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Revisiting the Interpreter's Role

Claudia V. Angelelli

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Revisiting the Interpreter's Role: A study of conference, court, and medical interpreters in Canada, Mexico, and the United States
by Claudia V. Angelelli

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A study of conference, court,
and medical interpreters
in Canada, Mexico, and the United States

Claudia V. Angelelli
San Diego State University

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To my husband, Christian Degueldre,
for his longtime work in this field and incredible support.

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AIIC	Association internationale des interprètes de conférence
CHIA	The California Healthcare Interpreters Association
ICE	Interpreted communicative event
ICEs	Interpreted communicative events
IPRI	Interpreter Interpersonal Role Inventory
MMIA	The Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association
NAJIT	The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators
SES	Socioeconomic status
TAALS	The American Association of Language Specialists

Prologue

From Ancient Egypt to the 21st century, interpreters have enabled communication between speakers of minority and majority languages. This has allowed them to either channel information or act as gatekeepers by exercising their agency. Interestingly, these powerful individuals have, more often than not, been depicted as invisible. Why is it that interpreters, powerful individuals who have occupied center stage since the origins of cross-cultural communication, have traditionally been portrayed (and even more importantly, have allowed themselves to be portrayed) as mere language conduits, invisible parties in the communicative event, deprived of agency, yet capable of performing complex linguistic and information processing tasks? More pointedly, why do we assume that all interpreters, regardless of their own individual differences or the social interactions within which they work, play their roles in the same way? Does this mean that institutions do not constrain interactions, or does it mean that interpreting can happen in a social vacuum? Do interpreters working in different settings adjust their roles to meet the needs of each distinct situation? Does some relationship exist between an interpreter's performance and the situated practice?

Whether they interpret during political meetings for the United Nations Security Council, the court system, a hospital, school, police station, or any kind of community setting, either over the phone or face to face, interpreters are vital agents between cultures and languages. Interpreters in the above-mentioned examples all have a similar goal: facilitate communication. However, as it will become evident from the results of this study, the settings in which interpreters work and the people for whom they interpret impose different constraints and needs on those communicative events they facilitate. These differences are not addressed when the interpreter's role is reduced to that of a language decoder-encoder. They are overlooked when standards of practice or a

code of ethics from one setting (e.g., conference) get blindly transferred to another (e.g., medical). Most importantly interpreters, as persons embedded in a society that possesses its own values, cultural norms, and societal blueprints, also bring their individual social differences to the table. Like any other human being, they perceive reality through their own social lenses. It is therefore problematic to believe that an interpreter, as an individual who brings the self to all interactions, can be truly neutral. During any interpreted communicative event, the self and the other interact. When that happens, the interaction is colored by an array of social factors, such as class, gender, age, and ethnicity. Additionally, if an individual working in any capacity other than that of interpreting (such as a nurse in a medical setting or a bilingual employee in a government agency) is asked to interpret, rendering him or her as what has informally been called a *dual-role* interpreter, he or she has no other choice but to bring the whole self to the interaction, which in turn plays out during the interaction rather than being artificially blocked by some standard that may require that he or she *merely interpret* the words being uttered.

The ways in which interpreters play their roles may vary significantly with the different settings in which interpreting takes place or with the rules that the various professional associations prescribe. A deeper understanding of the social factors surrounding communication between speakers of minority and majority languages should serve to illuminate the complexity of the interpersonal role that interpreters play. Until now, this interpersonal role has not been problematized. Instead, it has been assumed to be that of a neutral and accurate language converter. A better understanding of the complexities underlying the role of the interpreter is crucial to studying intercultural communication in its broadest sense.

As a professional translator/interpreter, active member of professional associations, and professor and researcher in the field of translation/interpreting studies, I have observed and interacted with professional interpreters and self-trained interpreters for over twenty years. Through both their words and actions, I have seen a tension emerge, which triggered my curiosity. There exists a discrepancy between the role that is prescribed for interpreters (through codes and rules, both inside and outside the classroom) and that which unfolds in practice,

where interpreters bring the self to the interactions (in hospitals, in meetings, in the courts, at schools, or in the community at large). The professional ideology prescribes an invisible interpreter without necessarily addressing differences imposed by settings. Some interpreters believe that this invisibility is plausible, while others, as this book will show, perceive their role as powerful and visible, seemingly acknowledging the agency they possess.

The dilemma of a visible interpreter who is mandated to be invisible (or *the interpreter's paradox*, as discussed by Metzger 1999) triggered the key question that guided this study: Are interpreters immune to social factors, or is there a relationship between interpreters' social background and their perception of their role?

From this question, the following questions arise:

- Does gender, age, socio-economic status, or self-identification with speakers of more- or less-dominant groups affect the way in which interpreters perceive their roles?
- Do interpreters working in different settings perceive their roles differently?

These questions place this research at the intersection of four distinct disciplines: (1) social psychology (specifically, interpersonal relations), (2) social theory, (3) linguistic anthropology, and (4) interpreting studies. Interpreting studies is an area of growing research interest that calls for increased interdisciplinary understanding. Throughout this book, I have drawn on theories and methods from these fields in a distinctive way. From social psychology comes the main research method for this study: the construction, validation, and implementation of a measurement instrument that explores interpreters' perceptions of their role. Based on theories from interpersonal relations, I argue that the interpreter cannot be immune to the interplay of social factors. From social theory, I draw on the concept of situated practices as a means to overcome deeply held beliefs on the roles of interpreters (specifically, as they relate to invisibility, neutrality, and lack of agency). The settings where interpreters work, the institutions for which they work, and the society at large all impact the interactions that interpreters facilitate, thus impacting the way in which they work. Out of linguistic anthropology comes the concept of a socially responsible interlocutor who is embedded in a speech commu-

nity and who constructs and co-constructs messages. From interpreting studies, I draw on the earlier construct of the interpreter's neutrality or invisibility, as well as the more recent construct of the interpreter as a co-participant and visible player. It is also in this area where I focus most of the theoretical implications of this study.

My objective for this study was the generation or amplification of a formal theory of interpreting based on the consideration of a number of variables supported by a representative sample (293 cases) from Canada, Mexico, and the United States. This theory of interpreting would be more inclusive of other disciplines and would expand the focus beyond the cognitive and linguistic aspects of interpreting. It would consider interpreting as a very specific type of communicative event and would consider the interpersonal, social, and political aspects of interpreting. New and more rigorous questions, which describe and explore instead of prescribe, must continue to be asked so that the field of interpreting can achieve the maturity it deserves.

The organization of this book follows the logic of addressing the research questions stated above. Chapter 1 explores the characteristics of the visible model that has been portrayed in the literature and how this construct has been studied. This chapter also provides an overview of the construct of invisibility and views the question of role from a historical perspective. The new framework (the intersection of interpreting studies with fields such as social psychology, social theory, and linguistic anthropology from which this study was drawn), which allows for a broader discussion on the issue of the visible role, is then presented in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 visibility is investigated through a methodology in which interpreters are asked to state their perceptions about their role. This chapter presents the design and construction of an instrument to measure interpreters' perception of their role across settings, describing the analyses and processes utilized to produce a valid and reliable assessment tool. In Chapter 4 the results of the administration of the Interpreter Interpersonal Role Inventory (IPRI) in Canada, Mexico, and the United States are revealed. Unsolicited data, in which respondents expand on their answers to IPRI, are also presented. Chapter 5 is a concluding discussion in which the implications of this research are addressed. Some of the questions and concerns that initiated this research are also confronted.

Key findings of this study are that interpreters in all settings perceive their role as visible, and this perception is heavily constrained by the settings in which they work. Given the ingrained belief system of the field of interpreting, these findings are important in challenging the myth of the invisible interpreter and studying situated practices accordingly.

This book was written to appeal to a variety of readers, including interpreter educators and practitioners, students of interpreting, researchers, policy makers, and communication specialists. Interpreters and interpreter educators will find insights about a practice that, although portrayed as simple and straightforward, is both rich and complex. Professional associations of interpreters may benefit from discussions in this book that open dialogue on standards of practice, professional ethics, and the education and certification of interpreters. Researchers concerned with interpreting as a specific event of cross-cultural communication may utilize the citations that place this book at the intersection of social psychology, social theory, linguistic anthropology, and interpreting studies. Policy makers and researchers involved in issues of access for linguistic minorities may decide to study more extensively the interpreter's role during the brokering of cross-cultural communication. Other interested readers will have the opportunity to discover the intricacies of the interpreter's role and how it is perceived firsthand. The descriptions and analyses in the body of the book will raise numerous questions for these readers. My hope is that their questions will be directed not only to the contents of this book, but also toward theories and generalizations from their own disciplines about the ways in which people communicate in a cross-cultural/linguistic encounter.

CHAPTER 1

Overview of the field

Since the origins of cross-linguistic communication, interpreters have been center stage in facilitating communication across cultures and languages. From a parent-teacher conference to a doctor-patient interview or from a United Nations forum to a court hearing, interpreters are instrumental in making speakers of less-dominant languages heard. The interpreter, for example, in her glass booth overlooking the Hall of the General Assembly at the United Nations, simply by doing her job, is contributing to negotiations for peace and stability in the world. In a hospital, a medical interpreter contributes to treating the health of a sick patient. Another interpreter helps to bring justice to speakers of the non-societal language in a court of law, and yet another one brokers communication between the principal of a school and a concerned immigrant parent who does not speak the language that is taught at the school. In each of these settings, the interpreter must pay attention to the manner in which the speakers construct the meaning of the interaction. To do this, she must be attuned to the speakers' social realities. Though she may abide by professional codes and believe she is focusing solely on the message (without paying too much attention to the way in which the message is socially constructed by each of the parties in the conversation), if communication is to succeed, she must also be attentive to the social factors affecting communication, such as the social background of the interlocutors, or the constraints imposed by the setting in which the interpreted communicative event (ICE) takes place. Interpreters in the aforementioned examples have a similar goal — facilitate communication. This is the basis for their role.

1.1 Brief historical overview of interpreting

1.1.1 Early forms of interpreting

Interpreters have always been necessary, not only for bridging communication between individuals from multilingual and highly advanced civilizations, but also in brokering the social differences among them. Hermann (in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 15) reminds us that "in Antiquity as in other eras, interlingual behavior was determined by the specific situation, and within it, by individual human decisions." Power differentials have always been in place between communicating individuals, and many times they have been determined by language use. In Ancient Egypt the title of human being was enjoyed only by Egyptians; foreign races were considered "wretched barbarians," and the interpreter was thought of as "the speaker of strange tongues" (Hermann 1956 in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 15).

In Ancient Greece, the interpreter was not only seen as the linguistic mediator for regular business transactions, but he was also considered semi-divine and capable of performing multiple tasks. Since the Greeks were somewhat averse to "foreign tongues," interpreters were constantly in demand. Greeks could only communicate with high status Roman Senate representatives or non-classical peoples like Egyptians or Celts with the help of interpreters. On the other hand, the Roman Empire was quite unique in how they valued a language different from their own. The Empire was practically bilingual, with the Latin and Greek languages enjoying almost the same status in schools. Interpreters seem to have held a prominent position in Roman society. In fact, Cicero specifically mentions his interpreter and the work done for him (Hermann 1956 in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 19), in both a positive and a negative light.

Interpreters have occupied a position of importance in the Americas (the continent on which the research presented in this book was conducted) since the Spanish Conquest. When Columbus planned the voyage that would eventually land him in the Americas, he knew that interpreting would be an important factor in his ability to communicate with the natives, so he decided to take two interpreters with him. One of these interpreters had spent time in Guinea, and the other supposedly

spoke Arabic, Hebrew, and Chaldean. However, when Columbus first set foot in the Americas, he came face-to-face with over 133 tribal families who spoke over 1000 different languages, spanning the territory from southern Argentina to northern Mexico (Bastin 2001: 506). Since the Spanish authorities and the Native Americans had no understanding whatsoever of each other's language, interpreters' intervention was to become absolutely essential for effective communication.

Unfortunately for Columbus, the languages spoken by his interpreters did not prove to be useful on the American continent. This served as a powerful learning experience for Columbus. Realizing the need to educate (note 1) some natives in the Spanish language and culture, he thus made a commitment to train interpreters. According to Bastin this was achieved by capturing ten natives and transporting them to Spain, where they were taught the Spanish language and culture, with subsequent expeditions following the same pattern (in Baker 2001: 506).

On subsequent voyages to the Americas, Columbus brought with him these previously uprooted interpreters who were now familiar with the Spanish language and culture. As a result, between 1495 and 1518 communication between the Spaniards and the Natives became enabled by a new generation of Native interpreters. Sometimes the interpreting task involved more than simply having to speak Spanish and a Native language. It has been documented that Hernán Cortés once utilized the skills of three interpreters working together. Cortés would speak in Spanish to an interpreter, who would then interpret into Mayan for the Yucatec natives. Then, Malinche (note 2) would interpret from Yucatec into Nahuatl for the Mexican tribes. In one account, a young Mexican boy (who understood Spanish) named Orteguita would listen to Malinche and verify that what she was saying corresponded to what Cortés had originally said (Bastin in Baker 2001: 506). This incident demonstrates how the more-dominant party was concerned about accuracy, but at the same time, did not trust the interpreter. Because of Cortés' position of power Orteguita reported only to Cortés, who was able to demand accuracy and verify its plausibility.

Throughout the colonization of the Americas, interpreters acquired an increasingly important and specific role, as well as status, within the emerging Latin American societies. Between 1529 and 1630, Carlos V, Philip II, and Philip III signed 15 decrees related to interpreting. The

first one considered interpreters as assistants to governors and judges. In 1537, there was a revival of the Orteguita phenomenon, where the concern for accuracy took center stage; a law was passed requiring the natives to be accompanied by a Christian acquaintance who could verify the accuracy of the rendition.

A unique feature of interpreting in its origin was that it happened between two parties that did not share the same status. This difference in power and status has characterized the field since its conception, and these power differentials vary from one situation to another, as does the nature of situated practices. However, until the last decades of the twentieth century neither these power differentials nor the differences that result from the various situated practices (i.e., settings such as international organizations, courts of law or health care centers) have constituted an integral part of interpreting discourse.

Interpreters achieved professional status in 1563. As courts were established, laws were created to regulate interpreters' salaries (according to the number of questions they interpreted), as well as working conditions (amount of work per week and number of interpreters per courtroom). Interpreters were required to take an oath stating that they would interpret without bias, neither omitting nor adding anything. The assumption at the time was that a rendition could be unbiased, and that the interpreting of the meaning of the message was independent of the interpreter himself and of how the parties constructed it. But accuracy was not the only thing expected of interpreters. "Christianity and goodness" were also considered key qualities of the interpreters of that era (Bastin in Baker 2001: 508).

1.1.2 Interpreting during World War II

More recently, during the Nuremberg trials (1945–1946), interpreters once again claimed center stage. After World War II, the sudden demands to train more interpreters resulted in interpreting gaining its way into academia (note 3). Universities in Europe (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK), Asia (Taiwan, Korea, and Japan), the Americas (Argentina, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, USA, and Venezuela), Africa (Tunisia and Egypt), and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) began to offer courses, programs, and degrees in

interpreting. Issues in which power was at stake required educated interpreters. The education of interpreters was thus prompted by the need to ensure communication between heads of state, rather than by the communicative needs of communities of speakers who did not share the societal language. Members of the less-dominant cultures with a need to communicate in their everyday lives received low priority on the list of interpreting needs. This may explain why many university programs only offered (and still only offer) conference interpreting courses (exceptions being, for example, Vancouver City College for Community Interpreting or Charleston North Carolina for Legal Interpreting).

At the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, interpreters have gained center stage once again. The importance of interpreters has been highlighted in recent times of crisis, such as Kosovo, Macedonia, the tragedy known as 9/11, and the war in Iraq. Each of these represents a critical situation in which people who do not share a common language have been put in contact. Without interpreters, nations and people can not communicate effectively. The 9/11 terrorist attack on the United States has especially served to raise awareness about the importance of professional interpreters in less-commonly taught languages. The U.S. Government has reacted in a variety of ways to improve national security. Besides its traditional investment in language learning through the Inter-agency Language Roundtable and the Title VI initiatives (which fund Language Acquisition Resource Centers), the US Government is also funding a new University Affiliated Research Center. Set up at the University of Maryland, CASL, the new center, has been given the task and the resources to respond to the dire needs of the country for increasing numbers of well-trained translators and interpreters. Especially crucial are the Persian and Arabic languages (http://www.president.umd.edu/testimony/testimony22004.pdf).

It is important to note that interpreting entered academia in order to meet a pragmatic need rather than to become an object of study. Research questions about the practice, its practitioners, and their role, which are essential to understand the underlying complexities of the interpreted communicative event, were deferred to the need to train practitioners to meet an immediate market demand. This may explain why many of the principles governing the profession today are the result of personal experiences, anecdotes, and opinions, rather than of empirical

research. Questions that were directed to conduct training took priority over questions that were designed to understand how training in the different areas varied. In many ways the situation these days is not different. Government mandates require well trained interpreters to perform highly classified tasks. Today, as in the time of the Navajo code talkers of the Second World War, interpreters are instrumental in facilitating communicative needs that are key to national security.

1.1.2 Interpreting as a profession

The practice of interpreting, without empirical or theoretical underpinnings of its own, became professionalized in 1953 when AIIC (Association internationale des interprètes de conférence), the first World Association of Conference Interpreters, was founded in Paris. Currently, with headquarters in Geneva, AIIC has only 2617 members (note 4) in the world (AIIC 2004). Although interpreting enabled communication between speakers in any setting in which different languages came into contact, interpreting for conference settings became the focus of attention and the leader in establishing standards for both training programs and professional associations. Shortly after the formation of AIIC, its American counterpart, the American Association of Language specialists (TAALS) was established in Washington D.C. in 1957. Currently the TAALS membership is of approximately 130 interpreters and translators based in nine countries of the Americas (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, USA, and Venezuela).

After the creation of AIIC and TAALS, more than twenty years passed before the National Association of Judicial Interpreters (NAJIT) was formed in the USA in 1978. Soon thereafter, other court and medical associations of interpreters at the state and national level began to emerge. Even today, there is no professional association for community or telephone interpreters. Although there is no certification exam for conference interpreters, there does exist a procedure that evaluates experience in terms of number of contract days and peer recommendation. In contrast, for court interpreters, there are various certifications, both at the state and federal levels.

One would think that the rules of a professional organization would reflect the reality of the practice it governs and that the different associa-

tions would attend to the specific needs of each setting. In the field of interpreting, this would have resulted in distinct rules for conference, court, or medical interpreters. However that is not necessarily the case. Today, as in 1563, the chief concern of most interpreter organizations is accuracy. Training programs set as their goal that interpreters relay accurate renditions of a message, even going to the extreme of stating that the goal of the interpreter is to make communication between parties who do not share a language as smooth as it would be if the parties did have a common language. Training programs set this unattainable goal as an attainable reality, and as a result, a tension emerges between the prescribed and the actual role of the interpreter.

Traditionally, the main concern for interpreter training programs and professional organizations has not been to understand the complexity of the role that interpreters play as they facilitate communication, but rather to prescribe how that role should be played. The problem that this obsession with dictating the role of the interpreter raises is that it leads to the distortion of the reality of the interpreter at work, limiting the opportunities for understanding the multifaceted and complex role that interpreters play. The different settings in which interpreters work, and the people for whom they interpret, impose different constraints and needs on the interpreted communicative events they facilitate. Thus, their role as interpreters undergoes constant change in order to satisfy those needs and constraints. This is a part of the practice of interpreting that should not be overlooked, especially when analyzing codes of ethics and standards of practice of the different professional organizations. The ignoring of situated practices (which seem to be so important in determining the constraints within which each interpreter does his job) during the designing of code of ethics or standards of practice leads us to wonder how this could have been possible. Why were these guidelines not grounded in observations and analyses of practices? Which factors *did* guide the research on interpreting?

1.1.3 Interpreting as a field of study

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, we have witnessed a shift in the perception of the interpreter's role, from a language conduit to an essential partner in a cross-cultural conversation or a co-construc-

tor to the interaction, to a participant with agency (Angelelli 2004: 36). Research utilizing a sociolinguistics lens has illustrated crucial differences in the participatory role of interpreters, and these differences depend upon the nature of the interpreted communicative event (Hymes 1974; Angelelli 2000a; Berk-Seligson 1990; Fowler 2003; Jacobsen 2003; Metzger 1999; Roy 1989 and 2000; Wadensjö 1995 and 1998a and b).

The fact that the interpreter constructs, co-constructs, repairs, and facilitates the talk during an interpreted encounter proves her role as a co-participant (Bélanger 2003; Berk-Seligson 1990; Fowler 2003; Jacobsen 2003; Metzger 1999; Roy 1989 and 2000; Valdés, Chavez and Angelelli 2003; Wadensjö 1995 and 1998a and b). Speakers and interpreters co-construct conversations in what is referred to by Wadensjö as a *pas de trois* (1998: 10). Well-documented ethnographies of interpreters in the courtroom (Berk-Seligson 1990) and in the hospital (Angelelli 2004), and studies in the academic (Roy 2000) and medical settings (Davidson 2000; Metzger 1999), the immigration office, and the police station (Wadensjö 1995 and 1998a and b) as well as of young interpreters in the community (Valdés et al. 2000; Valdés et al. 2003) are evidence of the *visibility* (Angelelli 2001, 2003a & b, 2004) of interpreters. These studies have challenged the notion of neutrality by studying the participation of interpreters during interactions (Davidson 2000 and 2001; Metzger 1999) and by considering interpreting as a special case of interaction (Wadensjö 1998) or discourse process (Roy 2000) in which interpreters are co-participants who share responsibility in the talk. However, the conceptualization of the interpreter as a conduit (Reddy 1979) or a ghost (Collado Aís in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 336) is still prevalent, especially in research on conference and court interpreters.

1.1.3.1 *Conference interpreting*

In conference interpreting, Gile (in Baker 2001: 42) identified four periods that characterized research: the early writing period; the experimental period; the practitioners' period; and the renewal period. During the early writing period (1950's and 1960's), practicing interpreters and interpreting trainers began to think and write about the field. They were not researchers themselves, so they mainly wrote reflectively about their thoughts and experiences (Herbert 1952; Van Hoof 1962 both in Gile 2001: 42). Writings from this period, though not empirically grounded,

significantly shaped the conceptualization of interpreting and the role interpreters were supposed to play. The experimental period followed, when researchers from cognitive psychology, neurolinguistics, and psycholinguistics became interested in aspects of interpreting related to the cognitive processing of information. These studies, mainly experimental in nature, were concerned with the effect of different variables, such as native language, source language, ear-voice span, and pauses in speech delivery (Gerver 1976 in Gile 2001: 42), on cognitive performance. Research from this period set the stage for an agenda that was mostly concerned with psycholinguistic and cognitive processes in interpreting. Little or no attention was paid to the role of the interpreter during this period, since the interest in mental processes placed emphasis on the interpreter as a cognitive being and less as an individual who is in contact with others and who performs a social and political role. During the practitioners' period (1970's), practicing interpreters attempted to do research on interpreting. The results of that research were considered theoretical or conjectural, rather than empirical, and these individuals generally worked in isolation from other scientific communities (Gile 2001: 42–43).

It was during the practitioners' period that the *Théorie du sens* (Theory of Meaning) became prominent (Seleskovitch and Lederer 1989). This theory argues for an idealized view of the interpreter and of interpreting. It claims that interpreting is based on meaning instead of language; interpreting is language-independent, and text comprehension and production are spontaneous. Therefore, as long as the interpreter has command of source and target language and world knowledge, she captures the only possible meaning of an utterance and renders it into another language. It considers meaning as a construct that exists on its own, rather than as a result of the co-construction of the parties involved in the interaction. Its failure to consider any of the social factors present in the communicative act of interpreting resulted in the target of numerous criticisms (Gile 1995), since interpreting can not happen in a social vacuum (Wadensjö 1998: 8). Without any empirical underpinning, this theory is at the core of the professional ideology that considers interpreters as bilingual "ghosts" (Collado Aís in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2003: 336) and has influenced significantly the teaching and learning of interpreting.

The *renewal period* began as a reaction to the *Théorie du sens.* Originating in the 1980's and still in vogue today, the renewal period calls for a more scientific study of interpreting and an interdisciplinary approach to the topic (Gile 1995; Lambert 1985; Moser-Mercer 1997 and 1999; Setton 1998). As has been evident across time, research in conference interpreting has focused mostly on the information-processing aspect of interpreting (note 5) or linguistic transfer, and not on the communicative event and its participants. Only recently have we begun to see expansions towards a sociocultural approach to the role and to the context in which interpreting occurs (Kurz 1993, Schjoldager 1995, and Collado Aís 1998, all in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002).

1.1.3.2 *Courtroom interpreting*

Almost overlapping with the renewal period but not necessarily focusing on conference interpreting, some empirical studies on the role of the interpreter began to emerge. Most of these studies have been conducted in one specific setting and have been of a qualitative nature (e.g., ethnographies of communication or discourse analysis studies). Berk-Seligson (1990) explored the participatory role of the interpreter in her ethnography of a courtroom. She demonstrated that through manipulation of the use of polite forms among other sociolinguistic devices, interpreters in the bilingual courtroom become more or less visible. This phenomenon is also evident in descriptive studies such as those performed with witness statements at a police station (Fowler 2003) and in Danish (Jacobsen 2003), Venezuelan (Vilela Biasi 2003) and Australian (Hale 2004) courtrooms. In spite of this evidence, many professional organizations today continue to state that interpreters are neutral, objective conduits who lack agency in the communicative event. When rules governing the work of an interpreter in a court of law are constructed, the complexity of a role such as the one studied by scholars and researchers gets paradoxically presented as a controllable and automatic neutral position.

1.1.3.3 *Community interpreting*

Various empirical studies have been conducted on interpreted mediated discourse (Angelelli 2003b and 2004; Bolden 2000; Bot 2003; Cambridge 1999; Davidson 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002; Kaufert and Putsch 1997; Metzger 1999; Roy 1989 and 2000; Valdés et al. 2000; Valdés et al. 2003;

and Wadensjö 1995 and 1998). Most of these have been qualitative in nature, have studied different ethnic groups, and have varied both in the types of questions they have asked and the number of encounters analyzed, but each of them has provided solid evidence of the participatory (or *visible*) role of the interpreter. In their study, Kaufert & Putsch (1997) look at the interpreter's role and consider day-to-day workplace pressures and ethical dilemmas, focusing on informed consent and end-of-life decisions mediated by interpreters. These authors disagree with the idea of a neutral interpreter, emphasizing the need for codes of ethics that would incorporate situations where interpreters "act as advocates for patients" (p. 77 and cf. CHIA Standards 2002: 44–47). Focusing on the role of interpreters, Kaufert and Putsch discuss the challenges of monolingualism in medical practice, which is increasingly multicultural, placing heavy emphasis on the aspects of clinical communication that involve power and dominance. They state that "health care interpretation often occurs across major gulfs of culture, class, and language; and therefore it is unlike interpretation in the courts or in business or international negotiation. Attempts to encourage mutually shared understanding require the health care interpreter to engage in explanation, cultural brokerage, and mediation when these actions are necessary" (p. 75).

Taking a similar line of argumentation while examining English-ASL medical interviews, Metzger (1999) applies frame theory and Goffman's concept of footing (1981) to analyze the interpreter's influence on interpreted interactions in two interpreting cases. She concludes that interpreters can misrepresent the source message footings by using their own renditions and utterances, thus giving them powerful influence over the discourse that is interpreted.

Davidson (1998) studies the construction of reciprocity and meaning in interpreted conversations. He states that the various parties to the interpreted communicative encounter see the role of the interpreter differently. For example, the physician sees the interpreter as a human instrument (who helps keep the patient and thus, the conversation) on track. However, the patient sees the interpreter as a co-conversationalist. Davidson attributes the difficulties that occur during interpreted encounters to both the construction of reciprocal understanding and the inaccurate transformation of semantic and/or pragmatic content. Davidson (2000) has also emphasized the importance of taking into

consideration the historical and institutional context in which interpreters perform their job, in order to better analyze their actions and their role. In later work, Davidson (2001) refers to interpreters as gatekeepers for the minority-language speakers for whom they interpret, stating that these interpreters align with health care providers, making them active participants in the diagnostic process.

Targeting a different ethnic group, Bolden (2000) analyzes two interviews between English-speaking doctors and Russian-speaking patients. Bolden challenges the non-participatory nature of interpreters by demonstrating that interpreters orient toward obtaining medically relevant information from patients and conveying that information to providers.

Focusing on community interpreting, Wadensjö (1995) provides evidence of the social and interactive skills of interpreters. She looks mainly at how responsibility "for the progression and the substance of interaction is distributed in and through talk" (p. 112). From the discourse analysis performed, she concludes that the interpreter's role during the interaction goes beyond a traditional channel that simply conveys information. She argues that interpreters co-construct meaning together with the interlocutors, and that responsibility during interpretation is shared by all parties to the conversation. In this sense, the co-construction of meaning and the responsibility of both the interlocutors and the interpreter as team players within a conversation shed light on other interpreting skills that extend beyond linguistic code switching and information processing. Just like Kaufert & Putsch, Wadensjö points out social skills that do not seem to be addressed by the literature on interpreting.

By using Goffman's framework of roles Roy (1989 and 2000) analyzes an interpreted (American Sign Language-English) encounter between a deaf student and a professor. She demonstrates that the interpreter is an active participant in the interaction, because of "the shifts interpreters make from relaying messages to managing and coordinating talk" (2000: 111). In the two instances analyzed by Roy, the interlocutor directly addresses the interpreter, and the interpreter responds directly back to the interlocutor. The author focuses on turn taking as she analyzes the role of the interpreter, whom she says takes "responsibility for the flow and maintenance of communication" (2000: 121).

In another school setting, this time with young immigrant bilingual students, Valdés et al. (2000) examine the performance of 25 bilingual students (English-Spanish) from two high schools who act as interpreters between a mother and the school principal. The study reveals that young interpreters exhibit many of the same characteristics displayed by experienced and professional interpreters in terms of strategies. It also demonstrates the agency displayed by these youngsters as they deal with offensive remarks and face-threatening acts.

1.1.3.4 *Prescribed vs. actual role: Ideologies*

This visible and opaque role that interpreters play continues to be overshadowed by the invisible one. This submission is also present in the language of metaphors that practitioners and researchers use to describe their work. According to Roy (1993 in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002), practitioners recurrently use the terms *channel, machine, telephone, window*, or *bridge* to explain what they do. Roy also explains the evolution of the various descriptions used among the professionals working with American Sign Language, from the interpreter as a helper (which encompasses the professional role as well as the social and personal) to the interpreter as a conduit to the interpreter as a communication facilitator (as ASL professionals turned to the field of communications for possible answers on their role). Although this description at first glance appears to be more inclusive than the previous one, it still conveys "the conduit notion in the disguise of communication-facilitator" (Roy in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 351). The last description used is that of interpreters as bilingual, bicultural specialists. According to this description, the interpreter's role includes an awareness of dialectal and regional language varieties and sociocultural pragmatics.

Examining Spanish-English medical interpreters, I interviewed ten participants (as part of a larger research study) to discuss their role (Angelelli 2004). Many of these interpreters turn to the use of metaphors to describe their jobs. The only traditional view is that of interpreters as multifaceted bridges; the other metaphors clearly point to a more visible and proactive role. These medical interpreters compare their work to that of a *detective* who searches for the necessary answer, a *mine digger* who excavates until the answer is found, and a *diamond connoisseur* who must possess the ability to distinguish relevant infor-

mation (diamonds) from the less relevant information (dirt). During this study, the tension between the role prescribed by professional associations, as stated in professional code of ethics and/or standards of practice (e.g., CHIA, MMIA) and the role described by interpreters in their own words (which illustrate their own perception) becomes evident. This tension raises several questions regarding the validity and empirical basis of those prescriptions. Why are interpreters so infrequently asked their views on their role? And when they are asked, why don't their views count? Why do professional associations ignore the reality of the practitioners and the empirical research on interpreting and set idealized standards of practice?

The conceptualization of an interpreter as a ghost (Kopscinscki 1994 in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2002: 336), or *invisible* participant, considers accuracy over all other aspects that can be attributed to the message (intention of the parties, goal of the communicative event, and context of the interaction). This model portrays an *invisible* interpreter who is a mere conduit or channel between two speakers who do not share a common language. It assumes no interaction between interpreter and speakers, no interaction between speakers among themselves unless through the interpreter, and that interpreting can indeed happen in a social vacuum (Wadensjö 1998: 8), since it overlooks social and cultural factors brought by the interpreter and the parties to the interaction. According to this *invisible* model, the interpreter is seen as a language modem.

Professional associations require an interpreter to be a neutral, *invisible* party whose role is to convey meaning accurately in another language. The underlying assumptions suggested by statements in their codes of ethics and/or standards of practice (e.g., Association internationale des interprètes de conférence [AIIC], California Health Care Interpreters Association [CHIA], Massachusetts Medical Interpreting Association [MMIA], National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators [NAJIT]), is that in any given utterance there is only one meaning, which is not subject to co-construction by all participants to the interaction (including the interpreter) but rather that meaning exists independently of the parties. Statements also assume that neutrality and accuracy are monolithic concepts. In other words, by stating that the interpreter's responsibility is to convey *the meaning of the message* into another language we are denying the fact that meaning is not mono-

lithic and that all parties to a conversation work together (participate) to generate this meaning. The interaction during which meaning gets constructed can take on different formats, for example, giving or requesting information, clarifying or re-stating concepts, repeating, paraphrasing, expanding, or summarizing statements. None of these behaviors can be explained by a non-participant or invisible interpreter.

Most schools that offer interpreting courses also share this professional ideology. During the course of an interpreting class, it is not uncommon to hear instructors tell students "your job is to grasp the meaning and state it in the other language. You have no part in what is said" or "your only job is to convey the meaning stated by one speaker into the other language for the other speaker." Without a doubt, when the interpreter's role is reduced to that of a language decoder-encoder, its capacity for complexity becomes limited, thus making it easier to teach by focusing only on the information-processing skills. If, however, we want to help students explore the different facets of their job and become aware of their power and responsibility, then the teaching of interpreting becomes more complex (Angelelli 2000b). The current status of interpreter education seems more in line with the status quo. Rather than studying, exploring, problematizing, understanding, and describing the role of the interpreter, most professional organizations and educational institutions continue to abide by an unchallenged belief system. Interpreters themselves are also characterized as subscribers to this belief of invisibility, paying lip service to professional organizations (Wadensjö 1998). Paradoxically, this lip service obscures important aspects of their power, and it prevents them from exploring and understanding the complex role that they play.

This phenomenon naturally leads to the following questions: What purpose does the myth of invisibility serve? Do interpreters accept this notion of being invisible, of holding no power? If so, then why do interpreters, instead of embracing the power they have as unique professionals in cross-cultural interactions, portray themselves (or allow themselves to be portrayed) as highly sophisticated language decoders/encoders who simply interpret and interpret it all (adapted from Wadensjö 1998)? Why, in spite of being so central to the cross linguistic/cultural communicative event, are interpreters portrayed as invisible? And finally, why do interpreters (Roy 2000) and translators (Hatim and Mason 1990) allow

themselves to be deprived of recognition for the central role they play in cross-cultural communication?

One speculation is that the notion of invisibility is embraced because it implies that the interpreter has no responsibility regarding the outcome of the interaction, even though interpreters can and do impact that outcome significantly. One can escape the entire question of boundaries and responsibilities if one subscribes to the myth of invisibility or neutrality (Metzger 1999). Another possibility is that invisibility earns trust. Trust is necessary for a temporary guest, which is the case of any conference interpreter who facilitates communication in a community of discourse that is not her own, such as among politicians, scientists or technicians (Angelelli 2000a: 585) or a stranger to enter into an interaction that is both intense and involved (and into which strangers would not usually be allowed). Wadensjö has explored plausible causes for the tension between reality and this current ideology of neutrality. She has stated that perpetuating the notion of the neutral interpreter instead of problematizing it is "paying lip service to official Codes of Conducts" (1998: 286). The way in which interpreters themselves perceive their role is a key element in understanding the perpetuation of this invisible or neutral role. The truth, however, is that we know very little about interpreters' perceptions of their role.

One may also wonder, then, how the decisions to mandate the role of the interpreter are made. If the mandates do not reflect the reality of the practice and if they have little empirical grounding, then how can they hold up? This status quo could come about by various means. In the next section I offer my view of how a rigid and unfounded conceptualization of the interpreter's role has survived, virtually unchallenged, for a significant period of time.

1.2 A closed circle

The regulation of the practice of interpreting and entrance into academia increased the prestige and status of the practice. This practice, as the reader will recall, was not based on the needs of the population that required the service, but rather on the needs of an elite group. Unlike translation, interpreting did not develop immediately into Interpreting

Studies, with its own underlying theory. The theory and research upon which interpreting is based has been generated mostly from within the field, with little influence from other disciplines (although interpreting is per se an interdisciplinary endeavor). It is derived from practice and is, in a very few cases, empirical (mostly experimental) and concerned primarily with the linguistic and information processing aspects of the profession. When it comes to the role of the interpreter, in many cases it is anecdotal and prescriptive (exception being Angelelli 2003a and b and 2004; Berk-Seligson 1990; Bolden 2000, Davidson 2001 and 2002; Metzger 1999; Roy 2000; Wadensjö 1998). For many years, theory and research on interpreting have focused mostly on the conference venue and, except for a few empirical studies mentioned earlier, have not accounted for the interpersonal roles that interpreters play as they broker and facilitate communication between members of different levels of society.

By failing to incorporate related theories from fields such as Linguistic Anthropology, Bilingualism, Feminism, Sociolinguistics, Social Psychology, Sociology, or Translation Studies, prior work in the field has created a closed circle. This circle may be explained in terms of the following: Interpreting, as a practice, is not grounded in a comprehensive underlying theory (which includes the socio-political aspects of interpreting as well as those related to information processing). Most importantly, the field of interpreting barely accounts for related theories from fields such as those named above that deal with interpersonal communication.

This situation leaves us with a complex field of practice, which lacks the insights of interdisciplinary research and theory (note 6), and which minimizes opportunities to contribute to theory development. As a result, a theoretically uninformed practice becomes professionalized. Today, professional associations continue to prescribe rules by which practice abides. The circle (see Figure 1) is closed by the presence of the schools of interpreting, in which the practice and the professional associations have an impact upon the education (note 7) of interpreters. In other words, the crucial relationship arising from the interaction of theory and research (which normally would inform practice by helping a field move forward) and practice (which normally would inform theory and research by setting new directions in which the field needs to move) is compromised and almost nonexistent.

Because theory and research have practically been left out of what I am calling the closed circle, the existing form of practice continues to perpetuate itself. Figure 1 shows the components of the closed circle and their interactions with one another. The bidirectional arrows show a continuous interaction among the three components of the circle. They do not imply any linear or causal relationship. The unidirectional arrows that link schools and practice to the professional discourse show the absence of dialogue between research and practice. Since theory and research from related interdisciplinary fields only occasionally affect the circle, they do not form a part of it.

Interpreting continues to live by rules that are seldom questioned, practitioners continue to worry about accurate transmission of the message, and the field fails to contextualize the interpreter and the message and its transmission. The notion of interpreting (like any other type of communication) as a manifestation of some kind of interpersonal relation has been largely ignored, and the contributing social factors (e.g., ethnicity, race, gender, age, status, power, or solidarity) that may influence the message and its transmittal during an interaction have seldom been taken into account (Angelelli 2004). Most importantly, there exists a need to address the fact that the practice of interpreting is socially situated. The constraints that any institution (be it a hospital, a courthouse, or a national/international or public/private organization) may pose on the act of interpreting need to be accounted for in a theory of interpreting. Although medical, community, conference, and court interpreting seem to have strong common grounds (based on a linguistic or information-processing perspective), there are probably more differences than similarities among the settings where these interpreting events occur and among the co-participants who contribute to them.

The present view of interpreting shared by schools and professional organizations fails to problematize and explore the divorce between the prescription and the reality of the ICE. By prescribing that the role of the interpreter should be *invisible*, the profession fails to see the interpreter's role for what it really is — that of an individual who orchestrates language, culture, and social factors in a communicative event.

Schools and associations have achieved a level of success under the current approach; the number of associations is increasing, associations are increasing their memberships, and schools that prepare interpret-

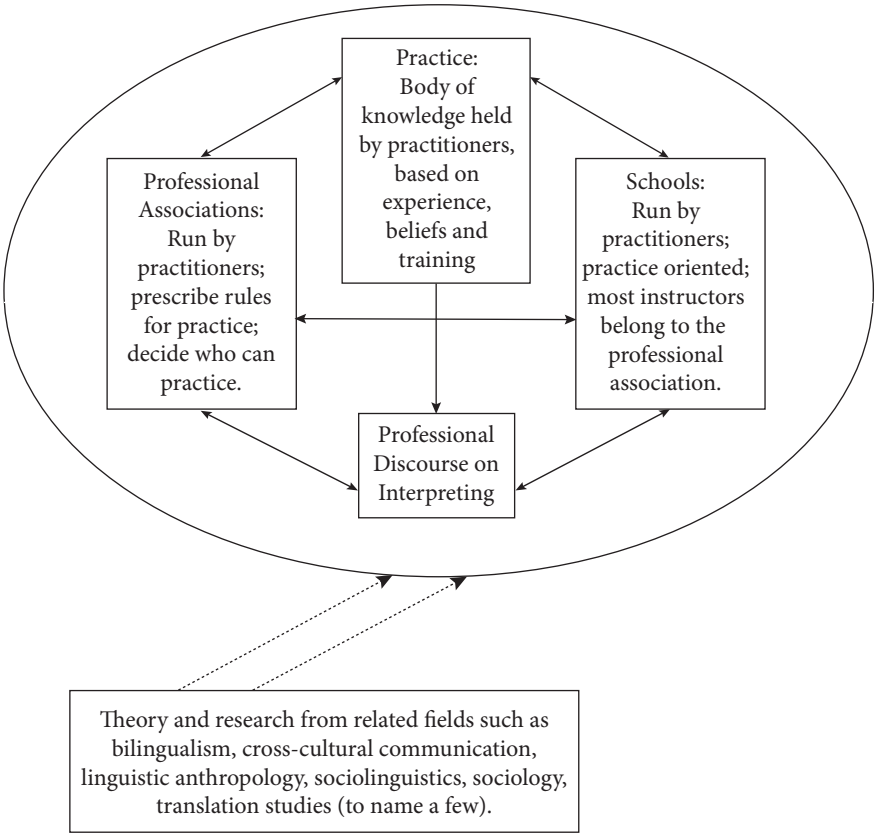

Figure 1. A closed circle

ers are booming. On the surface, the system appears to be functioning smoothly. In turn, practitioners themselves feel safe in knowing that their practice is organized. Perhaps it is also reassuring for interpreters to know that, as long as they are faithful to the message, their job is considered well done. Nevertheless, regardless of how controlled and straightforward this picture may seem, it is incomplete.

Of the three-party equation formed by the two interlocutors and the interpreter, the closed circle deals only with interpreters who are isolated from the social interaction and institution in which they work. The fact that more often than not interpreters and interlocutors for whom they work may or may not share social factors, that interlocutors may belong to the more or the less-dominant side of the three-party equation is often

under-explored. Current prescriptivism does not allow for the study of how interpreters interact with the less-dominant interlocutor in order to either channel information (Angelelli 2003b, 2004) to them or act as gatekeepers (Davidson 2002).

Undoubtedly, interpreters enable members of the less-dominant side to interact. As we have seen, interpreting, since its origin, has occurred between major gulfs of power and not just between two cultures and two languages. When Malinche interpreted between Cortés and the Natives, there was an obvious differential in the power status of the parties. Malinche, through her interpreting, made the Natives' concerns and voices heard, and helped the oppressor's message prevail. But Malinche's role was not neutral. She was not invisible. Instead, she was a key factor to altering or perpetuating issues of power and solidarity while brokering communication. Malinche's visibility as an interpreter was not an isolated case. As we have seen, interpreters through the course of history have continued to broker communication across major gulfs of both culture and power.

If interpreters and interpreting are so crucial to the communication between more- and less-dominant speakers, we need to be able to understand the ICE in its complexity. We need to consider the different interlocutors for whom interpreters work, the different settings in which interpreting occurs and the various limitations that the difference in settings imposes on the interpersonal role of interpreters. Limiting the scope of the ICE to the accuracy of the content or to the linguistic proficiency of the interpreter allows for very clear rules of what an interpreter should and should not do. It creates the illusion that as long as the information processing side is accounted for, then cross-linguistic communication is possible, regardless of where and between whom it occurs. Unfortunately, this illusion does little to help us understand the complexity of the role of the interpreter and to factor in the constraints that the different settings and the interaction of social factors place upon the act of interpreting. To ground an entire field in a myth (Metzger 1999) or in an illusion is to arrest its development. The closed circle needs to be opened.

CHAPTER 2

Opening up the circle

As I have argued in Chapter 1, the interpreted communicative event (ICE) in which three co-participants interact is still in early stages of being studied from a broader perspective. Research conducted on the cognitive or linguistic aspect of interpreting has allowed us to gain a partial understanding of this complex issue. However, in order to gain deeper knowledge, we need to study the interpreted communicative event as a social or political event, and then we must examine the interpreter's multifaceted role within that event. A social and sociological perspective would allow us to explore the agency or the power that interpreters hold (Angelelli 2003a and b, 2004; Davidson 2001 and 2002; Metzger 1999; Wadensjö 1998), which should not be overlooked, even under the guise of the interpreter's neutrality (Metzger 1999). Additionally, this communicative event is embedded within an institution which is itself embedded in society. Societal blueprints and cultural norms affect communication, whose practices are socially situated. Ideally, we would embrace the reality of a participant bringing the self to the table during each communicative event — not ignore it.

In making sense of the interpreter's role during an ICE we can open up the circle in an attempt to understand the interaction from various perspectives. Research and theories from disciplines such as sociology, social theory, and linguistic anthropology enable us to study the social role of the interpreter. The relative visibility or invisibility of interpreters can be examined at various levels of the interaction: interpersonal, institutional, and societal. First, we can look at the core of the three-party interaction in which the interpreter's role gets enacted and see the roles that each of the participants play and how each confers or defers certain status to the other. Some examples of these core interactions of interpreter and monolingual parties are conversations between legal/illegal or documented/undocumented immigrants and speakers of the societal language in a courtroom, or multilateral negotiations between delegates

from developing and developed countries in an international forum. Second, we can look at the degree of vulnerability of these individuals and groups within a given institution. For example, patients in a hospital or clinic, defendants charged with a crime, an immigrant family trying to save a home from foreclosure, or delegates from developing countries denouncing crimes against human rights at an international forum. Finally, we can consider issues of generalized status relations, primarily around class, and designations within society and the impact of societal beliefs on individuals. According to Bourdieu (1990), none of these interactions happens in a social vacuum, and in none of them are parties invisible or unbiased. They all bring to the interactions their deeply held views and values, prejudices, and biases. It would be unwise to assume that interpreters are immune to this interplay of social factors.

If the concept of *invisibility* fails to hold up when we examine the interpreter's reality at work, then what in fact is that reality? Observations of interpreters at work show that in the social environments in which they work, they interact with the parties (Angelelli 2003b and 2004; Berk-Seligson 1990; Bolden 2000; Bot 2003; Cambridge 1999; Davidson 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002; Kaufert and Putsch 1997; Kurz 1993; Metzger 1999; Roy 1989; Valdés et al. 2000; Valdés et al. 2003; and Wadensjö 1995 and 1998) for whom they interpret. As in any other kind of interaction, the two parties belong to a certain SES, ethnicity, nationality, and gender membership, as does the interpreter. In some instances more than others, interpreters and parties converge in terms of those social factors. For example, during a conference on political negotiations between ministers of governments, the ministers may share similar SES, status, or power, though they may differ in nationality, ethnicity, and gender. Conference interpreters are reported to be highly educated individuals (Weber 1984) and as such may be assumed to share some social features (e.g., education, ethnicity) with the parties for whom they interpret, although they clearly have a different social status in the interaction.

However in a court case where the defendant belongs to a less dominant group (aside from being a member of a linguistic and ethnic minority), or in a public hospital where the power differentials between doctors and patients are clear, the interpreter may have more factors in common with one party or with the other, but clearly not with both (Angelelli 2004: 87–88). It could be that power differentials are more salient

in a medical interview or in a court of law, although this certainly should not be construed to mean that no power differentials exist between heads of state or delegates of developed nations, or between those of developed and developing countries.

It is difficult to imagine that under such circumstances individuals could be truly neutral. Instead, I argue that various degrees of interpreter's intervention, or as I call it, *visibility* of the interpreter at work, result from the interplay of the social factors mentioned. Interpreters' behaviors are impacted by both the reality of the situation where interpreting occurs and the realities of each of the interlocutors. Empirical research has shown that when interpreters perform their roles to make communication possible, they are present and tuned in to the social realities of the parties at talk. By opening up the closed circle, the reality of the interpreter's interaction can be examined through the lenses of various sociological theories, which allow us to approach the problem of the role of the interpreter at three different levels (Angelelli 2004: 72): (1) societal; (2) interpersonal; and (3) discourse.

2.1 Breaking into the closed circle

When two or more interlocutors interact, they bring to the interaction the self. Many times the interaction occurs within an institution, which constrains it, and often times, the institution is a reflection of the society in which it is embedded. In other words, the interaction does not happen in a social vacuum; several forces affect it. These forces can be found at the level of the interaction itself, the institution in which it takes place, the society at large, or the interplay of all three levels at the same time. In previous work (Angelelli 2004: 30) I have presented what I call the Visible Interpreter Model (shown in Figure 2), which allows a visualization of this interplay, as well as the social factors that characterize and constrain each of the participants in the ICE.

As the figure shows, a pair of concentric circles, representing the society in which the institution can be found and the institution (i.e., the setting) in which the interaction takes place, surround the three participants of the interpreted communicative event (Interlocutor Language A, Interlocutor Language B, and the Interpreter). It is easy to see

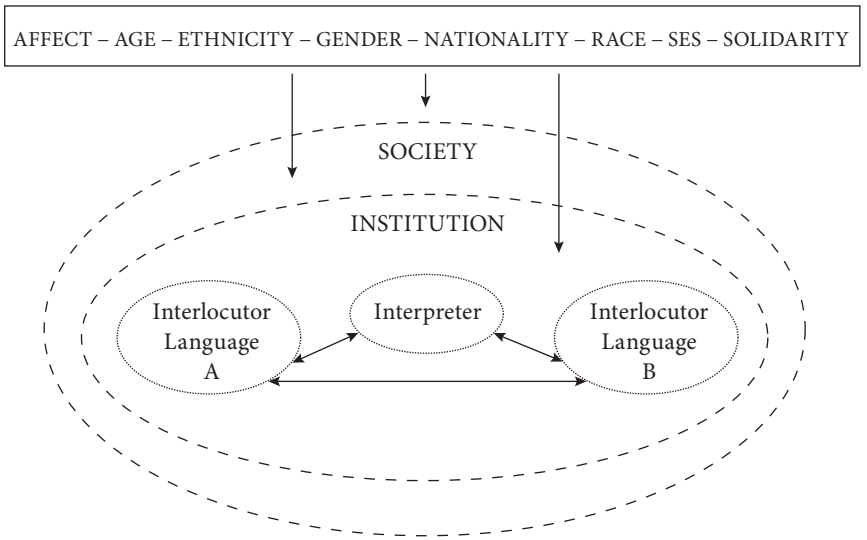

Figure 2. The visible interpreter (Angelelli 2001 and 2004: 30)

from this illustration how the interplay between the three participants is constrained by the institution in which they find themselves, as well as by the society in which the institution is found (i.e., the society in which they live). We can also see how a variety of social factors (represented in this model by affect, age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, race, SES, and solidarity) exert at least some degree of influence on each of the layers of the model (society, institution, interaction), as well as on each of the participants to the interpreted communicative event. In other words, each of these participants brings to the interaction the self (which is in great part constituted from these social factors), where it then comes into contact with two other people, each of whom has his/her own concept of self, resulting in the possibility of an interplay of countless combinations of social factors, rendering it virtually impossible for any of these participants to be truly *invisible*.

To study the role of the interpreter as a situated practice, we will first explore the different theories and research in order to examine the interpersonal role of the interpreter, in terms of how interpreters conceive their role and also in terms of how they report their behavior in practice.

In order to open up the circle in interpreting research, we will look at social and sociological theories to see how the interpersonal role can be conceived within an interpersonal interaction that is embedded in an institution which, in turn, is embedded in the society at large. Finally, we will turn to the literature in linguistic anthropology to examine the manifestation of that interpersonal role as it gets enacted during an ICE.

Interpreting has been discussed as a form of interaction (Wadensjö 1998). As such it needs to be studied like any other case of human interaction or of interpersonal cross-cultural/linguistic communication. To look at the interpreted communicative event at the interpersonal level, we are offered the following sociological theories. Theories in interpersonal relations include: (1) the Theory on Impression Formation (Brewer 1988; Feagin 1991; Rosenhan 1973); (2) the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger 1954); (3) the Theory of the Significant Other; (4) the Attribution Theory (Firske and Taylor 1991); (5) the Affect-Control Theory (Candace 1990; Hochschild 1983; Ridgeway 1993; Sachter and Singer 1962; Smith-Lovin 1990); (6) the Status Characterization Theory (Webster and Foschi 1998). At the institutional and societal level, we find Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1977; 1989; 1990; 1991). Finally, at the level of the discourse that gets constructed in the interaction, we can turn to the literature from linguistic anthropology (Duranti 1992; Hill and Irvine 1992; Hill and Zepeda 1992; Hymes 1974; Irvine 1992).

2.1.1 Sociological theories

Starting on the inside and moving toward the periphery of Figure 2, we first consider the problem of the interpersonal role of the interpreter at the level of the interaction between the three interlocutors. We can draw from theories on social psychology on interpersonal relations that state that people depend on one another in at least two ways: (1) effect dependent (they come together to achieve goals); and (2) information dependent (they depend on each other to gather information about their environment). In the case of interpreting, the three parties come together, both because they need to achieve communication, and they need to gather information about a situation. Using the court setting as an example, we can see how defendant, plaintiff or other officer of the court, and interpreter (the reader can substitute the setting and partici-

pants by others, such as a doctor and patient in a hospital, two heads of state in a negotiation, or a parent and a school principal) come together in the course of a trial to communicate about a specific issue, as well as to collect information about it.

From Brewer (1988) and the Theory of Impression Formation, we know that when people come together to communicate and seek information about a situation, they first must define *self* and *other* in order to begin interacting. However, there is an enormous amount of information available in the world, and interlocutors must attend to it selectively. In other words, when one person comes into contact with an *other*, the former attends to information according to a system of categories. This means that we, as human beings, never perceive anything directly or fully. Instead, our sense of the world is mediated by our system of categories. This is especially important when we consider the meaning of a message. Since everyone sees the world through various lenses, creating along the way meanings for the pictures that they see, we need to exercise caution and not assume that each utterance has only one meaning. Everything seen and heard is as much a product of the world as it is of any individual's or group's system of categories.

The category system that any one person applies to the world in order to make sense of it is a result of cultural and class backgrounds, as well as ethnicity and gender. Brewer (1988) refers to this as impression formation. When interpreters come into contact with the parties for whom they interpret, they also engage in this process. Although codes of ethics and standards of practice rule that interpreters must be neutral, this task may be more easily said than done. It is no simple feat to escape the social processes to which all individuals are continuously exposed. It is unfounded, then, to state that interpreters are value-neutral and immune to this categorizing; with this realization comes an understanding of the importance of raising awareness on how to become more conscious of our own limitations.

Following Brewer's model of impression formation, when individuals categorize, they need to balance simplicity, accuracy, and self-esteem. Simplicity is necessary, because individuals tend to want to categorize immediately. Through this system, although time may be crucial, the information can be stored in an orderly fashion. Even if simple, the information has to be accurate. Accuracy is important for the categoriza-

tion process, because if the wrong category is applied to someone, that person may resist the category, thus creating a conflict. I say *may* resist because not everybody can engage in category resistance. The person most able to resist categories is one who has power or status in the relationship (Feagin 1991; Rosenhan 1973). Finally, most important element of the interaction is the self. Maintaining self-esteem is considerably more important to individuals engaged in an interaction than balancing simplicity and accuracy. In other words, the self takes precedence over all others during the process of categorization.

The following stages are present in the process of impression formation (Brewer 1988): (1) identification; (2) typing/subtyping; (3) individuation; and (4) personalization. Except for personalization all other stages are top-down. The point at which the process is stopped correlates with the amount of involvement expected of each of the parties in the interaction. Therefore, the degree of involvement in a situation determines the efforts that will go into personalization or individuation (Angelelli 2004: 79). So, for example, during the first hour of a five-day conference on avionics, the U.S. State Department conference interpreter will be identifying the eight delegates for whom she will be working, typing them according to most salient social factors (race, age, gender), and sorting and personalizing them. This would probably not be the case if the interpreter were to only work for these delegates for two hours instead of five days.

The first set of categories marks the nature of the interaction. Once people categorize others, they proceed to interact. Individuals rely on one another to make sense of reality (Festinger 1954). We compare impressions of reality in order to construct a social definition of reality with our peers. The confidence and sense of security of the self are based on others' acknowledgment that the self is on target as to the perception of reality. Festinger (1954) claims that we are inclined to compare information with socially oriented peers (people who are in the same social location as we). But if the interpreter does not choose peers in an interaction, then who would she consider to be a socially oriented peer? In addition, interpreters find themselves working in very different settings where interlocutors do not share social background (e.g. court officers and defendants; healthcare providers and patients; company executives and managers). In a conference setting, for example, the two

monolingual speakers (the conference delegates) may share many social factors, as well as knowledge about the topic at hand. However, they do not share a language. In the case of court or medical interpreting, the two monolingual speakers (either the defendant and the court officer, or the doctor and the patient) may differ widely in their social position. The interpreter may be more oriented to one or to the other but she is rarely oriented equally to both at the same time, unless the two speakers are in a similar social position.

The fact that we take the information received from socially oriented peers as accurate demonstrates its significant social influence. Following Festinger's claims, the notion of self-oriented peers becomes particularly important to the understanding of behaviors of speakers of minority languages who depend on interpreters to communicate with others and to make sense of reality. It also helps us understand interpreters' behaviors when they report that they see themselves as bridges, helpers, or facilitators in the communicative process (Roy 2002; Angelelli 2004).

The influence that individuals have over each other as they interact is also discussed by Stouffer and colleagues (1949) in the Theory of the Significant Other. They argue that the self is rooted and anchored in social relations. It is not simple for the self to escape the social influence that might even cause it to be vulnerable or change, depending upon what significant others consider to be right or wrong. The fact that the self is vulnerable to the influence of others does not imply that it is without agency. The agency or power that the self possesses is the reason for the control that it has over those with whom it decides to interact. The power and agency of the self is defined in relation to the power and status of the other. In other words, the self can avoid negative comparisons to others by placing itself only in powerful social locales.

As the self and the other begin to interact, the lens of Attribution Theory helps us understand the reality of the interaction (Fiske and Taylor 1991). This theory states that when the self and the other witness an action that is distinctive or unusual, or a situation that is socially undesirable, we engage in correspondent inference, meaning that we begin to attribute causes to that action. When people engage in the attribution process, they do not do it free of biases or errors (Fiske and Taylor 1991). An interpreter confronts this reality, for example, when she witnesses a defendant being disrespectful to a court officer, or a patient bursting into

tears in front of a health care provider who, instead of showing some compassion, continues to write notes on the patient's medical record. It is inevitable that, when facing this reality, the interpreter will attribute characteristics to the interlocutors. For example, the interpreter may ascertain that the health care provider is inconsiderate or that the defendant is abusive.

Like all other interlocutors, interpreters incur into errors and engage in actions and attributions that have emotional consequences. Emotions shape reactions to actions and cannot be easily controlled, and they have consequences and implications in the interaction (Ridgeway 1994). Emotions are also socially constructed by the cultural beliefs and schemas of our society, which means that in the case of an ICE, they are shaped mostly by the views and beliefs of all parties who participate in the ICE.

Perceptions, attributions, feelings, and emotions are a few of the many social factors that influence interactions; however, the most influential one seems to be status (Webster and Foschi 1998). As we continue our attempt to open the closed circle, we can also look at the interpreter's interpersonal role from the perspective of Status Generalization Theory. The self gives deference to the other, because the other possesses something that is meaningful to the self (and to the group as well, such as knowledge or information), which therefore triggers subordination and higher status/power in the group (Webster and Foschi 1998). In this sense, status is an exchange. We can see how the knowledge and information that each party brings to the ICE is distinct from that of the other parties. For example, in a community setting, the immigration officer may bring the knowledge about the country's immigration policies and other information about the process to obtain a visa; the immigrant provides answers to the questions asked by the officer; and the interpreter brings interpreting skills and the knowledge of the two languages at stake. Status varies according to how the groups value the elements that each of the interlocutors bring to the interaction. The knowledge or information that one interlocutor brings to the interaction must be of some value to the group in order to receive status; it cannot be imposed by the interlocutor himself. Otherwise, it would be considered dominance (note 1). So in a way, the self gives deference to the other, and the other helps achieve the collective goal for the group.

These theories in interpersonal relations offer a different perspective to study the role of the interpreter. They provide several explanations for behaviors that occur when individuals engage in social interaction. They help us expand our views on the role of the interpreter. The interpreter is a human individual; we cannot assume that she is immune to social factors. These theories do not view the individual as being indifferent to others' reactions or to the social milieu. On the contrary, they portray an individual who perceives and then reacts to those perceptions with agency, allowing us to see a person who is engaged in social interaction, who behaves according to emotions, perceptions, and information sought and obtained. In this sense the individual is anything but neutral in instances of power, discrimination, conference, or deference of status. I conjecture that the interpreter goes through all the same processes that the other parties go through when they first come into contact with each other. Just like the monolingual parties, the interpreter is subject to instances of power and dominance, high or low status, emotions, perceptions, and information sought and obtained. Therefore we need to consider carefully the professional discourse that portrays an interpreter who is neutral and accurate, and then analyze that discourse carefully in light of these sociological theories of interpersonal relations, which enable us to open the circle and study the role of the interpreter in the interaction.

We have seen that the interpreted communicative event does not happen in a social vacuum, but instead is embedded in an institution which is itself embedded in a certain society and culture. We now turn to other theories that will continue to help us break into the closed circle by studying interactions as constrained by institutions and society.

2.1.2 Social theory

Interpreting, like any other practice, cannot be considered in isolation, because practices are situated. Bourdieu's Theory of Practice tells us that an interaction is completely dependent upon the objective structures that form it. It is these structures which produce the participants' dispositions and place them within the interaction (1977: 81).

Any interaction between these participants (defined by the objective structure in terms of subordination or peer status) brings together a

"system of dispositions" (carried by 'natural persons'), such as linguistic competence and cultural competence. Bourdieu calls these dispositions *habitus* (1977: 81). For Bourdieu, interpersonal relations are never individual to individual relationships, even if they appear that way. They are never self-contained. As such, no interaction can be explained from what transpires and is merely observed. Instead, every interaction should be explained in terms of the past, present, and future dispositions in the social structure that constitutes the individual's baggage, which is carried with the self at all times. The interpreter is no exception to this; she cannot be removed from the communicative interaction she facilitates (as the illusion of the invisible interpreter would encourage her to do), and thus cannot escape this social reality.

Bourdieu (1977) tells us that any interaction between agents (participants) is defined by the relations between the groups to which the agents belong (doctors checking patients; bosses talking to subordinates). These interactions bring together a set of dispositions that the participants carry with them (such as linguistic or cultural competence) and which constitute the *habitus*. This *habitus* produces practices, which can be accounted for only by considering the structures where such practices are in operation. In essence, *habitus* produces practices which are never unconscious, since for Bourdieu, the only possibility for "unconscious" is the forgetting of history (1977: 78). This means that when agents forget history, it is because history has become second nature to them, and it is thus incorporated into their *habitus*. In this way, agents gain a sense of objectivity of the practices they have incorporated into their *habitus*. These practices are secured by a consensus, a common sense of perceiving them on the part of the agents. The consensus is what produces the homogeneity of the *habitus,* making it possible for the *habitus* to become an immanent law. Interestingly, when one looks at the consensus of professional organizations with regard to the plausibility of the interpreter's neutrality or invisibility (even when it has been empirically challenged), one may explain that unquestioned and unconscious acceptance as a *habitus* that became immanent law in the profession.

Bourdieu's theory of practice conceives the human being as an element that abides by the structures of the institutional entity that grants her/him a certain position. Interactions between individuals can not be explained in terms of what transpires from the interaction itself. Within

the interactions the individuals display the *habitus* that is ingrained in them. It appears that from Bourdieu's standpoint, human behaviors can be dually constrained. Behaviors are constrained by the individual's own *habitus* and also by the institution within which individuals interact. Evidently this theory is applied to all human beings, including interpreters. The theory of practice, thus, would shed a different light on the interpersonal role of the interpreter. The interpreter has a *habitus* (as do the two monolingual participants) and is constrained by the institution within which she interacts (just like the other two participants). But, are the forces that affect the interpersonal role of the interpreter generated only at the institutional level, or is the institution embedded in a larger set of forces? And, how do these forces interplay with the interpreter as she enacts her role?

Individuals within a society tend to conform to that society's beliefs, norms, and rules. This may mean that we grow up inheriting certain social values from our own families and communities and then construct, co-construct, and reconstruct them as we navigate through life. Along the way, some social values are re-enacted, and others are challenged or dropped. We see certain behaviors as acceptable and others as unacceptable, and then we choose a point of view to which we will conform. This may cause us to align more with some social groups than with others. By exercising our agency we make choices and we build alliances. So does the interpreter. Sometimes these choices are made consciously — other times, they are not. But whether these choices and alliances are made consciously or not, we can not ignore them, because they make an important contribution to our societal positioning.

As discussed previously, Bourdieu's Theory of Practice says that "interpersonal relations are never, except in appearance, individual-to-individual relationships and that the truth of the interaction is never entirely contained in the interaction" (1977: 81). In cross-cultural/linguistic communication, both cultural power and symbolic power are important types of capital (among others) that are used to analyze forms of interaction.

If we look at Bourdieu's approach to language and linguistic exchange, we see the relationship between the linguistic *habitus* and the linguistic market. We have to consider the value that a linguistic product is given in the market. In the case of a bilingual individual (note 2), the

fact that she may have two linguistic products may confer her certain status. Furthermore, sometimes the bilingual individual may not only own the two linguistic products sought by monolingual interlocutors, but she may also have a broad range of utterances in both. In other words, the interpreter's linguistic *habitus* may enable her to communicate easily with individuals from a broad range of class backgrounds. By tailoring both language and register, she can interact appropriately with all participants to the interpreted encounter.

In Language and Symbolic Power (1991) Bourdieu discusses the case of individuals from *petit-bourgeois* backgrounds and the efforts that they must generally put forth in order to adapt their linguistic expressions to the demands of formal markets. In the case of an interpreter, although she may own a linguistic capital, she may be in constant tension to produce a speech that is not her own. All interlocutors, then, are engaged in a symbolic violence for exchanges of symbolic power. Bourdieu (1991) refers to these elements as *symbolic*, because they are not physical but instead are evident in a symbolic form. However, although symbolic, this type of power can not materialize without the recognition of the other parties. When two or more parties interact, each of them must be aware of the kind of contributions that are made by the other(s) in order for anyone's symbolic power to materialize. That is to say, power materializes by gaining recognition from the other parties to the interaction.

Even though symbolic power can be discussed at the individual level, in Western societies one must look at institutions in order to understand it. Bourdieu (1991) explains how violence (symbolic violence/power) is built into an institution/society. In different fields, institutions tend to do the following: they fix the values assigned to different products; they allocate the products differently; and they inculcate a belief in the value of the products.

For Bourdieu, any communication (mono- or multilingual) is a linguistic exchange, which is in turn, an economic exchange which materializes within a symbolic relation of power. For example, in the case of an ICE that takes place in the medical setting, the interpreter is the producer endowed with the bilingual ability, and the monolingual interlocutors are the consumers. The doctor, as discussed above, is a producer endowed with knowledge that the patient needs. The patient is the least powerful of the three parties.

When Bourdieu discusses *habitus,* he states that it is acquired gradually, through a process called inculcation, for which the childhood period is most relevant (1991: 12). Since the time she was a child, the hospital interpreter or the conference interpreter has acquired a set of ways that have become her second nature (for example, "don't put your elbows on the table," or "look people in the eyes when you speak"), i.e., they have been inculcated to her. But this inculcation is also structured in the sense that it does reflect the conditions in which the inculcation occurred. It reflects the societal milieu where the inculcation was conceived and materialized. These structured dispositions are also durable (they last throughout the life of the individual), as well as generative and transposable (they can generate a multiplicity of practices in fields different from the one in which they originated) within the structures and the society at large.

The *habitus* provides the self with a sense of how to act and react during daily activities; it orients actions. But actions occur within a context, and this relationship between *habitus* and social context is at the basis of Bourdieu's theory of practice (as discussed above). It is within this relationship, between the interpreter's *habitus* and the social field in which she works (the hospital within a given society, or an international organization within a certain country), where actions and reactions should be analyzed. This means that the hospital interpreter could have a measure of agency during the ICE, but that agency would also be constrained by the institution, which is in turn immersed in a certain society. The same holds true for the conference or court interpreter. When discussing social space and symbolic power, Bourdieu states:

> "…the construction of social reality masks different things: firstly, the fact that this construction is not carried out in a social vacuum, but that is subjected to structural constraints; secondly, that the structuring structures, are themselves socially structured, because they have social origins; thirdly, the construction of social reality is not only an individual enterprise, but may also become a collective enterprise" (1990: 131).

All of Bourdieu's writings, thus, point out the intrinsic interconnection between acts of participants within institutions which, in turn, are constrained, legitimized, and constructed by the society in which the

institution is immersed. The interpreter, like any other participant and member of a society who works within an institution, is not an exception to this and cannot therefore escape this interconnection. The lens of social theory helps us contextualize the ICE and the role of the interpreter. It conceives the individual as an agent with *habitus,* which helps us understand that the interpreter also has a *habitus* and agency in the interaction, and that her behaviors are constrained by the institution and the society. The lens of social theory helps us understand the ICE in the bigger context, and it helps us place the participants of interpersonal relations within an institution and a society. Through it, we can conceive the interpreter (complete with her tendencies and limitations) and the manifestations of the interpersonal role in a broader sense. However, it does not allow us to see the manifestations in detail. For that we need a third lens, which can help us look at manifestations of the interpersonal role at the micro level.

2.1.3 Linguistic anthropology

The literature from linguistic anthropology allows us to approach the ICE at the level of discourse. It enables us to conceive an interlocutor embedded into a speech community (Hymes 1974), and it also allows us to see how each interlocutor constructs and co-constructs messages, by looking at interlocutors who are socially responsible in their talk.

"To say that a human being as a social actor is 'responsible' is a relatively new way of speaking in English argues Richard Niebuhr (1963). Deriving from an older notion of 'responsiveness', a quality of participation in dialogue, the newer sense of 'responsibility' that has emerged in the modern era indexes the development of an idea of 'the continuity of a self with a relatively consistent scheme of interpretation of what it is reacting to… [and] continuity in the community of agents to which response is being made" (Niebuhr 1963: 65 in Hill and Irvine 1992: 1). The collection of essays in Hill and Irvine (1992) suggests that participation in dialogue is a form of responsibility to which attention must be turned. Their view is in line with a recent paradigm shift in linguistic anthropology that assigns meaning to dialogic constructions in interactions, rather than to the individual speaker. This paradigm shift is crucial for the study of the interpersonal role of the interpreter. It allows us to see

the interpreter as an interlocutor who participates in the dialogue and whose participation carries responsibility that is evident in the talk. This notion of the interpreter as co-participant has also surfaced in works within Interpreting Studies (e.g., Angelelli 2000a, 2003b, 2004; Belanger 2003; Metzger 1999; Roy 1993, 2000; Wadensjö 1993, 1995, 1998).

Other intellectual sources that also account for this paradigm shift are the ethnography of speaking (focusing on speech event and contextualization of meaning), symbolic interactionism, the sociological study of a conversation, feminist theory, and discourse analysis. The paradigm shift that emphasizes dialogicality and social construction of meaning implies a close connection between knowledge and agency (Hill and Irvine 1992). As I have argued elsewhere (2004: 41), socially situated participants interact to establish facts and to collect/request information by exercising their agency in the construction of knowledge. Their agency is also materialized when they act upon what they have come to know, suspect, or prove. This means that as participants in interactions, individuals are knowledgeable and responsible agents. The key to analyzing the responsibility is to look at it manifested in interactions, rather than in the individual intention of the speaker as suggested by the personalist view of meaning (Duranti 1992).

Duranti reviews the role of intentions in current theories of meaning. He has a critique of Searle 1983 (1992: 25) as an example of Western tradition in linguistic studies and their view of communication. According to Searle, communication is an exchange of individual intentions through a particular code (very much in line with the traditional view of interpreting). This tradition views intention of the speaker as being fully defined before any interaction takes place (i.e., intention lies in the mind of the speaker). Duranti confronts Searle's views with an interactively oriented approach to the study of language and social interaction. He cites the following as examples: Goodwin 1981; Gumperz 1982; Griffin and Mehan 1981; Psathas 1979; Schenkein 1978; Schegloff 1982; Streeck 1980. With a case study of a Samoan village, Duranti illustrates the ways in which the speakers' responsibility is contextually and cooperatively defined. Meaning can not be conceived as owned by an individual but as a result of cooperative achievement (1992). This concept of meaning is especially interesting when compared to the one present in the literature in interpreting (Chapter 1) that claims that meaning is objective and

independent of the parties who participate in its construction. Based on this ideology of an objective meaning, the field argues for an invisible language switcher that can communicate the same meaning in a different language. The lens of linguistic anthropology helps us understand how this conception can be a fallacy. This lens also allows us to examine the complexity of the interaction of the interlocutors and the co-construction of meaning as they speak.

Another example of social co-construction of meaning and responsibility emerges from Irvine's study of insult and responsibility in a Wolof village. She argues that insults are not simply a set of statement. "Instead, insult is a communicative effect constructed in interaction, constructed out of the interplay of linguistic and social features, where the propositional context of an utterance is only one such feature. In fact, the content could even look like a compliment, were it examined in isolation" (1992: 110). She uses the example of a praise singer that was hired to sing to a family of the Leatherworker caste. Because he thought he was not fairly paid for his services, the singer ridiculed this family by over-praising them. All the listeners became aware of this as the singer referred to the family's ancestors as kings and queens (which they obviously were not), and the praise turned into an insult. This example is a good illustration of Irvine's point of social responsibility. On the one hand, the family could not object to being over-praised, because the praise singer's songs might not have constituted an insult, had it been done with only the family as audience. On the other hand, the audience's knowledge that many of the praises were untrue only served to reinforce the fact that the song was intended as an insult to the family's honor and reputation. In other words, the insult only became an insult once there was an audience present.

As I have argued elsewhere (2004: 41–42), the lens of linguistic anthropology, thus, allows us to see an interpreter who, like the other co-participants in the interaction, constructs a message out of the interplay of linguistic and social features and not just out of propositional context that exists independently of the interlocutors.

A further example of co-construction of responsibility and agency is the analysis of Mrs. Patricio's trouble by Hill and Zepeda (1992). Mrs. Patricio's child had been missing school, and Mrs. Patricio does not want the truancy to reflect badly on her. When she tells the story to the

principal, Mrs. Patricio involves the principal and gains her sympathy. This work shows how in accounts of personal experiences, speakers (of which Mrs. Patricio constitutes the central example) try to construct favorable presentations of the self and to mitigate those representations that might damage the portrayed self. "In doing so, they (speakers) reveal everyday cultural frames through which agency and responsibility are understood" (1992: 197). Using rhetorical devices, Mrs. Patricio limits the possibilities of being held personally responsible for the wrong deeds of her truant son. Instead, these devices help her distribute the responsibility. Responsibility becomes a shared element in a social field, rather than the burden of a single agent. Mrs. Patricio uses reported speech, avoids making explicit statement, thus allowing the principal to draw her own conclusions, and portrays herself as powerless with regard to her son's truancy because of her legal status and lack of knowledge of the educational system, all in order to distribute responsibility. Using the case of Mrs. Patricio, Hill and Zepeda show how responsibility is neither external to the discourse nor inherent to only one agent; it is shared and co-constructed by the interlocutors.

2.2 An opened circle

At the beginning of this chapter we discussed the need to study the ICE from a broader perspective than that traditionally used. Going beyond a cognitive or linguistic approach to the ICE means both studying it as a social or political event and studying the multifaceted role that interpreters play within that event. Research from related fields such as sociology, social theory, and linguistic anthropology enhance our perspective of the problem of the invisible interpreter. This broader perspective helps us see that meaning is not objective and independent of the parties who are constructing it. The professional discourse on interpreting is, for the most part, based on a belief of an objective meaning, arguing that interpreting is about conveying that same meaning in a different language. Such a narrow view of the profession prevents us from examining the complexity of the interaction of the interlocutors and the co-construction of meaning as they speak. By opening up the circle and allowing research and theories of related fields to inform interpreting studies, we

understand that each interlocutor brings a unique set of dispositions, perceptions and beliefs to the interaction. The interlocutor exercises agency and responsibility as she interacts within an institution that is part of a society. The forces at play within the institution and the society cause an impact on the interaction. All interlocutors, including interpreters, are key player in the co-construction of meaning as they interact with the other parties and juggle the impact of both the institution and the society in which the interaction is embedded. In the following chapters, we will examine how the agency, i.e., the visibility of the interpreter, is a fact and not a fallacy. This fact will even be addressed by interpreters themselves. We will do this by studying the perception that interpreters have about their interpersonal role, by looking at how interpreters view their behaviors during their practice, and by unveiling interpreters' underlying beliefs about their roles.

CHAPTER 3

The construction of the Interpreter's Interpersonal Role Inventory (IPRI)

In Chapter 1, we explored the different conceptualizations of the role of the interpreter. In order to broaden our perspective, in Chapter 2 we turned to theories produced outside the professional discourse to study the interpreter's role. As we have seen, the role of the interpreter in a cross-cultural encounter is highly complex. Additionally, the various and wide-ranging components of different settings place very different demands on the interpreter. We know that cross-linguistic/cultural communication involves intention, context, form, gist, gesture, tone, and relations of power (Angelelli 2000: 580–582), but what do we know about interpreters' intentions during a communicative event? Professional associations mandate that interpreters be neutral and accurate. However, these interpreters are social beings who are subject to the interplay of social factors, institutional constraints, and societal beliefs. How can we gain an understanding of interpreters' beliefs about their role? What information can interpreters reveal about their behaviors during their practices? But, and perhaps most importantly, why would this information matter?

The potential for misunderstanding always exists between people trying to communicate with one another, even if they are speakers of the same language who share a cultural background. That potential becomes even greater when people assume that they can understand each other because of either a shared language or the presence of an interpreter. Sometimes the interpreter bridges the linguistic gap but not the cultural one. Other times, the interpreter is not even aware that such a gap exists. Sometimes the interpreter decides not to deal with the cultural aspect of the message, even though the parties involved in the interpreted event assume that the interpreter is a cultural ambassador. Some interpreters believe that they should know how to handle

these misunderstandings because of their training in Translation/Interpreting Studies. Other interpreters acknowledge that cross-cultural awareness has not been a part of their training. There is also a preoccupation on the burden of expectations placed upon the interpreter by the assumption that she can bridge cultural gaps. Is it fair to expect that interpreters can be cultural ambassadors?

More often than not, trial and error is the method employed by most educational programs in the U.S. Often, the standards for interpreting in one specific setting (e.g., conference) both for instructional and measurement purposes, get transferred to other settings (e.g., medical, court). However, if different interpreted situations vary in substantive ways (Angelelli 2000: 590) as is the case with situated practices (Bourdieu 1977: 77) and interpreters from different milieus view their jobs distinctly, then the use of a single standard for all types of interpreting is totally inappropriate, since each type of communicative events requires unique performance skills on the part of the interpreter.

The issues discussed above (and in Chapter 1) fueled my curiosity about the role of the interpreter. The truth is that we know very little about how the interpreter perceives her own role. The little that we do know comes from anecdotal and experiential writing, rather than from empirical research. Though colorful, these tales lack a systematic approach to the question of the interpreter's perception of and attitudes towards her role. The literature (Chapter 1) shows that research in the field of interpreting has concerned itself mostly with the cognitive aspect of information-processing, and the complexity of such processes has attracted scholars' attention. In the last twenty years, however, research crossing over from sociolinguistics has begun to question the plausibility of the conduit model and has shed some light on the interpreter as a co-participant in the interpreted communicative event. This shift in the conceptualization of the role of the interpreter is evidenced by studies on turn-taking and interaction in face-to-face interpreting (Belanger 2003; Berk-Seligson 1990; Metzger 1999; Roy 2000; Wadensjö 1995 and 1998). These sociolinguistic studies, which focus more on the interaction than on the interpreter's role, reveal an interpreter who actively manages the interaction. As researchers have problematized the interaction of the parties, the notion of a non-neutral interpreter has begun to emerge (especially in Metzger 1999), although the social factors that trigger

such visibility still have not been fully addressed. Beneath the evidence of co-participation and co-participant lies the notion of empowerment (agency). Nevertheless, the role of the interpreter has, for the most part, remained unquestioned (exceptions being Angelelli 2004; Belanger 2003; Berk-Seligson 1990; Davidson 2000 and 2001; Metzger 1999; Roy 2000; Wadensjö 1995 and 1998). Moreover, previous sociolinguistic studies have been performed in one setting only and between speakers of one language pair (Angelelli's in a medical setting between English- and Spanish-speaking interlocutors; Berk-Seligson's in the court room between English- and Spanish-speaking interlocutors; Davidson's in a medical setting between English- and Spanish-speaking interlocutors; Metzger's in a medical setting between ASL-English and English-speaking interlocutors; Roy's in teacher-student conferences between ASL-English and English-speaking interlocutors ; and Wadensjö's at a Police station, the immigration services, and a hospital between Russian- and Swedish-speaking interlocutors).

The difference in perceptions that interpreters have of their roles is of essential importance to both the research and the practice of interpreting. For the researcher, the discovery of how interpreters perceive their role and, in turn, how this perception impacts cross-cultural communication is crucial. An understanding of this phenomenon could have a huge impact on the current perception of the *invisible* interpreter and of the two-party conversation. It could also shed light on some aspects of this language specialist who brokers communication, not only between majority and minority speakers, but also between major gulfs of culture and power.

For the practice of interpreting, the understanding of how one type of interpreting (e.g., community) differs from others (e.g., court or conference) will impact the design and implementation of education and certification programs that are designed to prepare competent bilingual individuals who can bridge communication gaps that go beyond linguistic barriers. The differences and commonalties among conference, court, and community interpreting and the differences between face-to-face and remote interpreting have recently become an area of special interest to interpreter trainers and practitioners. Nevertheless, these issues have not been extensively researched (e.g. Mickelson 1998). Measurement and analysis of interpreters' attitudes

towards their role across the settings in which they work (community, conference, or court) can yield invaluable information. It must begin, however, with the construction of a valid and reliable instrument that can provide information on the role of the interpreter across settings. When I undertook this study, no such instrument existed in the literature on interpreting studies. Thus, I set out to design one.

I designed an instrument to study the interpersonal role of the interpreter (IPRI) with the goal of exploring interpreters' perceptions of their role in cross-cultural communication. By looking at role perceptions of interpreters working in different settings (medical, conference, and court), I hoped to learn more about the competencies involved in each kind of interpreted event and how one setting differs from others. My hope was that IPRI would allow variable measurement of the interpersonal/social aspect of interpreting in instances of cross-cultural communication across settings.

3.1 Initial validity considerations

To demonstrate the external validity of IPRI, I searched for a similar instrument already in existence that would aid me in exploring how schools that teach interpreting (or government and private agencies that contract interpreters) test their interpreters and officers, but I found no such instrument. While surveying published and unpublished psychological tests, in *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Attitudes* I found an Ethnocentrism Scale. Although this scale is outdated, and many of the statements could be stigmatized as prejudicial, the lack of a better option led me to use it as a starting point (adapting some items) for the construction of IPRI.

Table 3.1 Visibility Subcomponents

1.	Alignment with the parties
2.	Establishing trust with/facilitating mutual respect between the parties
3.	Communicating affect as well as message
4.	Explaining cultural gaps/interpret culture as well as language
5.	Establishing communication rules during the conversation

Since no relevant measurements of interpersonal role or cross-cultural awareness were found, validation of IPRI would eventually have to rely upon content-related validity evidence, confirmation of predicted differences across settings, and theoretically relevant patterns of correlation with measures of other constructs.

3.2 Instrument Design (note 1)

3.2.1 Description of Construct

IPRI was designed to measure the interpreter's attitudes towards the visibility/invisibility of the interpersonal role. The five subcomponents of visibility are shown in Table 3.1.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the visible interpreter's role goes beyond that of language switching. While exercising agency, this co-participant's visibility materializes as she helps parties understand concepts and terms, bridges linguistic and cultural gaps, communicates affect as well as language, facilitates mutual respect, controls the flow of communication traffic, or even aligns with one of the parties resulting in gatekeeping or the channeling of opportunities.

3.2.2 Target population

IPRI was designed for interpreters in the U.S.A., Canada, and Mexico from all settings (when available) and language combinations. Conference, court, medical/community, and over-the-telephone interpreters were surveyed.

An effort was made to have all settings represented in the three target countries. Since the survey was written in English, it could only be administered in certain areas where the English language is used. Funding restrictions made the translation, adaptation and validation of IPRI not possible for this study. Respondents were not required to have an education in Interpreting in order to participate, but they were required to be practicing interpreters who could read and understand the questionnaire in English.

Table 3.2 Initial item pool

Interpreters' views

personal/interpersonal (concept of self)	**socio-cultural (situational/contextual)**
1- aware of ethical issues of both parties	40- aware of contextual clues
2- helps parties achieve communication	41- constant check on context
3- aware of power of role	42- can assess a situation on the spot
4- remains loyal to the message	43- immediately identifies changes in context
5-remains loyal to intention of parties	44- can contextualize messages
6- aware of power differential between parties	45- picks up contextual cues from parties' understanding of the message
7- represents the minority voice	
8- educates the parties	46- anticipates from context
9- compensates for power differential	47- can switch among interpreting types
10- offers a voice to those regularly unheard	48- familiar with parties' social context
11- own prejudices can impact interpretation	49- aware of parties' social background
12- complies with the most powerful	50- able to deliver pleasant information
13- always behaves professionally	51- facilitates unbalanced power relations
14- never hesitates	52- can switch registers according to parties
15- is open to feedback from parties	53- acts according to own assessment of parties' back-grounds
16- is willing to take risks	
17- has to learn from experience	54- can mediate between the parties
18- improves from mistakes	55- able to persuade the parties to comply
19- is critical	56- aligns herself with least powerful party
20- monitors from mistakes	57- can deal with sensitive topics
21- must keep up 2nd language	58- uses the linguistic variety and register she feels more conformable in each of the 2 languages
22- works more on second than first language	
23- works equally to keep up both languages	
(self in social relations)	**(cross-cultural)**
24- neutral at all times during interpretation	59- can handle cultural taboo topics
25- manages conflict within the conversation	60- knows how to behave in both cultures
26- anticipates conflict	61- can prevent cultural misunderstandings
25- knows neutrality is relative	62- sensitive to cross-cultural misunderstandings
26- uses power to influence people to act	63- aware of dominant culture within ICE
27- can put parties at ease during interpreting	64- assumes what is not expressed in words
28- needs to gain parties' confidence in abilities	65- acknowledges influence of own ethnicity
29- needs to show empathy to both parties	66- anticipates conflict due to cross-cultural differences
30- intervenes in communication breakdowns	67- can explain cross-cultural misunderstandings to the parties
31- assures both parties' voices be heard	
32- pays equal attention to parties' needs	68- can discriminate between cross-cultural body language
33- needs to monitor that two parties understand conversation	69- imposes own views of cultural issues
	70- represents linguistic minorities
34- seeks understanding of parties over objectivity	71- shows more respect for less-dominant culture
35- control the communication flow	72- monitors cultural interaction through own lens
36- decides whose turn it is	73- creates a culturally neutral stage for the conversation
37- more concerned with the party that shows discomfort	74- can cope with cultural differences
	75- is indifferent to clashes arising from different back-grounds
38- aligns with less powerful	
39- mitigates seeking understanding	76- takes care of cultural misunderstandings by choosing the linguistically adequate form
	77- imposes her register
	78- decides on cultural approach because she is in control
	79- adopts the culture of minority party
	80- decides whose turn it is

3.2.3 Test blueprint, initial item pool, content validity, and dry run

In order to avoid a completely subjective writing and item categorization, five diverse sources of information were used in the initial drafting of the survey items. These included surveys, feedback from peers at a seminar for measurement instrument design, literature reviews, and interviews with interpreters. As a result, the original five subcomponents of visibility (listed in Table 3.1) were illustrated by eighty initial items. This initial item pool is shown in Table 3.2, and it ranges from attitudes and beliefs in four different dimensions: (1) the self; (2) the self with others; (3) the self in a context or situation; and 4) the self in a cross-cultural interaction. Focusing on the role of the interpreter and how it unfolds at each of these levels enabled me to write items that represent the role of the interpreter in each dimension. The four dimensions are represented in Table 3.2 by a Cartesian grid. In this configuration, the scope of the role moves from specific to general, progressing from the self to self and other and from the situation/context of the communication event to the cross-cultural context present in the communicative event. The horizontal plane illustrates the ecology of the interaction for isolated individuals (in isolation or interacting) versus those embedded in a contextual framework (specific or general).

This configuration takes into consideration the complexities and differences that arise in any communicative event. Items shown in Table 3.2 were then categorized by setting, using Wadensjö's (1998) classification of monologic and dialogic interpreting as a guide (Table 3.3). Wadensjö considers an approach to interpreting to be monologic when it considers talk as text, isolated text, in other words, interpreting reduced to a cross-linguistic manipulation of discourse (1998: 38–42) that is independent of interlocutors. An example of this could be a conference interpreter following one speaker who does not enter into dialogue but rather delivers a speech. Alternatively, a dialogic approach to interpreting considers talk as being co-constructed by interlocutors, as an activity. Examples of this form of interpreting could be a teacher/parent conference or a medical interview. By extrapolation, I used Wadensjö's classification of interpreted events to create the item categorization for IPRI and to classify interpreters who are co-responsible for those communicative events in the various settings where they work. My intention in doing this was

Table 3.3 Initial component categorization according to Wadensjö's taxonomy

		Monologic agree / dialogic disagree	Monologic disagree/ dialogic agree
Alignment	**BR**	24- An interpreter is a professional who provides a service and has no voice in the interaction (4) 25- My job as an interpreter is **not** to balance the power differentials that exist between the parties (38)	22- When I am interpreting, it is simply impossible to be value neutral (19) 23- As an interpreter my role is to compensate for the power differentials between the parties (48)
	BP	26- During an interpretation, I always protect the interest of the party paying my fee (14) 27- During an interpretation I constantly check my position to be neutral (58)	28-Even if I am working for both parties, I clearly give a voice to the weaker one (41) 29- As an interpreter, part of my role is to present my own voice during the interaction (52)
Establish trust / facilitate mutual respect	BR	30- The two parties will trust each other during the conversation neither more nor less than they would if they were communicating without an interpreter (55) 31- If the parties do not respect each other, it is not my role to try to improve that situation (6)	32- It is easier for me to establish trust with the party with whom I have more in common (12) 33- If one of the parties is disrespectful, my role is to compensate for that throughout the interpretation (56)
	BP	34- During my work, I am careful in not changing the tone used by the parties (3) 35- A disrespectful comment made by the parties must be conveyed, even if toned down (25)	36- During my interpretations, my goal is to gain the less dominant party's trust more than the more dominant's (61) 37- I strive to establish mutual respect between the parties throughout the conversation (1) 38- My work cannot begin until the less dominant party feels at ease with the more dominant one (26)
Communicate affect as well as message	BR	39- If the parties want their feelings and emotions to get interpreted they have to express them in words (28) 40- It is not my job to read the parties' emotions or re-express them (33)	41- Assuring the parties that they will be heard means conveying their emotions even if they are not expressed by words (21) 42- Sometimes interpreting tears is more necessary than interpreting the words that accompany them (57)

	BP	43- I can only work with what has been expressed in words (43) 44- My work as an interpreter has to be accurate; there is no room for guessing games on feelings and emotions (7)	45- My job is to try to make sense of the emotional component and convey it as I interpret the words I hear (53) 46- My job is not well done if the concerns of the less dominant party have not been explored throughout my interpretation (46)
Explain cultural gaps/ interpret culture as well as language	BR	47-As long as the meaning is conveyed, the cross-cultural differences are not a problem (47) 48- When the interpreter is present to convey the meaning, the conversation can proceed on a culturally neutral stage (44)	49- If there are cultural differences between the parties, the interpreter needs to iron them out before real communication can take place (29) 50- My job is to educate parties on cultural differences to help them communicate in spite of them (50)
	BP	51- I do not need to interpret conflicts in values unless the parties specifically mention them (24) 52- I never interrupt an interpretation to educate the parties on cultural differences (5)	53- If a party's words are culturally inappropriate, I need to make her/ him am aware of that (39) 54- If a party unaware of other's culture commits a *faux pas*, I always compensate for that (31)
Establish communication rules during the conversation	BR	55- Both parties have the same power to ask and answer questions (54) 56- As an interpreter, I believe I should adhere to the conversational conventions established by the speakers (9)	57- As an interpreter, I am the only party to the conversation who can control the flow of communication (62) 58- I have the right to interrupt the parties whenever I need, in order to assure smooth communication (18)
	BP	59- I have to respect the conversational rules established by the more dominant party (23) 60- It is not my job to remind the parties whose turn it is to speak (16)	61- I will make sure both parties speak only during their turns (15) 62- I actively work to keep the more dominant party from monopolizing the conversation (20)

Note: numbers in parentheses indicate random order. BR = belief about role BP = behavior in practice

to use a framework that could be supported by the current literature in the field. Table 3.3 shows two categories of interpreters (monologic and dialogic) and the five sub-components of visibility that target alignment, trust/respect, affect, cultural gaps and communication rules. For each of the subcomponents, items were written to measure interpreters' beliefs about their roles or their reported behaviors in their practice. Items were written and categorized so that the interpreters could be sorted into two categories: those who work more frequently in dialogic settings (community, medical ones) and those who work more frequently in monologic settings (conference, court).

Expert opinion and focus groups were then used to establish both content validity and external validity (Fishman et al. 2003). This process resulted in the removal of 18 items, due to redundancy and lack of clarity. The remaining items were randomly ordered, and what resulted was a four-page, 62-item survey, which was then put through a dry run.

3.2.4 The dry run

The survey in its final draft form was administered to four bilinguals (one conference, one court, and one community interpreter, and one college student who interpreted for her family). Each of the respondents reviewed the document separately with me and identified items he/she considered to be problematic. They were also asked about issues of readability, wording, and use of jargon. The prompt in the original instrument read: "*The following statements are aimed to collect information about the work of an interpreter. Please rate each of the following items according to the following scale.*" The four respondents reported that they were unclear as to whether they were supposed to base their responses on their experience and perspective or on what an interpreter *should* do. Therefore, the next draft of the instrument incorporated feedback from the dry run to clarify all points that had been identified as problematic by the respondents.

3.2.5 Small-scale try-out

After the validation processes, the preliminary version of the survey was administered to a total of ten people (seven experts and three novices)

in the field of interpreting from the U.S.A., Mexico, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Argentina, Uruguay, Japan, and China. Experts included conference interpreters (both AIIC/TAALS and non-AIIC/TAALS members), court interpreters (NAJIT and non-NAJIT), medical interpreters, and community interpreters all attending the 1999 Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs (FIT). The novices included recent graduates in conference and court interpreting, translation/interpreting students, and bilingual employees who had less than six months of experience. Informants represented the following languages: Spanish, French, Canadian-French Sign Language, American Sign Language, Korean, Japanese, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Dutch.

The respondents first completed the survey under realistic administration conditions, and then I reviewed the document with each of them individually. I asked them (as I did in the dry run) to identify items that they found problematic, as well as about issues of readability, wording,

Table 3.4 Informant's self-identification and training/experience (expressed in percentages)

Categories	Identification	Experience/training
Conference	30.8	42.3
Conference + medical	0	3.8
Conference + TE	3.8	11.5
Conference + community	3.8	3.8
Conference + court	3.8	3.8
Conference + TE + medical	3.8	3.8
Conference + TE + medical + community	0	7.7
Community + medical	0	3.8
Community + medical + TE	3.8	3.8
Community + medical + conference	3.8	0
Over-the-telephone (TE)	3.8	3.8
Interpreter	38.4	0
Non-respondent	3.8	11.5

(n=90)
TE=telephonic

and use of jargon. Based on the feedback obtained from these respondents, I dropped items, re-worded others and added more background questions. I then had a (non-interpreter) native speaker of English review this final draft and incorporated her comments into the survey. This version, which consisted of 62 items, was used for the pilot study.

3.3 The pilot

The 62-item survey (Version I) was administered to 29 bilinguals. This group consisted of nine different language combinations of T&I students (note 2) (Chinese, English, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish). Another administration of the Version I survey, in which participation was voluntary, was carried out with 64 interpreters who were attending the 40th American Translators Association Annual Conference. Respondents' protocols that had over ten percent of the items left blank were discarded, and then item means were inserted to fill in the blanks in the rest of the protocols, leaving a total of 50 complete protocols for the initial statistical analyses.

Each Likert-scale item response was coded 1 (Completely Agree) through 6 (Completely Disagree), with the highest value assigned to the end of the scale representing the more strongly dialogic (visible) perspective. For each completed protocol, the maximum possible score was 372, and the minimum possible score was 62.

Table 3.4 illustrates (in percentages) how the respondents self-reported on identification and experience/training. The respondents' experience in the field of interpreting ranged from under one year to ten years. The average level of education or training was 1.5 years. Forty percent of respondents self-identified as conference interpreters only, 36 percent as interpreters (no modifier), and the remaining 24 percent identified themselves as some combination of court, medical, community, and over-the-telephone interpreters (TE).

3.3.1 Reliability analysis

The purpose of the pilot study was primarily to examine, measure, and ultimately improve the reliability of the instrument itself. The term reli-

Table 3.5 Reversed Items for IPRI Final Version

IPRI item # final version	Area	Reversed item	ITEM # IN VERSION 1
1	Communication rules	Y	9
2	Trust	Y	3
3	Affect	Y	7
4	Distracter Linguistic	N	13
5	Alignment	Y	4
6	Distracter Linguistic	N	17
7	Communication rules	Y	16
8	Affect	N	21
9	Alignment	Y	58
10	Culture	N	39
11	Trust	Y	6
12	Distracter Linguistic	N	27
13	Trust	Y	55
14	Culture	Y	5
15	Culture	Y	47
16	Trust	N	26
17	Affect	Y	28
18	Trust	N	12
19	Affect	Y	43
20	Culture	N	31
21	Alignment	Y	38
22	Alignment	N	19
23	Communication rules	N	62
24	Affect	N	46
25	Culture	N	29
26	Communication rules	N	18
27	Culture	Y	44
28	Alignment	N	41
29	Affect	N	57
30	Affect	N	53
31	Distracter Psycholinguistic	N	37
32	Trust	N	61
33	Culture	Y	24
34	Alignment	N	48
35	Trust	N	56
36	Culture	N	50
37	Affect	Y	33
38	Alignment	N	52

ability refers to the stability or score-constancy, from time 1 to time 2, of the characteristic of an instrument, assuming that there is no change in the parameter being measured (Fishman et al. 2003). In order to assess and improve the reliability, three facets of item statistics were examined: (1) the difficulty of each item (criteriality); (2) the item discrimination (the relationship of an individual item to the remainder of the items in aggregate); and (3) the inter-item consistency of the responses one to another (Fishman et al. 2003).

3.3.1.1 *Item difficulty*

Because the questions on the IPRI have no correct or incorrect answers, the term *difficulty* in this case is a misnomer. The difficulty statistic was obtained by calculating the mean response for each item. In this version of the survey, the item difficulty range was 2.94, and the mean was 3.15. Based on this difficulty statistic, in order to avoid triggering a response pattern of monologic/dialogic scores, I reversed the scoring of some items. Table 3.5 shows all items from the final version IPRI and tells which ones were reversed.

3.3.1.2 *Item discrimination*

This assesses how closely an item correlates with the remainder of the items in aggregate. The statistic that describes item discrimination is the corrected item total correlation (a Pearson product-moment correla-

Table 3.6 Visibility Variable: Number of Items per Sub-component

Sub-component	Number of items
Align with one of the parties	7
Establish trust/facilitate mutual respect	7
Communicate affect as well as message	8
Explain cultural gaps/interpret culture	8
Establish communication rules	4

Table 3.7 Final scale of 34 items: reliability analysis

N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Reliability	Std. Error of measurement
50	1.79	.33	.90	.10

tion between a single item score and the total score corrected for the removal of that item). The ideal value for this statistic would be a positive value. Items with negative values should be considered as candidates for elimination/rewriting since they show that they do not share a common directionality. Item discrimination statistics ranged from –.52 to .88 with a medium value of .29. The negative items and the items with values below .20 were eliminated.

3.3.1.3 *Inter-item consistency*

This term refers to how tightly each item can hold together with the rest. While item discrimination tells us how an item behaves *vis-à-vis* the total score, inter-item consistency describes how the item behaves *vis-à-vis* each of the rest of the items individually. If the holding-together power is too high, there may be too much overlap in what each item is measuring. If the score is too low, the items may not be working in conjunction with each other towards a common goal. Therefore, the ideal result for this statistic would be a moderately positive correlation showing that the items are working together in the same direction. A moderately positive statistic would also indicate that the items are not redundant. Inter-item correlations were inspected within clusters defined by the five topics (the subcomponents of visibility) in the test blueprint. Then, after reviewing the wording of the items, the items that were either highly redundant or not functioning as intended were discarded.

The IPRI Version I was then revised on the basis of these three analyses to improve the instrument reliability. Twenty-four items were dropped in order to maintain good content coverage and high reliability with minimum test length, leaving a total of 38 items. The final item pool (shown in Table 3.5 above) ended up being composed of 34 IPRI scale items and four distracters (linguistic and psycholinguistic items). The breakdown of the number of items per subcomponent of the continuous variable Visibility is given in Table 3.6.

Table 3.7 gives the results of the reliability analysis for the IPRI final scale of 34 items. Results are reported on scale from 1 to 6, i.e., average value for the responses on each item.

Final revisions were also made to the format and scale, based on feedback from the small-scale try-out and from the various experts consulted. The final format chosen was a four-page booklet (Appendix 1),

in which the scale appears at the top of pages 2, 3, and 4. The numerical scale (1 to 6) was converted into to letters that represent the first initial(s) of the word(s) (e.g., SD for strongly disagree).

In sum, the revision process resulted in a two-part instrument. Part A contained 13 background questions mostly targeting social factors (gender, age, socioeconomic status, education — both general and related to interpreting) and Part B consisted of the 38 Visibility items. The total time required to complete IPRI was approximately 25 minutes. IPRI was now ready to be administered and analyzed, in order to study the interpersonal role of the interpreter across settings.

CHAPTER 4

Interpreter Interpersonal Role Inventory

Administration and results

A total of 293 interpreters who could read and write English participated in the study. The sampling process involved different types of organizations at all levels. Participants were recruited through directories (when available) of international organizations (e.g., AIIC for conference interpreters). National associations were considered as a second option (e.g., NAJIT for court interpreters), however they were not established in all three countries. As a third option, used if national organizations were not available, organizations at the state level were considered, even though they were not in place in all states or in all three countries. Finally, personal networking was used as a last resource. The following sections explain the sampling procedure for each of the settings in the different countries, the administration of the survey, and the results of the study.

4.1 Sampling of conference interpreters

For the sampling in this setting, two organizations were identified at the global level: AIIC (Association internationale des interprètes de conférence) and TAALS (The American Association of Language Specialists). AIIC, founded in Paris in 1953, is an international organization with over 2617 individual members from 258 cities in 87 countries, with 44 different languages (AIIC 2004). I used its yearly directory for sampling. Membership in the year 2000 (when the sampling took place) for target countries was as follows: Canada 99, Mexico 19, and the USA 129. All of these members were selected for participation in the study.

TAALS is a professional association in the Americas that represents language specialists working at the international level, either freelancing at conferences or as staff members in organizations. Founded in Washington, D.C. in 1957, it has a membership of 150 interpreters from 12 countries (TAALS 2004). At the time of sampling, membership for target countries was as follows: Canada 13, Mexico 5, and the USA 89. If interpreters belonged to both AIIC and TAALS, they were sampled only once, in order to avoid duplicating errors. Since the total number of conference interpreters in the target countries was small, all were selected to participate in the study. The response for the conference interpreters sampled was 30 percent.

4.2 Sampling of court interpreter

Sampling of court interpreters was somewhat more complicated than sampling of conference interpreters, since no international organization of court interpreters exists. In the USA, the 2000 directory of NAJIT (National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators) was used. The sampling number for this group was determined by the response rate for conference interpreters (30 percent).

Language and region stratified the 900 U.S. interpreters. From largest in size to smallest, the regions were: California; Florida; New

Table 4.1 NAEP definitions for regionalization*

Northeastern States	Midwestern States	Southeastern States	Western States
Connecticut, Delaware; DC; Maine; Maryland; Massachusetts; New Hampshire; New Jersey; Pennsylvania; Rhode Island; Vermont; Virginia	Illinois; Indiana; Iowa; Kansas; Michigan; Missouri; Nebraska; North Dakota; Ohio; South Dakota; Wisconsin	Alabama; Arkansas; Georgia; Kentucky; Louisiana; Mississippi; North Carolina; South Carolina; Tennessee; West Virginia	Alaska; Arizona; Colorado; Hawaii; Idaho; Montana; Nevada; New Mexico; Oklahoma; Oregon; Texas; Utah; Washington; Wyoming

*California, Florida, and New York are each considered as its own region.

York; Northeastern States; Midwestern States; Southeastern States; and Western States. This regionalization follows guidelines laid down by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Business Economics for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). The breakdown of each region is represented in Table 4.1.

From most prevalent to least, the languages were: Spanish; Other; and ASL. This resulted in the following strata: seven levels (defined by states and groups of states) crossed with three levels (defined by language) for a total of 21 strata. A simple random sample of ten listings was taken from each stratum, except for those strata that had fewer than ten entries, in which case all entries were selected. Then, entries were randomly picked from strata that contained more than ten entries, in order to compensate for the missing ones. When a randomly chosen entry proved to be one that had been previously selected, it was discarded, and another one was drawn. Of the 900 NAJIT interpreters listed in the U.S.A. directory, 210 were selected. There were a total of six NAJIT members from Mexico and six from Canada, all of whom were selected because of their limited numbers. Since neither Canada nor Mexico had court interpreter organizations with membership directories at the time of the study, the 12 respondents from NAJIT were the only court interpreters available to represent those countries.

4.3 Sampling of medical/community interpreters

Ideally, there would be a classification of interpreters that would be acceptable to all. Unfortunately this is not the case yet (note 1). Most medical interpreting associations consider themselves of service to the community, even though their services may be limited to the medical setting. For the purpose of this book, the medical and community settings are considered together under the category of *medical*.

Sampling was considerably more complicated for this setting, because neither international nor national organizations for medical interpreters exist in any of the countries surveyed. The National Council on Health Care Interpreting had a listing of several organizations in the U.S.A. that provide either healthcare interpreting services or education for medical interpreters. Among them are hospitals, non-profit organi-

zations, private companies, government agencies, and universities, but at the time the study was performed NCIHC had no membership. Additionally, various organizations in the U.S.A. were identified at the state and local levels. Examples of those are the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association (MMIA), the California Health Care Interpreters Association (CHIA), the Cross-Cultural Health Care Program (CCHCP) in Seattle, the Educational Program on Community Interpreting from the University of Minnesota (MINNE), Santa Clara Valley Medical (SCVM), the University of Washington Health Care Center (UWHC), Health Care Interpreter Services from Chicago (HCIS), and the University of California Medical Center (UCLAMED). CHIA, which did not have a membership directory at the time of sampling, was excluded from the study. The rest of the organizations (except for MMIA) had small memberships, so all members were selected for this study.

In the MMIA 2000 directory, there were 668 interpreters for a total of 43 languages. Stratifying languages according to size resulted in four strata: Spanish, ASL, other languages with 20 or more interpreters, and other languages with 19 or fewer interpreters. A simple random sampling of listings was taken from each stratum. This resulted in 80 entries for Spanish, 25 for ASL, 25 for other languages with 20 or more interpreters, and 80 for other languages with 19 or fewer interpreters. For strata that had fewer than ten entries, all entries were selected. For those that had more than ten entries, every eighth entry was selected. Appendix 2 shows the breakdown of all the organizations for each setting in the different countries.

4.4 Administration/materials

Once sampling was completed, IPRI were sent out in waves from March through September, 2000, with a November, 2000 deadline for return of completed surveys. A total of 967 IPRI were sent, which resulted in 293 complete protocols (note 2). Each package sent contained (1) a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, (2) a blank survey, (3) a blank consent form, (4) a copy of the consent form for the respondent's record, and (5) a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Each respondent completed

the IPRI at his/her own pace and then returned the protocol and the signed consent form in the envelope provided.

4.5 Participants: Descriptive statistics of the overall sample

Of the 293 (100 percent) interpreters who returned a complete IPRI before the deadline, 26 percent were male, 70 percent were female, and four percent were of an unspecified gender. The majority of respondents were between 40 and 49 years of age. In terms of formal education received, 39 percent of the participants reported some postgraduate education with nine percent having completed a doctorate. The duration of participants' specific education or training programs for interpreting ranged from over two years (11 percent) to none (35 percent), with the majority of participants having studied and/or trained for one semester to one year.

The informants had participated in various types of educational programs in interpreting. Fourteen percent attended certification courses/programs and 13 percent attended graduate courses/programs. The remaining 73 percent reported having participated in less-formal types of educational programs, such as workshops or on-the-job training. Respondents' education in the different types of interpreting was as follows: conference (26 percent), court (5.5 percent), and medical (11 percent). The modal interpreting experience (most frequently reported value) was between five and ten years. Most participants were middle class, with a modal annual household income ranging between $40,000 and $60,000 per year.

4.6 Results and Analysis

The IPRI sought to address the visibility of the interpreters by looking at three issues: (1) whether a relationship exists between interpreters' social backgrounds and their perception of visibility; (2) where interpreters from different settings fall on the continuum of visibility/invisibility for interpreter perceptions of role; and (3) whether interpreters from different settings differ in their perception of role.

4.7 Question 1: Is there a relationship between interpreters' social backgrounds and their perception of visibility?

This question entails one continuous dependent variable (visibility) and five independent variables: age, formal education, gender, income, and self-identification with dominant or subordinate groups. According to the literature (Brewer 1988), three factors are salient in impression formation: race, age, and gender. Because I was not interested in the racial affiliation of participants *per se*, but rather in their affiliation with more- or less-dominant groups, I replaced race with this variable. I was also interested in socioeconomic status, which was measured by level of formal education and income.

Of the five independent variables, two are nominal: gender (two levels: female and male) and self-identification with dominant/subordinate groups (four levels: dominant, subordinate, sometimes one and sometimes the other, and non-applicable). The three other variables are ordinal: age (seven levels, ranging from under 20 to over 69 years), formal education (six levels, ranging from less than High School to Doctorate), and income (six levels, ranging from less than $20,000 to over $100,000 per year).

The relationship between the variable *visibility* and each of the five background variables (age, gender, formal education, income, and self-identification with dominant or subordinate groups) was investigated.

Table 4.2. Means used for ANOVA of self-identification with dominant/subordinate group and visibility

Levels	Mean
Identify with dominant group	2.72
Identify with the subordinate group	2.85
Identify sometimes with one group and sometimes with the other	2.94
Non-applicable	2.63

4.7.1 Self-identification with dominant or subordinate group

I used Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare the nominal variable *self-identification with dominant or subordinate group* with the dependent variable *visibility,* in order to determine whether there were differences among the groups as defined by level of self-identification with dominant or subordinate group.

The results of this ANOVA indicated statistically significant differences among the average scores for the four levels ($F(3,276) = 4.213$, $p = .006$). The means are shown in Table 4.2.

A post-hoc Scheffe test demonstrated statistically significant differences between informants who stated that they identify sometimes with one group and sometimes with the other and those who stated that identification is non-applicable to them. This difference is consistent with interpreters' aversion to blatant alignment with one of the parties. It is also consistent with the theoretical prediction based on sociological theories on interpersonal relations that states that race is one of the three most salient factors for impression formation.

4.7.2 Gender

The relationship between gender (nominal, two levels) and visibility was investigated using an independent sample t-test. The means were 2.75 for female and 2.79 for male. An independent t-test comparing visibility across genders found no significant difference between the two groups (t (274) = .272, p = .306 >.05). This tells us that male and female interpreters do not perceive their role differently.

4.7.3 Age

The relationship between age (ordinal, normally distributed) and visibility was calculated using Pearson's r. A moderate negative correlation was found (r (286) = –.223, $p < .001$), indicating a significant linear relationship between the two variables. In this study, the older participants perceived themselves as being less visible, which is consistent with the invisibility tendencies identified in the literature. Only in the last fifteen years has a school of thought emerged which characterizes interpreters

as co-participants to the interaction and problematizes the notion of neutrality (Angelelli 2004; Metzger 1999; Roy 2000; Wadensjö 1998). The results of this study may indicate that this newer trend may be exerting an effect on the beliefs of younger interpreters and not on those of interpreters who were trained under the old school of thought that prescribed invisibility and considered it plausible.

4.7.4 Education and income

Level of education (ordinal) and income (ordinal), which were not normally distributed, were compared using a Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient. A weak correlation (which was not statistically significant) was found (r (293) = −.048, p = .409 >.05), implying that level of formal education (not limited to the field of interpreting) was not related to the interpreter perception of visibility. This lack of a relationship is noteworthy, since interpreters who have had a higher formal education may be more amenable to the idea of the implausibility of impartiality and neutrality, in terms of human interaction.

I also used the Spearman *rho* correlation coefficient to test the relationship between income (ordinal) and visibility. A moderate negative correlation was found (r (286) = −.178, p = .003 <.01), indicating a significant relationship between these two variables. In this study, the participants with higher income tended to perceive themselves as being less visible.

Table 4.3 Descriptive Statistics IPRI Visibility across settings

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Range of means (+ 2 SD)	
				Minimum	Maximum
Conference	107	2.5136	.5496	1.34	3.67
Court	89	2.6231	.6116	1.48	4.18
Medical	97	3.1877	.4593	1.93	4.17
Total	293	2.7700	.6167	1.34	4.18

4.8 Question 2: On the continuum of visibility/invisibility for interpreter perceptions of role, where do interpreters from different settings fall?

There is one independent variable represented in this question, *setting*, which is a nominal variable (Hatch and Lazarton 1991) with three levels (conference, court, and medical). The dependent variable is *visibility*, a continuous variable whose values range from 1 (extreme perception of invisibility for all items) to 6 (extreme perception of visibility for all items).

The mean, standard deviation, and range of values (i.e., descriptive statistics) for visibility in each setting are shown in Table 4.3.

As the table shows, interpreters in all three groups fall within the continuum of visibility/invisibility. Medical interpreters ranked highest in the continuum of perception of visibility, followed by court and then conference interpreters. Of special interest here are the ranges observed for the different settings. For conference interpreting, the mean values ranged from 1.34 to 3.67. Although respondents from this group perceived themselves as the least visible, the high end of this range, which extends beyond the mid-point of the scale, demonstrates to us that not all conference interpreters perceived themselves as invisible. For court interpreting, the range of means extended from 1.48 to 4.18. The ranges

Table 4.4 Scheffe POST-HOC TESTS
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS
DEPENDENT VARIABLE: IPRI Visibility (AVERAGE 34) SCHEFFE

		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	99% Confidence Interval	
SETTING (I)	SETTING (J)				Lower Limit	Upper Limit
Conference	Court	–.1095	7.776E–02	.372	–.3474	.1283
	Medical	–.6741*	7.599E–02	.000	–.9066	–.4417
Court	Conference	.1095	7.776E–02	.372	–.1283	.3474
	Medical	–.5646*	7.955E–02	.000	–.8080	–.3212
Medical	Conference	.6741*	7.599E–02	.000	.4417	.9066
	Court	.5646*	7.955E–02	.000	.3212	.8080

*Significant at the .01 level.

of the other two groups are also worth noting. The maximum mean value for court interpreters is higher than the maximum mean value of medical interpreters, which is interesting because medical interpreters resulted in the group that perceived themselves as most visible.

What do these results tell us? Is it that the medical interpreters are a more homogeneous group, and that court interpreters are more diverse in their perceptions about their role? Or is it that the nature of the medical and the court setting is very different? We can speculate that something in the nature of the settings causes a difference in how interpreters perceive their roles, but we cannot draw any definite conclusions based solely on the data presented in this table.

4.9 Question 3: Do interpreters from different settings differ in their perception of role?

As in question 2, one independent variable, *setting*, is represented in this question. The dependent variable once again is *visibility*, a continuous variable whose values range from 1 to 6.

ANOVA was performed on the means of the settings, in order to compare perceptions of visibility across settings. The results showed differences in perceptions of visibility for the three settings ($F(2,290) = 44.053$ $p < .001$). In other words, interpreters from conference, court, and medical settings perceived their role differently. A post-hoc Scheffe test (whose results are given in Table 4.4) showed that differences between the conference and court groups were not significant. However, both of these settings had a significantly lower mean score than that of the medical group. It can be argued that the differences between medical (which includes community) and court and conference may

Table 4.5 Results of ANOVA for subcomponents per setting

Setting	Affect	Alignment	Comm.	Culture	Trust
Conference	3.02	2.05	2.47*	2.64*	2.28
Court	2.90	2.15	2.93*	2.90*	2.27
Medical	3.52	2.67	3.40	3.52	2.81

*Significant at the .01 level.

be due to the private and public nature of the settings, respectively. While a doctor-patient encounter or a parent-teacher conference are more private encounters, with no audience present and therefore fewer regulated behaviors, a court session or a public meeting are by nature public encounters, where there is generally an audience present and behaviors are more regulated.

In order to further investigate possible differences in overall perception of visibility between court and conference interpreters, and to explore whether differences existed in any of the subcomponents of Visibility, I conducted a one way ANOVA, crossing each of the five subcomponents (affect, alignment, communication rules, culture, and trust) with setting. The results of this ANOVA are shown in Table 4.5. Differences between the five subcomponents of visibility when crossed with the three settings did indeed exist. A post-hoc Scheffe test showed statistically significant differences between court and conference settings for communication rules and culture; however, none were seen between the conference and court groups for affect, alignment, or trust. We could explain these results on the basis of the differences between the dialogic or monologic nature of the ICE in a court or conference setting. Based on the frequency of interactions (e.g., questions and answers), court interpreters, more than conference interpreters, may have to set more communication rules and take into account interlocutors' cultural backgrounds.

Table 4.6 Multivariate tests for background factors and setting

Factor	Wilks' Lambda	*F*-value	Hypothesis d-o-f	Error d-o-f	*p*-value	Significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level
Self-Identification	0.941	0.875	15	591	0.593	No
Gender	0.977	1.027	5	214	0.403	No
Age	0.919	0.919	20	711	0.563	No
Education	0.857	2.272	15	591	0.004	Yes
Income	0.915	1.287	15	591	0.204	No
Setting	0.726	7.425	10	428	< 0.001	Yes

4.10 Further analysis: multivariate and conditional analyses of variance

In addressing the research questions individually, I discovered significant associations between interpreters' self-perception of visibility and some of the background factors, such as age, income, and self-identification with dominant or subordinate groups. I also found that self-perception of visibility varied according to the interpreting setting. To compare the strengths of these associations, I conducted stepwise regression, which considered all of the independent variables simultaneously and helped to determine which variables were of strongest explanatory value.

Because of small frequencies, I condensed some of the categories of the background factors for this analysis. The youngest and oldest age groups were merged into adjacent categories, so that age was recorded

Table 4.7 Significance tests for background factors conditional on setting

Setting	Age *p*-value	Significant (α = 0.05)	Income *p*-value	Significant (α = 0.05)	Self-identification *p*-value	Significant (α = 0.05)
Conference	0.364	No	0.619	No	0.076	No
Court	0.706	No	0.322	No	0.585	No
Medical	0.508	No	0.318	No	0.219	No

Table 4.8 Crosstabulation of setting by age

			AGENEW					
			Under 30	30–39	40–49	50–59	Over 59	Total
SETTING	Conference	Count	2	14	20	46	23	105
		% within SETTING	1.9%	13.3%	19.0%	43.8%	21.9%	100.0%
		% within AGENEW	13.3%	22.2%	24.7%	54.8%	53.5%	36.7%
	Court	Count	1	14	38	21	14	88
		% within SETTING	1.1%	15.9%	43.2%	23.9%	15.9%	100.0%
		% within AGENEW	6.7%	22.2%	46.9%	25.0%	32.6%	30.8%
	Medical	Count	12	35	23	17	6	93
		% within SETTING	12.9%	37.6%	24.7%	18.3%	6.5%	100.0%
		% within AGENEW	80.0%	55.6%	28.4%	20.2%	14.0%	32.5%
Total		Count	15	63	81	84	43	286
		% within SETTING	5.2%	22.0%	28.3%	29.4%	15.0%	100.0%
		% within AGENEW	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

into one of five groups: under 30, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, and over 59. The lowest income categories were combined, so that household income was reported as either less than $40,000, between $40,000 and $60,000, between $60,000 and $100,000, or over $100,000 per year. Similarly, the lowest levels of education were combined, yielding four

Table 4.9 Crosstabulation of setting by income

			INCOMNEW				
			< $40K	$40–60K	$60–100K	> $100K	Total
SETTING	Conference	Count	8	20	28	39	95
		% within SETTING	8.4%	21.1%	29.5%	41.1%	100.0%
		% within INCOMNEW	11.8%	36.4%	36.4%	57.4%	35.4%
	Court	Count	15	19	28	20	82
		% within SETTING	18.3%	23.2%	34.1%	24.4%	100.0%
		% within INCOMNEW	22.1%	34.5%	36.4%	29.4%	30.6%
	Medical	Count	45	16	21	9	91
		% within SETTING	49.5%	17.6%	23.1%	9.9%	100.0%
		% within INCOMNEW	66.2%	29.1%	27.3%	13.2%	34.0%
Total		Count	68	55	77	68	268
		% within SETTING	25.4%	20.5%	28.7%	25.4%	100.0%
		% within INCOMNEW	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4.10 Crosstabulation of setting by self identification group

			SOCIETY				
			dominant	subordinate	half and half	does not apply	Total
SETTING	Conference	Count	38	4	15	45	102
		% within SETTING	37.3%	3.9%	14.7%	44.1%	100.0%
		% within SOCIETY	53.5%	11.1%	18.1%	50.0%	36.4%
	Court	Count	12	17	33	26	88
		% within SETTING	13.6%	19.3%	37.5%	29.5%	100.0%
		% within SOCIETY	16.9%	47.2%	39.8%	28.9%	31.4%
	Medical	Count	21	15	35	19	90
		% within SETTING	23.3%	16.7%	38.9%	21.1%	100.0%
		% within SOCIETY	29.6%	41.7%	42.2%	21.2%	32.1%
Total		Count	71	36	83	90	280
		% within SETTING	25.4%	12.9%	29.6%	32.1%	100.0%
		% within SOCIETY	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

possible responses: less than college graduate, college graduate, master's degree, and doctorate.

Multivariate analyses of the five sub-components of visibility (affect, alignment, communication rules, culture, and trust) generally corroborated findings for the aggregate visibility measure. When background factors and setting were considered simultaneously, none of the background factors originally found to be marginally associated with visibility (age, income, and self-identification) retained significance (see Table 4.6). Interpretive setting was the factor most strongly associated with self-perceptions of visibility, and tests of between-subjects effects indicated that the effect of setting was significant for all five components. Again, with respect to each of the five sub-components, medical interpreters perceived themselves as more visible, on average, than conference or court interpreters. Interestingly, the effect of formal education was found to be statistically significant for the affect and culture components of visibility. However, interpretation of this result is complicated by a significant interaction effect between education and setting. Multiple

Table 4.11 Significance tests for setting conditional on background factors

Factor	F-value	Hypothesis d-o-f	Error d-o-f	*p*-value	Significant at the α = 0.05 level
Age					
< 30	0.016	2	12	0.984	No
30–39	9.248	2	60	< 0.001	Yes
40–49	11.632	2	78	< 0.001	Yes
50–59	10.637	2	81	< 0.001	Yes
>59	3.430	2	40	0.042	Yes
Income					
< $40K	4.403	2	65	0.016	Yes
$40–60K	10.918	2	52	< 0.001	Yes
$60–100K	4.963	2	74	0.009	Yes
>$100K	10.345	2	65	< 0.001	Yes
Self-Identification					
Dominant	16.357	2	68	< 0.001	Yes
Subordinate	3.197	2	33	0.054	No
Half-and-half	15.985	2	80	< 0.001	Yes
Not applicable	7.603	2	87	0.001	Yes

comparisons indicated no significant systematic effect attributable to the level of formal education.

To confirm the importance of setting, rather than background factors, in explaining variation in interpreters' self-perception of visibility, I also conducted a series of conditional analyses of variance. For example, I analyzed data on interpreters in a particular setting (e.g., medical) and considered whether average visibility varied according to age, income, or self-identification. Conversely, I analyzed data on interpreters at a particular level of a background factor (e.g., those 30–39 years old) and considered whether average visibility varied according to setting. The results are summarized in Tables 4.7 through 4.11 above.

In Tables 4.8 through 4.10, we see that conference interpreters, when compared to interpreters in other settings, were older, had higher household incomes, and viewed the question of self-identification as being inapplicable to their work. However, conditional on setting, none of the background factors had a statistically significant effect on visibility. In contrast, average visibility differed significantly according to setting for almost every age, income, and self-identification group. These analyses demonstrate conclusively that the overriding association with interpreters' self-perception of visibility is that attributable to the interpreting setting.

4.11 Unsolicited data

Of the 967 IPRI surveys that were sent to court, medical, and conference interpreters, 293 were returned, some of which included unsolicited comments by respondents. These comments did not expand on the questions asked, but rather they reflected respondents' points of view and opinions regarding the content of the survey. Some of the comments confirmed beliefs about interpreter invisibility and role perception that have been present in the literature for many years. Most of the comments came from conference interpreters who, in general, expressed that the questionnaire did not apply to them. Each of the informants' comments fell into one of three categories (note 3):

1. Invisibility and neutrality
2. Differences according to settings
3. Lack of power differential

4.11.1 Invisibility and neutrality

Comments that fell into this category underscored complete neutrality on the part of the interpreter. These respondents considered neutrality not only plausible but also an essential part of their professional duty. Some examples of how participants expressed their firm opinions are: – *"A conference interpreter has the duty to be completely neutral (alas, even against our preferences!)." (Conference interpreter, AIIC member, Canada #17)* Interestingly, some respondents thought that their setting could be immune to the interplay of social factors, and that the mode of interpreting in which they work (in this case, simultaneous) called for the ignoring of cultural differences and mediation. As respondent #21 states: – *"Some questions such as 10, 14, 16, and 20 [related to cultural mediation] do not apply to the type of interpretation I do (Parliamentary, Supreme Court). Plus, it is impossible to do this in simultaneous interpretation." (Conference interpreter, AIIC member, Canada #21)*

Other respondents seemed annoyed by some of the questions, as if their work could be beyond human parameters. They appear to truly believe in their ability to participate in one interaction without actually participating: *"Our work is serious, and we must be respectful no matter what. Of course we can have feelings — we are human — but we keep them to ourselves. We are not participants; we are channeling other people's words and feelings and give our all to do so." (Conference interpreter, AIIC member, US #35)*

Neutrality or invisibility is the apparent goal of the interpreters who authored these unsolicited comments. They consider neutrality to be plausible but not necessarily something that comes naturally; it is something that one must work hard to achieve. As another participant stated: *"A consecutive interpreter, doing political work, has to be very careful to be neutral." (Conference interpreter, AIIC Canada #17)*

These interpreters seem convinced of their ability to monitor the interaction of social factors. The belief seems to be that if one monitors such interaction, then neutrality is plausible. The myth of the invis-

ibility (and neutrality, Metzger 1999) of the interpreter appears to be very real to these interpreters. These comments reflect the professional ideology that remains unchallenged and is shared between professional associations and practitioners that form an integral part of the closed circle (Chapter 1). As respondent #17 (AIIC, Canada) states, interpreters take neutrality for granted, seeing it as their duty. If their professional organization's code of ethics states it, then no matter what research and theories in related fields may prove, interpreters will continue to abide by the rules of these professional associations. A similar reaction is seen in Respondent #35, who equates working seriously with being a conduit of information. Even though empirical research in interpreting studies has demonstrated flaws in the conduit model, many practitioners continue to live by unfounded rules.

Other respondents, like #21, said that culture brokerage cannot occur during Parliamentary procedure or in simultaneous mode. This is in keeping with the belief that interactions in a social vacuum can and do happen in the setting where they take place. One AIIC member from the U.S.A. expressed seeming displeasure over item 11 *(If the parties do not respect each other, it is not my role to improve the situation)* stating, *"I don't know what is the point of this. An interpreter at whatever level is invisible…"* This respondent's comment seems to be a direct reflection of the professional belief that continues to prevail in the field.

4.11.2 Differences according to settings

Some respondents commented that they had never heard the term *community interpreting*. They also acknowledged that their opinions could differ, depending on which of their hats they were wearing while answering the survey. As one respondent stated, *"…many of the questions are not applicable to my experience as conference interpreter. I can see myself giving very different answers with respect to a community interpreting situation. I am not sure that the two are really comparable communication situations." (Conference interpreter, AIIC member, Canada #34)*

From the unsolicited reactions collected, it is evident that conference interpreters have not been the targets of many empirical research studies (see #28 below). Some think that the survey questions do not apply to them because they do not interact with clients. They seem to feel that

the booth shelters them from the three-party communicative process and that they are not actually an essential participant to this process. They contradict themselves, though, when they state that their job is to facilitate communication but that they do not interact with clients. As one respondent remarked:

> From the questions you ask I suppose your study does not apply to conference interpreters who are in a booth and almost never interact with their clients. I advise you to read the Code of Conduct of AIIC. A professional interpreter has to be neutral. His job is to facilitate communication. Nothing else…
> (Conference interpreter, AIIC member, US 28)

This point of view serves as yet another exemplification of the professional ideology that remains unquestioned. It also illustrates the lack of familiarity of some interpreters with research in their field and findings from other fields that impact their practice. How can an interpreter facilitate communication without interacting with clients? How is interaction conceptualized? To this respondent, being in a booth seems to mean being removed from the interaction. Research on the role of the interpreter (Angelelli 2003 and 2004a and b) who worked remotely (e.g., over the speakerphone in a hospital between a patient and a health care provider, or over the telephone between client and manager of a utility company) has shown that interpreter's interventions occur in both face-to-face and non-face-to-face interactions.

4.11.3 Lack of power differentials between interlocutors

Some conference interpreters appear to be unaware of power differentials between the interlocutors with whom they work. The consensus seems to be that heads of state are heads of state, regardless of the country in which they hold office; differences between first and third world nations do not seem to matter. Power differentials and social factors are not perceived by conference interpreters as having an impact on communication. Rather, some of these respondents conceptualize communication as being sheltered from those social factors and immune to power differentials. Revisiting Bourdieu (1990) and Wadensjö (1998), communication does happen in a social vacuum for these respondents.

A delegate from a developing nation reporting human rights abuses, and a representative of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) denying financial support to a developing nation share an equal social milieu in these interpreters' eyes.

Interestingly, of all the respondents who sent unsolicited data, only one was clearly aware of the social issues affecting his role as interpreter. This sentiment was reflected in his strong reaction against the notion of invisibility. He attached a letter, whose text is shown in its entirety in Appendix 3. From the narrative, we can see the respondent's struggle between the prescribed rules of his field and the reality of the practice:

> I have been interpreting for more than 25 years over 4 continents, essentially in conference settings. I had decided to study interpreting in one of the CIUTI schools because of their reputation for excellence. I started practicing interpreting right after graduation and soon left Europe for Latin America where I interpreted in a variety of meetings, from formal to informal for two years. I had been told during my training years to "Simply transfer the information". I had been told that the interpreter should not interfere with the message or that nobody is interested in what we [interpreters] think. This is probably why one of my professors at University was reading to us the English version of an article from the UNESCO Chronicle and was comparing our interpreted version to the French version he had in front of him. Fortunately, many things have changed for me since that time. I have learned that, very often, I have to explain, simplify, repeat, check and double-check. For example, there is little I could apply from my university days when interpreting in Peru between the President of the World Construction Federation and masons on construction sites. A simple transfer of ideas would not suffice [sic]. Some terms, ideas and concepts need to be explained, simplified and put in a form that the other party is able to understand. I have discovered that in every aspect of interpreting the interpreter is in charge, even in very formal meetings. He decides what word to choose, what is culturally appropriate, what needs to be explained.
>
> I have had the chance to work with and talk to some of the pioneers in our profession. People like Marie-France Schunke or Wadi Kaiser. I learned so much from them. It is my impression that they were not burdened by those categorical messages that some of our interpreting professors had to give in order to refrain the most inventive of us from creating our own stories. Messages like: "Stay close to the original" or "It is not your job to explain." (AIIC, US #16)

4.12 Final thoughts on the data

My initial goal in designing and carrying out this research was to determine whether there was a relationship between interpreters' social background and their self-perception along the visibility/invisibility continuum. The statistical analyses performed indicated that a relationship exists between background factors such as age, income, and self-identification with dominant or subordinate groups and the perceptions that interpreters have about their role.

Furthermore, I conjectured that interpreters do not perceive their role as invisible. Results from this study showed that interpreters in all settings perceived themselves as having some degree of visibility (within a continuum of visibility). This means that to some extent (sometimes greater, sometimes lesser), they perceived that they play a role in building trust, facilitating mutual respect, communicating affect as well as message, explaining cultural gaps, controlling the communication flow, and/or aligning with one of the parties to the interaction in which they participate. I also conjectured that their perception varies along a visibility/invisibility continuum, according to the setting in which they work. In this study, participants did indeed vary in how they perceived their role, according to the setting in which they interpret. Medical interpreters perceived themselves as more visible than court or conference interpreters.

Given the ingrained belief system of the field of interpreting, these findings are important in challenging the myth of the invisible interpreter as perceived by practicing interpreters. In this study, conference, court, and medical/community interpreters stated that they perceived some degree of visibility in their role, while it was demonstrated that the settings in which interpreters work place constraints on their behaviors and practices.

CHAPTER 5

Expanding perspectives

In order to open up the circle (i.e., study the social role of the interpreter) we have looked at theories from social psychology (specifically from interpersonal relations), social theory, and linguistic anthropology. These theories have helped us conceive the interpreter as a responsible social agent who takes part in an interaction that is constrained by the institution in which it is embedded. Methodologically, we have opened the circle by measuring this social role with IPRI across settings. The empirical evidence of the perception of this role now needs to be interpreted in light of the professional ideology. The results of IPRI show that interpreters' perceptions of their role are influenced by the settings in which they work, as well as by individual social factors.

Practices are situated. Social theory (specifically, Bourdieu 1997) states that interactions are never self-contained, but instead are constrained by the institutions in which they take place. As the results of this study have shown, the practice of interpreting is no exception. As a situated practice, interpreting cannot be considered in isolation from the constraints of the settings in which it occurs. Interpreters who work in conferences, in the courts, or in schools, hospitals, or any other community setting perceive their role differently, and accordingly, they report different behaviors. Even when interpreters' beliefs and perceptions are colored by individual social factors (such as self-identification with more- or less-dominant groups, age, or socioeconomic status), what ultimately determines how they will perceive their role is the setting in which they work. It is risky to believe that all interpreters can perform their jobs equally, based on the premise that all interpreters have in common the linguistic manipulation of a message. In this study, interpreters' work settings exerted a powerful influence on their behaviors in practice, as well as their beliefs about their roles.

These results also support Wadensjö's classification of monologic and dialogic interpreting. Interpreters who work in conferences and

courts (monologic settings) perceive their role as less visible than do those who work in medical settings (dialogic settings). The situated practice of interpreting (the contextualized performance) proved to be a powerfully influential factor in determining how interpreters perceived their roles. That fact serves to expand current discussions of interpreting beyond the cognitive element of the practice. In this chapter, we will look at how the interpreters' perceptions of their roles and the influence exerted by the setting in which interpreters work can affect the current conceptualization of interpreting and the theoretical and practical implications of these results.

5.1 Conclusions of this study

We have now examined the perceptions of practicing interpreters on their role and on their behaviors during cross-cultural/linguistic communication. The research done here was originally framed with the understanding that although interpreters are individuals who possess the capability of processing highly complex information (thus facilitating cross-linguistic/cultural communication), they are also social human beings. They engage with other interlocutors in the co-construction of a communicative event, their interactions and interpersonal relations constantly embedded within an institution that is permeable to both cultural norms and societal blueprints.

Employing mostly quantitative methods of analysis, this research examined the degrees of visibility of role perceived by interpreters in their different work settings. It also compared similarities and differences among conference, court, and medical interpreters, assessing the relationship between social factors and the interpreters' perceptions on their roles in their various work settings.

In order to study the relationship between social factors and interpreters' perceptions of their role, I designed IPRI, which proved to be a valid and reliable instrument. My goals were to bring to light the interpreters' beliefs about their roles and behaviors in practice, and to investigate whether they shared the belief system of professional organizations that consider them as invisible language switchers, immune to the impact of social factors. I had always been intrigued by the organiza-

tions' expectation of interpreters to be professionals whose performance cannot be colored by any social factors whatsoever, such as their origin, gender, or socioeconomic status. My instincts, as well as my experiences and observations in the field, pointed out to me the unlikelihood of the interpreter's interaction with other persons through the use of language being immune to the interplay of the same social factors that impact any other type of interpersonal relation. I conjectured that even though the current ideology shared by several professional organizations and schools portrays an invisible interpreter, an in-depth study of interpreters' perceptions and attitudes would offer evidence to the contrary. I also wanted to investigate whether or not an interpreter's own social factors could, in some way, predict some of her perceptions about the interpersonal role. I wanted to explore whether the gender, socio-economic status, level of education, or self-perception as dominant or subordinate of interpreters would have any impact on their self-perception in terms of the continuum of visibility/invisibility across their different work settings.

The findings of IPRI provided clear evidence of interpreters regarding their role as visible in each of the settings in which they work. This is particularly important for the groups that were hypothesized as most invisible and monologic (court and conference). Findings also showed that interpreters perceived themselves as visible whether they work in face-to-face or non-face-to-face interactions. Finally, the findings suggested that there exists an association between interpreters' social background and their perception of their role, but that perceptions about role are ultimately influenced more by interpreters' work setting than by their own social factors.

IPRI gave interpreters the opportunity to express their perceptions about role, their beliefs about their practice, and their perceptions of their own behaviors. The fact that interpreters perceived themselves along a continuum of visibility and that they acknowledged their own visibility has several implications both at the theoretical and pragmatic levels.

5.2 Theoretical implications

In the historical overview of interpreting (Chapter 1), we saw how professional development resulted from pragmatic needs: interpreters were needed to enable communication after World War II. At the time that this development was taking place, the construction of a theoretical framework that would ground the practice of interpreting was not considered an imperative. Additionally, we saw that interpreting evolved mostly in isolation, without benefiting from the research and theories of related fields such as bilingualism, sociolinguitics, social theory, sociology, or social psychology. The research that characterizes the renewal period (Gile in Baker: 42–43) in interpreting has focused mostly on two aspects of interpreting: information processing and linguistic ability under pressure.

A theory of interpreting should be integrative of interpreting in all its complexity, looking at the act of interpreting in context and in its entirety (Angelelli 2004: 279). Studies from cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics have viewed interpreting as a highly sophisticated case of information processing (Bell 1991 and 1998) and have focused mostly on conference interpreting. They have helped us understand the complexities underlying the decoding/encoding process, but in doing so, they have isolated a situated practice. This has unintentionally caused a fragmentation in theory, with interpreting thus being regarded mostly as a cognitive act (Angelelli 2004: 279).

A recent shift towards a sociolinguistic approach to the interpreted communicative event (ICE) is evident by studies that focus on the participation of the interpreter in the interaction (Berk-Seligson 1990; Davidson 1998; Metzger 1999; Roy 2000; Wadensjö 1998). These studies of situated practices do not necessarily enter into a dialogue with cognitive psychology, but rather they separate themselves from it, thus contributing to an even deeper fragmentation in theory. They have shifted the focus from the neutral and non-participant interpreter to the interpreter as co-participant in the interaction. Considering that any co-participation in an interaction is a type of interpersonal relation embedded in an institution (which, as we have already determined, is permeable to the same social factors that color all interpersonal relations), we need to continue studying situated practices in depth. There

exists a need to address further the ways in which societal norms and cultural blueprints permeate and constrain the institution where the interaction is embedded, and therefore the interaction itself. The consequences of such constraints have not yet been discussed, yet they are essential to support the claim that interpreting does not happen in a social vacuum (Wadensjö 1998: 8).

Also requiring further exploration are the external pressures that derive from the nature of the situation/occasion of the interpreting act, for example those pressures which come about by virtue of professional preparation (or lack thereof) of the interpreters and of the other parties to the conversation (in speaking via interpreters), or those which result from the constraints imposed by the institutions where the interpreted communicative event takes place. In any given interaction, interlocutors vary in their socio-cultural background. Parties to the ICE (which is more complex than a monolingual interaction), such as health care providers, lawyers, judges, community members, or business partners are not necessarily trained in cross-cultural communication, nor have they received training in how to communicate through an interpreter. The interpreters themselves vary in their degree of training received, from none (i.e., on-the-job training only), to a Masters degree in translation and interpreting. An integrative theory of interpreting needs to take into account the vast variety of social backgrounds of all interlocutors to the ICE.

As is the case in any situated practice, the degree of prescriptivism of the situation or occasion that requires interpreting (e.g., court case, UN session, parent-teacher conference) as well as the social constraints of the interaction (e.g., medical appointment, closing speech at a banquet) exert different types of pressures. Consequently, when studying the interpreted communicative event, we must consider separately court, conference, and medical or community interpreting, and address individually the different pressures that are built-in to each of these setting's interactions. In the courtroom, for example, interpreting is highly constrained. Interlocutors may only be addressed in a certain way, and turn-taking is regulated. These features are not seen in community interpreting. Therefore, ICEs are impacted by the various rules and regulations of the different settings in which the interactions take place, a fact that should be taken into account by an integrative theory of interpreting.

Situated practices also result in situated communicative functions. For example, if a communicative function such as asking questions were contextualized by setting, it follows that the questions asked in a courtroom versus those asked during the question-and-answer period following a lecture serve very different purposes. In the former, parties ask questions assuming expected answers. In the latter, the questions may be more direct, in order to obtain factual information. In conferences, the questions (and all interactions between parties) vary in frequency, and the time constraints of the simultaneous mode add to the pressure that already accompanies the rephrasing and exploring of questions. The nature and the goals of communicative functions constrain interpreting. This must not be overlooked by a more encompassing theory of interpreting. For instance, in a medical/community setting, information passing is a goal and a central criterion for the effectiveness of the interaction or its outcome. All parties involved (interpreter and monolingual interlocutors) utilize certain criteria to judge and react to the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of the interaction. On the other hand, in a court setting, the interpreter and other parties involved may not be able to utilize specific criteria to judge the effectiveness of an outcome.

Accounting for the nature of situated practices also implies differentiating between the public and private nature of the situations/occasions where interpreting takes place. For example, in a public setting, there is an audience. As we have seen from the literature in linguistic anthropology, audiences cause interlocutors to modify their behaviors. Of the settings represented in this study, only court and conference interpreting are public in nature. Interpreters, keenly aware of the presence of an audience, may act out their neutrality for any number of reasons: to meet the audience's expectations, to observe the codes of ethics, for the sake of their professional credibility, or, as Wadensjö (1998: 286) suggests, to pay lip service to the codes of the professional associations. Berk-Seligson (1990) has shown that interpreters can change a modal verb, thus impacting their neutrality in their rendition without even realizing it. Alternatively, there is no audience in a doctor-patient interview or in a parent-teacher conference. The private nature of these types of interactions impact interlocutors' behaviors. The public or private nature of the setting in which the interpreted communicative event takes place also carries implicit (specific to whether the encounter is private or public)

communicative rules for the interpreter. These rules may also affect the interpreter's role. For example, at a conference, opportunities for questions and answers are limited during the delivery of a speech. Communicative rules in conferences and the courts may limit the asking of questions. On the other hand, there are no communicative rules limiting the number of questions asked during a medical interview. In spite of this, though, the opportunities for the two interlocutors are still imbalanced since, as research has shown (Prince 1996 *inter alia*), it is the doctor who asks the majority of the questions during the medical encounter.

As I have discussed elsewhere (2004: 282–283), an integrative theory of interpreting will include and account for the discourse features of an interaction and the social context in which it is embedded, as well as the information processing aspect of the task. This new theory of interpreting would not prescribe, according to some ideal model, what the role of an interpreter during an interaction should be. Instead, it would describe the interpreter's role and establish realistic rules, based on the reality of the parties at work. This theory would also consider the interpreter as a powerful, visible individual who has agency in the interaction. As such, the interpreter would be capable of exercising power and/or solidarity. The interpreter would be considered as someone who is capable of either maintaining or altering the status quo.

If this new theory is to be truly integrative, then it must take all levels of society into consideration. It should look at how interpreters are educated, addressing whether they are encouraged not only to develop adequate linguistic and information processing skills but also social and ethical skills, among others. In other words, the focus on interpreter education should be broadened from terminology mastery and information processing to include other issues that are important in the interpreted communicative encounter, such as an awareness of the power that interpreters possess in the cross-cultural/linguistic encounter.

In many cases the interpreter is a member of an institution that either tries to channel services to the disenfranchised or to gate-keep the disenfranchised out of the system. She is a member of a society that allows genuine communication between speakers of majority and minority languages. In achieving such communication interpreters are key players; they are not isolated from the other interlocutors. Cross-

cultural/linguistic communication should be considered in its entirety, with all of its complexities, if a genuine theory is to emerge.

Integrating interpreters into the communicative circuit would lead to great advances in the development of a new, encompassing theory of interpreting. For the field of interpreting to move forward, research from cognitive psychology should merge with research in sociolinguistics, and then both of these fields need to enter into a dialogue with the other fields that account for the different facets of interpreting (such as bilingualism, sociology, social theory, cross-cultural communication, feminist studies, linguistic anthropology, linguistics, and second language acquisition). These exchanges will generate richer and more meaningful questions and answers that would contribute to a stronger theory of interpreting. The new and more encompassing theory of interpreting that I propose will include all areas mentioned above and will be based on the model shown in Figure 3. In this diagram, the central positioning of the field of interpreting intersects with other bodies of knowledge in a mutually beneficial relationship. To applied linguists, interpreting and interpreters pose interesting questions as special cases in the areas of bilingualism, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, acquisition, and assessment (Valdés and Angelelli 2003). The area of cognitive psychology has looked at interpreting as an interesting form of information processing. Additional questions could be asked about multiple intelligences (Valdés et al. 2000: 44–46) which interpreters use as they perform their jobs. To experts in education, interpreting and the education of interpreters raise questions on curriculum design, teaching methodology, assessment, and the education of teachers of interpreting. Experts in communication, social psychology, and social theory will see more interesting layers of complexity in the study of cross-linguistic/cultural interaction. Scholars dedicated to the study of feminism (as well as social theory researchers) will find in interpreting a different context to study the interplay of social factors. This hybridization between interpreting and related areas of knowledge will open up the closed circle and result in a stronger theory of interpreting.

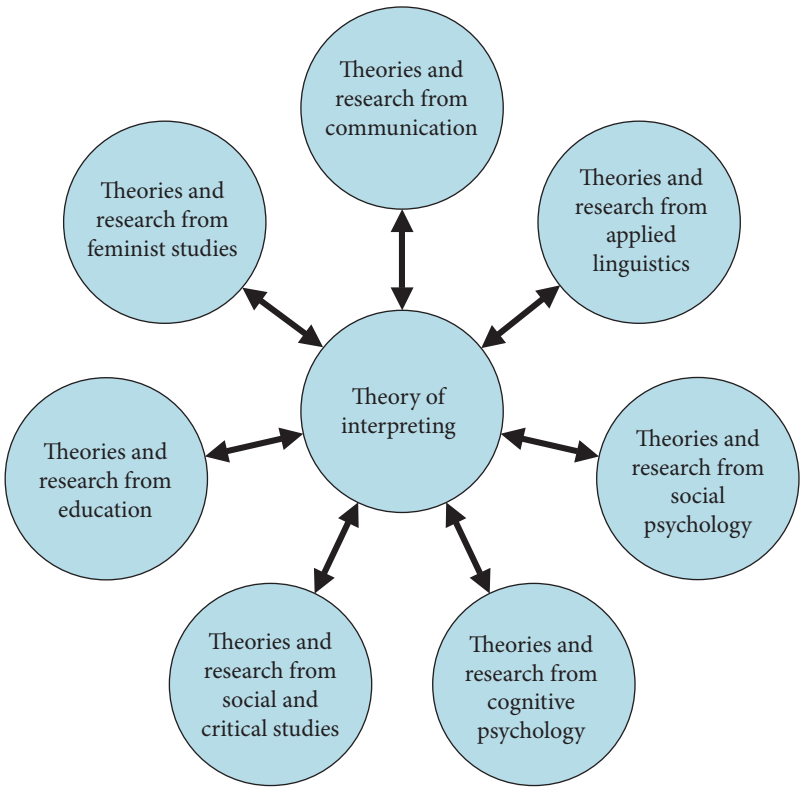

Figure 3. Working model for a new and more encompassing theory of interpreting

5.3 Practical implications

5.3.1 The education and certification of interpreters

Presently, most of American institutions that educate interpreters do not focus as much on the education of the individuals whose role is to broker cross-cultural/linguistic communication as they do on the training of how to interpret. Regardless of the level, certificate program courses and courses in undergraduate or graduate studies generally are of a pragmatic nature. The focus is not on educating well-rounded professionals, as much as it is on training them in specific skills such as memory

enhancement or terminology. Education is confused with training in information processing skills or terminology (Angelelli 2000: 43). Training continues to be based on underlying assumptions, or on monolithic concepts, one of which is invisibility.

From the perspective of the pedagogy of interpreting, one may see that teaching students to be *invisible* is certainly more feasible than teaching them how to manage their role responsibly as a third interlocutor. Could it be that it is simpler to prescribe that "parties should communicate as if the interpreter were not there" than to attempt to explore all possibilities that may arise when the interpreter participates in the interaction? Exploring different behaviors of the *visible* interpreter would empower students. Instead of reducing the complexity of the interpreter's role to that of an invisible language decoder/encoder, instructors could discuss possible behaviors that an interpreter might exhibit. What would be acceptable in each situation? What responsibilities would an interpreter take on in playing a visible or an invisible role? What are the consequences of being visible or invisible? What are the risks involved in these decisions? For example, what would be the consequences of the interpreter improving or not improving on a speaker, if a parent who complains out of frustration and addresses the principal inappropriately or even engages in name-calling with the principal at a parent-teacher/administrator conference (Valdés et al. 2003: 139–143)? In another example, if a delegate in the United Nations unintentionally mistakes the name of an officer or a place or exhibits an inappropriate degree of politeness or formality, what are the communicative consequences of embellishing or downplaying the utterance? What are the interpreter's responsibilities, in terms of embellishing or downplaying?

Sometimes, the visible role of interpreters (their key role) gets reduced to that of a *meaning grasper* or a *language modem*. Some teachers tell students that they need to focus on meaning only, because *grasping the meaning* helps them to convey it in another language (*accurate* decoding/encoding). By doing this, we are making assumptions rather than problematizing aspects of a complex task. By saying *grasp the meaning*, we are assuming that there is only one meaning, that meaning is not subject to co-construction, and that the meaning is shared by all three interlocutors. In other words, we are assuming that interpreting can happen in a social vacuum or that social factors cannot affect and color

the way in which each interlocutor co-constructs meaning during the interaction. Even though this assumption goes against all current theories of communication, we can understand the appeal of perpetuating this myth: simplicity and control.

For example, if an instructor teaching medical interpreting was to discuss the pain scale commonly used during medical encounters (On a scale from one to ten how would you rate your pain?) with her students (Angelelli 2004: 177), she would need to begin by talking about frameworks. She might want to discuss how medical students are taught to talk about pain, specifically, how we talk about pain in the Western world, even more specifically in American health care institutions (i.e., How do patients talk about and understand pain?). Discussing world views on health and/or cross-cultural communication may go beyond the area of expertise of a medical interpreter who is placed in front of a classroom to teach. More often than not, these professionals of goodwill are called upon to teach interpreting. In some cases, the professional interpreters have received instruction on how to interpret (mostly skills). In other cases they have not. They become professionals through experience and practice. While experiential knowledge is invaluable, it does not empower instructors to go beyond the transfer of their skills. Reflection, pedagogy and enhancement of their expertise through education are essential components to the transformation of a personal experience into meaningful teaching practices. Otherwise, when faced with sociological or ethical questions, (i.e., those that problematize the role of interpreters), practitioners who are in front of classrooms resort to their own experiences in search of answers. I would like to offer this as one explanation of how myths of invisibility and neutrality get perpetuated instead of being questioned or problematized, unpacked, or explained.

In terms of curriculum content, interpreting programs in the U.S.A., Latin America, Asia, and Europe focus mostly on skills to interpret. Few go beyond the necessary skills (i.e., sight translation/interpreting, consecutive and simultaneous interpreting), to address specific issues of the area of specialization (e.g., comparative law in a court interpreting program, international organizations in a conference interpreting program, basic anatomy and physiology in a medical interpreting program, or cross-cultural communication and the role of power differentials and discourse analysis in all of the settings).

Reasons for the exclusion of the interpersonal role in the interpreting curriculum could be of a scheduling or budgetary nature. However, given the absence of discussions on the interpersonal role, and on the agency of interpreters and on how to manage it, a critical approach to curriculum assessment may lead us to conclude that the interpersonal dimension of interpreting is not as important as the cognitive or the linguistic one. Interestingly, as many scholars have noted, many interpreters' dilemmas lie in this area (Angelelli 2004 and 2001; Davidson 2000; Metzger 1999; Morris 1995; Prince 1986; Wadensjö 1998).

An integral education in interpreting would affect how student interpreters are assessed and certified, and the measurement of skills would also be integral. Students need to gain awareness on the nature of situated practices. They must be able to contextualize the type of interactions in which they will participate. One way to obtain this knowledge is by offering courses for students of interpreting on interpersonal relations or social psychology. Students could learn how to analyze meaning and its co-construction through courses in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis, raising their awareness of multiple meanings for one utterance and thus their awareness of their role as powerful co-participants who possess agency in the interaction. These students could be offered courses that deal specifically with the different issues that arise from the different settings in which interpreters practice (e.g., institutional cultures, ethics, or protocol or power imbalance). Interpreting students could learn to contextualize the use of language through courses in dialectology, register, and varieties of language. Each of these educative opportunities would enhance the student-interpreter's foundation, rendering him or her better-equipped for a career as a visible, powerful, culturally-sensitive professional.

In the same way that teaching focuses mostly on cognitive skills, the assessment of interpreters currently focuses on areas of information processing (memory, analytical skills, speech monitoring), language proficiency, and specific terminology. Although the measurement of cognitive and linguistic skills is essential when it comes to testing interpreters, it provides only a partial view. As it emerged from the literature, other skills (i.e., interpersonal or social) are as crucial as cognitive and linguistic skills, but are seldom taught or measured. This means that constructs such as neutrality, objectivity, and invisibility are assumed,

but are neither taught nor tested. The role that interpreters play during an interaction (in terms of how visible or invisible they need to be) is not tested, yet this role is a key to the successful and responsible performance of these prospective interpreters. It would be more responsible to measure every aspect of the education of interpreters, in order to consider achievements and diagnose areas in need of further work. Are interpreters aware of their role? What is the responsibility of being visible or invisible? What are the consequences of each role? How aware are interpreters of these issues?

The wider use of instruments similar to IPRI would reveal important information on interpreters' perceptions about their role. Using IPRI as an example of a pre-test/post-test, programs could measure changes in incoming candidates' ideas or perceptions of the role that interpreters play. After teaching about agency and responsibilities of interpreters, programs could measure the effectiveness of content learning and its impact on the interpreters' perceptions of their roles. This means that programs would explicitly address the multiplicity of the interpreter's role, as well as its consequences across settings. If a program teaches neutrality or recognition of agency, then instruments like IPRI can help to measure that construct. When a program explicitly teaches neutrality, a lower score in IPRI may mean that an interpreter's perceptions have changed as a result of explicit instruction. A high score may show no instructional effectiveness. The same would hold true for a program that challenges monolithic views on role. For a program that problematizes the social role of interpreters and discusses agency, a higher score may reveal the acquisition of concepts and a lower score may show no impact of instruction. In doing this, testing becomes more integrative of all the dimensions present in any interpreting event. Instead of neglecting or talking for granted social and interpersonal skills, programs would be testing them side-by-side with cognitive and linguistic ones. This encompassing approach to testing would provide a more thorough and precise view of the candidates' abilities.

5.3.2 The professional organizations

Professional associations are, by definition, entities dedicated to serving the needs of their members. Their functions are numerous: (1) they

strive to provide guidance and information to their associates; (2) they offer continuing education opportunities; (3) they channel information; (4) they organize forums or conferences where members come together to address pressing issues in the profession; and (5) some of them test and certify members. They are committed to excellence, many having served their members for several decades. When it comes to the role of the interpreter, however, few professional associations address neutrality, transparency, or *invisibility*, either implicitly or explicitly (cf. CHIA 2002: 44). This exclusion of the reality of the role of the interpreter from the discourse of professional associations produces an inevitable tension between prescribed rules and practical codes.

A thorough understanding of the interpersonal role of the interpreter may allow professional associations to better serve their members and, consequently, the members of the linguistic minorities for whom interpreters work. Rather than prescribing an unrealistic interpersonal role for the interpreter and blindly transferring standards from one setting to another (most of the code of ethics for court and medical interpreters in the U.S.A. are based on the code of ethics of AIIC), associations should encourage research to explore and understand the true role of the interpreter in each of the different settings where interpreters work. The pressures and constraints that result from each of these settings should be considered from the perspective of the three (or more) interlocutors. Additional studies are needed to address the interactive and interpersonal challenges of the interpreting task and to acknowledge the power that the interpreter holds and how this power plays itself out in the different settings where interpreters work.

Current prescriptivism does not allow the associations to address the complexity of the role of the interpreter as it unfolds fully in practice. Ungrounded prescriptivism creates tension between the reality of the interpreters' workplace (rules and regulations of certain hospitals, for example, require that interpreters act as patient advocates or as a social service officer) and the professional organization code of ethics (which condemns advocacy). It causes practitioners to feel helpless, and they sometimes fall into a trap — observing their professional organization's code of ethics can often cost them their job or the respect of their communities. For example, some hospitals expect interpreters to escort patients and to help them navigate that hospital's system of care, or, in

another example, patients belonging to some small rural communities with few bilinguals may take offense if the interpreter (be it a neighbor or an interpreter hired by the hospital) refuses to accept a gift, if offered. An interpreter who refuses to act as a patient's advocate or refuses gifts from community members, while acting within the limits of professional codes of ethics, may indicate to an institution a lack of compassion or cultural sensitivity, and that interpreter may be seen as a liability, rather than an asset. Associations have good intentions when they support the development of code of ethics or rules of practice. However, basing them on limited discussions of right versus wrong does little to help practitioners improve in their practice and achieve better status. The ethical principles laid down in codes of ethics or standards of practice should be empirically grounded and tested, rather than prescribed or assumed. Practitioners should not be placed between a rock and a hard place when trying to implement professional standards in the context of their workplace (Angelelli 2002: 28).

Another area that merits improvement is the current measurement of interpreters' performance. Professional associations (as well as schools) engaged in the assessment of interpreters generally base their tests on interpreters' ability to interpret consecutively and simultaneously. They sometimes test memory and terminology in both languages for which the interpreter is seeking certification or a degree. In other words, for these organizations, as for many schools, linguistic and information-processing are the only skills worth testing. If the act of interpreting is considered in its entirety, then certification procedures should also be more encompassing. They should not overlook the fact that interpreting is an interaction (Wadensjö 1998) as well as a discourse process (Roy 2000). The interpersonal role of the interpreter needs to be incorporated into the assessment of interpreters. Instruments like IPRI would serve to help associations measure the interpersonal and social skills of interpreters. For example, they could be used as pre- and post-tests after a training session in ethics or professional conduct, as part of a certification process. Issues of alignment, affect, trust, and respect should be accounted for in assessment and certification of interpreters rather than taken for granted or simply ignored. Once again, it is important to measure constructs instead of assuming them. If certification is contingent upon behaviors that demonstrate neutrality or advocacy,

then instruments like IPRI will provide more specific data and, therefore, better feedback for candidates. This broader view of assessment would result in professionals who are better prepared to serve the communicative needs of individuals at all levels of society.

5.4 Invisibility revisited

This book concludes with two propositions that are relevant to explaining the powerful role of interpreters that has, thus far, been overlooked. Firstly, interpreters perceive their role as visible in all of their work settings. In other words, to a greater or lesser degree, interpreters perceive themselves as aligning with one of the parties, expressing affect as well as information, controlling the flow of the communication traffic, establishing trust and facilitating mutual respect, and interpreting culture as well as language. Secondly, in spite of the fact that individual social factors affect interpreters' perceptions of their role, making it almost implausible to state that they can be value-neutral or impartial, interpreters' work setting has an even greater impact on their performance. Interpreting is, like any other practice, a situated one, and should be considered as such for the purposes of professional regulations, standardization, and certification.

In our modern, global village, where increased and instant contact among people from various cultures is a given, the social role of interpreters (and translators) has proven to be even more crucial than it was in ancient times. Whether they interpret in the political, economic, scientific, judicial, law enforcement, or medical arena or any other type of community setting, and whether they work face to face or remotely, interpreters are participatory agents between cultures and languages (Angelelli 2003, 2004a, and 2004b; Bot 2003; Roy 1993, 1996, and 2000; Vilela Biasi 2003; Wadensjö 1995 and 1998 in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger 2003; Wadensjö 1998). As interlocutors, they exercise their agency in each interaction of which they are a part, and in doing so, they facilitate communication between speakers of majority and minority languages, thus becoming gatekeepers or access channels. Every communicative event involves power differentials. Every cross-linguistic/cultural communicative event includes (or *should* include) an interpreter. Interpreters

play a significant role in brokering these power differentials, constantly striving for excellence. As researchers and professionals in this field, we owe it to all interpreters to explore the struggles they face as they juggle theoretical professional mandates and the empirical reality of their work. My hope is that this work begins to shed some light on interpreters' on-the-job struggles and challenges, in order to better understand their complex and important social role.

APPENDIX 1

IPRI Final Version

Respondent Information

(Please note that some questions may be worded in an unfamiliar fashion, because this questionnaire is intended for use in other parts of the world)

Part A
Please fill in the following information. Circle ALL the options that apply to you.

1- I identify myself as a:

A: community interpreter	D: medical interpreter	G: T&I student
B: conference interpreter	E: over-the-telephone interpreter	H: self-taught interpreter
C: court interpreter	F: interpreter (no qualifiers)	

2- Gender: M/F 3- Age group: under 20 20/29 30/39 40/49 50/59 60/69 over 69

4- Please indicate the amount of formal education you have had:

A: Less than High School	B: High School	C: Some College	D: College Graduate
E: Masters Degree	F: Doctorate		

5- Interpretation Education/Training:

5-1 Duration:

A: None	B: 1 or more workshops	C: Less than 1 semester
D: 1semester-1 year	E: 1–2 years	F: Over 2 years

5-2 Type:

A: Intensive course	B: Undergraduate courses/program
C: Graduate courses/program	D: Certification courses/program
E: On-the-job training	F: Practical experience interpreting for family, etc.

5-3 Education/training in the following types of interpretation:

A: community	B: conference	C: court
D: medical	E: over-the-telephone	F: general (no qualifiers)

6- Interpretation Experience:

A: Less than 1 year	B: 1/3 years	C: 3/5 years	D: 5/10 years	E: Over 10 years

7- In the past year, about how many times have you served as an interpreter in each of the following settings? (Enter approximate numbers on as many rows as apply)

Settings/Modes	Face-to-face	Non face-to-face
A: Community	times	times
B: Conference	times	times
C: Court	times	times
D: Medical	times	times
E: Over-the-telephone	times	times
F: Other (specify)	times	times

8- What is your total household annual income from all sources (Please circle one. Amounts are expressed in US dollars)

A: less than 20,000 B:20,000/30,000 C:30,000/40,000 D:40,000/60,000
E: 60,000/100,000 F: over 100,000

9- Working Languages (interpret into): _____

10- Working Languages (interpret out of):_____

11- Please comment on the interpreting that you have found more rewarding:

_____

_____

12- In most societies, there are more and less dominant/prestigious groups or subcultures, often defined by racial or ethnic heritage, country of origin, language background, etc. Within the context where you practice as an interpreter, do you identify more with a dominant/more prestigious or with a subordinate/less prestigious cultural group? (Please mark only one option with an "X").

_____ dominant/more prestigious
_____ subordinate/less prestigious
_____ sometimes one, sometimes the other (about half and half)
_____ does not apply

13- What term(s) would you use to describe the group (based on racial or ethnic heritage, country of origin, language background, etc.) with which you most closely identify?

Part B

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about your work as an interpreter. Please answer the following questions from your own experience and perceptions. Please respond to each of the items using the following scale:

CD	SD	D	A	SA	CA
Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree

Please circle the option that best represents your position. **Please respond in terms of your own perceptions and experience, rather than your general beliefs about the profession**.

1- As an interpreter, I should adhere to the conversational conventions established by the speakers	CD SD D A SA CA
2- During my work, I am careful not to change the tone used by the parties.	CD SD D A SA CA
3- My work as an interpreter has to be accurate; there is no room for guessing games on feelings and emotions.	CD SD D A SA CA
4- The greatest challenge is to maintain my second language, especially if it is not spoken in the country where I live.	CD SD D A SA CA
5- An interpreter is a professional who provides a service and has no voice in the interaction.	CD SD D A SA CA
6- I use the language variety of my place of origin during the interpretation.	CD SD D A SA CA
7- It is not my job to remind the parties whose turn it is to speak.	CD SD D A SA CA
8- Assuring the parties that they will be heard means conveying their emotions even if they are not expressed by words.	CD SD D A SA CA
9- During an interpretation I constantly check my position to be neutral.	CD SD D A SA CA
10- If a party's words are culturally inappropriate, I need to make her/him aware of that.	CD SD D A SA CA
11- If the parties do not respect each other, it is not my role to try to improve that situation.	CD SD D A SA CA
12- I only use my register and not that of the parties.	CD SD D A SA CA
13- The two parties will trust each other during the conversation neither more nor less than they would if they were communicating without an interpreter.	CD SD D A SA CA

CD	SD	D	A	SA	CA
Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree

14- I never interrupt an interpretation to educate the parties on cultural differences.	CD SD D A SA CA
15- As long as the meaning is conveyed, the cross-cultural differences are not a problem.	CD SD D A SA CA
16- My work cannot begin until the less dominant party feels at ease with the more dominant one.	CD SD D A SA CA
17- If the parties want their feelings and emotions to get interpreted they have to express them in words.	CD SD D A SA CA
18- It is easier for me to establish trust with the party with whom I have more in common.	CD SD D A SA CA
19- I can only work with what has been expressed in words.	CD SD D A SA CA
20-If one party, unaware of the other's culture, commits a *faux pas*, I always compensate for that.	CD SD D A SA CA
21- My job, as an interpreter, is **not** to balance the power differentials that exist between the parties.	CD SD D A SA CA
22- While interpreting, it is simply impossible to be value neutral.	CD SD D A SA CA
23- As an interpreter, I am the only party to the conversation who can control the flow of communication.	CD SD D A SA CA
24- My job is not well done if the concerns of the less dominant party have not been explored throughout my interpretation.	CD SD D A SA CA
25- If there are cultural differences between the parties, the interpreter needs to iron them out before real communication can take place.	CD SD D A SA CA
26- I have the right to interrupt the parties whenever I need to, in order to assure smooth communication.	CD SD D A SA CA
27- When the interpreter is present to convey the meaning, the conversation can proceed on a culturally neutral stage.	CD SD D A SA CA
28- Even if I am working for both parties, I clearly give a voice to the weaker one.	CD SD D A SA CA
29- Sometimes interpreting tears is more necessary than interpreting the words that accompany them.	CD SD D A SA CA

CD	SD	D	A	SA	CA
Completely disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Completely agree

30- My job is to try to make sense of the emotional component and convey it as I interpret the words I hear.	CD SD D A SA CA
31- It is not always possible to maintain my professional stance.	CD SD D A SA CA
32- During my interpretations, my goal is to gain the less dominant party's trust more than the more dominant's.	CD SD D A SA CA
33- I do not need to interpret conflicts in values unless the parties specifically mention them.	CD SD D A SA CA
34- As an interpreter my role is to compensate for the power differentials between the parties.	CD SD D A SA CA
35- If one of the parties is disrespectful, part of my role is to compensate for that throughout the interpretation.	CD SD D A SA CA
36- My job is to educate parties on cultural differences to help them communicate in spite of them.	CD SD D A SA CA
37- It is not my job to try to read the parties' emotions or re-express them.	CD SD D A SA CA
38- As an interpreter, part of my role is to present my own voice during the interaction.	CD SD D A SA CA

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation!

PS: If you would agree to answer some further questions or would like to receive results of this study, please write your contact information.

____ I am willing to discuss these issues further

____ Please send me information about the results of the study

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Ph: _____

Thanks again !

APPENDIX 2

Organizations surveyed for different settings

Type	Org	Country	Date Out	Ipri Out	Ipri In	Total In	Total Out
CONFEREN	AIIC	US	4/19; 5/5	129	65	107	300
	AIIC	CANADA	12-May	99	37		
	AIIC	MEXICO	22-Jul	18	5		
	TAALS*	US	5/9; 5/16	54	*		
COURT	NAJIT	US	Jul-00	210	84	89	222
	NAJIT	CANADA	Jul-00	6	1		
	NAJIT	MEXICO	Jul-00	6	4		
MEDICAL	SCVM	US	May	15	14	79	445
	UWHC	US	20/7	20	6		
	HCIS	US	25-Jul	50	4		
	MMIA	US	Oct.12	210	34		
	MINNESOTA	US	20-Sep	50	10		
	CCHCP	US	20-Sep	50	3		
	UCLAMC	US	28-Sep	20	8		
	MDPH	US	2-Oct	30			
Total				967	275	275	967

References
AIIC= Association Internationale des Interprétes de Conférence
TAAL= The American Association of Language Specialists
NAJIT= National Association of Judicial Interpreters and Translators
SCVM= Santa Clara ValleyMedical
UWHC= University of Washington Health Care Center
HCIS= Health Care Chicago Interpreters Center
MMIA= Massachusetts Medical Interpreter Association
Minnesota Certificate Program for Community Interpreters
CCHCP= Cross-cultural Health Care Program
UCLAMC=University of California Los Angeles Medical Center

APPENDIX 3

Letter from AIIC, U.S. Respondent #16

I have been interpreting for more than 25 years over 4 continents, essentially in conference settings. I had decided to study interpreting in one of the CIUTI schools because of their reputation for excellence. I started practicing interpreting right after graduation and soon left Europe for Latin America where I interpreted in a variety of meetings, from formal to informal for two years. I had been told during my training years to "Simply transfer the information". I had been told that the interpreter should not interfere with the message or that nobody is interested in what we think. This is probably why one of my professors at University was reading to us the English version of an article from the UNESCO Chronicle and was comparing our interpreted version to the French version he had in front of him.

Fortunately, many things have changed for me since that time. I have learnt that, very often, I have to explain, simplify, repeat, check and double-check. For example, there is little I could apply from my university days when interpreting in Peru between the President of the World Construction Federation and masons on construction sites. A simple transfer of ideas would not suffice. Some terms, ideas and concepts need to be explained, simplified and put in a form that the other party is able to understand.

I have discovered that in every aspect of interpreting the interpreter is in charge, even in very formal meetings. He decides what word to choose, what is culturally appropriate, what needs to be explained.

I have had the chance to work with and talk to some of the pioneers in our profession. People like Marie-France Schunke or Wadi Kaiser. I learnt so much from them. It is my impression that they were not burdened by those categorical messages that some of our interpreting professors had to give in order to refrain the most inventive of us to create their own stories. Messages like: "Stay close to the original" or "It is not your job to explain."

Talking to the pioneers confirmed the vague feeling of nostalgia of the time when interpreters traveled first class (I saw the end of that period), were treated as professionals

Wadi Kaiser [adapted from a discussion with WK from October 1, 2001] explained this in the following way. He said: "everything has changed with simultaneous. Before, when we were working in consecutive, we were in the same room as the delegates. They would see us do our work. They had respect for us and we also obviously had a lot of respect for them. We were treated as equals. We would speak with them during the coffee breaks. They would sometime ask us for our opinion."

WK continues by deploring that today it "is even poorly considered by some colleagues when one speaks with the participants". It is as if two clans had emerged: the interpreters and the people they interpret or for whom they interpret.

In my career as an interpreter and in every single conference, I have tried and continue to try to promote the utmost professionalism. Ours is a difficult profession. Interpreters should be regarded with maximum respect. I began to understand this in a large public meeting in Panama. It was my first major press conference at the closing of a world congress. Hundreds of people were listening to my words as I was interpreting some French-speaking members of the board of directors. I was deciding what term to use to better express what I understood. I was in charge. I was making the speech. I was the voice of the delegate, putting his ideas into my words. The pressure that I felt was the same that when interpreting for former French President Mitterrand. We were working in a relatively small room. About 100 guests were listening to a debate between five Heads of State and Government. President Mitterand was looking directly at the booth, listening to my words.

Allow me to provide another example in order to understand the importance of the interpreter's job. More recently (March 2003), during the debate on Iraq at the United Nations Security Council, I was listening to the Arabic-English interpretation of the statement by the Iraq Ambassador to the United Nations. At one time, the interpreter had a slight hesitation before using the term "… world security" which he immediately corrected to "world stability". How many decisions did he make during that time? Can we still consider that that interpreter is

simply relaying the message? Yes, but in a very personal, active way. Not like a boom box.

When I worked in Korea, I was told that the interpreting profession was just considered to be one knot above that of the butchers who, because butchers are in contact with blood" are really at the bottom of the scale. More than once, the organizers of conferences in Korea have tried to have interpreters take their lunch break in the kitchen with the staff. We really had to fight to be given the right to be treated in the same manner as the conference participants. It was a struggle between being considered as service providers and seeing ourselves as professionals.

In Korea, I taught interpreting at graduate level for seven years before joining the faculty of a graduate school in the United States where I have taught interpretation students for the last 17 years. I still hear very often the same old stories: "You have to be faithful to the original." I am not saying that this should not be the case and that interpreters can make up stories. I simply have come to realize now that interpreters make choices at every step of the way.

Still, in the United States, as in many countries, interpreters are asked to try NOT TO BE on the official photographs of a conference. Some conference organizers would like to be able to hide the interpreting booths behind the scene or in a corner of the room because "they don't look nice". The interpreters have to explain that they need to see the room, the speakers and the screens on which they project their Powerpoint presentations.

Interpreting can at times be like buying a house. You can have it "as is" or "remodeled". There is really no clear cut rule as to what, when, how the interpret is supposed to adapt, explain, paraphrase. Some speakers do not make much sense and multiply repetitions and hesitations. It is up to the interpreters to decide whether or not to improve on the speech. When conference interpreters "clean" the message, they provide their listeners with a better service and on many occasions people have said that "it is easier to follow the interpretation than listening directly to the original speech". Doesn't this make the presence of the interpreter very obvious indeed?

Delegates are very much aware of the crucial role of interpreters. This certainly was the case at the conclusion of the Summit of the Americas. To show her appreciation, Ms. Clinton asked to have a picture with

the interpreters involved in the Ladies' Summit. During long drafting committee sessions, when laboring on the choice of a phrase or a word, sometimes delegates turn to the interpreters and solicit their opinion in the spirit of what, in my view, should happen: delegates and interpreters work together to the success of the meeting. We are far from: "Just interpret". However, this does not happen frequently enough.

Notes

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Although I use the term educate to describe what Columbus did to the Natives, and although this incident may have been crucial for the recognition of interpreting, I want to clarify that I do not condone the violent uprooting of Native peoples.

2. Malinche, daughter of an Aztec noble family, was given by the Cacique of Tabasco to the sixteenth century Spanish conqueror Hernán Cortés as a slave. She interpreted from Nahuatl into Yucatec, a Mayan language. Jerónimo de Aguilar, a Spanish priest, then interpreted from Mayan into Spanish for Cortés.

3. Unlike translation, interpreting entered academia due to a pragmatic necessity rather than a theoretical interest.

4. AIIC members represent 44 languages in 258 cities across 87 countries.

5. My arguments should not be construed as being dismissive of the complexity of the information-processing task involved in interpreting. Rather, they should be taken as a reaction in support of addressing the complexity of interpreting in its entirety (specifically, the interpersonal role of the interpreter) with the same rigor as Bell has used to address the analytical process. This process has been characterized by Bell (1991) as a special case of human information processing which requires the decoding of a text and the encoding of that same text into a different language through non-specific language process such as conceptualization or mental representations. For a complete overview of that complexity, see Bell (1991: 44–45).

6. Gile (1995) refers to the research and theory produced within the field as Interpreting Research and Theory, a young discipline which has still not reached maturity. Moreover, texts on interpreting are published at a rate far beyond that of actual research production, thus producing much repetition if not textual harassment of the readers.

7. The term "training" is often used in the fields of Translation and Interpreting Studies to refer to education. In many instances, education is confused with training.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. Thus, the difference between status and dominance (also related to a form of power) is that in the latter, the person who enjoys higher status is collectively defined as the one who is more able to achieve a collective goal.

2. For the purpose of this discussion, the term bilingual individual is used in a restrictive way to refer to a language interpreter.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. For a detailed description of the construction of IPRI, see Angelelli (2001).

2. The fact that the first batch of informants of Version I constitutes a homogeneous group is a concern I want to express here. Although the amount of experience in the field varies among informants, at the time they were surveyed, all were students of Translation/Interpreting at a school that specializes in conference interpreting. Undoubtedly this may have impacted the results of the survey on the pilot phase.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. There is no agreement in the profession as to the use of these terms. Critical Link, for example, considers both medical and legal interpreting as subcomponents of community interpreting.

2. When a respondent left more than ten percent of the responses blank in Part B, the survey was discarded. For surveys in which fewer than ten percent of the responses in Part B were left blank, the item mean was used to complete the protocol. This resulted in 293 usable protocols. Part A was used intact.

3. The results discussed here come from unsolicited comments and are analyzed qualitatively within the limitations of this study. For extensive qualitative analyses of interpreters' perceptions of their roles the reader is directed to Angelelli (2004a: Chapters 7 and 8) and Roy (1993) in Pöchhacker and Shlesinger (2002).

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