4. Calques — to point to the presence of lexical and morphosyntactic interferences between the language pair. Description: few, frequent, many.
5. Internationalisms — a category relying upon transliteration from other languages. Description: few, frequent, many.

Macro-area: Content

The categories in this section refer to the equivalence relations between ST and IT, taking into account information units and their impact within the communicative event. The assessor will decide upon the relevance of the information units for the overall economy of the text within the communicative event and will examine the impact of the changes in terms of form or content. In other words, are the changes only quantitative or also qualitative? The categories chosen reveal whether the changes introduced by the interpreter strengthen text coherence, dilute the content or, at worst, produce an incoherent text. The descriptive criteria are both quantitative and qualitative, to show whether the changes are: *strategic* and useful for the global economy of the performance, preserving or enhancing text coherence; imperceptible, and therefore *negligible*; or *disturbing* and liable to alter the sense.

1. Changes — substitution of elements, synthesis or paraphrase of text segments. Quantitative description: none, few, many; qualitative description: strategic, negligible, disturbing.
2. Omissions — different kinds of omissions may be detected (omission of redundant elements, reformulation with loss of information, omission of information units). Quantitative description: none, few, many; qualitative description: strategic, negligible, disturbing.
3. Additions — as already stated for the preceding categories, there are several occurrences in this category. At one end of the continuum are the interpreter's intentional additions, useful for global text coherence; at the other end are additions which have no connection with the text or the communicative situation

and therefore entail a breakdown in text coherence. Quantitative description: none, few, many; qualitative description: strategic, negligible, disturbing.

4. Logical links — to indicate whether the logical sequence of the ST has been reproduced. Description: same, less, more.
5. Register — this category shows whether the rhetorical and stylistic effect of the original has been maintained, and whether the register used was suitable to the communicative intention and event.
    Description: same, modified, distorted.

Macro-area: Interpretation

Categories in this section help describe specific aspects of an interpreting performance in which interpreting competence prevails over language and communication competence, reflecting use of interpreting strategies. The purpose of the last category is to give an impressionistic evaluation, not a description, of the IT immediately after it has been performed.

1. Reformulation — this category points to the ability to move away from the text, avoiding calques or excessive adherence to ST constructions, but also the ability to postpone text segments or change the sequence of information units. Depending on the text type, it can be applied to a greater or lesser extent. While technical texts require little reformulation, it is more important in narrative texts. Description: none, little, frequent.
2. Anticipation — this category refers to the possibility of anticipating given text portions, based on linguistic or knowledge-bound assumptions. Descriptive criteria: none, little, frequent.
3. *Décalage* — Description: close, distant, variable.
4. Technique — a category that indicates the command of the simultaneous or consecutive modality (i.e. divided attention in SI, use of the technical equipment — especially during relay, self-monitoring, note-taking in CI, eye contact and posture) and reveals the ability to manage difficulties by use of strategies. Description: none, little, much.
5. Overall performance — to indicate the global impression of the interpreting performance immediately after completion. It is made up of all other categories, but represents a separate category because it indicates whether the IT has achieved the communicative goal within the specific event in which it is performed. It is a qualitative category. Evaluation: good, satisfactory, poor.

This descriptive sheet is now being tested at didactic and research level at the SSLMIT in Trieste. As part of an ongoing project, it is a contribution to the elaboration of new instruments of analysis in interpreting studies. Practice will show whether it reaches its objectives and what refinements may be needed.

Since the 1990s, interpreting studies have been increasingly confronted with the task of clearly delimiting their own research field and methods of analysis and the following section provides a brief outline of the main research lines established so far.

5. Studies on quality and interpreting strategies

In the 1990s, interpreting research continued its course along the lines of interdisciplinary studies (Kurz 1996; *Interpreting* 1997, Vol. 2, 1–2), but a considerable amount of work has concentrated on specific interpreting issues such as quality and interpreting strategies. Quality in interpreting has been investigated at various levels, with studies centred on customer expectations and priorities (Kurz 1989a, 1993a, 1993b, 1997b; Gile 1990; Vuorikoski 1993; Kopczynski 1994; Mack and Cattaruzza 1995; Moser 1996) and their relevance for different user groups. Further research work has concentrated on error analysis and quality assessment in training (Altman 1994; Schjoldager 1996; Russo and Rucci 1997; Falbo 1998; Riccardi 1999a; Viezzi 1999), and on a global approach to quality (Gile 1991, 1995a, forthcoming; Kalina 1995, forthcoming; Moser-Mercer 1996; Viezzi 1996, forthcoming; Collados Aís 1998).

A different line of studies has examined interpreting strategies resulting from the time constraints imposed upon interpreting (Snelling 1992; Gile 1995a, 1999c; Kalina 1995, 1998; Riccardi 1996, 1998, 1999b; Moser-Mercer 1997b; Setton 1999). The strategies are generally divided into comprehension strategies (knowledge activation, anticipation, information chunking) and planning or production strategies (reformulation and transcoding, compression and expansion, generalisation, repair strategies). One issue addressed in investigation of planning or production strategies is their linguistic specificity. Moreover, there are global strategies influencing the overall performance, such as monitoring strategies, automatised solutions and workload management strategies.

Studies within the expert-novice paradigm (Riccardi 1996, 1998; Moser-Mercer 1997b) link the investigation of interpreting strategies to the teaching of interpreting. The comparison of professionals' and students' perfomances shows to what extent their interpreting behaviour differs and in what direction it should develop over time, from a more language-based (bottom-up) to a more knowledge-bound approach (top-down).

Research for teaching purposes has not been mentioned separately, because it has motivated and accompanied every area of interpreting studies from the outset. Examples of this include aptitude testing, mode-specific studies, cognitively oriented or culturally oriented studies, quality assessment, and research on strategies.

6.   Concluding remarks

Turning to the initial question on the present status and future evolution of interpreting research, it can be said that the 1990s witnessed the growing autonomy of interpreting studies and that the discipline is gradually defining its borders. Interpreting-specific issues are being investigated from different angles and the contribution of neighbouring disciplines will continue to offer invaluable new material for reflection. At the start of the new millennium, interpreting studies are consolidating their position and gaining autonomy through the development of their own methods and instruments of analysis. On this basis, interpreting studies will be able to provide useful data for research co-operation with other disciplines.

Note

1. Translation and Interpretation: Models in Quality Assessment — Saarbrücker Symposium als Euroconference, 9–11 March 2000.

A methodology for the analysis
of interpretation corpora

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The study of simultaneous interpretation has generated speculative and empirical literature almost since SI emerged as a viable activity in the middle of the last century. Until then translation was a staid, deferred activity, the object of musings about the nature of equivalence and differences between languages. A few professional psychologists have approached the new immediate, situated form of translation with the curiosity which drew their founding fathers to feats of memory and intelligence; cognitive psychological approaches to interpretation are accordingly long on memory and attention modelling, but short on the *contents* of memory and the *focus* of attention, and lack articulation with features of the discourse. Practitioners, meanwhile, have explored their new feat with undisguised pride and tried to distil its essential principles to guide training. The main aims of conference interpretation research have thus emerged as follows:

1. pedagogical: to determine what the activity requires in terms of memory, attention and linguistic proficiency;
2. quality assessment: the search for a reliable metric of quality;
3. to use interpreting as a laboratory to learn more about human language and cognition generally.

Conventional scientific procedure usually follows the sequence: (1) observation and data collection — (2) pattern recognition — (3) hypothesis formation — (4) experimental testing under controlled conditions, where possible — (5) drawing conclusions from the results. Everyone nowadays recognises that none of these steps is neutral: (1) and (2) are selective and directed by preference and habit, and rare are the free spirits in whom (3) is not directed by existing models, which then inevitably influence the conditions chosen for (4) and the assumptions which continue to pervade (5).

However, as a first step towards understanding interpreting processes or factors in quality, or establishing a theoretical basis for training, it seems reasonable to

begin by observing and comparing original discourse and its interpreted versions. Instead of imposing models of memory and attention on the process a priori, we now have accounts of language in communication and models of real-time speech processing which can be applied directly to the data, but have so far been under-utilised in interpreting research. We propose a procedure for discovering processes in simultaneous interpretation through detailed corpus analysis (Setton 1999), followed by a brief discussion of the fundamental insights it offers, and the prospects for fuller formalisation and more ambitious applications such as the evaluation of translations.

The methodology proposed applies a composite of tools of linguistic analysis at different levels with the ultimate aim of generating viable representations of the meanings available from the input and output speech streams. Transcription conventions are proposed to

– represent the key meaning-indicating features of discourse — phonological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic;
– capture the temporal dimension of an SI corpus;
– model the contexts constructed by participants (interpreter and listeners), without which no projection of available and salient inferences — and hence no evaluation of fidelity — is possible.

Modelling context is a major challenge to translation research. Most translations certified as good and accurate by a panel of experts defy any explanation in terms of pure decoding-encoding: the conventional wisdom recognises that a translator must draw on an external knowledge base, but assumes it is individual and unconstrained, hence impossible to model. This would place translation *definitively* beyond the reach of scientific analysis, along with other 'open-ended' cognitive processes (Fodor 1983). The only hope of connecting our field of research up with cognitive science, and through it to eventual explanatory articulation with, for example, neurological description, lies in constraining the knowledge base to input into our model of interpreting.

1.   A basic paradigm for corpus analysis

1.1   Selection criteria

An initial exploratory corpus should preferably be recorded at a real conference event. This does not mean the loss of all control. Some *subject variables*, like training and experience, are given by the interpreters' profiles, while others, like the interpreters' preparation (the basis for the initial mental model) are difficult, though not impossible, to isolate. *Discourse variables* like delivery speed, technicality, spontaneity (recited, semi-rehearsed, impromptu), genre (narrative, descriptive, discursive) or register can be controlled by selecting particular speeches or extracts.

Live conference events also prohibit (short of deception) the comparison of several versions of the same discourse 'live' into the same language. Lederer (1981) asked her subjects to interpret from audiotapes the half-hour turns which their colleagues had interpreted at the conference. Setton (1999) had two additional subjects interpret from playbacks in a simulated panel session in which actors also delivered other speeches transcribed from the event.

Not all interpreting conditions, even everyday ones, are recommended for exploratory study. While SI of fast recited speeches without access to the prepared text is now a legitimate object of research — and subjects' performance can be compared for recited vs. spontaneous input (ibid.) — ' SI with text' involves reading, which complicates the psycholinguistic process model. At the other extreme, completely improvised speech may be so disconnected and allusive (e.g. the Watergate transcripts cited by Pinker [1994: 222–3]) that any cohesion apparent at the event disappears in the transcription. Interpreting from this type of input requires complex inferencing, context construction (not to say guesswork) and special production strategies, such that it is difficult for the researcher to correlate output with the incoming utterance, the remoter discourse record, or background knowledge. Finally, wordplay and metalinguistic or culture-specific discourse may also call for explanation and paraphrasing strategies not specific to SI.

Specific (e.g. typologically contrasting) language pairs may be chosen in order to investigate claims about the language-pair specificity of SI.

1.2 General description of the corpus

Before transcribing, we must decide which parameters are relevant and need to be shown in the transcription, but in order to set the scene and allow comparison with other research, it is also advisable to characterise the corpus in terms of a few global features. These should preferably include the following (cf. Pöchhacker 1994a):

– the *event and discourse context*, including date, place, title, aims, and participants: examples in the present paper are taken from remarks on European subsidy fraud made by a German High Court judge in a panel discussion on transfrontier crime in the EU, on the second day of the Founding Symposium of the Association for European Criminal Law in Würzburg, Germany in 1992;

– the '*spontaneity index*' of the speech, i.e. whether it was recited from text, rehearsed, semi-rehearsed or improvised, and its relationship to any accompanying text, media, etc. In our sample, the Speaker has begun *ex tempore* with a standard greeting, then invokes his duty as Speaker, outlines his intended remarks, and promises to address the issues raised by previous speakers, before paraphrasing and extending the opening sentences of his written text (our sample, Figure 1);

– *speed and delivery* in this sample are smooth and fairly even, slowing from a

brisk 124 wpm/238 spm (spontaneous segment) to a comfortable 107 wpm/201 spm on the text-bound segment. The *style* is correct and formal, with no colloquial constructions or usages, but not stilted; there is 'cooperative' redundancy, with frequent pauses, the longer ones matching shifts in discourse topic.

Der europäische Subven'tionsbetrug —'wird　　— das　ist hier　in Ihrem Kreis
The European　　subsidy fraud　　—? Fut/Pass — that is　here　in your　circle
schon　ge'sagt worden — in der Bundesrepublik 'Deutschland — durch　　'den —
already said　　been　　— in the Federal Republic Germany　　— by/through the　—
@Pa@n in den siebziger Jahren EINgefügten Paragraphen zweihundert
#　　in　the　seventies years　inserted　　paragraph　　twohundred
vierund 'sechzig des　　Strafge'setzbuches — gegen　— Subven'tionsbetrug —
fourand sixty　　of-the penal-law-book　　— against — subsidy fraud　　　—
'MITerfaßt …..
also-covered (3 clauses, of which 1 parenthetical, 1 embedded)

…und damit　　dür-　　@ das ist 'AUCH schon　zum Ausdruck gekommen —
　and with-that ModalAux # that has also　　already been expressed　　　—
dürfte　　der — der -'Schutz — der-　　des　　Finanzsystems — des des Mißbrauchs
ModalAux the　　the protection　(of-)the of-the finance system　　of-the of-the abuse
der　　Subven'tionen — der　　europäischen Ge'meinschaften in unserem Land　—
of-the subsidies@　　— of-the European　　Communities　in our　　country —
in Kern — be'friedigend und vor　　allen Dingen　— in gleicher 'Weise　— wie der
in core — satisfactorily　and above all　　(things) — in same　　way　　— as　the
Schutz　　der　　　deutsch des　　deutschen Subventionssystems — er.FASST sein
protection of-the$_{FEMPL}$ German of-the German$_{NOMSING}$ subsidy system covered be
(2 clauses, of which 1 parenthetical)

Symbols: @: filled pause ('er', 'um'); ': rising introduction intonation ; CAPS: stress; — short pause; + long pause; # phonetically unclear.

Figure 1. Sample of a speech in German with some prosodic marking and a simple gloss (showing some case and number marking and syntactic ambiguities).

Here are 'fluent' transcripts (see below) of the three interpreters' versions:

Interpreter L:

　　European subsidy fraud, as has been said already, is a crime which has been enshrined in the legal system of the Federal Republic of Germany by means of its insertion in paragraph 264 of the German penal code; and, as has already been said during the course of this Symposium, this therefore means that the protection of the financial system and the abuse of the subsidies granted by the European Community are now protected by means of core legislation in our

legal system, and protection of the Community's financial interests are equated with the protection of Germany's own interests. (8 clauses)

Interpreter A:

I'm going to address fraudulent obtention of subsidies in Europe; and it's already been pointed out that this is something that is regulated in Federal Germany by the penal code. There are specific paragraphs that were introduced in the penal code in the seventies, the point being to protect the European Community's finances from being misused; and basically, this is something that is covered by our penal code in the same way as it would be if it were to concern German state finances. (10 clauses)

Interpreter B:

European subsidy fraud — as has already been said in this particular seminar — is treated in German law in article 264 of the criminal code in Germany; and, as has already been said in this seminar, the protection of the financial resources of the European Community is therefore dealt with, I think, satisfactorily; and dealt with in the same way as the budget of the German government is protected. (7 clauses)

Subjects:

i. *Qualifications:* Interpreters L, A and B are English native speakers and professional conference interpreters of about 5 (L) and 15–18 years' (A and B) (ca. 400 and 1200/1500 days) experience respectively.

ii. *Preparation:* Interpreter L was present at the event, where she had interpreted during the entire previous day, and had ample documentation. Interpreters A and B, in the simulation, were sent the programme and the speaker's text a week ahead. These differences helped to theorise about the effect of being 'in-situation'.

1.3 Recording and transcription

Modern technology offers a range of recording options including single, dual and multiple-track audio and single or split-screen video, which can be combined. Additional single-track back-up tapes can be useful in providing a clearer version for transcription. Until now, frustratingly, it has rarely been possible to listen to other researchers' original tapes. In future, multi-media and internet technology will make it possible to publish substantial corpora on CD- or DVD-ROM, with links between sound, text and visuals, text-tagging options (perhaps based on some future corpus linguistics standard like TEI) and scanning features.

Transcription of SI corpora has traditionally been done by typing out, time-tagging and annotating the SL and TL discourses separately, then 'interleaving'

them line by line. Lederer (1981) sought to offset the limits on accurate human-ear synchronisation by superimposing the regular clicks of a metronome on dual-track recordings, and claimed accuracy to the order of 3-second units, 1s for selected examples. Setton (1997, 1999) used counter numbers and repeated stopwatch measurements to synchronise single- and dual-track tapes, and avoided relying on examples (e.g. of anticipation) requiring a timing accuracy of under 0.5 seconds, also bearing in mind that words may be recognised before they are complete (Tyler and Marslen-Wilson 1982). Manual timing, tagging and alignment of SI corpora by listening to the tape and adjusting the spacing of the text on screen is difficult and time-consuming, and we must hope new technologies will soon provide labour-saving solutions, possibly by some automated combination of speech recognition and tagging, although editing will probably always be necessary.

The research goal will determine which features of the discourse to show in a transcript. For the present corpus, exhaustive analysis and annotation of both syntactic and prosodic features were desired, in order to investigate both structural and pragmatic dimensions. Not surprisingly, the range and distribution of features will differ not only between languages, but between discourses, and any harmonisation should be justified and explained. Transcriptions can be presented in various formats:

– In a *synchronised interlinear* transcript, source discourse and interpreter's(') version(s) are shown on alternate lines with the SL and TL words aligned to reflect synchronicity, and time elapsed marked at intervals in the text or represented by regular marks such as slashes. A gloss or word-for-word-translation can be inserted below the transcription, with simplified labelled bracketing as a guide to syntax if necessary. Different fonts can be used to distinguish speech streams (speaker and interpreters). Each speech stream can be annotated with a variable amount of information, such as silent and 'filled' pauses ('er', 'um'), primary pitch contour (showing tonic stress and modulation), syllable-lengthening, and various speech errors, as well as variations in volume or voice quality (creaky or breathy), chuckling and laughter, or rustling in the booth to indicate that the interpreter is consulting documents. Corpus linguists have proposed transcription conventions for most features and these can be followed for the sake of interdisciplinary comparability.
– *Tabular* presentations can be used to show several interpreters' versions side by side for each segment, with input and a bracketed gloss on the left and, if desired, additional columns for a running analysis of the process of meaning assembly, showing, for instance, strongly communicated implicit meanings which are postulated as inferrable via lexical association, pragmatic pointers, documentation or assumed general knowledge (see Setton 1999).

In both tabular and interlinear presentations, each line can be made to correspond to a fixed time interval, provided this does not cramp the transcription.

– *'Fluent'* versions, punctuated, and with speech errors and hesitations eliminated, can be supplied to give a feel for the speakers' and interpreters' discourses as perceived by charitable listeners.

For reasons of space, the sample in Figure 1 is presented in a simple prosodic transcription with English gloss, followed by 'fluent' transcripts of the interpreters' versions.

2.   Linguistic and cognitive analysis of an SI corpus

2.1   Levels of representation

Linguistics offers models of speech at various levels for analysing a stream of sound into morpho-phonological units, sentence structure, logical form, intonation units and (if we accept these theories) speech acts or functional units of discourse. Both fundamental research into interpreting processes and applications like quality evaluation will probably need elements from all these levels. Among the most difficult components to capture are the lexical-semantic (the contribution of individual word meanings) and pragmatic dimensions. In both these areas at least, however, theoretical approaches and even the beginnings of formalisation have emerged, which is not yet the case for subtler levels such as affective and non-verbally conveyed meaning.

Morpho-phonological analysis of the speech stream is given largely by the words of the transcript; for less common languages, significant features can be further explained in footnotes. Syntacticians use 'labelled brackets' to represent *sentence structure*. Although this notation was designed for research into the rules behind linguistic forms, syntactic structure is obviously a major contributor to any model of meaning available to hearers from different speech streams, and must therefore be shown.

That such a 'parsed tree' might have psychological reality as a *distinct stage* in speech processing, however, was shown to be implausible at an early stage in speech processing research. Contemporary models are based on 'lexically driven' comprehension, in which each incoming word constrains meaning via its semantic frame. But each content word, at least, must simultaneously also evoke complex concepts and associations. The *lexical-semantic* component of our model should account for the semantic and conceptual material activated by each recognised incoming word, bearing in mind that words evoke a spectrum of potential meanings, of which some become selected more strongly to make sense with their neighbours, in a rapid choice of the best possible fit. The source conceptual material is assumed to be

stored in long-term memory in associative structures known as frames, schemas or scripts which facilitate retrieval en bloc (bootstrapping) to working memory. Secondly, modern prototype and mental space theory suggest that words activate not so much *points* or *nodes* in semantic space (as in a network) as *vectors*, while resolutely inferential accounts see words more as 'pointers' which may indeed be differently situated but point to the same meaning (Origgi and Sperber 2000). Both these combinatory and inferential aspects make meaning from words very difficult to model.

On the syntax-semantics boundary, a *logico-semantic* component is necessary to capture referential and logical scope dependencies, particularly in logically complex sentences like (1) and (2):

(1) 'we didn't dismantle a whole tier of government only to have it replaced by a bureaucracy in Brussels' (Margaret Thatcher).

(2) 'I don't know what scope delegations which have flagged that they can't agree to the Council decision this afternoon would like to give the Secretariat to summarise their reservations'

Such logical structures can if desired be represented using sub-indexing, brackets or other logical notations (see for example Kamp and Reyle 1993; Allwood 1977). This kind of analysis can reveal how simultaneous interpreters deal with long-term dependencies by a process of approximation and correction (Setton 1999: 271–274).

In terms of presentation, longer samples can be segmented for better readability. The German speech cited here fell rather naturally into segments of one or two syntactic sentences, except where (as above) a particularly long sentence, with parentheticals and embeddings, could be neatly split at a conjunction. Primary syntactic analysis shows, for instance, that interpreters produce more clause units than the original Speaker.

Natural-seeming 'readable' segments will vary from one discourse to another. The more informal Chinese corpus in Setton (1999) fell heuristically into 'idea' units (which in consecutive interpretation might be marked off by horizontal lines), usually comprising some rhetorical prefacing, a core sentence or complex phrases, and an 'afterthought', as in the example below (rough English translation):

> *'I think — talking about this joining the United Nations — in terms of intentions — I think government and people — I think in fact already reached unanimous consensus — this is an undeniable fact'*

2.2 Propositional analysis

Proceeding from pure formal or syntactic analysis to a first level of meaning representation, we can begin by unpacking the propositions explicitly encoded in each discourse, as we have done for the Speaker's and three interpreters' discourses in Table 1.

Table 1. Propositional analysis of a small sample of German-English SI (speaker and 3 interpreters)

Speaker S	Interpreter L	Interpreter A	Interpreter B
1. Art 264 covers ESF in Germany	1. ESF is a crime	1. I will speak about ESF	1. GPC Art 264 treats ESF in FRG
2. (N) inserted Art 264 (*into…*) in the 1970s	2. (N) enshrined ESF in GLS	2. GPC regulates ESF in FRG	2. (N) already said (1) here
	3. (N) inserted ESF into Art 264	3. (Some) Arts. — inserted into PC in the 1970s	3. (N) protects EU-FS (presupposition of 'the protection of')
3. (N) already said (1,2) here	4. (2) is consequence of (3)	4. (N) already said (2) ———	
	5. (N) already said (1–4)	5. (N) protects EU-FS against (E)SF	
4. (N) protects EU-FS against SF (presupposition of 'the protection of') basically satisfactorily in Germany		6. (5) is purpose of (3)	
5. (N) protects GSS against SF (presupposition of 'the protection of')	6. (1–5) therefore (7–9)	7. GPC covers (?5)	4. (N) protects EU-FS satisfactorily
	7. GS core laws protect FS and EUS	8. (N) protects GFS against (E)SF (hypothetical)	5. (N) protects GFS [Govt. budget]
6. and most importantly (4) in the same way as (5)	8. (N) protects EU-F-interests	9. If (8), then in the same way as (5) basically	6. (4) in the same way as (5)
7. probably, I trust that *the law* provides that (4–6)	9. (N) equates 7 and 8		7. (N) already said (4–6) here
8. (4–7) is consequence of (1–2)			
9. (N) already expressed (4–8) here	10. (N) already said (6–9) here		

Abbreviations: Germany: Federal Republic of Germany; SF: Subsidy fraud; ESF: European subsidy fraud; Art. 264: Article 264 of the (German); Penal Code (GPC); EUS: EU subsidies; EU-FS: European financial system; G-FS: German financial system; GLS: German legal system; GSS: German subsidy system.

(N): as yet unspecified Agent (e.g. in passive constructions) or other referent to be inferred.

This raises a number of difficulties, beginning with the choice of notation and level of abstraction in representing the propositions. In what language should propositions be represented? Symbolic or logical notations, even if they could accurately represent discourse, are inaccessible to all but a tiny minority of specialists, and make it difficult for readers to get a holistic feeling for the text. Secondly, such analytic notations cannot economically represent conceptual content. To take two leading theories of word meaning, feature analysis would require a long series of binary values to describe each word; and prototype theory would require a specification of core and possible peripheral usages, again expressed in other words. Neither presentation would show the effect of the discourse environment in making certain meanings of words more salient.

We therefore fall back on English to represent the propositions expressed. Re-arranging word order, tagging for anaphoric reference ('that' in the embedded parenthetical refers to the matrix proposition), and, inevitably, making certain lexical choices in refining the literal terms of the gloss (e.g. 'paragraph 264' becomes 'Article 264'; 'penal-law-book' becomes 'Penal Code'), we obtain the following:

> [European subsidy fraud is also covered in the Federal Republic of Germany by Article 264$_j$ of the Penal Code against subsidy fraud which$_j$ was inserted in the 1970s]$_i$
> That$_i$ has already been said here in this circle

This turns out not to be analytic enough for a useful text-to-text comparison of propositional content. We can abstract a bit further from surface form to logical-semantic representation by:

– eliminating Passives, representing unspecified Agents as (N);
– extracting propositions from Relative Clauses;
– unpacking and representing as explicit propositions both the presuppositions in Noun Phrases and logical connections encoded in '*by means of*' or '*this means that*';
– listing propositions in a conventional logical order regardless of their order of emergence in the text (many of them are embedded), e.g. listing the parenthetical 'this has already been said here' after the propositions it refers to.

The resulting breakdown (Table 1) obviously still finesses many indeterminate points of logical and lexical semantics. How we deal with them depends on whether we are doing basic research to learn more about processes, or experimenting with formal representation of discourses for comparison and quality evaluation.

In both cases, in terms of logical semantics we have to take some decisions about referential scope and attachment. Thus, in the proposition S9 '*this has already been said (here)*', '*this*' is taken to refer to all the propositions S4–8. Also, the use of English as a representing language may accidentally filter out some logical relations:

to capture the force of *mit* in *miterfasst*, we must add a proposition: 'Art. 264 covers ESF in Germany *as well as something else*'.

This takes us to the limits of a code model of language communication. An inferential model includes several more steps in comprehension and, as the propositional analysis shows, any realistic evaluation will need to be based on an account of what has been *communicated*, as opposed to merely being explicitly encoded. For this we need a finer analysis, involving a projection of the implicit information clearly communicated by a discourse to listeners through the normal process of inference.

2.3 Bridging inferences, presuppositions and attitudes

Bridging inference is a vague but convenient term for inferences which readers/ listeners must regularly draw to make basic coherent sense of a discourse. If we hear that '*Article 264 of the Penal Code was inserted in the 1970s*' we infer (what the grammar does not tell us) that Art. 264 was inserted *into* the Penal Code in the 1970s. Similarly we construe '*the protection of the finance system of the abuse of the subsidies of the European Communities*' to mean the protection of the finance system *against* the misuse of EU subsidies. To evaluate fidelity, the same courtesy must obviously be extended to the interpreter's discourse, allowing for inference by readers or listeners (D. Seleskovitch called this the 'principle of non-imbecility of the hearer').

Additional propositions to those explicitly formulated as sentences are communicated by being presupposed. Indeed, it has been shown that *semantically* exact translation is impossible because different languages do not allow the same information to be conveyed explicitly in translation — the information about relationships conveyed in honorifics like *tu* and *vous*, for instance — except by asserting what is presupposed, and vice versa (Keenan 1978). Even the simple definite noun phrase *The protection of the financial system* presupposes (unless the presupposition is subsequently cancelled) that the financial system is or may be protected. If presuppositions are deemed to be communicated propositions, then L's '*are now protected*' and A's '*the point is to protect*' are justified at a semantic level. However, though implicit-explicit shifts are inevitable in translation, to assess pragmatic fidelity we must check whether they change the strength with which the information is communicated.

Finally, in several places the speaker marks an *attitude* to what he is saying, such as a degree of confidence (some variation on a belief or a desire) in words like 'satisfactorily', or the modal auxiliary *dürfte*, which has the force of '*should, I trust* [be covered by the law]'. These attitudes may be expressed in various ways in different languages: we find 'basically' and 'I think satisfactorily' in the English versions, but in speech, attitudes can also be expressed by intonation, making prosodic marking necessary in any corpus transcription for evaluation purposes.

3.   Applications of corpus analysis

3.1   Research into cognitive and linguistic processes

Linguistic tools can help us capture meanings more or less immediately available from the text and distinguish them from inferences which depend on other knowledge. In the case of a tightly constrained translation activity like simultaneous interpreting, these distinctions can in turn illuminate fundamental research about memory and language:

i. Comparison of SI output to input in a timed and synchronised transcription illuminates the psycholinguistic processes, i.e. the linguistic and memory processes of translation, by revealing a fairly complex time and transformation relationship between the output and its various sources. For instance, we find that the span of availability in working memory seems to vary more than has been suggested in observations of interpreters' 'lag' (*décalage*) measured between individual words and their assumed equivalents, supporting the idea that a 'long-term working memory' (Ericsson and Kintsch 1995) may be the key to expert performance. Indeed, the source of some elements in output seems to be diffuse or difficult to pin down in the input, suggesting some operation of memory other than a short-term store limited by time and information capacity (this diffuse correspondence seems to apply particularly to non-propositional elements, such as expressions of attitude, which might be ascribed to a 'volitional' dimension distinct from strictly cognitive operations).

In this way SI corpora have the potential to make a huge contribution to models of translation, and more generally to models of memory in speech processing.

ii. Corpus analysis and modelling reveal the sterility of certain controversies which are clearly not empirically soluble in our present state of knowledge. For example, the two hypothetically contrasting processes of 'transcoding' (translating by equivalents)' vs. 'freewheeling' (or 'deverbalisation', or 'translation via concepts'), cannot be distinguished empirically. Ordinary language use tells us that words and phrases automatically activate concepts, whereas concepts less automatically generate the right words. If the WORD > CONCEPT connection always operates by default, then the two allegedly distinct translation operations WORD(S) > CONCEPT(S) > WORD(S) and WORD(S) > WORD(S) are indistinguishable, since even a pure CONCEPT > WORD operation would always resemble a WORD > WORD operation.

iii. Lastly, just as logico-syntactic analysis reveals the long-distance dependencies necessary for linear speech to express multi-dimensional thought, SI corpus analysis reveals the details of a process of constant approximation and compensation (Setton 1999).

3.2 Corpus analysis for quality evaluation

Traditionally, evaluators have compared source texts and translations as products and got bogged down in conundra of lexical equivalence. Modern approaches consider the function (or *skopos*) of the products and their effect on a projected audience; but this still requires a theory correlating texts, functions and contexts. For interpretation, the simplest heuristic so far proposed to judge the *collective* quality of a team of interpreters is general user satisfaction after an extended multilingual discussion involving questions and answers (Lederer 1981). But for obvious reasons, users alone are not considered qualified to evaluate specific performances, and trainees or candidates to the profession are evaluated on a sample of their performance by panels of interpreter judges. More specific evaluation still, for a given discourse, is complicated by the immediacy, situatedness and evanescence of the process.

Simply matching propositional content is clearly inadequate (as is formal descriptive linguistics as a source discipline), but propositional matching might be supplemented with a pragmatic component to produce a model of meanings available and salient from a discourse, which could then in turn be refined, in the light of assumptions about a given audience's knowledge and concerns, into a model of the effects likely to be actually derived. For evaluation, such models can be built up separately, in steps, for input and output, aiming finally at evaluation on the criterion of pragmatic (as distinct from formal or functional) fidelity.

The first step, matching informational content on the basis of simple propositional analysis, will turn up some clear factual omissions. In our sample, for instance, interpreter A does not give the number of the Article, 264, while L fails to specify 'in the 1970s'. But problems arise if we require strict logical equivalence: in our sample, B would be considered to have made a serious error in not explicitly stating that B4 (see Table 1) is a *result* of B1 and not just a consequence. And can A6 ('*x* is the purpose of *y*') be considered a faithful rendition of S8, '*x* is a consequence of *y*' (*damit* in the original)? And have parts of S4, S6 and S7 (*satisfactorily, importantly, probably*) been omitted? Or is 'basically' in A9 an 'addition error'? Comparison will also turn up apparently superfluous and gratuitous 'added' statements such as (3) and (4) below:

(3)   (L1) 'European subsidy fraud *is a crime*' or

(4)   (A1) '*I'm going to address* fraudulent obtention of subsidies in Europe.'

For pragmatic evaluation, a second step is therefore necessary in which it may be discovered that some such 'added' propositions express valid inferences, in which case they must pass a third test to determine whether this implicit-explicit shift restores or distorts relative saliency. In (4), if the speaker had paused for an extra beat and cleared his throat, or assumed an important posture, before saying

'European subsidy fraud…' — topic-change signals not available to or not chosen by the interpreter — the equivalence may be accepted. In (3), the extent of the stress on 'crime' may decide whether the interpreter has unduly increased the saliency of this attribute (which is otherwise highly accessible to the audience) to the point of triggering other, misleading inferences.

In short, at least the following steps are necessary to reach a verdict on pragmatic fidelity:

1. compare propositional content;
2. check propositional differences for inferential validity (requiring a model of external knowledge and an inference-generator);
3. consider pragmatic effects of implicit-explicit shifts.

This added pragmatic dimension would obviously yield a very different evaluation from the simple word and content matching used by Barik (1975), for example, in what was basically a behaviourist approach which studiously avoided recognising inference. A pragmatic approach might address the notion of over- and under-translation, or of omissions and additions, as follows: propositions or their parts which were explicitly expressed in the input, but not in the interpreter's output, would count as *omissions* only if the information were not strongly inferrable (manifest, in relevance terms) from the output; if the inference were only possible, but not made sufficiently salient, or required too much effort to derive, this would count as under-translation. Conversely, propositions or their parts (or attitudes) encoded in output, but not in the source discourse, would count as *addition* errors only if the information (or attitude) were neither entailed by nor inferrable from input. Finally, overt expression of what was only formally entailed, but not *pointed to,* in the input would be considered over-translation.

Even when 'surplus' material in the output turns out to be valid inference, pragmatic fidelity still requires it to be *relevant,* defined as offering access to cognitive effects — adjustments to the hearer's knowledge and assumptions — proportional to the effort needed to derive them (accessibility by decoding and/or inference). This is a function of manifestness, and results from a combination of saliency in the discourse and the contexts available to the target audience. (The ultimate interest of the information to members of either the source-language or target-language audiences, *once cognized,* is not considered, this being a secondary effect for which an interpreter cannot assume responsibility;[1] his task is to make the same information as available to the latter as to the former. Hence the only fair criterion is whether a given meaning made manifest to the SL audience would be manifest to the L2 audience. We therefore provisionally exclude cross-cultural explanations and the like, which are treated as icing on the cake).

4. Prospects for formalisation

In considering the 'state of the art' in interpreting research, we cannot ignore the increasing pressure on all forms of research to move quickly on from merely understanding phenomena to modelling them with a view to formalisation and simulation, usually with an eye to automation. What are the prospects for formalising and automating the evaluation of translations, for example?

Humans evaluate translations in a way that appears holistic, but may in fact be a blur of multiple tasks like content matching, assessing implicit-explicit balance and choice of words, and judging audience receptions, running more or less concurrently and converging stochastically on an overall impression. Looking more closely at what must be involved, *automated* evaluation would seem to require at least the following components and operations:

1. word recognition from graphic or phonetic input (with phonological analysis for the latter);
2. primary propositional analysis with parsing into logical form and thematic roles (with assumptions about identity of reference of different phrases);
3. specification of *combined* word meaning in context (with input from discourse model);
4. a knowledge base with a plausible, i.e. access-constraining, architecture (linguistic, situational, local, discourse and world knowledge);
5. a generator of inferences tagged and weighted as more or less available from the combined output of 2, 3 and 4, based on:
6. the known pragmatic effects of SL and TL linguistic devices (word-order, intonation etc.);
7. a relevance filter to constrain the inferences actually derived by an audience A;
8. a language of comparison.

Let us explore the difficulties in two of the trickiest (and overlapping) areas of word meaning and pragmatic inference. On a 'cognitive' account of equivalence, terms used in a translation are acceptable only if they evoke the same referents in the L2 audience as terms in the original evoke in the SL audience, provided also (and this might loosen the constraint on individual terms) that the use of these terms *together* (combinatorial semantics) and in the context (pragmatics) activates, or makes available, the same overall mental representations in the two listener groups. Already at the very outset, for proposition-matching, decisions will have to be made on the 'associated equivalence in context' of phrases like *the German Penal/Criminal Code, German law, Germany, the German legal system; the German financial system, our/Germany's financial interests, the German government budget; the European financial system, the European subsidy system,* etc. These decisions will have to be subsumed in any readable representation of the overall propositional structure;

minor variants (*German law* vs. *German legal system*) can be ignored and subsumed in identical abbreviations, leaving others (e.g. S5/B5: *protect German subsidy system* vs. *protect German budget*) for the user to judge their appropriateness in context. For example, when A says '*protect the European Community's finances from being misused*', we can assume she knows, and listeners can infer, that '*being misused*' refers to subsidy fraud, indeed European subsidy fraud, so that we are justified in transcribing this as (A)5: (N) protects EU-FS *against (E)SF*.

A recent 'massively parallel' computational model for speech-to-speech translation anticipated problems with noisy input, lexical ambiguity, elliptical sentences and recognising the speaker's intention (Kitano 1993:6–7), but this is just a foretaste of the difficulties. Any attempt to take account of inferences would encounter a complexity problem. Equipping the machine with a vast lexicon and generating an exhaustive list of the precise entailments and overlaps of the various entities to cover all possible lexical meanings would be pointless, since the appropriateness of a term is a function of context.

An automated system might perform the simple labour-saving function, for a defined sub-class of texts, of disqualifying translations with too many factual omissions or discrepancies at a first pass on the basis of simple propositional content matching. The complexity problem could be limited by generating possible inferences from the propositional and lexical output only where initial content-matching threw up anomalies, but even then, inference generation would need to be constrained or guided by a model of the pragmatic effects of discourse devices to determine the strengths given to elements of meaning by word-order, particles, intonation, etc.

As for the next step, what are the prospects for designing a 'relevance filter'? In addition to the effects due to discourse devices, this would require a model of current and salient assumptions in the minds of the audiences, to measure the effort required to derive implicatures and hence their cognitive effects (Sperber and Wilson 1995:270 ff.). More work on the nuts and bolts of semantics and pragmatics may eventually yield very complete and sophisticated accounts of word meanings and the effects of various discourse devices. But it is not clear whether computational techniques can be developed to satisfy the post-Gricean inferential model of communication in which 'different decodings may provide evidence for one and the same inferential interpretation' (Origgi and Sperber 2000).

5.   Conclusion

In conclusion, tools from linguistics and logic seem to offer some descriptive benefits for SI corpus analysis and may help to elucidate such venerable theoretical issues as the relative importance of language and context, or even inform pedagogical

strategies. But the automation of tasks like translation evaluation still seems barred by a complexity problem, particularly in the absence of a means of simulating relevance to constrain the range of possible logical inferences from text. Meanwhile, linguistic analysis extended to pragmatic and cognitive dimensions at least provides the basis for a possible interface with other branches of cognitive science, offering some prospect for true interdisciplinarity between contributing fields like psychology, linguistics, and perhaps one day, neurology.

Note

1. In speech-act theory terms, perhaps the beginning of 'perlocution'.

Resurrecting the corp(us|se)

Towards an encoding standard for interpreting data

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1. Why interpreting studies need an encoding standard

Like all speech, interpreting dies in the air. In order to study it, we need to resurrect the corpse by recording and transcribing it, thereby transforming the corpse into a corpus.

Interpreted events seem particularly hard to resurrect in this manner, however. In the first place, interpreting data is not readily *available*. Interpreters are often reluctant to be recorded, and many interpreting contexts make it difficult to obtain a single two-track recording of the original and its interpretation, which is essential in order to understand the relative timing involved. Since transcription is also time- and skill-demanding, the quantity of data obtainable by the single researcher is usually very limited. And since permission to use these data is typically restricted to a particular project, it is rarely feasible to integrate them with data collected in other projects. There is a clear need to make interpreting data public, and to design corpora in such a way as to make these data readily *interchangeable*.

Even if I have access to data collected by others, in fact, these may be of little use to me directly. No transcription is a complete record of a spoken event: you may be interested only in interpreters' words, I may be interested in their pauses and prosodies. Our transcriptions will consequently differ. There is no way of guaranteeing that a transcription of yours will capture all the features I am interested in, making it desirable that not only transcriptions, but also the original recordings be made available, so that I can revise and add to your transcription to bring it into line with my requirements. Even where we are interested in the same things, we may not transcribe them in the same way: you may transcribe pauses with a number indicating the pause length between brackets, while I may transcribe them with plus signs, the number of such signs indicating the total length of the pause. Effective interchangeability requires a basic set of shared transcription conventions.

Even were other data available, however, and transcribed using shared conventions, the problem would still remain of accessing these data and of retrieving instances from them of the phenomena with which we are concerned. The moment we speak of large quantities of data, this problem becomes one of *machine readability* — of making data storable, retrievable and analysable by computer. Nowadays virtually all transcriptions of speech are typed into computers. However, this is usually done in application-specific and platform-specific formats, which depend on the use of a particular programme on a particular type of machine. Anyone who has tried to take an MS-Word file and to convert it into WordPerfect, or to read it on a Macintosh, will be only too aware of the problems: spacing and fonts may change in unpredictable manners, and diacritics may become incomprehensible symbols. There is no generally agreed manner of representing the information implied by specific characters or formatting instructions which is application- and platform-independent. Nor is there any agreed means of providing metatextual information concerning the transcription itself — to indicate the setting in which the interpreting event takes place and the participants, for example — and concerning particular parts of that transcription — who is the speaker of each utterance, paralinguistic features and non-verbal events, overlaps and pauses, transcriber comments etc. — in an unambiguous and application-neutral manner.

As far the problem of availability is concerned, one promising source of data is TV interpreting. This is readily recordable, and poses relatively few problems of permission. It also includes a wide range of interpreting modes, from simultaneous to consecutive and *chuchotage*. Here we will discuss some of the problems involved in transcribing and encoding TV interpreting data in an interchangeable machine-readable format, illustrating our proposals for a possible standard. The variety of interpreting to be found on TV makes it a good field for the development and testing of these proposals, which we believe should be fairly readily extendable to data from conference and contact interpreting contexts.

As far as interchangeability is concerned, four main problems emerge. We have already hinted at that of permission, and the need for researchers to ensure that their data can be freely passed to others — a problem which can only be solved by general consensus among researchers in the field. The second concerns transcription, and the need to establish an agreed set of minimal norms as to what to transcribe, and how to transcribe it. The third concerns the availability of the original audio or video recording: only if the original recording is made available, as well as the transcript, will it be possible for another researcher to check and/or expand my transcription. The fourth problem is that of *encoding*: how to make transcriptions machine-readable, adopting application- and platform-independent standards for representing textual and metatextual information. What particular researchers will want to transcribe ultimately remains an individual choice: what is important is that the ways in which they transcribe and encode their transcriptions

should follow standardised practices. This paper first examines what we perceive as basic requirements in transcribing interpreting data, and then proposes ways in which such transcriptions can be encoded in a standard machine-readable format.

2. Some basic requirements for encoding TV interpreting data

While exactly what we transcribe will depend on what we are interested in, in any transcription we are likely to want to include metatextual information concerning the overall context — the place and time, the setting, the participants and the overall purpose and topic. In the case of TV interpreting data, we are also likely to want to indicate the interpreting *mode* (simultaneous, consecutive, *chuchotage*, etc.), the interpreter's *position* (on- or off-screen), and the primary *function* of the interpreting — whether it serves to guarantee communication between the participants on screen, or between these participants and the viewing audience. In the former case, the interpreter functions as a *buffer* between the participants on screen. In the latter, the interpreter functions as an *amplifier* of the televised event in order to reach a wider audience.

Other types of metatextual information relate not to the overall context, but to specific moments and particular utterances. Any transcription of talk involving more than one speaker will need to indicate the beginning, the end, and the speaker of each utterance, and TV interpreting data poses particular problems in these respects. In the first place, it is necessary to analyse the notion of *speaker* in greater detail. Interpreters may speak either as the animators of talk originally produced by other participants in another language (Goffman 1981), or else as conversationalists in their own right, speaking not for others but for themselves. This choice of *participant status* is typically reflected in the reference of first person pronouns: where the interpreter's utterance is produced to animate another participant's previous talk, *I* will generally refer to that participant rather than to the interpreter. Speaking as the animator of another's talk implies that the interpreter's utterance *corresponds* to one or more utterances produced in a different language by another participant, which it will normally parallel in content — of which it constitutes, to use Wadensjö's term (1998), a *rendition*.

Secondly, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the *timing* of utterances: not just where they start and end, but how they intertwine. Both simultaneous interpreting and *chuchotage* are characterised by large proportions of overlapping speech. In everyday two-party conversation, conversational participants observably orient to overlaps on the floor of talk, for instance by treating the overlap as co-producing the first speaker's utterance, or alternatively as interruptively signalling disagreement and predicting repetition and expansion once the first utterance has finished (Zorzi 1980). In interpreting contexts, however, overlapping talk need not

have these implications (Roy 1996), since two distinct floors of talk may be involved — a first floor of communication in the first language, and a second floor of communication in the second language. Provided that they do not interfere acoustically, overlaps between talk on different floors are not generally treated as significant: in simultaneous or *chuchotage* mode, an interpreter may be able to talk in the L2 without being perceived as interrupting or contributing to the L1 talk which s/he is interpreting. Where the interpreter functions as amplifier (in either simultaneous or consecutive mode), s/he is in fact usually excluded from participating in the first floor, while having a near-monopoly in the second. Arguably, therefore, in transcribing TV interpreting data, we need to distinguish utterances, and particularly overlaps, according to their *floor status* (see 3.2 below for examples).

In the next section we suggest ways in which the features outlined in this section can be encoded in an application- and platform-independent machine-readable format.

3.   Encoding with the TEI guidelines

The Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) is a major international project aiming to establish application- and platform-independent norms for the encoding of all types of electronic text (Burnard and Rahtz forthcoming). The TEI guidelines (Burnard and Sperberg-McQueen 1994) describe the principles employed and illustrate how a wide range of features and different kinds of texts can be encoded. Originally designed to use the Standard General Markup Language (SGML), TEI has since been adapted to render it compatible with the Extensible Markup Language (XML), which is rapidly replacing HTML as the language of the Internet. We take as our starting point the TEI guidelines for encoding spoken texts in XML, elaborating these to take account of the particular features of TV interpreting data outlined in the last section.[1]

3.1   From reader-friendly to machine-friendly encoding

Proposals for the transcription of recorded speech have generally emphasised the need for the latter to be easily interpretable for the human reader (Edwards 1993). For this reason, they have generally adopted many of the conventions employed in the best-known type of language which is written-to-be-spoken, the playscript. Example (1) shows what we believe to be a typical transcription of this kind involving interpreting data:

(1)   *Greetings*
      A: Hi (…) how are [you?]
      I: [Ciao] come +stai?*
      B: +Bene * (laughs) e tu?
      I: Fine and you?

This extract represents an invented example of the sort of recording which researchers in interpretation have to transcribe, with two primary participants (A and B) speaking two different languages and communicating via the interpreter (I). It also illustrates some common practices followed to transcribe conversational interaction: the transcriber has focussed on various features of the original recording and chosen various graphical resources to represent them. In this case, the identity of the speakers is signalled by the initials in bold at the beginning of each utterance. Pauses are represented by "(…)", and non-verbal events by a description in parentheses. To cope with the particular characteristics of interpreting, the transcription introduces particular conventions to indicate the floor status of contributions: overlaps due to the simultaneous interpretation of the interpreter on a different floor are marked by square brackets (the words "you" and "ciao" in the first two utterances), while the beginning and end of conversational overlaps occurring on the same floor are marked by "+" and "*" (the words "stai" and "bene" in the second and third utterances).

Example (1) is displayed in a *reader-friendly* format, conceived taking into account the needs and skills of the human reader:[2] its form is designed in such a way as to help the reader understand its content. Thus, for instance, you can understand that "Greetings" is a title from the fact that it is at the top of the text and is in italics; you can understand that a new utterance begins from the fact that a new line starts with a letter followed by a colon in bold. Similarly, the temporal alignment of overlapping utterances is suggested by the spatial arrangement of the text on the page.

The problem is that once you have stored a transcription like this on a computer, the machine will not understand it. Computers are very good at remembering things, but not at interpreting them: they are not able to infer information from documents in the way that human readers can. A computer will not necessarily understand, for instance, that the letters at the beginning of each utterance in (1) are not words uttered by a speaker but codes identifying the speaker — nor indeed that this is a spoken text made of four utterances, that "*Greetings*" is a title, that "laughs" is something that 'happens' and not something which is said, that "you" and "ciao" occur at the same time, and so on. The main problem is that there is no clear distinction between textual information (the actual words spoken) and metatextual information (showing who says them, in what way and when). If we want our transcription to be *machine-friendly*, so that a computer can understand the information implicitly contained in a document, we need to make this information explicit for the machine, distinguishing metatextual from textual information and rendering both types non-ambiguous.

This is precisely what encoding is all about. It is based on the principle of complete detachment of content from form (Watson 1999), and concerns the process by which we add metatextual information to a text and keep this information separate from the text, so as to increase the computational tractability of data. We now look at how we can put this principle into practice following the TEI guidelines.

3.2 Elements and attributes

For a start, we can tell the computer what our text is and what it is made of. To do so, the TEI scheme proposes to mark up the text to indicate its *elements*. Elements are the "objects" documents are made of, or, to be slightly more precise, the features we want to inform our computer about. In (1), we might say that our document is a spoken text made up of four different utterances, which contain words, pauses and non-verbal events. Translating into TEI we have:

(2)[3]   ⟨**text**⟩
⟨**u**⟩hi ⟨**pause/**⟩how are [you?]⟨**/u**⟩
⟨**u**⟩[ciao] come +stai?*⟨**/u**⟩
⟨**u**⟩+bene* ⟨**vocal desc="laughs"**/⟩ e tu?⟨**/u**⟩
⟨**u**⟩fine and you?⟨**/u**⟩
⟨**/text**⟩

In (2), we have explicitly indicated four different kinds of elements: ⟨text⟩, ⟨u⟩, ⟨pause/⟩ and ⟨vocal/⟩. The labels indicating these elements are distinguished from the words of the transcript through the use of angle brackets: these delimit the markup *tags*, which are the features we insert to name and identify features of a text. Where relevant, the tags mark the "boundaries" of an element: we use a *start tag* (⟨element⟩) to mark the beginning of the element, and an *end tag* (⟨/element⟩, with a slash following the opening angle bracket) to mark its end. Everything occurring between the start- and end-tag is *contained* in that element. Thus in (2), the text contains all the words and elements we find between ⟨text⟩ and ⟨/text⟩, while each utterance contains all the words and elements found between one ⟨u⟩ and the next ⟨/u⟩.

The remaining elements introduced, ⟨pause/⟩ and ⟨vocal/⟩, do not contain words or other elements, and are therefore *empty elements*. Empty elements have a slightly different syntax in XML, since they do not have separate start and end tags, but only a single tag with a slash before the closing angle bracket (⟨element/⟩).[4]

To inform the computer about the producers of the various utterances in (2) we can use element *attributes*. Attributes are specifications we attach to an element to add further information about it. To indicate the identity of the speaker of each utterance, we use the attribute *who*, specifying the identity of the speaker as the *value* of that attribute following the = sign. But we can also add further attributes, as in (3):

(3) ⟨text⟩
      ⟨u who="A" id="u1" lang="eng" corresp="u2"⟩
            hi ⟨pause/⟩how are [you?]
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨u who="I" id="u2" lang="ita" corresp="u1"⟩
            [ciao] come +stai?*
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨u who="B" id="u3" lang="ita" corresp="u4"⟩
            +bene* ⟨vocal desc="laughs"/⟩e tu?
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨u who="I" id="u4" lang="eng" corresp="u3"⟩
            fine and you?
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨/text⟩

Here the other attributes specify the number of the utterance (the value of an identifying attribute *id*), the language in which the utterance is produced (the value of the attribute *lang*), and the correspondence between the contents of different utterances — in (3), for instance, the attribute *corresp* is used to specify that the element ⟨u⟩ identified as "u1" corresponds to that identified as "u2", and vice versa.

The encoding of overlap can be divided into two sub-problems: on the one hand, we need to tell the computer which words are uttered at the same time, and on the other, the floor status of the overlap involved. In (3), the first utterance (by speaker A) overlaps with its simultaneous interpretation on a separate floor by speaker I (the interpreter). To encode this information in TEI, we propose the use of the element ⟨anchor/⟩. An ⟨anchor/⟩ is an empty element that can be used to identify any point in any text, and we use it to identify any point where overlap starts or ends between talk on different floors. Thus in (4) the starting points of the overlap, which were previously identified by square left brackets in utterances "u1" and "u2", have been converted into ⟨anchor/⟩s. Once we have identified the two beginnings, we only have to express their simultaneity: this can be conveyed through the attributes *id* and *synch*, whose values identify and express the synchronisation of ⟨anchor/⟩ elements. The tags inserted in (4) mean that the point "s1" identified by the ⟨anchor/⟩ in utterance "u1" is synchronised with the point "s3" identified by the ⟨anchor/⟩ in utterance "u2".

(4) ⟨text⟩
      ⟨u who="A" id="u1" lang="eng" corresp="u2"⟩
            hi ⟨pause/⟩how are **⟨anchor id="s1" synch="s3"/⟩**you?]
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨u who="I" id="u2" lang="ita" corresp="u1"⟩
            ⟨anchor id="s3" synch="s1"/⟩ciao] come +stai?*
      ⟨/u⟩
      ⟨u who="B" id="u3" lang="ita" corresp="u4"⟩

```
        +bene* ⟨vocal desc="laughs"/⟩e tu?
    ⟨/u⟩
    ⟨u who="A" id="u4" lang="eng" corresp="u3"⟩
        fine and you?
    ⟨/u⟩
    ⟨/text⟩
```

Repeating the same process for the points at which the overlap ends, we obtain:

```
(5)  ⟨text⟩
     ⟨u who="A" id="u1" lang="eng" corresp="u2"⟩
         hi ⟨pause/⟩how are ⟨anchor id="s1" synch="s3"/⟩
         you?⟨anchor id="s2" synch="s4"/⟩
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨u who="I" id="u2" lang="ita" corresp="u1"⟩
         ⟨anchor id="s3" synch="s1"/⟩ciao
         ⟨anchor id="s4" synch="s2"/⟩ come +stai?*
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨u who="B" id="u3" lang="ita" corresp="u4"⟩
         +bene* ⟨vocal desc="laughs"/⟩e tu?
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨u who="A" id="u4" lang="eng" corresp="u3"⟩
         fine and you?
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨/text⟩
```

From this markup we (and also our computer) can infer that utterances u1 and u2 overlap between the points indicated by the four synchronised ⟨anchor/⟩s.[5]

As far as conversational overlaps are concerned (i.e. on the same floor: cf. 2 above), we can apply a similar mechanism, but using a different element so as to distinguish them from overlaps on different floors. The TEI element ⟨seg⟩ can be used to identify any (arbitrary) portion of a text, whatever its length, where the criterion used to segment the text is specified in the attribute *type*. In our example, the overlapped segments are the word "stai" in utterance "u2" and "bene" in utterance "u3". Thus we have:

```
(6)  ⟨text⟩
     ⟨u who="A" id="u1" lang="eng" corresp="u2"⟩
         hi ⟨pause/⟩ how are ⟨anchor id="s1" synch="s3"/⟩
         you?⟨anchor id="s2" synch="s4"/⟩
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨u who="I" id="u2" lang="ita" corresp="u1"⟩
         ⟨anchor id="s3" synch="s1"/⟩ciao⟨anchor id="s4" synch="s2"/⟩
         come ⟨seg type="overlap" id="o1" synch="o2"⟩ stai?⟨/seg⟩
     ⟨/u⟩
     ⟨u who="B" id="u3" lang="ita" corresp="u4"⟩
```

```
⟨seg type="overlap" id="o2" synch="o1"⟩ bene ⟨/seg⟩
⟨vocal desc="laughs"/⟩e tu?
⟨/u⟩
⟨u who="A" id="u4" lang="eng" corresp="u3"⟩
    fine and you?
⟨/u⟩
⟨/text⟩
```

3.3 The TEI header

Our text is now marked up with tags specifying its structure; however, it still lacks metatextual information about the setting of the interaction, for instance, and the interpreting mode used. To add such information, which concerns the entire text rather than a specific portion of it, the TEI scheme uses the element ⟨teiHeader⟩. This is placed at the beginning of the file (as a preface to the text, as it were), and it can include general details about the setting, the interpreting mode, the interpreter's function and, more generally, the source which the text was taken from, as well as the encoding and transcription practices adopted. Notwithstanding appearances, this markup procedure is relatively straightforward, and for reasons of space we shall not go into it here, limiting ourselves to an example (for further details, see Cencini 2000).

```
⟨teiHeader⟩
⟨fileDesc⟩
⟨titleStmt⟩
    ⟨title⟩ L'ultimo valzer — an electronic transcription ⟨/title⟩
    ⟨respStmt⟩
        ⟨resp⟩transcribed and encoded ⟨/resp⟩
        ⟨name⟩Marco Cencini⟨/name⟩
    ⟨/respStmt⟩
⟨/titleStmt⟩
⟨extent⟩words: 526; kb: 10⟨/extent⟩
⟨publicationStmt⟩
    ⟨authority⟩release authority: SSLMIT⟨/authority⟩
    ⟨availability status="free"⟩
        ⟨p⟩Available for purposes of academic research and teaching only⟨/p⟩
    ⟨/availability⟩
⟨/publicationStmt⟩
⟨sourceDesc⟩
    ⟨recordingStmt⟩
    ⟨recording⟩
        ⟨equipment⟩
            ⟨p⟩Recorded from TV to VCR⟨/p⟩
        ⟨/equipment⟩
```

```
⟨broadcast⟩
    ⟨bibl⟩
        ⟨title⟩An interview with Michael Bolton⟨/title⟩
        ⟨author⟩RaiUno⟨/author⟩
        ⟨respStmt⟩
            ⟨resp⟩interviewer⟨/resp⟩
            ⟨name⟩Fabio Fazio⟨/name⟩
            ⟨resp⟩interviewer⟨/resp⟩
            ⟨name⟩Claudio Baglioni⟨/name⟩
            ⟨resp⟩interviewee⟨/resp⟩
            ⟨name⟩Michael Bolton⟨/name⟩
            ⟨resp⟩Interpreter⟨/resp⟩
            ⟨name⟩Unknown⟨/name⟩
        ⟨/respStmt⟩
        ⟨series⟩
            ⟨title⟩L'ultimo valzer⟨/title⟩
        ⟨/series⟩
        ⟨note⟩broadcast on
            ⟨date⟩5 Nov. 1999⟨/date⟩
        ⟨/note⟩
    ⟨/bibl⟩
⟨/broadcast⟩
        ⟨/recording⟩
    ⟨/recordingStmt⟩
⟨/sourceDesc⟩
⟨/fileDesc⟩
⟨encodingDesc⟩
⟨classDecl⟩
    ⟨taxonomy⟩
    ⟨category id="mod1"⟩
        ⟨catDesc⟩consecutive⟨/catDesc⟩
    ⟨/category⟩
    ⟨category id="mod2"⟩
        ⟨catDesc⟩simultaneous⟨/catDesc⟩
    ⟨/category⟩
    ⟨category id="mod3"⟩
        ⟨catDesc⟩chuchotage⟨/catDesc⟩
    ⟨/category⟩
    ⟨category id="pos1"⟩
        ⟨catDesc⟩on-screen interpreter⟨/catDesc⟩
    ⟨/category⟩
    ⟨category id="pos2"⟩
        ⟨catDesc⟩off-screen interpreter⟨/catDesc⟩
    ⟨/category⟩
    ⟨/taxonomy⟩
```

```
⟨/classDecl⟩
⟨/encodingDesc⟩
⟨profileDesc⟩
    ⟨creation⟩
        ⟨date⟩2 Jul 2000⟨/date⟩
    ⟨/creation⟩
    ⟨langUsage⟩
        ⟨language id="eng"⟩english⟨/language⟩
        ⟨language id="ita"⟩italian⟨/language⟩
    ⟨/langUsage⟩
    ⟨particDesc⟩
        ⟨person id="TICFF1" sex="m" role="interviewer"⟩
            ⟨persName⟩Fabio Fazio⟨/persName⟩
            ⟨firstLang⟩ Italian⟨/firstLang⟩
        ⟨/person⟩
        ⟨!-- here follow definitions of the other persons --⟩
    ⟨/particDesc⟩
    ⟨settingDesc⟩
        ⟨setting⟩
        ⟨!-- here follows a prose description of the setting --⟩
        ⟨/setting⟩
    ⟨/settingDesc⟩
    ⟨textClass⟩
    ⟨catRef target="mod2 pos2"/⟩
    ⟨/textClass⟩
⟨/profileDesc⟩
⟨/teiHeader⟩
```

Figure 1. TEI header for a TV interpreting text

3.4 Displaying the encoded text using stylesheets

Once a text is fully marked up, we have solved our problems regarding machine
readability and application- and platform-independence, through the detachment
of content from form. In the process, however, we have made the text much harder
to read for human beings. XML technology provides a solution to this apparent
dichotomy between machine-friendly and reader-friendly formats through the use
of *stylesheets.*

A stylesheet is a file which can be linked to one or more encoded documents to
specify how they should be visualised and/or printed: it can thus be used to display
TEI markup in a more reader-friendly manner. Currently, there are two different
languages available for stylesheets: the *Cascading Style Sheet language* (CSS), which
provides for basic formatting options, and the *eXtensible Stylesheet Language* (XSL),

which provides for more advanced formatting. Figure 2 shows an example of output from a CSS stylesheet. It is a screen-shot taken from XMetaL,[6] a programme designed to write, edit and display XML- (and TEI-) conformant files.

The stylesheet can be edited to choose what elements and attributes are to be displayed and how. Here the value of the attribute *who* is shown at the beginning of each ⟨u⟩, and empty elements are indicated by diamonds. In addition the element ⟨pause/⟩ is displayed as "(…)", and the presence of ⟨anchor/⟩s is marked by "+". The struck-out utterance at the beginning illustrates a more sophisticated formatting option: it marks a ⟨u⟩ element produced by one of the primary participants which lacks a correspondent in the production of the interpreter (a zero-rendition: Wadensjö, 1998).

bGE: thank you
aP: passiamo l'auricolare per la traduzione simultanea se no ◇(…) ce l'ha già ◇(…) grazie professore ◇(…) al professor ◇(…) Penrose ◇(…) eccolo qua ◇(…) Roger Penrose ◇(…) matematico ◇(…) dell'università di Oxford ◇(…) grazie di essere qua ◇(…) professore che- ◇(…) che differenza c'è ◇(…) professore ◇(…) tra cervello ◇(…) e computer
bRP: well I think ◇(…) many activities of the brain ◇+ may be computational but consciousness ◇(…) is something different and I believe that consciousness requires ◇+
iPS001: ◇+ beh molte attività del cervello of- di- ◇(…) possono essere computative ma la coscienza invece è qualcosa di diverso ◇(…) io penso che la coscienza ◇+
aP: cos'è la coscienza?
iPS001: what is consciousness?
bRP: what is? what is consciousness? ◇(…) ◇+ well there is a difference

Figure 2. Visualisation using a CSS stylesheet (XMetaL).

Figure 3 instead shows an example using an XSL stylesheet.[7] Part of the text shown in Figure 1 is here visualised as a musical stave, and the temporal alignment of utterances is shown graphically.

The advantages of using stylesheets to display documents are clear:
–   stylesheets can be used to display markup using conventions with which readers are familiar;
–   the appearance of a transcript can be changed by simply editing the stylesheet linked to it. This is particularly useful when dealing with large corpora, since it guarantees complete consistency in the representation of features in all the transcriptions by editing just one file (the stylesheet);
–   there is no need to worry about the final visual representation during transcription, nor to manually edit the transcript subsequently: the computer automati-

Figure 3. Visualisation in stave format using an XSL stylesheet.

cally produces the display as specified in the stylesheet;
– the appearance of the transcript can be adapted to the medium in which it is to be read. For instance, if transcripts are to be consulted as web pages, different colours can be used to highlight particular features, while if printouts are required, a stylesheet using different fonts and spacing can be employed.

4.   From looking at to looking for

Markup is not only useful to obtain pretty outputs from stylesheets in order to look *at* your data, but also to look *for* specific features in your data.

SARA (SGML-Aware Retrieval Application) is a programme originally developed for use with the British National Corpus (BNC), a 100-million-word corpus of spoken and written British English which is largely TEI-conformant, now available in an XML-compatible version. Figure 4 is a SARA screen-shot showing a concordance of the word "bene" in the Television Interpreting Corpus (TIC), a TEI-conformant pilot corpus of TV interpreting transcriptions (Cencini 2000).

In Figure 4, all the XML tags are shown, but SARA also allows you to convert these tags into more reader-friendly outputs, as in Figure 5. Here, values of *who* attributes on utterances are displayed in square brackets, pauses as "(.)", overlaps on different floors (⟨anchor/⟩ elements) as "[^]", and conversational overlaps between "+" and "*".

The concordance in Figure 5 also provides an example of the more sophisticated searches that can be performed with this software. It lists all the English utterances produced by one of the primary participants which do not have a correspondent in the interpreter's production (i.e. with zero-renditions). This search is possible because SARA is able to exploit the TEI markup in the corpus to recognise (a) English utterances as opposed to Italian ones; (b) interpreters' utterances as opposed to those of primary participants, and (c) utterances with corresponding
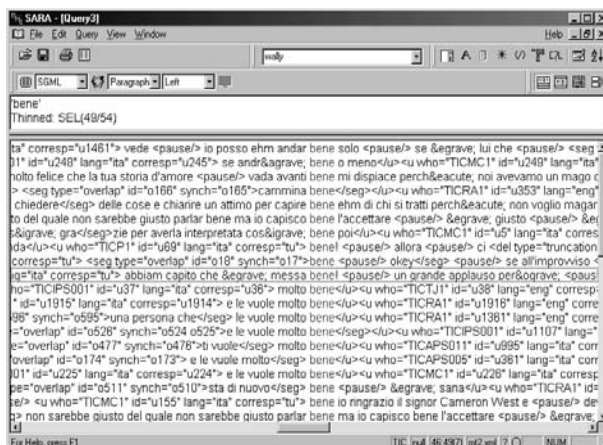
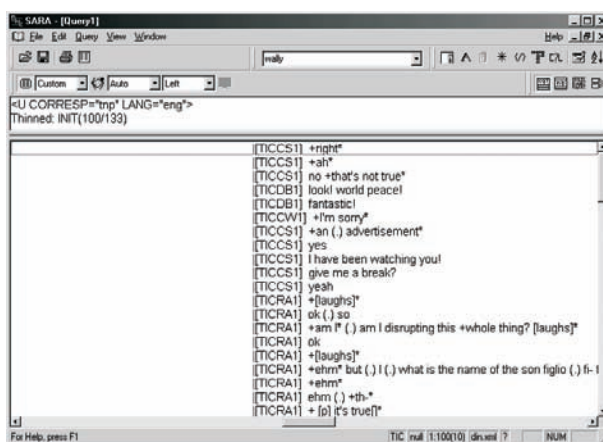**Figure 4.** *Bene* in the TIC: *SARA* KWIC concordance display showing XML mark up.

Figure 5. Utterances in English without corresponding interpreter utterances in Italian in the TIC: *SARA* KWIC concordance display, mark up automatically converted to reader-friendly format.

utterances as opposed to ones without. The amount of context shown can be increased as required: SARA also allows you to view the full text corresponding to a particular concordance line, as in Figure 6.
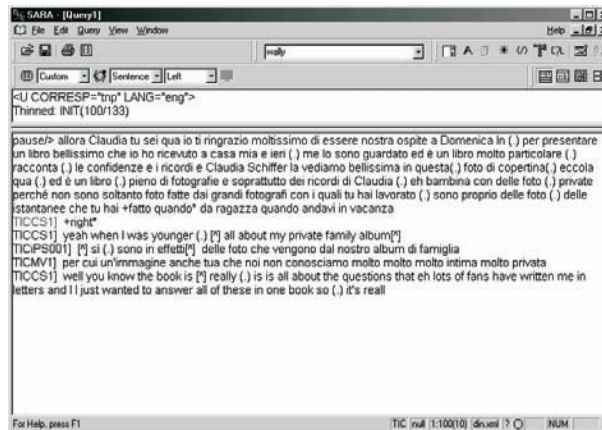
Figure 6. Full context of first line in Figure 5: reader-friendly format (see note 3). TICCS1 = Claudia Schiffer; TICMV1 = Mara Venier; TICIPS001 = Anonymous interpreter.

5. Conclusions

In this short paper, we in no way pretend to have provided an exhaustive account of issues in the encoding of interpreting data using the TEI guidelines. What we hope to have done is to illustrate the potential of the latter, in the belief that TV interpreting provides a varied and challenging context for experimentation, from which the principles outlined here can be extended with relative ease to conference and contact interpreting settings. TEI has met with rapid and widespread acceptance in many academic communities, particularly as far as textual corpora are concerned, and our work so far suggests that it can provide a valid tool for the encoding of all types of interpreting data in an interchangeable format.

In this respect, we would stress the flexibility and extendability of TEI to cover features of interpreting data not discussed here but of potential interest to many researchers — pause length, prosody, voice quality, kinesics, *décalage*, etc. — not to mention the coding of different kinds and degrees of correspondence between utterances, shifts in footing and language within utterances, etc. Of particular value for researchers in interpreting is the fact that TEI also permits the alignment of different files containing parallel data, and hence the alignment of different interpretations of the same source text, or the alignment of the transcription with digitised audio or video. Work on parallel corpora in the area of translation studies makes it likely that over the next few years XML-aware parallel concordancing software will be developed allowing the retrieval of corresponding utterances or segments across different files, so that we will not only be able to search our corpus for occurrences of *bene*, but also for the corresponding translations and audio/

video, and to view and hear those interpreter utterances which correspond to source-language utterances which contain *bene*.

Maximising the benefit to interpreting studies of such technical developments will, however, depend on significant quantities of data being available to the research community in standardised formats. As Straniero Sergio (1999a: 323) puts it:

> It is only through the empirical observation of regularities of situation and behaviour that it is possible to create corpora which, in turn, enable the determination of norms […], a major lacuna in the field of interpreting.

The development of widely acceptable encoding conventions would seem a prerequisite to the construction and comparison of the corpora necessary to determine such interpreting norms.

Notes

1. We are grateful to Lou Burnard for his help in extending the TEI specifications to cover interpreting data.

2. For further information about the conventions of reader-friendly formats, see Edwards (1993, 1995).

3. Font choices, multiple spaces, new lines and indentation are *not* significant in TEI, and have been inserted in these examples solely to facilitate the human reader's understanding of the structure of the encoded text.

4. The names of the various elements and the way they relate to each other (i.e. what elements are allowed within other elements) are defined in a separate file called the *Document Type Definition* (DTD). Any document linked to a particular DTD must conform with the hierarchy it expresses (i.e. the elements it contains must be present in that DTD and respect the rules it specifies).

5. In cases of larger portions of overlap, we can add more ⟨anchor/⟩s so as to obtain a more precise idea of the synchronisation of utterances: this can be useful for studies of *décalage*.

6. Some specifications of CSS stylesheets are also compatible with browsers such as Internet Explorer 5.0; full compatibility is expected fairly soon.

7. We are grateful to Sebastian Rahtz of the Humanities Computing Unit of Oxford University Computing Services for developing the XSL stylesheet which produced this visualisation.

Retrospection as a method of studying the process of simultaneous interpreting

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1. Theoretical considerations

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how retrospection can provide information about the process of simultaneous interpreting, and about differences between experienced and inexperienced interpreters during the performance of an interpreting task. The main interest of this presentation is focused on what kind of information quantitative and qualitative oral retrospective data can give about the informants and the process of interpreting.

During the last few decades, research on the process of translation has been carried out by introspective methods, for instance verbal reporting (cf. the overview by Jääskeläinen 1999:62–68). Retrospection as a method for investigating the process of interpreting is related to such research. There are, however, differences between studying translation and interpreting. When studying simultaneous interpreting, the methods that can be used are restricted by the fact that no concurrent introspection or thinking aloud is possible during the actual performance of the interpretation. One appropriate method therefore seems to be the use of retrospective comments, though retrospection as a method for studying the process of simultaneous interpreting is not without its problems (cf. Kalina 1998:151–159). First, not all decisions made by the interpreter during interpretation are conscious, nor are they all remembered. Second, the informants may have some reasons for not commenting on everything they remember or notice during the retrospection session, or for rationalising or explaining their own performance, thus affecting the reliability of the analysis. This is why researchers are often advised to use supplementary methods and not to rely on retrospection as the only source of information about the process.

Ericsson and Simon (1987:45–46) point out that, if informants are asked why they preferred certain alternatives to others, they will give a reason for what they did

instead of saying what they actually thought in the situation. I am, however, interested in both the informants' thoughts and the strategies they prefer, which makes retrospection a suitable method for the study. Preferred approaches and strategies are variously referred to in the literature as the *technique of simultaneous interpreting* (Jones 1998: 78–120), or *tactics* (Gile 1995a: 192–206).

According to Zimmerman and Schneider (1987: 179, 194), delayed retrospection as a means to elicit data about the translation process is not only a source of information about actual strategies and preferred strategies, but can also shed light on the subject's knowledge of how to solve linguistic problems. Thus, what we can obtain information about through retrospective comments is actual strategies, preferred strategies and the informant's knowledge of the language/s concerned.

2.   Empirical material and test conditions

My study is based on an interpreting test which was conducted with 21 informants: 6 novice students of interpreting (referred to below as *novices*), 8 advanced students of interpreting (referred to as *students*) and 7 professional interpreters (referred to as *professionals*). The informants, all female, have Finnish as their "A" language and Swedish as their "B" language, or vice versa.

The source text for the interpreting test was based on a manuscript of an authentic speech presented by a Finnish minister of state at a conference that was interpreted. Since no videotape of the Minister's speech was available, it was read by another person and videotaped for the purpose of the test. The length of the speech was about 7 minutes. The informants, who interpreted the speech simultaneously from Finnish into Swedish, were provided with the original conference programme and abstract of the speech about one week beforehand.

After the test, informants were asked to meet the tester to comment on their own interpretations. For some of them this meeting could be arranged the same day as the interpreting test, but for others it was some days later. Each informant listened to the tape recordings of the source text and her own interpretation. A transcription of the source text was also available. The informants were asked to stop the tape whenever they wanted to comment on it, or when they remembered what they had thought during the interpreting test. The tester tried not to interfere, but stopped the tape when appropriate to ask the informant for comments. If the tester accidentally asked leading questions in order to encourage the informant to speak, the answers to these questions were not used in the analysis.

Though the time lag between the interpretation and the retrospective comments varied, my assumption is that such differences do not affect the results of this study. Cohen (1987: 84, 93) states that there seem to be no significant differences between immediate and delayed retrospection. In a test with retrospective comments

given by informants within six hours or three days of completing the task, he reports few observable differences between the two conditions.

The empirical material of this study consists of the retrospective oral comments given by the informants. The total number of comments was 690. Table 1 presents a quantitative breakdown of comments for each category of informant.

Table 1. Number of comments given by the informants

Informants	Number of comments	Variation in number of comments	Average
Novices	123	11–31	20
Students	258	22–41	32
Professionals	309	28–61	44

While there are individual differences between the informants, the more experienced tend to give more comments than the less experienced. There may be several reasons for this difference. The students and professionals may be more used to analysing their own performances. They may also be more willing to give comments, as they know the tester better than the novices do. Another factor may be the fact that the novices do not produce as much target text as the other two categories, some of them having quite long pauses in their performances. There is thus less activity and less target text to comment on.

3.   Categories of analysis

The analysis of the informants' retrospective comments is based on the phases of the interpreting process. The phases and categories used for the analysis are based on Gile's sequential model of translation, which "describes and explains an idealised path in the professional's progression from source-language text to target-language text" (Gile 1995a: 101–127). The benefits of the model include the emphasis on testing plausibility and acceptability, as such considerations are important in the process of interpreting. The model has been modified and complemented, to adapt it for use with my corpus.

The comments given by the informants can be divided into four main categories, based on the phases identified in the model. These categories are comments on *knowledge*, *understanding*, *transfer* and *product*, each divided into several subcategories. They are presented in Table 2.

The comments on knowledge focus on either informants' *knowledge base* or their *preparation* for this particular task. The knowledge base comprises informants'

Table 2. Categories of analysis

Knowledge	Knowledge base
	Preparations
Understanding	Reception
	Meaning
Transfer	Plausibility
	Acceptability of form
	Acceptability of content
	Interpreting technique
Product	Linguistic expression
	Equivalence
	Presentation

total linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Their comments state, for example, that they had no problems rendering the name of a Minister mentioned in the source text, as this name was familiar to them. The comments on preparation are often about points such as how the informants read the material they received before the interpreting test and studied the vocabulary.

The comments on understanding are divided into comments on *reception* and on *meaning*. *Reception* includes comments on problems with hearing what the speaker is saying. *Meaning* refers to comprehension of the source text's content.

The category of *transfer* includes different kinds of comments on *plausibility* and *acceptability*. These comments concern what the informant has heard in the source text, or something she is planning to produce in the target text. They may refer, for example, to linguistic acceptability. One of the informants reported that she had to use an expression which was not the exact equivalent of what the speaker had said. This irritated her, as she had to use the expression several times.

The final item of *transfer, interpreting technique,* comprises comments describing how the informant is acting during the interpretation; if, for instance, she is noting numbers occurring in the speech on a paper or looking at the abstract of the speech during the interpretation. The common feature of comments about the transfer phase is that they describe some kind of process or activity — i.e., a dynamic event.

The comments about the product can be about the *linguistic expressions* used, the *equivalence* between source expression and target expression, or the *presentation* of the interpreting product. The informant may point out that the expression she uses is right or wrong, or that she has left something out. Comments on the presentation can be about hesitations or traces of uncertainty in the voice. These comments differ from those on transfer, since they focus essentially on the target text and the informant's perception of her performance.

4. Analysis

The comments given by the informants will be discussed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative presentation is based on the number of comments per category of analysis which each informant made. This is followed by information on the contents of the comments. Both the quantitative and the qualitative analysis aim to identify any differences in the behaviour of the three categories of informants during the interpreting process.

4.1 Quantitative analysis

My hypothesis is that the number of comments about the different aspects of the interpreting process reflects either the informant's emphasis on each aspect or special problems related to it. The quantitative data for each category of informants are presented in profile diagrams, in the *Appendix*. Differences between individual informants can also be seen in the diagrams.

Students and professionals have very similar profiles. They most often comment on transfer and production. The novices also emphasise the transfer phase, but the students and the professionals have a more nuanced way of commenting on it, while most of the novices' comments concern interpreting technique. The reason why technique is not emphasised by the more experienced informants may be that they know how to act in different situations. If the technique requires no special attention, it does not need to be commented on.

The most significant difference between the categories of informants is that the novices have very few comments on production. They also seem to concentrate generally on fewer aspects of the interpreting process than the other informants. This may be because they are not as used to analysing their own performances as the students and professionals. In addition, the novices probably do not yet have the capacity to concentrate on all the phases of the interpreting process (cf. the Effort Model by Gile 1995a: 159–190), which may also affect their ability to comment on them.

The general similarity between students and professionals may be a sign of successful training. In other words, the students seem to have acquired an approach which is close to that of professionals.

4.2 Some qualitative aspects

The quantitative analysis shows that the most significant differences between novices and more experienced informants occur in the transfer and production phases. In my analysis I will briefly discuss some aspects of the comments given about the transfer phase, in order to illustrate what kind of information such an analysis can provide.

All categories of informants have only a few comments on plausibility, all of which seem quite similar. Essentially, informants focus on whether their perception of source speech content is plausible.

Most comments about formal acceptability either concern sentence structure, choice of expression and errors, or give a general perspective on the linguistic quality of the interpretation. The novices have few comments on linguistic acceptability and they do not seem as critical as the other informants in this respect. Students and professionals, on the other hand, discuss nuances in the expressions they use. The reason for this may be that they are better able to analyse their own language. This emphasis on linguistic expression may, however, also indicate that the more experienced informants are more concerned with correct language use.

The comments on acceptability of meaning mainly refer to structural changes the informants have decided to make in order to be able to transfer the message from source language to target language. Such comments reflect what the informants are thinking as they decide to rephrase expressions. One interesting difference between the professionals and the other two categories seems to be that the professionals discuss how their potential audience would react to their interpretation. There are, for instance, some comments illustrating that the professional interpreter relies on the audience's understanding the interpretation even if it is not very clearly formulated. In other words, the professionals seem to perform for an audience, although they did not have one during the interpreting test.

Finally, the comments on interpreting technique show some differences between the categories of informant. The students and professionals mainly stress different approaches to problematic aspects of the source text. The novices' comments mostly focus on their use of the material received for preparation and on problems due to speech rate. This is considered a source of difficulty by novices, but not by the more experienced informants. Another interesting difference is that, while novices' comments focus on the source text, the professionals discuss how the interpretation should be performed in a real interpreting situation.

5.   Discussion

In this paper I have presented some findings of a study using retrospection as a method for obtaining information about the process of simultaneous interpreting. The analysis gives information about how experienced and inexperienced interpreters think and act during the process of interpreting.

The method of oral retrospection is, however, only one of the methods I use in a larger study analysing the interpreting test presented in this paper. The informants provided further information on the transcriptions of the source text and target text through questionnaires and written comments. By using a variety of methods, I

hope to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the strategies and techniques used in interpreting. The results of this research give information about how the process of interpreting can be discussed and what we should stress when we teach future interpreters.
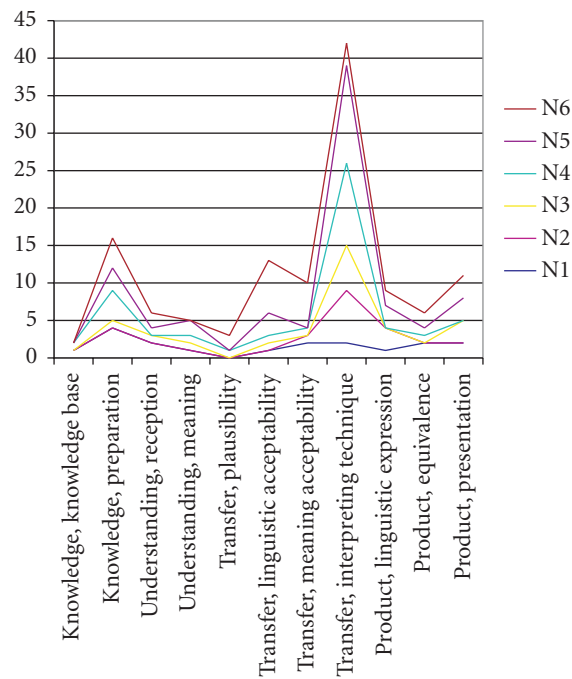
Appendix
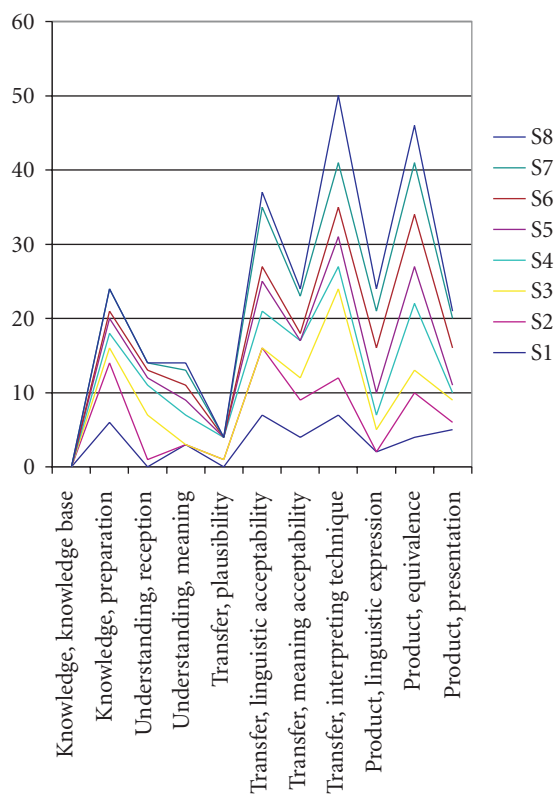

Figure 1. Comments given by the novices.
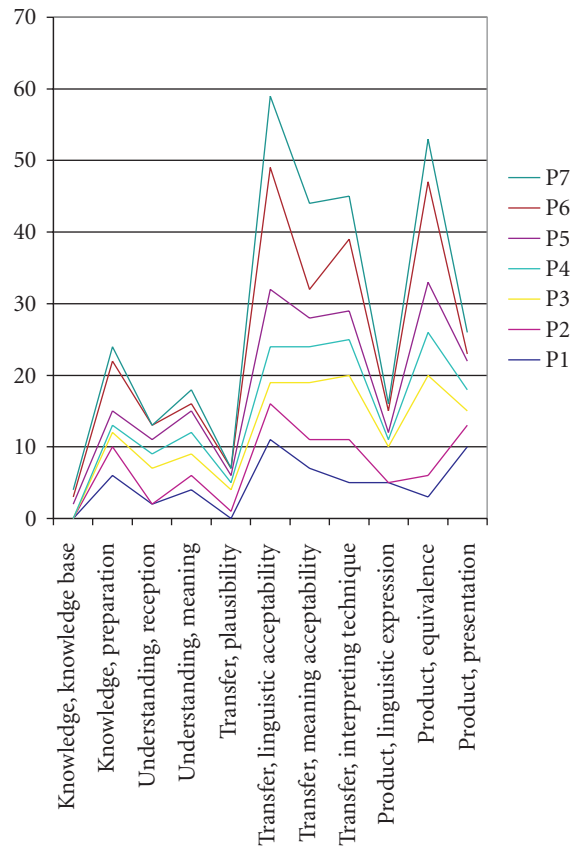
Figure 2. Comments given by the students.

Figure 3. Comments given by the professionals.

Exploring hesitation in consecutive interpreting

An empirical study[*]

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> *"'Pray speak a little Italian to him,' said the good landlady to me. 'I have heard a good deal about the beauty of that language, and should like to hear it spoken.'"*
>
> George Borrow, *Wild Wales* (1862)

1. Introduction

The subject of this study is interpreters' perception of why they pause in consecutive interpretation, the aim being to compare the explanations they give of pauses: (i) at different levels of training and experience; and (2) in Italian and English (i.e. their A and B languages respectively). The study is part of a research project on duration of pauses in consecutive interpretation, submitted for a doctorate at the Université Lumière-Lyon 2, France, for which the viva has still to be scheduled at the time of writing.

Control of hesitations and pauses is an index of fluency, inasmuch as these are examples of disfluencies or "influencies" (Goffman 1981). In his essay "The Lecture", Goffman (1981:172) states that: "[speech] segments must be patched together without exceeding acceptable limits for pauses, restarts, repetitions, redirections, and other linguistically detectable faults". Since interpreters should acquire professional standards in their public speaking skills (http://www.aiic.net/en/tips/voix/trottier.htm; Jones 1998), their disfluencies can provide a viable perspective for assessment of target language fluency (Mead 1996). In this respect, Kopczynski's (1981) "errors of performance" are close to Goffman's "linguistically detectable faults".

In addition to providing a measure of fluency, control of these "faults" is also one of the linguistic skills on which fluency actually depends. General linguistic knowledge and availability are other essential determinants of fluency. The latter,

represented in Gile's Gravitational Model (Gile 1995a: 189–194), is difficult to measure. Studies of associational fluency go some way towards doing so (Kurz 1996), though its evaluation through written tests does not necessarily reflect *oral* fluency (Carroll 1978: 125). Another important component of fluency is skill in the use of coping tactics or strategies (Gile 1995a: 129–142). Interestingly, those used by language learners (e.g., omission, paraphrase, calques and borrowings, appeal to interlocutors) (Ellis 1994: 397) overlap to a certain extent with those identified in interpreting. Not all of these depend on strictly linguistic skills.

Non-linguistic skills are, indeed, important prerequisites of fluency, both in "normal" linguistic production and, perhaps to an even greater extent, in interpreting — whether simultaneous (listening and speaking at the same time, management of *décalage* etc.) or consecutive (notes, memory etc.).

While Gile's Effort Models (1995a) explain disfluencies and other production problems, the factors which trigger them are often not readily apparent. Breakdowns in production (mistranslations, linguistic errors etc.) can be considered the tip of the iceberg, their underlying causes often difficult to sound. The origin of the problem is not necessarily an intrinsic difficulty of expression, and may lie in the need to divert attentional resources from production to other Efforts — in consecutive interpretation, long term memory and reading of notes. Weber (1990: 47) gives particular emphasis to "the interpreter's reading ahead of what he is actually enunciating", identified almost two thousand years ago as a difficulty in reading aloud: "[…] quod difficillimum est, dividenda intentio animi, ut aliud voce aliud oculis agatur" (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* I.i.34).

Problems may also be triggered by factors outside the actual interpreting process — e.g. logical inconsistency of the notes or target speech with pre-existing general knowledge, nervous tension.

Against this theoretical background, the aim of the present study is to examine subjects' retrospective evaluation of why they pause in consecutive interpreting. This perspective, suggested by my supervisor at Lyon, can shed light on the difficulties subjects perceive while interpreting. While subjects' insight does not necessarily identify all the underlying factors behind pauses, it should at least provide information as to whether pauses are intentional or unintentional — or, indeed, whether the subject is even aware of them.

2.   Methodology

Forty-five subjects (39 f., 6 m.), divided into three groups of fifteen, took part in the study. The sample represented different levels of training and experience, each group comprising either students of conference interpreting (beginners in one group and advanced students in another) or professional interpreters. Subjects participated

on a voluntary basis. All had the same linguistic combination (Italian A, English B), except one English/Italian bilingual among the professional interpreters.

All thirty students (27 f., 3 m.) were attending degree courses in Interpreting at Italian universities — twenty-five of them at the University of Bologna, the remaining five at the University of Trieste. Since students at both universities train as interpreters or translators in their third and fourth years, after two years of preparatory study, the beginners and advanced students in this sample were third and fourth year students respectively.

Of the fifteen interpreters (12 f., 3 m.), the majority either had more than ten years' professional experience (10 subjects) or had worked regularly at the European Commission JICS (2 subjects). Apart from the two most recent graduates, who had interpreted professionally for less than two years, the whole group had acquired extensive professional experience since qualifying.

During the period January 1999–February 2000, each subject recorded two consecutive interpretations, one into Italian and the other into English. The two recordings were mostly made on separate occasions, except in the case of a few subjects who completed both exercises in the same session. If interpretations had not been recorded, subsequent analysis would not have been possible. This requirement was not considered likely to affect subjects' performance — particularly for the students, who are used to being recorded during exercises and examinations. Professional interpreters could arguably find it more unnatural to have their target speech recorded, just as they are less used than students to working from recorded source speeches. However, all subjects agreed willingly to the study conditions.

Given the possibility that subjects might take greater care in the second consecutive with aspects perceived as critical in the first, about half of them started with the interpretation into English, while the other half interpreted into Italian first. This made it unlikely that subjects would be consistently less "naïve" in one language than the other, any adjustment of approach after the first consecutive being evenly distributed between the two languages. For purposes of comparability, the same recorded source speeches were used for all subjects.

Subjects were informed beforehand that, immediately after each recording, they would be asked to spend about three quarters of an hour discussing certain aspects of the target speech. They were also told that the analysis would not involve qualitative comparisons, and that they would not be named in the study. Apart from a short written briefing, they received no prior information on the texts before listening to each speech.

Having an audience would have allowed a more natural setting for the consecutive. The choice of individual sessions was dictated by the following considerations: (i) given that the recordings were made on an itinerant basis (sometimes at subjects' homes), it would have proved practically impossible to arrange an audience for every session; (ii) recruiting an audience for the consecutives recorded at university

would have limited the pool of potential subjects without prior knowledge of the speeches; (iii) it would have been inconsistent to record some interpretations before an audience and others in individual sessions. Using different source speeches would have made it possible to have participants listen to other subjects, but this would have meant sacrificing inter-subject comparability for a limited added value.

Both speeches were from conference recordings, kindly made available by the organisers of the events concerned. The recording in English was the opening of a speech on British attitudes to Europe, given to an audience of Italian students by an English lecturer. The Italian source speech was again the start of a lecture, in this case by a journalist speaking to a group of industrialists about the international impact of the 1973 oil crisis.

The two speeches were reasonably comparable in a number of respects:

a.   both were about contemporary history or current affairs;
b.   neither was addressed to an audience with specialist knowledge of the subject, or demanded particular extralinguistic knowledge (Gile 1995a: 216);
c.   both were delivered "off the cuff", with no text, slides or overheads;
d.   the duration of the two source speeches was more or less the same (3′50″ and 3′40″);
e.   density of information was comparable, the content of each speech being divided into ten basic points;
f.   mean speed was similar (127 words per minute in English, 119 w.p.m. in Italian). The intention being simply to ensure that overall speed was not markedly different, the syllable count preferred by some authors (Pöchhacker 1993) was considered unnecessary (use of a syllable count also raises the issue of whether elided syllables are to be included.)

Speeches were neither difficult nor complex. Those encountered in professional practice — and in university examinations — are often longer and more demanding. However, the following considerations had to be borne in mind: (i) source speeches had to be accessible to students with only a few months' training behind them; (ii) the nature of the study does not demand a long, difficult speech; (iii) subjects might find it hard to maintain motivation and interest throughout detailed discussion of a long consecutive.

The recordings and interviews were organised as follows. The subject first listened to the cassette of the source speech and recorded his/her consecutive interpretation. The recording was then played back to the subject and comments were sought on major hesitations or clusters of brief pauses. Given that the consecutive interpretation generally took from 3 to 4 minutes and the average frequency of pauses was about 25 per minute (sometimes far more), separate explanations could obviously not be sought for every minor individual pause, in some cases lasting less than 0.10 sec.

Subjects' explanations of pauses were collected by stopping the tape after prominent or sustained hesitations, and asking: "Is there any particular reason for this hesitation?" The question was left open, to ensure that subjects would not be "prompted" by leading questions like: "Did you have a lexical problem there?". Information collected in this way provided the basis for the analysis of how subjects perceived their pauses.

Explanations of pauses were sorted into five categories, established beforehand in a pilot study with a small group of other subjects. The full classification grid used is shown in Figure 1.

The five categories were: (1) difficulties of formulation (lexis, grammar); (2) difficulty with notes (e.g., indecipherable symbol); (3) logical doubts (e.g., "Does this comment make sense?"); (4) no apparent reason perceived by the subject; (5) others (e.g., thinking about previous difficulties). Items in "others" were those which do not fit the categories identified in the pilot study. While these were potentially linguistic or non-linguistic in nature (e.g. reading ahead in notes), they made up only a very small percentage of overall explanations.

For each subject, values of the various classes of explanation were calculated as percentages of the total count. For example, if eight out of thirty-two explanations for a given recording attributed pauses to difficulties in formulation, the percentage value for this category was 25% (8/32). Converting scores into percentages provided a common denominator for the statistical analysis, since the total number of pauses commented on varied from subject to subject.

Statistical analysis of these percentages for the different classes of hesitation comprised: (i) comparison of the three groups, by analysis of variance, to identify any differences according to training and experience; (ii) comparison between languages, by t tests for paired data, to identify any differences according to direction of interpretation.

3.   Results and discussion

3.1 Overall results

Table 1 shows the breakdown of the explanations provided by the sample of 45 subjects.

Just over two thousand explanations were recorded, more or less equally divided between the two languages. Results for the different categories of explanation, with each category calculated as a percentage of the overall total, are indicated for each language and also for both together.

In the first three categories, it is possible to distinguish between linguistic (formulation) and non-linguistic (notes, logic) items. The remaining two categories (no apparent reason, others), which account for about 20% of the explanations in

1	**FORMULATION**	2:4	need to eliminate repetition
1:1	synonym for common word	2:5	no notes
1:2	synonym to avoid repetition	2:6	notes illegible
1:3	more appropriate synonym	2:7	sense of notes not clear
1:4	need to sort through alternatives	2:8	word/symbol not noticed at first
1:5	search for a translation	2:9	new page and change of topic
1:6	options limited by opening words	2:10	"surprise" start to new page
1:7	acceptability doubtful	2:11	page skipped while reading
1:8	"Is a foreign word acceptable?"	2:12	new topic
1:9	cultural contextualisation?	2:13	"flèche de rappel" for subject
1:10	reformulation	2:14	ignore division in notes?
1:11	need for linking expression	2:15	create division in notes?
1:12	completion of phrase		
1:13	adjective moved to another noun	**3**	**LOGICAL DOUBTS**
1:14	need to attenuate	3:1	missing detail
1:15	grammatical transformation		
1:16	grammatical doubt	3:2	"Does it make sense?"
		3:3	"The notes are wrong!"
2	**READING OF NOTES**	3:4	need to be noncommittal
2:1	very few notes		
2:2	proper name only partly noted	**4**	**NO APPARENT REASON**
2:3	notes misread	**5**	**OTHERS**

Figure 1. Categories of explanation for hesitations identified in the pilot study.

Table 1. Explanations of pauses by all 45 subjects

explanations for pauses	Italian	(%)	English	(%)	both languages	(%)
formulation	435	(42.73%)	544	(48.40%)	979	(45.70%)
notes	256	(25.15%)	248	(22.05%)	504	(23.53%)
logic	129	(12.67%)	82	(7.30%)	211	(9.85%)
no reason	166	(16.31%)	207	(18.42%)	373	(17.42%)
others	32	(3.14%)	43	(3.83%)	75	(3.50%)
total	1018	(100%)	1124	(100%)	2142	(100%)

each language, potentially include both linguistic and non-linguistic factors.

In the overall analysis for both languages together, combined figures for non-linguistic factors (i.e. "notes" and "logic": 33.38%) are rather lower than those for language ("formulation": 45.70%); the relative weight given to linguistic and non-

linguistic factors in Italian and English is commented on below (3.3). What is important in this preliminary analysis is that, on the whole, subjects do not limit their comments to strictly language-related difficulties. Problems in rereading notes and resolving logical inconsistencies are also considered important. This overall balance between linguistic and non-linguistic items does not differ greatly in the two groups of students (46.63% linguistic and 34.15% non-linguistic for third year students; 51.50% linguistic and 31.63% non-linguistic for fourth year students). The professional interpreters are the group who perceive linguistic factors as least important (36.19%), while they give more or less the same weight as the two groups of students to non-linguistic items (35.36%). They also show a slightly higher overall percentage for "no apparent reason" than the students.

3.2 Incidence of different categories of explanation according to training/experience

Table 2 summarises the significant inter-group differences in explanations of pauses, based on their classification into five categories (formulation, notes, logic, no apparent reason, others). Results are shown for both languages together, and also for each separately. The analysis identifies a significant evolution for four categories out of five in Italian, and two out of five in English.

Significant trends which emerge in both languages, as subjects progress along the learning curve from "beginner" to "professional" status, are: (i) fewer problems of formulation; (ii) more hesitations with no apparent reason.

These results prompt two main comments, offering a tentative interpretation of data. First, perception of fewer problems with formulation as subjects acquire experience probably reflects increasing mastery of extralinguistic skills and strategies. Experienced interpreters, well versed in skills such as use of notes, arguably have greater attentional resources available for management of strictly linguistic problems. In addition, they are probably prompter than trainee interpreters in foreseeing difficulties (e.g., by reading ahead in their notes) and opting for appropriate strategies to minimise hesitation (topic avoidance, generalisation etc.). It is unlikely that actual linguistic competence differs significantly in the three groups, particularly in Italian, since even the least experienced subjects are already in their third year of university.

Second, professional interpreters fail to find an explanation for more hesitations than students, both in the two languages together and in Italian. These "inexplicable" hesitations can be tentatively related to *unconscious* processes. Given that experienced interpreters have learned to manage *conscious* processes (e.g., reading of notes) efficiently, they may experience relatively more hesitations related to unconscious processes. This would explain the relatively high incidence of "inexplicable" pauses among professional interpreters.

Table 2. Significant inter-group differences in explanations of pauses

Language	Category of explanation	sig.	Bonferroni modified t-tests for multiple comparisons	
			significant differences	sig.
Italian & English:	formulation	< 0.01	3rd year students – professionals	≤ 0.10
			4th year students – professionals	≤ 0.01
	logic	0.10	—	—
	no reason	0.03	professionals – 4th year students	≤ 0.05
Italian:	formulation	< 0.01	4th yr. students – 3rd yr. students	≤ 0.10
			4th year students – professionals	≤ 0.01
	logic	0.06	—	—
	no reason	< 0.01	professionals – 4th year students	≤ 0.01
English:	formulation	0.02	3rd year students – professionals	≤ 0.05
			4th year students – professionals	≤ 0.10
	logic	0.04	professionals – 3rd year students	≤ 0.05

(sig. = significance level)

3.3 Incidence of different categories of explanation according to language

Table 3 summarises significant results of the paired sample t-tests. Since the sequence English — Italian is maintained for each comparison, a negative t value indicates that the item concerned is significantly more frequent in Italian. If there is no negative sign, frequency is higher in English.

The analysis highlights a number of trends.

First, only third year students perceive significantly more language difficulties when interpreting into their B language, English. This is probably related to less confident and immediate use of strategies for solving (or, indeed, avoiding) problems of expression.

Second, there is generally greater perception of non-linguistic items (logic and, to a lesser extent, notes) in Italian. This suggests that the different skills contributing to fluency do not entail the same distribution of efforts in the two languages. Subjects probably pay more attention to ensuring that expression is correct in their B language. In their A language (Italian), where production entails less effort, they can pay more attention to management of non-linguistic tasks (reading notes, reproducing in detail the logic of the source text, etc.).

The significantly higher perception of logical doubts in Italian has another possible explanation — that the source speech in English is more demanding in terms of logical analysis. While the two speeches are of comparable difficulty (see

above, 2), the English speaker's perspective on Anglo-European relations is arguably not familiar to Italian listeners. They may therefore experience logical doubts on their assimilation of some points — for example, the explanation of Britain's lukewarm attitude to the creation of the E.E.C. Here, this is attributed to the British belief that other European countries were merely interested in enlisting Britain's economic muscle for the European cause. This is a slightly different perspective from the standard (and perhaps justified) Italian perception that Britain has, in any case, always favoured an isolationist policy.

Table 3. Significant inter-language differences in explanations of pauses (2-tailed, paired t tests)

group	pair	t	sig.
3rd year students	formulation English – formulation Italian	2.949	0.005
	notes English – notes Italian	−1.849	0.043
	logic English – logic Italian	−4.313	< 0.001
4th year students	notes English – notes Italian	−1.592	0.067
	logic English – logic Italian	−1.858	0.043
	no apparent reason English – no apparent reason Italian	3.117	0.004
professional interpreters	notes English – notes Italian	1.676	0.058
	logic English – logic Italian	−2.245	0.021

(sig. = significance level)

4. Conclusions

Weber (1989:163) describes formulation of the target speech as practically automatic, provided that the source speech has been well assimilated and noted. By contrast, Thiéry (1981:100) considers that production is the second *temps fort* in consecutive interpreting (the first being assimilation of the source speech, while note taking is a *temps accessoire*). Similarly, Gile's Effort Models highlight that production is by no means automatic (Gile 1995a:97).

This view is borne out by the present study, in that subjects' comments on expression difficulties suggest considerable dependence on non-automatic processes in both the A and B languages. Here, *availability* of relevant linguistic knowledge is probably an important factor in streamlining processes like lexical selection and reducing demands on attentional resources.

Data also indicate that fluency depends on both linguistic and non-linguistic skills.

The latter, which include abilities like logical analysis of the source speech and use of notes (both while listening and during delivery of the target speech), arguably contribute almost as much as language skills to the interpreter's fluency. In addition, unobtrusive use of coping strategies and tactics probably contributes to fluency, whether in monolingual communication or in interpreting (see Introduction).

These considerations on control of disfluencies, relevant to qualitative evaluation of interpreting, are appropriately summed up by J.-D. Katz's (1989) exhortation to us all: "*interprète, mon frère, pour le 'client', l'auditeur, le seul orateur c'est toi!*"

Note

Anthroponyms, acronyms and allocutives in interpreting from Russian

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> "So, under a double influence, when the little girl grew up, she became half servant and half boarding-school girl. Thus, they did not call her Kat'ka or Katen'ka, but a name in between, Katjuša".
>
> Lev Tolstoy, *Resurrection*

1. The role of proper names

Since the late 1960s, scholars within the field of Slavonic studies have contributed significant linguistic and semiotic research on proper names. Rejecting the theory about their arbitrary nature (a theory advocated by O. Jespersen, P. Christophersen, A. H. Gardiner, among others), this work has highlighted that proper names, as social, ethnic, affective, cultural and pragmatic indicators, are meaningful linguistic items. Their pragmatic role has also been analysed.

Among Russian scholars, A. V. Superanskaja has produced a wealth of informative studies; her well-known work *Obščaja teorija imeni sobstvennogo* (1973) offers a detailed overview and critique of the different theoretical positions about the "meaning" and semiotic role of proper names, illustrating the main mechanisms underlying their formation and spread.[1] Superanskaja (1973: 46–88) summarises the main theories in her survey as follows:

A. proper names have no meaning and thus differ from common names, which indicate objects or imply a definition (J. Stuart Mill);
B. proper names are more meaningful than common names (the Stoics, the Roman grammarian Diomedes, H. Sweet, O. Jespersen, M. Bréal);
C. every name is an exclusively individual prerogative (the Stoics, Dionysius Thrax, Apollonius Disculus, Roman grammarians Diomedes, Donatus and Consentius [fifth century], the Port Royal grammarians, H. Sweet);
D. all proper names are synonymous (T. Togeby);
E. proper names are arbitrary (O. Jespersen, P. Christophersen, A. H. Gardiner);

F. all proper names have an intrinsic meaning — a concept which can be traced back to the Greek "naturalist" theory, as opposed to the "conventionalist" view that linguistic form is arbitrary.

Within the "naturalist" perspective, which returned to favour in the 20th century, proper names are considered to be complex signs. As such, they are referred to by Bondaletov (1983:53) as *onims* (cf. also Superanskaja 1970). This is why mastering the onomastic code is one of the most advanced stages in the development of bilingualism.

Furthermore, proper names *also* convey supplementary information concerning (a) the nature of the name bearer (*Fido* and *Lajka* being instantly recognisable as dog's names, *Mary* as a woman's name); (b) her/his ethnic origin (*Hans Schmidt* is probably German, *John Smith* is British or American or Australian etc., *Luciano Pavarotti* is Italian, *Leonard Cohen* is a Jew, but not an Italian Jew, since his name is not Leonardo Coen); (c) (often) social class (cf. Nikonov 1970; Superanskaja 1964, 1973);[2] (d) the relationship between the speaker and the person whose name is mentioned (the highly connotated *Katjušen'ka* indicates a very close relationship, while *Ekaterina* indicates in relative terms distance or coldness).

Proper names are thus important indicators at a number of levels.

a. Social indicators

As shown by Nikonov (1967), proper names are "social signs" within a continuously evolving socio-political and cultural setting. They can be chosen, used and modified according to their social connotations. Cinema and television can play a considerable role in this respect, determining the popularity of "fashionable" names — for example, *Canzonissima* and *Sandokan*, names of popular programmes on Italian television, were used as first names in recent years. The basis for names can also be political and ideological (e.g. in the Soviet Union, names such as *Vladlen* [Vladimir Lenin], *Elektrifikacija*, *Pjatvčet* [*pjatiletka v četyre goda*, i.e. 5-year plan in 4 years]). There can also be personal reasons for the choice of a name (e.g. giving a girl's name to a newborn boy, or viceversa). Furthermore, the social dimension/force of proper names is active in discourse, indicating the social relationship between interlocutors.

b. Ethnic indicators

Despite their Greek or Slavonic etymological, phonetic and morphological features, some "Russian" first names are unmistakable signs of ethnic origin when associated with specific surnames or patronymics (Salmon Kovarski 1995, 1996). For native speakers, the three components of the official Russian name (first name, patronymic, surname)[3] are a clear indication of the ethnic group a person belongs to (particularly for Jews). Many Russian citizens, often native speakers of Russian, are actually Ukrainian, Belorussian, Tartarian, Georgian, Armenian or Jewish in terms of "ethnic nationality" (*nacional'nost'*).

c. Indicators of affection

What distinguishes the Russian name sub-code from that of other European languages is its highly sophisticated expressive sub-code.[4] The "affection scale", which can be expressed through innumerable diminutives or pet names, cannot be reproduced symmetrically (i.e. through the same linguistic category) in any other European language. The affective role of proper names is connected with social role.

d. Cultural indicators

Some proper names take on a specific semantic/semiotic value, giving rise to antonomasia, pseudonyms, nicknames, puns, jokes etc. These are not readily identified by those without appropriate knowledge of the culture. People born and bred within a given culture automatically acquire the ability to manage information concerning the use of proper names in their own linguistic system. Only thanks to this "natural" ability does a native speaker have a complete mastery of the sensitive "normative" system of the code.

For non-native (coordinate) bilinguals, going through the process of acquiring a second identity (a process which, arguably, can never be completed), several stages may be identified in the management of the L2 name code:

a. passive acquisition of the standard rules;
b. active reproduction of these rules;
c. acquisition of the passive ability to identify idiosyncratic elements or "violations" (of the standard rule by a native speaker);
d. reproduction or creation of non-standard forms, i.e. deliberate idiosyncratic violation of the norms.

The use of the name code in different languages is related to sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic considerations, and to politeness. I firmly believe that, in a language like Russian, coordinate bilinguals can only rarely achieve the same full active competence as a "citizen" (cf. Acton and Walker de Felix 1986)[5] in the use of the name code — i.e. at the maximum level of acquired bilingualism/biculturalism.

2. Proper names and translation

Proper names are therefore a very complex theme in the framework of translation theory. This is true for both so-called aesthetic-expressive and informative texts. In aesthetic texts, proper names are the result of a non-arbitrary, "significant" choice and require specific competence on the part of the translator in selecting an equifunctional sign in the target language (Superanskaja 1973: 30–35, 133–148; Salmon Kovarski 1997).

However, at all communication levels and in all types of text, proper names can be given functions which vary from author to author. Commonly mentioned

functions are communicative, vocative, expressive, deictic and ideological (Super-anskaja 1973: 269–273).

Ultimately, the function of proper names is not different from that of common names, but there are:

> special onomastic functions of proper names [which] also have an extra-linguistic dimension, although they are fulfilled by linguistic forms (names). The onomastic functions of names are defined by the "social mandate" and are often explained not by linguistic facts, but by the social knowledge of correlations between things (Superanskaja 1973: 273–4).

According to most Soviet and Russian scholars, the functions of proper names are a matter of *parole*, rather than *langue*. They have a socially determined "meaning"; they are "cultural items" (cf. Viezzi 1996: 95), not simply "*realia*". The ability to identify the function of a proper name in a text is a crucial ability for translators and interpreters. This is a typical case that casts serious doubt on code-switching theories (one of the most recent advocates of which is Min'jan-Beloručev 1999).

When confronted with a written text (including film scripts and plays), translators have the opportunity to reflect upon proper names before committing them to paper. In conference interpreting, however, interpreters have to be trained to make choices immediately, usually in critical, stressful and time-constrained circumstances.

Besides the usual cross-linguistic and cross-cultural competence, the reformulation of proper names and acronyms also requires strategic choices to be made with reference to the *Skopos* and the communicative situation. In conference interpreting the time available to hear, decode and reformulate is very limited — both in the consecutive and, more particularly, in the simultaneous mode.

In an essay published in 1984 (which, to my knowledge, is the only one dealing with this subject in interpreting research), Daniel Gile makes some useful comments, supported by direct observation, which lend themselves to generalisation. Gile states that, apart from the proper names with which the interpreter is already familiar,

> les noms propres, même quand ils sont phonétiquement et morphologique-ment simples, sont mal restitués dans l'ensemble, et des taux d'échec de plus de 50% sont très fréquents (Gile 1984: 79).

Gile also stresses the importance of anticipation, which mainly depends on the "apport linguistique du contexte" and on the "bagage cognitif de l'auditeur" (80). He then introduces the concepts of *redondance interne* (connected with meaning) and *redondance externe* (connected with form). He also makes a distinction between "simple proper names" and "compound proper names" (81). The former — he argues — involve hardly any redundancy, with the exception of grammatical features such as gender and inflection.

According to Gile, compound names, unlike simple ones, have little *redondance externe*, but a great deal of *redondance interne*. This makes them "nettement moins vulnérables aux baisses de concentration de l'auditeur et aux perturbations du signal" (1984:81).

In conclusion, Gile states that

> La restitution des noms propres en interprétation simultanée est un élément de difficulté non négligeable dans la pratique professionnelle. (84)

and

> la solution du problème passe par une familiarisation préalable de l'interprète avec les données qu'ils récouvrent (ibid.).

Gile's conclusions are particularly relevant to Russian. Interpreters working from and into Russian need a thorough knowledge of the way in which names are used in the source and target languages.

I propose now to demonstrate that, in order to make their strategic choices in reformulating proper names in the target language, translators and interpreters have to be fully aware of the range of possible options. Without appropriate theoretical and professional training, there is a risk of addressing the problem hastily and superficially.

3.   The Russian name code: From competence to strategy

3.1   The appellative function in Russian: A synthesis in the diachronic and synchronic perspective

In Russian there is a three-element name system (*trechčlennost' imeni*), which is the official and bureaucratic norm for personal identification. The three-name code is a characteristic of the Russian language and dates back to Peter the Great. It is also used in the Ukraine, Belarus and in other ex-Soviet republics.

The three names identifying each Russian citizen are:

a.   the first name (N), whether masculine or feminine (e.g. *Ivan/Anna*);
b.   the patronymic (P), deriving morphologically from the father's first name and bearing information as to gender and number (e.g. *Ivanovič/Ivanovna/Ivanoviči*). The use of patronymics probably dates back to the 11th-12th century;[6]
c.   the surname (S), formed by a variety of linguistic processes in different historical periods (*Ivanov, Ilina*):
    1.   by a possessive suffix, marked[7] for gender and number (ancient patronymics, e.g. *Ivanov/Ivanova/Ivanovy, Petin/Petina/Petiny*);
    2.   by a toponymic suffix (-sk/-ck), always marked for gender and number

(*Galickij*/*Galickaja*/*Galickie*); more rarely, by use of a nickname, a non-declinable acronym (e.g.: *Maršak* → Morrenu pabbi Šelomo Kluger) (Podol'skaja 1988, 141), or a collective form (e.g.: *Kukryniksy* → Ku[prijanov], Kry[lov], S[okolov]) (ibid.), etc.

In the pre-revolutionary period, the choice of name was subject to the Greek Orthodox calendar and the consent of the Russian Church (cf. Nikonov 1970:34; Černyšev 1934:212).

Today, the name code conveys an "emotional" value in addition to a social connotation. Rules of courtesy are paramount in this respect:[8]

> The patronymic is a *sign of politeness*, of a reverent attitude towards a person. In everyday language it is still habitual to call a person, as a sign of profound respect, not only by his/her name but also by his/her patronymic (Petrovskij 1984:18; my emphasis).

Although the non normative (contracted) use of the patronym (e.g. *Pal Palyč*, instead of *Pavel Pavlovič*) is not acceptable in "literary language" (*v literaturnoj reči*), it is increasingly common in everyday usage and even in texts (and not only in *skaz*, *Pal Palyč* being a character in Viktor Erofeev's work *Enciklopedija russkoj duši*).

In terms of courtesy, Russian forms of address (allocutives) also require some attention, although often neglected or ignored (not only by trainee interpreters, but also by professionals). While in Italian it is not very polite to refer to someone who is present using the third-person pronoun ("*lo chieda a lui*" = "ask him"; "*lui dice che …*" = "he says that …"), in Russian this is a serious violation of politeness rules — it may be interpreted as rude, even offensive. This is why someone who is present is better referred to by using N+P (*Ivan Ivanovič*), N+S (*Ivan Ivanov*) or an appropriate title + S (*doktor Ivanov*). Using the pronoun is similar to using just the surname ("*Ivanov* says that …").

3.2 Translation competence and options

General cultural competence, and in particular onomastic competence (*onomasti-českoe pole*), necessarily covers a number of notions which anyone involved in linguistic mediation with the Russian language should be familiar with. Admittedly, as Superanskaja says:

> some names such as Repin, Lev Tolstoj, are known and understandable by any well educated person. (1970:281)

However, knowing that Repin is a great painter and Tolstoj is a great writer may not be enough. It may also be necessary for interpreters to identify them in references to *Il'ja Efimovič* and *Lev Nikolaevič*.

Only specific preliminary training can help interpreters develop "phonic competence"[9] (or formation-derivation rules), used to recognise derivative forms (e.g., pet names, nicknames) and allocutives consistent with Russian social conventions. Among the most urgent issues for interpreters is the repetition or substitution of a proper name (Viezzi 1996:69). The ability to cope quickly with such mechanisms — associated with the "meaning" of proper names, abbreviations and acronyms, with stylistic conventions and, in particular, with different text types — is an essential skill for the interpreter. Sometimes, a translation which is perfect from the semiotic point of view (e.g. substituting the full name for the acronym) may entail moving from two syllables in Russian to thirty in Italian, creating problems of time management in simultaneous interpreting. For instance the acronym *Sovfracht* stands for "*Vsesojuznoe ob"edinenie po frachtovaniju inostrannogo tonnaža Ministerstva morskogo flota SSSR*" and therefore it translates into Italian as "*Unione pansovietica per il noleggio del tonnellaggio del Ministero della Marina dell'URSS*". However, there is often no viable alternative, as a shorter form may prove unintelligible to listeners.

Acronyms and full names are therefore not always as interchangeable as, for example, USA/*SŠA* — United States/*Stati Uniti/Soedinënnye Štaty*. Every communicative situation requires a specific choice on the part of the interpreter, who needs to be aware of the listener's knowledge and expectations.

3.2.1 *Register*

As has been said, the interpreter should enable L2 listeners to identify proper names. If proper names express a register variation, changes are required — the connotation may be either "neutralised" or transferred to other elements in the sentence. Before considering some examples of names, their combinations and substitutes (nicknames, circumlocutions, pseudonyms, etc), it should be stressed that register variations may concern all proper names. For example:

– diminutives of place names: *Peterburg*, and above all, *Piter* for *Sankt-Peterburg*; *Vladik* for *Vladivostok*; *Ligovka* for *Ligovskij* prospekt; etc.;
– shortened forms for names of buildings or institutions: *Leninka* for *Biblioteka imeni Lenina*; *Publička* for *Publičnaja biblioteka*; *Technološka* for *Technologičeskij Institut*; etc.;
– antonomasia for buildings: Belyj dom (the White House, the building where the Duma meets); Bol'šoj dom (the ex-KGB headquarters in St Petersburg);
– names of city inhabitants: *pitercy* for *peterburžcy*;
– derogatory names for nationalities: *čuchoncy* for *finny* (Finns); *chochly* for *ukraincy* (Ukrainians); *gansy/nemčura* for *nemcy* (Germans); etc.
– implied brand names i.e. metonymy: "on kupil *devjatku*", "he bought the [Lada model no.] *nine*";
– titles: *Literaturka* for *Literaturnaja Gazeta*.

As is the case for anthroponyms, only rarely do these proper names have a corresponding element in the target language. This is the case only when there is a symmetry between the source and target language cultures — e.g. use of derogatory names for Germans and Jews (common in European languages), or certain "universal" shortened forms such as Bolshoi (for *Bol'šoj teatr*/Bolshoi theatre) or *Petersburg* (for Sankt-Peterburg/Saint Petersburg). Where there is no direct equivalent in the target language, interpreters may have to provide explicit information about the proper name.

3.2.2 *Diminutives and pet names*

In the past (as recently as L. Tolstoj's times, cf. epigraph), diminutive forms bore a social connotation; today, they are mostly marks of affection and connote the relationship between participants in the speech act. Having devoted a whole essay to this specific aspect (forthcoming), here I shall limit comments to some brief considerations concerning interpretation.

In an oral presentation, the use of diminutives may be an indication of (a) intimacy or (b) irony. In both cases (e.g. *Borja, Tanja, Kolja*), it is suggested the interpreter use the proper name in its standard form (*Boris* [El'cyn], *Tat'jana* [El'cyna], *Nikolaj* [II]), to avoid doubt or misunderstanding on the part of the non-Russian public. In the case of the form *Borja*, the interpreter can highlight the ironic intentions of the speaker (especially when there is a direct quotation) by adding an adjective (e.g. "*old Boris*").

3.2.3 *Antonomasia, circumlocutions and pseudonyms*

Antonomasia, circumlocutions and pseudonyms are generally cultural items. In most cases, interpreters make the reference to the person involved explicit. However, they can also resort to their creativity in retaining an ironic connotation. For example:

– antonomasia: *Chozjain* ("the master" or "the boss") par excellence is Stalin (a name which is itself a pseudonym);
– circumlocutions: *Samyj čelovecnyj čelovek* (the most human among humans) and *živee vsech živych* (the most lively among the lively) are well-known phrases used for Lenin. It is worth noting at this point that the surname is often replaced by S+P (Vladimir Ilič). For Russian listeners this implies no difference, but the reference may be lost on non Russians;
– pseudonyms: in most cases pseudonyms are familiar outside Russia (*Stalin, Lenin, Trockij, Gor'kij*), whereas official first names and/or surnames are hardly known (*Džugašvili, Ul'janov, Bronštejn, Peškov*).[10] In Russia both forms are generally recognised — official names, though, tend to bear connotations, while pseudonyms do not. The rhetorical and, particularly, ironic use of official names instead of pseudonyms is widespread.

3.2.4 *Nicknames*

Politicians' nicknames are particularly interesting for interpreters. They evolve constantly and tend to be very expressive. In private conversations in Russia, nicknames related to one's profession or social status may be used (as is the case in Italy: e.g., *l'Avvocato* for Gianni Agnelli, the owner of FIAT). In the political field, the most common nicknames are based on wordplay involving the etymology of the proper name.

A number of examples follow:

Gorbačëv/*gorbatyj* (hunchback); Berezovskij/*berëza* (birch); Gusinskij/*gus'* (goose); Lebed'ev/*lebed'* (swan); Stepašin/*Stepaška*: Stepaška is the name of a calm, kind and obedient rabbit in a TV show called "Spokojnoj noči, malyši" ("Good night, kids").

There are also more complex forms, based on etymology, morphology or orthoepy. For example, Kirienko/*kindersjurpriz*, a rather sophisticated nickname, alludes both to the person's youthfulness and to possible "surprises". Further examples are Černomyrdin/*Černomordin* (*černyj*/black, *morda*/muzzle) and [Boris Abramovič] Berezovskij/*bab*. The latter is an interesting case, the initials BAB providing a pun with *baba* (a derogatory term for a woman).[11]

3.2.5 *Abbreviations and acronyms*

According to Alekseeva (1983:7), Russian abbreviations may be divided into: (a) literal abbreviations (acronyms), e.g. SSSR/USSR; (b) complex syllabic abbreviations (e.g. *komsomol*, *kolchoz*) (c) complex compound abbreviations (*LenTASS*, *sambo* [*samozaščita bez oružija*]/wrestling)

Interpreters working with Russian need to be familiar with abbreviations and acronyms, which are much more common than in other European cultures. Most compound phrases are shortened into one term, which behaves morphologically like a noun. Grammatical gender is determined by the word ending, and the word is declined accordingly. Interpreters are well aware that abbreviation norms are not always the same (see below: *filfak* and *stomat* both indicate university faculties; cf. also Alekseeva 1983:129), and the same abbreviation may in some cases be used to refer to different referents. In other words, Russian abbreviations present a high level of homonymy (e.g. GPU may have four different meanings). Some terms are extremely productive: words with the prefix *glav-* (*glavnyj*/main, central) occupy over 40 columns in *Slovar' sokraščenij russkogo jazyka* (Alekseeva 1983:99–121). These are some examples of compound abbreviations:

– Soviet era:
  capstrany (*capitalističeskie strany*/capitalist countries);
  socstrany (*socialističeskie strany*/socialist countries);
– current:
  Gosbank (*Gosudarstvennyj bank*/[Russian] national bank;

Minzdrav (*Ministerstvo zdravoochranenija*/Ministry of Health);
– colloquial:
Filfak (*Filologičeskij Fakul'tet*/Faculty of Arts);
Stomat (*Stomatologičeskij Fakul'tet*/Faculty of Dentistry).

These are some examples of acronyms:

– Soviet era:
GPU [gɛ pɛ ˈu] (*Gosudarstvenno političeskoe upravlenie*/State political adminis-tration), active from February to December 1922;
GULAG [ˈgulag] (*Gosudarstvennoe upravlenie lagerej*/State administration of labour camps);
GAI [ˈgai] (*Gosudarstvennaja avtomobil'naja inspekcija*/State Automobile Bureau);
– unofficial:
zek (*zaključënnyj*/convict);
– current:
SNG [ɛsɛn ˈgɛ] (*Sodružestvo nezavisimych gosudarstv*/Confederation of Indepen-dent States);
OVIR [ˈovir] (*Otdel viz i registracij*/Visa and residence bureau).

3.2.6 *Translation of abbreviations in conference interpreting*

With a view to translation, acronyms fall into different categories, each of which requires a specific procedure.

a. Russian acronyms used in other languages: these include terms dating back to the Soviet era and concerning referents that do not exist any more or have changed their name (KGB, GULAG). As regards KGB, depending on the listeners, interpret-ers may choose whether to

– use the more elegant but less common Russian pronunciation /kagɛ ˈbɛ/;
– pronounce as in the target language (e.g. in Italian: /ˈkappadʒi ˈbi/);
– explain the institution's function by using a term like "Intelligence".

In this respect, it is interesting that the acronym FSB (Federal'naja služba bezopas-nosti, i.e. Federal Security Service) was mentioned with its Russian pronunciation in a recent 007 film (*The World is Not Enough*), and also in the Italian dubbed version (ɛfɛs ˈbɛ). In both versions, the name was translated, consistent with the initials, as Federal Security Bureau. In the dubbed version, this created a "strange" effect.

b. Russian acronyms which have been translated into other languages: in Italian, for example, *PCUS* (= *Partito Comunista dell'Unione Sovietica*) is used to designate the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Since it takes considerably less time to say the acronym than the full name, the former is a convenient option for the inter-preter if no understanding difficulties on the part of the addressee are anticipated. In the case of SNG/CIS, the Russian acronym is certainly not well known in Italy.

c. Acronyms to be "explained": sometimes there is no target language acronym corresponding to the Russian acronym, but there is (almost total) correspondence with a target language referent. In this case, the translation procedure may be:

– non problematic: *žurfak* (*Fakul'tet žurnalistiki*) easily becomes Faculty of Journalism;

– subject to variation, according to the communicative situation. This is the case of GAI, a term which may be functionally equivalent to "traffic police". The latter would arguably be more understandable than State Automobile Bureau, but approximate and inaccurate (in Russia there is a *milicija*, but not a *policija*). The crucial consideration for the interpreter or translator is whether attention is focused on the characteristics of the institution or the task to be accomplished by its employees (i.e. to fine drivers). For instance, *OVIR* has no definite counterpart in Italy. Possible solutions are: "Ufficio per i visti" (= visa bureau), "Ufficio stranieri" (= aliens' office) or "Ufficio per l'espatrio" (= emigration office). It may be very useful here to follow the principles of the *Skopostheorie*, discouraging automatic code-switching in favour of a functional solution taking into account the beneficiaries' needs.

Finally, in cases such as *Gosbank* (*Gosudarstvennyj bank*), it is advisable to add the adjective "Russian" to the institution's full name.

d. Acronyms with no corresponding referent: this is the case of terms such as *sovnarkom*, a compound abbreviation deriving from *sovet narodnych komissarov*. Since the term dates back to the Soviet era, the translation of *sovet* is not "Council", but "Soviet" (a term which has entered other European languages, with modified spelling, to indicate a Russian referent). The case of the abbreviation *sov-* is complicated, since it is used not only for *sovetskij* (Soviet, adj.) and *sovet* (Council), but also for *soveršennyj vid* (perfective), *sovremennyj* (contemporary) (Kovalenko 1995: 527) and *soveršenno* (cf. sov.sekr., soveršenno sekretno, "top secret").[12]

4.   Conclusions

I hope this paper will convince readers of the need to include the study of onomastics in the language training of future conference interpreters. I also hope that this discussion may serve to confirm that oppositions such as right/wrong, faithful/ unfaithful, translatable/untranslatable are not tenable. Interpreters can establish their priorities — client or beneficiary, domestication or foreignisation, philological aspirations or communicative function — only in relation to a complex array of situational variables. While priorities are to a certain extent subjective, appropriate linguistic/interpreting competence generally leads to comparable results. In terms of quality, what really counts is to *smooth out oppositions*, that is, to produce a

translation-oriented text, i.e. oriented towards the translator's own heuristics. When complex sub-codes are involved, such a text can be created in the time-constrained conditions of interpreting only if the interpreter is familiar with the options suggested by translation/interpreting theory.

Notes

1. Superanskaja's work offers an exhaustive discussion of the linguistic, historical and social problems connected with onomastics (starting from the semantic evolution of the term "proper names" itself, cf. 45–46). However, as in all the Soviet scientific literature on this subject, there are no references to two extremely important aspects which are of special interest for translators and interpreters: the relationship between the code and the bearer's ethnic origin, and translation from one language system to another. In the former case, there is reason to believe that this is, at least in part, due to a taboo.

2. However, this can be misleading: *Asia* can be a girl's name ("anthroponym"), *Aurora* a brand name, *Ambrogio* an animal name ("zooanthroponym") (for indications concerning correct onomastic terminology, see Podol'skaja 1988).

3. The onomastic terminology I am using here is based on Podol'skaja 1988. In any case, I think that, whatever the terminological model adopted, to use "patronymique" or "nom patronymique" instead of "nom de famille" or "family name", as Gile (1984:81) does, can give rise to a degree of ambiguity.

4. I have discussed this aspect in a recent book, Sal'mon (forthcoming).

5. The classification of the degrees of foreign language acquisition/acculturation proposed by Acton and Walker de Felix (1986:22) comprises four levels: tourist, survivor, immigrant, citizen (i.e. native-like).

6. In ancient Russia, people fought for "the right to be addressed with the form -*vič*, i.e. with the patronymic (similarly, the "lower" suffix -*ka* was imposed by the upper classes on the lower social groups) (cf. Nikonov 1970:51).

7. Although traditionally proper names — unlike common names — were considered to be purely denotative, it is now recognised that they also have a connotative value, carrying supplementary information. For a discussion of this issue, cf. Caprini (2001:19–32).

8. On the macro-changes that have occurred in the Russian name code in the course of the 20th century, cf. Bondaletov 1983:128–129.

9. The term *Fonovye znanija* was introduced in the mid-70s by E.M. Vereščagin and V.G. Kostomarov.

10. Cf. for instance, a sentence like: "Ol'ga Forš had proposed to reformulate chronology starting from the birth date of a man called Džugašvili" (S. Dovlatov, *Naši*).

11. The same happened for *ebn*, an acronym for El'cyn Boris Nikolaevič: its first two letters trigger an association with one of the most popular vulgar words in the Russian language (a past tense form from verb *ebat'*, "to fuck").

12. On the contrary, when translating into Russian from languages that have expressions like "State Council", the interpreter can elegantly resort to the abbreviation *Gossovet*, based on unambiguous compounds.

Researching interpreting quality

Models and methods

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1. Introduction

As stated by a speaker in the opening session, the 1st Forlì Conference on Interpreting Studies is in fact the third landmark conference on the study of interpreting to be hosted in Italy. Whereas the NATO Symposium in 1977 (Gerver and Sinaiko 1978) represented the heyday of interdisciplinarity and the Trieste Conference in 1986 (Gran and Dodds 1989) its 'Renaissance' (Gile 1994), the Forlì Conference stands out for its broad conception of interpreting, embracing not only conference interpreting but also court, media, public-service and signed-language interpreting.

The Forlì Conference and Proceedings are therefore an ideal environment for the present paper, which is based on work initiated for a special issue of *Meta* (Pöchhacker 2001). In an effort to overcome or at least narrow the divide between various domains of interpreting research, I will address the issue of 'quality', one of the main themes of the Conference and of Interpreting Studies in general, in an overarching perspective, encompassing research on conference as well as community-based interpreting. Following an attempt to model the concepts of 'interpreting' and 'quality', I will review the literature with regard to methodological approaches to quality-oriented research. Highlighting the common ground shared by those studying quality in interpreting, I hope to show the potential benefits for interpreting research of taking a broad view of the field and promoting a synergistic exchange among researchers in various domains of interpreting.

2. Models

2.1 Interpreting

On the assumption that there is something to gain by taking a comprehensive,

unifying view on interpreting before focusing on a particular domain for specific investigations, I suggest that 'interpreting' be viewed as a conceptual spectrum of different (proto)types of activity, distinguished by the extent to which they are governed by the constraints of a particular socio-cultural environment or institution. The concept of interpreting can thus be modelled as a bi-polar, inter- to intra-societal continuum (Figure 1).
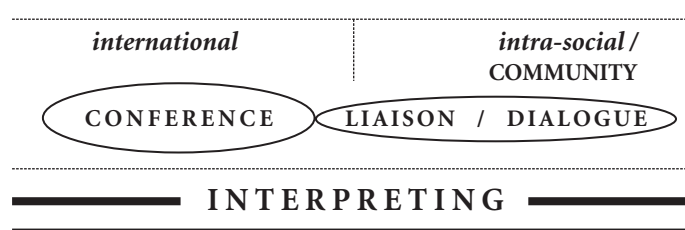
Figure 1. Conceptual spectrum of interpreting.

The domain of interpreting in an 'international setting' largely — but not fully — corresponds to what is usually labelled 'conference interpreting', whereas the domain on the right-hand side in Figure 1, interpreting within a particular socio-cultural community, system or institution, is obviously best captured by the term 'community interpreting'. More importantly perhaps, the model acknowledges the existence of a middle ground, with 'grey' areas, hybrid forms and fuzzy boundaries. Thus, it is not so much concerned with where to draw the line between one category or another but with highlighting that interpreting as a socio-communicative practice can and should be seen as a unified concept.

2.2 Quality criteria and standards

There is considerable agreement in the literature on a number of criteria which come into play when assessing the quality of interpreting. While the terminology may vary from one author or text to the other, concepts such as accuracy, clarity or fidelity are invariably deemed essential. These core criteria of interpreting quality are associated with the product-oriented perspective and focus primarily on the interpretation or target text as "a 'faithful' image" (Gile 1991:198) or "exact and faithful reproduction" (Jones 1998:5) of the original discourse. The notion of clarity (or linguistic acceptability, stylistic correctness, etc.), on the other hand, relates to a second aspect of quality, which could be described more generally as 'listener orientation' or target-text comprehensibility (cf. "*fruibilità*" in Viezzi 1996:100).

Beyond this two-pronged textual perspective, i.e. "intertextual" and "intra-textual" analysis (Shlesinger et al. 1997:128), the interpreter is essentially expected

to "represent fully" the original speaker and his/her interests and intentions (cf. Gile 1991: 198). Harris (1990) labels this the "honest spokesperson" norm, formulated more specifically by Déjean Le Féal (1990: 155) as the criterion of 'equivalent effect'.

Finally, the focus of quality assessment may be neither on the source text nor on listeners' comprehension or speakers' intentions but on the process of communicative interaction as such. From this perspective, which foregrounds the '(inter)activity' of interpreting rather than its nature as a 'text-processing task' (cf. Wadensjö 1998: 21ff), quality essentially means "successful communication" among the interacting parties in a particular context of interaction.

As indicated above, the various sets of criteria for quality in interpreting pertain to different aspects or even conceptions of the interpreter's task, ranging from text processing to communicative text production for a certain purpose and effect and, most generally, to the function of facilitating communicative interaction. As depicted in Figure 2, the model of quality standards ranging from a lexico-semantic 'core' to the socio-pragmatic sphere of interaction can be viewed as reflecting the fundamental duality of interpreting as a service to enable communication and as a text-production activitiy (cf. Viezzi 1996: 40).
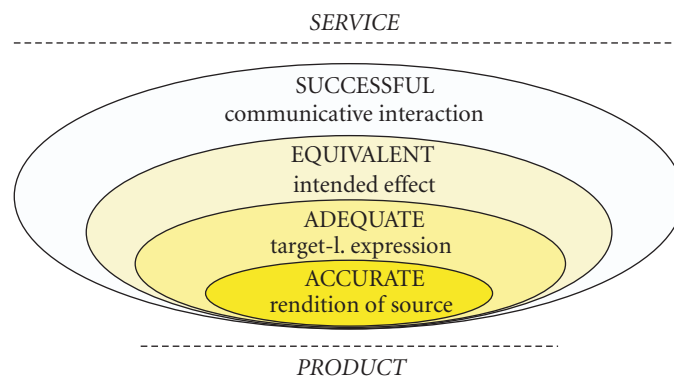
Figure 2. Quality standards for the product and service of interpreting.

2.3 Perspectives on quality

The more one focuses on interpreting as a service to enable communication in a particular constellation of interaction, the more easily one will accept that the degree of 'success' — or indeed any other criterion of quality — is necessarily judged from a particular (subjective) perspective in and on the communicative event. As modeled in Figure 3, the "communication configuration" (Gile 1991) typically includes not only the interpreter and the users — in the roles of sender/

text producer (ST-P) and target-text receiver (TT-R) — but also the "Client" who commissions and pays for the service as well as the interpreter's colleague(s).
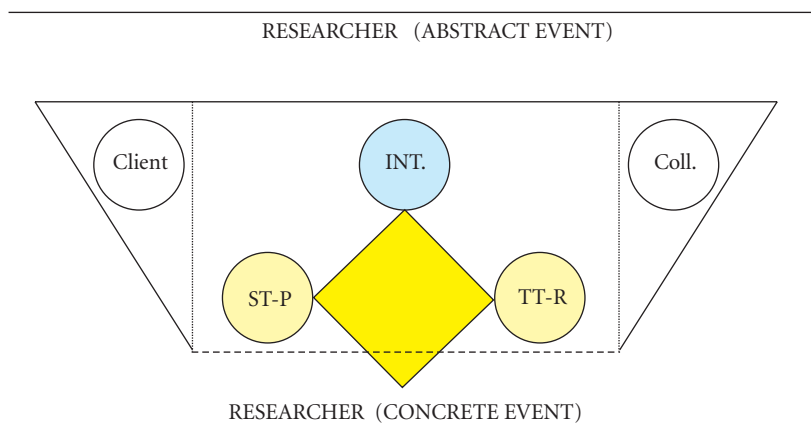
Figure 3. Perspectives on quality in interpreting.

As suggested by Viezzi (1996: 12), the perspective(s) of those involved more or less directly in the communicative event can be distinguished from that of the 'external observer' who takes a research approach to interpreting and is interested in measuring 'objective' features, particularly of the textual product, or else capturing subjective attitudes and judgements.

Given these multiple perspectives on and dimensions of quality as discussed and modelled above, there is a broad range of methodological approaches to the study of quality in interpreting. The following section will give an overview of quality-related research methods and topics with reference to interpreting in both conference and community settings.

3.   Methodological approaches

Empirical studies on quality in interpreting have been carried out along various methodological lines, the most popular and productive of which has been survey research. More indirectly, but consistently, the issue of 'performance' assessment has also been dealt with in experimental studies. Comparatively fewer researchers have focused on the analysis of authentic textual corpora and of individual cases.

With reference to these major methodological orientations as well as to the various assessment standards and perspectives on 'quality' modelled above (Figures 2 and 3), I will now attempt to review the state of the art in research on quality on

the basis of some exemplary studies. Since work on interpreting in conference settings is largely covered by other papers in this volume, more attention and space will be devoted to the presentation of research on quality in the domain(s) of community interpreting.

3.1 Survey research

Survey research on the basis of questionnaires or structured interviews targeting one or more positions in the constellation of communicative interaction has been conducted both from the generic perspective, often with reference to the interpreter's task as such, and with reference to concrete interpreting events.

3.1.1 *Interpreters*

If interpreting is viewed in its duality as a service, rendered by an individual (or group, team, etc.), and as a textual product, the issue of quality can be formulated as 'What makes a good interpreter?' and 'What makes a good interpretation?' These generic questions have been asked in surveys addressed to interpreters and/or users of interpreting since the 1980s. In Australia, Hearn (1981) and co-workers surveyed a total of 65 interpreters in an evaluation of two regional interpreting services. One of the 65 question items covered in personal interviews focused on the qualifications of a 'good interpreter' and yielded such criteria as knowledge of both languages and of the migrant culture, objectivity, socio-communicative skills, reliability, responsibility, honesty, politeness and humility (Hearn et al. 1981:61). The interpreters were also asked about their perception of attitudes and expectations prevailing among their professional clients, particularly regarding the definition and acceptance of the interpreter's role and task. A separate question addressed the issue of 'cultural mediation', which has been of prime concern to those reflecting on the community interpreter's role and was also addressed in the survey by Mesa (1997) described further down.

In her pilot study among conference interpreters, Bühler (1986) had 47 conference interpreters rate the relative importance of criteria like endurance, poise, pleasant appearance, reliability and ability to work in a team. At around the same time, 39 members of the German region of AIIC were interviewed about issues of their profession, and a long list of prerequisites emerged for a 'good interpreter' and team member, ranging from linguistic and general knowledge to voice quality, and from good health and endurance to psychosocial qualities such as appearance, poise, politeness and flexibility (cf. Feldweg 1996:326–378).

An innovative attempt to use Bühler's (1986) criteria for a ranking task in an Internet survey is presented by Nocella (forthcoming).

3.1.2 *Users*

Prompted by Bühler's (1986) attempt to generalise from her findings to the quality needs and expectations of users (listeners), questionnaire-based user expectation surveys were introduced by Kurz (1989a) and turned into a highly productive line of research (cf. Kurz 1993a; Mack and Cattaruzza 1995; Moser 1996; Collados Aís 1998). While some of the user surveys narrowed the focus to Bühler's product-related ("linguistic") criteria, particularly for simultaneous interpretation, others broadened it to include aspects of the interpreter's role and the specifics of consecutive interpretation and particular meeting types (e.g. Marrone 1993; Vuorikoski 1993). A significant distinction was made by Kopczynski (1994b) between the preferences of users as 'speakers' as opposed to 'listeners' in a conference setting. While the former would tolerate a greater extent of intervention by the interpreter, the latter showed a stronger preference for the 'ghost role' of the interpreter and favoured a close rendition of the speaker's words and even mistakes (cf. Kopczynski 1994b: 195ff).

In community interpreting, where bilateral short consecutive ('liaison') interpreting of dialogue is the most common mode by far, the distinction between the two user roles is of a different nature. Whereas the primary interacting parties will usually take alternating turns at speaking and listening, they are essentially different in their status as 'representatives' as opposed to 'clients' of an institution or public service. It is thus common to refer to 'service providers' or 'professionals' on the one hand and 'non-(majority-language)-speaking clients' on the other. Both of these 'user perspectives' — as well as that of the interpreters — were investigated by Mesa (1997), who administered questionnaires to 66 clients (in 11 different languages) and 288 health care workers from 30 different institutions in the Montréal region. Whereas the former were asked about their perception of the quality of interpreting services received (see below), the latter were asked to rate the importance of over 30 interpreter qualities and behaviours on a three-point scale (*très – assez – peu important*). In the survey of service provider expectations, the items which received the highest ratings ('very important') from most of the respondents included 'fully understands client's language' (96%), 'ensures confidentiality' (95%), 'points out client's lack of understanding' (92%), 'refrains from judgement' (91%) and 'translates faithfully' (90%). Strikingly, however, the expectation that the 'cultural interpreter' generally 'explains cultural values' ranked low among service providers' expectations (61% 'very important'), and even fewer respondents (47%) considered it very important to receive cultural explanations from the interpreter after the mediated exchange.

Service providers' expectations of what interpreters ought to do in various institutional settings were also investigated in two questionnaire-based surveys conducted in Vienna. Pöchhacker (2000b) collected responses from 629 health care and social workers on interpreter qualifications and role definitions. Out of ten

criteria, such as linguistic and cultural competence, general education, specialised knowledge, training in interpreting, strictly neutral behaviour, and discreteness and confidentiality, only the latter two were rated 'very important' (on a three-point scale) by a majority of respondents. Nevertheless, user expectations among these service providers were highly demanding. More than two thirds of respondents saw such editorialising functions as simplifying and explaining provider utterances and summarising of client utterances as part of the interpreter's task, and 62% each also expected interpreters to explain cultural references and meanings and to formulate autonomous utterances when asked to do so by the provider. An analysis of the data by professional groups (doctors, nurses, therapists, social workers) yielded a number of significant differences. Thus, nurses tended to construe the interpreter's role much more broadly than doctors, whereas social workers showed much greater acceptance for the interpreter's role as a cultural mediator. As in the study by Mesa (1997), hospital interpreters themselves felt much more strongly than health care personnel that providing cultural explanations was part of their job (83% vs. 59%).

Kadric (2000) used a similar questionnaire-based approach to ascertain user expectations regarding the qualifications and task definition of courtroom interpreters. Her target population consisted of some 200 local court judges in Vienna. As regards qualifications, the 133 respondents rated 'interpreting skills' and, in second place, 'linguistic and cultural competence' more highly than 'basic legal knowledge' and 'knowledge of court organisation and procedure'. Asked about their definition of the interpreter's task, the judges turned out to be less restrictive than one might expect from the literature (cf. Morris 1995), showing considerable acceptance of summarising (46%), simplifying the judge's utterances (63%), explaining legal language (72%) and even formulating routine questions and admonitions on behalf of the judge (72%). As many as 85% of respondents expected the interpreter to explain cultural references for the court.

Since the local court judges surveyed by Kadric (2000) are also responsible for hiring interpreters when needed, the study is unique in that it also addresses the perspective of the 'client' in the broader sense of the term as described below.

3.1.3 *Clients*
In the literature on community interpreting, the role of 'client' is usually taken to refer to the individual client of the institution or public service, and thus to the interpreter's 'individual' as opposed to 'professional client' in the communicative exchange. In a more general sense, however, the interpreter's client must also be seen as the individual or institution that commissions — and pays for — his or her services. Notwithstanding the pivotal role of the client — in the sense of 'employer' — in the constellation of interpreting as a professional service, the quality expectations associated with this position have received very little attention. The study by Kadric (2000) on courtroom interpreting points to the specifics of this perspective

on quality by investigating 'ce-hiring criteria', such as 'smooth facilitation of communication', and eliciting additional concerns such as costs and fees (cf. Kadric 2000: 126–136).

In the area of conference interpreting, a major survey on quality from the employer perspective has been undertaken by the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service of the European Commission (SCIC), the world's largest client of interpreting services. Not surprisingly, the study adds cost and management considerations to the list of quality-related concerns and thus addresses the dimension of the service as well as that of individual interpreters and their work.

3.1.4 *Case-based surveys*

Apart from surveys designed to elicit normative views and expectations regarding a more or less abstract notion of interpreting and interpreters, survey research has also been carried out with reference to quality in concrete conference interpreting events (e.g. Gile 1990, Marrone 1993). For community interpreting settings, a case-based cumulative survey method was developed and applied by a Canadian cultural interpreter service (Garber and Mauffette-Leenders 1997). Feedback from 34 non-English-speaking clients in three language groups (Vietnamese, Polish, Portuguese) was obtained by way of translated questionnaires which were given out by 17 interpreters in a total of 72 assignments. Among other things, clients were asked to rate comprehensibility on a six-point scale and to state their perception of the quality of interpreting with reference to criteria such as accuracy and impartiality. A more elaborate evaluation form was used for service providers in the same encounters, thus implementing a quality assurance system covering both individual client and service provider perspectives. The survey by Mesa (1997) already mentioned above made a similar distinction between the individual client and the service provider perspective. Whereas the 66 clients (of eleven different language backgrounds) were asked mainly to express their agreement (or disagreement) with ten evaluative statements on features of the interpreter's performance, service providers were asked to complement their generic user expectation ratings by stating to what extent ('yes' – ' more or less' – ' no') they had seen the members of the interpreting service under study actually fulfilling those expectations.

3.2 Experimentation

Experimental studies on (simultaneous) interpreting since the 1960s have shown a keen interest in the impact of various input parameters (e.g. speed, noise) on the interpreter's 'performance'. While experiments did not explicitly address the issue of quality as such, looking at interpreters and at 'how well they do under particular circumstances' is certainly linked up with quality assessment or at least a particular aspect of it.

3.2.1 *Measures of performance*

Many experiments have been designed in such a way as to measure the presumably essential parameter of 'accuracy'. (For a more detailed discussion, see Vuorikoski forthcoming). Error counts (e.g. Barik 1971), scores of 'informativeness' as well as 'comprehensibility' (Gerver 1971a), various types of propositional — or verbal — accuracy scores (e.g. Mackintosh 1983; Strong and Fritsch-Rudser 1992; Tommola and Lindholm 1995; Lee 1999a) and even acoustic synchronicity patterns (Lee 1999b; Yagi 1999) have all been used, more or less confidently, as objective measures of interpreting performance in experimental settings.

Only some authors explicitly acknowledge that their 'scoreable textual parameters' cover only a certain 'aspect of quality', if they reflect 'quality' at all. Mackintosh (1983:15), for instance, who used a complex semantic scoring system and calculated inter-rater reliability among her three judges, clearly stated: "In any exercise designed to permit a qualitative assessment of interpretation products, it would be necessary to refine the scoring system." A similar acknowledgement of the limitations of his error coding system is formulated by Barik (1971:207): "Nor is the system intended to reflect except in a very gross way on the adequacy or 'quality' of an interpretation since other critical factors such as delivery characteristics: voice intonation, appropriateness of pausing, etc., are not taken into consideration" (for recent work on such delivery features, see Ahrens forthcoming and Mead, in this volume).

While this problem remains largely unresolved (cf. Gile, in Niska 1999a:120), some progress has been made by using (some feature of) quality not as the dependent but as the experimental input variable.

3.2.2 *Quality as input variable*

Studies involving the manipulation of output quality features in the experimental design have tended to focus on the dimension of target-text adequacy for a particular audience. This approach to experimentation in interpreting was pioneered by Berk-Seligson (1988) in her research on court interpreting. She presented a group of mock jurors with two stylistically different versions of a court interpreter's rendering of witness testimony and was able to show that variations in register (politeness) will significantly affect the way in which listeners perceive and judge the original speaker's credibility, in this case as a witness.

In the area of simultaneous conference interpreting, two innovative studies have focused on precisely the feature that was found to be relatively unimportant in a number of user expectation studies. Shlesinger (1994) presented listeners with two versions of a target text, one delivered with what she analysed as "interpretational intonation", the other read with standard rhythm, stress and prosodic patterns. In a comprehension and recall test administered to her two groups of subjects, the group which had listened to the read version with standard intonation gave 20% more correct answers than the group listening to the interpretation. In another

experiment on the impact of intonation, Collados Aís (1998) produced three intonationally and/or informationally different interpreted versions of a (simulated) conference speech and asked experienced users of simultaneous interpretation to judge the quality of the interpretation with the help of a questionnaire. Even though the same subjects had confirmed the relative insignificance of non-verbal features in a prior user expectation survey, their direct assessment of the quality of the (simulated) interpretation and of the interpreter demonstrated a significant impact of the monotonous intonation in the experimental input material.

Each of the studies mentioned above touch on 'quality' in terms of the cognitive or pragmatic effect of the interpretation on the listeners, thus addressing the criterion of 'equivalent effect' as formulated by Déjean Le Féal (1990:155). In methodological terms, these experiments also share the use of simulation as a key feature in their research design and thus manage to overcome some of the limitations of laboratory experiments in which, by definition, most of the variables of an authentic communicative setting remain out of view and in which the absence of a user or client invariably leaves the dangling question of 'quality (adequacy) for whom?'

3.3 Corpus-based observation

Compared to surveys and experiments, there are relatively few studies of interpreting based on the observation of authentic textual corpora. Cokely (1992) analysed "interpreter miscues" in a corpus of ten authentic sign language interpretations in a conference setting. Pöchhacker (1994a) described quality-related features of the text surface such as interference, hesitation, slips and shifts, as well as problems of coherence in five pairs of original speeches and interpretations, and Kalina (1998) lists 'product analysis' performed on authentic as well as experimental corpora as the methodological basis of a dozen empirical studies, including research on issues like intonation, interference, errors and self-corrections. A large-scale corpus analysis of simultaneous interpreting in the European Parliament, covering four languages, has been undertaken by Vuorikoski (forthcoming).

However detailed the textual analyses in such studies, the findings from the observation of authentic textual corpora are largely subject to the same kind of limitation as the experimental studies discussed above, i.e. the researcher will gain a view on only one set of features rather than come to a more multi-dimensional assessment of quality. The use of transcripts, to begin with, obviously truncates and distorts the semiotically complex textual product under study. Moreover, at least in the area of conference interpreting, there has been a strong bias in favour of discrete and quantifiable textual features, such as errors, omissions, etc., with little regard to complex psycho-communicative relationships and effects. (For a more functional approach to error analysis, see Falbo forthcoming).

In the literature on community interpreting, there are very few examples of quantitative analysis of textual corpora (e.g. Ebden et al. 1988). Rather, the subject — not necessarily of quality — has been dealt with mainly on a qualitative basis. A pertinent example is the study by Jacobsen (forthcoming) on various types of additions, including explanations of culture-bound items, in both a simulated and an authentic court interpreting corpus.

The application of discourse analytical methods to the study of interpreting performance is a relatively recent development (cf. Mason 1999a). Notwithstanding its potential, it must be acknowledged that observational studies based on authentic textual corpora alone will be insufficient to the task of evaluating interpreting quality in concrete communicative interactions. On the assumption that quality is a multidimensional socio-psychological as well as textual phenomenon within a specific institutional and situational context of interaction, the observational study of quality is arguably best served by an approach which allows the researcher to collect a maximum of information on a single case.

3.4 Case study

The concept of case study as characterised by Robson (1993:5), with particular emphasis on the combination of various observational techniques, has not been very common in interpreting research to date. Its application to research on interpreting quality would suggest the combination of corpus-based observation, survey research (interviews), participant observation and documentary analysis so as to ensure a holistic view on quality also at the levels of intended effect and successful interaction.

There are a few studies in which some of these design features are taken into account. Gile (1990) used a questionnaire and reported on his impressions of textual output quality. However, he did not engage in systematic corpus analysis or discuss his approach as a participant observer. Similarly, Marrone (1993) used a questionnaire but did not consider corpus analysis. Since he himself was involved in the case in the role of (consecutive) interpreter, he did install an observer "to 'monitor' events in the light of the questionnaire's parameters" (Marrone 1993:36) but did not report on the data from that source. Pöchhacker (1994a), in his conference case study, used corpus-based data analysis, participant observer notes and documentary analysis but failed to gain sufficient access to conference participants with his user assessment survey.

The most successful example of the use of case study research in interpreting is probably the work of Wadensjö (1998), who recorded and analysed a large corpus of authentic discourse, participated in the interpreted events as an observer, and conducted post-interaction interviews. (For the use of retrospection in the analysis of simultaneous interpreting, see Vik-Tuovinen, in this volume.) Given Wadensjö's

(1998) descriptive orientation, she largely avoids discussing her data in terms of quality. She does however discuss the prospects of applying her methodological approach to "the whole issue of evaluating (the degree of) interpreters' professional skill" (Wadensjö 1998: 286).

4. Conclusions

Against the background of the conceptual dimensions and methodological approaches reviewed in this paper, the issue of quality stands out as a particularly complex research problem. As has been shown, the various facets of the issue — from textual criteria and communicative standards to the interpreter's qualifications and role as well as the multiple perspectives on interpreting as a professional service — have all been recognised and investigated, albeit to a varying extent, for different forms of interpreting activity across the typological spectrum. On the whole, there is a lot of conceptual and methodological common ground, and considerable potential for mutual enrichment between various domains of interpreting research. Thus, work in the field of community interpreting on issues like the interpreter's role and the impact of specific institutional constraints could profitably be taken up in studies of bilateral interpreting in international settings, while researchers studying the whispering mode used in community-based interpreting might turn to the literature on simultaneous conference interpreting for available methods and findings. Clearly, there is also ample room for researchers to co-operate in improving techniques for the (corpus-)linguistic analysis of textual/discourse data. The same holds true for the need to develop elaborate multi-method case-study designs for the in-depth investigation of concrete interpreting events.

Overall, then, this paper is essentially a plea for promoting the discipline of Interpreting Studies by adopting a broader view, of the object under study as well as the research questions and research methods. Considering the complexity of the task facing those who would study 'quality' in interpreting, it should be a win-win proposition for researchers across the typological spectrum from conference to community interpreting to look beyond the conceptual and methodological horizons of their particular specialty and find both new challenges and opportunities in researching interpreting quality.

Quality and norms in interpretation

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While the proposal to extend the application of the concept of norms to interpreting has so far had relatively few advocates (originally Shlesinger 1989 and Harris 1990; more recently Schjoldager 1995; Gile 1999a), it could provide a flexible framework for research in this field. This paper proposes its use as a key concept in quality research.

The elusiveness of the concept of quality is a recurrent theme in the literature on interpreting (e.g.: Shlesinger et al. 1997:122). Incidentally, its definition has become increasingly complicated as, in time, research in this sector has left behind a purely "linguistic" and "technical" approach and moved towards a broader view, based on a notion of interpretation as a complex interactional and communicative event encompassing pragmatic and sociolinguistic factors (e.g. Pöchhacker 1995b; Viezzi 1996). Evidence of this can be found, for instance, in the uncertainties that have emerged over the definition of "errors",[1] which seemed uncontroversial in the 1970s when a purely (inter)linguistic perspective prevailed and the text was seen as a "document" rather than a "message" (Sager 1997:27).

The basic problem is that quality is the sum of several different, heterogeneous aspects, some of which involve different subjects — interpreters, clients, users, speakers — each with a different view and perception of quality, as research has shown (Kurz 1993a, 1993b; Kopczynski 1994a; Moser 1996). There are variations even within the same group: among users, quality expectations tend to vary, reflecting not only the kind of events where simultaneous interpretation (SI) is provided, but also individual tastes and criteria, often related to socio-linguistic factors. This is made more problematic by the inherent evanescence of the product, which is difficult to inspect and does not lend itself to repeated evaluation. Although transcription turns it into an analysable material object, there is no doubt that to analyse an oral text in written form is not only methodologically incorrect, but also ineffective, owing to the important role of prosody in the expression of meaning. Even Pöchhacker's "trans-description" system (Pöchhacker 1994c:236ff), which records some of the features of oral language (pauses, voiced and unvoiced

hesitations, presentation rate assessed in syllables per minute, assessment of melodic, dynamic and rhythmic accentuation, voice quality, articulation), does not make it easy to assess the impact of prosodic factors and paralinguistic features on the transmission of meaning and on text coherence without actual auditory exposure to the oral text. Anyone who has ever tried to transcribe impromptu speech will certainly be aware that often what seems to be perfectly coherent discourse in the oral presentation appears totally chaotic when written. Interestingly, a recent experiment on variability in the perception of fidelity (Gile 1999b) shows that fidelity ratings for the same performance, given both by professional interpreters and "laymen", are generally higher when the interpretation is evaluated in its oral form rather than in transcription.

Models of quality

It is thus hardly surprising that there should be no single, unambiguous agreed definition of the concept of quality in interpretation. Approaches to quality depend either on a piecemeal evaluation covering one or more of its different aspects, or on multi-dimensional models. In either case, there is the preliminary problem of determining and classifying the elements to be analysed. In particular, multi-dimensional approaches presuppose the construction of a model based on coherently defined criteria, while authors who have tried to produce models of this kind have often analysed the problem using heterogeneous, partly overlapping categories, in some cases located at different levels of specificity.

Probably the clearest description of the elements to be looked at when evaluating interpretation quality is in Shlesinger et al. (1997: 128). This quite significantly emerged in a workshop involving a number of distinguished scholars. However, this scheme still breaks down quality into separate elements which may be evaluated independently, as it distinguishes three main levels for analysis — the *intertextual* level (consisting in "a comparison of the source text and the target text, based on similarities and differences"), the *intratextual* level (i.e. the acoustic, linguistic and logical aspects of the IT as a product in its own right), and the *instrumental* level (i.e., the target text's comprehensibility and usefulness as a customer service). This model seems more coherent and effective than others, in that it eschews ambiguous and controversial catch-all terms, like "equivalence" or "effectiveness", which in turn would need to be defined accurately, and is based on theoretically sound criteria: it looks at the (oral) texts involved in interpretations, i.e. focusing on the relationship between the original material to be processed and the finished product, the intrinsic merits of the latter, and the actual use and function for which it is intended. Among the parameters in this model, the most controversial is the *intertextual* one: as is well known, in the literature on translation (particularly the

Allgemeine Translationstheorie, or general translation theory), the importance to be attributed to the relationship between source text (ST) and target text (TT) is highly disputed and it is now widely accepted that, for a translation to be viable, text function in the target culture takes priority over "fidelity" to ST. This means that fidelity is no longer the only yardstick against which the quality of a TT is to be measured. However, in the case of SI there can be no doubt that intertextual consistency is a fundamental prerequisite, since the speaker's communication and the interpreter's translation are part of the same communicative event. There is no change in context or function. As Pöchhacker (1992) has very effectively shown, SI is only "voice over" text and is inherently embedded in the situation where the ST is produced.

If one accepts the principle that this is the basic background against which to evaluate SI as a "finished product", then an analysis of the elements that contribute to determining its quality will have to take into account factors pertaining both to the interpreter (linguistic and encyclopaedic competence, technical skill, ability to work in a team, conference preparation) and to the ST (textual/linguistic features, speaker's pronunciation and prosody, degree of technicality etc.). This in turn means considering a number of contingent, extra-textual, situational variables, which may have a marked impact on interpreters' behaviour. Among these, Kalina (this volume) lists contract specifications, the number of participants in an interpreted event, working languages and language combinations, technical equipment, booth position, working hours, event duration, team strength and composition, availability of documents, and relay quality/quantity.

The extreme complexity and heterogeneity of the aspects to be evaluated helps account for the difficulty that research on quality seems to have in drawing a unified picture of all the different elements involved or at least finding a concept that might account for a satisfactory number of them.

However, the fragmentary nature of this picture does not seem to have prevented an implicit and intuitive agreement, in the interpreting community and in the literature, on basic quality criteria — sense consistency with (or 'fidelity' to) ST, accuracy, successful communication. While this perspective actually works, there certainly is a degree of variability in the actual definition of these parameters, as well as in the relative importance professional interpreters and users/clients attach to them. Fortunately, this instability has not had a seriously hampering effect on research work in operational terms, since intuitive notions of quality may be enough. However, it has left an area of epistemological uncertainty, given the absence of a theoretical model that subsumes all the different dimensions and variables involved.

What is being suggested here is that, in order to find a principle covering the multiplicity and complexity of elements which determine the quality of SI, one should not simply look at the texts involved or at the situation where the interpreted

event is embedded. The aim should be to formulate a principle which is located at a sufficiently high level of generalisation to explain the rationale underlying the interpreter's behaviour and choices, thus providing a basis for understanding the intrinsic quality of a given SI performance, as well as the user's quality expectations.

The application of the concept of norms to interpreting

I suggest that such a principle can be found in the concept of "norms" as "a category for descriptive analysis of translation phenomena", first put forward by Gideon Toury (1980: 57). I propose to use this concept as a heuristic instrument to account for variability in quality criteria and standards, as perceived and (above all) as practised by interpreters and users. This variability is a function of the situation and of the social (sub-)groups involved in each interpretation event.

In this framework, norms can be seen as internalised behavioural constraints which govern interpreters' choices in relation to the different contexts where they are called upon to operate, the aim being to meet quality standards, which in turn are strictly connected with the sociocultural context and are, therefore, norm-based. Norms are shared by members of the professional community and can be extrapolated from regularities in interpreters' behaviour in situations of the same type, assuming that such regularities testify to an underlying normative model. This definition of norms focussing on text production has its counterpart in text reception, since users' expectations concerning interpretation can also be seen as norm-based, deriving from a system of beliefs, partly modified by experience,[2] about what a good interpretation *ought* to be like. These expectations are organised in normative models related to the culture of the different (sub-)groups, which can be reconstructed by analysing the expectations and evaluation criteria applied by the "consumers" of interpretation as a product.

The concept of quality in interpretation can thus be defined as a construct embodying the norms which are deemed appropriate to guarantee the intrinsic and extrinsic properties considered ideal for an interpretation performance in a given social, cultural and historical situation.

In the first article ever to propose the application of the concept of norms to interpreting, Shlesinger (1989) questioned that it would be possible to recognise in interpreters' behaviour "a shared body of norms — the manifestation of shared values or ideas in recurrent situations of the same type…". In her view, one of the main problems was the "virtual nonexistence" of textual corpora collected in the field, in which regularities of behaviour might be sought and norms extrapolated.

In his immediate response to Shlesinger's article, B. Harris (1990) put this problem into a less gloomy perspective. Subsequent events have proven him right, as in the meanwhile corpus-based studies have multiplied in interpreting research,

although the collection of authentic material is still quite difficult. All in all, I think that interpreting scholars should not be discouraged by the conviction that serious research is possible only if large corpora, preferably transcribed and encoded in electronic format like the *BNC (British National Corpus)* or CPSA (*Corpus of Spoken, Professional American*), are available. Think only of how many important works in the field of linguistic and translation research were produced before the idea of corpus collection ever emerged. Think also of how many of the most successful studies in the last few decades are not based on large, formally organised corpora, but on the analysis of single meaningful cases, or groups of cases, which are examined and used as exemplary in order to supply "plausible explanations to central issues" (Toury 1980: 81). Such explanations can then be tested on a full range of other instances, or against the shared knowledge and experience of the scholarly community involved. This means, on the whole, reliance on "cases" rather than "corpora". Such an approach is exemplified in some of the works that have influenced the development of linguistics and translation studies in recent years. For example, it is true of de Beaugrande and Dressler's *Introduction to Text Linguistics* (1981), which is based on selected examples; it is also true of most fundamental works on translation: A. Lefevere, G. Toury, J. S. Holmes, P. Newmark and S. Bassnett are but a few of the many scholars who have written seminal works without using large corpora.

Actually, as regards interpreting, there are reasons to believe that the analysis of a corpus that is limited in terms of topic, situation and cultural context, and thus more homogeneous both from the linguistic and the socio-cultural viewpoint, is likely to yield meaningful and reliable results.

A recent case, which is all the more topical here since it deals specifically with norms and the possibility of working with the concept in the absence of a large corpus, is Theo Hermans' essay on Adrianus De Buck's translation of Severinus Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae.* In this essay, Hermans (1999: 57) upholds "the heuristic relevance of proceeding with a norms concept as a guiding tool" and argues that this can be done by "focusing on norms not primarily as regularities in behaviour extracted from large corpora but as matter of prevailing normative as well as cognitive expectations, and the selective aspects of the individual translator's choice for a particular option in the context of a limited range of realistically available alternatives".

Furthermore, as Gile (1999a: 100) points out, research on norms of interpreting is "more efficiently done by relying on what Toury (1995: 65) calls 'extratextual sources', i.e. by asking interpreters about norms, by reading […] texts about interpreting, by analysing users' responses and by asking interpreters and non-interpreters to assess target texts and to comment on their fidelity and other characteristics using small corpora".

How do norms work in SI?

Having accepted the principle of the applicability of norms to SI, it is now worth asking how norms operate in SI in the perspective of quality assurance.

In order to discuss this point, reliance will be made on Toury's classification of norms as *preliminary* and *operational*, the latter being divided into *textual-linguistic* and *matricial* norms (1995: 57ff).

It is well known that, in the case of translation, preliminary norms include the choice of texts to be translated, which results in a deliberate cultural policy. This is not always the case in interpreting: more often than not, the decision about whether to provide interpreting services for a given event is more the result of an objective need rather than of a given cultural orientation.

However, this does not mean that there are no preliminary norms in interpreting. In the pioneering article mentioned above, where Harris provides examples of very general norms that anyone practising the profession in the Western world would recognise and subscribe to, he deals mainly with *preliminary* norms: "the interpreter speaks in the first person as if s/he was the orator", "interpreters work in shifts of 20 to 30 minutes", and "good interpreters work exclusively or at least prevalently into their A language".

The latter norm is especially interesting, since it provides a good example of two "problematic" features inherent in the very notion of norms in relation to the prevailing concept of quality: the socio-cultural specificity of norms and their basic instability (Toury 1995: 61–62). Let me illustrate this point. As is well known, within the institutions of Western Europe interpreters generally work only into their A language and this has been the rule ever since interpreting services have been offered at EU level. This reflects a norm-based model resting on the basic assumption that the quality of an interpretation is certainly better if the interpreter translates into her/his mother tongue. Of course, as Harris (1990) himself points out with reference to the Canadian situation, this norm is not complied with in many cases where the practical needs of communication in a given situation require interpreters to provide a *retour* as well. In Italy, this is more often than not the case on the free-lance market. However, this is considered simply a departure from a norm which in itself is not challenged. Nor is the idea that B-to-A or C-to-A language translation guarantees better quality. The underlying belief is that the intratextual well-formedness of the interpreted text, in terms of both expression and phonetics, has to be given priority. This view may not be shared by people belonging to other cultures. In Soviet Russia, for instance, it was traditionally believed (and the underlying ideological reasons are obvious) that the highest quality of performance in SI was provided by an interpreter working from her/his A language into a B language, the underlying idea being that intertextual consistency with the ST is more important in determining the quality of a SI than the linguistic effectiveness of the TT.

As for the second feature under discussion, instability of norms, it is a fact that norms are subject to change over time. Referring again to the example that has just been discussed, it is to be expected that, with the enlargement of the European Union and the consequent exponential increase in the number of language combinations, the "into A language" norm will in time give way to a more flexible idea of language direction in interpreting. This in turn will require an adjustment in our norm-based idea of quality.

Going back to the discussion of the operation of norms in SI with a view to quality, let us now look at the second category of norms, operational norms (Toury 1995: 58). More specific than preliminary norms, these are the basis for decisions during the act of translation/interpreting, underlying the interpreter's behaviour in coping with general and "local" translatorial and textual problems. These norms, as Toury makes clear, are either learnt or developed in time through experience: "translators undergoing socialisation also develop strategies for coping with specific types of problems that are likely to recur during actual translation". Gile (1999a: 99) re-interprets as norms three of the general "rules" he put forth in his 1995 book: "maximising information recovery", "maximising the communication impact of the speech" (target norms) and "minimising recovery interference" (optimisation norm). These are just instances of operational norms functioning at a general strategic level. There are also operational norms that work at a local or, if you like, tactical level, i.e. at the level of microstructures. Such norms are "interlinguistic" (Toury 1995: 59) and language-specific, enabling the interpreter to rely on *ad hoc* strategies or ready-made solutions for the translation of certain recurrent problematic structures in pairs of languages. Useful enough in translation, they are all the more valuable in the case of SI, given the severe time constraints and cognitive overload under which the translation task is performed. For certain recurrent pairs of frequently occurring syntactic patterns, interpreters develop automatised strategies. A series of fixed solutions are acquired, in the form of norm-based strategies activated whenever a certain problem occurs, thus saving energy and time. An example is that of 'chunking' procedures, customarily used by interpreters to simplify the hypotactic structure of a sentence, in order to cope with recurrent problems in given pairs of languages. In this case the general norm is: "in SI a sentence is simplified as much as possible in terms of grammatical dependency". In its application, this norm is broken down into a number of more specific tactical norms in a given language combination, accounting for the multitude of single cases which the interpreter will manage in more or less the same way. For instance, in SI from Italian into English, whenever an interpreter comes across a left-branching structure at the beginning of a sentence, the norm is that s/he will not start with a subordinate clause without knowing what will follow. The tendency is to start with a main clause and express the logico-semantic relation with the following clauses paratactically, thus avoiding the risk of being unable to finish the sentence appropriately.

Among operational norms there is another subcategory of norms, *matricial* norms, which govern the "very *existence*" of target-language material as a substitute for the corresponding source-language material […] its location in the text, as well as the textual segmentation" (Toury 1995: 58–59). Although the interpreter is not in a position to change the overall structure of the ST radically in her/his translation, matricial norms are of great interest for her/him as they govern omissions, additions and changes. These are problematic in assessment of quality: while it is often tempting to class them as errors, they are sometimes used as emergency or repair strategies and thus contribute to the overall quality of the performance.

The case of omissions

I will illustrate this point by discussing omissions. The temporal and cognitive constraints under which professional interpreters operate often prevent them from applying norms of which they are perfectly aware, and oblige them to find "compromise" solutions. In the case of omissions, for instance, one of the basic norms shared by the interpreting community is that the interpreter should give a complete rendition of the ST, which in theory would rule out omissions. These are prominent in all quality research focusing on classification and analysis of errors (e.g. Barik 1971, 1994; Galli 1990; Altman 1994). However, we all know by experience that in certain cases the interpreter's omissions help guarantee the best possible quality of interpretation under the circumstances. As Jones explains: "There are cases when the interpreter is unfortunately not in a position to provide a totally complete and accurate interpretation" (Jones 1998: 139). When this occurs, "the interpreter omits in order to preserve as much of the original message as possible". In other cases, omissions are deliberate and aimed at "economy of expression, ease of listening for the audience, and maximum communication between speaker and audience" (ibid.). This contextualised evaluation of omissions is in accordance with the results of some of the users' surveys. For instance, in his questionnaire-based survey, P. Moser (1996: 164–166) found that, although answers to a question about completeness had received a high rating by respondents, in responses to a subsequent question "concentration on essentials" took priority over completeness, especially among older respondents. Kurz (1993a: 15–16) found, in her survey, that completeness of interpretation was rated only fourth or fifth among quality criteria (after: sense consistency, logical cohesion, use of correct terminology and, in some cases, fluency of delivery), and received the lowest marks from doctors and engineers. As Kurz reminds us (ibid.: 19), this is in accordance with Gile's finding (1989: 27) that, in the case of scientific and technical conferences characterised by high information density, participants often prefer a more concise rendition, probably because it does not make excessive demands on their concentration. It is interesting that, in

translation too, the norm regarding completeness of rendition as the absolute priority is no longer a dogma. Sager argues this point in relation to technical texts:

> If we accept that the integrity of the source text content is no longer the sole criterion of the quality of a translation, and at the same time give translators the dynamic role of mediators, we can also expect them to adjust to the needs of secondary readers… (…)
>
> (…) it must be recognised that in certain circumstances and for certain uses, simple omission of parts of a source text can improve the quality of the document for the reader (Sager 1997:33).

Thus, in a target-language-oriented perspective, the function of the translated text and the needs of the recipients prevail over the traditionally accepted norm of completeness of rendition, which is seen as subordinate to ease of reception of the translated text by users.

These observations help highlight how comprehensive the concept of norms can be as an explanatory instrument when dealing with quality in interpretation. It can account not only for regularities in the standard behaviour of interpreters who implement the ideal solutions vis à vis a number of translation problems, but also for repair and emergency strategies which contribute to assuring the quality of the final product. The interpreter can thus overcome the difficulties inherent in a translatorial task to be performed extemporaneously, and in physical seclusion from the actual environment where the communicative act takes place.

All the instances discussed above when dealing with the application of the different categories of norms to interpreting help demonstrate that neither the concept of quality nor the norms underlying it are absolute, but strictly dependent on the context of situation and context of culture and, as such, subject to change in time.

Variability of norms and quality criteria across cultures, space and time

The discussion has so far not emphasised the essentially social nature of norms. As Schäffner (1999:1) reminds us, Bartsch (1987:xii) defines norms as "the social reality of correctness notions". To illustrate this important point, I shall start from another argument put forward by Hermans (1999), where he relies on the theories of sociologists Niklas Luhmann and Pierre Bourdieu to point out that the acquisition of norms by the individual translator can be viewed as "the inculcation of a durable, transposable disposition, i.e. a *habitus* which is both structured and structuring, *forming a link between the individual and the social*" (Hermans 1999:58; my italics). This means that norms as models of behaviour are essentially inter-subjective in nature and thus two-faceted, indeed multifaceted, since they are the result of an interaction involving users, interpreters and other actors (initiators, clients, Professional Conference Organisers, professional associations).

This is the rationale underlying the distinction, proposed by Chesterman (1997: 64–70; 1999: 91), between *expectancy norms*, i.e. the expectations of the target audience, and *professional norms,* which "explain the translator's tendency to take account of these expectancy norms". This distinction, which cuts across Toury's classification, applies very well to interpreting, although it was originally conceived for written translation. Expectancy norms and professional norms are but two sides of the same coin, strictly interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Norms thus appear as expressions of social notions of correctness: the translation/interpreting act, i.e. the actual decisions the translator/interpreter makes, can be seen only within the framework of a translation event, i.e. "the context of situation where the person performing the act, and hence the act itself, are embedded" (Toury 1999: 18; 1995: 249ff), which is socio-cultural in nature and "comprises the various aspects of the communicative and the social background, the client etc. which impinge upon the act of translation" (Chesterman 1999: 91–92).

This is also obvious in the very process through which norms and related notions of quality are acquired by interpreters and by the other actors involved. The interpreter is first taught norms by prescriptive training. S/he then "absorbs" them thanks to the example and advice of senior colleagues, after which s/he refines them through experience. In the end, they become internalised and act as behavioural constraints.

But the problem can also be looked at from the outside, concentrating on the way such norms manifest themselves in the intrinsic quality of the "finished" product, which is guaranteed by compliance with such norms, and on the degree of acceptance the product meets with among its users. In this perspective, norms are the result of an intersubjective negotiation process with all the other actors identified above — the initiators of the interpreting acts (*Translations-Initiator*), clients (*Besteller* or *Auftraggebber*), sometimes operating through Professional Conference Organisers, speakers/delegates (*Ausgangs-Texter*) and recipients (Pöchhacker 1995c: 35–38). These are the "pertinent groups" (Pym 1999: 110–111) involved in the negotiation of norms, which determine the characteristics and quality of the interpreter's performance.

Thus, in the field of interpretation the concept of quality is essentially normative, being based on norms which are negotiated between all the actors involved. The role that each of these actors has in determining quality standards is different. According to Toury, this process of negotiation is mainly carried out by means of what he calls "environmental feedback", "which acts as a kind of post factum product monitoring device, from users, but also from those who have commissioned the act of translating, and sometimes from the originator of the utterance to be translated as well […] The feedback that a translator receives is *normative* in essence" (Toury 1995: 248–249, emphasis in the original). However, apart from the interpreter and the recipient, there are other actors — clients, PCOs, initiators, interpreters themselves as members of the commissions that select novices on behalf

of professional associations or in international institutions — who influence quality by acting as gatekeepers, preventing subjects not considered adequate from gaining access to the profession. In other words, sanctions are applied against those who do not conform with quality norms: they are not offered jobs, they are not admitted to professional associations, they are not selected for positions in international institutions. Of course, the ultimate source of elements for the evaluation of the quality of an interpreter's performance is "environmental feedback", but — again — the picture is quite complex.

For the actors who actually "handle" the finished product directly, i.e. interpreters who produce it and users who consume it, quality production/evaluation rests on a compromise between a system of beliefs concerning the "ideal" quality standards in SI and the actual conditions under which their work is performed, i.e. between the norms that ideally ought to be applied and more realistic norms which are materially applicable in consideration of the real conditions under which the interpreter works. Of course, in professional practice interpreters try to live up to ideal quality standards, but most of the time they work in an emergency situation. This is due to the mode of delivery of the text to be translated, which is rigorously "linear", and a number of different contingent situational facts (paralinguistic features of the ST, working conditions, availability of documentation, efficiency of equipment etc.). Therefore, to meet the best possible quality standards, interpreters' behaviour has to incorporate a whole range of emergency procedures. As pointed out above, in the discussion of the "no omissions norm", the quality of SI is the result of a compromise between abstract standards and the constraints imposed by the real conditions under which it is performed. By necessity, professional norms incorporate a number of "repair" and "backup" strategies.

Symmetrically, there is no reason why this should not apply to users as well. In a survey — like Bühler's or Kurz's — carried out by means of a questionnaire, which simply asks people what they think *in abstract terms* about the different elements that contribute to determining the quality of a SI, there is no guarantee that the opinions expressed by respondents actually reflect the criteria that they apply in practice when assessing a real performance.

So one may wonder if the results of such surveys are reliable with a view to formulating a concept of quality that can be applied in practice. When questions are asked about specific aspects of SI, views expressed by respondents, although based on experience, may be biased by pre-conceived ideas or attitudes. For instance, users' survey results seem so far to indicate that respondents tend to be relatively indulgent about voice quality and fluency, but this could be the consequence of a sort of "ideological bias", that is of the idea that after all "form" is unimportant, while what really counts is content. These points have hardly been tested empirically. When one speaks in purely abstract terms, the evaluation of each single criterion is given in isolation, but in a real evaluation process the different elements may

overlap and interfere with one another. For instance, it can be expected that a poor performance in terms of prosody and fluency may be perceived as less correct and less coherent, although in actual fact it is not.

A recent pilot study (Garzone, forthcoming) I carried out to verify these points as part of a wider study on SI in scientific communication seems to confirm that, although in users' ideological system elements such as style, choice of register, prosody, fluency etc. are not considered essential, these elements do in fact have a marked impact on the norms users apply when they evaluate real performances. This is because such formal factors not only make the interpretation more pleasant to follow, but are also perceived as indicators of the interpreter's competence and reliability in offering an adequate rendering of the ST.

In the light of these considerations, it can be suggested that interviews, surveys and questionnaires are more liable to ideological distortion than research based on a rigorously descriptive approach, which is free from such dangers and can more easily lead to a clear identification of norms and quality standards.

Quality in interpreting as an ethical/deontological problem

The above observations help highlight a fundamental problem in quality research: most of the time users have no objective elements to check the intertextual coherence between TT and ST. They thus have to rely on indirect indicators, as well as on the compatibility of the meaning of the interpreted text with their knowledge of the topic under discussion, plausibility and logical coherence. In other words, users have no direct means to assess intertextual consistency between TT and ST, since this would imply they do not need an interpreter. This aspect is also problematic in translation; however, anyone wishing to check the fidelity of a written translated text can ask a native speaker to give an interlinear translation or to explain in detail the meaning of the ST, while even this "second hand" check is impossible in interpreting. As Shlesinger puts it, "Do our clients know what's good for them?" (1997: 126). One may add: "How can they know for sure whether the service provided is adequate?".

It can thus be clearly stated that, apart from the preventive action of "gatekeepers", quality assurance rests exclusively on interpreters. On the one hand, they are the only guarantors of the intrinsic quality and fidelity of the TT to the ST; on the other, they also have to take care that the "finished product" is sufficiently fluent, plausible and coherent not to raise the user's suspicions concerning its reliability. Users' confidence can be gained only if formal criteria are also complied with, although they should not become substitutes for *real* fidelity to the ST (as may be the case when the interpreter's competence is inadequate, but s/he is crafty enough as to "market" her/his "product" well).

Against this background I would like to adopt here a distinction — on which my colleague and friend, Slavonic scholar Laura Salmon, has often insisted in relation to the translator's profession — between deontology, that is a professional's moral commitment to providing the best possible 'product' for her/his customer's satisfaction, and ethics, i.e. a personal system of general moral principles which an upright person should want to abide by also in the professional sphere, although it might sometimes interfere with deontology. On the basis of such a distinction, I would suggest that formal acceptability of SI, both as a positive quality of the interpreted text and as a prerequisite to win the user's confidence, is part of an interpreter's professional deontology. Assurance of the intrinsic quality of an interpretation and its fidelity to the letter and spirit of the ST is an essentially ethical question.

Notes

1. Cf. Barik (1971, 1994), and other researchers using criteria based on his classification of errors, e.g. Galli (1990) and Altman (1994). In the evolution towards more holistic approaches to TT evaluation, cf. Gerver (1971a and 1971b) and Anderson (1979), who evaluate the TT by means of an *intelligibility scale* and an *informativeness scale,* and Tommola and Lindholm (1995), who take an even broader approach, assessing the TT against a *text base*, i.e. "a semi-formal representation of the semantic elements in the source discourse in terms of predicates and arguments" (Tommola and Helevä 1999: 181).

2. This emerged quite evidently from P. Moser's survey (1996), where the opinions of older respondents differed from those of other age groups.

Quality in interpreting and its prerequisites

A framework for a comprehensive view

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1.   Interpreting quality — Past and present approaches

In his inaugural address at a 1998 exhibition on "Interpreting in the new millennium", organised by the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC), Lord Simon of Highbury, then U.K. Minister for Trade and Competitiveness in Europe, made the following observation: "With experience, you learn to tell the difference between quite good, very good and excellent interpreters".[1]

The experience which the speaker refers to is well exemplified by examiners assessing trainee interpreters. Moreover, since evaluation of interpreting is an intuitive, to a certain extent subjective process, examiners cannot always state precisely what makes the difference between an outstanding and a modest performance.

While it has long been recognised that the quality and reliability of interpreting — and, in some cases, the allegiance of the interpreter — cannot be taken for granted, they are difficult to ascertain (cf. Wirl 1958, Kurz 1986). Poor interpreting can plunge negotiations into a state of confusion and tension, sometimes even triggering hostilities. This in turn may lead to abandonment of interpreting in favour of negotiations in a vehicular language, however limited delegates' linguistic skills.

In written translation, discussion of quality has traditionally focussed on fidelity to — as opposed to freedom from — the source text (cf. Störig 1963). In interpreting, there has been a certain consensus that the priority is to convey the sense, not the wording (Seleskovitch 1976), though this principle is not applicable to the same extent in all forms of interpreting. For example, court interpreting does not imply the same degree of freedom to reword the original as media interpreting. For conference interpreting, a variety of factors determine the extent to which the original wording has to be maintained, and quality cannot be determined simply on the basis of sense predominating over words. It is equally inappropriate to judge simultaneous interpreting in relation to quantitative indices such as *décalage*, i.e. by

equating a long ear-voice-span to good segmentation and high quality (cf. Goldman-Eisler 1972).

Scientific research on the quality of interpreting started only with the advent of simultaneous interpreting. Current studies of interpreting continue to focus far more on simultaneous than on consecutive. Among the possible reasons for this are limited market demand for consecutive and, to a certain extent, the tendency to consider consecutive cognitively less demanding than simultaneous. While processing conditions differ in the two modes, a framework for a comprehensive approach to quality should cover both.

2.   Measuring output quality

In early interpreting research, product quality was judged by experimental studies comparing transcriptions of the source text (ST) and target text (TT). In many cases, a prose ST was used.

An early attempt to evaluate the TT was that of Barik (1971). He compared STs and TTs, counting omissions, additions, substitutions and errors. Quality assessment was based on the resulting data. This approach met with sharp criticism,[2] as Barik did not use authentic STs, his subjects were mostly not professional interpreters and — a particularly critical issue — assessment was based largely on transcripts of TTs. Such an approach does not take into account the interpreting situation, the overall setting or the constraints these place on the interpreter.

Anderson (1979) concluded from her more authentic study that making documentation available to interpreters before conferences did not necessarily improve interpreting quality, and that interpreters felt at ease even when given no documents in advance. Anderson's study also showed no significant difference in quality according to whether interpreters received live audio, or video ST input. The study, done in a very early phase of interpreting research, illustrates a common research problem — i.e., that data are often insufficient for drawing any kind of general conclusions.

Gile (1988), in his capacity management model, explains how interpreting quality is liable to deteriorate when one of the three main Efforts (in simultaneous interpretation: listening, memory, production) demands extra processing capacity and does not leave enough for the other Efforts. Constraints on overall capacity are liable to affect the quality of the TT.

Pöchhacker's hypertext approach focuses on product inspection as an integral part of quality assurance (1994c: 233); the author considers that one perspective on quality is to consider the TT as a product which can be judged independently of the ST (1994a: 205ff). This means that the ideal goal of the TT is to convey the message understandably to the addressees. Pöchhacker also takes ST variables into account

by establishing text delivery profiles. This makes it possible to define objective and subjective TT quality, according to the conditions in which the text is produced (1994c: 241–242).

Moser-Mercer identifies, as the optimum quality goal, a complete, accurate, undistorted rendition of the original, taking into account extra-linguistic information subject to situational constraints (1996: 44).

In his pragmatic approach to quality, Kopczynski focuses on contextual factors and situational variables (1994a: 88).

A didactic approach is reflected in Viezzi's quality model (1996), which describes the four goals of equivalence, accuracy, appropriateness and usability; quality is defined as the degree to which these goals are achieved.

All these authors suggest that there are several dimensions to the relationship between speakers, STs, interpreters, TTs and users (addressees) (cf. also Kohn and Kalina 1996; Kalina 1998). This leaves the problem of how these relations and the factors that affect them are to be measured.

3.   Users' views

The first survey on interpreting quality was carried out by Bühler (1986), whose respondents were professional interpreters. Among subsequent surveys was that by Kurz (1993a, 1993b), examining user expectations. The final report of a study commissioned by AIIC (Moser 1995) provides extensive data on users' expectations and requirements. The one point on which users seem to concur is that content is more important than form (cf. also Kahane 2000). However, the content of the ST can be judged only by listening to it in the original language. If the user listens to the TT, equivalence between ST and TT can be assessed only on the basis of general criteria, such as logical coherence and plausibility. These factors alone, crucial as they are for interpreting quality, are not enough to allow a broader assessment of quality, examining the TT in relation to the ST. Users' understanding of ST content is at best vague, since they would not need interpreters if they could understand it without difficulty.[3]

Shlesinger puts the question succinctly: "Do our clients know what's good for them? What do they expect, and what will make them happy with the service and product we provide?" (Shlesinger et al. 1997: 126). While user surveys provide answers to the second question, the real problem is actually summed up in the first. How should users know what is good for them? Similarly, how should interpreters know what is good for users? Ultimately, the insights provided by user studies document only one dimension of the quality paradigm — i.e., users' perception of interpreted texts, itself a function of several variables (cf. Kohn and Kalina 1996). What is needed is a model encompassing the communication situation, the

intentions and knowledge bases of the different actors (including the interpreters), and any conditions liable to affect the interpreted event. However, caution is needed in any claim to define objective criteria for interpreting quality. Even in translation, which involves far fewer volatile factors and allows hard facts to be established much more easily than in interpreting, total objectivity is not possible (cf. House 1997).

4.   A broader perspective

4.1   Interpreting as an interactive communication process

It is thus not as easy as it may seem at first sight to define exactly what interpreters are supposed to present and how. To make matters worse, little attention is given to what interpreters expect and/or require from the other actors involved in the communication process.

With advances in information technology and financial constraints, the profession is now facing a deterioration in the working conditions which the professional associations, particularly AIIC, have campaigned hard to improve over the years. This affects the quality which interpreters are able to provide. Based on the definitions reviewed in Section 2, I suggest that quality cannot be determined in relation to the interpreter's output alone. Other aspects too require close study — e.g., the interpreter's appearance and general conduct during and around conferences, booth manners, discretion, commitment to preparation and debriefing, further training.

The conditions in which the interpreting act is taking place, crucial for TT quality, also need to be examined more closely. A number of external factors can be made measurable, and studies may be carried out to determine their impact on interpreting quality.

Such studies may have a dual objective. First, they enable interpreters and other actors to identify whatever scope for improvement there is. Second, they highlight that interpreting quality is subject to appropriate standards in interpreters' working conditions.

One of the main needs is closer cooperation between interpreter teams and organisers of multilingual events. However, such cooperation requires time. This is why organisers often turn to agencies for recruiting interpreters. Agencies, or "event organisers", are even less inclined to invest time in problems which they do not see as an integral part of the interpreting service, i.e. obtaining documents, checking technical conditions, requesting speakers to send in manuscripts early enough, avoiding relay interpreting etc. They often recruit interpreters at the last minute, without sufficient notice for adequate preparation.

Interpreters may thus realise only during the meeting that the organisers could actually have provided them with documents, visual material (such as transparencies),

translations, or information on speakers. Similarly, if speakers are not informed beforehand of possible difficulties for interpreters, they will have no qualms in quoting lengthy references without prior warning.

Such oversights are bound to have repercussions on interpreting quality and earn interpreters a poor reputation. The impact of all these variables should therefore be made clear and, as far as possible, measurable.

4.2 A framework for determining factors that affect quality

Ideally, this implies the need for a yardstick against which we can assess an individual interpreting act in a given communication situation. We would like to be able to quantify what makes actual performance fall short of perfection. This seems a difficult undertaking. There are admittedly a number of measurable parameters in output (cf. Figure 1). However, these are not only interdependent, but also subject to continuously changing situational, contextual and procedural requirements. Finding the right balance during each and every phase in a communication act is a competence that may be reflected differently in different segments of an interpreter's output.

Semantic content	Linguistic performance	Presentation
consistency	grammatical correctness	voice quality
logic, coherence	adherence to TL norms	articulation
completeness	comprehensibility	public speaking
accurateness	stylistic adequacy	discipline
unambiguity	terminological adequacy	simultaneity
clarity	discretion	technical mastery
reliability	lack of disturbances	conduct

Figure 1. Dimensions of interpreters' output quality.

Other aspects are not necessarily reflected in output. First, the participants in the event and their role in the communication process must be considered. The main actors involved are the conference organiser, speakers (producers of STs), ST and TT listeners (addressees from the point of view of the speaker, users from the interpreter's perspective), and interpreters. There can be interaction between the interpreters, with their different languages and relay requirements, and the other actors, not only during the communication event but also beforehand.[4]

Other prerequisites are the interpreters' skills and professionalism. These include: general physical and mental factors (such as stress tolerance and concentration); linguistic and communicative skills; transfer competence between two languages; subject knowledge and prior preparation; teamwork skills; professionalism in dealings with conference organisers; and professional ethics.

More task-specific skills and competences include discourse comprehension and production, even under adverse conditions (e.g., poor speakers, non-native speakers), terminological knowledge and its application, intercultural knowledge and, very important, proficiency in choosing appropriate interpreting strategies as a function of the task, working conditions, situation and relevant constraints (cf. Kohn and Kalina 1996). Speaking and listening at the same time, for example, is a skill which can, in principle, be trained. Knowing when to speak during a listening effort and when to keep silent is a competence which has to be acquired in a cognitive learning effort.

Factors in interpreting quality can be classed in four groups, according to when they come into play in relation to the event. The first group includes factors defined prior to the process (pre-process or upstream). Factors in the second group are situated in the period immediately before and during the interpreting process (peri-process conditions). The third group is made up of actual in-process requirements and conditions, while factors in the fourth group cover what comes after the event (post-process or downstream). Figure 2 presents these four stages and indicates the factors most likely to affect output.

1. Pre-process prerequisites

skills and competences
contract specifications
task definition
preparation

2. Peri-process conditions

number of participants
working languages
technical equipment
booth position
team strength, composition
working hours, event duration
language combinations
relay quantity/quality
availability of documents
information on proceedings

3. In-process requirements

knowledge and presuppositions
conditions of ST presentation
target language requirements
interactional competence

4. Post-process efforts

terminological follow-up
documentation
quality control
further training
specialisation
adaptation to technical progress

Figure 2. Factors relevant to interpreting quality.

Given that all these factors may affect the quality of interpretation, data are needed to ascertain which can be measured and how, and to what extent each is related to the interpreting product.

When attending numerous conferences (whether as an interpreter, as a participant or as an observer sensitive to the problems of communication in interpreted events), one finds that there is often considerable scope for improving the quality of interpreting. Yet action is rarely taken. Interpreters themselves do not always make optimum use of their skills or of available information. Organisers and speakers are insensitive to the needs of the interpreter. Examining these factors more closely should afford a clearer view of where improvements are possible.

With this objective in mind, I have listed some data on overall conditions for simultaneous interpreters in two conferences. These were comparable in a number

General conditions	Event A	Event B
request for interpreters made by organisers	3 months in advance; recruitment by agency (specifying need for specialist interpreters); carefully composed team	one/two days before event; any interpreter acceptable; team composition not thought out in advance
contract negotiation	pay not an issue (generous); negotiation by one interpreter; contract settled 2 months before event	no information

Specific conditions	Event A	Event B
assessed need for preparation	extremely high	very high
availability of printed material	made available by organisers	existing publications
availability of glossaries and terms	specific 7-language glossary made available	none
availability of speakers' texts	none	some scripts made available just beforehand by speakers, when asked by interpreters
availability of speakers' transparencies	all	none

Figure 3a. Scenarios of interpreted event: pre-process conditions.

Peri-process	Event A	Event B
technical equipment	installed by highly reputable firm	fixed installation of average quality; microphone problems during discussion
booth position	lateral, with good view of screens and transparencies, speakers and audience	extremely lateral, with little or no view of overhead transparencies, average view of speakers; an alternative position would have been possible
working hours	9–12 (briefing), 13–17 (event)	9–18 (90 min. lunch-break)
explicit reference to translation	once at opening; thanks at close; positive remarks during breaks	frequently by chairperson, asking speakers to slow down when interpreters had problems

Figure 3b. Peri-process factors and conditions.

of respects. Both were one-day events, with the same language combination; on each occasion, the team consisted of two interpreters with different A languages. Scientific reports were presented at both events, with discussion and requests for follow-up action. Since presentations were thematically related to one another at each of the two conferences, intertextuality criteria as defined by Alexieva (1994) were fulfilled. Interpreters were aware of audience needs. The number of participants was roughly the same. Presenters and other participants knew each other and spent the whole day together (with an evening social event).

Figures 3a,b,c, and d show a synopsis of the variables observed at the two events, following the sequence of four stages illustrated above.

It would also be interesting to study the interpreters' output from the two events and users' assessments of quality; however, as no recordings were made and no questionnaire was distributed to participants, there is only cursory information. Remarks by participants indicate that they considered the interpretation excellent at event A, and the interpreters were also satisfied; in event B, the audience were aware of — and sympathetic with — the difficulties experienced by the interpreters (who actually reminded participants several times of the conditions they were having to cope with).

Even if recordings and user assessments were available, they would not shed light on all aspects of quality, some of which are not present in the TT or reflected in users' impressions. Confidentiality, of the utmost importance for interpreters, is a case in point. While lack of conscientious preparation will usually have a perceptible effect on the TT, breach of confidentiality will not.

Source text related	Event A	Event B
text presentation	40% read out manuscripts (with transparencies); no adjustment of delivery rate needed; use of transparencies in both languages	50% read out manuscripts; transparencies/handouts made available during presentation only on request; speakers asked to slow down — no effect
rhetorical characteristics	very marked	marked
non-native speakers	none	several (~20%)
language distribution	30:70	60:40

Target text related	Event A	Event B
length of interpreting turn	20 to 40 minutes, depending on speaker, language and speech length	5 to 25 minutes, depending on workload and language direction
need for interpretation	needed by most	needed by some (including non-natives)
feedback from audience	praised interpreters' specialist knowledge	encouragement; sorry for interpreters' difficulties

Figure 3c. In-process factors.

Post-process	Event A	Event B
need for confidentiality	yes	no
debriefing, terminological follow-up	thorough	no information
output review (e.g. recording)	no	no information
further training	yes	no information

Figure 3d. Post-process work and requirements.

5. Conclusion

A scheme such as that proposed above, which can of course be extended and adapted, might serve as a reference framework for determining the potential quality of a given interpretation. It may also distinguish between factors or conditions which depend on the interpreter and those which do not.

The next question is whether, and to what extent, these conditions and their effect on interpreting quality are measurable. For instance, does insufficient preparation affect only the content of the TT, or does it also affect interpreters' delivery and general conduct? Measuring such factors and effects is, I think, one of the most difficult tasks in interpreting research, requiring cooperation with other disciplines. One specific section of interpreters' output may not necessarily reflect all the factors identified above, but analysis of an entire conference certainly should. A large number of observational studies are needed to obtain information on all these factors.

One aim is to improve working conditions and ensure that what has been successfully fought for in the past is not lost. Another concern is to measure interpreting quality against more objective criteria, which means that all relevant conditions (variables) have to be clearly identified.

This attempt to sketch a broader perspective of quality — or rather quality assurance — could, in my opinion, also provide a useful basis for teaching future interpreters. After all, interpreter training is not only about processing skills. All aspects of mediated communication that may determine its success should be taught.

If we can prove that quality depends to a considerable extent on conditions such as those discussed above, we may have a better chance of obtaining a working environment conducive to the highest quality.

Notes

1. Source: Silke Gebhard in the AIIC Bulletin, vol. XXVII no. 2, 15 June 1999: 7.

2. The main points of this criticism can be found in an article by Eliane Bros-Brann (1975), in Babel 21/2, 93ff.

3. Participants occasionally listen in to interpreters to check their fidelity to the ST (cf. Pöchhacker 1994a: 128).

4. For a more detailed discussion of what the different groups of actors require of each another, cf. Kalina (1995).

Interpreting outside the conference hall

Community interpreter training

Past, present, future

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1. Introduction

Community interpreting requires not only good linguistic knowledge and education, but also a range of socio-cultural and psychological skills. Among the many variables to which the community interpreter must be sensitive are the setting in which interpreting is provided, its purpose, the status of participants, societal norms regarding interpreter behaviour, and professional ethics. At the same time, the interpreters' labour market is highly influenced by external factors, such as the overall economic situation and fluctuations in migration. In addition, the advent of new technology, e.g. remote interpreting, is challenging established "truths" about interpreting quality. There is a need for flexible training programmes, taking all these factors into account so that current and future training needs can be met.

Can anyone become an interpreter? In principle I would say yes, but in practice time constraints and limitations on financial resources make it advisable to select the people who need least training. It should also be remembered that, since there are different forms of interpreting (conference, community, escort, sign language etc.) and the interpreter works in a variety of settings (conferences, institutions, negotiations, court proceedings etc.), users' expectations vary from situation to situation. Interpreter training must therefore attempt to address the actual needs of specific working situations.

The first part of this paper attempts to define the concept of community interpreting, giving an overview of past and present needs. These include the organisation of interpreting for immigrants and other linguistic minorities. Such issues are important background factors when discussing training needs for interpreters.

The second part will then focus on training of community interpreters, including questions of screening and aptitude testing. I will also present some ideas

about future directions in community interpreter training, given the increasing role of new technology and the need to raise awareness of the emotionally demanding work done by community interpreters.

2.   Aspects of interpreting

Community interpreting differs in many crucial ways from conference interpreting (e.g., setting, social status of participants, knowledge of the subject discussed, purpose of the encounter). In addition, views on a number of issues in community interpreting (e.g., the interpreter's role in the interaction s/he mediates) differ. In many if not most countries, community interpreters are supposed to be neutral and unobtrusive, just like conference interpreters, whatever the setting (for a typology of interpreting cf. Kulick 1982). In other countries, the community interpreter is supposed to be actively involved in looking after the rights of the "weaker" party. Socio-cultural considerations such as these should be recognised as a first important factor to be analysed with a view to optimisation of training.

Two other factors which are important are the need for linguistic proficiency (competence at both "system" and "performance" levels — e.g., knowledge of genres and text types) and cognitive skills (tapping "old" and "new" knowledge about subject matter, situation, participants, etc.).

The following table is an attempt to classify various aspects of the interpreter's competence, with reference to these three factors.

Aspects of interpreting
1.   Socio-cultural
     – situation: setting, status of participants, purpose of encounter, societal norms and rules regarding interpreter behaviour
     – professional ethics, norms of interpreting
2.   Linguistic
     – language skills
     – knowledge of genres, text/discourse types
3.   Cognitive
     – knowledge of topic, situation, participants
     – interpreting technique
     – meta-communicative competence: knowing what to do and why

Figure 1. Aspects of interpreting.

3.   Terminology[1]

–   *Community interpreting* can be described as interpreting between a *service provider* and a *client* who do not master each others' languages. It is usually conducted within public or private institutions, in health, legal, education, labour market and social service settings. Synonyms are *liaison interpreting, contact interpreting, public service interpreting.*
–   *Community interpreters* are persons who do paid interpretation work at institutions and organisations, in the situations described above.
–   *Community translation* is written translation of mainly informative texts, addressed by authorities or institutions to people who do not understand texts in the language of the text producer.
–   In many countries, *court interpreting* is considered a branch of community (or liaison, etc.) interpreting. Other specialities include *medical interpreting* and *interpreting at the work-place.*
–   Community interpreting mostly involves interpreting *dialogues* — hence the term *dialogue interpreting,* coined to describe this special type of *consecutive interpreting.* Often, especially in the court and in psychotherapy, *simultaneous interpreting, simultaneous whispered interpreting (chuchotage), summarising* or a mixture of several techniques are used.
–   *Conference interpreting* is often carried out by specially trained conference interpreters who do not necessarily master the skills of community interpreting, and vice versa.
–   *Interpreters for deaf, deaf-blind and hearing-impaired persons* often have assignments at conferences, meetings or lectures. The majority of these interpreters do, however, also work in community interpreting settings.[2] *Sign language* is nowadays recognised as the native language of the deaf.

4.   History of community interpreting

4.1   One of the world's oldest professions

Interpreting has existed since the fatal collapse of the Tower of Babel. A normal activity in the daily lives of most of the world's population, interpreting is a trivial affair in everyday communication within bilingual or multilingual societies (i.e. most of the world). Professional interpreters have played a major role as guides and spies in every imperialistic endeavour to take control over foreign lands, since long before Hernando Cortez. In more peaceful circumstances, business trips like Marco Polo's would not have been so successful without the help of skilled interpreters.

"Community interpreting", in the form of linguistic assistance for communication between members of different ethnic communities, has thus been around for thousands of years. It has mostly been done for at best very modest remuneration. This familiar combination of trivial, everyday activity and an accepted practice of unpaid linguistic help to fellow community members has hindered efforts to professionalise community interpreting. In this respect, international migration of workers and refugees has increased the need for public service interpreting, often in countries with no tradition of organised interpreter services for immigrants.

4.2   Community interpreting today

Professional community interpreting, and publicly funded training and testing of interpreters, have been around at least since the 1960s. Sweden started its first interpreter service agencies for spoken languages at the end of the 1960s and, in 1976, introduced state authorisation for interpreters and translators. At roughly the same time, interpreting services were being built up on the other side of the globe, in Australia, where the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) was set up in 1977.

During the 1980s, community interpreting agencies and training courses were set up in many European countries. The Nordic countries, Great Britain and the Netherlands all have a history of comparatively well-organised community interpreting, albeit with great differences in scope and organisation of services. The countries with the largest numbers of immigrants, France and Germany, were less prompt in organising public interpreting services for immigrants.

5.   Organisation of interpreter services

During the last decade, most countries in Europe have gradually started to recognise the need for community interpreter services and training. In the middle of the 1990s, an EU project was launched to initiate co-operation and exchange of experience between European interpreter service providers. In 1998, the project published a "European survey on community interpreting" (ISM 1998).

Forty-two interpreter service agencies in 13 countries responded to the survey. Out of these, 14 agencies are public (usually local government) organisations, 26 are private non-profit organisations subsidised by government, and only 2 are private companies. They provide interpreters in the following areas (in order of importance): social, medical, legal, and education. Only 16 agencies provide interpreters in all of these areas.

Most of the agencies indicated that they use free-lance interpreters. Only 10 agencies use staff interpreters.

Thirty-three agencies indicated their total annual interpreting hours. The overall figure was 890,000 hours (1996). Ten agencies (almost one third) each had a total of over 50,000 hours, while 14 had less than 1,000 hours.

5.1 Recruitment of interpreters

The following requirements of community interpreters were formulated in the European project.

An interpreter in the public sector has a different role and obligations than the business interpreter or the conference interpreter. The task of the community interpreter is to secure satisfactory communication between professionals and clients who differ in social and cultural background, religious beliefs, status and level of education. The European project states that aspiring interpreters should possess all necessary work and residence permits, not have a criminal record, be of a certain minimum age, and have lived in the host country for at least three years. Those born outside the host country should have received at least secondary school education in their country of origin; candidates born in the host country should have university training and should have stayed for an extended period of time in the country of the other language.

The survey recommends that applicants be tested for the knowledge and qualities listed in Figure 2.

Qualities	Method of testing
social competence	interview
perfect knowledge of languages	oral and written tests, role play and courses
good knowledge of host country and special terminology within the working areas	oral and/or written tests
interpreting technique	role play, practical tests
knowledge about targetgroup and their special problems in host society	minimum period of residence in host society and/or test

Figure 2. Qualities required of prospective community interpreters (from *European Survey on Community Interpreting*).

5.2 The interpreter's role

The European survey also asked how interpreters approach their task. The figures for the various alternatives are indicated below.

The interpreter:

– only interprets what is said	27
– is a cultural broker	20
– is an advocate of the immigrant	2
– is an advisor to the client	10
– should be a shelter against discrimination	6

While 18 agencies indicated "only interprets what is said" as their sole choice, 9 supplemented this with "possibly also cultural broker". According to the survey, this may imply a difference related to the sector in which assignments are carried out (ISM 1998: 2).

5.3   A diversified interpreter role

Discussions about the professional role of the interpreter usually highlight two opposing principles or ideas: the neutral "translator"/"linguistic interpreter", as opposed to the "advocate"/"cultural interpreter". While both these principles have their staunch defenders, I would like to advocate (sic!) a more practical view. We could perhaps see interpreting as an activity embracing several approaches, depending on the situation. This concept can be represented as a pyramid (Figure 3).
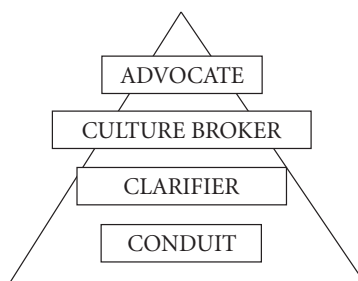
Figure 3. Interpreter roles (after Diversity Rx 1998).

As the picture implies, the bulk of interpreting takes place on the basic "conduit" level, meaning that "just interpreting" is provided. In some situations, the interpreter has to go further. When it comes to technical or culture-specific terms, the interpreter often has to give explanations in order to make the message accessible to the recipient.

The other two roles, cultural broker and advocate, are more controversial. However, studies of real-life interpreting show that the interpreter sometimes does have to interrupt the session and give an explanation of some specific cultural issue threatening to develop into a serious misunderstanding. The role of "advocate"

means that the interpreter acts on behalf of the service user (i.e. client) outside the interpreting session. An example of the interpreter feeling this need arises when the patient's needs are not addressed because of hospital bureaucracy or racism.

It would be interesting to see how far these approaches are actually practised at public institutions — probably to a very varied extent.

6. Training of community interpreters: Flexibility and innovation

Migration in the form of going abroad to work has always existed. Globalisation and internationalisation of society, together with the arrival of refugees, will result in growing population groups which do not master the official language(s) of the host country. This means that the need for community interpreters will continue to grow. While this is not an imminent prospect for all countries, all regions or all immigrant languages, one of the challenges for training institutions is nevertheless to achieve the flexibility to set up courses once the need arises.

How long is needed to plan a new training course in a language in which none has been provided before? If the answer is more than six weeks, it may be too long! Ad hoc solutions are often necessary to cater for sudden needs. There is nothing wrong with this, but one must make sure that there is an efficient system for the organisation and administration of such courses. This includes recruitment of students and teachers, as well as availability of course material.

Taking into account the varied language proficiency of prospective community interpreting students, the training course should allow for extra language support if needed. Course length could be flexible, depending on the students' educational background. Does the university have this flexibility, or would it be better to choose another form of training such as adult education centres or "open university"?

I would argue that, ideally, an interpreting course should consist of about 50% theory and 50% practice. Does the institution have its own teachers for a course in community interpreting? If not, do we know where to find those teachers? How do we educate our own staff so they can teach on interpreting courses?

Community interpreter training at universities is not a matter solely for language departments. Intensive co-operation with other departments (e.g. law, economics, psychology) is very valuable, as is the ability to find guest lecturers from relevant professions: doctors, police officers, labour union representatives, etc.

The following factors have to be taken into account when setting out to train community interpreters:

1. purpose of the course: what does the labour market look like? Which institutions need interpreters? What do service providers and service users require? Is there a long-term need? etc.;

2. students' needs (according to educational background and linguistic competence): including financial issues like grants, student loans, leave from work to attend courses etc.;
3. resources available: teachers, training facilities, course material, assessment methods etc.

As an example, the following objectives of training have been adopted by the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies at Stockholm University. Although the curricula of courses are set up by the University, the training takes place in non-academic settings, at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations in different parts of Sweden. This allows great pedagogical and methodological flexibility, taking into account the needs of the individual student.

"The objectives of interpreter training at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations are:

– to develop the community interpreters' language proficiency and knowledge of terminology in Swedish and in their other interpreted language, based on both the language milieu from which the immigrants to Sweden come and the one in which they now live;
– to provide training in interpretation technique, as well as knowledge of the ethical and psychological demands of interpreting;
– to provide factual information in relevant fields;
– to provide a good understanding of social, political, cultural and labour affairs in the immigrants' native country and in Sweden." (TÖI 1990).

7. A framework for testing interpreters[3]

Baker (1989) has developed an interesting framework for language testing, which I have tried to transfer to the testing of interpreters. This model uses the following distinctive features:

1. performance-referenced vs. system-referenced tests;
2. direct vs. indirect testing.

Performance-referenced and system-referenced tests are respectively specific and general in scope, the aim being to measure skills and knowledge. Thus, a system-referenced test of language proficiency may evaluate general linguistic skills, whereas a more performance-referenced test could test knowledge of an area such as legal language.

A direct test is one with a direct relationship to its object, while construction of an indirect test involves a process of analysis. A driving test is a good example of a direct performance-referenced test. The criterion "driving a car" is measured by driving
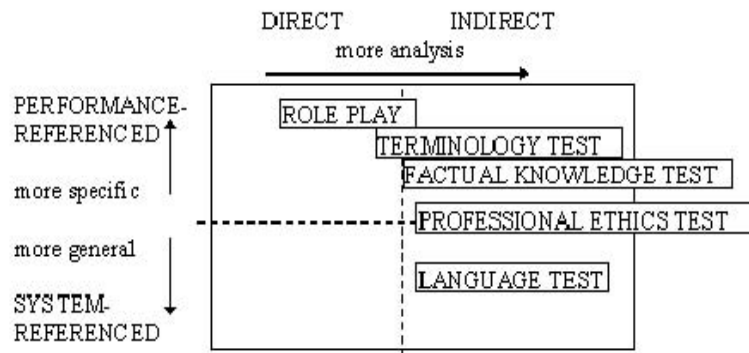
Figure 4. The accreditation test in the test framework.

around and making manoeuvres. We have to distinguish between test performance and criterion performance. In the case of the driving test, test performance means driving around making manoeuvres for a short time, while criterion performance is driving around making manoeuvres for the rest of one's life (Baker 1989).

Interpreter tests are by nature more performance- than system-referenced. The diagram shows the model, with the items in the Swedish government's accreditation test placed within the framework provided. The more indirect a test, the more thorough an analysis is needed to decide what items are to be tested and how. There are no strict divisions between categories, which can be thought of as making up a continuum.

7.1 A recruitment test for interpreters

A couple of years ago, the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies developed a new aptitude test to be used by interpreter service agencies for recruitment of new interpreters. We received the help of language testing experts from Stockholm University, as well as interpreters, interpreter trainers and agencies. Not only did we construct an aptitude test, but we decided to develop a whole "test package" within the broader framework of interpreter services to immigrants.

The purpose of the test is to help recruit applicants whose standard of knowledge will ensure that two years of intensive study will bring them to the level required for the government's accreditation test.

By testing the four proficiencies, hearing, speaking, reading and writing, in the two working languages, i.e. Swedish and the foreign language, the aim is to assess whether the linguistic level of the applicant corresponds at least to secondary school level in both languages. General knowledge and interpreting aptitude are also tested, the latter through role play.

About 60 agencies in Sweden use the test, at present available in 24 languages. Everyone who buys the test package must attend a one-day course at the Institute for Interpretation and Translation Studies, to learn how to use it. A small number of highly competent interpreters have been specially trained to participate in testing as "language testers", in conjunction with the Swedish-speaking recruiter.

8.   A look into the future

8.1   Telework for interpreters

Remote interpreting is often envisaged as a cost-effective way of breaking the language barrier in international and intercultural communication. In many countries, telephone interpreting has long been used in various settings, e.g. in health care and legal institutions. Several telephone companies have set up telephone interpreting units to serve both public service and business interests, nationally as well as internationally. One example is the AT&T Language Line,[4] whose interpreters were studied by Oviatt and Cohen (1992).

Traditional telephone interpreting, while certainly invaluable in many situations, still has the drawback of being limited to audio communication, leaving out non-verbal aspects like facial expression and gestures, and it does not show documentation. New telecommunication technology, especially video-conferencing and the growth of inexpensive data transmission through the Internet, have given birth to new applications and a growing awareness of the possibilities of this new technology for the development of remote interpreting services.

Videophone interpreting for the deaf and hard-of-hearing is used in some countries. A person who does not know sign language can communicate with a deaf person through an interpreter, who uses a telephone with a video monitor to interact with the deaf person.

Remote telephone interpreting can be a good way of solving easier cases in the fastest and most economical way possible. It can also be viable when it comes to neutrality and impartiality. In this way, those belonging to very small language groups can easily find an interpreter. However, in more complicated cases, e.g. asylum and police hearings, court proceedings etc., interpreting should be conducted as far as possible with a "live" interpreter.

Videophone interpreting eliminates some of the problems with telephone interpreting, as all parties can see each other and can also monitor "silent" communication, which is important for the interpreter. The technology must, however, be further refined, to eliminate irritating features such as delays and echoes.

Since remote interpreting puts higher demands on interpreters, it should be done only by the best interpreters. Unfortunately, in these times of economic

decline, a disastrous combination has emerged: to save money, many service providers require telephone interpreting from the lowest bidder, i.e. the least competent interpreter.

To conclude, remote interpreting is already important and looks set to become even more so, provided that only the most competent interpreters are used. Institutional training should ensure that this need is met.

8.2   Remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI)

A very interesting way of rationalising medical interpreting services without quality loss was recently tried in the United States (Hornberger et al. 1996; RSI 1998). A new language service was developed, in which interpreters were trained in the skills of simultaneous interpretation. The interpreters were linked from a remote site to headsets worn by the clinician and patient. The service was called "remote simultaneous interpretation" (RSI), by contrast with the traditional method of the interpreter being physically present at the interview and interpreting consecutively, which the researchers call "proximate consecutive interpretation".

Mothers and physicians significantly preferred RSI to the usual consecutive interpretation service. Though the interpreters preferred to work with the latter, they agreed that mothers and physicians understood each other better through RSI.

In later follow-up studies, even the interpreters were enthusiastic about the new technology. One important reason for the interpreters' satisfaction is probably that they were given extensive training in simultaneous interpreting. They thus enhanced their professional abilities, which broadened their potentially marketable skills.

8.3   Awareness-raising: Coping with emotional stress

Interpreting for sick children, terminally ill patients or destitute asylum seekers can be stressful and emotionally demanding. All this is difficult to shut out once the interpreter's brief is over. Babelea, an association of European interpreting service agencies, has conducted a research project to ascertain the extent of professional "trauma" among community interpreters. The project, led by Dr Karen Baistow of Brunel University (UK), compared such trauma in various countries (Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, France, the UK and Italy).

An interesting finding of the study was that, while the majority of interpreters had received some kind of interpreter training,[5] only 10% of all respondents said they have been given training in "stress management". Difficult circumstances that their clients had experienced were, in order of frequency, family separation, physical abuse, war, domestic violence, torture and persecution (Baistow 1999).

According to the report, one of the reasons for interpreters' emotional difficulties is that agencies, service providers and interpreters' organisations do not

explicitly acknowledge the emotional difficulty and distress caused by community interpreting and that there is no pre- or in-service training to address such difficulties The report stresses the need for a "cultural shift" which would enable the emotional effects of community interpreting to be "normalised". This means:

1. increasing awareness and recognition of the profession's emotional impact, amongst community interpreters, employers and service providers;
2. making it possible and legitimate for this to be talked about.

Among the strategies for changing the culture the report mentions the organisation of pre- and in-service training to develop self-awareness and work-awareness and to provide preparation and realistic practice for real-life situations.

Notes

1. Since community interpreting — as defined here — has only existed for about 30 years, and still is a fairly new area of research, terminology is far from standardised.

2. In the USA, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) was created in 1965, mainly to cater for community interpreting.

3. For a more comprehensive account, see Niska (1999b).

4. URL ⟨http://www.att.com/languageline/⟩

5. The figure is 64.6%, which is not a satisfactory figure *per se.*

Language as a human right

The challenges for legal interpreting

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Changes in society

Communication problems across languages and cultures are well known in all parts of the European Union (EU). In the legal field, for example, such problems are increasingly frequent where there is no shared language or mutual understanding of the legal systems and processes involved. The areas concerned include both criminal and civil law, as well as issues like asylum, immigration and legal co-operation.

Legal services now need to collaborate much more intensively, entailing the need for effective channels of communication in the form of reliable specialist legal translators and interpreters, on both an international and a national basis.

– On an international basis, this need is obvious in criminal matters (international crime, drug or people trafficking, terrorism etc.), as well as in questions of asylum and migration — for example, about 400,000 illegal immigrants enter the European Union each year. The need to deal effectively with these communication problems is also becoming increasingly pressing in civil, administrative and commercial law, since the EU open border policy means greater movement of goods, services and citizens from one part of the EU to another.

– On a national basis, one is confronted with the same issues, with an ever-increasing number of individuals who do not understand or speak the language of the country but end up involved in its legal system. To take the example of Belgium, about 37,000 applications for asylum were received in 2000. In addition, foreigners of different nationalities are detained for various offences, accounting for about 45 languages in Antwerp's main prison alone. Legal action concerning other issues, such as road traffic accidents abroad or, for example, violence among football hooligans, must also be taken into account.

In all these cases legal interpreters (LI) are needed — both as a prerequisite to a genuine "European area of justice" and simply to make the national systems

perform better. This can only be achieved through the provision of professional and qualified LI, ensuring effective communication across languages and cultures.

The current national provision of LI in member states is, however, patchy and uneven. Those working in legal services are thus hampered in their efforts to provide the quality of service they would like, because they cannot always gain easy access to qualified interpreters in the languages they need. In addition, LI are not given the professional training they deserve to do a good job. These "systemic" shortcomings would be reason enough in themselves to try and do something about the state of LI in the EU member states. However, there is also a body of international documents and precedents that is becoming increasingly influential in the shaping of EU policy in this field.

The European Convention on Human Rights

The legal basis for the need — or indeed the obligation — for national authorities in the EU to provide legal interpreting is to be found in the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 4th November 1950. This document, consisting of 66 articles and 11 protocols, has been incorporated into most legal systems of the European Union — most recently into British law on 2nd October 2000.

Art. 5, par. 2 and Art. 6, par. 3 (a and e) of this Convention lay down the requirements for interpreting and translation in (all) legal cases in order to guarantee a "fair trial".

Article 5:2 reads: "Everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly, in a language which he understands, of the reasons for his arrest and of any charge against him".

Article 6:3 states that everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right "(a) to be informed promptly in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him" and "(e) to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court".

In a sense, this document is even more ambitious than the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, because it is enforceable in a special European court.[1]

The European Court of Human Rights

In the past, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) used to work on a non-permanent basis. Since 1st November 1998, it has been working on a permanent and full-time basis, due to an enormous increase in its caseload. Submissions to the Court are no longer "filtered" through a Commission. Consequently, the ECHR is

becoming increasingly active, influential and trend-setting. The Court does allow countries some leeway, but more and more emphasis is put on minimum standards, e.g. in criminal and civil law or with regard to economic and social rights. The following phrase from the Quaranta decision (24 May 1991, Series A, no. 205, par. 30) summarises and illustrates the position of the Court quite neatly. Concerning the issue of language rights, the ECHR accepts that the member states and signatories to the ECHR "enjoy considerable freedom in the choice of the means", but at the same time they are expected to ensure "that their legal system satisfies the requirements of Article 6."

This is the line the ECHR has followed in several landmark decisions on language and interpreting.

In 1978 the European Court decided, in *Luedicke, Belkacem and Koc v. Germany* (Series a, no. 29), that:

> an accused who cannot understand the language used in court has the right to the translation or interpretation of all those documents or statements in the proceedings instituted against him which it is necessary for him to understand in order to have the benefit of a fair trial.

The Court further ruled that Art. 6 par. 3(e) entails, for those who cannot speak or understand the language used in court, "the right to receive the free assistance of an interpreter without subsequently having payment of the costs thereby incurred claimed back from him". Finally, the Court insisted that the right to the free assistance of an interpreter denoted "neither a conditional remission, nor a temporary exemption nor a suspension but a once and for all exemption or exoneration".

In the *Golder-case* (21 February 1975, Series A, no. 18, par. 26), as well as in its *Artico* judgement of 1980, the Court confirmed that "the Convention is intended to guarantee not rights that are theoretical or illusory, but rights that are practical and effective", and that "hindering the exercise of a right may amount to a breach of that right".

Concerning the right to interpretation, the real landmark case is undoubtedly *Kamasinski v. Austria* (19 December 1989, Series A no. 168). In this case the Court held that:

> The right, stated in paragraph 3(e) of Article 6, to the free assistance of an interpreter applies not only to oral statements made at the trial hearing but also to documentary material and the pre-trial proceedings. Paragraph 3(e) signifies that a person "charged with a criminal offence" who cannot understand or speak the language used in court has the right to the free assistance of an interpreter for the translation or interpretation of all those documents or statements in the proceedings instituted against him which it is necessary for him to understand or have rendered into the court's language in order to have

> the benefit of an fair trial (see the Luedicke, Belkacem en Koç judgment of 28 November 1978, Series no. 29, p. 20, §48).

The Court decided that Art. 6 par. 3(e) does not require a written translation of all items of written evidence that are submitted during the procedure, but that "the interpretation assistance provided should be such as to enable the defendant to have knowledge of the case against him and to defend himself, notably by being able to put before the court his version of the events". However, in the same decision the Court did introduce the crucial aspect of "quality" of interpreting, ruling that:

> in view of the need for the right guaranteed by paragraph 3(e) to be practical and effective, the obligation of the competent authorities is not limited to the appointment of an interpreter but, if they are put on notice in the particular circumstances, may also extend to a degree of subsequent control over the adequacy of the interpretation provided (see, *mutatis mutandis,* the Artico judgement previously cited, Series A, no. 37, pp. 16–18, pars. 33 and 36 — quoted above at paragraph 65).

In the *Brozicek* case (19 December 1989, Series A, no.167) and again in *Fox, Campbell and Hartley v. Great Britain* (1990), the ECHR reiterated that Article 5 par. 2 requires that the reasons for an arrest be given "*dans un langage simple et accessible pour la personne arrêtée*", "in a language which the accused understands", a position, by the way, also taken in Article 52 of the Schengen Agreement.

The Council of Europe

In a few recommendations to the member States, the Council of Europe also refers to the interpreter or translator.

The European Agreement on the transmission of applications for legal aid deals with the applications for legal aid in civil, commercial or administrative matters made by persons who are habitually resident in another State. The explanatory Memorandum to this Recommendation reads: "A failure to understand the language used by the court is a serious obstacle to access to justice. The state should therefore take measures to remedy this situation". This basic tenet is repeated in various resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, such as in Art. 3 of *Resolution (78)8* on legal aid and advice, which recommends that legal aid should provide for all the costs necessarily incurred by the assisted person defending his legal rights, and in particular lawyer's fees, expert's fees, witnesses and translations.

Recommendation N⁰ R(81)7 on measures facilitating access to justice, urges states to pay particular attention to the problems of interpretation and translation, to ensure that persons in an economically weak position are not disadvantaged in

relation to access to the court or in the course of any proceedings by their inability to speak or understand the language of the court.

Finally, *Recommendation (97) 6*, aiming at improving the practical application of the *Agreement*, invites the member states to provide, whenever possible, a lawyer who speaks a language which the applicant understands.[2]

The Tampere Summit: "A European Area of Justice"

One might argue, admittedly with some exaggeration, that "Tampere" will change everything for legal interpreting and translation (LIT) in the EU. The European Council meeting at Tampere in October 1999 took upon itself the ambitious task to start implementing the principles of "freedom, security and justice" inscribed in the Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), which set out to create, after an economic and social Europe, a "European Area of Justice". Such a task, ambitious in itself, was made virtually Herculean by the limited time-span the European Council set for itself (only five years).

In view of the various mandates arising from the resolutions, legal interpreting has acquired fundamental new importance in all areas of the judiciary, in civil, commercial, administrative and criminal law, as well as in refugee and asylum procedures.

To take the example of the co-operation envisaged in criminal justice, three main areas were singled out in the conclusions of the Summit:

– *Access to justice.* This would include the defendant's rights — to provide those accused of a crime with correct and precise information as to the charges against them — and support for victims, but also measures for those involved in the legal system to be heard and to receive information in their own language.
– *Mutual recognition* of judiciary decisions, during the investigation and pre-trial stages as well as in final decisions, rogatory commissions, extraditions etc. Obviously, such recognition can only be achieved if there is complete mutual confidence in the way procedures are conducted in another member state, which includes guarantees concerning the quality of the interpretation or translation.
– *Co-ordination and, if possible, centralisation* of information, legal proceedings and police and judicial authorities; harmonisation of definitions and regulations.

In all these issues and areas, language proficiency and LI become essential pre-requisites, hence their salience now for the Directorate of Justice and Home Affairs and the EU Commission.

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Launched by the German Presidency of the EU IGC in 1999, this Charter will address the current weaknesses of the Maastricht Treaty, in which the principles of EU citizenship are still fairly weak and vague. EU citizenship is obviously an issue of concern as such within the EU, but the principles of democracy, civil freedoms and justice now become particularly salient in the light of the pending enlargement of the Union.

The Charter, which sets out the rights of the European Citizen in 53 articles, was signed and proclaimed by the Presidents of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, on behalf of their institutions, on 7th December 2000 in Nice. Similar to the ECHR, the Charter will have fundamental consequences for the judiciaries of the member states in all aspects covered by the ECHR and aspired to at the Tampere Summit. In a way, one could argue that via the Charter, the ECHR is incorporated into EU law, thus introducing greater consistency and overcoming the uncertain relationship between the EU and the ECHR, and implicitly between the ECHR in Strasbourg and the ECJ in Luxembourg. As a matter of fact, it must be clear that upon acceptance of the Charter, the obligation of compliance with fundamental rights devolves upon the EU and no longer or not only upon the member states and their own national legal systems. Therefore, the Charter is another key-document laying down the principle of equal access to justice, including the right to be informed in and to be able to use a language one understands (cf. www.consilium.eu.int).

The current situation of LI

In most member states only a small élite in the judiciary are used to working across languages and cultures in both national and international contexts. Their expertise, though, has usually been acquired on the job and is not formally taught or structured. The majority in the judiciary have no proper understanding of the interpreting process and do not really know how to work efficiently with interpreters.

As for LI, they are sometimes very good indeed, but their standards of training, practice and working arrangements differ from one member state to another, or even within member states. On the whole, it is safe to say that there are insufficient legal interpreters, whether in terms of numbers, the wide range of languages required in member states, or quality. Moreover, there is a lack of training and consistency in the inter-disciplinary guidelines to good practice, and a lack of compatible national central registers — not to mention an EU one — which are easy to access on a 24-hour basis and are accompanied by an enforceable code of conduct.

These practical points combine to hinder legal co-operation and equal access to

justice throughout the Union. The implications for the legal system obviously affect EU member states to differing degrees, but they are significant for the EU as such. No democratic country can afford to sustain a legal framework which does not support full and meaningful access to it across languages and cultures by all those who may become, or wish to become, involved in it. Equally, those who work in the legal system are professionally at risk where they cannot communicate reliably. It has therefore been the purpose of the Grotius-project on EU standards in legal interpreting and translation to make a contribution to remedying this situation.[3]

GROTIUS Project 98/GR/131

This project (1998–2000) has set up a collaborative action proposal between four EU member-states in connection with agreed standards of Legal Interpreting and Translation (LIT) and sought to establish EU equivalencies on:
–   standards of selection, training and assessment of LIT
–   standards of ethics, codes of conduct and good practice
–   interdisciplinary working arrangements between LIT and the legal systems.

Six institutions, each of which has experience in the field of legal interpreting and/or translation, have participated in the project. They are:
–   the Lessius Hogeschool in Antwerp, the Institut Libre Marie Haps in Brussels and the Chambre Belge des Traducteurs, Interprètes et Philologues (Belgium)
–   the Handelshøjskolen i Århus (Denmark)
–   the University of Malaga (Spain)
–   the Institute of Linguists (United Kingdom), lead body.

The aim was to bring together existing systems as a nucleus, with a view to establishing internationally consistent best practice and then to expand those findings and experiences into other EU countries, though national differences from the common core in needs and existing practices must be taken into account. These recommendations are to be disseminated to present and future member states of the EU, so that the intended outcomes can be achieved, i.e. that citizens and legal practitioners can assume specific standards of competence and practice in LIT, so that non-native speakers in all EU member countries have equal access to the legal system and judicial co-operation between the EU member countries can be improved.[4]

The final outcomes of the project are a series of recommendations, which are available both in print and on a web site.[5] These recommendations include guidelines and supporting material on:

Standards
–   of interpreters
–   of translators
–   and the assessment of standards

Criteria for selection for training
– linguistic
– professional
– contextual

Training: Initial and continuous professional development
– teacher training
– course curriculum
– course design
– training materials

Codes of conduct and good practice guides
– code of ethics
– guides to good practice for the range of working contexts
– quality assurance
– disciplinary procedures

Professional working arrangements
– registration/contact/support systems
– letters of agreement/contracts
– insurance
– security
– vetting
– legal status

Interdisciplinary conventions with the legal services
– good practice guidelines on working with interpreters and translators
– good practice guidelines on working across cultures
– professional accountability of legal services.

The project has tried to establish "equivalencies", so that, for example, standards of competence, core curricula, codes of conduct and principles of good practice are basically the same but may vary to accommodate different starting points or national requirements. Such equivalencies would, in the mid term, guarantee at least minimum LIT standards and practice in present and future member states. This would also entail a number of practical advantages: interpreters and translators training and working in the countries of their language combination, collaborating on cases across national borders and thus ensuring consistency; and the possibility of shared — and broader — expertise in such matters as teaching materials, terminology, national registers etc. The end-result would definitely be the promotion of confidence in communication across languages in the legal systems of the member states, with improved interdisciplinary relations between the judicial actors and the interpreters-translators, thus ultimately guaranteeing and safeguarding the fundamental right and principle of "access to justice".

The Forlì Appeal

Hence this appeal to the EU CIUTI interpreter training institutes. Let us face these challenges, let us pool our expertise and resources in the field of conference and legal interpreting, so that we can start thinking about the establishment of EU accredited courses in Legal Interpreting and Translation. This can be done by using our institutes in different countries, with their staff and resources, and also by interactive distance learning.

Such a strategy would maximise resources and efforts in a number of ways — e.g., shared teaching materials and terminology resources, exchanges of language and legal training experts, access to a broader common body of knowledge and expertise, exchanges of students with transferable credits, allowing the students to take course modules in the country of one of their languages. The model could be implemented throughout the EU, and serve and possibly speed up the cause of enlargement by bringing LIT training in candidate member states in line with the core principles adopted in the EU.

In the process of our research, it has become clear that, to deal with the wide range of legal interpreting, at least four forms of training will have to be developed in any comprehensive national system, and in the EU as a whole:

– a 'crisis' or 'urgency' model, to cope with unexpected and pressing demands such as the sudden influx of a new immigrant contingent, a major disaster, etc.;
– a diploma or first degree level programme, providing the basic professional level guaranteeing quality in Court Interpreting;
– a postgraduate (M. A.) level in Legal Interpreting, which would widen the range of languages, improving and expanding cognitive and professional skills. The diploma or first degree level could be credited towards the award of the M. A.;
– finally, a continuous professional development level of post-qualification training, in areas of expertise enabling practitioners to specialise, develop new skills and keep up to date.

As CIUTI institutes are concerned with training, the following sections illustrate two of the recommendations in the report.

The Urgency Model in Legal Interpreting

It would be unrealistic to pretend that there are no crisis situations, due to unexpected demand, when there are no qualified interpreters available to meet the need.

Suggestions as to what might be done in such circumstances include:
– offering as much briefing and orientation as time allows by means of e.g. an interview, instruction leaflets, a training video, etc.;

- taking these interpreters through the codes of conduct and guides to good practice;
- providing information about the likely format and purpose of interviews and hearings;
- explaining the meaning of any standard documentation or forms to be completed;
- familiarising interpreters with the main terminology to be used;
- making them aware of health and safety issues. To give just one example, one should take additional care, particularly if selecting from a refugee group, to take account of the degree and nature of post-migration trauma.

It is important to clarify the situation with the legal services or immigration authorities, to ensure that they:

- are fully informed about likely linguistic limitations;
- are briefed as to how to make the best use of the skills available, including the need to encode what they say simply and unambiguously, listen carefully and cross check essential facts;
- do not expose emergency interpreters to unnecessary emotional pressures, and show that their efforts are valued.

The interpreter's role must also be clarified with members of the other language group, so that they:

- are aware of possible linguistic limitations and will encode clearly;
- are aware of the code the interpreters are obliged to observe, so that pressure is not put on them to breach confidentiality and impartiality;
- do not find their position within their own language group adversely affected.

Finally, proper employment arrangements must be ensured, including:

- on-going in-service training;
- proper and prompt payment of fees and subsistence etc.;
- insurance;
- moral and psychological support, with help from qualified counsellors where needed;
- immediate access to practical informed help where difficulties are encountered;
- adequate de-briefing;
- access to formal training in interpreting for those who have proved their aptitude and for whom work would be available upon qualification.

First degree level in Court Interpreting and MA level in Legal Interpreting

By the end of these courses, depending on the level involved, students should be able to practise responsibly as court or legal interpreters, having sufficient knowledge and expertise for the task components listed below.

Knowledge of the criminal and civil legal systems

Students should have structural and procedural knowledge of the police force, courts, probation, asylum and refugee bodies, etc. Additional module options can be envisaged in such areas as terminology and — of course — in specialisations such as fraud and family law, forensic or technical evidence, human rights issues, etc.

The best people to teach students about the legal system are the people who work in it every day, and the teaching should be complemented by observation visits to courts, police stations, prisons and other places where the qualified interpreter is likely to work. These visits have the additional function of introducing those who work in the legal services to the students, as potential future colleagues.

Written and spoken competence in both languages

This should cover the formal and informal terminology and the range of registers commonly used in the legal context, but also the most common regional variants, jargon, slang etc.

Language teachers, preferably graduate native speakers, should work with students on their language skills, using a range of teaching methods based on realia from the legal context.

Transfer skills

Necessary transfer skills include short consecutive and whispered simultaneous interpreting skills, which can be mainly taught through role-play in the classroom, firmly rooted in realia and, as the course progresses, including carefully planned professional challenges.

Later in the course, more demanding situations should be set up, such as moot courts and simulated police interviews with all the normal players and procedures. These provide the challenges of real situations, giving students confidence and teaching practical elements which cannot be experienced in the classroom, e.g. acoustics, when and how to use short consecutive or whispered simultaneous techniques.

Other relevant skills are taught as well: note-taking, memory drills to improve short-term memory, sight translations (both ways), etc.

Code of conduct and guide to good practice

This is a vital part of the course, because it provides the basic professional foundation. It also gives students a framework in which to operate once qualified. Students have to acquire a full understanding of the principles and moral qualities behind the

code and guides, to the extent that they can apply them instinctively, even in stressful situations.

They are taught, as an integral part of the course, through a formal introduction in the first few weeks of the course, after which they are always included in interpreting role plays and in class discussions, sometimes involving people from legal services with similar codes and guides.

Training of those working in the legal system on how to work with interpreters

Magistrates and lawyers with expertise in this field can offer relevant briefing to interpreters in aspects such as terminology or procedure, but can also show other magistrates what interpreting actually involves, how to work with interpreters in court or during an interview, when to pause, how to express themselves clearly and unambiguously, the need to use direct speech, how to respond to potential miscommunication so that the court can accommodate the interpreting process without limiting its effectiveness.

Interpreters deserve to have their work respected, to be given a status in the procedures, to have enough time to prepare and do a competent job. This means they should be briefed on the case, particularly the phase in which they take part, the context and the terminology (de Mas 2000a: 10).

Continuous professional development

This is the ability of students to be responsible for their own development on an ongoing basis, through objective reflection and learning. In this way they can contribute to the profession as a whole.

Students should also be introduced here to the practical requirements of the work of court or legal interpreters, which include: how to plan and organise their professional lives in order to perform well; how to safeguard their physical and mental health and well-being, recognise when they need help and support, and know where to obtain it; essential, practical points such as how to accept and prepare for assignments; time management and financial matters, record keeping, contracts and letters of agreement, etc.

Conclusion

The reasons why quality legal interpreting is important are clear enough. The reasons why the matter has not been addressed thoroughly, or even sufficiently, by the EU are no doubt complex and diverse.

The question which looms large is: why cannot the legal services deliver the same standard of service across languages and cultures that successful companies or organisations, in the very same countries, have been providing for years?

Or, to take another perspective: why cannot the same high standards of delivery and quality assurance used for interpreting in the European Parliament and Commission be applied to the European Area of Justice?

Justice, which safeguards the fundamental freedoms of individuals and states, and which goes to the heart of the Europe of the new millennium as envisaged at the Tampere summit, really deserves no less.[6]

Notes

1. This survey of documents and precedents is restricted to the EU, but one could also mention e.g. Article 9.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), Article 40 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Principles Nos. 12 and 14 of the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment (UN General Assembly Resolution, December 1988–43/173), etc.

2. There is also the useful questionnaire conducted by the Council of the European Union on the provision of an interpreter in criminal proceedings (Brussels, February 1999, 5451/99), surveying the relevant domestic legislation to meet the requirements of ECHR Article 6 and its still patchy implementation. In 2002, the Council also intends to propose a Charter on support for victims and defendants' rights.

3. Reference should also be made to two other Grotius projects on *Communication within the Legal Process,* conducted by Fair Trials Abroad, i.e. Grotius 98/GR/003 and Grotius 99/GR/012. Both reports are edited by Sarah de Mas (2000a and 2000b).

4. In what follows we make extensive use of some of the reports of meetings held and first drafts submitted by Edda Ostarhild (see also 1999), Bodil Martinsen (see also Nicholson and Martinsen 1997), Yolanda Vanden Bosch (see also 1999) and Ann Corsellis, the project co-ordinator (see also 1995 and 1998).

5. Since the Forlì conference, the outcomes of the project have become available in print (Aequitas: Access to Justice across Language and Culture in the EU, Antwerp, 2001. ISBN 90–804438–8–3. Price: EUR 15. Contact erik.hertog@lessius-ho.be) and on a website: www.legalinttrans.dk

6. The project presented in this paper is continued in Grotius project 2001/GR/015 (2001–2002), the purpose of which is to disseminate to all EU member and candidate member states at a conference, in print and on the web, the outcomes of the previous project and formulate common European standards in LIT.

Medical interpreting

Some salient features[*]

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to present some preliminary findings of ongoing research within the project "Interpreting in Hospitals", which has recently been established at the Research Centre on Multilingualism in Hamburg. Within the project we compare monolingual and multilingual interactions in hospitals to investigate the differences between interpreted and non-interpreted doctor-patient communication. The languages under study are German, Turkish and Portuguese.

We would like to draw attention to two features of interpreted doctor-patient communication which at first glance seem to be rather subtle, but which, as they appear frequently in our data, may also be considered 'salient'. First, the communicative function of modal verbs in briefings for informed consent will be discussed. Then, we will take a look at switches between monolingual and multilingual modes of interaction. It will be argued that an analysis of these features within the framework of Discourse Analysis and Functional Pragmatics[1] may help us understand the communicative demands of these specific institutional settings and may also contribute to the discussion concerning professional community interpreting.

1. Preliminary remarks

The web page of the Monterey Institute of International Studies provides us with some remarks about medical interpreting. There it is stated that:

> the task of interpreting between patient and health care provider is very difficult, not just because of the specialised terminology involved and the already complex nature of the patient-provider relationship, but also because of the linguistic and cultural barriers that must be bridged (www.miis.edu/iirc/iirc9.html).

This quote raises four issues which are important in multilingual doctor-patient communication: the problem of medical terms, the doctor-patient relationship, problems stemming from differences between languages in general and from possible cultural differences between people who do not speak the same language. Each of these issues is in some way independent from the others and they all seem to constitute separate problems. In what follows we will take a closer look at two of these dimensions: the issue of medical terms and the doctor-patient relationship. The aim is to show that language is not just one problem among others, but rather the crucial point.

1.1   Medical interpreting in Germany

Usually, social, political and medical institutions in Germany are not considered to be multilingual. Disregarding some local exceptions, multilingualism is not perceived as the norm in German society, although the percentage of migrant population in urban areas sometimes reaches 20 percent. According to their different needs, these non-native speakers of German differ widely in their linguistic skills. Not all of them speak German well enough to talk to physicians, but almost all have access to medical services (McGroarty 1996). So far, only rarely have "professional" interpreting services been offered in hospitals. The interpreters are often bilingual staff members or relatives of the patient, who are drafted in on an unpaid, *ad hoc* basis. One might argue that the lack of payment, as well as the lack of training, makes it impossible to call these persons 'interpreters' in the professional sense. However, it cannot be denied that a lesson can be learnt from the experience gained in this kind of activity, which can provide useful insights if in the future professional interpreting services are to be offered — as seems it would be advisable — in a medical setting, all the more so since to date professional experience in this field has been so scanty.
It is clear that only more extensive study of problems related to interpreting in this sector will ensure a full needs analysis, with a view to recruitment of professional language mediators.

1.2   Focus and data

In our research we focus on language as a tool for communication. We believe that common language forms fulfil specific communicative functions within medical discourse, though these are not always self-evident. Our aim is to find out how linguistic forms and institutional demands fit together and how the former are shaped by the latter. We presume that the interpreters' lack of familiarity with the institutional background will be one major difficulty in interpreted interaction between doctor and patient.

We are collecting data in a unit for internal medicine at a German general hospital, and in a clinic in Turkey. To date, our sample comprises 78 monolingual and multilingual interactions. The interactions last on average 13 minutes. We collect not only interpreted but also monolingual discourse, to compare the two and identify any cultural interferences. We investigate mainly two types of discourse: medical interviews and briefings for informed consent.

The audiotaped data are transcribed and translated following the HIAT-conventions (Ehlich and Rehbein 1976; Ehlich 1993; Meyer 1998).[2]

2. Medical discourse in hospitals — The case of briefings for informed consent

Hospitals as providers of medical care for large populations serve two purposes: care and research, i.e. reproducing the individual capacity for labour and investigating illnesses and medical methods (Foucault 1988). Doctor-patient communication takes place mainly within the sphere of care, in which two interrelated complex procedures are carried out: diagnosis and therapy.

For each illness, specific types of treatment have been developed. Strauss et al. (1985:20) put forward the notion of "illness trajectory" to account for the fact that the course of events is based each time on a trajectory scheme, which comprises potential events and predictable actions. Although the normal course of events may differ for specific illnesses, a repetitive structure can be identified. One potential action within the normal course of events is the briefing for informed consent.

Figure 1 provides a general trajectory scheme and shows where briefings for informed consent are located (see also Bührig, Durlanik and Meyer 2000).
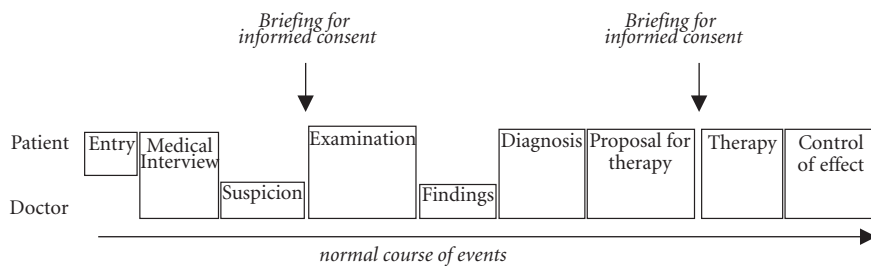
Figure 1. Trajectory scheme and location of briefings for informed consent.

Each box in this figure represents a complex of predictable (inter-) actions. Some of them are interactions between doctor and patient. Briefings for informed consent are only potential events, as they are not necessarily carried out. They

necessarily occur only before certain invasive methods of examination (gastroscopy, colonscopy, bronchoscopy, bone marrow puncture) or before certain operations. A third variant are briefings to prepare the patient for general or local anaesthesia. They may be carried out before examinations and operations and show specific features.

2.1   The institutional purpose(s) of briefings for informed consent

All types of briefings (pre-diagnostic, pre-operative and pre-anaesthetic) are obligatory by law, but serve institutional purposes as well. The patients are informed about the type of intervention and the course it will follow, as well as the possible risks and complications that it might entail. On the basis of knowledge imparted by the doctor, the patients decide whether to consent to the operation or method. This is the juridical background, the intention being to guarantee the patients' self-determination. The patients' decision should be based on an appraisal that takes into consideration the purpose of the operation and possible risks. Usually, the patient will have little or no knowledge of either of these. S/he is thus completely dependent on information from the medical staff. Moreover, the patient often does not realise that s/he can actually reject the planned operation, or that an appraisal on his or her behalf is called for. In most cases the patient will consent to the decision made by the doctor. The consent will be documented through a signature at the bottom of a form, which proves that the patient has been informed.

In our data, we deal mostly with briefings which occurred within the diagnostic phase of the trajectory scheme.

Due to their specific purpose, these briefings are subject to a particular structure. In Meyer (2000), I have retraced their constitutive elements by analyzing 22 authentic interactions. Figure 2 contains the constitutive speech actions of the doctor in pre-diagnostic briefings for informed consent.

The doctor's scheme or plan of action for the briefing is divided into two parts. First, the medical intervention is announced and described. To clarify why this particular method needs to be applied, the announcement and description may be combined with information about findings with previously applied methods. In the second part of the briefing, the doctor refers to possible risks and complications, which will be illustrated. After a rough estimation of their frequency, the doctor will ascertain the patient's further need for information and finally get the patient to sign the form.

By announcing and describing the method, the doctor orients the patient towards the institutionally determined plan of action, thus ensuring future co-operation during the medical intervention. On the other hand, the reference to risks is done for legal purposes.

Both of these institutional demands (i.e. orienting the patient and appraising the method) determine the course of verbal interaction in these briefings. They
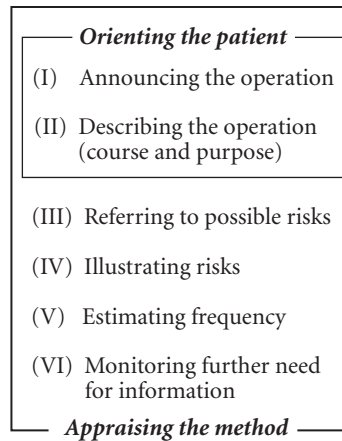
Figure 2. Institutional demands and constitutive speech actions in briefings for informed consent.

entail a particular sequence of speech action patterns to be performed by the doctor, and they influence lexical choices. This does not imply that the course of the briefing is fixed and inflexible. Indeed, patients as well as interpreters may influence 1the course of interaction. Nevertheless, doctors on the whole stick quite predictably to the sequence shown in Figure 2.

2.2 Modality in announcements

One constitutive speech action pattern that needs to be performed at the beginning of pre-diagnostic and pre-operative briefings is the announcement of the planned action, the method the medical staff has opted for. As Rehbein (1981) shows, annnouncements usually contain an indication of future time, for example, a modal and/or a deictic temporal expression like 'tomorrow'. Within the framework adopted here, modality is the mental representation of a relationship between actor, action and reality. Within this perspective, modals refer to stages of action processes (Redder 1984, 1992).[3] Doctors tend to refer to the institutional pre-history of the planned action by saying that they "wish to", "would like to" or "want to" apply a certain method. By doing so, the doctors conceptualise the constellation between doctor and patient as a decision-making process in which the patient can intervene. Interpreters tend to use forms like "will", thus referring to the carrying-out stage of an action. They convey the doctor's speech action as if it were the announcement of an action which undoubtedly will take place. The patient thus appears as a purely passive participant. Let me illustrate this by taking an example from our data. In this briefing the doctor (referred to in the transcription as "DOC") informs the

patient ("PAT") about a gastroscopy and a specific type of ultrasound. The patient is a retired Portuguese worker who has lived in Germany for 35 years and has only a poor command of German. The interpreter ("INT") is his 28-year old niece, who is bilingual and grew up in Germany.

Excerpt 1

(1)	DOC	Gut • •äähm, Herr Gomes, wir wollen • bei Ihnen zwei Untersuch-ungen noch • durchführen.
		Well • •uuhm, Mister Gomes, we want • to do two more check-ups in your case.
(2)	DOC	Und zwar einmal eine Magenspiegelung und einmal • ein Ultraschall des Herzens durch die Speiseröhre.
		One is a gastroscopy and one • an ultrasound of the heart performed through the throat.
(3)	DOC	((2s)) Hm
(4)	INT	O tio percebeu?
		Did you understand that, uncle?
(5)	INT	Ou…
		Or…
(6)	PAT	Percebi.
		I understood.
(7)	INT	Ach so, soll ich jetzt immer alles übersetzen • direkt, oder?
		Oh, shall I translate everything directly, or…
(8)	PAT	Disse que eu/ que…
		She said that I…
(9)	INT	Oder wenn er jetzt verstanden hat ähm • •wie…
		If he understood this now, how…
(10)	PAT	Não, não.
		No, no.
(11)	PAT	Eu/ eu/ eu percebi.
		I/ I/ I understood.
(12)	INT	Oder wenn er jetzt verstanden hat ähm • •wie…
		If he understood this now, how…
(13)	PAT	Disse/ disse que já me fizeram…
		She said/ she said that they have already done…
(14)	DOC	Übersetzen, würd ich sagen.
		I would suggest you translate.
(15)	INT	Ja?
		Yes?
(16)	PAT	Disse que äh äh…
		She said, that uh uh…
(17)	DOC	Das ist am einfachsten.
		That would be the easiest.
(18)	INT	Okay.

(19) PAT   Disse que já me fizeram do/ do/ do/ do/ do(is) Spiegelungs.
                     She said that they have already done two/ two/ two/ two/ two (two)
                     scopies to me.

(20) INT   Não, não fizeram.
                     No, they have not done that.

(21) INT   Vai/ vão fazer.
                     She will/ they will do that.

(22) INT   •Ainda mais dois exames.
                     Two more examinations.

The modality shift between doctor's utterance (1) and the interpreter's (21) is a subtle, but nevertheless frequent feature within our data, as the following table shows.

Table 1. The different use of modals in announcements: number of occurrences

	Doctors	Interpreters
'want', 'would like to', etc.	*12*	*1*
'will', 'going to', etc.	*4*	*12*
No interpretation		*3*

In 16 bilingual briefings, the doctors used a German modal similar to 'want' 12 times, and a modal construction like 'will' or 'going to' only 4 times. Of these 4 occurrences, 3 were in pre-operative briefings. In 12 cases the interpreters rendered the announcements with a Portuguese or Turkish form similar to 'will'. Only once did an interpreter use the Portuguese *querem* ('they want'), which leaves the carrying-out of the action unspecified. In three cases the announcement was not translated into the target language.

The contrast between source and target languages does not stem from a grammatical constraint. Both Turkish and Portuguese provide means to express modality. Although modal expressions are specific to each of these languages and not always easily transferable to German, the difference between referring to planning ('we *want* to do x') and referring to carrying out ('we *will* do x') is expressable in both. The most convincing explanation for the switch of modality is that interpreters are not familiar with the institutional presuppositions of the doctor's talk.

3. Partial transparence as a feature of medical interpreting

Müller (1989) analyses translation as only one option in bilingual conversation. His data, based on interviews with Italian migrants living in Germany, show that, in bilingual constellations, linguistic repertoires may be mutually exclusive only to

an extent. In communicating with migrants, several choices are possible. Most of the doctor-patient interactions we have taped so far are, in Müller's terms, charact-erised by a certain degree of transparency: the patients understand German to some extent. The participants in our data (doctors, patients, and interpreters) frequently use this factor to switch between different modes of interaction. In Excerpt 1, the patient uses the German term *Spiegelung* ('scopy') in utterance (19). He then insists on direct interaction with the doctor in utterances (6) ('I understood') and (11). This may be viewed as his reaction to a partially transparent constellation. Similarly, the constellation forces the interpreter in (8) into explicitly asking whether interpre-tation is necessary — as her uncle apparently understands at least part of the doctor's talk, she is unsure whether and when she should interpret. This prompts the doctor's suggestion in (14) ('I would suggest you translate').

Müller (*ibid.*:736) perceives the option of switching between different modes of interaction in partially transparent bilingual conversation as a resource which actors use creatively, for instance to modify their alignment to the interaction.[4] For example, bystanders may adopt the role of interpreter to get involved in the conversa-tion of others. However, it seems that in our data the partially transparent constellation is more a hindrance than a help. This will be shown in the analysis of Excerpt 2. As the numbering indicates, Excerpt 2 (below) is the continuation of Excerpt 1.

Excerpt 2

(23)	INT	É umaaa, uma
		It is aaa, a
(24)	PAT	Spiegelung.
		Scopy.
(25)	INT	uma Magenspiegelung, genau.
		a gastroscopy, exactly.
(26)	INT	Äähm • •ee • vão lhe tirar/ vão lhe fazer Ultraschall ((1s)) ao coração.
		Uhm, and they will remove/ they will do an ultrasound of your heart.
(27)	PAT	Hm
(28)	INT	Ultraschall, sabe o que é?
		Ultrasound, do you know what that is?
(29)	PAT	Sim.
		Yes.
(30)	PAT	Não sei.
		I don't know.
(31)	INT	Oh Gott!
		Oh my God!

After correcting her uncle, the niece proceeds in (23) with an attempt to name the examinations that the medical staff want to carry out. She lengthens the indefinite article and indicates a kind of 'search for the right word' ('It's aaa, a'). Her uncle helps her by offering the word *Spiegelung* (scopy), which he obviously had heard before.

This word as such is inappropriate, but allows her to introduce the correct German compound *Magenspiegelung* (gastroscopy) into her Portuguese utterance (25). She then adds the second announcement and relies on the same strategy, using the German term instead of a Portuguese one (26). The patient's reaction is a hearer signal with level stress, which in German serves to indicate processing problems (Ehlich 1979). This leads to a clarifying question by the interpreter in (28), again with the German term as part of the Portuguese construction. The patient responds 'Yes' and 'I don't know' in (29) and (30), which in turn leads the niece to exclaim in German: 'Oh, my God!'

This cry for divine intervention is not astonishing if we consider the communicative function of the term *Ultraschall* (ultrasound) in this section of discourse. As has been pointed out in Section 2, the doctor at the beginning of such briefings usually initiates the speech action pattern of 'announcing'. The underlying constellation of 'announcing' is determined by a joint process of action, in which the hearer is unprepared for the "planned occurrence" of a specific type of action (Rehbein 1981:221). Hence, the speaker verbalises knowledge about a "plan for future action" in order to prepare the hearer (Rehbein *ibid.*:219). If the character of the planned action is unknown to the hearer, the speaker has to reveal it more explicitly by propositional elements. Thus, the propositional content of the announcement may vary according to the hearer's knowledge.

In the particular case of announcements at the beginning of briefings for informed consent, the hearer (the patient) usually has little or no knowledge about the planned action. Therefore, the doctor has to explicitly describe elements of the plan for future action. This explicit description, required by law, enables the patient to co-operate within the procedure. The medical terms used in announcements at the beginning of briefings for informed consent are therefore important anchoring elements for the following discourse sections. Here, the niece feels intuitively that something important is missing.

It would be tempting to analyse the interpreter's difficulties merely as a problem of terminology — if she had known the Portuguese word for 'ultrasound' she would not have had any trouble. This view would be correct if Excerpt 2 would were just an isolated case. However, our attempt was to highlight the partially transparent bilingual constellation as a subtle, but salient feature of medical interpreting in Germany. This feature has an impact on interpreted medical interaction in various ways, and one of them has been discussed in this section. The primary interlocutor's option for native–non-native interaction in German causes difficulties for all participants. Interpreters have to step continuously into and out of their role, doctors are unclear about whether patients have understood, and patients themselves may have the mistaken impression that they have understood the message conveyed to them by the doctor.

4.   Conclusions

Two features of medical interpreting have been discussed in this article: the use of modals and the impact of the partially transparent bilingual constellation. With regard to modals, it has been shown that interpreters tend to shift modality: whereas doctors announce planned medical procedures without specifying whether the procedure will actually be carried out, the interpreter's version of these announcements treats the procedure as an action which undoubtedly will take place.

The specific bilingual constellation and the option for native–non-native discourse can be perceived as a communicative condition which influences the interaction process in various ways, but it is not precisely quantifiable. Unlike the case of modality shift, it is not restricted to specific types of action but appears in many interactions. Thus, the constant change in the interpreter's alignment towards the interaction is a more general feature, which still needs to be studied in detail.

From the specific format of the bilingual constellation, one may conclude that specific skills are required to cope with the communicative dynamism triggered by this format in a medical setting. That all types of liaison and dialogue interpreting require different communicative skills from those of conference interpreting (Keith 1984, Mason 1999b) is a view that is gradually gaining ground. These skills, however, still need to be defined more precisely for medical settings.

Concerning the use of modals, another conclusion can be drawn. As has been pointed out above, what the shift in modality indicates is not that the interpreter lacks linguistic competence, but that she is unfamiliar with the institutional presuppositions of the doctor's talk. Doctors' use of modals like 'want' or 'would like to' is not random, but stems from the fact that the patient's approval is called for. Therefore, the carrying out of the medical procedure cannot be taken for granted. Although patients are not always aware of this institutional demand and usually agree to the doctor's proposal, the announcement must leave room for doubt whether the procedure will actually be carried out.[5]

Furthermore, we can deduce that briefings differ according to whether the patient's agreement is needed. Announcements in briefings that refer to anaesthesia usually contain an expression similar to 'will' or 'going to', as they are carried out only if the patient has already opted for an operation or diagnostic method. In pre-operative briefings the constellation between doctor and patient is even more complex, as these talks are influenced by different kinds of institutional pre-histories of the interaction (see Biel 1983, Jung forthcoming). Sometimes the patient has already opted for the operation before s/he came to the hospital. In other cases, the physical state of the patient may not allow a true decision-making process, even where this is required.

The influence of institutional demands on doctor-patient communication in (monolingual or multilingual) briefings for informed consent is not a unique case.

The same holds for medical interviews, counselling, or explanatory talks (Bührig 1996; Hartog 1996; Rehbein 1985b, 1993). If we want to overcome "commonly held perceptions (…) of the interpreter as a kind of 'translating machine'" (Mason 1999a: 149), we need to investigate and to verify the complexity of interpreting in ordinary types of discourse in hospitals and other public service institutions.[6] This would be more fruitful than further discussion of spectacular, but rather isolated and anecdotal evidence of misinterpreting and culture clashes. Anecdotes may serve to highlight the need for interpreting services, but they tell us hardly anything about features of ordinary interpreted doctor-patient communication.

Notes

1. Functional Pragmatics is a variant of Discourse Analysis, inspired by the work of John L. Austin (1962) and Karl Bühler (1934/1982). It reconstructs features of interaction between speakers and hearers (writers and readers) in terms of linguistic action theory ('Theorie des sprachlichen Handelns': Rehbein 1977). Rehbein 1994 applies it to medical discourse, Koole and ten Thije 1994 to multicultural team discussions.

2. Due to limited space, the data is presented in LIST form in this article.

3. Tebble (1999: 186–188) analyses modals as means to express the interpersonal metafunction in interpreted doctor-patient interaction.

4. The term "alignment" is from Goffman (1981). It refers to the relationship between a participant and an utterance. Wadensjö (1998, Ch. VII) applies it to dialogue interpreting.

5. In terms of the MIIS, this might be perceived as one aspect of the 'doctor-patient relationship'.

6. E.g. in Pöchhacker and Kadric (1999), who reveal subtle mismatches between source and target discourse in a speech therapy session.

Spoken-language and signed-language interpretation

Are they really so different?

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1. Sign language and interpretation

The profoundly Deaf have always had to rely on one means of communication with the hostile, outside world: gesture. Signs developed spontaneously in the form of arm, hand and head movements together with facial expression between the Deaf themselves and those close to them with normal hearing. In each family or community, signs have adopted different configurations and meanings in isolated pockets or regions throughout the world. There developed not one universal sign language for the Deaf, as most people think, but a myriad of scattered idiolects and dialects.

Interpretation for the Deaf is as old as deafness itself. Deaf people in the past had to rely on close relatives as their 'interpreters' and, lacking any normal social interaction, they tended to retreat into an isolated detached world of their own. Still today, interpreters for the Deaf tend to be related to or have had close contact with a Deaf person since childhood, or are teachers of the Deaf, volunteer workers and welfare workers: 'first generation' interpreters. This has been the natural tendency throughout the world, though Woll (1988: 198) warns, "However, their fluency in sign language may not in itself guarantee the best sort of interpretation".

However, in the last few years this trend has been changing as the public has become more aware of the needs of the Deaf, and many people with no prior knowledge of sign language have enrolled in sign language courses out of interest and curiosity. A new professional figure has been emerging in the field of interpreting, a language mediator specialising in interpreting for the Deaf. This new development in the profession has also found institutional support. A law was passed by the Italian Parliament in 1992 (law 104/1992), which gives Deaf children the right to obtain the service of an interpreter throughout their education to university level.[1]

Since the watershed symposium on interpretation in Venice in 1977 (Gerver and Sinaiko 1978), where several papers on sign language were also presented, the literature on interpretation studies has been dominated by simultaneous interpretation (SI) and, to a lesser extent, consecutive interpretation (CI) in spoken language. Pöchhacker, in a bibliographic analysis of writings on interpretation from 1952 to 1994, found that:

> …three times as many works focus on the simultaneous rather than the consecutive mode of interpreting, and conference interpreting is by far the most frequent of all the various types of interpreting distinguished by the institutional/situational setting" (1995a: 29).

A corpus of 945 items was divided into two distinct periods (1952–1988 and 1989–1994), with closer analysis of the second: Bib-II. Out of the over 600 items analysed in Bib-II, written in a dozen different languages (though English dominated, at 55.7%) and reflecting a strong 'European' perspective, only twelve items were specifically about sign language interpretation! This European situation contrasts strikingly to the quantity of literature on sign language interpreting across the Atlantic, where related linguistic studies started in the 1960s (see Stokoe 1960). In Patrie and Mertz's annotated bibliography (1997), covering the period from 1966 to 1997, a total of 1,300 entries are related to both signed- and spoken-language interpretation, but with the main focus on the former. Twelve items specifically on sign language interpretation can be found in the first 52 entries alone!

That there should be a smaller share of writing on signed-language interpretation compared to spoken is logical if one bears in mind that the Deaf comprise only a small proportion of the world population (70,000,000 worldwide, of which 70,000 live in Italy).[2] Yet what was said in Venice is still highly relevant today, in that:

> …the interpretation of sign languages is an integral part of the general study of interpretation and that no description (practical or theoretical) of interpretation which fails to take account of sign language interpretation can be regarded as complete (Ingram 1978: 109).

2. Sign language interpretation training in Italy

In the 1980s, when research began on the linguistics of Italian Sign Language (LIS: see Volterra 1987) at the Institute of Psychology of the Italian National Research Council in Rome, interest intensified and led to the provision of the first courses in LIS for interpreters: 'second generation' interpreters for the Deaf.

Cortazzi (2000: 72) reports that, as interpreter services in Italy expanded and improved, Deaf people themselves began to look beyond their social Deaf clubs.

They began to actively participate in conferences and research projects. This has contributed to greater insight into the diffusion and types of sign language in Italy, leading to greater awareness of the need for professional interpretation. The most able of the 'first generation' interpreters began to collaborate with the CNR, enrol in specialist courses and workshops and provide a framework for the 'second generation' to emulate. The emerging figure of the professional interpreter for the Deaf has led to several training initiatives[3] by officially recognised authorities, such as ENS (Ente Nazionale Sordomuti: Italian Deaf Association) and the Mason Perkins Deafness Fund, as well as by both public and private educational institutions, one example being a two-year post-diploma course in Bologna organised by ENAIP (Ricci Bitti 2000: 102). Cortazzi (2000: 73), however, warns of the ease with which unscrupulous individuals can offer courses under the present law with little regard to accepted standards of professionalism.

It was only in 1997 that Italian Sign Language was officially included among the various university disciplines (G. U. 27/6/1997) in the groupings *Glottology and linguistics* (L09A) and *Didactics of modern languages* (L09H). This has led to the possibility of teaching LIS and sign language interpretation at university level as part of a regular degree course. 1998 saw the start of such an initiative at the Scuola Superiore di Lingue Moderne per Interpreti e Traduttori of the University of Trieste.

Despite growing demand and an improvement in interpreter services in Italy over the past twenty years, there is still need for homogeneity in the quality of services provided; as yet there is no official Italian register of professional sign language interpreters. Cameracanna and Franchi (1997: 231) suggest that it is not quantity (a greater number of interpreters) that is needed, but quality, and that mere improvised interpretation is an insult to the Deaf. Furthermore, they encourage any hearing person who has signed since birth to follow interpretation courses. To know sign language is not sufficient, one must learn how to translate.

3.   Similarities between spoken and signed interpretation

The aim of this paper is to briefly outline to what extent sign language interpretation resembles or differs from the better known, more fully documented modes of spoken language interpretation: consecutive (CI) and simultaneous (SI) conference interpreting. Starting with the fundamental requirement for all interpreters, which is to have as near as perfect knowledge of both the source language (SL) and target language (TL) in order to perform the task of interpretation in the first place, it should be remembered that second language acquisition requires constant practice and exercise as well as immersion in the culture of the language being learnt. Sign language is no exception to this and any aspiring interpreter must enter the world of the Deaf to understand Deaf culture and reality as 'seen' from another point of view.

Acquisition of this culture entails an added difficulty, as there is no 'Deaf country' one can visit to learn sign language, and in many nations it is still not officially recognised (Nilsson 1997:551).

Register in spoken language varies according to formal or less formal settings, of which the interpreter must be aware. The sign language interpreter must likewise identify the correct register in a given situation. Humphrey illustrates an example in American Sign Language (ASL), where:

> The more formal the linguistic register, particular lower-face grammatical markers are adjusted to reduce the width of an open mouth. If the interpreter fails to make this seemingly minor adjustment, Deaf participants may feel insulted or "talked down to" by the hearing communicator when it is in fact an interpreter error or oversight (1997:520).

Most interpreter trainers would agree that good pronunciation and prosody are essential requirements in the TL, though research has indicated that, according to the type of end-user, good voice quality is not always felt to be essential (see Gile 1990:68; Kurz 1989a, 1993a) and that other aspects matter more. However, my opinion, gained from experience of organising conferences with the need for sign language interpretation and watching it being performed, is that sign quality definitely *is* important. Interpreting in signs also requires good 'pronunciation'. A wrong inclination of the hand or arm, imprecise touching of the head and so on, can lead to omissions, miscomprehension or ambiguity. Signs must be mastered and produced in a clear, concise and convincing manner, without hesitation, repetition or incompleteness the same way as the interpreted phonemes and morphemes of spoken language. The vast majority of the hearing population as children are taught not to 'make faces' or gesticulate, so that any adult seen doing so seems to be breaking the cultural norm. But sign language interpreters must visually convey meaning through facial expression and gesture, as their absence would result in a "… monotone-type of presentation which fails to captivate an audience and is often not true to the intent of the speaker" (Humphrey 1997:519). Hearing people are often unaware of this necessity and regard signing negatively.[4]

Interference between languages may occur. Girardi (2000:65) mentions the case of an Italian Deaf 'speaker' who, on returning from the USA, kept using the ASL sign for "year" while signing in LIS. This was picked up by interpreters, which caused puzzlement and incomprehension among the Deaf.[5]

For all three modes of interpretation there are variables, which may have an effect on the quality of interpretation, before or during input (the listening/seeing and encoding stages);

1. *environmental factors:* lighting (especially important for sign language interpretation), location of the interpreter;

2. *experience-related factors:* adaptability to the subject matter, degree of speciali-sation, familiarity with the subject matter, level of general knowledge, level of training, prior experience;
3. *inter-personal/social factors:* empathy with the audience, empathy with the speaker;
4. *linguistic features:* degree of linguistic difference between the SL and TL, direction of language, verbal/gestural behaviour of the speaker/signer;
5. *physical and mental factors:* absence from home, anxiety, concentration, emotional response, family problems, fatigue, fear, general state of health, intellectual curiosity, memory, physical endurance, recovery time, self confidence, steady nerves, stress coping ability, time zone adjustment, tiring modes of travel;
6. *prosodic features:* the speaker's/signer's accent, the speaker's/signer's delivery, speech/sign rate;
7. *situational factors:* audience co-operation, audience size, audience type, audience reaction, purpose of the interpretation, location, speaker/signer status, unexpected events;
8. *task-related factors:* cultural adjustment, erratic schedules, information over-load, knowledge about the speaker/signer, no advance knowledge of the subject matter or terminology, provision of background material, relaying;
9. *technical features:* acoustics, broadcasting, microphone use, audio/video recording, use of slides or overhead projectors, videoconferencing, visibility of speaker/signer;
10. *textual features:* complexity of the subject matter, density of the text, speech/sign quality of the speaker/signer, speed, style, text coherence and cohesion, text typology, use of technical jargon or unfamiliar expressions;
11. *Time factors:* duration of the speech, duration of the interpreting event, lag time.

There are numerous other aspects of interpreting which the three modes have in common during reformulation (output) into the TL:[6]

1. *linguistic features* not mentioned above include: accuracy, appropriate use of style, choice of vocabulary, clarity of content, completeness of information, coping with figures, coping with proper names, false starts, fidelity of the message, intelligibility of output, repetition, slips of the tongue/hand, and terminological precision;
2. *a paralinguistic feature* found in all three modes is hesitation;
3. *prosodic features* include: accent, articulation/configuration, audibility/visibility, fluency, intonation, pausing, quality of delivery, rhythm, speech/sign rate, tone, voice/sign quality;
4. *physical and mental factors* comprise: assertiveness, concentration and memory;
5. furthermore, *technical features* beyond the immediate control of the interpreter, such as acoustics, optimum visibility of the speaker/signer and use of micro-phones, can play an important role in output quality.

These are by no means exhaustive lists, but serve to point out the many similarities sign language interpretation shares with the other two modes.

4.   Differences between spoken and signed interpretation

The most immediate, obvious difference between spoken and signed interpretation is the modality used: the former depends on oral/aural channels, the latter on visual/gestural channels. Furthermore, the grammar is so different between spoken and signed languages that Isham (2000: 36) considers interpreting between Italian and LIS more similar to interpreting between Italian and Chinese than between Italian and a 'closer' European language such as French.

All spoken-language interpreters need to learn the skills of listening, encoding and oral reformulation into the TL, but signed-language interpreters must not only sharpen their visual skills before encoding and delivering a message into spoken discourse, but also learn to listen, encode and reformulate into signs from oral discourse.

In SI, non-verbal communication (NVC) on the part of the interpreter, located out of sight in a booth, is not part of the job. In CI a neutral stance is required, with a controlled amount of NVC such as facial expression, the occasional appropriate hand movement and correct posture. NVC is necessary to avoid monotonous delivery but, if exaggerated or inappropriate, such as fidgeting, then distraction, amusement or irritation on the part of the audience may result (Kellett Bidoli 1995). During sign language interpretation, emphatic NVC is essential. It must be exaggerated, so that the Deaf audience can 'see' the translation taking place.

The sign language interpreter can neither 'hide' in a booth during spoken/ signed SI nor take full notes before spoken/signed CI, but must learn to juggle elements of both modes according to the language direction required and the setting (conference or public service interpreting). In the case of sign-to-speech conference interpretation, the interpreter is seated with microphone in hand in the first row of the audience, in front of the standing Deaf signer and not in full view of the audience, in order to convey the message through simultaneous voiced rendition to those present amongst the public with normal hearing (resembling the SI situation). In the opposite direction (speech-to-sign), the interpreter stands to the side of the speaker, in full view of the audience (as in CI), preferably on a well-illuminated raised platform so that all parts of the body from the waist up are clearly visible. A plain, light-coloured background or white screen is required to contrast with the interpreter's dark coloured clothes, so that the Deaf can see the slightest movements at a distance. The dress code requires that dark colours be worn with few accessories, and that hair be cut short or gathered back so as not to conceal facial expressions, which are as important as the signs themselves and complement them. The interpreter must at all times face the audience/client.

Unable to turn sideways to observe the speaker's NVC markers, s/he has to rely entirely on auditory prosodic and verbal information. In an alternative seating arrangement, the speaker may be invited to sit in the front row, in full view of the signer. This solution is adopted in some cases, but is not favourably looked upon by the hearing audience. Another option is the engagement of two interpreters. In this case the speaker remains in front of the audience; one interpreter sits in the front row and signs the TL message, which is then shadowed by a second interpreter standing in view of the audience. This latter solution is also often used when the target language is different from the standard spoken/signed version, for example from spoken English to ASL to LIS. At present in Italy there are few sign language interpreters who can interpret to and from more than one signed/spoken language, although it is hoped to train more interpreters to work in this direction in the future.

Traditional note taking for CI from sign is not easy, as one cannot observe and follow the signer if one is writing. To follow sign language one has to concentrate one's gaze on the face of the signer, so as not to lose changes in facial expression. From speech-to-sign, one can take notes from spoken discourse in theory, but any attempt to sign from them would lead to interruptions in the flow of the signed discourse. Therefore, during CI few notes if any are taken; the signer has to have a well-trained memory and the portions of spoken discourse have to be shorter than in oral CI. Otherwise the sign language interpreter is best advised to use SI.

An added difficulty for the sign language interpreter is coping with translation during the viewing of overheads, films or slides, which entails constant turning backwards to see the images if the screen is not strategically placed, leading to consequent loss of fluency unless a second interpreter is present.

Lag time is a factor mainly relevant to SI and depends very much on the speed of the SL discourse. One of the first things one can notice in sign-to-speech SI is that the Deaf 'speaker' often has to pause to permit the interpreter giving the voiced rendition time to catch up. This is because much meaning in sign is in the form of concepts which are conveyed more quickly than in words. From speech-to-sign, the main problem encountered is when a speaker uses proper names or foreign place names that do not have a conventional sign. Recourse to finger-spelling on the part of the interpreter is often the only solution, which may take a few seconds longer and interfere with the memory retention of what the speaker has said in the meanwhile. Most speakers are unaware of this problem and would be advised to pause after pronouncing any unfamiliar or non-Italian name.

A similar situation may occur from speech-to-sign with neologisms (technical, political etc.). Sign language evolved and evolves in a family environment, where the language focuses on the description of everyday events and situations. Deaf people who work in a hearing environment have to widen their vocabulary and adapt to the workplace. Most of them learn to speak and understand spoken utterances through lip-reading with remarkable ability. A Deaf employee may hold a professional

or specialised job, which leads to knowledge of specialised spoken lexis. However, since most Deaf people do not have access to or feel the necessity to use specialised terminology in everyday situations, signs do not evolve to describe it during signed 'conversation'. Technical lexis is not an area well covered by sign language. This renders the work of the sign language interpreter more arduous, as conferences are becoming ever more technical. Even though the interpreter may feel s/he has found an adequate solution to describe some complex term through the joining together of existing signs, this will catch on and be repeated in future only if it actually conveys the meaning to the Deaf public.

It is widely accepted that spoken SI and CI are more commonly performed from one's second language into the mother tongue. Sign language interpreters, though, rarely learn sign language as their first language unless one or both parents are deaf. Signs are therefore more usually learnt as a second language in childhood, or in adulthood at an interpreter training centre (Isham 2000: 39).

Spoken-language interpreters are normally able to interpret from more than one language; three or four are often desirable. However, the sign language interpreter in Italy tends to be confined to knowledge of LIS only. A shortage of interpreters able to switch, for example, from Italian-LIS to Italian-ASL or Italian-FSL (French Sign Language) combinations has led to the reliance on relay at international conferences.

Translators of written or oral language need to have access to dictionaries and technical glossaries during the translation of text or during preparation before a conference. A visual/gestural language that uses three-dimensional space is extremely difficult to 'write down' graphically or in print. Sign language interpreters are thus to an extent denied these useful tools. Of course there are dictionaries,[7] but they are not sufficiently exhaustive to cover the many fields the sign language interpreter may be confronted with. Notation systems have been invented but may vary from author to author.[8]

Sign Language interpretation is not only mentally but also physically taxing, since it involves energy-consuming use of gross-motor articulators. The stress factor can be further heightened by the fact that the interpreter is filmed constantly during rendition, as video recorded conference proceedings are preferred by the Deaf to a written record. Spoken-language interpretation is not normally filmed. This tendency will change in the future as videoconferencing gains a foothold (Mouzourakis 1996).

'Repeated Motion Injuries' are not covered in the literature on spoken SI and CI for obvious reasons, as — apart from the occasional writer's cramp in CI — there is no marked repetitive movement involved in oral interpretation. Instead, in the case of sign language interpretation, because of repeated gross-motor movements, carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis can occur (Stedt 1992).

5. Conclusion

Having outlined similarity and diversity in a number of areas between signed and spoken interpretation, it may now be a little clearer whether or not they are so different. Nilsson (1997:550), after much experience in the field of interpretation and discussion with her Swedish colleagues, concludes that

> all interpreters do the same job; we interpret between two languages. In an infinite variety of situations the interpreter receives the message in one language and interprets it into another language, simultaneously or consecutively.

Interpretation enables communication between different languages and cultures. It is a bridge connecting two different realities, whichever mode is chosen, in a diverse number of situations. Though signed or spoken interpretation are fundamentally the same, the means of achieving communication differ. I leave those present today to make their own conclusions as to the extent of diversity and hope that this brief outline of an emerging form of interpretation will lead to further interest and research in a field that certainly promises great challenges and opportunities in the 21st century.

Notes

1. For information on interpreting services at the University of Padua see De Gasperi (2000).

2. Information and news updates provided by the World Federation of the Deaf can be obtained on the Internet at: http://www.wfdnews.org.

3. Initiatives by: Institute of Psychology of the Italian National Research Council (Rome), Ente Nazionale Sordomuti (ENS), Associazione Nazionale Interpreti e Operatori dei Sordomuti (ANIOS), Associazione Nazionale degli Interpreti per i Minorati dell'Udito (ANIMU), Associazione PROGREDITUR, Parents' Associations, SILIS Group (Rome), Orgoglio Sordo (Milan), Gruppo LIS (Genoa), Cooperativa DIRE (Radutzky 2000:78).

4. As sign language has entered mainstream linguistics research and has been found comparable to spoken language, interest in its 'prosody' is increasing (see Sandler 1999).

5. SL interference in the TL renditions of sign language interpreters of ASL is discussed in Davis (1990).

6. For an overview of aspects of interpretation which lend themselves to critical assessment and evaluation, see Kellett Bidoli (2000).

7. For example: ASL — Stokoe et al. (1965); BSL — Dictionary of British Sign Language/English (1993); LIS: Magarotto (1995), Romeo (1997), Pienotti G., *CD-Rom Dizionario Mimico Gestuale*, Rinascita Informatica, Ascoli Piceno. For a brief analysis of three dictionaries in LIS, see Pietrandrea (1997).

8. For example: the Stokoe notation system, Eshkol-Wachmann dance notation, Sutton movement writing through pictorial representation and Teuber alphabetical notation (Kyle and Woll 1985:90).

Interpreters for peace[*]

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1. Introduction

When entering an interpreter training school, students make a distinct professional career choice which exposes them to a specialised learning environment. It also involves a commitment to a professional problem, intercultural communication, which requires a specialised adaptive orientation. A student's choice also brings him or her to become a member of a reference group of peers who share a common set of values and beliefs about how one should behave professionally. This orientation shapes learning style through habits acquired in training and through the more immediate normative pressures involved in being a competent professional. Interpreting studies, in turn, is enriched by the entry of new members and their contributions: observational analyses and research findings serve to alter the way we perceive and carry out our job and, more importantly, how professional expertise is acquired as a consequence.

This paper reports on the first interpreter training course organised by the Italian Army to train military interpreters for future Peace Support Operations (PSOs). The course is unique in that it was taught by civilian interpreters and participants were in a position of breaking new ground, without a reference group of peers as outlined above. Part of the course necessarily consisted in consciousness-raising, i.e. introducing participants to interpreting, but the course's foundation rested upon the participants' construction of workable ethics within a military context. And this they had to do for themselves. The course's primary aim, then, was to create an environment which favoured the development of ethical expertise.

The new professional profile will first be discussed in relation to a plausible reference group, e.g. in-house, public sector interpreters from the Ministry of the Interior, whose responsibilities most closely resemble the potential duties military interpreters may encounter. Successively, a context of action for future military interpreters is framed in a discussion of the modified nature of peacekeeping missions, NATO language standards and military guidelines for face-to-face communication (§2).

A training model is introduced (§4.2) whose major role in this course was to create tension and conflict among existing values and beliefs and offer a means by which course participants could begin to set personal standards and goals. The inner workings of the learning process throughout the course are discussed, both theoretically and practically, so as to demonstrate how learning (and hence, teaching) may be instrumental in developing professional integrity and a working ethic. In light of the rapidly changing environment in the interpreting profession, this — the author submits — may represent a major challenge and opportunity for the 21st century.

2. New professional profile

The term 'professional profile' applied to a military interpreting context embraces categories related to recruitment, training, future responsibilities (as determined by the change of military involvement in activities of peacekeeping) and career development. An analysis of the profile begins by comparing military interpreters to Ministry of the Interior in-house interpreters whose duties most closely correspond to public service interpreting (Table 1).

In 1984 the Ministry of the Interior held a public competition to fill about 270 positions involving translating and interpreting. Candidates came from varying educational backgrounds: three-year training institutes, a university degree in translation and/or interpreting, university degrees in literature and foreign languages. They accessed their future career with the Ministry via a national exam that comprised a translation into at least two foreign languages. Survivors were then invited to an oral exam consisting of a conversation in the languages of their choice. Once hired, their official profile was defined as 'translator/interpreter' and duties ranged from the translation of various documentation to interpreting assignments for investigations, trials and immigration. Those specifically trained (and willing) offered their simultaneous interpreting services for international conferences organised by the Ministry of the Interior.

These in-house translators/interpreters are promoted from within. Initially hired at a pay scale level 6, all were promoted to level 7 following legislation which modified their status into the first of (what were to become) three senior levels (C1,C2,C3). A group of 9 interpreters filed suit for the de facto recognition of senior positions (equivalent to other civil servants) and won, thus creating the base for career development within the Ministry. All interpreters at present are undergoing retraining for 'requalification', after which 35 of the 270 will be promoted to a C3 level and the remaining, to a C2 level. The Ministry may then announce a competition to fill C1 positions for language combinations needed, following the recent waves of immigration.

Table 1. Ministry of the Interior in-house interpreters vs. military interpreters

Profile	M. I. in-house interpreters	Military interpreters
recruitment	public competition: exam max. age 40	NATO SLP — 3344 max. age 35
training	translation and conference interpreting diploma or univer- sity degree language/literature degree	Formal/Military: technical Higher Education: enrolled
responsibilities	investigations trials conferences immigration	peace enforcement peacekeeping humanitarian aid
Career development	'requalification' in-house promotion	rank
Pay scales	level 6 → level 7 C1, C2, C3	rank

The select group of military career personnel who took part in the interpreter training course (11 servicemen) had never undergone translator or interpreter training and the average age of participants was 33 years. Four were enrolled in university programs and for the most part all had received specialised technical training (mechanical engineering, telecommunications, aeronautics), either through the military academy or during previous formal schooling. The common denominator was their English language proficiency level, a course prerequisite (§2.2). The course aimed to prepare them for face-to-face interpreter-mediated encounters within the context of future Peace Support Operations (§2.1). The following sections discuss the ingredients which combine to create the new profile: PSOs, NATO Standardized Language Profile (SLP), and military constraints regarding face-to-face communication.

2.1 Peace support operations

Traditional peacekeeping — interpositionary military forces monitoring a cease-fire — has given way to other forms of peacekeeping after the rise of internal armed conflicts in which genocide, or ethnic cleansing, targeted civilians. Perhaps it was Security Council resolution 688 authorising UN intervention to protect Kurds in Northern Iraq from Iraqi forces following the Gulf War that marked a turning point in the nature of peacekeeping missions. In their essay on military humanitarianism, Tom Weisse and Kurt M. Campbell make the following concluding remarks in relation to the resolution,

> With humanitarian intervention in Iraq, the international community may be perched on the brink of a new era in which states will codify the principles and identify the appropriate conditions when humanitarian imperatives will override domestic jurisdiction. Military humanitarianism provides a bridge between Cold War military capabilities and the vision of new world order proponents (Weisse & Campbell 1991: 463–464).

The inclusion of civilians (non-governmental organisations, international relief and development agencies) in the planning and undertaking of modern peacekeeping has led to the use of the term 'peace support operations', or PSOs, to describe today's complex missions. Hence, the major challenge in this new context is the partnership between civil and military components of these missions and their relative aims concerning relations with local groups, that notably led to conflict and misunderstandings. Knowledge of what lies at the basis of these challenging missions is the key to understanding and coping with the tension involved in face-to-face mediated encounters. This does not, however, simply imply taking into consideration the context of a situation, but rather developing operational awareness, for which we suggest an experiential learning approach in §4.

In all missions there are 'purely military' and 'purely civil' tasks, but also a grey area where the military takes part in civil operations which include humanitarian aid, infrastructure reconstruction, political leadership and the repatriation of refugees (Griffin 1998: 5). Military participation in civilian operations is motivated by the following reasons, according to Eriksson (2000),

> […] it creates goodwill and thereby increased security for the unit and […] the soldiers benefit from being able to carry out something concrete for the local population, not least as a break from […] the very routine nature of […] duties. Civilian operations can provide a means for obtaining information and intelligence in areas to which it might otherwise be difficult to gain access. […] certain resources (roads, electricity, water, etc.) are vital to the military units and may have to be secured through civil operations. […] in some cases, primarily due to the security stations, the military units may be the only ones to deliver aid to a certain area.

Eriksson's description of the military's motivation to carry out civilian operations implies negotiation at varying levels in order to reduce tensions and strengthen mechanisms for peaceful conflict resolution. In essence, then, military interpreters involved in PSOs participate in the pursuit of security by means of stability which implies managing instability, hence the concept of dynamic equilibrium. Can dynamic equilibrium be considered a possible working ethic in face-to-face mediated encounters? The concept of negotiation, or a transactional view of self and society will be taken up in §4.1 when discussing social cognition.

2.2 NATO STANAG 6001

NATO certifies language competence according to its Standard Language Agreement 6001 (STANAG 6001) which sets out five standardised language proficiency levels: 1 (elementary), 2 (limited working), 3 (minimum professional), 4 (full professional), 5 (native/bilingual).[1] A Standardised Language Profile (SLP) is comprised of four numbers corresponding to Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing, e.g. 2211 or 2334.

The Italian Army Language School uses profile descriptors for each level and skill as standards for both service and civilian language schools so that they might clearly identify the performance targets that their students must achieve and can plan their training accordingly. Military personnel participating in the interpreter training course were required to have a SLP 3344, which means a level '3' in oral language skills, i.e. listening and speaking. Table 2 lists salient features from the NATO standard language agreement profile descriptors for these two skills.

The categories listed in the first column (proficiency) concern the contexts in which language skills are tested and the required standards. It is interesting to note certain requirements that are not normally taken into consideration, such as the ability to 'overhear conversations' (listening) and to both convey 'affective intent without rephrasing' and avoid 'groping for words' (speaking).

2.3 Military constraints

In an article entitled 'U. N. Military Observer Interpreters in Sarajevo' Major Roy Thomas gives us an idea of what it means to be part of peacekeeping activities.[2] He highlights that "fear of spies led warring parties to insist on U. N. Military Observers using interpreters who lived on their side of the line" (1995: 10). Today, in fact, most — if not all — interpreters operating in PSOs are hired locally. It is significant, then, that the Italian Army decided to train military interpreters at a time when civilians have become more involved in peacekeeping efforts (§2.1). In a situation where military interpreters provide services to their country's army officers, the question of 'neutrality' is presumably non-existent. But aside from issues linked to loyalty, there are a series of specific constraints imposed on face-to-face communication in a military context.[3]

Commanders in NATO countries are specifically trained to make the most of face-to-face communication. When this involves the use of interpreters, they are sensitised to the importance of the interpreter's role and are informed how to maximise an interpreter's strength and anticipate weaknesses. A first step to successful interpreter-mediated communication, it is suggested, is the establishment of a rapport with interpreters, showing genuine interest in their backgrounds and families. If interviewers are officers it is recommended that either an officer or a

Table 2. NATO SLP 33 (listening-speaking) proficiency profile

Proficiency	Listening	Speaking
Contexts	– face-to-face/telephone – radio/TV/video – overhearing conversation – lectures/oral briefings	– face-to-face – telephone/telephone – transactions/social conversations – oral briefings/presentations
Standards	– medium density of texts – limited amounts of interference – regional expressions and pronunciation – occasional difficulty overhearing – identifies gist of all texts – comprehends most key details – occasionally requests repetition – may miss details in presence of interference – occasionally requests clarification from native speakers on content of texts conveyed via disembodied media	– affective intent conveyed without rephrasing – fluency may be impaired by hesitation without groping for words – complex structures used with occasional errors – recognisably foreign pronunciation should not interfere with intelligibility – language is socially acceptable and contextually appropriate in most situations – circumlocution may be used to maintain flow of speech – language is socially acceptable and appropriate in most situations

civilian act as interpreter. However, civilian interpreters are preferred when military interviewees are not officers, so as to avoid intimidation. Here, the question of a military interpreter's rank, in relation to the interviewer, only marginally influences the interpreter's work, since a serviceman's rank is always relative to a hierarchy and presumably nothing would change. In other words, should there be a Captain acting as interpreter for a Major, the relationship is always to be considered one of subordination, regardless of whether they are working in an office or on the field.

Officers are specifically advised on matters concerning 'gate-keeping', or control of the event, in face-to-face communication. They are instructed to advise the interpreter to mirror their tone and not to interject his/her own questions. Officers, in turn, must always keep their eyes focused on their interlocutors and not on the interpreter. Control of the interpreter's delivery comes under the duty of the interviewer, although it is not understood how this is to come about, since the very presence of an interpreter would imply an interviewer's inability to understand one of the two languages being spoken. What seems to emerge is a view of interpreters similar to that in legal settings where they are considered "disembodied containers of others' messages" (Wadensjö 1998:279). This is, however, in stark contrast with what Major Thomas stresses as being the most important qualities of the interpreters

with which he worked, namely courage and the ability to persuade (Thomas 1995:12). In part this may be attributed to the fact that indeed Major Thomas worked with civilian, and not military, interpreters. Nonetheless, Italian military interpreters will be participating in PSOs and military tasks within missions always imply operations requiring security, hence a situation servicemen would expect. What becomes a challenge for them, then, is their status as military interpreters in mediating face-to-face communication where the military participate in civilian operations (§2.1). In other words, military interpreters are constrained by guidelines governing face-to-face communication, yet their negotiation skills are those most valued in situations of this kind.

Interestingly, officers are informed never to criticise an interpreter in the presence of the interlocutor, thus avoiding the impairment of his/her effectiveness. This final point paves the way for a discussion on the learning perspective adopted in the course. Indeed criticism is often met with impaired effectiveness both on the job and in the classroom, the cycle stemming from an individual's sense of self-efficacy (cf. Bandura 1997). After a presentation of the course curriculum (§3) the theoretical constructs underlying the course are introduced in an attempt to highlight the epistemological value of adopting an experiential learning approach to interpreter training. The notion of dynamic equilibrium is explained in terms of factors governing a person's actions, in this case learning, and the tension surrounding a student's negotiation of the different learning orientations which are part of our training model (as discussed in §4). The management of dynamic equilibrium, however, is also suggested as a basis for the development of ethical expertise, within the context of interpreter-mediated face-to-face communication.

3.   Course curriculum

It was clear the Army was responding to contingent problems (the need for linguistic mediation during PSOs) by commissioning such a course, although the nature of the mediation was never specifically defined. The responsibility for course content and development thus lay squarely with the professional interpreters/professors involved. In other words, there had been no prior survey concerning market needs, nor were professors in a position to convey first-hand experience, all being civilian interpreters. A needs analysis was carried out to assess possible directions for the interpreter training course (§3.1) and a syllabus was drafted to respond to participants' needs (§3.2).

The course — officially designated a course for 'cultural mediators' — lasted one academic year, from November 1999 to July 2000, including an exam session. The curriculum was planned in accordance with input provided by course teachers, which included professors of Interpreting (English/Italian), English linguistics and

the Serb language. Course participants were expected to attend 4 hours of lessons a day, four days a week: they studied Serb two days a week (200 hrs.), Interpreting one day (100 hrs.) and English linguistics one day (100 hrs.).

After a period of four months, course professors decided to alter the curriculum and separate the two course languages (English and Serb). Interpreter training thus continued, along with the English linguistics course, for a period of three more months. A new timetable was established after the change to allow for independent study, since participants began taking more responsibility for their own learning. This meant attending three days of lessons instead of four. The last two months were then dedicated entirely to learning the Serb language.

3.1   Needs analysis

Participants' comprehension skills were tested using a variety of means: audio recordings, TV videotapes and computer video sound sources reproducing speakers of English with varied accents where the text density, sound quality and levels of interference also varied. In terms of oral production and their ability to engage in a two-way interaction, participants were requested to respond to textual clues and cloze particular turns in a dialogical exchange. Overall, their comprehension levels proved to be remarkable, especially in conditions where a text presented considerable amounts of interference. A few also showed particular skill in conceptualising lengthy stretches of texts, even though their management of terminology needed strengthening. An overriding weakness, however, was the inability to read textual clues (suprasegmental ones) and respond appropriately.

3.2   Interpreting syllabus

The varied nature of PSOs pitches the discourse on a cline from less 'formal' events (humanitarian aid) to more 'formal' events (support of political leadership) as illustrated in Table 3.

The contextual configurations of the two extremes overlap to some degree, e.g. it is conceivable that the discourse of supporting political leadership also include a hidden agenda, or that distributing humanitarian aid involve manipulative discourse.[4] Roles are described in terms of military interpreters at the service of other military officers. Thus relationships depend to a great extent on the social status of participants, i.e. whether they are civilians or servicemen, the latter notably positioned in a well-established, hierarchical order. The probability of performing in more formal settings, along with the participants' weaknesses in interactional expertise, led to an interpreter-training syllabus designed as three, overlapping modules, each covered by a different interpreting professor:

Table 3. The discourse of PSOs

contextual configuration	less 'formal' event	more 'formal' event
FIELD	Personal contact with aid recipient aiming to alleviate strife, create goodwill and increased security for unit	Public interaction aiming to strengthen political leadership through the support of emerging leaders
MODE	Use of two or more languages; spoken extempore phrases: commands, concern, compassion, hidden agenda	Use of two or more languages; spoken extempore or prepared speeches, notes as aide-mémoire: diplomatic, persuasive, manipulative
TENOR	Roles: based on military rank; Social status: civil and military Commander: military Aid recipient: civilian Interpreter: military	Roles: based on military rank Social status: civil and military Speaker: military Listener: military or civilian Interpreter: military

1. memory skills and acquisition of a personalised note-taking technique;
2. consecutive interpreting from stretches of discourse (± 3 min.);
3. terminology management and mediated face-to-face communication.

4. A learning perspective

In a paper entitled 'Choice Blends: A process approach to interpreter training using a learning-centred self-monitoring technique', Cresswell and Monacelli (1998) reported on an experiment conducted to shift the student's — and the teacher's — attention off 'product' and onto 'process'. Although the concept of learner-centredness would ideally imply that students be involved in curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation, Nunan and Lamb clarify that most students are not in a position to make critically informed decisions about what to learn and how to learn (1996: 11). Learners usually require systematic teaching of the skills needed to implement such an approach. Whereas it was found that interpreting students in a university setting have little or no experience with learner-centred methods (Cresswell and Monacelli 1998; Monacelli 2000: 32), military personnel participating in the interpreter training course proved to be better prepared to take responsibility for their own learning (§3).

The philosophy of learner-centredness has strong links with experiential learning. D. A. Kolb's seminal work entitled *Experiential Learning* (1984) has provided the missing link between theory and practice in education. He describes his experiential learning model as

> [...] a four-stage cycle involving four adaptive learning modes — concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. [...] The structural bases of the learning process lie in the transactions among these four adaptive modes and the way in which the adaptive dialectics get resolved (Kolb 1984: 40–41).

But how can we operationalise the concepts put forth by Kolb within the confines of our interpreter training classroom walls? Kolb mentions the importance of including the following three learning objectives in curriculum design: content objectives, learning-style objectives, and growth and creativity objectives. When considering student growth and creativity, the aim is to make a student self-directed and to focus on what Kolb calls "integrative development", having the student develop in each of the four learning modes. Here the key to creative growth lies in teaching the student to "experience the tension and conflict among the four orientations, for it is from the resolution of these tensions that creativity springs" (ibid.: 202–203).

4.1   Self-regulated learning

A process approach to learning that includes learning-centredness corresponds to what the literature calls self-regulated learning.[5] Self-regulation (SR) is essentially a cybernetic process; a control mechanism which makes individuals goal-directed and assists in implementing intentionality. All living systems are self-regulating, which means they have a set of inner mechanisms that control the system. Human beings, however, have a capacity for self-regulation that far exceeds that in other living beings, in part because the conscious mind is involved in the process and this enhances the flexibility, range and articulation of behaviour (Binswanger, 1991: 155). People possess self-reflective and self-reactive capabilities that enable them to exercise some control over their thoughts, feelings, motivation and actions (Bandura 1991: 249). Using these capabilities, individuals monitor their processes of engagement and the progressively updated products these processes create, thus generating internal feedback ('intra-personal communication') or, as Vygotsky put it, "inner speech" (McCaslin Rohrkemper 1989: 145). This information provides the basis for subsequent engagement in terms of the establishment of goals.

In our interpreting classrooms learning comes about in a social environment, and a student's (self-regulatory) behaviour is the result of interactions among behaviours, environmental events, and covert processes (Graham and Harris 1994: 205). Bandura describes this interdependent causal structure as "a transactional view of self and society, internal personal factors in the form of cognitive, affective, and biological events; behaviour; and environmental events all act as interacting determinants that influence one another bidirectionally" (1997: 6). This transactional view of self and society provides insight into what is at stake in military negotiations at all levels when involved in PSOs (§2.1).

One of the key subprocesses of self-regulated learning and indeed the initial and sometimes sole component is self-monitoring (Mace et al. 1989: 30). Self-monitoring can generally be defined as self-observation and refers to deliberate attention to aspects of one's behaviour. Monitoring is pivotal in self-regulated learning since it represents the cognitive process that assesses states of progress relative to goals and generates feedback that can guide further action. However, as Bandura points out, even though self-observation provides the information needed for setting personal goals, the process of self-monitoring is not simply a mechanical audit of one's performances (1991: 250).

But how, exactly, should self-monitoring be effected for it to yield the best results? Mace et al. (1989) offer a general, two-step framework for self-monitoring, the first of which requires the student to be aware of or discern the occurrence of the target behaviour that is to be controlled. Of course, in interpreting, this means being aware of what interpreters actually do and being able to assess professional behaviour (i.e. consciousness-raising). During the second step the authors suggest that students record their performances for self-observation. Mace et al. stress that for self-monitoring to work, subjects must be trained in use of the technique.

4.2 Training model

Figure 1 illustrates the role of self-monitoring in learning interpreting and indicates how each of the four procedural phases represents one of Kolb's (1984) four different modes of learning, thus both providing for interpreting students' needs — according to their personal preferences — and the possibility of extension into other modes of learning needed for professional growth and adaptability. Retrieval or exchange are shown as arrows.

During the first phase ('Analysis') students are exposed to authentic recordings of spontaneous speech, professional interpreting performances and in-class demonstrations of interpreter-mediated events. Students begin to single out issues
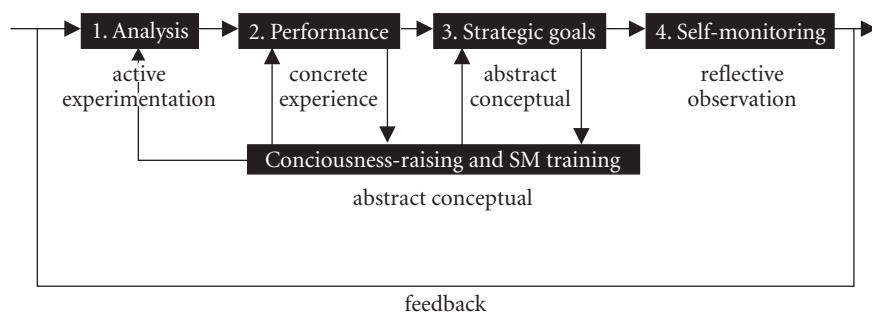
Figure 1. Self-regulated interpreter training model.

they consider significant and suggest personal strategies. In class they practice the skills deemed necessary for interpreting ('Performance') and receive peer and teacher (external) feedback. During this exchange students develop personal standards and set themselves 'Strategic Goals', while being guided by the teacher in a consciousness-raising cycle and goals are readjusted as students progress. Much of what conventionally occurs in classrooms usually concerns only this inner cycle of the model. However, context-dependent know-how, as developed, becomes the essence of creative cognition (Varela et al. 1999: 148), which can then be applied to an enlarged cycle where internal feedback is generated by the student in reflective observation.

'Self-monitoring' training takes place in the classroom, through a teacher demonstration, and students are then invited to offer written assessments of their own work (15 min. recordings of interpreter-mediated face-to-face communication). These are exchanged with peers and students are given both written feedback from peers, as well as oral feedback from the teacher. Subsequently each class simulation is recorded and students self-monitor their work individually. The process takes as long as students are willing to spend, which meant weeks or even a month in this specific course. Their work was then submitted to the teacher in writing who also responded in writing. The two cycles were repeated until students produced at least three written assessments of their work, in order to examine the progressive development of skills.[6]

5.   Challenges and opportunities in the 21st century

Challenges and opportunities for the military interpreter lie in acquiring a disposition where immediacy precedes deliberation and in enacting a cycle of ethical expertise.[7] In communication this means accepting and dealing with the dynamic quality inherent to the communicative event (cf. de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981: 36). Thus, in line with the notion of dynamic equilibrium as a working ethic, military interpreters face the challenges and opportunities directly linked to the tension surrounding the partnership between civil and military components of PSOs concerning relations with local groups.

The self-regulated training model (Figure 1) applied to a military context seemed to provide the necessary challenges and above all the opportunity to progress along a continuum of professional expertise. How far along this continuum participants managed to progress largely depended on their personal assessment in relation to externally received feedback. In theory, the military interpreter is somewhat removed from the professional cycle mentioned in our introduction, as these new members to the profession may not materially contribute to its development by way of research, since military data is generally considered highly confidential.

But epistemological issues are in fact cultivated in the classroom where a 'meeting of minds' indeed takes place, and where both students and teacher benefit from this cross-fertilisation. It is no wonder, then, that the notion of dynamic equilibrium emerged in a classroom where most were 'operationally minded', and where participants placed less emphasis on eloquence and more on 'getting the job done'.

The issue of whether interpreting studies will develop as a discipline in its own right is raised by Riccardi in this volume. Insight into this fundamentally epistemological question is offered by an experiential approach to learning. A major challenge and opportunity for the interpreting community in the 21st century lies in further exploring the teaching/learning process which may hold the essence of professional integrity and ethical know-how and help interpreting studies find its own dynamic equilibrium.

Notes

* My thanks go to Marco Rasori from the Italian Ministry of the Interior; to Roberto Punzo from the Italian Army General Staff, Logistic Support Division; and to Francesco Gratton from the Italian Army Language School for their invaluable help.

1. NATO Standard Language Agreement, 1996, Standard Language Profile Descriptors in amplification of NATO STANAG 6001, Perugia, Italian Army Language School.

2. My thanks go to Franz Pöchhacker for supplying me with a copy of Major Thomas's article.

3. Personal communication. Due to the confidential nature of this information, the source cannot be disclosed.

4. This recalls Pöchhacker's mention of a 'grey' area (this volume) along a spectrum of interpreting, ranging from international 'conference' interpreting to intra-social 'community' interpreting.

5. Cf. Schunk and Zimmerman (1989, 1994); Zimmerman (1990).

6. Cf. Monacelli (1999) for a comprehensive description of SM applied to the interpreting classroom.

7. Cf. Varela et al. on "embodied cognition" and "ethical expertise" (1999: 133).

Physiological stress responses during media and conference interpreting[*]

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1. Introduction

In the literature there are numerous references stating that interpreting is a highly stressful occupation that places special demands on those exercising the profession:

> More often than not the interpreter is very highly strung and must in his profession stand a long and continuous strain which is hard to bear (Herbert 1952:6).

> [...] interpretation requires that one have nerves of steel (Gravier 1978:iv).

> When he interprets, the interpreter is under pressure (Seleskovitch 1978:41).

> Most imperative is [...] a quality perhaps best defined by the modern slang word 'unflappability', or coolness under pressure (Roland 1982:13).

> [...] the ability to work under stress for long periods (Longley 1989:106).

It is true that conference interpreters work under conditions which psychologists generally consider to involve objective stress factors: information overload, the tremendous amount of concentration required, fatigue, the confined environment of the booth, etc.

Case reports describing live TV interpreting indicate that media interpreting is generally perceived as being even more stressful than simultaneous interpreting in other settings (cf. Kurz 1997b).

It involves special stress factors stemming from at least 3 different sources:

1. Physical environment:
When working for TV, the interpreter may have to sit in the newsroom or in a separate studio rather than in a soundproof booth and will be subject to all sorts of visual and acoustic distractions and disturbances. In the majority of cases the interpreter has no direct view of the speakers but receives the visual input via a monitor. Whereas in a conference setting speakers and participants usually interact

with each other, communication in the case of TV broadcasts is in one direction only. The interpreter receives no feedback from the audience.

2. Work-related factors:

Quite often, on TV, interpreting has to be done late at night and/or on short notice with little opportunity for preparation. Whereas in an ordinary conference setting the interpreter can get used to a speaker with a particular accent or speaking style, on TV this is often impossible given the brevity of a live performance. Besides, the sound quality may be poor. Together with other occasional technical problems, e.g. feedback of the interpreter's voice, this adds to the difficulties.

3. Psycho-emotional stress factors:

Knowing that s/he is interpreting for an audience of hundreds of thousands or even millions, the TV interpreter is more keenly afraid of failure than during ordinary conferences. Newspapers will not hesitate to report critically, and TV viewers do not understand or appreciate the difficulties the interpreter may be facing. Empirical evidence has shown that the expectations of the quality of media interpreting are particularly high. The media interpreter's performance is frequently judged against that of the TV moderator or newsreader, and the standards regarding voice and diction are very high.

Sometimes media interpreting is even called "a different sort of world" (AIIC Technical and Health Committee 2000).

The present study sets out to examine whether interpreters' subjective impressions of the greater stressfulness of live TV interpreting can be confirmed by physiological stress measurements.

2.   Stress research

Stress studies generally focus on three different components: (1) stressors, i. e. the stimuli producing stress responses (sometimes also called objective stress), (2) responses/performance, and (3) intervening variables.

Stress-producing factors and stress responses can be observed, whereas the intervening variables can only be assessed indirectly by questioning subjects or measuring their stress responses.

2.1 Stressors

Generally, we can differentiate environmental, mental and social stressors. Environmental stressors include factors such as noise, heat, vibrations, lack of sleep, alcohol and hypoxia; typical mental stressors are tasks requiring attention over long periods of time, decision-making and monotony; examples of social stressors are changes of social status, and competition.
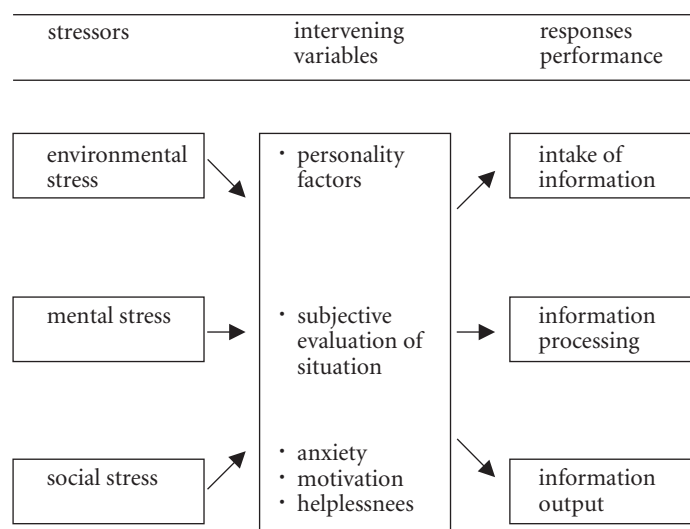
Figure 1. Schematic illustration of the interrelations between stressors, intervening variables and responses.

The impact of the work environment or, more precisely, temperature, humidity and air quality in the booth, were investigated in earlier studies (Kurz 1981, 1983a, 1983b; Kurz and Kolmer 1984). Over the years, the Technical and Health Committee of AIIC (International Association of Conference Interpreters) has contributed towards considerable improvements in the design of booths and sound equipment (ISO and IEC standards), thus reducing environmental stress for interpreters. Furthermore, AIIC has developed working conditions designed to alleviate fatigue and ensure high-quality performance (e.g. proper manning strength and a recommendation that simultaneous interpreters should take turns approx. every 30 minutes).

2.2 Responses/performance

Studies in this particular field try to analyze the causes underlying a decrease of individual performance, e.g. visual or acoustic disturbances interfering with the intake of information, disturbances of information processing, motor or speech disturbances interfering with information output. The impact of prolonged turns (more than 30 minutes) on the quality of interpreters' output was investigated in a pilot study by Moser-Mercer, Künzli and Korac (1998).

2.3 Intervening variables

The so-called intervening variables have a decisive influence on the type of responses produced under certain kinds of stress. They include personality factors, such as

an individual's self-confidence or the way s/he judges a situation. Such factors decide whether an individual perceives a situation as stressful or not. This stress experience is also called subjective stress. What is stressful for one person may not be so for another.

Ergopsychometric studies, i.e. psychological testing under stress as compared to neutral conditions, carried out by Guttmann and collaborators at the Department of Psychology of the University of Vienna (Guttmann and Etlinger 1991), confirmed the well-known phenomenon that there are persons who show an unchanged or even increased performance level under load (so-called consistent performers), while others with an equally good performance level in a neutral, stress-free atmosphere tend to fail in stressful situations.

In a pilot study, the State and Trait Anxiety Inventory was used to compare conference interpreters with the normal population in terms of anxiety levels. The results lend support to the hypothesis that, like successful athletes, conference interpreters have better situation-dependent control over their feelings of anxiety and seem to be able to label their anxiety in a positive way. This suggests that they belong to the category of "consistent performers", i.e. persons who are able to maintain an even performance under stress (Kurz 1997b).

Nevertheless, in the Cooper Study (Cooper, Davies and Tung 1982), which was commissioned by AIIC and involved a total of 826 AIIC interpreters, 45% of the respondents indicated that over 40% of the stress in their lives was work-related. Almost 20% stated that over 60% of stress was due to work.

2.4 Physiological measurements in stress research

Besides studying psychological stress and environmental factors, researchers have also examined the stressfulness of work by using objective physiological measures. Physiological responses are measured to assess the subjective stress a person associates with a particular situation. Changes of physiological functions are used as an indicator of emotional and mental processes. A wide variety of physiological parameters, e.g. heart rate, blood pressure, cortisol levels and psychogalvanic response, can be used for this purpose. However, some physiological parameters are easier to record than others and are, therefore, more widely used (cf. Zeier 1997).

Earlier studies on interpreters were carried out by Klonowicz (1994), who measured blood pressure and heart rate before and after 30-minute turns; Tommola and Hyönä (1990), who carried out pupillometric studies during simultaneous interpreting; and Moser-Mercer, Künzli and Korac (1998), who measured cortisol and immunoglobulin A concentrations after prolonged turns. More recently, AIIC has commissioned a comprehensive study of workload in simultaneous interpreting, to understand the causes of workload, stress and burnout.

3.   **Stressfulness of live TV interpreting vs. conference interpreting (Pilot study)**

The pilot study described below is part of an ongoing empirical investigation carried out by a PhD student working under the author's supervision in co-operation with the Department of Psychology of the University of Vienna. It sets out to examine the stressfulness of conference and media interpreting by using objective physiological parameters.

3.1   Method

As it is considered important to conduct psychophysiological stress research under natural conditions, it was decided to use a method that (1) can be applied in live interpreting situations and (2) permits the continuous recording of physiological parameters.

The saliva test used by Moser-Mercer et al. to determine cortisol and immuno-globulin A concentrations is a somewhat complicated procedure, as witnessed by their description:

> Test tubes […] were provided before the test session, after 30 minutes and at the end of each test session. Subjects were instructed to remove the test tube stopper, take the [sterile cotton] rolls out of the test tubes, put them in their mouths and chew them slightly for exactly two minutes. Then they had to push the saliva-filled cotton rolls back into the test tubes, seal the tubes with the stoppers and return them to the investigator. […] The subjects were instructed not to eat, and to rinse their mouths well with water 10 minutes before the first saliva collection (Moser-Mercer, Künzli and Korac 1998:51).

Even though this method might be applied in a conference setting, it could not be used during live media interpreting.

For the present study, the following two parameters were chosen: (1) pulse rate and (2) galvanic skin response or skin conductance level (SCL).

When we are alarmed or stressed, we sweat slightly more than usual. Sympathetic activation of the sweat glands causes a decrease of the electrical resistance of the skin and a consequent increase of skin conductance. Sensitive electrodes placed on the skin, e.g. on the palm or ventral surface of the digits, can detect this, allowing us to measure changes in galvanic skin resistance or skin conductance. This parameter has been found to respond very sensitively to sensory or emotional stimulation.

With present-day equipment, such as the Insight Instruments biofeedback system used in the present study, skin conductance and pulse rate can be recorded at the same time with minimum inconvenience to subjects: two electrodes are

placed on the ventral surface of one of the digits of the left hand (in right-handed persons) and secured with a Velcro strap.

The purpose of the study was (1) to determine whether physiological stress responses can be observed during conference interpreting, and (2) to find out whether physiological stress is even higher during live TV interpreting.

The empirical set-up was as follows:

1. An interpreter's pulse rate and skin conductance level (SCL) were continuously recorded throughout her work at a 5-day medical conference (German/ English) in early June 1999.
2. The same interpreter's pulse rate and SCL were recorded while she was interpreting during the live TV broadcast of Prince Edward's wedding on June 19, 1999.

Some of the first results of this ongoing research are reported below.

3.2 Results and discussion

Figures 2 and 3 show some of the findings of this investigation. It should be pointed out that the graphs illustrating the interpreter's pulse rate and skin conductance (SCL) in the two different settings (medical conference vs. live TV broadcast) are not directly comparable, because neither the overall duration of measurement nor the measurement intervals in the two situations were identical. The sample taken from the medical conference has a total length of approx. 27 minutes (1640 seconds). Measurements were taken at 28-second intervals. The total recording time during live TV interpreting was approx. 131 minutes (7781 seconds), with measurements being taken at 131-second intervals. Owing to equipment overload, only the first 87 minutes, i.e. 40 measurements, could be evaluated. Nevertheless, the results obtained clearly reveal significant differences in the physiological stress levels in the two settings.

The upper half of Figure 2 shows a sample of the pulse rate recordings obtained during the medical conference: with the exception of a slightly higher value at the very beginning, the interpreter's pulse rate remained below 80 throughout the 27-minute turn. Most of the time it was somewhere in the 70s.

During the live TV broadcast (lower half of the figure), however, the interpreter's pulse rate was consistently above 80. The physiological data clearly confirm the interpreter's subjective impression of higher stress.

The SCL (skin conductance level) appears to be an even more sensitive stress indicator (see Figure 3). In the sample taken from the medical conference setting, there were only minor fluctuations of the SCL, ranging from 0.9 to 1.2.

During live interpretation on TV there was a sharp, quick rise from approx. 1.1 to a maximum of 3.4 before the curve levelled off, a clear sign of elevated physiological stress.

It should be noted that the interpreter was not working at all during the first 45 minutes or so and, what is more, knew that she would not have to work until later

medical conference
PR (pulse rate)
Fr, 11 June 1999
1640 sec   interval 28 sec

live TV broadcast
PR (pulse rate)
Sa, 19 June 1999
7781 sec   interval 131 sec
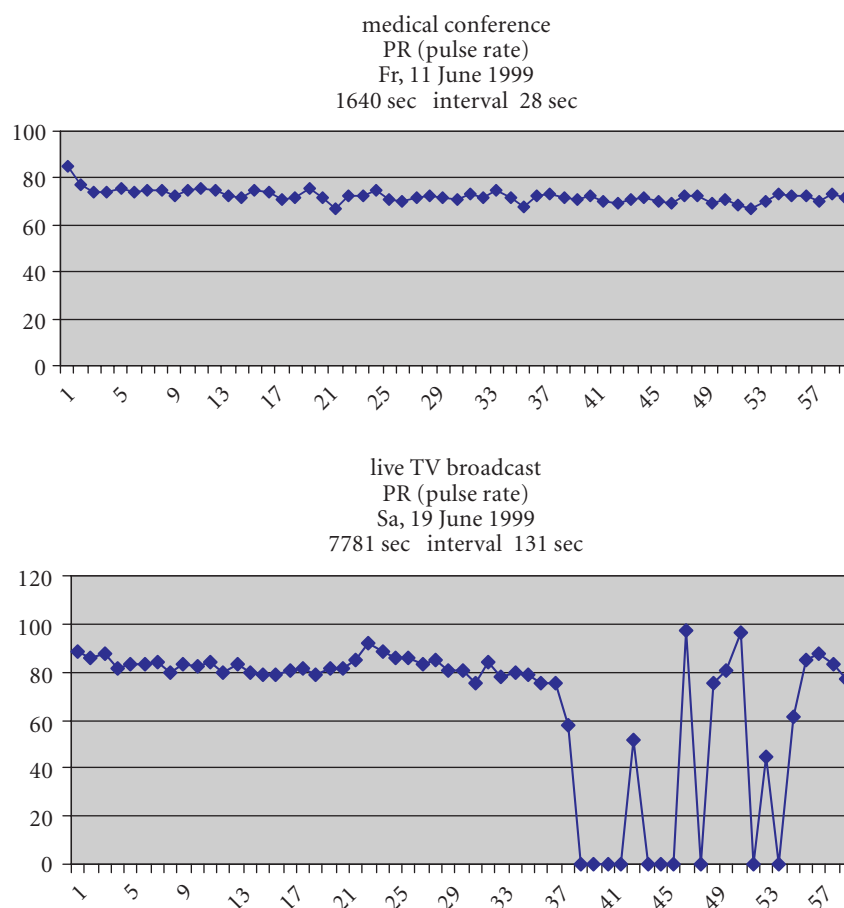
Figure 2. An interpreter's pulse rate recordings in two different settings: (1) medical conference, (2) live TV broadcast.

on in the program. Still, her SCL rose steadily from the very beginning, indicating that tension was building up prior to the actual onset of work.

At a first glance it may perhaps appear somewhat surprising that, during an admittedly difficult medical conference, the interpreter's physiological parameters were within the normal range and no marked signs of elevated stress were observed. It should be borne in mind, however, that experienced conference interpreters can be expected to cope with the demands of a technical conference.

It is important to underline that the findings presented here are only the very first results of an ongoing research project. There is a wealth of data that must be examined and analysed in greater detail. Therefore, it would be far too early to draw

medical conference
SCL (skin conductance level)
Fr, 11 June 1999
1640 sec   interval   28 sec

live TV broadcast
SCL (skin conductance level)
Sa, 19 June 1999
7781 sec   interval 131 sec
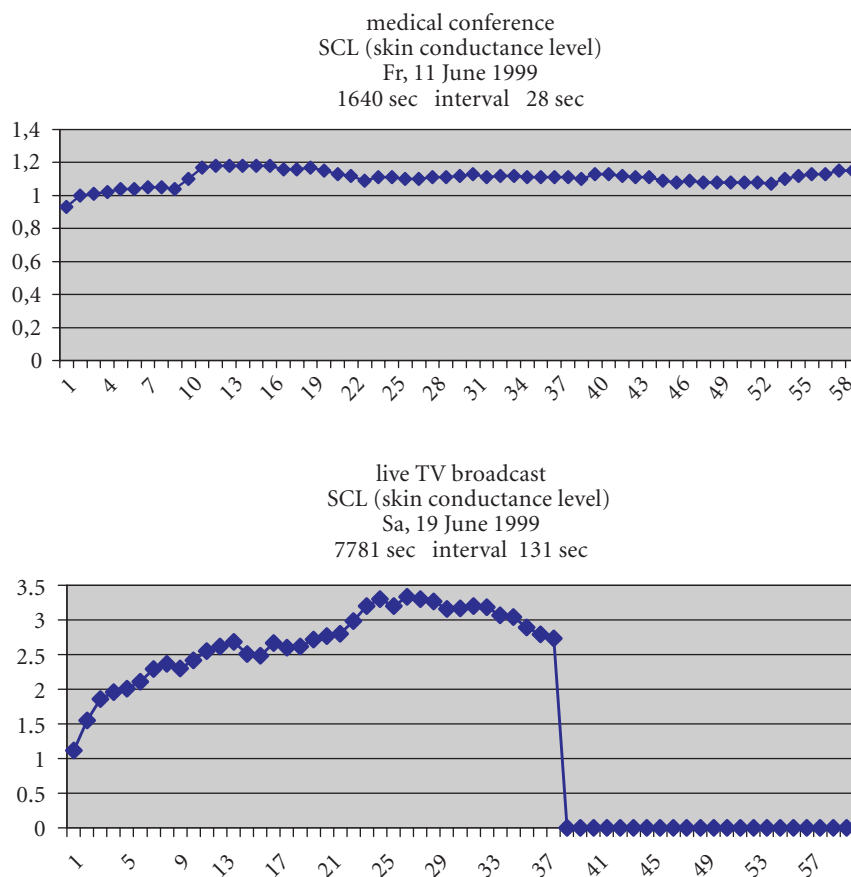
Figure 3. An interpreter's skin conductance level (SCL) recordings in two different settings: (1) medical conference, (2) live TV broadcast.

any final conclusions. However, even these first results leave no doubt that interpreters' subjective impressions of greater stress during live TV interpreting can be confirmed by objective physiological measurements.

Note

New perspectives and challenges for interpretation

The example of television

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1. Aspects of international television communication

According to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), during the first eleven months of 1999 its Eurovision network broadcast more than 100,000 programmes, with an increase of more than 15% over the whole of 1998, which was itself a record year (EBU 2000).

This simple figure casts an impressive light on one particular aspect of globalisation — the increasing internationalisation of television programmes, both terrestrial and satellite-broadcast.

As Blommaert and Verschueren observe, "it is quite obvious that processes of internationalisation always involve a cultural-communicative component, and that this component may precisely be the weak spot in the process, defying good intentions, elaborated policies, and the extensive preparation by the participants" (Blommaert and Verschueren 1991:11). Yet, rather amazingly, scores of studies and books on international and intercultural communication hardly mention (and one could ask how far they consider) the fact that globalised communication implies the use of language — or rather different languages — and thus, in most cases, there must be some sort of overt or covert interlinguistic transfer.[1] This is true also for television discourse. Until now, though the problem has been addressed mainly by translation scholars,[2] a number of interpreting researchers have also made prominent contributions.[3]

If we accept with J. Lambert (1989:215) that "the question of translation has become a key problem of discourse in general", translation being at the same time an (active) agent and a symptom of linguistic and cultural exchanges, we cannot ignore the social and ethical responsibility involved in its use, and the consequent need to improve our understanding of its working mechanisms — for example those of interpreting on television.

1.1 The research project on interpreting in Italian television

The research project the author is engaged in, initiated by Francesco Straniero Sergio (University of Trieste), aims precisely at exploring the field of impromptu oral translation on Italian television during the last thirty years. A large collection of recordings from public as well as private television channels is being transcribed and analysed. The insight to be gained from these studies will be used both for descriptive and teaching purposes. Until now over 900 items have been collected, with a duration ranging from a few minutes to several hours and involving about 100 interpreters. The transcription and its transformation into a machine-readable corpus is far from being completed, but there are already some preliminary results and partial studies.[4]

The present article aims at sketching out a general background for the systematic analysis of characteristics and typologies of orally translated television discourse in Italy, and at highlighting some of its crucial aspects.

2. Interpreting on television

Previous considerations on television interpreting have always acknowledged differences between television interpreting and interpreting in conference settings. Some researchers seem to consider television interpreting simply as conference interpreting performed under severer circumstances (e.g. Pinhas 1972; Strolz 1992); this is also the stance of many professional conference interpreters actually working for television. On the other hand, there are not only authors who stress the profoundly different character of performances expected from television interpreters, but also professionals who acknowledge a completely different approach on television by comparison with traditional interpreting settings.[5] Altogether, there seems to be a consensus that television interpreting needs additional qualifications (Daly 1985), leading to a new professional profile (Laine 1985; Kurz 1990; Kaufmann 1995). In the words of Bros-Brann, "interpreting live for television requires an entirely new 'mind set' compared to everyday practice of conference interpretation and to what all of us have learned and taught in various schools of interpretation" (1993: 1). My theses, deriving from the analysis conducted up to now on the recorded material, are that:

– television interpreting is indeed substantially different from interpreting in traditional conference settings and ordinary face-to-face communication;
– most of the specific differences between traditional interpreting and television interpreting have not yet been sufficiently investigated;
– the norms of behaviour internalised by professional conference interpreters are not always adequate to television communication, and can even lead to conflicts about the perception of interpretation quality.

Media discourse as discourse in the age of technical reproducibility has been studied extensively. Some of the salient peculiarities of interpreted television discourse are:

a. the typically asymmetrical and one-way character of television communication: there is a growing number of recipient subgroups — the television audience, henceforth referred to as off-screen participants — who cannot actively participate in the communication process but have the power of (remote) control, accompanied by a shrinking number of producers of messages, the on-screen participants, and an even smaller number of senders distributing the 'raw material' (pictures and contents);

b. the industrial character of message production for mass communication, involving enormous personal and technical resources and economic interests, which makes it difficult to identify and clearly distinguish between animator, author and principal of a message.

In face-to-face communication the situation is physically shared by all participants. For example, at the funeral of Princess Diana, the liturgy and the speeches were in English, being addressed primarily to the congregation in Westminster Abbey.[6] If interpreters are needed, they can be present and translate for some of the participants.

Media communication, instead, takes place in a virtual situation. In the above-mentioned case, the broadcast of the funeral, staged in different formats, was made available in 44 different languages to 2.5 billion people. It was shown live in about 187 countries, and after the event in another 45 countries (*Il Corriere della Sera*, 7 September 1997, p. 7).

3. Characteristics of interpreter-mediated communication

For the purpose of the present analysis, I consider an interpreter to be anyone who acts as a mediator between at least two people speaking different languages, independently of her/his status and the other roles that particular person may play in the specific communication situation. On television, as in real life, interpreters are not always professionals, officially recognised as interlinguistic mediators. On the contrary, especially on Italian television, there seems to be an increasing tendency towards a hybridisation of roles, with leading journalists and showmen/women acting (also) as interpreters, and professional interpreters becoming (also) primary communication partners.

According to the basic premiss that interpreting is a socially determined activity, a multifactorial analysis is thus needed. The general framework chosen to systematise the salient characteristics of interpreted discourse in different communication situations is Dell Hymes' analysis of communicative events (1974: 45–65).

Hymes distinguishes eight main components with sixteen fundamental aspects, summarised by the acronym *SPEAKING:*

Situation	3. setting	4. scene
Participants	5. speaker, sender	7. hearer, receiver, audience
	6. addressor	8. addressee
Ends	9. purposes-outcomes	10. purposes-goals
Act sequences	1. message form	2. message content
Key	11. key	
Instrumentalities	12. channel	13. forms of speech
Norms	14. norms of interaction	15. norms of interpretation
Genres	16. genres	

Following these categories, some aspects will be highlighted to underpin the claim that television interpreting is indeed substantially different from interpreting in traditional conference settings.

In particular, these categories are applied to three varieties out of the host of possible types of interpreted communication: informal or natural interpreting (in which the interpreter acts as an unremunerated 'helper'), interpreting in traditional conferences, and television interpreting (the latter two in both consecutive and simultaneous mode). Given the dynamic character of any form of communication, all distinctions made are at least to some extent artificial and should be viewed as different positions along a continuum.

3.1   Situation

As to the physical setting (time and place), the main characteristic of interpreting on television is the complex character of techno-communication, constructed for the benefit of a remote audience, while face-to-face interaction always occurs between physically present primary and secondary communication partners (though impaired by the presence of a booth in simultaneous interpreting). On television, programmes can be recorded in the studio and broadcast much later. The television interpreter shares the setting only (if at all) with on-screen participants: working in the consecutive mode, he/she is mainly on-screen, but his/her visibility to the audience is determined by the camera, while the simultaneous interpreter is often completely isolated from the primary communication partners. The scene is mainly determined by the transmission genre (see 3.8), and by the specific roles and status of participants (see 3.2).

In a form of communication with 'no sense of place' (Meyrowitz 1985), staging becomes a constitutive aspect of discourse. This always implies a series of choices (concerning the selection of the images and parts of discourse to be broadcast, their arrangement and explanation), and thus some sort of pre-interpreting. Staging is

often used to create a sense of authenticity; together with editing and mixing, it can enhance the impression of actuality and spontaneity on television.

3.2 Participants

The main aspect distinguishing television discourse from spontaneous face-to-face interaction in this respect is the double level of television communication: carefully chosen on-screen participants — mostly both visible and audible[7] — communicate with each other for the sake of an off-screen audience. This audience is by definition undifferentiated, anonymous and numerous, with no possibility of active participation. The interpreter can be employed exclusively as a mediator between on-screen and off-screen participants, or also as a mediator between on-screen participants.

The increased size and fuzziness of the television audience makes communication more complex for both primary participants and interpreters. As Holly observes, in oral communication "the greater the number of addressees, the more difficult it is for the speaker to provide a text which at the same time is relevant, informative, and comprehensible for a heterogeneous target group" (Holly 1995:342).

Television interpreters obviously always act 'on-screen' at least in voice, but there are important distinctions to be made. In some circumstances the (mainly consecutive) interpreter is placed right in the focus of attention and experiences a new type of involvement in the communication situation, playing the role of an expert or even becoming a television personality. On other occasions, the interpreter (working mainly in the simultaneous mode) is treated as a sort of non-person placed no matter where, a technical device which transforms a verbal input in one language into a verbal output in another language — in Goffman's words, a talking box. This makes the role and status of the television interpreter much more ambiguous than those of a conference interpreter (see 3.7. *Norms*). The ambiguity of the television interpreter's role is further increased by the fact that this function can also be performed by non-experts playing a double role, e.g. as presenter and interpreter.

In interpreter-mediated communication situations on television, we have till now observed three main typologies of participant relationships.

Type 1 comprises events in which on-screen participants communicate with the help of an interpreter, (part of) whose translation is made accessible also to the television audience. Researchers have described this form of discourse as talk constructed for absent overhearers (Hutchby 1995). There is a first level of interaction, including the interpreter and the primary communication partners, and a second level, where their interaction is 'amplified' for the benefit of the television audience.

Type 2 includes events developing independently of their broadcasting; interpreting in this case is one of several means to make the media event accessible to a television audience which cannot follow it in the original language. In this case,

there is a first level of interaction excluding the television interpreter, who comes in only at the second level for the benefit of the television audience.

Type 3 consists of events in which one of the primary communication partners plays a double role, acting both as presenter and as interpreter for the exclusive benefit of the television audience. In this case, there is a stronger sense of mutual relationship between the first and the second level of communication, as the interaction with participants speaking a foreign language is controlled and mediated by one and the same person. Television audiences, the main addressees of media communication, are made less aware of their position as overhearers, being treated as if they were the only addressees of interpreting and thus potentially active communication partners. This particular form of staging adds to the ambiguity of all participants' roles and makes the distinction between author, animator and principal of what is being said particularly difficult.

3.3 Ends

Both in a conference situation and on television, interpreting is the most immediate (and often the cheapest) way of granting verbal communication between people speaking different languages. This could be one reason why the possibility of postponed broadcasting has not led to a systematic substitution of interpreting with more controllable forms of language transfer, such as dubbing, traditional voice-over or subtitling (see Luyken et al. 1991), notwithstanding the risk admittedly involved in actual spontaneity (see 3.8. *Genres*).

In conference interpreting, the interpreter's supposed professional purpose is to act as a neutral mediator and honest spokesperson, loyal both to the speaker and to the listener, aiming at mutual understanding, equivalence and possibly complete-ness (see e.g. quality questionnaires); additional personal goals may be to earn one's living (keeping the customers satisfied by allowing the conference to run smoothly) or to optimise the cost/benefit ratio (balancing fatigue and time against fees), together with the pressing need to preserve one's face in front of an invisible but large audience, not to mention critical clients and colleagues.

In pursuing these same aims, the television interpreter must adapt to massive technical, process- and interaction-related constraints (see 3.1. *Situation* and 3.6. *Instrumentalities*), as well as audience expectations (e.g. as to characteristics of media discourse; see 3.7. *Norms*) and the purposes of the other communication partners (e.g. rapid questioning style of presenters leaving no time for *décalage*; prior instructions to the interpreter to make somebody 'sound' some particular way).

In the case of mixed roles, there can be an even stronger interference with personal goals of the presenter/interpreter (tendency to adapt the translated discourse to one's expectations or aims, need of topic and situation development, gatekeeping etc.).[8]

3.4 Act sequences

Schematically speaking, discourse occurring in informal interpreting situations is mainly dialogical. Conference interpreting, instead, generally occurs in situations which privilege monologic discourse, focussing on propositional content and prevailingly informative function, and using a style nearer to the written pole of the continuum. Thus the interpreter, too, tends to privilege correspondence of semantic content over form in his/her output if circumstances do not allow the achievement of both.

On television things are different. There 'the medium is the message', the oral component is accompanied by an obtrusive visual component, and both are carefully staged (see 3.1. *Situation*). Interactive and conative functions prevail both in monologic passages (explanations, comments, speeches) and in dialogic format, with a strong tendency towards shortening turns. Situation development can prove more important than topic development, the way social discourse is constructed more important than propositional content. The conference interpreter's tendency to set greater store by semantic content than form may thus not be judged the same way on television as in a conference setting.

3.5 Key

In order to involve the audience in television discourse and to keep their interest alive, the role of presenters and other types of 'guides' becomes essential. In the entertainment genre (see 3.8. *Genres*), phatic aspects, talk-as-play and footing are skilfully used by media professionals to create a "personalised style of pseudo-intimacy" (Holly 1995:345) and to enhance parasocial interaction involving the virtual audience. In this respect, interpreting helps to create the illusion of live participation through television, hiding its character of 'mediatedness'. Here the interpreter's ability to take key into account in both input and in output becomes crucial; consecutive interpreters, especially, are exposed to changes in footing which temporarily modify their role in interaction (see Straniero Sergio 1999a).

In the event-like genre, on the other hand, probably the most important feature is the tendency to concentrate attention on the present moment, giving television audiences the impression of living reality 'as it is'. The original sound audible in the background thus "contributes to the sense of authenticity in the translation and prevents a degree of mistrust from developing" (Luyken et al. 1991:80).

3.6 Instrumentalities

Obviously the main medium of expression all interpreters rely on, both for their input and for their output, is speech transmitted via the acoustic channel. Yet the

visual channel also carries important non-verbal information for all communication partners.

The main characteristics of media instrumentalities, compared to more traditional forms of interpreting, are their increasing technicality and the minimal control the interpreter has over them, as well as the complete lack of back-channel from the off-screen audience and, sometimes, from all participants.

Television interpreters depend even more than conference interpreters on technical devices; the interplay of visual and acoustic channels, including their own output (staging), is almost totally out of their control.[9] Consecutive interpreters mostly work from and into a foreign language and often have to alternate *chuchotage* and consecutive without notes.

3.7   Norms

Conference interpreters, at least in Western societies, are established professionals. They usually operate in a highly ritualised interaction context, with mainly monologic turns managed by a chairperson. They are generally regarded by their public as impartial experts helping participants to cross the language barrier, as ratified overhearers authorised to speak in the first person singular for primary communication partners and even to talk together with them, infringing the rule of 'one speaker at a time'. This 'instrumental' or service character is confirmed by the general absence of voice matching and the interchangeability of interpreters (the same speaker can be translated by different interpreters). Though the audience does not always have a correct perception of the interpreting process (the 'talking box' idea seems still very popular), the interpreter's loyalty to both the speaker and the listener is granted by professional ethics which perpetuate the 'true interpreter' principle (Harris 1990).

On television, this scheme is (partially) used only in the event-like genre (see 3.8. *Genres*). In the information and entertainment genre, there is a complex interaction which — on the macro-level — follows a pre-established script often unknown to the interpreter, while turn management on the micro-level, though made more complex by the presence of an interpreter (e.g. by *décalage*), is strictly controlled by the presenter. Voice matching is increasingly employed, and television interpreters occasionally also switch to the third person singular (see e.g. Straniero Sergio 1999a, Amato forthcoming).

The fact that the interpreter can become a primary communication partner and that the interpreting function can be taken up by a primary partner raises several problems, including the ethical question of loyalty (which norms are applied? what is privileged in the case of conflicting goals?) and the audience's perception of interpreted discourse. Unfortunately, not only in Italy but elsewhere too, there are few studies on this aspect.[10]

3.8 Genres

The typical cultural specificity of genre traditions observed in cultural studies (see e.g. Rehbein 1985a) seems not to apply to interpreting situations in conferences and on television. At international conference level there are well-defined rituals (official or political encounters, press briefings, traditional conferences with presentations and debate, parliamentary work), but mostly these are not bound to any specific culture. On Western television, on the other hand, a hybridisation of traditional genres has been observed, which also tends to cross national borders.

Leaving aside the broadcasting of conferences and conference-like events, consisting in a mere amplification of the interpretations produced for the public present on the spot, television makes use of interpreters in three typical types of interaction:

a. the "infotainment" genre (mainly formal conversation and narration — e.g. interviews, debates), for which interpretation is mostly simultaneous;
b. planned or unplanned media events, again mostly with simultaneous interpreting;[11]
c. the entertainment genre (breakfast television, talk-shows etc.), with informal or formal conversation and narration adapted to television requirements, where consecutive interpreting is mostly used.

As to speech act performance on television, Ong (1982) identified the 'secondary' orality of media discourse: electronic media are not really spontaneous, but contrive apparent spontaneity by carefully programming events. In the words of another researcher, "media spontaneity (…) has to be learned by media professionals, and it differs from the language style of non-professionals in a significant manner" (Holly 1995: 344). Holly classifies this kind of performance as obviously read, recited (by heart), pseudo-spontaneous (with the teleprompter), semi-spontaneous (improvised from written text or keywords), and spontaneous. He also states that actual spontaneity is generally avoided, because it is considered too risky.

This could explain the apparently paradoxical fact of interpreters sometimes experiencing more difficulties with the 'oral' style of television discourse than with the more 'written' style of conferences: even more than elsewhere, television interpreters seem to be the only participants in communication compelled to produce genuine fresh talk!

4. Conclusions

In the light of the factors analysed, there should be no doubt that television interpreting on the whole is indeed very different from traditional conference interpreting and should therefore deserve more attention from both researchers and teachers.

To sum up, the main characteristics of change are related to:

– the progressive loss of interpersonal character of communication;
– the reproducibility of oral discourse in the age of electronic media;
– staging (where the selection of viewpoints and the restructuring of discourse implicitly include a pre-selection of meaning);
– the secondary character of orality on television, conflicting with the interpreter's genuine fresh talk;
– last but not least, what I have called ambiguity — the loss of a clear-cut profile of language mediation. This pushes the interpreter a step back into invisibility and, above all, may be discriminatory towards 'the other' who wants to make his/her voice heard.

To finish with a deliberately provocative statement, the impression gained from Italian television is that at least some of its interpreters still live on the other side of the (media) moon, where the faithful transmission of meaning, even at the expense of form, for a co-operative audience is the supreme goal of interpreting, while others use their power as mediators in a far from impartial way. Perhaps it might be their choice of a self-imposed norm that denies 'old style' interpreters success in the media context. Failing to recognise and react to these different circumstances could result in an increasingly frequent substitution of 'traditional' interpreters with other mediators, who prove more adaptable. The ethical consequences of these observations, which I consider crucial, are still unexplored.

Let me conclude by again quoting Blommaert and Verschueren, whose comments on intercultural communication partners are, in my view, of particular importance for interpreters: "The solution of these practical problems […] cannot be found in 'increased awareness' of otherness alone. […] Solutions are to be found in practical training involving the questioning of one's own role in the interaction. […] Training should focus on the range of adaptability which the interlocutor [and I add: the interpreter] can hold for him/herself without losing the effectiveness crucial for attaining his/her communicative goals" (Blommaert and Verschueren 1991:9–10).

Notes

1. Cf. e.g. Hall (1976); Brislin and Yoshida (1994); Meckel and Kriener (1996); Samovar and Porter (2000).

2. Cf. e.g. Rehbein (1985a); Knapp et al. (1987); Schäffner (1994); Drescher et al. (1997).

3. Cf. e.g. Kondo and Tebble (1997); Kurz and Pöchhacker (1995); Kurz (1998).

4. Cf. Straniero Sergio (1999a,b); Mack (1999, 2000 and 2001); Amato (forthcoming).

5. Cf. also Mack (2001).

6. Yet, events themselves are more and more designed for being broadcast. The 'perfect crime' (Baudrillard 1995) has been successful: virtual reality appears by now more real than physical reality.

7. But sometimes only visible (e.g. the studio audience) or only audible (e.g. people from the audience calling in during a transmission, or simultaneous interpreters).

8. After all, television's main purpose is to involve, to capture: no pauses, no voids, no decrease of interest mean no zapping; thus its need to appear entertaining, but also authentic and credible.

9. Cf. also Mack (2001).

10. Cf. e.g. Elsagir (1999).

11. Cf. Dayan and Katz (1992).

Linguistic mediation on Italian television

When the interpreter is not an interpreter: a case study

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1.   *Ad hoc* interpreting in the Italian media

Despite the fact that the issue of quality has become of general concern within the field of Interpreting Studies, there is one area of interpreting, at least in Italy, where it would appear that the question of quality is largely ignored and in which the 'interpreter' can get away with producing oral translations which are often unacceptable. What can be defined as *ad hoc* interpreting in the media, and in particular *ad hoc* interpreting for entertainment purposes, is an area in which it would appear that the issue of quality is at best undervalued. Considering that this type of interpreting reaches millions of people, why the public should endure what are often undoubtedly poor quality interpretations remains unknown. Conceivably, the person who interprets is a special one, i.e. a personality, and this detail, coupled with the fact that professional interpreters are not involved, may result in such interpretations being considered fallacious by researchers and consequently unworthy of serious consideration.

Research on multimedia translation in general is still in its early stages and within this field very little research exists on TV interpreting. In the field of Interpreting Studies, it is clear that interpretations which do not fall within the categories of either simultaneous or consecutive are only just beginning to find their feet, so it is hardly surprising to find that, within the area of TV interpreting, even less research is dedicated to interpreting which is not concerned with matters of great importance such as mass-mediatic events. The type of *ad hoc* interpreting discussed in this paper occurs in TV magazines and/or variety shows which are principally concerned with music and film. In other words, programmes within the realm of popular mass culture which are totally divorced from politics, economics and high culture in general. Let us beware that, just as what is not literary or Biblical

translation has run the risk of being categorised as 'other' in Translation Studies, what falls outside the scope of economics, politics and the pure sciences does not suffer the same fate in Interpreting Studies.

In the ever shrinking global village, where diverse cultures communicate with historically unprecedented ease, where news travels at breakneck speed and the role of English is ever gaining importance, it is hardly surprising that out of sheer necessity Italian television makes frequent use of various forms of linguistic mediation. Italy is renowned world wide for producing high quality dubbing and, owing to the vast number of imported films, series, serials, documentaries and news interviews to which audiences are exposed, it is not altogether unlikely that Italians are so familiar with dubbed programmes and recorded voice-overs that they are unaware of any linguistic transformation taking place at all. In fact, if in the BBC interview with the late Diana Spencer confessing her woes in dubbed Italian and in the coverage of her funeral in live simultaneous interpretation the translators/ dubbing-translators and interpreters were well hidden, with regard to trivial news from Buckingham Palace reported systematically on the tail end of the eight o'clock news, the translator is completely invisible. Yet what audiences are experiencing is nonetheless a form of linguistic mediation, albeit opaque. *Ad hoc* interpreting is in total contrast with these other forms of linguistic mediation in the media because here journalists and presenters are fully visible to the public as they appear in their new professional roles.

1.1   The journalist-interpreter

Early morning viewers in Italy will certainly be familiar with RAI[1] journalists who go on the air live and interpret international news web sites (especially CNN) by simultaneously translating the oral text of a site's video clips and often the written texts contained in Internet site frames in question, too.[2] Audiences thus watch a journalist watching and listening to a news programme in another language on a computer screen as it is being transmitted in real time through the World Wide Web, and listen to her as she (a) interprets the oral text and (b) orally translates some of the ever-changing written messages which appear around the video clip — these are usually news flashes, financial indices, weather reports and so on. This type of interpreting can be defined in terms of three-way interaction, of journalist-interpreter mediating between virtual written/oral text-types, guests and remote audience. As the flowchart in Figure 2 illustrates, this model of interpretation is quite dissimilar to that of simultaneous and consecutive interpreting and even of video conferencing. These traditional forms of interpretations typically involve an Orator performing in Language A, with an Interpreter listening to the message in Language A and translating it into Language B for an Audience, which is witness to both Languages A and B (Figure 1).
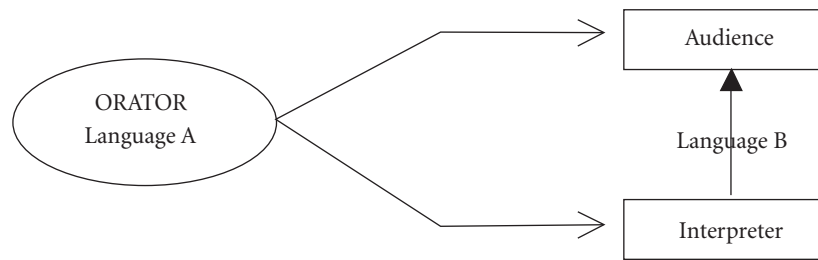
Figure 1. A model for traditional conference interpreting.
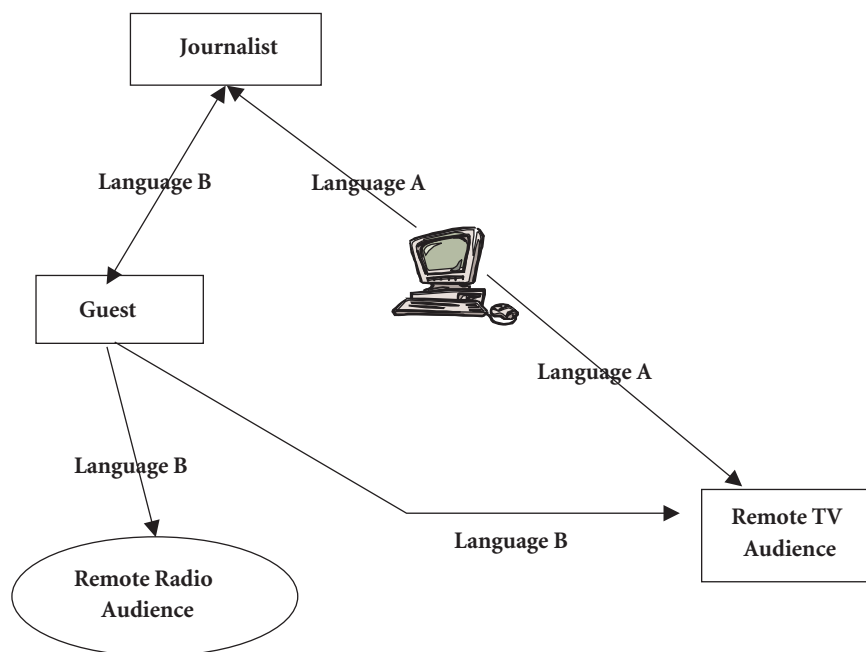
Figure 2. A model for interpreting across different media.

Interestingly, early morning journalists, like interpreters in booths, wear headphones as they converse simultaneously with monolingual guests, who are often physically elsewhere. In Italy such news programmes are usually in part broadcast on radio, TV and the Internet at the same time.[3]

1.2 The compère-interpreter

However, not all *ad hoc* interpreting on Italian TV deals with matters of great pith and moment such as international news. Much *ad hoc* interpreting exists simply for entertainment purposes. There are numerous compère - or host-interpreters on Italian TV; personalities such as Raffaella Carrà, Gabriella Carlucci, Fabio Fazio, Red Ronnie and Paolo Limiti, to name but a few, are all too willing to reveal their linguistic abilities to millions of viewers as they liaise between their non-Italian speaking guests and their Italian speaking audiences. And even if many limit their bilingual performances to a few short introductory and/or valedictory exchanges, others go all the way and take part in bilingual chatting within the wider framework of a monolingual chat show. In fact, often, the host of a variety/magazine-type show, and therefore a well known personality, will interview a foreign celebrity, usually from the world of show business, and interpret both himself and his guest.

In such cases, in terms of interpretation typology, we have a fairly uncharacteristic situation, as the interpreter is not strictly liaising between two parties, in the sense that he is transferring messages from A to B and back again from B to A as would occur in regular liaison interpreting (Figure 3).

In the case of liaison interpreting, the interpreter mediates between two parties who do not share the same language. Normally, any initiation comes from either of the parties for whom the interpreter is acting as moderator. We can imagine situations as far apart as business negotiations and court interpreting in which, although fully visible, the interpreter neither initiates discourse nor authors it. Conversely, the host-interpreter is not a regular go-between, but a totally independent agent within the speech event. Although he is indeed interpreting *for* two parties (or possibly three depending on how we wish to consider the audience) who do not share a common code, unlike any other interpreting typology, he is the initiator of the speech event and thus in total control of the situation (Figure 4). Unlike any other form of interpretation, the interpreter is not only the initiator of the text to be interpreted, but also author of part of the discourse — as far as a presenter can be an author, of course.[4]

2. The investigation[5]

An empirical study was carried out in order to investigate audience perception and attitudes towards *ad hoc* interpreting on Italian TV. The aim was principally to find out how audiences responded to such interpretations, with a view to understanding their levels of:

a. trust: translation of some sort is obviously necessary in the media and an Italian-only speaking audience has no choice other than to trust the translator. How much credibility does a personality, a non-professional actually have?
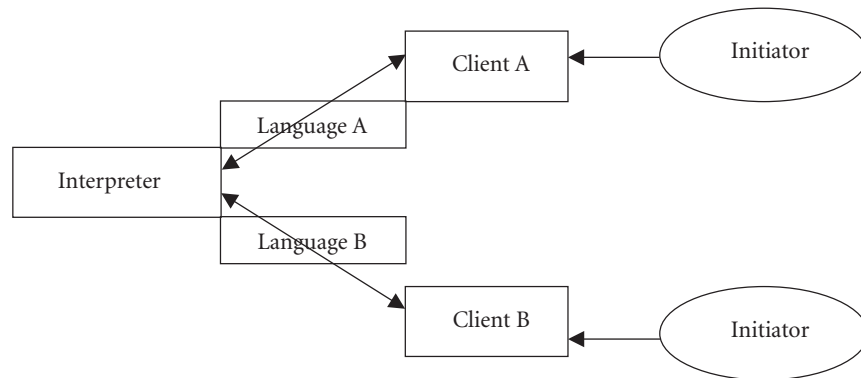
Figure 3. A model for liaison interpreting.
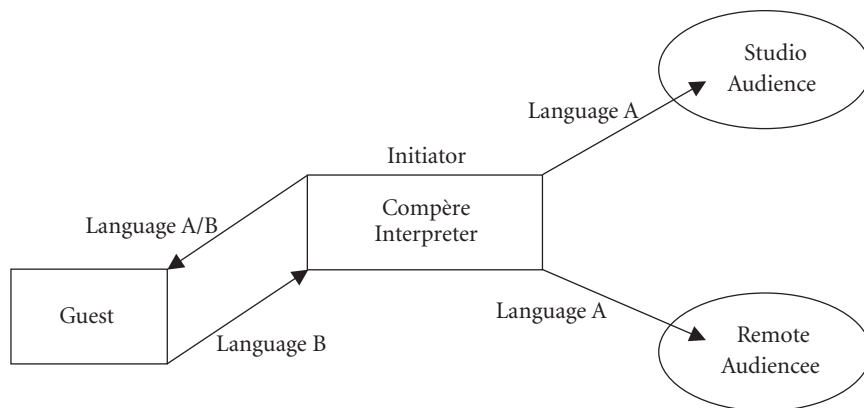
Figure 4. A model for interpreting for entertainment purposes on TV.

b.   levels of tolerance: audiences who understand the person being interviewed are obviously more fine-tuned to the interpreter than the linguistically 'lay' person. How much non-professionalism are such viewers willing to tolerate?

In order to explore these areas, two different categories of viewers were asked to watch a nine minute video clip containing an example of a host-interpreter interviewing a celebrity and were then asked to fill in a short questionnaire.

2.1   The recording

Our investigation was based upon an interview conducted by Paolo Limiti, as opposed to another host, mainly because of the compère's exceptional command of the English language. It was thought that the poor quality of English often spoken by other presenters would have almost certainly resulted in biased respondent

reactions, whereas a personality who was at least linguistically competent would receive a more neutral judgement. Younger and more linguistically competent host-interpreters of pop and rock music programmes were also rejected because they were often not well known to the general public. Limiti was thought to be the perfect choice because, despite his proficiency in English, his interpreting skills are those of an amateur, whose technique is quite unlike that of a professional interpreter. Whether the general public was aware of this was one of the factors we set out to evaluate. The recording chosen for our experiment was of Paolo Limiti interviewing heart surgeon Christian Barnard, which was originally broadcast in September 2000.

2.1.1 *Paolo Limiti*

Limiti is the compère of *Ci vediamo su Rai Uno,* a magazine which is broadcast daily by the RAI in the early afternoon. The programme is clearly aimed at senior citizens, both the studio audience seated behind Limiti and the guests being usually in the over-sixty age group. The format of the show is classic Italian variety, consisting of song and dance routines, stand-up comedy acts and phone-in quizzes. Most of the songs on the show are from the pre-war era and they are historically contextualised in detail by Limiti. When songs are not performed in the Italian version Limiti will first gloss the lyrics, after which the number can be heard accompanied by superimposed *mot à mot* subtitling — this also occurs for songs from the classic Neapolitan repertoire. Every day Limiti interviews different guest personalities and, if the guest of the day happens not to speak Italian, he consequently doubles up as an interpreter.

As far as this particular type of speech event is concerned, it could almost qualify as an example of what Goffman defines three-way conversation (1981:197) — in this case between presenter, guest and audience. Limiti will typically begin his interview by questioning his foreign guest in Italian, he will then repeat the same question in English, his guest will then respond in English and Limiti will translate the response back into Italian for his audience. This bilingual conversation within a conversation is, of course odd: although Limiti is conversing face to face, dyadically with his guest, he is, in fact, really only speaking Italian for the sake of the studio audience behind him, which in a sense is only vicariously part of the speech event. Furthermore, let us not forget the larger audience which is participating from home, what Goffman labels the 'remote' audience. Thus what we really have is a four-way conversation.

The translations of the guest's responses are also uttered in a dyadic mode, facing the guest rather than the audience. Occasionally, Limiti will ostensibly turn round and speak to the studio audience alone or even to the wider audience at large, usually when promoting a book or a film, but will do so (like all TV/radio announcers) as if he were speaking to one single person in pseudo-dyadic mode.

Finally, Limiti and guest converse in — or indeed perform in — what Goffman calls 'fresh talk' (op.cit.). Now, while we do not wish to imply that Limiti and his guests previously prepare the interview by rote, we would like to suggest that:

a. Limiti prepares the questions beforehand — he goes on the air visibly clutching a clipboard which presumably has the questions on it; however, the clipboard is probably a 'safety-net', as it is feasible to suppose that he reads the questions over dozens of times beforehand. Nevertheless, his talk always give the impression of being "fresh";

b. the guest is most likely to be not totally ignorant about what s/he is going to be asked, and has surely thought about or has maybe even practised what to answer. Yet once again talk appears to be 'fresh'. Thus, Limiti's interpretations appear to be equally fresh — or at least as fresh as those of a regular practitioner, who will not go to work totally unprepared on the subject matter to be interpreted.

2.2   The respondents

Two different groups of respondents were asked to watch the recording. Group A consisted of 80 informed respondents. These were all undergraduates attending the first two years of the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Bologna, who were either majoring in English or studying it as their second language.

The same recording was shown to Group B, which was made up of three focus groups, each consisting of 10 participants aged between 15 and 70, from different walks of life, with different degrees of competence in the English language. Participants were chosen haphazardly from the local community — shopkeepers, teachers, builders etc. The only qualification they required was lack of linguistic expertise.

All respondents were given a short questionnaire to fill in. While group A were questioned on discrete linguistic features contained in Limit's interpretation, group B were simply questioned on their perception and attitudes towards the interviewer in terms of trust in the host-interpreter.

Professional interpreters were deliberately excluded from the sample for this project, as were students attending the third and fourth year of our faculty. This was because informal reactions to the interview by professional interpreters tended to be extremely intolerant (quite rightly so perhaps) towards the presenter, although their comments on features such as the presenter's general absence of technique and professionalism were greatly appreciated. While laypersons generally marvelled at Limiti's interpreting abilities, professionals were particularly intolerant of features such as his poor use of ear voice span, his habit of talking over the interviewer and the fact that he paid little attention to style.

3. Results

In Group A, the informed respondents, 69 of whom were female and 11 male, which well reflects the male/female ratio of the faculty, when asked to evaluate Limiti's use of lexis, grammatical correctness and stylistic appropriacy, pretty unanimously gave him a pass mark. According to about half the sample, the presenter's rendering of these features was considered as being sufficient (Table 1).

The group of undergraduates were also asked to give a yes/no answer to whether they trusted the personality as an interpreter. This variable was crossed with those regarding perception — i.e. fidelity, lexis, syntax and style. The results of cross tabulation of these variables lead us to consider that there might be a relationship between trust and perception. We used chi squared statistics (χ^2) to test the null hypothesis that there could be no association between trust and perception against the alternative hypothesis that there could be an association. The data of the contingency table were plotted in four tri-dimensional bar graphs: Figure 5 illustrates the cross tabulation between fidelity and trust; Figure 6 between syntax and trust; Figure 7 between lexis and trust, and Figure 8 between style and trust. In each graph, the two categories of the variable *trust* were plotted on the y axis and the three categories of the perception variables (*poor*, *sufficient* and *good*) were plotted along the x axis. Percentages are plotted on the z axis. The results of chi square statistics (χ^2), the degree of freedom (d) and the p-value for the level of significance have been indicated in each figure. Chi square statistics show there is a strong association between trust and perception at least for three variables — lexis, fidelity and style. Thus the fact that the public figure inspires trust seems to affect the perception of respondents. As can be seen in Figure 5, of the 56.3% who rated fidelity positively in Table 1, 43% trusted Limiti. The same pattern can be observed in the other figures and, according to results of the chi squared test, it seems that respondents are able to judge the quality of this service objectively.

Table 1. Ratings given by informed respondents on Limiti's interpretations of linguistic features

	Poor	Sufficient	Good	Total
Fidelity	10	25	45	80
	12.5%	31.3%	56.3%	100%
Lexis	19	34	27	80
	23.8%	42.5%	33.8%	100%
Syntax	19	44	17	80
	23.8%	55%	21.3%	100%
Style	29	35	16	80
	36.3%	43.8%	20%	100%
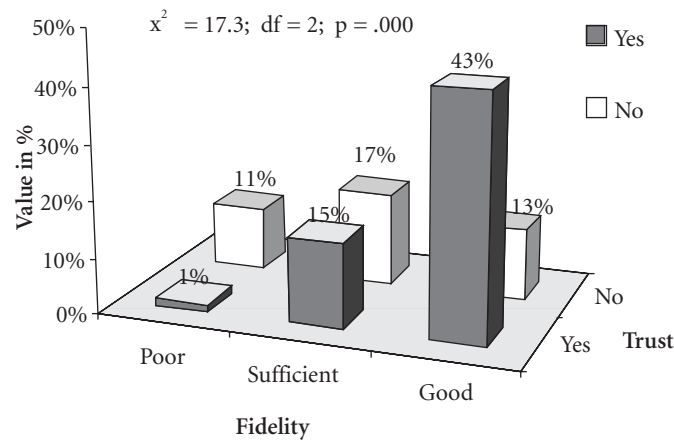
Figure 5. Trust and Fidelity.
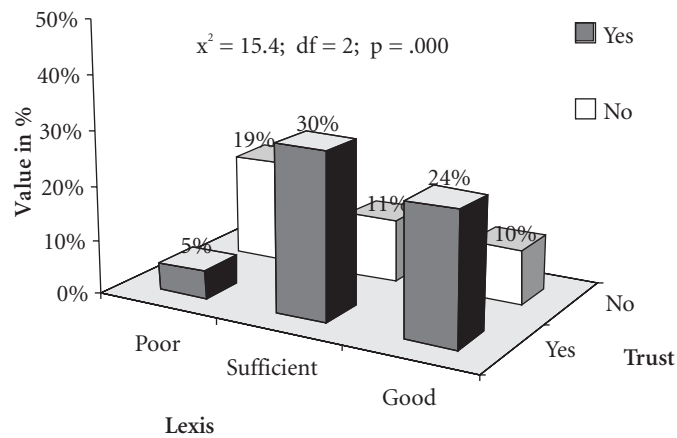
Figure 6. Lexis and Trust.

With regard to the layperson focus groups in which respondents were not asked to judge Limiti's linguistic abilities, discussions revealed that the more proficient the respondent was in English, the less he or she would trust Limiti's interpretation. This seems to reinforce the judgement of students whose English proficiency is certainly better than that of the people involved in focus groups. As a result, we could infer that the opinion most viewers have of the interpretations in these programmes is influenced by the reputation of the compère.
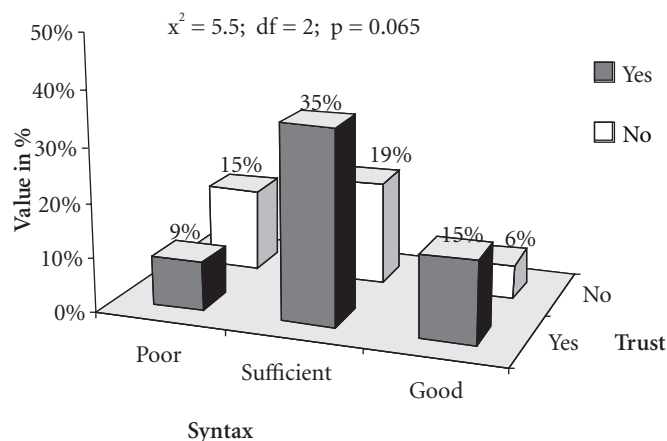
Figure 7. Syntax and Trust.
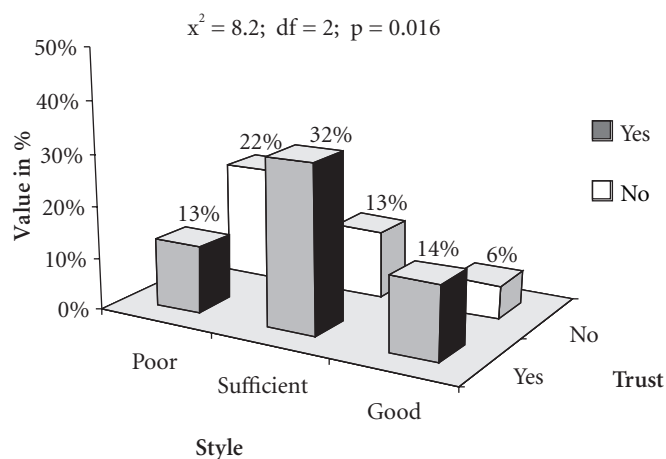
Figure 8. Style and Trust.

4. Conclusions

We would like to suggest that informed respondents, students who entered the School following severe linguistic and cultural selection, and are surrounded by English and linguistics, were influenced by the charisma of the TV personality and were therefore more tolerant than would be expected of his shortcomings, many of which were not simply poor interpreting strategies, but genuine mistakes and even contradictions. In the layperson focus group, our results are strengthened. While students who judge Limiti positively represent a homogeneous sample of linguistic

proficiency, the heterogeneous focus groups showed that judgement of our personality is higher when the level of English is poor. The chi square test also confirmed this hypothesis.

Despite the fact that non-professional linguistic mediators on TV are not so numerous, we believe that this typology of interpretation will become more common in the future, for obvious reasons regarding globalisation and the spread of English as a *lingua franca*. This case study has shown that, while in terms of quality we are a long way away from the performance of a practitioner who could raise the quality of the interpretation in every sense, such interpretations are part and parcel of the show, of entertainment. It would be unlikely that an anonymous albeit professional interpreter would have the emotional impact on the public of a personality like Limiti.

Since this is a pioneer study in the field of multimedia translation we would like to conclude that this typology of interpretation should not be ignored by researchers and that the model suggested in the flow chart be further explored using a larger sample of host-interpreters.

Notes

1. RAI (*Radio Televisione Italiana*) is the state owned radio/TV corporation.

2. Such interpretations, however, are not always necessarily 'live'. Since going into print early morning RAI journalist Emanuela Falcetti appears to have been preparing and summarising her texts before going on the air.

3. During the US presidential elections in autumn 2000, the CNN website went out live on Italian TV within a RAI Internet frame and the usual live interpretation was replaced by a mixture of subtitles and written glosses. Conversely, written web sites relating to Bush and Gore were (or at least appeared to be) localised and translated orally while on-line, once again by a non-practitioner.

4. For a lengthy and detailed discussion on authorship in the media, see Goffman (1981).

5. I would like to thank Giuseppe Nocella for his support regarding the experimental design of the investigation and above all for his generous contribution of statistical know how.

Interpreter training

The quest for optimal relevance

The need to equip students with a pragmatic compass

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I have been teaching and participating as a juror at the graduation exams of several schools in Europe and the Americas more or less regularly for the last fifteen years, practising the profession for nearly thirty, and watching over it for the last ten as Chief Interpreter with the United Nations Office at Vienna, and I have noticed what to me is an underrating of the pragmatic aspect of communication in conference interpreting — an underrating that amounts to underrating relevance and, with it, acceptability itself. It is an unavoidable if regrettable fact that students (and more than a few veterans) do not take duly into account the social import of their job: they seem to switch on automatically to a default mode of interpretation in which texts, though oral, appear suspended in thin air, come from nowhere and no one in particular and going nowhere and to no one in particular. Students just, well, translate!

What teachers should attempt, I submit, is to instill the need to understand that people come to meetings with a specific purpose and that they open their mouths with a specific purpose, and that those who are listening to them directly or via an interpreter have also come with a specific purpose and are now listening with a specific purpose. No matter how hard he tries, a mediator is never a pellucid window pane, decoding semantic representations in one language and encoding them in another: he is being paid to make the speaker relevantly understood by his (the mediator's) interlocutors. Whatever he needs and does in order to achieve this end matters only to his peers (or teachers) and remains, mostly, between him and his maker. In order to achieve optimal relevant identity between meaning as meant and meaning as understood under any specific circumstances, it is the interpreter's first and foremost task to ascertain what counts as relevance (for the speaker, for the interpreter's addressees and mutually); otherwise, he will be interpreting in the pragmatic dark. Any interpretation — as indeed any task at all — that is not optimally relevant under the circumstances leaves that much to be desired. The very

first thing to do, then, even before asking them to attempt to interpret in any mode, is to equip students with a pragmatic compass solidly inset in an assessment of optimal relevance in the specific virtual circumstances.

Indeed, speech acts (in García Landa's 1998 wider sense) do not happen in a vacuum or for no reason at all. Most students do not stop to ponder the pragmatic reasons that make the propositional content of meaning meant relevant in a given situation for a given set of interlocutors: they tend to concentrate on propositional content alone and try to convey all of it, regardless of its *ad hoc* relevance and, worse, without any conscious effort to convey the right pragmatic attitude. This is particularly felt in consecutive interpreting, where students at times fail even to adopt the right body posture. Within consecutive interpreting, moreover, this shortcoming is more sorely apparent in speech acts that stray away from the trite staleness of regular conference speeches into the realm of the humorous, ironic, lighthearted or simply colloquial. It is difficult to illustrate paralinguistic and kinetic features in writing, but it takes no inordinate imagination to see what I mean: a student that, for starters, spends the first half of the speech act with his nose all but piercing his notebook, scribbling furiously, without even looking at the speaker or his future interlocutors, conveying the wrong pragmatic attitude even before he starts talking. And then, when the moment finally comes to make sense out of all those doodles, they are deciphered modularly, without any sense of direction or purpose. But even short of this worst-case scenario, I have witnessed a myriad otherwise most acceptable performances that were sadly lacking in pragmatic savvy, as if the student had never been aware of the pragmatic attitude evinced by the speaker. Again, this is especially true of humour. Such renditions remind me of what Etkind (1982:34) said about a certain translation of a Russian epigram:

> *Est-elle vraiment juste, cette traduction? Oui, pour le sens. Ce qui manque, c'est une bagatelle: le chant. Et une autre: la blague.*

Excessive or, rather, exclusive emphasis on propositional content alone, demanding that it be there, all of it, regardless of its pragmatic function, is ill placed. To my mind, it is but a manifestation of an obsolete concept of the mediator as the speaker's *alter ego*, as if the only *X* marked on the communicative stage were right next to the speaker. Why not next to the mediator's interlocutors, or anywhere in between? I have progressively come to the conclusion that conference interpreting is a social anomaly both with respect to tenor and field, which tends to blind practitioners to the pragmatics of communication altogether. To make things worse, the social setting is confused with the interpreting modality: consecutive and simultaneous interpreting need not be conference at all! Media interpreting, for instance, is a different ball game, and students, that I know of, are never made aware of the new social co-ordinates demanding a different communicative approach — which brings pragmatic acceptability by the widest possible audience to the very fore.[1]

Conference interpreting tends to be a relatively staid and rarefied activity; thus, when it comes to the real trappings of real communication between real people, conference interpretation theory and practice stand to gain a lot from the insights of dialogue interpreters (community, liaison, etc.): There is much about the real world out there that the humble peasants can teach the gentry — if only the gentry would deign to stoop and listen!

1. A model of communication

Students (and not only of interpretation, but also those of translation), I submit, must be taught the following truisms:

I. *On the speaker's side:*

a. this speaker you are about to interpret has come to this meeting with a specific motivation, which pre-exists his actually intervening at this given time;

b. this motivation has been further refined now that the time has come for him actually to speak;

c. this specific motivation governs his main and secondary pragmatic intentions: what he actually intends to do by saying what he is about to say or is in the process of saying — i.e. to produce certain effects on his listeners (perhaps not on all of them, or not on all of them to an equal degree; and maybe even on some absent addressees, such as a constituency back home);

d. this set of pragmatic intentions actually governs what and how he will say or go on saying;

e. what he actually verbalises is also a function of the relevant knowledge he activates — in order to understand him you must activate the *same* knowledge;

f. the relevance that the propositional content conveyed by the speaker's utterance(s) has for the speaker himself can only be assessed on the basis and in the light of the pragmatic intentions behind it — in order to understand *him*, and not simply what he is saying officially, you must look behind his official discourse;

g. the speaker verbalises his meaning meant as a function of the language *as he speaks it,* not as *it* is — you must therefore try and penetrate *his* language, especially if he is not articulate;

II. *Between the speaker (and the mediator) and his addressees:*

a. in order to communicate meaning meant, the speaker produces a semiotic stimulus that is at once linguistic, paralinguistic and kinetic (which aspects are relevant in different ways);

b. in a given social situation governed by certain social practices and relevant world;

c. at a given historical time and at a specific place and moment;

d. there is no necessary relationship — let alone isomorphy — between meaning and its verbalisation: if there were, translation would be, by definition, impossible;

e.   this meaning, meant by this speaker, is meant to be understood by these interlocutors in this situation, not *urbi et orbi et per saecula saeculorum.*

III. *On the addressees' side:*

a.   each interlocutor, including the speaker's direct addressees and those of the interpreter, have come to the meeting out of their own specific motivations, which pre-exist their actually listening to the speaker;

b.   these motivations are further refined when the time comes for them actually to listen to the speaker;

c.   every interlocutor sieves his comprehension through his own interest or indifference in, or even resistance to, understanding — if you want to be optimally relevant to your audience, you must try and elicit or guess where their interest and motivations lie;

d.   in order for comprehension of the propositional content of meaning meant to obtain, each interlocutor must activate the same knowledge as the speaker — you must be aware that shared knowledge reduces the need for semantic explicitation;

e.   this complex interplay of activated knowledge, motivations, expectations, interests, indifference or resistance actually governs the pragmatic effects of comprehension of the propositional content conveyed by the speaker — unless you take them duly into account, you run the risk of producing uncalled for negative effects;

f.   the relevance of the propositional content conveyed by the speaker's utterance(s) can only be assessed on the basis and in the light of the contextual (i.e. both pragmatic and cognitive) effects produced by its comprehension on each interlocutor — so think before you say something that may be useless or, worse, counterproductive;

In the light of the above, the following corollaries are thus clear:

i.   *Successful communication can be defined:*

a.   cognitively, as propositional identity between meaning as meant by this specific speaker here and now and as understood by these specific interlocutors here and now — if you achieve that, the speaker's propositional meaning will have been fully understood;

b.   pragmatically, as a certain correspondence or correlation between the intentions pursued by this speaker here and now and the effects felt by these specific interlocutors here and now — propositional meaning meant, however, may be totally irrelevant to your interlocutors, therefore sapping their willingness to co-operate with him or you;

c.   relevantly, as the closest to optimal mix of propositional identity and pragmatic correlation in the specific situation — which is up to you to decide strategically and tactically at every step.

ii. *There often are, however, obstacles to successful communication:*

a. Although among the participants at any institutional event, such as a typical multilingual conference, one can reasonably presume enough convergence of motivations, interests and expectations to assume that what is more or less relevant to the speaker will be more or less relevant to his addressees, relevance is always individual and *ad hoc*, and, with it, overall acceptability — so you must constantly watch for inevitable mismatches and try to patch them up in so far as possible or deontologically apt;

b. there may be different degrees of mismatch between what García Landa calls the hermeneutic package — i.e. the linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge base — applied by the speaker and that which is activable on line for each interlocutor — so make sure that you give your audience enough semantic clues and enough *time* to activate them;

c. there may be different degrees of mismatch between the speaker's pragmatic intentions and relevance assessment and relevance assessment by each interlocutor and, therefore, the contextual effects of comprehension upon him. These mismatches may be of a cultural or cognitive nature — so beware of any such mismatches and may the Force be with you!

d. successful communication is a direct function of the interlocutors' willingness to co-operate: when this subjective predisposition to make oneself understood or to understand does not obtain fully, the pragmatic rapids become much more difficult to negotiate — so all you can do is play innocent.

e. meaning and understanding being, by definition, asymmetrical, most of the time pragmatic success is measured negatively, as the avoidance of negative effects — so that is what you must strive for first and foremost (the do no harm maxim so dear to Pearl);

f. (unnecessary) negative effects can only be avoided by adequately assessing relevance for the specific interlocutor(s) — so be mindful of it.

iii. *So that successful mediated communication:*

a. depends, thus, on the relevant degree of propositional identity between meaning as meant by the speaker and as comprehended by his indirect interlocutors, i.e. such an identity that ensures as adequate a pragmatic correspondence as possible between the speaker's intentions and the effects that comprehension has on his addressees. It is the interpreter's ultimate task, therefore, to help achieve such relevant identity between meaning meant and meaning understood (see Viaggio 1999a or b);

b. This then becomes the student's pragmatic North, which must govern both his propositional and pragmatic choices as well as the means of their verbalisation.[2]

Once these objective facts, which are part and parcel of any act of communication — whether mediated or not, both monolingual and interlingual, formal or informal

— have been clearly understood by the student, it becomes immediately apparent that the mediator's first task is to assess or at least educatedly guess any mismatches in relevance as viewed by the speaker, his direct addressees and the interpreter's own. Once such mismatches are reasonably established, the interpreter must decide which relevance criteria he will cater for strategically and then tactically at each turn: the speaker's alone, his own interlocutors' alone, or some point in between. This choice, or, rather, series of choices, are themselves governed by the interpreter's loyalty. Depending on the specific circumstances, and most especially on the degree of co-operativeness obtaining between the different participants at a meeting and between the interpreter and his own interlocutors, this loyalty may shift. Even if it does not, relevance criteria do shift all the time, and an interpreter must be aware of them.

For instance, information loses its original relevance with each time it is repeated: delegates who have to listen to the same speech or argumentation or part thereof one hundred times over tend not to listen at all after a while. *Ad nauseam* repetition of a discourse theme also conspires against relevance and acceptability (see Viaggio 1995). Last but most definitely not least, machine gun speed is the worst enemy of intelligibility, and therefore relevance, and therefore acceptability. Students should be taught to seek an even and poised delivery regardless of the speaker's word-per-minute count. This can only be achieved by condensing and abstracting (see Viaggio 1992b), which, in turn, can only be effectively done on the basis of relevance for the listener.

I think that this approach merits more than a simple once-over at the beginning of a course, and that it must be pursued constantly. As a matter of fact, it would be most useful for students to practice establishing relevance for the different imaginary participants at a meeting and then interpreting the same speech according to different criteria.

2.   A practical example. Relevant identity established on line

I shall analyse a speech delivered at the 2nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Geneva in 1998. Now let me boost your "hermeneutic package," dear reader. As you most probably know, climate change is a cause of great concern: the hole in the ozone layer and global warming due to greenhouse gas emissions (i.e. emissions from industrial and consumer use, mainly from those who are industrious and consummate) are wreaking havoc with third-world peoples' livelihood and first-world peoples' vacations, which concerns both developing and developed countries. So here comes the delegate of Kiribati. The delegate of what? Kiribati. Have you ever heard of it? Neither have most people. This the delegate knows full well, so that he starts off by

presenting his tiny country. The wealth of detail that was mostly superfluous with the speech on Antarctica I used as an example in Viaggio 1992a and 1995 is here mostly of the essence. The delegate is as genuinely interested in informing his audience as they are in becoming informed.

But before I proceed, do what I ask my students to do: take a minute to imagine where Kiribati may be on the map, what kind of country it is, what kind of people inhabit it, what they might do for a living and how well they manage. Think, also, why would such an unknown country take the trouble to come all the way to Geneva. What kind of case will it plead? And think, besides, why all the other countries have come to Geneva for and what they would be listening for when the floor is given to Kiribati. Done? Let's go on, then. Let me tell you that Kiribati is classified as an LDC, or least developed country. This is a political and administrative term (a bit like "disaster area") in that it entails certain rights and privileges that countries are entitled to only when they are officially poor. Among such privileges is help from the UN so that their delegations can attend specific international gatherings. So here is the speech, with all its many infelicities faithfully reproduced:

> *Mr. President,*
> *Thank you for giving Kiribati delegation this opportunity to speak at this plenary session of the 2nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. At the start, let me congratulate you sir on your election to the chair. I assure you of my delegation's support and confidence.*

We can already see that the speaker has difficulty expressing himself in English. In any event, the only thing that counts so far is the illocutionary act of congratulating, not the specific linguistic means mobilised.

> *We come from a group of coral atolls in the Central Pacific. There are 33 coral atolls with a total land area of some 820 sq. km. within an ocean area of some 3.5m sq. km. As one national has advocated, Kiribati is a country of ocean. But of course, the atolls are about 3 meters above mean sea level and the only international airport at its capital island Tarawa is serviceable for limited flight connections to other parts of the world. Kiribati remains, nonetheless, comparatively isolated from the mainstream of international air routes.*

This is the encyclopaedic entry that the interlocutors are presumed to lack. The delegate's intention is now to convey the relevant propositional information in order to furnish his interlocutors with an adequate hermeneutic package. As you probably guessed, it is a godforsaken fistful of minute coral atolls strewn widely apart, with just one small airport probably unsuited for anything larger than a small propeller plane. But what is the relevance of a *national* having *advocated* that Kiribati is a *country of ocean*. The speaker must be trying to make relevant sense, but, obviously, he does not manage. My personal guess is that the national is a —

perhaps *the* — national poet, and that the way he said it was very poetic. But it is a guess. As the speaker manages to verbalise it, his utterance's objective sense (Viaggio 1999a), his official verbalisation, makes no sense at all. Notice, also, the first of many ill-chosen coherence markers: Kiribati remains, not *nonetheless comparatively,* but *therefore altogether* isolated.

> *In 1995 the population was 77811 with an estimated per capita GDP of US$450. Kiribati is classified as a least developed country.*

As we have seen, a relevant piece of information, except that the exact number of Kiribatians down to the unit is, perhaps, a bit too much detail.

> *With those background information about my country, it is always an honour to feel fully participating at international meetings such as this. It is also a privilege for it would not have been possible otherwise, without the assistance from the international funds of the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on Climate Change. And our participation reflects our serious concern about climate change.*

We can see the speaker fighting a losing battle with the English language. Meanwhile, the main pragmatic intention shifts: the speaker is now thanking and assuring.

> *Kiribati ratified the Convention in February 1995, soon after the new government assumed office. And we have also paid our share contribution to the operation funds of the Secretariat.*

Obviously, the delegate represents this new Government, which, unlike its predecessor, did ratify the Convention and paid its assessed contribution. But how relevant are Kiribati's internal politics? The statement is probably addressed to the constituency back home. It is totally irrelevant for the rest of the delegates in the room.

> *Here in this Conference, we sense a feeling of a common purpose. It is the purpose to ensure that the objectives of the Framework Convention on Climate Change shall be met. However, we always wonder with anxiety whether these objectives would be realistic for low lying coral atolls, given the continuing prediction of the IPCC on sea-level rise whilst there appears to be no set time tables to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly from the industrialised countries.*

The presentations are over and the speech proper begins. The issue is transparent if obscurely put forward: yes, the objectives are clear and all seem committed to achieve them; but are they realistic for countries such as Kiribati? IPCC (whoever they are)[3] predict that sea level will continue to rise, and industrialised countries, who are responsible for and have the means to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that make the sea rise, have not set any specific time frames to do so.

> *Some scientists would wish to make us realise that the rate of sea-level rise would only be a few millimetres per year. The best estimate by IPCC of the global sea-*

> *level rise is some 50cm by the year 2010 and this is not insignificant. We, in Kiribati, feel that this is serious, and timely action should be taken to mitigate climate change.*

As verbalised, the speaker's propositional meaning seems guided by a sardonic intention. I, for one, doubt that it is. What he probably means is, simply, that some scientists *claim* that the rise of sea level is insignificant. Not according to IPCC, though: if by the year 2010 sea level is to rise by 50 cm, most of Kiribati will perish from the Earth. No wonder they feel it is serious and advocate timely action.

> *However, we would wish that the uncertainties in the predictions were to eventually amount to negative radiative forcing and thereby reduce the predicted warming and therefore the predicted sea-level rise.*

I dare you, dear reader, to make head or tail of this utterance. Again, the speaker must be trying to make sensible sense (the pragmatic intention seems clear enough), but there is no way I can manage anything remotely resembling propositional comprehension. All I can tell, a bit like Alice trying to make sense out of *Jabberwocky*, is that they wished that predictions about warming and sea-level rise were more reassuring.

> *Serious coastal erosion is experienced on many atolls. It has affected the people's livelihood, and people in certain villages are already accommodating the change of the coastal profiles of their atolls. Certain villages are already retreating further inland. We keep wondering whether sea-level has not already been rising and that coastal erosion experienced is not the consequence of the rising sea level.*

Indeed! But how are people *accommodating the change of the coastal profile of their atolls*? Simply by retreating inland: they are being literally washed away by the rising water. Is it that the atolls are sinking, or maybe, just maybe, that the sea is rising?

> *It is only recently that we have a high precision tide gauge installed at Tarawa, so we could not be able to tell just what had been the situation of sea level in Kiribati. We cannot compare the immediate past situation of the sea-level with what is now, or what will be over any furrier period.*

In other words, since the tide gauge has just recently been installed, they cannot compare or establish any trend over any *further* period.

> *Kiribati is planning on a number of programmes to specifically address climate change issues. In addition, we participate in the US Climate Initiative Programme and under this programme we intend to complete, among other works, a Vulnerability Assessment of a few of our atolls. The programme covers some of the responsibilities that we have to undertake under the Convention. We also participate in sea-level monitoring programme funded by Australia and managed by the Australian National tide Facility in collaboration with the South Pacific Regional*

> *Environment Programme. And as I mentioned earlier, a high precision tide gauge has been installed at Tarawa under this programme. It will increasingly prove to be a very important monitoring programme for the state of sea-level in Kiribati.*

All these programmes are mostly irrelevant to the audience, except, perhaps, for the countries mentioned specifically, and those with strategic interests in the region (including France). Be that as it may, it is totally irrelevant, say, for Latin America and Spain. As we shall see, it is good for the Spanish interpreter to be aware of it.

> *Programmes to upgrade our national capability to monitor climate change and its impacts are also being formulated. We like to be able to understand and to detect whether the sea around Kiribati is rising or not. We wish to ensure that policy makers and the public are sufficiently briefed on the issues of climate change. An early start on these programmes depends on availability of resources, and we will depend on international and regional co-operation to implement them.*

The aside is over. Now the speaker is explaining his country's internal objectives and the need for money from Australia and New Zealand (the wealthy neighbours) and the more distant rich in order to implement them.

> *My government has started work on a framework law on the environment. This is in line with our policy to strengthen management of our local environment. We need to monitor our corals, and manage our coastal zone, including mangrove ecosystems. We need to protect and enhance the quality of ground water lens. We realise that we would still be threatened by climate change and sea-level rise. IPCC predictions of sea level are quite alarming for low lying atolls. And we will continue to turn to the international community with hope and confidence that it will continue to mitigate climate change.*

The Government are keeping their side of the bargain. But this alone will not save the country from doom: it is others who can do something effective about it.

> *Indeed, climate change is a common concern of mankind, and only the international community that can safely address the issues and save the global environment. We therefore trust that in these forums, we will be able to agree on clear, and timely actions that the various categories of the parties should take to meet their obligations under the Convention. We should not fail to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Therefore, we urge that a decision on the adequacy and urgency of the commitments under the Convention should be strongly guided by a consideration of the needs to save the most vulnerable ecosystems. I thank you, sir.* (1.039 words)

The political message specifically addressed to the speaker's interlocutors there and then is now clearly spelled out: we are a small, poor and vulnerable country; we cannot even afford to come here on our own. You may not think much of us, but

if we go under, you will probably follow suit, if not now, then later, so let us take the right decisions and make the right commitments here and now.

This is the kind of analysis that a good mediator must be able to make in real time and on line in order relevantly to convey meaning meant to his specific audience. This might be a possible strategy: the mediator sides with the speaker. He is trying to put his message across as clearly, coherently and convincingly as possible. All information that is relevant to the speaker is transmitted (in so far as it is readily comprehensible). Obviously redundant information, however, is wisely pruned down or altogether dispensed with. The raw material that the mediator must work with — an extremely awkward utterance — demands a thorough editing job, which, in turn, takes time. Whenever required, the mediator gives the speaker the benefit of the doubt and assumes responsibility for avoiding nonsense. Specifically, the mediator takes over coherence.

The practical exercise (notice that it need not be interlingual at all) can be done as follows: The students are asked to imagine a specific audience and cater to it. In that light they are instructed to (a) highlight every word carrying a concept that must be retained and (b) crossing out everything that is (i) redundant, (ii) unnecessary, (iii) parasitic, or (iv) incomprehensible, as well as (v) the syntactic connectors and other grammatical morphemes that will have to change in the target language or can be dispensed with without impeding comprehension. In other words, the students prepare the text as for an exercise in cognitive clozing. Eventually, this kind of clozing ought to be done automatically by means of *selective listening*, which relieves much of the input processing effort, filtering out, at the same time, most sources of linguistic interference. Selective listening, of course, cannot but be relevance based. Below I am suggesting how the speech might end up looking. In this particular case, I have kept, or even introduced, whenever necessary, the basic coherence markers, so that the italic text can be read rather smoothly. In my experience, this is a most valuable method when preparing written speeches in the booth. Less cumbersome, of course, is simply to highlight the key semantic markers and leave it at that. Notice that there are two possible relevant readings: italic text alone, or anything that has not been crossed out. Depending on the speaker's own rate of delivery, the interpreter can choose either version or any intermediate one. What is crossed out is *irrelevant*, which means that it is better omitted even if the interpreter has no problem whatsoever reproducing it: as a case in point, each full mention of the *Framework Convention on Climate Change* or even *Kiribati* is, more than redundant, exasperatingly parasitic.

> Mr. President,
> *Thank you* for ~~giving Kiribati delegation~~ this opportunity ~~to speak at this plenary session of the 2nd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change~~.
> At the start, *let me congratulate you* sir on your election to the chair. I assure

you of my delegation's support and confidence.

We come from a group of coral atolls in the Central Pacific. There are *33* ~~coral atolls~~ with a ~~total~~ *land area of* ~~some~~ *820 sq. km. within an ocean area of* ~~some~~ *3.5m sq.km.* ~~As one national has advocated, Kiribati is a country of ocean. But of course,~~ *the atolls are about 3 meters above* ~~mean~~ *sea level and the only international airport* at its capital island Tarawa ~~is~~ *service[s]*~~able for~~ *limited* ~~flight~~ *connections to* other parts of *the world. Kiribati* remains~~, nonetheless, comparatively~~ *isolated from* the *main*~~stream of~~ *international air routes.*

In 1995 the *population* was *77811 with* an estimated *per capita GDP of US$450. Kiribati is* classified as *a least developed country.*

~~Mr. President,~~

~~With those background information about my country,~~ *it is [thus]* always *an honour to* feel *fully participat[e]*~~ing~~ *at international meetings* such as this. It is also a privilege for *it would not have been possible* ~~otherwise,~~ *without the assistance from* the international funds of *the Secretariat* of the ~~Framework~~ Convention ~~on Climate Change. And~~ our participation reflects our serious concern about climate change.

Kiribati ratified the Convention in February 1995, soon after the new government assumed office. *And* we have ~~also~~ *paid* our ~~share~~ *contribution* to the operation funds of the Secretariat.

Here ~~in this Conference,~~ *we sense a feeling of a* [*our*] *common purpose.* ~~It is the purpose~~ [*is*] *to ensure that the objectives of the* ~~Framework~~ *Convention* ~~on Climate Change shall~~ *be met. However, we* ~~always~~ *wonder* ~~with anxiety~~ *whether these objectives* would be [*are*] *realistic for low lying coral atolls, given the* ~~continuing~~ *prediction of the IPCC on sea-level rise whilst there appears to be no set time tables to limit and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly from the industrialised countries.*

Some scientists ~~would wish to make us realise~~ [*claim*] *that the rate of sea-level rise would only be a few millimetres per year. The* best *estimate by IPCC of the* global sea-level rise *[however] is some 50cm by the year 2010* ~~and this is not insignificant.~~ We~~, in Kiribati,~~ feel that *this is serious, and timely action should be take*n to mitigate climate change. ~~However, we would wish that the uncertainties in the predictions were to eventually amount to negative radiative forcing and thereby reduce the predicted warming and therefore the predicted sea-level rise.~~

Serious coastal erosion is experienced *on many atolls.* It has affected the peoples livelihood, and people in certain villages are already accommodating the change of the coastal profiles of their atolls. *Certain villages are already retreating further inland. We* ~~keep~~ *wonde*~~ring~~ *whether* ~~sea-level has not already been rising and~~ *that* coastal *erosion* ~~experienced~~ *is not the consequence of the rising sea level.*

~~It is~~ *only recently* ~~that~~ *we have a high precision tide gauge* installed at Tarawa, *so we could not* ~~be able to~~ tell ~~just~~ what had been the situation of sea level in Kiribati.

We cannot *compare* the immediate *past situation* ~~of the sea-level~~ *with what is now, or what will be* ~~over any furrier period~~.

Kiribati is planning on a number of programmes to specifically address climate change issues. In addition, *we participate in the US Climate Initiative Programme and* under this programme we *intend to complete*, among other works, *a Vulnerability Assessment of a few* of our *atolls*. The programme covers some of the responsibilities that we have to undertake under the Convention.

We also participate in sea-level monitoring programme funded by Australia and managed by the Australian national tide Facility in collaboration with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

~~And~~ as I mentioned ~~earlier~~, a high precision tide gauge ~~has been~~ installed at Tarawa under this programme. It **will** ~~increasingly~~ prove to *be* a *very important [for] monitoring* ~~programme for the state of~~ *sea-level* ~~in Kiribati~~.

Programmes to upgrade our national capability to monitor climate change and its impacts are also being formulated. We [would] like to be able to understand and to *detect whether the sea around Kiribati is rising or not. We wish to ensure that policy makers and the public are sufficiently briefed on the issues* of climate change.

An early start on these programmes depends on availability of resources, and we will depend on *international and regional co-operation to implement them.*

My government has started work on *a framework law on the environment.* ~~This is~~ in line with our policy to strengthen management of our local environment. We need to monitor our corals, and manage our coastal zone, including mangrove ecosystems. ~~We need to protect and enhance the quality of ground water lens.~~

We realise that *we would still be threatened by climate change and sea-level rise.* IPCC predictions of sea level are quite alarming for low lying atolls.

And *we will continue to turn to the international community* with hope and confidence that it will continue *to mitigate climate change.* Indeed, climate change is *a common concern of mankind, and only the international community* ~~that~~ *can safely address* the issues and save the global environment. *We therefore trust that* in these forums, *we will be able to agree on clear, and timely actions* that the various categories of the parties should take *to meet* their *obligations under the Convention.* We should not fail to achieve the objectives of the Convention.

The Convention recognises that there are *those that are most vulnerable to adverse impacts of climate change, including small islands. They are also in the forefront in any test for the resilience of the world's ecosystems to adverse consequences of climate change. If they would not adapt* to stresses brought about by climate change, then *it would be questionable whether the international community can save the rest of the* ~~totality of the~~ *world's ecosystems.*

Therefore, we urge that a decision on the adequacy and urgency of the commitments under the Convention should *be* strongly *guided by* a consideration of

> *the needs* to save *the most vulnerable* ecosystems.
> ~~I~~ *thank you*~~, sir~~.

Let us now compare the original with one of two of many possible more relevant versions — the most complete (everything except what has been crossed out) and the most succinct (only that which has been highlighted).

Mr. President,	
Thank you for giving my delegation this opportunity to speak at this Conference.	Thank you, sir.
Let me congratulate you sir on your election to the chair. I assure you of my delegation's support and confidence.	I congratulate you.
We come from a group of 33 coral atolls in the Central Pacific with a total land area of some 820 sq. km. surrounded by some 3.5m sq.km of ocean. In the words of one of our poets, we live in the ocean. Indeed, the atolls are about 3 meters above sea level and the only international airport at our capital island Tarawa can only service limited flight connections to other parts of the world. Kiribati remains, therefore, isolated from international air routes.	We are a group of 33 coral atolls in the Central Pacific with a land area of 820 sq. km. Amid 3.5m sq.km of ocean. The atolls are about 3 meters above sea level and the only international airport can service limited connections to other parts of the world. We are, therefore, isolated from international air routes.
In 1995 the population was 77811 with an estimated per capita GDP of US$450. Kiribati is classified as a least developed country.	Our population is some 80000 with an estimated per capita GDP of US$450 and we are classified as a least developed country.
Mr. President,	
You will understand, in view of the above, what an honour it is to be fully participating at this international meeting. And a privilege too, for it would not have been possible without the assistance from the international funds of the Secretariat. Our participation, on the other hand, reflects our serious concern about climate change.	For us it is an honour to be fully participating at this international meeting. And a privilege too, for it would not have been possible without the assistance from the international funds of the Secretariat.
Kiribati ratified the Convention in February 1995, soon after the new government assumed office. And we have also paid our contribution to the operational fund of the Secretariat.	We ratified the Convention in February 1995, have also paid our contribution.
etc.	etc.

I submit that barring obvious and cumbersome pauses (which, let us remember, are perceived as a function of the interpreter's rate of delivery, not the speaker's), both versions would be equally acceptable to all delegates, as would any possible intermediate renderings.[4] Initially, students can be asked to work "horizontally," i.e. monolingually, and later they can be asked to try it "diagonally," i.e. interlingually, in which case the version on the right would be in the target language. If the original had been in French, the English interpretation could have read like the one in the right column.

Am I actually advocating that interpreters leave glaring blanks? In consecutive, indeed I am! In the case of consecutive interpretation the blanks are unnoticeable and much valuable time is gained by everybody concerned. In any event, the rule of thumb that seems to prevail everywhere is that a good consecutive interpretation ought to be much shorter than the original.[5] What I am really submitting, though, is that students must learn to establish relevant identity from the standpoint of what their audience want to spend time and effort processing: after all, this is but one among 185 speeches by as many countries expressing their salutations, gratitude, situation and position that week! How much glued to their earphones do you think the Costa Rican delegation were throughout Kiribati's speech? What the mediator actually does and how is his own business, but he must be able to do it in *different* ways in different situations, and *always* relevantly. His main task is, for the umpteenth time, to establish such relevance, so as to be able to perform relevantly, with respect both to form and content, i.e. both pragmatically and cognitively. In the particular instances above, propositional content has been manipulated from the standpoint of optimal relevance to a specifically targeted audience, whilst the mediator's main and secondary pragmatic intentions have systematically parallelled those of the speaker. In other words, the speaker has pleaded his case most effectively with different addressees; the mediator has not deserted him at all: on the very contrary, he has become his most effective ambassador before different constituencies with different assessments of relevance. On the other hand, the mediator has catered each time specifically to a specific group of interlocutors, providing them with the most relevant interpretation. Of course, there may be wider deontological, political or other reasons overriding this particular approach under different specific circumstances — i.e. what is optimally relevant to the speaker or a given constituency may not be optimally relevant to the client (in this case the U.N.). It is up to the mediator to establish such optimal relevance at every step, so students better start becoming aware of it and learning how to do it in real time as soon as possible. At the risk of sounding unbearably pompous, I submit that most interpreters are not consciously aware (some pleonasm!) of this fact, or dare not perform consequently out of insecurity or outright fear. This, to my mind, is due to a lack of theoretical background (or, in Marxian terms, to false consciousness), even when the intuition is palpably felt. By actually teaching our students the theory behind

most relevant practice, we are actively promoting the qualitative development of conference interpreting *tout court* into oral mediated interlingual communication — a gigantic leap that has been waiting all too long to happen.

Notes

1. At the AIIC meeting with Chief Interpreters in Rome a couple of years ago, the representative of the ARTE TV channel complained bitterly about the fact that schools paid no attention to the specific needs of media interpreting.

2. By the way, the above is but a different verbalisation of my development of García Landa's model (see Viaggio 1999a or b) minus the offputting symbolic notation.

3. They actually are the International Programme for Climate Change.

4. Readers familiar with Viaggio 1992b will detect that there is a lot of common ground between that piece and this one. What that one sorely lacked was a firm rooting in pragmatics and relevance theory. Also, back then I used to advise condensing and abstracting as sheer manipulations of the verbalisation of propositional content, with a view to saving the interpreter valuable effort; now I advocate it from the standpoint of the interlocutors themselves.

5. The only reason why this is not so in simultaneous interpreting is that, although less dense or informative or redundant, a simultaneous interpretation cannot be *shorter* than its original (except for the lag at the beginning and a possible anticipation at the end). Blanks in simultaneous are therefore perceived as such, and since the original is, after all, a stimulus of ostensive communication that automatically communicates the presumption of its optimal relevance (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995), the interpreter's pauses, if perceived as inordinately long, are at the same time perceived as cheating the listener of information that is presumed to be relevant even if it is not. Note that in both cases we are talking about the subjective perception of a listener. Pauses are perceived as long, not in absolute terms but relative to the interpreter's rate of delivery. On its part, the information perceived as lacking is perceived as relevant. All the interpreter has to do is to fool his interlocutors' perception by speaking at a more leisurely pace.

Aptitude for Conference Interpreting

A proposal for a testing methodology based on paraphrase

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1.   Introduction

The methodology proposed aims at detecting the linguistic and cognitive strategies which can help predict "school-efficiency" in students wishing to attend a conference interpreting course. Here, however, we will not enter into the details of the empirical and procedural part of the test. The aim of the present paper is to explain the theoretical framework for choosing an oral paraphrasing exercise as a diagnostic tool for aptitude to interpreting. Our model to analyse students' oral paraphrases at three levels, i.e. syntax, semantics and pragmatics, will also be discussed.

The paper is divided into two parts. The first part presents an overview of aptitude criteria and tests implemented world-wide and tackles the issue of the need for an objective measurement of abilities. The second part focuses on paraphrase and our analytical three-tier model and categories.

2.   The need for aptitude assessment methods: Reflection and experience

The start of the 70's saw a proliferation of university training courses for interpreters, and with this arose the need to tackle the problem of the selection of candidates. The need was felt to establish criteria and methods that would identify candidates with a marked aptitude for conference interpretation. A variety of studies and other reflections on aptitude gradually developed, based on the idea that to carry out simultaneous interpreting it is essential to have certain cognitive, linguistic and behavioural skills. This theme has been explored in various conferences. Bowen and Bowen (1989) recall, for example, the *Colloquium on the Teaching of Interpretation,*

its Methods and Principles in 1965, and the 1974 AIIC school seminar, at which M. Lederer stressed the importance of the linguistic knowledge of the candidate, assessed on the basis of lexicon usage, of grammar or of idiomatic expressions. On this occasion, the importance was discussed of the ability to understand the information conveyed by the speaker and to express oneself in a clear manner, a solid cultural background being fundamental in this respect. All of this is to be assessed at the entrance examination. The subject was also tackled in the *Colloquium on Interpretation in a Multilingual Institution* (1979), in which Longley and Gerver specified the admission requirements for the course at the Polytechnic of Central London. Aptitude was also discussed during the conference on *The Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Teaching Conference Interpretation*, held in 1986 at the University of Trieste. On the basis of these considerations, thanks to Longley (1989) and Gerver et al. (1989), it was possible to draw a profile of the professional interpreter:

– excellent knowledge of A, B, C languages and cultures;
– ability to grasp rapidly and to convey the essential meaning of discourse, irrespective of the language spoken;
– a memory which recalls the links between logical sequences of discourse;
– ability to convey information with confidence and pleasant delivery;
– broad general knowledge and interests, a curiosity and willingness to acquire new information;
– ability to work as a team member;
– ability to work under stress for long periods.

At the beginning of the 90's, S. Lambert (1991) analysed articles written by professionals and transcripts of interviews with interpreters. She stated that, although empirical research on the skills and abilities required for interpreters was underdeveloped, the professional field agreed on the undoubted need for:

– profound knowledge of active and passive languages and cultures;
– ability to grasp rapidly and convey the essential meaning of what is being said;
– ability to project information with confidence and a pleasant voice;
– wide general knowledge and interests, and a willingness to acquire new information;
– ability to work as a team member.

During the 90's, the debate regarding the study of aptitude for simultaneous interpreting does not seem to have critically reconsidered these previously identified criteria. Yet the fact remains that in the various university training courses, both in Europe and in the rest of the world, tests are devised and used for admission to interpreting courses. Such tests can be held (Moser-Mercer 1994b):

– before admission to a degree course in interpreting and translating, with no further selection procedures after enrolment;

– before admission to a training course in translation, with further tests for admission to a specialisation in interpreting;
– before a postgraduate course of various lengths (6–24 months).

We will now consider a number of screening tests which have been used over the last 30 years and, where possible,[1] refer to the prerequisites, the techniques used and their assessment. A chronological order will be followed, starting with the experience of Georgetown University's School of Language and Linguistics (Washington D.C.), followed by those of the University of Ottawa and of the SSLMIT of the University of Trieste. We will then present the most recent testing proposals,[2] with examples from the University of Stockholm, the ITTC of the ELTE of Budapest, the CBS (Copenhagen Business School) and the ETI of Geneva.

Georgetown University's School of Language and Linguistics

Aptitude tests for admission envisaged (Bowen 1989): multiple choice standard vocabulary test; written translation; oral examination as well as sight translation, followed by a summary of its contents. Results were expressed by "acceptable", "unacceptable" or "probation".

University of Ottawa

Lambert (1991) outlined the methods to select candidates for the graduate diploma programme in use since 1984. The selection exams included tests for shadowing (phonemic shadowing and phrase shadowing), cloze, sight translation/sight interpretation, memory test, and an interview.

These methods seem to have enabled examiners to identify by all the test components several general characteristics considered important (general knowledge, command of A and B languages, ability to transfer meaning, specific interpretation-related skills, personality traits).

S. Lambert (1991) stated that the array of methods used by the University of Ottawa can identify those candidates with little chance of success in the field of interpretation. Lambert hoped to be able to determine whether a further significant correlation exists between the results scored in the tests, and those scored later during the diploma programme. Regrettably, the author specified neither the administration procedures nor the assessment criteria. Furthermore, it must be stressed that the admission tests, applied since 1984, have progressively been modified, which means that candidates were given different tests, and that, therefore, there could be no correlation with the final exam results.

SSLMIT, University of Trieste

From 1979 until the end of the 80's, an aptitude test was administered at the beginning of the third year.

In 1990, Gringiani set out to verify the effectiveness and reliability of this test. The test included a written summary, a sight translation, an improvised speech, general knowledge questions and specific questions on the grammatical aspects of the B language.

The analysis carried out by Gringiani showed that the test was only able to predict which candidates needed a longer training period.

At the same time Russo (1989, 1991, 1993) launched a research project on a new aptitude test. The test consisted of paraphrasing in Italian a speech delivered in Italian, and was aimed at highlighting cognitive and linguistic abilities (comprehension, analysis, anticipation, reformulation and synthesis). The performances of 20 students, assessed on the basis of 14 criteria, were compared with those of students who had already completed their training. The test scores were then correlated with:

– the results obtained in the exams taken during the interpreting course;
– the number of students who had completed or were completing the course;
– the number of students who had dropped out;
– the average mark in the interpreting exams;
– the success rate (exams attempted and exams passed);
– the number of (interpreting) exams passed;
– the number of exam sessions required.

It emerged that 88% of students with a score equal to or higher than zero had completed the course, while 50% of the students with a mark lower than zero had abandoned it. A positive correlation coefficient emerged between the test score and the number of exams passed, as well as the number of exam sessions required.

Contrary to the conclusions reached by Lambert (1991) and Gringiani (1990) concerning the selection tests they analysed, this pilot study showed that the test had a greater predictive value for students with a good chance of success and a lesser predictive value for those cases where a slower progress was foreseen.

The University of Stockholm

This Institution began to offer postgraduate interpreting courses in 1993. On average, 12–15 candidates are admitted to the courses. The test is exclusively oral and includes a presentation in the A language of about 5 minutes, a summary/interpretation in Swedish of a speech delivered in each of the foreign languages known, questions on the culture and civilisation of the foreign countries studied, and an interview.

Interpreter and Translator Training Centre (ITTC), ELTE (Budapest)

The ITTC of the University of Budapest offers a postgraduate course. The admission exam consists of a written and an oral test. The written test includes two translations (into the A and into the B language), a summary in the B language, and an essay in the A language. The oral test includes cultural literacy and current affairs, an interview, a test of liaison interpreting and a sight translation.

Copenhagen Business School (CBS), Centre for Conference Interpretation (CIC)

CIC offers a 6-month post-graduate course. For the admission test, candidates are assessed on the basis of their passive knowledge of the two foreign languages. In practice, the test consists of paraphrasing two brief presentations in language A. The assessment is based on distortions, errors of comprehension and omissions in the A language delivery. The second part of the test includes an interview in the B language. For borderline passes, a sight translation from the B or C language into the A language is used.

ETI, Université de Genève

The admission exam for the interpreting courses is designed to assess the following:

– aptitude for conference interpreting;
– linguistic competence (oral and written skills) in the candidate's A language/s;
– passive language/s competence;

The written part includes translation tests, which must be passed in order to sit the oral examination. The oral part consists of a comprehension test for each of the candidate's languages and an oral presentation test for each of his/her active languages.

3. Aptitude tests: The need for an objective measurement of abilities

In the majority of cases, screening tests are developed, given and assessed by interpretation lecturers. The test components are generally described in the relevant publications, though the administration procedures, or, most noticeably, the assessment criteria are not always specified. This lack of information prevents us from fully taking advantage of these experiences or from considering those aspects particularly worthy of attention.

Selection tests could be devised in a great variety of ways, but what should not be forgotten is that, when investigating aptitude testing in an experimental setting, one is referring to an objective and standardised measurement of a sample of

behaviour (which, even if limited, must be representative of the reference population) (Anastasi 1991: 52–58). Standardisation implies a uniform procedure in administering the test and determining the score. A test must be reliable, and that can only be true if a subject repeating the same or equivalent form of test achieves the same results. It must also be valid and, again, that can only be true if it actually measures what it sets out to measure. Determining its validity requires independent criteria.

In the following sections our research project striving to develop a valid and reliable testing methodology for aptitude to interpreting will be presented.

4.   Rationale behind paraphrase

The primary aim of our research project is to test the hypothesis that efficient strategies to process oral texts within the same language, spontaneously implemented by students who were never trained in interpreting, might prove efficient predictors of aptitude for conference interpreting. If this is the case, it might prove possible to develop objective aptitude testing procedures focused on such linguistic and cognitive skills.

It is generally assumed by the interpreting community (see above) that the main pre-requisite for a successful interpreter is the ability to grasp the meaning and reproduce it fluently into another language. In other words, this is the ability to reconstruct the semantic network (text world) of utterances as they unfold, and of the whole discourse as a cohesive and coherent unit, and to reproduce it on-line in another acceptable wording. This ability, which develops with experience, shows the degree of oral text processing skills and can be evaluated using a linguistic-cognitive model. We assume that, when such skills are detected in students before formal training in conference interpreting, "school-efficiency" can be predicted, that is to say the aptitude to complete the course more successfully than other students lacking those same skills.

But how can we assess that ability in aspiring interpreters not yet trained in listening and speaking simultaneously?

For a test to be valid (see above), it must measure what it has been conceived for (aptitude) and the result must be correlated with independent criteria. In our case, the number of simultaneous (SI) and consecutive interpretation (CI) exams and average marks were among the criteria selected. Furthermore, for a test to be reliable it must be replicable. This means that its evaluation categories should be made fully explicit and univocally defined as well as its procedures.

As regards validity, on-line oral paraphrasing[3] from Italian into Italian was considered a viable diagnostic tool to test the aptitude of would-be interpreters to understand and reproduce the meaning quickly and correctly. The reasons are as follows.

First of all, for its analogies with the SI process: "When both input and output concern speech rather than writing, and the person producing the paraphrase does

so on-line (simultaneously), the demands of the paraphrasing task appear very similar to those of simultaneous interpretation" (Danks et al. 1997:52). Furthermore, Malakoff and Hakuta (1991) suggest that paraphrasing may be more demanding as it calls for a larger vocabulary in the language concerned.

Second, an intralinguistic interpreting task performed by mother-tongue speakers (in this case, Italians) offers the advantage of keeping the sample homogeneous, excluding any bias due to uncontrollable variables such as code-switching interference and uneven foreign language competence among the subjects.

Third, it is particularly useful in assessing would-be interpreters' L1 competence and performance. Greater mastery and awareness in the use of one's own mother-tongue is a prerequisite for a more aware second language acquisition (SLA) (Marinetto 1998:8). We could thus hypothesise that a satisfactory control of L1 lexicon and syntax, if detected in aspiring interpreters' performance, may enhance foreign language competence and also the acquisition of interpreting skills. This, however, ought to be tested under the same time constraints and potentially disruptive stressful conditions as SI — hence the choice of simultaneous oral paraphrasing.

Fourth, unlike shadowing, "paraphrase is not a passive operation, but one involving linguistic creativity, both at cognitive (for instance, appropriate inference, abstraction and generalisation skills) and at linguistic level (for instance correct and "rich" use of lexicon and syntax)" (Corno in Marinetto 1998:8; our translation).

Fifth, a prerequisite for paraphrasing, as for interpreting, is understanding. Only understanding of the "message" (i.e. its illocutionary force, or what the Paris School would call the speaker's *vouloir dire*) allows it to be interpreted and re-phrased in a variety of ways: "an intelligible utterance is one a native speaker can paraphrase" (Putnam 1987:335). In other words, "a person has really understood a text, i.e. its internal links, only when he/she is able to reword it in many different ways" (Marinetto 1998:85; our translation).

Sixth, paraphrase as a "mechanism of text production" (Mortara Garavelli 1979; our translation) implies an important aspect of text competence, namely the ability to perform metalinguistic operations to establish the necessary semantic equivalencies for a synonymic linguistic production. However, an unsuccessful paraphrase may not be the result of poor understanding, but rather of poor performance in language production: that is why these two processes must be kept and assessed separately.

5.   Evaluation criteria

The subjects' oral paraphrases were therefore analysed at a syntactic, semantic and also pragmatic level, to account for the effects of the language used in that particular situation.

The Italian source speech was first analysed from the point of view of its logico-semantic structure (Leech 1974, Chierchia 1997), segmented into syntactic units (Renzi 1988), and then matched with the subject's version. Establishing the textual limits of a paraphrase, however, is less a structural problem than a problem of comprehension/interpretation of the speaker's communicative intention, as Sornicola (1999) rightly points out. As a matter of fact, the problem arose not so much for the syntactic, but for the pragmatic and especially the semantic analysis. Whenever the subject's utterances could not be clearly related to a specific ST segment, a zero correspondence was assigned. The reformulations were evaluated at each unit level, starting from syntax, followed by semantics and finally pragmatics. For each level of analysis, relevant categories were developed and applied. They are specifically and univocally defined, as follows:[4]

5.1   Syntactic categories

Reduction: the omission of text chunks of any size at the syntactic level is defined as reduction (R). It may occur at two levels: Rl and R2.

R1 indicates the omission of a linguistic segment consisting of a sentence nucleus (Chierchia 1997), i.e. a verb and its subject and complement/s, which we shall refer to as Predicate and Arguments to simplify the labelling of phenomena and avoid terminology overlaps between syntactic and logico-semantic nomenclatures. A whole sentence (argument/s and predicate/s, R1s), a clause (argument/s and predicate, R1c), or just a phrase (argument and/or predicate, R1p) can be deleted.

R2 indicates the omission of elements which complete or modify the nucleus constituents, i.e. articles, relative clauses, adjectives, quantifiers and space and time adjuncts.

Expansion: the inclusion of text chunks of any size at the syntactic level is defined as expansion (Exp). It may occur at two levels: Exp1 and Exp2.

Exp1 indicates the inclusion of linguistic segments consisting of a sentence nucleus: the expansion may concern a whole new sentence or a clause, (Exp1s and Exp1c respectively), or simply a phrase (argument or predicate, Exp1p). Any linguistic element necessarily added to preserve syntactic cohesion is not to be considered an expansion.

Exp2 indicates the inclusion of elements which complete or modify the nucleus constituents, i.e. articles, relative clauses, adjectives, quantifiers and space and time adjuncts.

Syntactic Transformation: the reproduction of meaning via the same lexical items, but with a new morphosyntactic network, is defined as a syntactic transformation (SyT). Source-Target Text transformations may concern a whole sentence, a clause or just a phrase (SyTs, SyTc, SyTp). These specific differences are indicated

only when there is a syntactic shift between ST and TT equivalents. In all other cases, just SyT will be used.

Syntactic and Lexical Transformation: the reproduction of the meaning via a new morphosyntatic network and new lexical items is defined as a syntactic and lexical transformation (SLT). Source-Target Text transformations may concern a whole sentence, a clause or only a phrase (SLTs, SLTc, SLTp). These specific differences are indicated only when there is a syntactic shift between ST and TT equivalents. In all other cases, just SLT will be used.

Lexical Transformation: the use of different lexical items for the corresponding ST chunk (syntactic unit) is defined as lexical transformation (LT).

Permutation: a shift in the sequence of text chunks is defined as permutation (P) and points to mnemonic skills.

Production disorders: delivery disregarding morphosyntactic rules, even if acceptability is not jeopardised, is broadly defined as production disorders (PD). These include a variety of performance mistakes, ranging from lack of gender matching to loss of cohesion, false starts, disfluencies, interrupted words or sentences.

5.2   Semantic categories

Deletion: the omission of information units (IU) of any size at the semantic level is defined as deletion (D). It may occur at three levels: D, D1 and D2.

Level D indicates the deletion of a whole predication (the semantic correlate of a sentence, Leech 1974:135) or sentence nucleus plus satellites (Chierchia (1997:219).

Level D1 indicates the deletion of IUs which are sentence nucleus constituents and relevant information for the macrostructure (gist) of the sentence.

Level D2 indicates the deletion of IUs which complete the nucleus constituents (satellites or IU complements), such as modifiers and qualifiers (defined as downgraded predications by Leech 1974:151).

Addition: the integration of units of meaning of any size at the semantic level is defined as addition (A). It may occur at two levels: A1 and A2.

Level A1 indicates the addition of IU constituents.

Level A2 indicates the addition of elements which complete the IU (satellites or IU complements).

Interpretative paraphrase: a linguistic reformulation suggesting in-depth ST processing is defined as interpretative paraphrase (IP). Such cognitively complex operations concern processes of meaning implication (IPi), condensation (IPc), generalisation (IPg) and particularisation (IPp). Examples:

> IPi Rivolgiamo il nostro pensiero alle vittime di tante nazionalità italiana statunitense messicana e altre ancora […][5]
> Ricordiamo le vittime di tanti paesi.[6]

Ipc Da varie parti giungono appelli e pressioni per risposte irrazionali *che servi-rebbero solo ad accumulare altra materia infiammabile.*[7]
Ma non bisogna lasciarci prendere dall'ira e rispondere con *inutile violenza.*[8]

IPg […] capace di apportare una soluzione *di pace e giustizia* in Medio Oriente.[9]
[…] per trovare una soluzione ai *problemi* mediorientali.[10]

IPp […] ad una *situazione* che desta preoccupazione generale.[11]
[…] al grave *problema del terrorismo.*[12]

Non-relevant, synonymic and paradigmatic substitution: the production of new meaning, implausible in the context, is defined as non-relevant substitution (NS); the production of a meaning different but semantically akin to the original (including hypo-hyperonymic relations) is defined as synonymic substitution (SS); the production of a meaning different from the original via a linguistic unit which is only syntactically equivalent (function-words) or semantically plausible in the context is defined as paradigmatic substitution (PS).

Loss of coherence: the failure to produce adequate logical and conceptual links is defined as loss of coherence (LC) (de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981), which can also be due to loss of syntactic cohesion.

5.3   Pragmatic categories

Pragmatic Loss/Gain: any effect resulting from personal use of the language, which may have a pragmatic value in as much as it neutralises or stresses the speaker's *vouloir dire* while facilitating communication, is generally defined as either pragmatic loss (PL) or pragmatic gain (PG). By pragmatic value, reference is made to "[…] approaches which are defined pragmatic because they supplement the utterance meaning with inferences drawn from shared knowledge between the participants, but they are not to be associated to a notion of language as action" Sbisà (1989: 9; our translation). In this context, PL is divided into loss related to language register (register loss, RL); loss of communicative efficiency (EYL) and loss of communicative effectiveness (EFL). Efficiency loss is associated with the concept of processing ease, as it requires a greater processing effort for the receiver. Effectiveness loss is associated with the concept of processing depth, as the speaker's aim and intentions are not easily grasped and the effect on the hearer will not be the intended one. The original message will either be more *specific* (EFLS) or more *emphatic* (EFLE).

When the opposite occurs, the relevant occurrences are defined as communicative efficiency gain (EYG) and as communicative effectiveness gain (EFG) respectively. The TT could be either more specific (EFGS) or more emphatic (EFGE).

The categories involve: rhetoric effect (such as that produced, for instance, by syntactic parallelism, which is quite frequent in our ST); discourse markers; time,

person and space deictics; modulation; retrieval of shared knowledge; procedures facilitating language perception (Kimball 1973) and processing (such as syntactic transformations from subordinate to co-ordinate clauses).

Theme/Focus: the shift into thematic position of information units is simply defined as theme (T), whereas the use of linguistic devices aimed at stressing a specific text chunk is defined as focus (F).

Delivery: the way in which the TT is orally presented is defined as delivery (D). It is an overall evaluation which concerns voice quality (weak, tense or firm, calm) and attitude (anxious, hesitant, uncertain with frequent self-repairs or self-assertive and in control). The evaluation can be either positive (P) or negative (N).

The following table shows the model and the categories of analysis. The analysis starts from the language surface level (syntax) and assesses the associated effects at the other two levels. For instance, in the case of syntactic expansion, at semantic level new information may be provided (addition) or a type of interpretative paraphrase may occur; at pragmatic level some type of loss or gain may result.

The syntactic, semantic and pragmatic categories may be both diagonally and horizontally associated.

Syntax	Semantics	Pragmatics
R1s	D (predication)	PL
R1c	D1 (IU constituents)	or
R1p	D 2 (IU complem)	PG
R2		
Exp1s	Ad1	PL
Exp1c	Ad2	or
Exp1p	IP	PG
Exp2		
SyT (s/c/p)	IP	PL
	NS, SS, PS	or
		PG
SLT (s/c/p)	IP	PL
	NS, SS, PS	or
		PG
LT	IP	PL
	NS, SS, PS	or
		PG
P	–	T/F
PD	NS	PL
	CL	
		Delivery P/N

6. Conclusions

The linguistic-cognitive model we have presented is work in progress and is being tried out with a group of 90 students. The results of the paraphrase analyses will be statistically correlated with external criteria for validation purposes through cross-checking academic career results in the same students, and, in particular, with interpreting exams.

Developing a methodology to test aptitude to conference interpreting is a daunting task, but through our efforts we hope to be able to contribute towards shedding some light on a very challenging and moot issue: is it nature or nurture which mostly sparks our interpreting skills?

Notes

1. Not all the necessary information is available in the publications referred to.

2. Not having found publications on these subjects, the information gathered on these tests was obtained thanks to the personal contribution of several teachers, who kindly offered their help and forwarded information by e-mail.

3. After being given a little training in the task, subjects were asked to sit in the booth and paraphrase a 5 minute Italian political speech while listening to it (See Russo 1989 for details on experimental conditions). The evaluation criteria described in that article mark the starting point for the present totally revised, three-tier analysis.

4. Paradigmatic examples are provided only for the less self-explanatory categories.

5. "Let's ponder on the victims of many nationalities, Italian, American, Mexican and many more…"

6. "Let's remember the victims of many countries…"

7. "Appeals and pressure for irrational response come from various sources *but they would only help to further kindle the fire.*"

8. "But we should not be carried away by wrath and reply with *useless violence.*"

9. "[…] able to bring a solution *of peace and justice* to the Middle East."

10. "[…] in order to find a solution to the *problems* in the Middle East."

11. "[…] to a *situation* which causes general concern."

12. "[…] to the serious *problem of terrorism.*"

The role of linguistics
in the interpreter's curriculum

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1.   Introduction

This paper discusses the role of the study of general and historical linguistics in Undergraduate Degree Courses in Interpreting. In the discussion I shall at least in part rely on my own personal experience: I am a Researcher in General and Historical Linguistics at IULM University in Milan, but I was also trained as an interpreter; I practised professionally for a few years and taught Interpreting at the Milan Interpreters' School, before deciding to concentrate my energies on academic and research activities.

I have now resumed teaching trainee interpreters within the framework of a new Degree Course in Interpreting which has just been started in my University in co-operation with the Milan Interpreters' School. The subject I teach now is General Linguistics, so I shall also make reference to my direct experience in drawing up a programme for our courses, a task to which we set out with some clear objectives in mind: on the one hand, offering trainee interpreters an opportunity to expand their cultural background, with special regard for different theoretical aspects underlying the history and description of languages, on the other hand, ensuring that they acquire a command of instruments and strategies which might be applied to specific problems.

2.   A proposal for a curriculum

2.1 Historical aspects and theoretical models

In drawing up the syllabus it was decided that, as concerns the most general cultural aspects, we should first of all concentrate on the historical description of the main European languages, with special regard for Romance and Germanic languages, i.e.

those languages that are most frequently used in international meetings. As a matter of fact, a good background in historical linguistics might help interpreters go beyond the contingency of each single instance of language use and develop the capacity to discern linguistic variation, in its historical and social dimension.

Incidentally, in the history of European languages contact has had an important role; however, on account of sociological and cultural factors, its impact has differed radically in different cases: under the effects of contact, some languages have disappeared altogether (e.g. Celtic in Continental Europe and in England), others have seen their importance greatly reduced in functional or geographical terms (e.g. Ladin and Provençal), while others have been enriched with new lexical and syntactic elements. The awareness of substratum and superstratum phenomena, as well as of facts due to geographical contiguity, is a vital basis for understanding the historical complexity of the modern languages which the trainee interpreter will have to use; it also helps students notice certain aspects of language use which otherwise would escape observation. In this perspective, a lexical approach is particularly interesting and may lead to construct a real "history of words", focussing the student's attention on extremely important linguistic and cultural phenomena. The same is true for syntactic and textual aspects, an area where at any given historical moment the most prestigious languages have made their influence felt.

The main target of a linguistics curriculum should, however, be to help students familiarise with the workings of natural languages. In teaching, this presupposes the choice of a theoretical model; in our case we have chosen the structural model which we believe to be the most viable, also in terms of its effectiveness when applied in practice. Of course, students must be made aware that the model adopted is only one among many and, as such, has an essentially relative value.

This structural Saussurean approach is adopted in a handbook with an enigmatic Sanskrit title, *Mugdhabodha* (Negri 2000), especially written for trainee interpreters, where a general introduction to the basic concepts of linguistics is offered, special attention being given to those notions considered most useful for them: languages as systems of signs, the linearity of the signifier, the concept of "value" etc.

2.2 Expression

The analysis of *expression* (to use Hjelmslev's term) provides the opportunity to introduce a number of useful general concepts — for example variant/invariant, continuous/discrete etc. — within the general picture of language as a system.

Some of the basic notions of structural phonology are also introduced; the description of the sound systems of natural languages and the way they work, together with the description of language sounds in articulatory terms, helps stimulate the students' awareness of the characteristics of their own mother tongue,

and — in comparative terms — of their other languages, thus improving ability to observe specific characteristics of foreign languages. All this is conducive — in practical terms — to more effective learning, an aspect that is particularly important in training for a profession for which oral language is the basic tool.[1]

2.3 Grammatical description

At a higher level of description, students are encouraged to focus their attention on language units having autonomous lexical and grammatical meaning, using the concept of second articulation as a starting point. Here, the notions acquired in the study of phonology are used in order to identify "-emic" units and their variation (i.e. morphemes, morphs, allomorphs).

In broad terms, morphological elements, like phonological ones, can also be examined in a contrastive perspective, pointing out possibilities of hypo- and hyper-differentiation similar to those described by U. Weinreich (1953) for phonology. As Jakobson made clear (1952), languages do not differ in what they *can* say, but rather in what they *must* say and, above all, in *how* they say it. The awareness of morphological paradigms in his/her working languages is absolutely essential for the trainee interpreter. Suffice it to think how categories of tense and aspect differ from one language to another. At least as crucial are problems connected with lexicalisation and grammaticalisation, which offer a good starting point for typological observations.

In terms of syntax, both within and across sentence boundaries, observations based on a generative approach are to a certain extent inevitable, if only for the crucial historical role played by Chomskian theory. Other subjects which cannot be ignored are the quest for language universals, which is especially relevant within the framework of translation and interpreting studies, the problem of the order of constituents, the theme-rheme sequence within the sentence and the paragraph, as well as the notion of markedness.

2.4 Typological observations

However, in my opinion the most interesting and practically relevant area for trainee interpreters is language typology, which can be approached both in its morphological and syntactic aspects. In our course students are asked to read one of the most important essays in the history of linguistics in the 20th century, *Language* by Edward Sapir (1921). This text contains, among other less original notions, some fundamental observations on the evolution of languages in history, together with a very useful typological model,[2] which adds to and improves Schlegel's classification. Incidentally, the choice of an "authoritative" text is also

meant to educate students to the "taste" of accessing the original sources of theories, rather than resorting exclusively to second-hand accounts and digests.

Since space is too limited here to illustrate Sapir's model in any detail, I will merely note that typological study applied to an interpreter's working languages can greatly help his/her awareness of the divergences between the structures of such languages in view of developing strategies to overcome the problems deriving from such divergences. Besides, familiarity with word-formation mechanisms can be useful in the text decoding process, and even assist the interpreter in situations where s/he has to rely on word formation in order to improvise the translation for a word.

Something similar can be said for order-of-words typology, which is absolutely fundamental in simultaneous interpreting for all language pairs, although for the layman its relevance is evident at first sight only when German is involved. While it is not the general linguist's task to discuss this problem in detail for specific language pairs, it has been addressed by a number of interpreting scholars. For example, Snelling (1992) examined the contrast between languages belonging respectively to the Romance and the Germanic families and, interestingly, in a later work focused on specific syntactic strategies to be used when German is involved (Riccardi and Snelling 1997).

Finally, the importance which interpreter training gives to proficiency in foreign languages often diverts attention from one crucial fact: the importance, for an interpreter, of his/her mother tongue. Ideally, this should be taken almost for granted, although it should not be neglected in the curriculum. Of course, the interpreter needs not only an excellent command of his/her native language, but also a thorough knowledge of its structures and varieties (including LSPs), as well as an awareness of its typological and structural characteristics, in both a contemporary and a historical dimension.

2.5 Textual analysis

The role of textual analysis, which is amply recognised in the case of translator training, cannot be neglected in the interpreter's curriculum. In a recent paper, Garzone (2000) has shown that familiarity with the general principles of textual analysis above sentence level, and in particular *Applied Discourse Analysis*, can lead to increased generic and textual competence at the macrostructure level, thus improving an interpreter's anticipation abilities and enabling him/her to "see" the discourse plan more clearly. The underlying assumption is that, in terms of sociolinguistic and semiotic configuration, conference papers belong to a unique well-characterised category of communicative events, embedded in a *macrotext*,[3] i.e. the conference event, representing a (hyper)genre.

3.   Linguistics and the "third language"

3.1   Consecutive interpreting and note-taking technique

The second part of this paper will illustrate a specific application of metalinguistic instruments of analysis, starting from the possibility of examining, in rigorously scientific terms, the note-taking technique that interpreters customarily use in the consecutive mode.

As is obvious, in this mode the morphological or sentential typology of the languages involved is not as important as it is in simultaneous interpreting: in consecutive, thanks to the non-simultaneity between reception and production, there is the objective possibility that in the first of these two phases the interpreter may succeed in constructing a complete mental model of the text,[4] since the comprehension process can proceed in a circular manner: information given in later parts of the text can be used retrospectively to decode anything that is obscure at the beginning, given that the interpreter does not have to translate until the speaker has completed his/her speech or at least a substantial stretch of it.

Actually, the acquisition of a good note-taking technique is one of the main abilities a trainee-interpreter has to develop. Although some authors argue that it is hardly possible to teach note-taking systematically (e.g. Thiéry 1981) and others simply ignore the problem, most consider — rightly, in my opinion — that in the early stages of interpreter training much time and effort must be dedicated to this aspect.

This is the assumption underlying the production of specific teaching materials, which, although adopting different approaches, illustrate the general principles of note-taking together with practical suggestions and examples. The most ponderous of these texts is by Matyssek (1989), who illustrates a systematic and detailed code, with many interesting suggestions. However, the system has been criticised as so complex that it runs the risk of becoming a sort of "interpreter's shorthand". Other interesting proposals have come from Bowen and Bowen (1980) and, in Italy, from Gran (1982), whose approach is certainly the most well-balanced and viable.

In this general picture, among the texts which take a stance in favour of a note-taking system which is independent of the languages involved in the interpreting process, there is one which I consider particularly interesting in theoretical terms: it is the proposal of dealing with notes in consecutive interpreting as a "third language" — an interlanguage in an intermediate position between the source- and the target-language — put forth in a book edited by Giuliana Garzone, to which I was also invited to contribute (Garzone 1990).

It is evident that a consecutive interpreter's notes — differently from shorthand notes — are not a transcript of the source text, so they could be seen as a "secondary code". However, I would rather consider them as being based on an autonomous code, somehow poised between two natural languages, with a restricted purpose (self-communication aimed at the reconstruction of a source-text) but,

within the limits of its use, endowed with enormous potential.

In actual fact, the very basic principles underlying this "special" code were already described in Rozan's historic textbook: noting down concepts rather than words (a basically ideographical idea of writing), exploiting the bi-dimensional quality of the page, dividing up the notes into segments in vertical succession and noting down the links and connections between such segments (Rozan 1956).[5]

This is integrated, more specifically, by the abbreviation of words (by means of apocopation, syncopation, omission of vowels, acronyms), which is particularly interesting in the case of (nominal as well as verbal) morphological indicators, and also by resort to "symbols" (in Rozan's terminology), i.e. icons standing for primary lexical concepts (such as "man", "woman", "world" etc.).

These facts are common fare for interpreters, but hardly known to most linguists, although a good consecutive interpreter's notes lend themselves to a number of linguistically interesting observations, based as they are on a specific code, characterised by features of its own, which nevertheless in many respects resemble those typical of natural languages.

3.2   Signs and value

To start with, the "third language" qualifies as a sign system in its own right. It is evident that in this case the word *sign* is used here with a meaning that differs slightly from that assigned to it by Saussure: what is relevant here is only the presence of a signified and a signifier. Obviously, the distinctive trait of the note-taking system is the nature of the signifier, which is not based on the transcription of a sound sequence, as in the case of alphabetic writing, but in each of its elements has a direct relationship with the signified, expressing it graphically in a way that makes it similar to an ideogram.[6] Each of these "graphic segments", which — as we shall see — admit "morphological" variations and are combined together applying the rules of a specific *ad hoc* syntax, has a particular value, which is determined differentially and by opposition with respect to the structure of the whole system.

Therefore, also the third language can be explained by means of the metaphor of the game of chess Saussure used to illustrate the functioning of natural languages: it is not necessary for the knight-pawn to look like a real knight, provided it can be told from all the other pawns and is moved in compliance with the rules of the game. In the same way, the value of letters in alphabetic writing is purely negative and differential; for example, it does not matter if a *t* is written in pencil or in ink, in Roman type or in italics, with a longer or shorter stroke of the pen: what counts is that it should be different from all other letters and used in conformity with the rules to which it is subject. Similarly the value of each element in the third language is determined by opposition to its other elements and what is essential is that it should not be easily confused with any of the others.

3.3 Arbitrariness

At first sight, the characteristics that Saussure recognises as peculiar of the linguistic sign, arbitrariness and the linearity of the signifier, seem to have nothing to do with the way the third language works. But if the problem is examined at a higher level of abstraction, it will be evident that such characteristics are present here as well, although in different forms.

In Saussure's conception of the linguistic sign, arbitrariness means conventionality, guaranteeing the sign's social nature, and does not imply that it is arbitrarily chosen by each single speaker: rather, in his view arbitrariness is absence of motivation. On the contrary, in the note-taking system the choice of the signifier is entrusted to the individual and the relationship between concept and "graphic form" is often symbolic, because the presence of some kind of motivation (not necessarily iconic) can be useful as a support for memory.

However, in this special code motivation is not indispensable and in many cases the choice is purely arbitrary. The reason for the lack of conventionality is that the third language does not aim at the transmission of messages between different individuals, but at self-communication, as the interpreter uses notes to complement memorisation. This means that what is actually lacking is the social aspect of the language system.

3.4 One-to-one correspondence

Before considering the second essential characteristic of linguistic signs, some other specific aspects of the note-taking system will be briefly examined, first of all the univocal quality of the signified-signifier relationship.

Natural languages are, at least in part, equivocal codes: there is no strict one-to-one correspondence between words and meanings. There are cases of synonymy (one meaning, more than one word to express it) as well as cases of homonymy (one word, several meanings). Obviously, these facts do non prevent communication, thanks to the role played by the context and by redundancy.

Notes, being synthetic, leave little scope for redundancy. It is therefore strongly recommended that in note-taking an interpreter resort to a code that is as free as possible from ambiguity. For each meaning, one single graphic segment should be consistently used: for instance, the notion of "agriculture" should be always indicated with one given abbreviation or "symbol"- say, a spade or a pitchfork etc.; by the same token, each graphic segment should refer consistently to the same meaning (e.g., if the abbreviation "EN" is used to stand for the notion of "energy", it will not be used for "entry" or for "encyclopaedia", or any other word starting with that syllable).

Thus, in the third language neither synonymy nor homonymy should exist. One graphic segment can nevertheless be used for similar notions, provided that the context is sufficiently clear not to give rise to uncertainties or mistakes; this means that, in some cases, polysemy is allowed.

These general principles explain why it is advisable for a trainee-interpreter to develop his/her own repertory of signs (i.e. of stable associations between meanings and graphic segments) in conformity with a set of consistently applied general rules.

3.5 Morphological indicators and markedness

In the third language, signs, i.e. units of meaning, do not necessarily correspond to the word, in the same way as in natural languages a first-articulation unit can be equal to, or smaller than, or larger than, the word.

In the case of lexical items, interpreters match notions or, sometimes, combinations of notions with a graphic segment. By using two signs together (often in non-linear succession) or superimposing them, it is possible to create complex graphic signs corresponding in broad terms to compounds or phrases; sometimes, the segments that are combined are not homogeneous (for instance, an icon and an abbreviation).

From a linguistic perspective, the technique used in noting down grammatical notions is especially interesting. Here a distinction between inflectional and derivative morphemes can be particularly useful. The former are certainly more important. For example, they include marks for the singular and plural of nouns and marks indicating the tense and mood of verbs. Here again, the third language qualifies as a univocal code: one morph for each morpheme. An obvious example is the indication of plurals by means of "-s" (which is customary for many interpreters, whatever the source- and target-language), a graphic segment which can be combined with an abbreviation, an icon, a symbol etc.; similarly, many interpreters use "ed" to indicate the past tense "ll" for the future and "d" for the conditional (which, following Rozan's suggestions, are usually written as a superscript).

This system seems to apply a notion which has attracted a lot of attention, even controversy, in linguistics: markedness, an idea first applied in phonology and then extended to morphology. In practice, this yields a distinction between marked and unmarked forms, considering as unmarked the form used in contexts which neutralise the distinction. For instance, Italian neutralises the feminine/masculine opposition in the plural, where the masculine gender is used (*Carlo è bravo, Luisa è brava, Carlo e Luisa sono bravi*). For this reason, the masculine can be considered as unmarked in Italian. This is why, in general, Italian interpreters do not feel it necessary to indicate the masculine gender, but in certain contexts they do note the feminine. Similarly, the present tense is unmarked for time and has a temporally deictic value only if contrasted with non-present forms, such as the future or past; similarly, the indicative is unmarked for mood.

Finally, as far as derivative morphemes are concerned, in consideration of their greater instability in terms of form-function relationship and their tendency towards polymorphism, in many cases the third language prefers notes that are essentially phonetically-based. "Signs", for instance those that indicate the *nomen agentis* or *nomen actionis*, are nevertheless quite frequent.

3.6 Bi-dimensionality and linearity

The second essential feature of Saussure's signs, i.e. the principle of signifier linearity, is an aspect where the third language seems to differ from natural languages. If the signifier is typically linear, i.e. it develops in time (or in linear space, as alphabetic writing shows in visual terms), in this note-taking system, by contrast, it is the principle of bi-dimensionality that applies. The page is used in two dimensions, which enables the interpreter to access the information s/he has noted down from any point, thus escaping the need to read the text of his/her notes in a pre-established order (from left to right, then down to a new line and once again from left to right etc.).

However, the elements that are laid out on a plane (i.e. the page of the notebook) are not simply placed near each other at random, but are arranged in conformity with a specific "syntax". For example, this is shown by the way the notions of time progression, increase, decrease and parallelism are noted down.

Furthermore, conceptual points are jotted down in vertical succession and separated from each other, usually by means of a horizontal line. In each section of the layout thus obtained, conceptual relationships are specified with transition markers, usually written in the upper left-hand corner. In this way the linearity of linguistic expression is represented graphically by means of a vertical, rather than horizontal, sequence, from the top to the bottom of each page.

It is to be noted that the transition markers used to indicate the conceptual links (logical, quantitative, qualitative, comparative etc.) between the different sections of the notes, which Rozan called *mots-charnières*, are not a transcription of one given conjunction, but a more general way of indicating one type of logical relationship. They may also provide other kinds of information: for instance, that the content of the section is to be intended as reported speech, or as a question, or simply indicate the place and/or time where/when something has happened.

In this way the page is divided into smaller units, the message is segmented and its parts can be arranged so as to reproduce the conceptual structure of the message on the page. In the reception stage, a good interpreter can immediately grasp the articulation of thought in the source-text, interiorise it and note down the essential points while memorising the rest; then simply by looking at his/her notes, starting from these differently stored fragments, s/he can reconstruct the message and reproduce it in the target language.

3.7 Idiolect and communication

This brief analysis of the way the third language works and the principles underlying it, based on theoretical instruments developed in linguistics, has highlighted similarities, analogies and differences between its functioning and that of natural languages. This confirms that a basic background in theoretical linguistics and a good command of adequate instruments of linguistic analysis can be of great help for trainee-interpreters; such knowledge can provide a theoretical basis to assist them in the acquisition of note-taking proficiency, one of the most important practical abilities they have to learn.

The comparison between natural languages and the third language would be incomplete without one final observation. The third language, although based on a set of general principles, varies noticeably in the way each single interpreter uses it.[7] Once again, this is not strange even for a natural language, since individual usage often shows considerable variation not only in pronunciation, but also in vocabulary and syntax.

However, in natural languages the degree of variation is limited, for the sake of communicative effectiveness, while the third language, being aimed at self-communication, leaves ample scope for diversification. This is related not only to the personality and habits of each interpreter, but also to the context where s/he is called upon to operate.

The third language is inherently characterised by a high degree of freedom, being governed as it is by a limited number of basic recurrent principles, while in its practical application it is subject to personal — and therefore subjective — criteria of promptness, convenience and clarity.

Notes

1. For the teaching of phonetics in a contrastive perspective and the importance of a meta-linguistic approach to provide a useful cognitive basis to promote the students' awareness of how languages work, cf. Garzone and Santulli (1999).

2. On the structure of this essay, see Santulli (1999: 39ff).

3. The term *macrotext* is here preferred to Pöchhacker's *hypertext*, following the proposal of Garzone (2000).

4. Also on this point cf. Garzone (2000).

5. For a history of note-taking in consecutive interpreting, see Ilg and Lambert (1996: 70ff).

6. Here, the expression "graphic signs" (and similarly "symbols" or "icons") will be avoided because, in a structural framework, signs are double-faced entities, having both a content and a form.

7. It is to be noted that also Matyssek, in the subtitle of his handbook, emphasises that his proposal is inherently "relative" in character and should be considered as only *one* possible path (*ein Weg*) an interpreter can follow in order to develop a viable note-taking technique.

Autonomy of the interpreted text

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1. Introduction

The relative autonomy of the interpreted text of professional interpreters in relation to the source language text has been highlighted by various authors. Robin Setton, for example, observes that "interpreters formulate largely independently of input sentence structure, and that the contents of the last utterance is not the only source of their ongoing production" (Setton 1999: 173). This paper attempts to examine some of the reasons for this autonomy of the interpreted text of professional interpreters, especially when compared to the performance of trainee interpreters, on the basis of literature in the first part and a small corpus provided by professional and trainee interpreters working from Italian into English in the second part. The third part of the paper looks at the relevance of the findings to the teaching of interpretation.

2. SI as part of the communication process

SI is clearly first and foremost an act of communication, but interpreters find themselves in a rather anomalous position in the communication process in that they are not the intended addressees of the SL text, although it is the interpreters who must understand this text and then produce the TL text. This anomaly has been noted by various authors. The relevance of this is of course that, as cognitive psychology has shown, subject matter knowledge has a very important role in enabling listeners to understand. Speakers usually therefore make assumptions about their listeners' knowledge in line with the Gricean cooperative principle that speakers want their listeners to understand them: "the writer must make assumptions about the reader's state of knowledge. If incorrect assumptions are made, then communication may be seriously impaired", especially "for those reading about unfamiliar concepts" (Nunan 1993: 14). Speakers do not, on the other hand, make

any such assumptions about the interpreters' knowledge. However well interpreters prepare for a conference, they will rarely share the same background knowledge as the other participants: there tends to be very little specialisation among free-lance interpreters. When given an assignment, interpreters obviously find out as much as they can about the topic, the participants, study any material given to them, and prepare a specific glossary. In this way the referential meaning of most of the utterances should be clear, but as they are not experts in the given field, the connotative meanings will not. To give a very banal example, an interpreter having to intrerpret a press conference involving football would hopefully have no problem in translating an expression such as 'total football', but would probably not be aware of the connotative meanings (Johan Cruyff, early '70s, attacking football etc.). Indeed, most readers will probably be totally unaware of the connection that exists between these words. These meanings depend on our background knowledge and are important because, as discourse analysis has shown, a text is clearly not a series of random sentences. The sentences are linked to one another by means of various text-forming devices, "relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as text" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 4), i.e. cohesion. According to Hoey the most important form of cohesion is lexical cohesion, "the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 274). Hoey underlines that

> lexical cohesion accounts for over forty per cent of ties in Halliday and Hasan's own analyses […]; if conjuction is discounted (on the grounds of its quite different function in text-formation), nearly fifty per cent of ties are lexical. (Hoey 1991: 9)

He also states that the centrality and importance to the text of any particular sentence within the text is revealed by the number of lexical connections that sentence has to other sentences in the text.

Halliday and Hasan identify two types of lexical cohesion: reiteration, which includes repetition, synonym or near synonym, superordinate and general word, and collocation. "The principle behind both types is the cohesive effect achieved by the continuity of lexical meaning" and this relationship "has both a semantic aspect — synonymy, hyponymy, metonymy, etc — and a purely lexical or collocational aspect, the mutual expectancy between words that arises from the one occurring frequently in the environment of the other, or (a better way of looking at it) of the two occurring in a range of environments common to both" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 320). Despite certain problems in defining collocation, "its contribution to coherence in text is so significant that it cannot be ignored" (Martin 1981: 1). The ability to follow this type of cohesion depends obviously on our background knowledge of a given topic: "The background knowledge of the reader or listener plays a more obvious role in the perception of lexical relationships than in the

perception of other types of cohesion. Collocational patterns, for example, will only be perceived by someone who knows something about the subject" (Nunan 1993: 30). Since interpreters do not have the same background knowledge as the intended listeners, lexical cohesion can clearly pose a problem for interpreters. At the above-mentioned football press conference, for example, the sudden shift from total football to Johan Cruyff, attacking football, 1974 etc. could make it difficult for the interpreters to follow the speech. I believe this helps explain why interpreters make far greater use of other forms of cohesion.

As Robin Setton says, "interpreters share neither the background nor motivations of Speakers and Adressees, and therefore rely more strongly than other participants in the communicative event on inference from textual, situational and other (encyclopaedic) sources" (Setton 1999: 5). Not having the same background knowledge, interpreters are at a certain disadvantage vis à vis the development of the ideas in a text through lexical cohesion. They must therefore concentrate more than the normal listener on all the other sources of information available, both extratextual and intratextual.

At an intratextual level, interpreters make full use not only of the other forms of cohesion — reference, ellipsis and conjunction,[1] but also of the fact that sentences are organised into theme and rheme, and that, as functional linguists like Swales have shown, discourse has a 'generic' structure so that a discourse will have certain clearly predictable stages.

The predictability of discourse is not limited solely to the generic structure, however. Hoey states that some of the factors that affect the acceptability of a discourse — and without any training whatsoever we all recognise whether somebody is a good speaker or not from the fact that we are able to follow them — "must operate over a larger field than adjacent sentences" (Hoey 1983: 5). For Hoey there is a hierarchical structure to a discourse and the surface of discourse contains sufficient clues for the listener to perceive accurately the discourse's organisation. He argues that, "lexical signals are the author's/speaker's explicit signalling of the intended organisation and are therefore obviously of primary importance; it is probable that they are one of the main means whereby a reader/listener 'decodes' a discourse correctly" (Hoey 1983: 63). He concludes that all discourses are describable in terms of their discourse and rhetorical organisation, and that:

> If writers or speakers fail to relate one or more of their sentences to any of the other sentences in their discourse, then they are not producing coherent discourses but fragments of a discourse. If on the other hand writers or speakers relate all the parts of their discourse but fail to show their readers a clear pathway through the parts, then these discourses are coherent but rhetorically inept. Rhetorical ineptness may arise either from under-signalling so that no clear focus of attention is found or mis-signalling so that the reader is wrongly directed as to what to expect (Hoey 1983: 179–180).

The idea that there exists such a 'pathway' to guide people through a discourse is clearly of fundamental importance for interpreters.

3. Pragmatic aspects

As has been highlighted by numerous authors, another invaluable source of information for interpreters derives from the pragmatic function of language. Pragmatics, to quote Setton, is:

> the branch of linguistics which addresses its applied, communicative aspects: the role of context and inference, the relationship between the explicit and the implicit in linguistic communication, and those dimensions of meaning which are related to extralinguistic factors such as time, place and situation, and the knowledge available to the participants. All factors very much in evidence in conference interpretation. (Setton 1999:4)

It is this knowledge that enables us to make assumptions, on the basis of who is talking to whom, about what, why, etc., as to the illocutionary force of utterances rather than their propositional meaning. Searle (1996) has distinguished five basic functions that can be fulfilled by language: (1) to say how something is; (2) to try to get people to do something; (3) to commit ourselves to doing something; (4) to express sentiments or attitudes; (5) to bring about changes in reality. Although Searle only considered individual sentences, Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984) have also distinguished larger communicative units, which they call compound illocutions or illocutionary act complexes. Obviously, interpreters are above all concerned with achieving the desired illocutionary effect and may therefore manipulate to a certain extent the propositions they are interpreting.

4. The corpus of interpreted texts

The fundamental importance of cohesion and signalling was highlighted by my small corpus. The corpus consists of sixteen interpreted texts (3 professionals — 2 English mother tongue [A1 and A2] and 1 Italian [B1] — and 13 Italian students — including 2 who had already completed their exams [C1 and C2]) of two different speeches from a debate on television organised by the Italian political party UDEUR in September 2000. The first SL text (ST1) was a 9½ minute manuscript speech delivered at 140 words per minute (wpm) by the Italian MP Lamacchia with virtually no intonational variation or pauses and none of the repetitions typical of normal speech; the second speech (ST2) was the first 12 minutes of an impromptu speech by Mr Zaccaria, chairman of the Italian State television RAI, at 114 wpm,

with numerous pauses and repetitions, incomplete utterances and considerable prosodic variation. The interpreters were told just before entering the booth that the speeches were part of a debate on television organised by the UDEUR. They were not told who the speakers were, nor did they hear the introductions by Mr Viti, who chaired the meeting. This caused considerable problems, especially for the students, because, when giving the floor to Mr Zaccaria, who immediately follows Mr Lamacchia, Mr Viti announces, "The ball is now in Mr Zaccaria's court", to which Mr Zaccaria responds with reference to a tennis match he was supposed to play against Mr Mastella.

The examples discussed are merely intended to give the reader an idea of the SL and TL texts and do not include any of the prosodic elements, which are clearly of considerable importance but not relevent in this case. Moreover, the examples are taken only from the transcriptions of the three professional interpreters and the two trainee interpreters who had completed their exams. This was decided as the aim of this research is primarily to look at the importance of the cohesive devices and the less experienced trainee interpreters' texts contained too many errors of different kinds to be of much use here, although they are included in the statistical analyses carried out using Wordsmith Tools.

4.1 Cohesion and 'written' SL texts

ST1 is characterised by a high degree of cohesion. The predominant forms of cohesion are reference and substitution, with conjunction being very limited. There are only two examples of '*e*' being used to link main clauses with different subjects, and only one example of '*quindi*'. In the interpreted texts, however, the two English mother tongue professionals, A1 and A2, use respectively 19 and 23 'and', 1 and 5 'and so', 6 and 0 'so', 1 and 4 'but' (although there are no '*ma*' or '*però*' in the original) and virtually no other connectives. The fast delivery and 'writtenness' of the SL text caused the interpreters serious problems, resulting in several omissions and very short, simple constructions linked together by the most neutral of connectives 'and'. Only the professional Italian mother tongue interpreter attempts slightly more complex constructions, often with additions as regards the SL text to help create greater cohesion, but here too there are 10 'and' and 2 'so'. The other main method used by the interpreters to create greater cohesion is anaphoric reference, above all through the use of 'this' and 'these', especially in the case of A2 and B1, where we have respectively 16 and 18 examples. In several cases, however, the referent is either ambiguous or incorrect. Examining the trainee interpreters' texts, C1 and C2, it is striking to note how there are respectively 11 and 8 'so' and just 8 and 5 'and', with the 'so' in respectively 8 and 3 cases not beginning an utterance that is linked consequentially to the previous utterance. Analysing the entire corpus using Wordsmith for the frequency of 'and' and 'so', it was discovered

that their frequency among professional and trainee interpreters was 3.32% versus 2.81%, and 1.02% versus 1.17%. It would therefore appear that trainee interpreters tend to be unaware of the semantic value of the conjunction 'so', tending to use it almost as a neutral filler.

4.2   Cohesion and impromptu speeches

It was clear from analysing the interpreted versions of Mr Zaccaria's speech that this speech had created problems not only for the trainee interpreters, but also for the professional interpreters. Initially, it was not clear why this had happened, but closer analysis of the SL text revealed that some of these difficulties arose as a result of mis-signalling. The speech is greatly lacking in cohesion, with numerous digressions and several utterances left uncompleted. Many of the lexical signals given are totally misleading. The use of deixis in the first part, referring to what had happened previously, caused insurmountable problems for the trainee interpreters, but not for the professionals. The main type of cohesion in the central part of the text is lexical and depends on one knowing what "1138" refers to. This is a bill which has still not been passed by the Italian Parliament concerning the reorganisation of the entire television sector, including RAI, the Italian State television. Without this knowledge the speaker appears to be leaping arbitrarily from one idea to the next. It was clear that most of the interpreters had little or no idea of what this "1138" referred to from its very first, rather abrupt mention with a clear example of mis-signalling:

> Naturalmente, quando si parla del parlamento si deve anche dire che… anche qui oggi io ho sentito citare due volte il 1138. Io non lo so che… che effetto crea nella più parte delle persone l'evocazione di queste quattro cifre in sequenza.

> And when we talk about Parliament I've heard mention of 1938 and I'm not sure exactly what most people think when they hear this number. (A1)

> Of course, when we speak about Parliament, we also have to stress that — for example, here, I today heard about 1138 as a reference. I don't know … what many people understand from these figures quoted in this way. (A2)

> Of course, when we talk about Parliament, there are a couple of things that we have to bear in mind. Bill 1138 has been mentioned twice today. I wonder really what this figure conveys to people's minds, the majority of people. (B1)

> Of course, mentioning Parliament, we necessarily mention law 1138 — I don't know what this means for normal people. (C1)

> When we talk about Parliament … Today … we talked about the 1138. I don't know what the majority of citizens think about these number. (C2)

The lack of knowledge of "1138" and the very ambiguous anaphoric reference with 'this' cause further problems for everyone shortly afterwards:

> Beh due anni fa, due anni e mezzo fa, nel febbraio del 1998, dopo che il parlamento aveva approvato una legge nota come "legge Maccanico", dal nome del ministro proponente, una legge importante che fissava alcune regole, quindi nel… a metà del 97, subito dopo avrebbe dovuto essere approvata questa legge che era la seconda parte di questo disegno normativo no, insomma, diviso in due parti

> In February 1998, after Parliament had passed a law known as the Maccanico law — Maccanico was the Minister who presented this law, an important law which established a whole series of rules — … this law… a second part of this law was meant to be then passed. There were two parts to this law (A1)

> Two or two and a half years ago, in February '98, after Parliament had approved a law which was the Maccanico law, from the name of the Minister who proposed this particular bill at the time — this was an important law and it fixed a number of certain rules. Then, in '97, immediately afterwards, we should've had the approval of the law concerned, which was the second part of this overall proposal. It was divided into two parts basically (A2)

> Now, as I was saying, a couple of years ago, two and a half years ago, in February 1998, the Parliament had approved what is known as the Maccanico Act, proposed in fact… the bill was proposed by Minister Maccanico. It was an important piece of legislation establishing a number of rules. The bill had been passed in mid 1997 and it had to be approved shortly after… I mean this legislation was made up of two different bills that were supposed to be passed in a short sequence (B1)

> Anyway, in February 1998, after Parliament had passed a law known as Maccanico… the Maccanico law, from the name of the Minister that proposed it this was an important law… law establishing certain rules, and after it a new law should have been approved as secon… the second part of the former law. It was actualy divided in two parts, then. (C1)

> Anyway, two years and half ago, in February 1998, after the approval of the Parliament of the so-called Maccanico law — this was a very important law … And […] After approving this first law we wanted to approve another law which was very important and related to the first one… (C2)

An even clearer example of mis-signalling comes towards the end:

> Tra poco parlerà Emmanuel Gou, il soggetto con quale… che rappresenta qui il gruppo francese col quale noi abbiam fatto una prima importante alleanza dopo aver flirtato anche con Stream per un certo periodo, *ma* non abbiamo potuto chiudere perché il gruppo francese di Canal Plus ci ha offerto condizioni, allora, molto più interessanti.

The 'ma' is obviously slightly ambiguous, but the prosodic contour makes it seem that the agreement was not concluded with Emanuel Gou. So once more, lack of background knowledge, i.e. that Gou is the head of Canal Plus' operations in Italy, makes the lexical cohesion between Gou and Canal Plus impossible to pick up, causing many of the interpreters to follow the wrong information signalled by the 'ma':

> We will hear Emanuel Gou shortly and the French group he represents — one of the first groups that we forged a strong alliance with, an alliance which, unfortunately, we were unable to complete totally… complete totally … and this is a shame because the aim here was to show… this alliance was to show the products… programmes were not just aimed at the Italian market (A1)

> In a moment Emanuel Gou will be speaking and he represents the French group with which we set up a first very important alliance. We weren't able to conclude a different agreement that we were also working on. But, as it happens, it was with the French group that we were able to actually conclude our negotiations (A2)

> Mr Manuel Cou, the representative of the French group with whom we started the first alliance, is going to take the floor in a minute and he will probably dwell on that. We could not bring this… agreement to an end because another French group offered us better conditions. That was one of the first opportunities when we could show that Italian TV network could produce something that might be attractive… attracting also to foreigners (B1)

> Mr Gou will have… will have the floor in a few moments, and will talk about… the alliance that has been reached with a… the France group. So as we can… as we can see, in order to demonstrate that RAI was not only appreciated in Italy (C1)

> There are some very important groups involved like the French group that offered us very interesting conditions and this showed that RAI is not only a national product (C2)

The interpreters had great difficulty in trying to produce a more cohesive text. Once more there is an attempt to divide the text up into coherent utterances and link them together with anaphoric reference using 'this' and 'these' rather than with the connectives 'but' and 'also'. This was presumably because in the SL text the main cohesive device, and an often poorly signalled one, was conjunction, with a more limited, and sometimes poorly signalled use of anaphoric reference. The interpreters A1 and A2 in particular made considerable use of anaphoric reference through 'this' and 'these'.

Another indication of the difficulties the professional interpreters had in trying to produce a text that coheres is revealed by their repetitive use of certain individual fillers: A2 with 24 'actually', and A2 and B1 with 'I think'.

5.   Implications for the teaching of simultaneous interpreting

Trainee interpreters can only be encouraged to be curious and acquire greater world knowledge, something which in any case occurs naturally with the passing of time, while the pragmatic elements are something that hopefully is taught in the class-room and in conference settings, where trainee interpreters can be shown how to make full use of the situational context. It is clear from what has been stated here, however, that the task of teaching trainee interpreters could be greatly facilitated by devoting far more attention to showing them how the texts they will be asked to deal with actually work before they even begin interpreting (or for that matter translating). This is both an active and passive knowledge. The passive knowledge is important in enabling interpreters to follow the signs that can guide them through a speech. Yet, interpreters must themselves be good speakers, which means that they must have a knowledge of rhetoric and also be aware of the specific genre of texts on which they are working. The importance of rhetoric and text analysis in helping to improve interpreter performance was highlighted by Anna-Ritta Vuorikoski (fortcoming). The importance of text analysis and genre has also been stressed by Giuliana Garzone (2000), while outlining the research project being carried out by SSLMiT of Forlì on conference text analysis and genre: "All too often in interpreting studies, it has been taken for granted that the acquisition of textual competence could be simply an intuitional process, relying on mere exposure to texts" (2000: 84).

The knowledge of how a text works is clearly not merely a passive knowledge. One of the distinguishing features in my small corpus was that the interpreted text of the professional interpreters is in all cases characterised by a high level of cohesion. This cohesion is achieved mainly through reference and conjunction — above all through the use of 'and', which as Setton remarks is the most flexible of connectives, and 'so', using the typical situation-result pattern highlighted by Hoey. Setton too noted that cohesion is usually more marked in the TL text than in the SL text. This was true even in the case of the text read at 140 wpm without pauses and with a flat intonation. Although this resulted in a slight lack of coherence, the cohesion was very marked. Parsons states that "although cohesion might not be absolutely necessary for coherence, a text with cohesive devices is more likely to be coherent than one without them." (1991: 417) I believe this is why interpreters, who do not have the blueprint of the original, strive to create coherence, but first for themselves, so that they can follow what they themselves are saying, and only afterwards for their listeners. This would seem to support the *Allgemeine Trans-lationstheorie* (ATT) ('General Translation Theory'), which highlights the priority given to the intratextual coherence of target text. According to the Skopos theory "the translation must be coherent, first and foremost in itself, and as far as possible, with the original" (Setton 1999: 44).

The ability to create such a text is not something with which we are gifted and yet courses in rhetoric, public speaking and communication theory are notably lacking in the curriculum of most interpreting schools, while text and discourse analysis appears to be too little and too late.

Note

1. Halliday and Hasan initially identified five types of cohesion: reference, substitution & ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion, though substitution was subsequently considered as a form of ellipsis.

Computer-assisted interpreter training

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Personalised teaching of conference interpretation has obvious limits in traditional classroom work, but is considerably extended by online learning, where the flexibility of software-based interaction allows for a modelling and adaptation of the contents, time and methods of study according to the characteristics and requirements shown by each individual student and group of students. Online learning of conference interpretation is briefly discussed against the background of the forthcoming Italian University reform (L. Gran, §1 & §2).

In this perspective, two computer-based interactive projects, which are being tested at the SSLMIT of the University of Trieste, are described.

IRIS — the Interpreter's Resources Information System — was designed by A. Carabelli and F. Fioravanti to guarantee an open and flexible architecture capable of bringing together both traditional teaching methods and modern multimedia technologies, as well as allowing for the exploration and experimentation in new training techniques for interpreters and translators. It is an interactive system aimed at providing teachers and students with a virtually unlimited database of written, audio and video material in different languages that both teachers and students can use *ad libitum* for training and research purposes (A. Carabelli, §3).

InterprIT is a didactic tool created on the basis of a specific methodological approach designed to guide the student towards the acquisition of the cognitive tools needed to develop a rational note-taking technique. It involves a clear progression from liaison interpreting modules, where students learn to identify and select isolated key-words which can help them remember the main points of relatively short utterances, to consecutive interpretation modules, where recall of longer stretches of speech require a more structured arrangement of notes and at the same time, a move away from words towards concepts. The fundamental assumption of the application is a guided approach to discourse analysis (R. Merlini, §4).

1. Introduction

The opportunities offered by multimedia tools are extremely stimulating and challenging for interpreting teachers. Though direct contact between teacher and students in the classroom is obviously a *sine qua non* for successful training, the possibility of supplementing information, suggestions and material offered during classes (for instance by providing additional texts on the same subject, in the same or different language registers, involving increasing degrees of difficulty, etc.) and, especially, of providing a follow-up to the dialogue started in the classroom on a more individual basis through e-mail discussion of further tasks performed by each student is of invaluable help in offering a teaching service which should be increasingly student-based rather than teacher-based.

This approach is in line with the long-awaited Italian university reform, to be activated as of academic year 2001/02. The reform has been conceived as part of an attempt at harmonising university curricula and accreditation criteria throughout the European Union. The basic concepts underlying the reform are:

1. flexibility of curricula, so as to match market requirements and individual initiative;
2. adoption of mutually recognised credit-based curricula in order to facilitate student mobility and offer truly international university degrees obtained by attending parts of one's curriculum in different European countries;
3. a clearly defined workload ratio to be divided between teacher-to-student classes and individual study.

As regards points 2 and 3, university courses are credit-based, each credit consisting of 25 hours to be divided between academic lessons and student individual study (on a 50/50 basis, on average). The various subject-matters are taught in "modules" (each module comprising one or more credits and certified by an exam). A total of 180 credits are required to obtain the first-level three-year degree, while a higher-level two-year degree or master entails a further 120 credits.[1]

The credit-based system, where the ratio between traditional classroom courses and individual study is clearly defined, involves the need — particularly in the case of interpreting studies — for guided individual training and a supply of carefully selected materials to fulfil the purpose. Individual work for interpreting students, where practice is particularly relevant, may include collective training among peers, drills with teaching assistants, advice from teachers and, of course, computer-assisted interactive work (where available).

As a consequence, the possibility of offering a follow-up to each traditional lesson is of paramount importance. The availability of online training material (written texts, audio- and video-recorded speeches etc.), which may be used at any time — and as many times as necessary — is much more student-friendly and

allows for greater adjustment to individual learning pace than was conceivable in traditional teaching. Precious material (which interpreter teachers collect during conferences or from recordings of meetings at international organisations) remains available for as long as is deemed useful. Last but not least, online suggestions and corrections (if requested by students) are easier to offer when date and time constraints are drastically reduced.

2.   Online learning

Online education has unique attributes, even though it shares some of the features of place-based education (notably group interactivity) and of distance education (notably the freedom from time and place constraints). Computer-mediated communication (CMC) has the potential to provide a means for the weaving together of information from many people and sources, regardless of when and from where they contribute. The educational potential of such computer-mediated interactivity, and the openness to multiple discourse and perspectives which it can permit, is enormous (Kaye 1989:3).

Through online communication facilities, people can very easily contact each other, transfer text and data files, and obtain information from computer databases, regardless of space or time constraints. All that is required is a telephone line, a computer, a modem, and suitable word-processing and communications software. This technology, combined with access to suitable networks, has the potential to vastly enrich the range of resources available to the distance learner. Three types of online service are currently being used in education. These are electronic mail, computer conferencing, and online databases.

Online education, in contrast to traditional classroom education, is character-ised by a clear separation in space and time of some of the teaching and learning activities. Teaching, particularly in the field of interpreting, is already mediated through various technologies (equipment for simultaneous interpretation, print, audio, video, broadcasting, computers), and learning generally takes place both in the classroom and via drills among students. The streamlining of traditional and new teaching tools via an inclusive interactive software offers obvious advantages in view of better-quality training. As with any normal classroom lesson on any given subject, therefore, interpretation can also be learned and practised "at a distance", using a flexible interactive support system for training. The student can thus follow his/her own pace of improvement, and may also obtain specific assessments of his/her work through e-mail messages to teachers. The quality of the teaching materials and the level and variety of support for independent study depends on the nature and resources of the institution or organisation responsible for a given programme, and the available communications infrastructure.

Calvani makes an interesting observation about this form of learning:

> Traditional schooling is based on the principles of homogeneity and sequenti-
> ality, on marching in unison, all following the same path. A sort of *tabula rasa*
> is presupposed here; the steps followed are the same for all students as is the
> final goal set out to be achieved (Calvani 1994: 21).

The principle of personalised learning cannot be applied to traditional schooling,
where any form of individualism is seen as a problem as it causes dispersion. This
principle is, however, applicable to online education, where the flexibility of the
software used and the continuous communication between students and teachers
allow for a modelling and adaptation of the contents, time and methods of study
according to the characteristics and interests shown by each individual and by the
group as a whole.[2]

Introducing the latest technologies in telecommunications will pave the way to
further improvement in this context: among the many new opportunities offered by
the Internet, the following may be the most useful:

teleconferencing: allowing for simultaneous communication with students
located in a seat other than that of the teacher, with audio/video support;

voice-over-IP: in interpreter training, replacing the conventional telephone line
with a highly economical instrument, even for long distances, offers students the
opportunity to participate in *booth* work from a distance, as well as to practice in
mute for conferences transmitted "live" via the Internet in real time, thus virtually
without facing any geographical barrier;

Newsgroups, mailing lists and e-mail: thanks to discussion forums and e-mail,
asynchronous communication between students and teachers, and between
students alone is greatly strengthened and facilitated. In addition, studying in
multimedia and interactive environments stimulates a much more active and
motivated participation of students.

In short, the main aspects defining an Online Learning experience are:

– the spatial and physical separation between teacher and student
– the use of multimedia, computer technologies for the distribution and use of
   didactic materials
– interactive communication between teacher/tutor and student

Online Learning is one of the main educational goals of American universities,
which see it as a way to distribute their courses at the global level, capable of
reaching students anywhere in the world. It is also a program promoted by large
companies across the globe which see it as a way to train their employees, located in
any company office or subsidiary, simultaneously and without incurring in time
loss or transportation costs.[3]

The Online Learning approach offers, with respect to synchronous learning, the following advantages:

– flexibility of space
– flexibility of time
– possibility of sharing resources
– better and wider access to education
– increased number of users
– improved quality of educational content (the information given through different forms of media has greater chances of being absorbed, and thus introduces a richer, more appealing and qualitatively improved form of learning)
– greater flexibility in management
– easier quantitative assessment of advantages offered
– reduction of costs

In conclusion, we share the view expressed by Turoff (1995) about the collaborative learning approach offered by online learning:

> a learning process that emphasises group or cooperative efforts among faculty and students, active participation and interaction on the part of both students and instructors, and new knowledge that emerges from an active dialogue among those who are sharing ideas and information.

3.   The IRIS User Interface

IRIS — the Interpreter's Resources Information System — is an interactive software programme, created by A. Carabelli and F. Fioravanti, providing a flexible and open architecture for the exploration and experimentation of new training techniques for interpreters and translators.

In attempting to adopt the most favourable approach in the development of a user interface for access and use of IRIS, a number of basic factors must be taken into consideration. The workstation must be able to guarantee easy and efficient use of all of the available resources, while allowing users to carry out even the most complex operations, such as recording and archiving digital audio files, in a rapid and secure way. Considering these requirements, two possible solutions may be suggested — though diametrically opposed in terms of the technology used. The first is based on the development of a dedicated program, i.e. a program designed exclusively for access to IRIS, while the second entails the use of Web technologies, which have become widespread tools throughout the Internet community.

The development of a dedicated program for the IRIS workstation requires the creation of a software application which can be used on a specific platform (Hardware and Software). This program, developed through the use of an appropriate programming language, must be installed on every computer intended to provide

access to IRIS. It must also allow for access to archived information on the database (search and data retrieval, resource archiving, etc.) as well as local level management of resources (recording and reproducing audio files, downloading information from files stored on the hard disk of the computer, etc.). The program is strongly conditioned by the type of platform used, because the programming language and resource management completely depend on the type of operating system and computer on which the program is installed.

In order to give access to IRIS from workstations based on Personal Computers with a Windows Operating System and from MacIntosh workstations, two distinct versions of IRIS software must necessarily be developed — a solution which could lead to a major waste of resources. On the other hand, the creation of dedicated software allows for an efficient use and management of the resources of the system for which the software itself was developed. Dedicated software also allows users to work in the friendliest environment in which operations are automated and guided by the program itself.

The most viable alternative to software customised for accessing IRIS is the use of Web technologies, i.e. a series of protocols and languages which enable interactive access to information through the use of a single program — a browser or navigator — which is very easy to use and adaptable to all types of platforms. It interfaces with the IRIS database through a gateway program, developed especially for the IRIS Server platform, which is executed by the Web Server at the request of the user. After a request has been forwarded to the Web Server, the gateway returns the information to the Browser in HTML language.

The main benefits of the use of these technologies are as follows:

– the system can be accessed by any platform equipped with a Browser (today, practically any combination of Hardware and Software);
– there is no need to install a dedicated program for IRIS access on workstations;
– access is made available to users outside the organisation (through the Internet) who are not equipped with dedicated software for IRIS access;
– users are provided with a familiar standard interface (the navigator).

The exploitation of these technologies, however, sets limits to the optimisation of the user interface and, in particular, to the types of functions which are to be made available on IRIS workstations. Web technologies have been developed with the main purpose of enabling unidirectional distribution of information, from Server to Client, and are still very limited in reverse transfers (i.e. the archiving of Client data on a Server). Furthermore, the standardisation of multimedia resource management (audio and video) within navigators, i.e. embedding resources in HTML files, is currently the object of a study being carried out by the software standards organisation, while, to date, only a few basic functions are available. With reference to the IRIS workstations, these limitations are severe constraints, as the

system's main objective is to provide an instrument which can retrieve and manage multimedia resources through very simple procedures.

In light of these considerations, the best solution would most definitely be the development of a dedicated program for IRIS workstations, rendering access to system resources simple and efficient. The platform adopted is one of the most popular in use today, and is based on a Personal Computer with a Windows 98/2000 Operating System. On the other hand, the need for an unlimited distribution of access to IRIS (by making the service or part of it available on the Internet) necessarily implies the need for a Web Service with the basic functions of resource referencing and retrieval.

3.1   User profiles

The IRIS database provides for a specific profile for each user, in which both customisable data and system information can be stored. Both the selected language pair and the course joined are entered when logging in or can be changed by the user when the program is running. Their choice can be stored in the user profile on the IRIS database. In this case, the registered preferences can be automatically retrieved at login time during subsequent work sessions with IRIS.

The specific authorisations for operating on the IRIS database are also stored in the user profile, but they cannot be modified by the user: the assignment of "User Grants" is in fact a task reserved to IRIS administrators who operate through a different program.

3.1.1 *Windows and pages*

After completing the login procedure, the user accesses the program's Main Window. This window is made up of several pages, related to the specific activities that can be carried out on the IRIS database, and is also equipped with a toolbar and a status bar.

The first page of the Main Window contains basic information about the selected resources and allows the management of archived information.

The second page allows the user to manage the source text of the currently selected resource: the text can be stored on the IRIS database in its written form or as an audio or video recording. The Source Page also provides for the management of the specific text-related information, consisting of several text Pointers with an explanation of acronyms, collocations, etc.

Translations of the currently selected source text can be recorded, archived and retrieved by accessing the Translation Page of the Main Window. This page also allows users to share their private translations with other users.

The Mailbox allows the user to send and receive messages to and from other users. Any message can make reference to a selected IRIS resource, thus facilitating the sharing of information and collaborative work on a text.

3.1.2 *Resource searching*

Resource searching is carried out by selecting the "Search" button on the Main Page of the program. The dialog box "Resource Search Conditions" allows for targeted searches on the IRIS database. The text boxes available are:

Document Title — The words typed in this box must appear in the resource title.
Summary Description — The words typed in this box must appear in the description of a selected resource.
First Author Name — The author specified in this box must correspond to the one indicated in the selected resource.
Reader's name — The reader (or speaker) of the audio/video recording related to a selected resource must correspond to the one indicated in this box.
Resource Date — The date of a selected resource must correspond to the one indicated in this box.
Date of Creation — The date of creation of a selected resource must correspond to the one indicated in this box.
Creator — The selected resources must have been archived by the user indicated in this box.
Category — The selected resources must belong to the category (or to one of its subcategories) indicated in this box. The selection of a category is made by clicking on the button next to the text box, which opens the Category Dialog Box.
Available Source — The selected resources must contain the original text in the indicated forms: Audio, Video, Written. When requiring more than just one form of the text, many options may be selected simultaneously.
Search Only Suggested Resources — The selected resources must be "suggested" for the course in which the user is currently registered. The name of the course is given in the title of the box containing this Check Option; it is also possible for users to register in a different course. This option allows users to select a new course among those available for the currently selected language pair.

3.2   Managing the resource text

Resource text management can be performed on the Source page of the IRIS user interface.

The Source page is divided into two basic panels: the left side panel displays the Written version of the text and the Text Pointers, while the right side panel gives access to the Audio and/or Video recording of the text.

When a written, audio or video resource has been retrieved from the IRIS Server, it is placed on the local computer's cache disk: this procedure allows the user to quickly access the same resource during one session, without having to download it from the Server.

3.2.1 *The Original Text Section*

The "Original Text Section" is responsible for the management of the written version of the text, which can be displayed and edited as in a normal word processor.

3.2.2 *The Original Audio and Original Video Sections*

The "Original Audio" and "Original Video" sections are available for the management of the audio and video recordings of texts, which can be recorded, manipulated and reproduced as if working with a normal tape recorder.

The archiving of the currently selected recording on the IRIS database must be executed explicitly by the user by selecting the "Storing a Recording on IRIS" button.

3.3   Creating and analyzing translations

The management of the translations related to the currently selected resource is carried out through the use of the Translations page of the IRIS user interface.

The Translations page displays a list of translations related to the currently selected resource, which are archived on the IRIS database, after specifying the following attributes: *Type:* whether sight, simultaneous, consecutive, or written translation; *Date* of the translation; *Translator:* the full name of the translator; *Published:* it indicates a published translation, i.e. a translation which is made visible to all IRIS users through authorisation of a systems administrator or teacher; *Shared:* it indicates whether a given resource was shared with or made visible to any other IRIS user; *Description/Comments:* additional descriptions of the translation.

Any already archived translation can be retrieved from the IRIS database once it has been selected from the list of those available. The translation may be viewed together with the original text, but no updates or modifications can be made.

3.3.1 *Creating a new translation*

The user can also create a new translation and store its written version or audio recording. It must be noticed that a written translation can be performed only when the resource contains a written version of the text, while the other types of translation imply the availability of audio or video versions.

The text of the written translation may be modified in the "Translated Text" section.

The oral version of a translation may be recorded by using the recording button on the toolbar of the "Translation Recording" section.

The functions of the recording section and the "Original Audio" and "Original Video" sections are slightly different in the case of simultaneous or consecutive translations:

– In the case of a simultaneous translation when the user begins his new recording, the audio of the original text is automatically activated (and not vice-

versa), while stopping any one of the two recordings will necessarily cause the arrest of both.

– In the case of a consecutive translation, the "Original Audio or Video" recording is not available during the recording of the new translation.

At the end of the translation session, upon selection of the "End Translation" button, a dialog box will appear enabling the user to choose whether to store the translation on the IRIS database, save its recorded or written version on a local file, or eliminate it altogether.

4. The InterprIT programme

The application, which is still a prototype, was developed under the auspices of TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning), a consortium of UK universities led by the CTI (Computer Technology Initiative) Centre for Modern Languages at the University of Hull. TELL courseware was produced as part of the TLTP (Teaching and Learning Technology Programme), a major initiative funded by the Higher Education Funding bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

InterprIT is two programmes in one. The original project, which envisaged only the Liaison Interpreting Modules, "grew out of the response of the Italian Department at the University of Hull to the perceived needs of modern-language students to be immediately more effective in the world of work after graduation" (Thompson 1997: 38). When liaison interpreting classes replaced traditional oral work in the final year of the degree course, students felt the need for more practice than hard-pressed staff and timetabling could allow. Prof. Thompson, editor of the software programme, recalls that, by that time, the Department had already developed a range of TELL products, so "it was not unnatural that it should look to computers to see whether or not they could help resolve the problem" (ibid.). Thus, work on InterprIT began and a prototype was presented at the 1994 Helsinki Conference on Interpreting. Having met with the encouraging response of both interpreting teachers and scholars, the project was expanded to include a new learning activity, which was being devised at the time as an introduction to the acquisition and practice of consecutive interpreting skills. From a didactic point of view, there emerged a clear progression from the "first-born" liaison interpreting modules, where students learn to identify and select isolated key-words which can help them remember the main points of relatively short utterances, to the "second-born" consecutive interpretation modules, where recall of longer stretches of speech requires a more structured arrangement of notes, and, at the same time, a move away from words towards concepts. Furthermore, the intended users of the two components could easily coincide: language students in the final year of their university

degree course, needing more focused and professionally-oriented oral practice, and student interpreters in the initial stage of their training, a stage when the most exacting transition must be made, from general language learning to the acquisition and development of interpreting skills. The propaedeutic nature of the consecutive interpretation modules has repeatedly been stressed (see Merlini 1996, 1997). The first version of InterprIT on CD Rom, InterprIT 1.0, including both the liaison interpreting and the consecutive interpretation components, came out in 1997.

The learning activities suggested in the latter component are based on the following general assumptions:

– the text, its information content, structure and cohesive elements are certainly the most visible factors in the processing of meanings or, rather, the most "audible" ones, given that the focus here is on oral texts. Yet they are not the only ones. The knowledge the addressee has of the context, the subject-matter, the speaker and her/his intentions is as important as the message itself. The more background knowledge the addressee can call upon while listening to a speech, the less dependent s/he will be on the actual text, the more rapidly and thoroughly will s/he understand it and the more complete and accurate this understanding will be;

– while anticipation occurs in any type of communication, the need for it in interpreting is vital, given the specific nature of this task. In bilingual communication the interpreter acts, at the same time, as receiver and 'processor' of the message, though not as its intended addressee, and as producer, or rather re-producer, of the same message, yet with no semantic autonomy over it. Because of these constraints, the interpreter's speech comprehension and processing strategies are somewhat different from those used by the addressee, who is at greater liberty to choose what to retain of an utterance, how to interpret it and how to react to it. By relying on background knowledge and contextual information the interpreter finds a shortcut to meanings and is thus able to concentrate on transferring the full message into the target language.

The rationale of the consecutive interpretation modules is thus focused on the concept and practice of text analysis. Taking as a starting point De Beaugrande and Dressler's (1981) definition of both spoken and written texts as "communicative occurrences", two complementary perspectives in the analysis of any such occurrence can be identified: a user-centred and a text-centred one, with macro-processing activities occurring at the former level and micro-processing at the latter. While macro-processing has to do with all the extralinguistic factors which have a bearing on the act of communication, namely the situational context (participants, time and place of a given event), the producer's intentions determining the function of the text, the receiver's assumptions and expectations, and the world knowledge of both (i.e. the relevant part of their stored encyclopedic knowledge), micro-processing is

concerned with the syntactic-semantic analysis of text-constituents, i.e. cohesion and coherence (Merlini 1996).

What follows illustrates how these concepts have been implemented in the application.

Navigation in the application is linear with an intermediate and optional loop after the self-assessment screen, where the student can return to the task screen to interpret the speech a second time. As previously mentioned, the progression of activities is meant to lead the student through subsequent and complementary stages of analysis towards the full appreciation of a given communicative occurrence. Starting at the level of macro-processing in the initial screens containing background reading material and a preliminary questionnaire, the student moves on to a closer investigation of textual components in the task screen and the reinforcement questionnaire, where micro-processing takes place.

Given that this component of the programme is still a prototype, only two speeches have been included so far: "Una coerente strategia industriale europea", delivered in 1994 by Gian Mario Rossignolo, Chairman of the Zanussi Group; and "Innovation in business", delivered in 1995 by Nicky McCann, Development Director of Hazelwood Foods plc.

Although in real life the finding of *background information* is a task which professional interpreters must perform on their own prior to the event, help in the form of reading material is offered to students in each unit. By singling out the most useful items of information and the instances of technical jargon, they familiarise themselves with the kind of preparation which will be required of them in their future professional life. To this end, a highlighting function, activated by clicking with the mouse on the particular word(s), has been implemented. Three kinds of reading material are available in this screen:

- information about the situation (i.e. who speaks to whom, about what, why, when and where);
- information about the topic, the speaker and/or the institution s/he represents;
- newspaper and magazine articles reporting on the event; although this material would only be available to the professional interpreter when s/he no longer needs it, that is after the event has taken place, the reason why it has been included in the application is to give students an additional cognitive tool to carry out the interpreting exercise which, at the initial stage of their training, is a totally new, exacting learning activity.

In the *preliminary questionnaire* students are called upon to answer five preliminary questions on the as yet unknown speech, drawing on the contextual and factual knowledge they have acquired in the background screen. The aim of the exercise is to make the didactic objectives of the preceding step even more explicit, by asking students to verbalise the ideas they have formed so far about the text and the

conclusions they have reached. The mental processes of inference and presup-
position, which play so large a part in the interpreting task are thereby activated and
possibly enhanced. Five areas are explored: language function, degree of formality,
information content, speaker's stance and student's background knowledge.

With reference to language functions, although Hymes's classification (1968)
was generally followed, some of the terms were borrowed from Newmark (1981),
either where their semantic transparency made them more suitable for pedagogical
reasons, or where a different shade of meaning was to be conveyed. It should be
noted that, though the term "function" appears in the preliminary questionnaire,
the alternatives suggested are simply meant as an introduction to and explanation
of the concepts, whilst labels are supplied at a later stage in the application, i.e. in
the reinforcement questionnaire.

The three alternatives offered for each of the four functions should not be seen
as mutually exclusive.[4] The main reason for supplying them is to focus the students'
attention on different aspects of a communicative event, while equipping them with
a variety of descriptive tools. Students should also be made aware that, as Jakobson
(1960) observes, very rarely will verbal messages fulfil only one function, the
diversity of text types lying not in the monopoly of any one of them, but in their
different hierarchical order.

Once all the questions have been answered, students proceed to the *task screen.*
The practice of consecutive interpretation has invariably been associated with the
technique of note-taking. On hearing the same text, professional interpreters will
produce notes which may differ widely in terms of quantity, selection of key-words
and repertoire of iconic signs. Whilst the development of personalised note-taking
systems by professional interpreters is an undisputed fact, from a didactic perspec-
tive the moot point is to what extent individual variation should be encouraged in
the early stages of training, and, conversely, how desirable and indeed productive is
the teaching of a structured system. Teachers of interpreting have tended to adopt
two conflicting stances. On the one hand, absolute freedom in the development of
a personal note-taking technique is advocated. The common denominator of this
widely represented school of thought is precisely the strong opposition expressed by
all its exponents to teaching note-taking as a standardised, valid-for-all system.
Historically, the non-prescriptive approach grew as a response to an over-zealous
application of the basic principles for note-taking as set out in the 1950s in the
pioneering works of Jean Herbert and Jean-François Rozan. At the other end of the
spectrum is the highly-structured system of non-verbal, language-independent
note-taking, which Heinz Matyssek used to teach in Heidelberg until the early
1990s. In this respect it might be suggested that whilst a prescriptive approach is
undesirable at the later stages of interpreter training, the teaching of a syntax-based
note-taking system as a preliminary and preparatory exercise, to be practised prior
to the development of a personal technique, might help students acquire three

fundamental skills: faithfulness to the original message and the logical sequencing of information, clarity and concision. These features should be the primary target of beginners in interpreting. Only at a later stage will a detailed rendition conveying the slightest shades of meaning and overtones, and a smooth delivery be required of student interpreters. However, despite widespread recognition of the importance of note-taking as an instrument for the processing of meaning and not merely as an aid to memory, and despite the advocacy of logical analysis exercises by generations of authors (Herbert 1952; Tall-Leibrich 1965; Longley 1978; Matthews 1984; and Ballester and Jiménez 1992, to name just a few), reluctance on the part of the teachers to translate these useful, but somewhat vague suggestions into practical guidelines of a more prescriptive nature has often left the students on their own in finding their way to interpreting. Hence the idea of designing a task which might contribute to filling this gap.

On accessing the task screen a window appears asking students to select a range of symbols (see screen-shot, Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Only certain basic symbols have been introduced, the emphasis being much more on the underlying methodological principles than on the teaching of a fixed set of widely used signs. What the students are expected to acquire and hopefully

retain is the habit of noting the same concept by the same graphic sign, irrespective of the words and, indeed the language, used to express it. To this end, it is immaterial at this stage whether the sign chosen by the student is an iconic or a verbal one, since both will eventually come to be perceived as conceptual, language-independent symbols. What is even more important is that only a certain category of signs is available to students, namely signs indicating logical links. The purpose is to increase text awareness by focusing the students' attention on logical linking between ideas, expressed grammatically in the form of clauses. The range of clausal relations given in this screen is by no means exhaustive. Only the major logical links have been included, namely: cause, purpose, result, concession, addition, alternative and contrast. Whilst labels have all been taken from Leech and Svartvik (1975), for didactic purposes a distinction between concession and contrast has been made, concession being classified as a particular instance of contrast.

Before illustrating the kind of exercise that students are required to carry out in the task screen, a brief outline of the actual process of consecutive interpretation needs to be drawn. Consecutive interpretation consists of two distinct phases: phase 1, listening to a speech sequence of several minutes and phase 2, reformulation of its message into the target language. In a theoretical model, the former phase can be broken down into the following operations: acoustic perception, analysis of concepts, logical links and key-words, and note-taking.

It should be reiterated that these operations are only theoretically distinct; in practice they occur simultaneously in the first stage of the interpreter's performance. In the exercise devised for this module, the basic components of the listening stage have been separated so as to allow students to practise them, not in total isolation from one another, but at least in a simpler context than that of the global task of consecutive interpretation. First of all the speech has been divided into sequences of approximately 30 seconds each, which, in the first texts, students can play up to three times. Notes should be taken at the end of the second listening, while the third, optional listening should be used exclusively to check figures and names. Although in the advanced units the replay option is allowed only once, the separation between listening and note-taking remains for pedagogical reasons.

The note-taking field is the on-screen version of the traditional note-pad, where pages are turned not by a "flicking of the wrist" but by a "click of the mouse". The field has been subdivided into clearly-defined areas — four columns — corresponding to precise grammatical functions (see screen-shot, Figure 2).

Into this pigeonhole structure signs can be inserted, to be read and understood without ambiguity.

– Column 1 is for logical links between clauses and sentences (i.e. conjunctions, sentence adverbials and other adverbials, when the latter are in front-position, i.e. come before the subject).
– Column 2 is for subjects and vocatives.
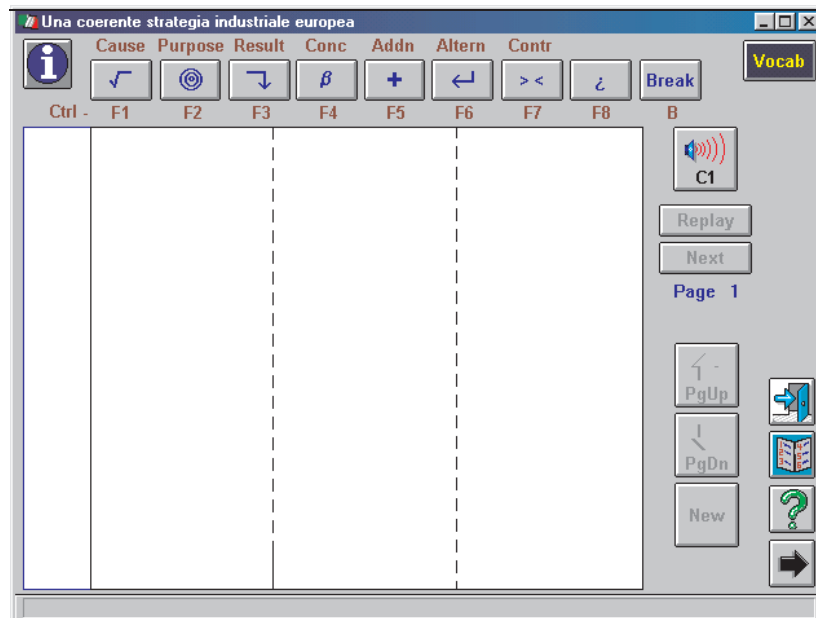
Figure 2.

– Column 3 is for verb phrases and/or adjectives and noun phrases used predicat-
   ively as subject complements after linking verbs.
– Column 4 is for objects, prepositional complements and adverbials in end-
   position.

Whilst flexibility in the use of the third and fourth columns is envisaged, consisten-
cy is required in the use of the remaining two columns. As the solid line on screen
indicates, the most rigid division is between the first field and the others. Thus two
of the best known note-taking techniques have been implemented: diagonal
arrangement of notes (*décalage*) and vertical listing (*verticalisme*).

Figure 3 is an illustration of these concepts.

Text:

"As far as innovation is concerned I really do believe that anything is possible, no matter
what size of business. In fact, often the smaller the business the easier it is to make it
happen. You don't need endless meetings to convince everyone that they need to get
behind the idea…"

And now to the most important question: why use the computer when the
more traditional and, no doubt, much more flexible note-pad might be the ideal

Notes	p.q.r. innov. oft ✔ ◎	I qsto meetingssss	credo!! + easy NO needed convince	ttt possbl (indpn.y size/ bns) con sml bsns ttt
Syntactic structure	adverbial adverbial conjunction conjunction	subject subject subject	verb complement verb verb	object (adverbial) adverbial object

Figure 3.

candidate for the job? Let us consider not so much the well-known and highly praised advantages of this learning tool, but, rather, its most manifest weaknesses, which the rationale of the present module has turned into valuable pedagogical strengths. While the default layout of the note-taking field acts as a constant reminder to students to go beyond the surface structures of the source text and carry out operations of syntactic de-structuring and simplification, the small size of the page and the consequent narrowness of columns invite concision and the extensive use of abbreviations. But, most importantly, the keyboard, unlike the pen, may prove a powerful deterrent for students, who will be much more inclined to wait until the sequence is over to take notes, thus relying on memory rather than scribble down whatever words they hear.

Once the speech sequences are over, students are required to record an interpretation based on their notes. They then go on to the *self-assessment screen* where they will be able to listen to their interpretation and check it against the transcript of the original speech, their own notes and suggested notes.

The purpose of the following screen containing a *reinforcement questionnaire* is to guide students, through a more detailed analysis, to an even deeper understanding of the original text. Whereas the first four questions are identical in content to those of the preliminary questionnaire, points 5 to 8 are meant to focus the students' attention on thematic structure, syntactic patterns, technical vocabulary

and rhetorical devices. Both the transcript of the original speech and the students' answers to the preliminary questionnaire are accessible from this screen.

In the last screen of the application, the *conclusion screen*, students are presented with two windows. One contains the transcript of the speech broken up into conceptual paragraphs and preceded by indications of text type, syntax and level of formality — occurrences of technical vocabulary and rhetorical devices are also marked. The other displays a possible translation of the text, a spoken version of which is also provided, to expose students to the pronunciation of a native speaker of the target language and to his/her use of prosodic features. The word "translation" is no misnomer here. Bearing in mind the emphasis that this application places on text-analysis, a thorough, accurate and grammatically correct written version was thought to be more beneficial to students than the transcript of an authentic consecutive interpretation.

Notes

1. For further information on the Italian University Reform see the website of the Italian Ministry for Universities and Scientific and Technological Research: http://www.miur.it/università.

2. See: http://www.forcom.unito.it/baudhaus/ricerca/gonella/capitol2.htm

3. See: http://www.mediamente.rai.it/mediamentetv/learning/corsi/0002c4_4.asp

4. Expressive/emotive/subjective; vocative/persuasive/directive; informative/referential/descriptive; contextual/situational/social.

Interpreting in the 21st century:
What lies ahead

Summary of the closing panel discussion[*]

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Panellists:
Laura Gran, *University of Trieste* (Chair)
Helge Niska, *University of Stockholm*
Stephen Pearl, *United Nations Organisation*
Franz Pöchhacker, *University of Vienna*
Robin Setton, *University of Geneva*
Sergio Viaggio, *United Nations Organisation*

1.   Introduction

The concluding round table was free in both format and spirit. When such events are based on a number of papers, followed by questions, the cut and thrust of discussion is often disappointingly absent. This was not the case on the final afternoon in Forlì, with panellists taking their cue from chairperson Laura Gran, from each other and from the floor.

The intention was to focus on the future, in three main areas — the profession, research and teaching. A strict agenda was not followed, the three topics being so closely linked that it is difficult to focus on any of them in isolation from the other two. Another all too independent variable was time, which curtailed the discussion in the late afternoon with panellists and audience in full stride.

However, much was concentrated into the limited time available, including many insights and remarks that might not have found expression in a more formally structured discussion.

2. Future trends in the interpreting profession

The discussion on the future of the profession highlighted the growing importance of community interpreting, which reflected the considerable interest in this subject throughout the conference. It was thus fitting that Helge Niska should open the discussion of possible future trends in the interpreting profession. One foreseeable evolution highlighted by Niska is the privatisation of public service interpreting. Although so far public service interpreting in Europe has mainly been organised by NGOs or public service organisations, there now seems to be a trend towards privatisation. It is becoming more of a commercial market, as it is in the U.S., with the advantages and disadvantages which that implies.

With increasing international contacts, and large numbers of refugees moving from one country to another, Niska saw remote interpreting as an important trend. "Virtual" mobility means that both conference and community interpreters can, to all intents and purposes, work internationally without ever actually leaving base. Against this background, Laura Gran voiced the concern that questions like stress and work load should be thoroughly researched in remote interpreting. References to these issues in the literature include a study by Alessandra Riccardi, Guido Marinuzzi and Stefano Zecchin (1998).

The process of internationalisation is also affecting the training of interpreters, an area where there is a marked trend towards international cooperation, not only within the European Union — which has been promoting several projects in this field — but also elsewhere in Europe. In view of these future trends, the training of community interpreters becomes crucial (Niska 1999b). Niska briefly described the training system developed in Sweden and a number of other countries, to guarantee professional standards in community interpreting. Trainees are currently offered courses in four disciplines: social security or social service interpreting, medical interpreting, labour market interpreting and legal interpreting. Courses, run in a non-university environment, are organised on a module basis, allowing considerable flexibility in attendance requirements for practising interpreters. The first module is an introductory course, of about thirty or forty hours. This is followed by modules of about eighty or ninety hours — in some cases shorter and, in some, considerably longer. These courses, which do not have to be taken in a predetermined order, focus on specific, practical training for real working situations. Once trainees have successfully completed the four basic modules, they can usually take the state examination for accreditation of interpreters.

Stephen Pearl explained that in the U.S., with the exception of Spanish and — on the West Coast — Vietnamese, very few trained interpreters can provide interpreting in a court or hospital setting. One reason could be that the level of pay for these highly demanding interpreting activities — as Berk-Seligson (1990), González et al. (1991) and other authors have highlighted — does not encourage

people to see legal or medical interpreting as a career. This problem could be solved by introducing formal training for court interpreters, so that they can be seen as qualified professionals and paid accordingly. Interestingly, Helge Niska commented that interpreters' pay in Sweden is becoming less sharply differentiated between conference interpreting and other settings. Following a national ruling, court interpreting in Sweden is now far more highly paid than community interpreting, and no longer lags far behind conference interpreting. This contrasts starkly with the situation of court interpreters in Italy, examined by Elio Ballardini in a paper delivered at the conference. In the light of Stephen Pearl's comments on declining rates of pay for all categories of interpreter, briefly discussed below (Section 5), Swedish court interpreters are perhaps to be considered a fortunate minority within the profession.

On the whole, what is essential, as Sergio Viaggio insisted, is that the prejudiced view of conference interpreting as cognitively and neuro-physiologically more difficult — and therefore more important — than other interpreting activities should be left behind. Viaggio criticised the standoffishness of many conference interpreters, whom he describes as the "boothed gentry". The responsibility of a medical or a community interpreter, on whose work lives can depend, can actually be much greater that that of a conference interpreter.

Laura Gran emphasised the link between Sergio Viaggio's "boothed gentry" critique and the concept, expressed elsewhere in this volume by Franz Pöchhacker, that all forms of interpreting have a strong common denominator — i.e., their socio-communicative function. Against this background, different forms of interpreting are at different stages in terms of establishing their professional and academic status. Thus, conference interpreting has come far from the pioneering days of self-taught practitioners and teachers having to set precedents and standards for a profession in its infancy. In this respect, community interpreting and signed language interpreting started to develop considerably later and have much lost ground to make up. Both have yet to acquire a visible profile as a potential career for young people who enrol on interpreting courses. There is now a course in signed language interpreting at the University of Trieste, but there is still a lack of research in this field. Gran emphasised the importance of such research, as a boost to the practitioner's self-confidence and self-esteem.

Laura Mazzoni, who has specialised in signed language at the University of Pisa and is herself a practising signed language interpreter, confirmed that such an approach can only be beneficial — in terms of issues such as available knowledge and reference books, the interpreter's responsibility and client expectations. As in community interpreting, the signed language interpreter's role is not clearly defined and s/he is often asked to represent the interests of one side or the other, rather than act as a neutral linguistic mediator. Another major problem is the lack of formal training and theoretical knowledge, many signed language interpreters being self-taught. Mazzoni stressed that studies of signed languages can afford an interesting theoretical

perspective for interpreters working with vocal languages, just as mainstream interpreting research is a source of useful knowledge for signed language interpreters. An example of an interdisciplinary perspective on interpreting in signed and spoken languages is William Isham's (1995) study of verbal recall in simultaneous interpreting.

3.   Research

Robin Setton opened the discussion of research by pointing out the difficulty of attracting funding or sponsorship for studies of interpreting. Authors such as Daniel Gile (1995b) and Franz Pöchhacker (1995c) have also addressed this issue. Setton suggested two approaches to the problem: (i) to target interpreting research towards teaching applications, since research findings to date have not been rigorously and systematically applied to teaching; and (ii) to take the initiative in establishing contact with "mainstream" research disciplines such as cognitive sciences and linguistics, which would involve learning more about relevant research paradigms and conventions. In this respect, Setton also emphasised the need for more data, as opposed to insistence on theoretical models, often borrowed from other disciplines.

Franz Pöchhacker complemented Setton's remarks by suggesting stronger links between research and the profession. In this respect, he identified two perspectives. First, he was emphatic in his support of a research component in interpreting qualifications. It might be thought that research requirements are less relevant to trainee interpreters than practical priorities, such as performing to professional standards and (with a view to prospects in international organisations) developing a broad language combination. However, Pöchhacker pointed out that research contributes to the academic status of the interpreting profession, thus setting the scene for interpreters to be treated accordingly, rather than as linguistic helpers. From a practical point of view, interpreters working in scientific or scholarly settings need to acquire sufficient knowledge of the subject to ensure accurate, efficient handling of specialist discourse. To do so, they must share knowledge which is often taken for granted by congress speakers and participants — a difficulty well analysed by C. Thiéry (1981). From this perspective, university courses requiring a final dissertation can help familiarise interpreters with the concepts and conventions of scientific research, which will stand them in good stead when preparing for congresses.

The second perspective adopted by Pöchhacker was the practical importance of research as a force helping shape the future of the profession. Pöchhacker's own extensive research into community interpreting in Austria (e.g. Pöchhacker 1997) is a case in point. In particular, a commissioned study of interpreting needs in Vienna hospitals and social service settings (summarised in Pöchhacker 2000b) led to the setting up of a training course, financed by the City of Vienna together with various public and private sector organisations, for a group of hospital interpreters.

This provides a clear example of how research on a variety of issues (e.g., surveys on needs and quality issues, legal implications of not using qualified interpreters) can contribute to the professionalisation of community interpreting.

Helge Niska argued in favour of descriptive research. This is obviously consistent with research needs in community interpreting (surveys on language needs, the type of service provided, training etc.). In conference interpreting too, the value of descriptive research has been advocated on various occasions by Daniel Gile (e.g. 1998). Indeed, the data called for by Robin Setton need not necessarily come from controlled experiments; case studies and surveys can also provide valuable information.

In conclusion, Sergio Viaggio identified considerable scope for research into the social, scientific, financial and academic needs associated with different forms of interpreting. He also stressed that those best placed to identify the many gaps in existing knowledge are interpreters.

4.   Teaching

Interest in community interpreting was at no time more evident than during the discussion of teaching. Helge Niska's comments on the situation in Sweden, summarised in Section 2 ("The future of the profession"), provided a useful starting point for discussion. Training of community interpreters in Sweden has been fully financed by the Government since it started in 1968. It seemed at one point that funding would be curtailed, but protests from public authorities, interpreters and immigrants saved the day.

Beatrice Romano spoke of her experience teaching community interpreting techniques to multilingual groups in Florence, the courses being run by a non-governmental organisation called COSPE. They have been financed by Horizon, a European project for the employment of disadvantaged individuals. Romano also spoke of a European network (Babelea), made up of institutions offering training in community interpreting. One goal of this organisation is to obtain professional recognition of community interpreting at European level, with recognised standards for issues like training, selection, examination and accreditation. This should go some way towards addressing the sometimes hostile attitude of interpreters' associations to short courses of this kind, without officially recognised qualifications. Sergio Viaggio suggested that standards in training and professional practice might be differentiated, according to the specific skills required — for example, at a hospital, in the media, at the United Nations Security Council, or at a bilateral summit.

David Snelling spoke at length on teaching issues. His first point was that governments should take financial responsibility for higher education, which must not be allowed to become the preserve of those who can afford high fees. The reaction in Sweden against withdrawal of state funding for interpreting courses provides a salutary lesson in this respect. Without state finance for higher education,

access to professions like interpreting cannot be truly democratic. The second issue addressed by Snelling was the university reform in Italy, scheduled for the autumn of 2001. This will introduce a five-year qualification — a three-year first degree followed by a two-year specialisation. For interpreting and translation, this will mean a first degree in linguistic mediation, followed by two years of specialist interpreter or translator training — in other words, the 'Y' format described by J. Mackintosh (1999). Many universities will probably offer a three-year qualification in linguistic mediation, whereas few will be equipped to provide subsequent specialist training in interpreting. Snelling cautioned that the shifting patterns of university attendance might necessitate moving of lecturers with tenure from poorly subscribed courses to more popular disciplines — for example, from literature to linguistic mediation. The undoubted benefits of tenure, in terms of staff commitment to teaching and research, are thus not without their attendant problems. Against this background, the real challenge will be to ensure that the syllabus for the two-year specialist qualification in interpreting is of the highest standard and gives appropriate emphasis to sometimes neglected priorites such as communication skills. Snelling's third point was a comment on the role of the English language within the interpreter's linguistic portfolio. Given that many students and professionals know English reasonably well, Snelling considers that it will be increasingly important in future to distinguish between mastery of English in specialist fields and mere working knowledge of the language, of little use for professional conference interpreting. The fourth point addressed by Snelling was the increasing accountability of teachers towards students, which he welcomed. His final comments concerned the role of computers in interpreter training, which he saw as a valuable adjunct but not a substitute for the teacher.

5.   Other issues: *"… and all the men and women merely players"*

The round table afforded a sociological perspective on the profession, with discussion of whether it is becoming an increasingly female preserve. Stephen Pearl introduced the subject by commenting that, in many parts of the world, the vast majority of practising and trainee interpreters are women. He considered that, once the profession is perceived as attracting mostly women, men tend increasingly to dismiss it as a career option. This led Pearl to voice his concern about remuneration, since he sees feminisation of a profession as being associated with lower rates of pay.

Other panellists saw the situation as less clear-cut. Indeed, it was perhaps ironic that concern about the feminisation of the profession should emerge from a discussion in which women were, if anything, under-represented! Franz Pöchhacker commented that the majority of trainee military interpreters for peace-keeping operations, on the course described elsewhere in this volume by Claudia Monacelli,

are men. He also noted that the many women who study interpreting at university could equally opt for degrees in business studies or law, taking them into highly remunerative careers. This suggests the need for caution in equating the feminisation of interpreting with declining rates of pay. Finally, Pöchhacker referred to an unpublished doctoral dissertation at the University of Vienna, on the feminisation of interpreting and translation (Zeller 1984). Ingrid Kurz's (1989b) brief account of the dissertation is readily accessible, in English, in *The Interpreters' Newsletter*.

Not all panellists saw the feminisation of the profession as prompting particular comment, let alone concern. David Snelling mentioned staff numbers at Trieste as an example of progressive defeminisation, probably emblematic of a healthily balanced outlook in which there is little room for the traditional gender-related stereotypes emphasised by Stephen Pearl. Helge Niska shifted perspective in pointing out that, for some languages (e.g., Arabic), interpreting had traditionally been a male preserve until recent years. The increasing availability of women community interpreters in the languages concerned offers practical advantages — for example, in medical interpreting, where a female patient might require a female interpreter.

Looking beyond the panellists' comments towards the prospects for the profession, Laura Gran focused on the stereotyped equation of feminisation with lack of assertiveness in maintaining appropriate levels of financial reward. Despite some concerns about pay rates, Gran did not see this non-assertiveness as a relevant issue in conference interpreting, where males and females alike have learned to defend their professional status. By contrast, community interpreters probably still have much to learn about realising the full value of their work and negotiating from a position of strength.

6.   Conclusions

No brief conclusion could do justice to the wealth of issues addressed during the round table. Such a conclusion would be inappropriate, in that the discussion could not be dismissed in a summary statement of consensus.

Laura Gran's closing remarks were apt in this respect, for she remarked on the importance of contacts and exchanges between different groups with a variety of perspectives on interpreting — practising interpreters (community and conference interpreters, whether using spoken or signed language), academic researchers, and teachers. In this respect, the three days at Forlì had provided valuable further impetus to the continuing development of Interpreting Studies.

Note

*   Amalia Amato is the author of paragraphs §1 and §2, Peter Mead is the author of paragraphs §3 to §6.

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