

外教社 翻译硕士专业 (MTI) 系列教材
口译实践指南丛书 ③

Mary Phelan

The Interpreter's Resource

口译员的资源

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导 读

口译无疑是一个起步较晚的研究领域,常设在翻译范畴之下,不少翻译协会就包括口译,而许多论述翻译的著作也会专门设立章节来讨论口译。

历史上对口译的研究相对较少,部分原因是对口语大都没有书面的文字记载,对译员工作的记录也可能不多。在历史文献中,可能提到有译员在场,但大多数情况下并未特别提及译员的姓名。

然而,口译的历史却相当悠久。操不同语言的人见面时需要用手势语或通过懂两种语言的人来沟通。有些人是在双语环境中成长的,因为他们生活在边界地区或他们的父母说不同的语言。有些人则是从一个国家到另一个国家生活,学会了第二种语言。可以说,口译的历史在跨语言交际的时候就已经开始了,比笔译要早得多。

随着全球化进程日益显著,且愈来愈超越经济领域,口译在此过程中所起的作用与担当的角色亦日趋重要。口译在全球化的过程中成为不可或缺的桥梁或中介。爱尔兰都柏林城市大学应用语言与跨文化研究学院教师玛丽·费伦(Mary Phelan)的这本《口译员的资源》,无疑是帮助译员走向成功的利器之一。

本书在纵的方面,让读者对口译有一个历史的了解;在横的方面,使读者对国外口译有一个总体的印象。而其最大的指导意义,在笔者看来,乃是在于其为读者——译员或未来的译员——提供了一张相当详细的“地图”,读者不但对此地图会有一个整体的了解,而且可以“按图索骥”,与网络相结合,查找更详细、更新、因而更准确的信息。

本书除前言、网址、附录等外,共分十章。

在**前言**中,作者除了说明本书的写作目的(对口译作一个较为全面的描述)与读者对象(对口译感兴趣或者希望成为口译者的人)外,还通过调查得出一些有趣的结论:会议口译是口译中的热门,待遇最高,但许多机构反馈的问卷调查结果却令人惊讶。其一,除欧盟与联合国外,大多数机构雇佣的译员数量不大。其二,尚未找到如下说法的根据:译员吃的是“青春饭”,一般只工作五年左右,赚一笔钱,然后就退出译员舞台。相反,译员一直工作到退休年龄,有的甚至过了退休年龄还在做口译。其三,英语成为国际商务

语言,在世界各地的董事会议与商务会议上都使用英语。英语也是科学界的国际语言。二十世纪六十年代与七十年代,外语教育尚未普及,医学或科学界的国际会议还需要口译。如今大多数受过教育的人士都学习外语,因此这种会议场合对译员的需求就减少了。但是,对社区译员与法庭译员的需求却大增。

第一章对口译的历史作了简要的介绍,从历史上口译者的身份(如外交官或本义上的语言学家)及其在历史文献中的缺席,口译的悠久历史及成因,到移民、出国乃至殖民化过程中口译所扮演的角色,作者都作了扼要的叙述。

第二章从不同的角度对口译作了分类。从发生(学)角度,口译可分为人们常说的三类: bilateral or liaison、consecutive 和 simultaneous; 但还可以从用途或工具等角度加以区分。本章涉及的口译分类多达十余种,有 conference interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, consecutive interpreting, whispered interpreting, bilateral or liaison interpreting, sight translation, telephone interpreting, sign language interpreting, television interpreting, videoconference interpreting, wiretapping and tape transcription。

第三章虽然是为译员而写,但针对的却是会议发言者,这自然也是希望发言者为译员考虑。作者从两个方面提出了建议: (1)会议前; (2)发言前。希望阅读本书的读者将来做口译的时候,能够对会议发言者表达类似的建议或希望,从而更有利于口译的顺利与成功。

第四章介绍了社区口译、法庭口译与医疗口译。虽然中国在这方面的口译还比较少,但随着全球化在各个领域的深入,此类口译将来会越来越多,因此这一领域的发展趋势值得大家注意。

每一个职业都会有其自身的职业伦理,口译也不例外。**第五章**收录了不同国家/地区、不同机构的口译行为准则与职业道德: (1) The AIIC Code of Professional Ethics (会议口译), (2) The American Association of Language Specialists (TAALS) Standards of Professional Practice for Conference Interpreters (美国, 会议口译), (3) The National Registry for Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) Code of Conduct for Public Service Interpreters (英国, 公共服务口译), (4) Vancouver Health Care Interpreter Standards of Practice (加拿大温哥华, 医疗口译), (5) Code of Ethics of Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (聋哑人口译)。读者当然需要参照国内相关规定与文献。

第六章专门介绍欧盟。欧盟据说是拥有或使用了世界上最多译员的机构,原因是欧盟对所有欧盟语言一律平等对待,即需要为所有官方的欧盟语言提供口译。在简要介绍了欧盟的历史后,作者列出了欧盟下属的众多机构与组织。

第七章题为“战争与和平”，介绍自二战结束后，欧洲有关防御与外交领域的机构与组织，如 Council of Europe、North Atlantic Treaty Organization 等大家熟悉的机构。

第八章用了相当篇幅介绍联合国属下的各机构与组织，读者还可在此基础上通过网络查阅最新资料。

第九章介绍了其他国际组织机构。读者不妨通过网络了解与中国和亚洲有关的一些跨国家、跨地区的组织机构。

最后一章**第十章**则介绍了世界各地——当然主要是欧美——的译员或译者协会/学会等组织机构。读者需要通过网络或其他途径(如《中国翻译年鉴》等)了解中国(包括港澳台)的翻译协会/学会，包括全国性机构、省市地方机构以及行业机构。

作为一本实用指南，本书列出了有关网址，以备查阅更新信息。

作者在本书附录中还提供了不少有用的信息，如欧洲国家培养会议口译硕士的大学及其联系方式，开设 AIIC 认可的课程的大学及其联系方式，FIT 会员国家的协会或学会机构名单，等等。

值得一提的是，国内的出版物大多没有索引，这对读者来说是一大损失，所幸本书保留了索引，读者可以“按图索骥”，节省了不少时间。

当然，本书毕竟不是专为中国读者而写，与中国的情况有些不符也在情理之中，这就需要读者加以辨别，根据中国的实际情况作出相应的判断。如书中讲到在西方，学术会议的国际通用语言是英语，对译员的需求减少了；而事实上在中国召开的国际学术会议，如果以英语作为会议工作语言，目前还是需要译员的。相反，就目前而言，中国在社区翻译、法庭翻译等方面的需求可能还不是很大。

需要指出的是这本口译实用指南还有美中不足之处，即因此书自身的局限，在中国口译情况方面还缺少足够详尽的信息。好在有了网络，相信读者自会找到所需的信息。

王晓元

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I attended the Agnese Haury Institute for Court Interpreting at the University of Arizona in July 2000. The course helped to clarify my ideas on court interpreting and I am particularly grateful to Joyce García for her lecture on wiretapping and tape transcription. The section on this topic in the present volume is based on that lecture.

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The population figures given in this volume are based on censuses mentioned in Encarta 98 Encyclopedia on CD-ROM.

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Preface

Interpreting is a relatively new area of research that is all too often subsumed under the heading of translation. For example, many Translators' Associations include Interpreters. Many books on translation will include a section on Interpreting. Of course there is an overlap between the two areas that are so alike and yet so different – many translators do some interpreting work and vice versa. All of this has led to a confusing situation where interpreting is still in the process of establishing itself as a discipline in its own right. The general public is confused about what exactly interpreting is. The very word interpreting is most unsatisfactory. If you do a search in an OPAC library catalogue on Interpreting you could find anything from interpreting statistics to interpreting Bach at the Keyboard. Similarly, an Internet search can turn up all kinds of results, from interpreting ancient manuscripts to interpreting the Irish Famine.

My aim in this volume is to provide an overview of interpreting in the year 2000 to anyone interested in interpreting in general or indeed in becoming an interpreter. A number of specialist books have been published in recent years, all on specific areas of interpreting. I would like to provide a fuller picture. To this end I set about collecting information about international and regional Organizations in particular. My starting point was a booklet published by AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters in 1997. The booklet, *Conseils aux étudiants souhaitant devenir interprète de conférence*, contains a list of international organizations around the world that employ interpreters. However, it does not contain any information on the numbers of interpreters employed or on the organizations themselves. I wanted to collect information on the numbers of interpreters employed around the world. Conference interpreting is the most prestigious type of interpreting and the best paid. I was quite surprised by some of the results of the questionnaire that many of the organizations kindly completed for me. Firstly, with the exceptions of the European Union and the United Nations, the actual numbers of interpreters employed by many organizations is quite small. Secondly, I have not found any support for the notion that interpreters suffer from burnout, that they work solidly for five years or so, earning quite a lot of money, and then disappear into the sunset. On the contrary, they continue to work as interpreters until retirement age and in some cases beyond it. Thirdly, English is the international language of business and

is used in boardrooms and business meetings throughout the world. English is also the international language of science. In the 1960s and 1970s when foreign languages were not widely taught, international meetings of doctors or scientists needed interpreters. Nowadays most educated people learn foreign languages and as a result the need for interpreters at this type of meeting has diminished.

However, the need for Community and Court interpreters has increased dramatically. There is far greater movement of people now than ever before. These include tourists, people living and working in foreign countries, illegal immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The training and testing of Community and Court interpreters varies from none at all in some countries to well thought out programmes in others.

The Internet has been a wonderful source of information. Of course, it must be said that many Web sites are poorly organized, out of date or just do not have the information one is looking for. All are unrelentingly positive regarding their achievements and rarely mention negative aspects. I have included Web site addresses for those readers who wish to update the information or to check out on employment possibilities – quite a lot of Web sites include a vacancies section. When writing about the international organizations I have drawn heavily on such resources as information booklets and the Internet – in many cases these are the exact same. My aim has been to summarise the objectives and explain the management structure of each organization. I have also included information about interpreting staff and working languages gleaned from my questionnaire. This information is not given for a number of organizations that did not respond to my request for information. Obviously, a great deal more could be written about many of the organizations but my aim here has been to provide essential information only.

Any errors that appear in this volume are my own. A word of warning: it is the nature of this type of information to date quite quickly. For example, the next EU Treaty will bring substantial changes to the organization of the European Union. If enlargement goes ahead there will be changes in the numbers of members of the European Parliament from each member state. There will also be changes in the European Commission. The system of qualified majority voting in the Council of the European Union will have to be refined. On the other hand, I would expect the United Nations to continue without any major changes.

Mary Phelan
September 2000

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1 A Brief History of Interpreting

Comparatively little research has been done on Interpreting throughout history. In part, this is because often there is no written record of the spoken word. There may be very little evidence of the interpreter's work. It may be clear from the context that an interpreter was present but all too often the interpreter is not specifically named or mentioned in historical documents. The interpreter may have been a linguist or a diplomat who was asked or offered to interpret.

Interpreting has existed for a long time. Whenever people met who had no common language they had to make do with sign language or find someone who could speak both languages. Some people grew up in a bilingual environment, because they lived in a border area or because their parents spoke different languages. Others moved from one country to another and acquired a second language.

At times in history groups of educated people have shared a common language across borders. A prime example is Latin, which was the language of the Catholic Church and was also used by scientists, writers and diplomats.

When Europeans began to move outside their own countries they had no knowledge of the languages of the peoples of America, Africa or Asia. In the process of colonisation of new continents language was important. The indigenous peoples outnumbered the colonisers and communication was the key to power and control. In their chapter titled *Interpreters and the Making of History* which appeared in *Translators Through History* (1995), Margareta Bowen, David Bowen, Francine Kaufmann and Ingrid Kurz provide a fascinating and detailed account of interpreters down through the ages. Their examples include the following: Christopher Columbus took six native Indians back to Spain with him so that they could learn to speak Spanish and then be used as interpreters once they returned to Central America. Other colonisers such as the French in Canada repeated this pattern. Subsequently the colonisers imposed their own language on the native people, thus reducing the need for interpreters. Some Europeans became proficient in the native Indian languages after being shipwrecked or captured. Missionary priests intent on spreading the Catholic faith drew up glossaries and dictionaries of the native languages.

French was the international language of diplomacy until the peace

talks that took place in 1919 after the First World War. These were a turning point because for the first time English was used as a working language. According to historian David Thomson, most of the great powers were represented by their Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers rather than by kings and queens. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States and Prime Minister Lloyd George of the United Kingdom did not speak French. This was the beginning of conference interpreting. Consecutive interpreting was the order of the day with some interpreters exhibiting an amazing ability to recall speeches lasting up to fifty minutes.

Margareta Bowen *et al.* relate how in the 1920s another milestone was reached with the invention of equipment for simultaneous interpreting by Edward Filene, a businessman, Gordon Finlay, an electrical engineer and Thomas Watson, the president of IBM. Simultaneous interpreting was first used at the International Labour Organization Conference in Geneva in 1927. However, technical difficulties meant that almost twenty years would elapse before simultaneous interpreting was provided in English, French, German and Russian at the Nuremberg Trials, which lasted from November 1945 to October 1946. Some of the interpreters at the Trials went on to work as conference interpreters at the United Nations. In his article, *How Conference Interpretation Grew*, Jean Herbert related how, gradually, simultaneous interpreting began to be used in the United Nations in particular, first in French and English and later in the other official UN languages, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish. The development of simultaneous interpreting was to facilitate the growth of international organizations after the Second World War. The interpreter's role also changed as the interpreter moved from a very visible, high profile position as consecutive interpreter to being a voice from a booth at the back of a venue.

Some of the first conference interpreters, such as Jean Herbert, wrote about their experiences. Many of those who worked as consecutive interpreters were really in the thick of things. However, although fascinating, these were personal memoirs and more historical documents than research into what exactly is going on when an interpreter is at work.

The first conference interpreters became interpreters by accident. They had one or more foreign languages and found themselves in the right place at the right time. As interpreting developed, universities began offering courses in the subject. This helped interpreters attain professional status. The University of Geneva School of Interpreting was founded in 1940 and the Vienna School of Interpreting in 1943. Georgetown University Division of Interpreting and Translation was founded in the United States in 1949. In 1952, Jean Herbert, a practising interpreter, wrote a book called *Manuel de l'Interprète* which was followed in 1956 by Jean-François Rozan's book *La prise de notes en Consécutive*. Both books were published by University of Geneva Press. AIIC, the International Association of Conference Interpreters, was set up in 1953 and became a proponent of better conditions for its members. Over the decades interpreting became a growth area. In 1957 two schools of Interpreting were