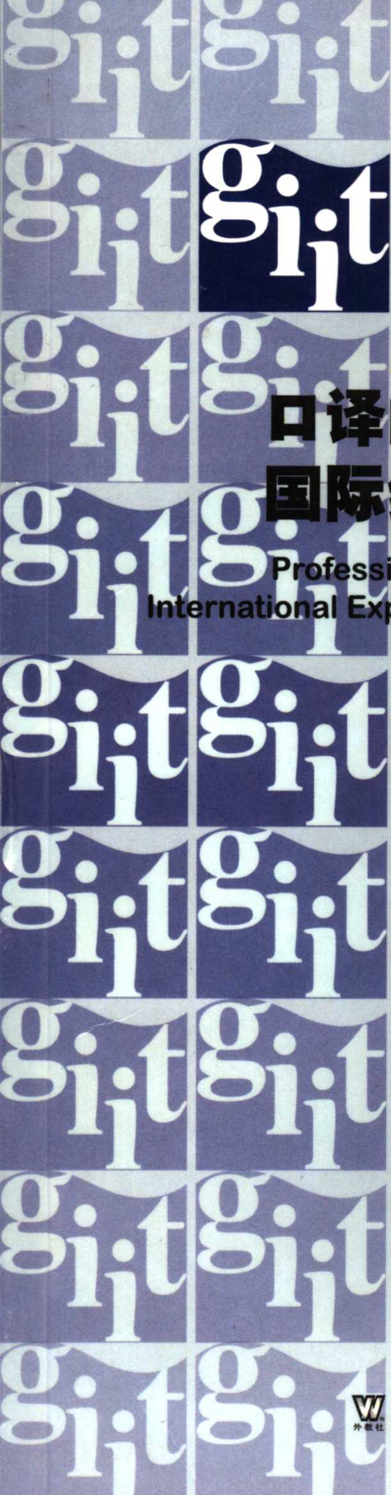

口译的专业化道路：国际经验和中国实践

Professionalization in Interpreting: International Experience and Developments in China

主　编　柴明熲
副主编　张吉良

外教社
上海外语教育出版社
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序言

口译，这门人类历史上进行跨民族、跨文化、跨国界交往时不可缺少的古老技能，随着当今社会的发展，正在被不断地注入新的诠释，展示出新的风采，并上升到新的专业高度。但是，在我们的口译教学和实践中，人们似乎仍没有完全弄清有关口译的一些基本问题，诸如“什么是口译？”、“懂外语就能做口译吗?”之类的疑问仍在不时困扰着我们的外语甚至口译教学工作者。

那么什么是口译？口译有高下之分吗？

在日常生活中，不懂外语者需要通过一位中介才能理解外宾讲话的内容，使双方的日常生活或工作交流得以持续下去；同样，当他收到一封外语信件时，也得求助于一位中间人将来信的内容讲述给他听；假如他身处域外，欲为购物而讨价还价时，他还得借助于这个中介，才能买到价廉物美的商品。在上述情境中这个“中介”起着跨越语言和文化障碍、准确传递信息的作用，他所做的工作就叫做口译。不过这类口译一般被国际口译界界定为非专业口译，属于低端口译。

还是这位不通外语者，当他参加一个国际会议或记者招待会，或是聆听外国专家的讲座，观看热点事件的电视转播时，他同样要依赖这位被称作译员的中介以口述的方式将听到的信息重述给他听。虽然此时这位中介所做的工作也叫口译，但此口译却非彼口译。这种口译通常被国际口译界称为专业口译，属于高端口译。

显然，这两种口译形式间存在着重大差别。一般说来，具备了一定外语能力的人只要稍加训练就能基本胜任非专业性的口译工作。但要能胜任专业口译工作，一个人仅仅具备了外语能力还远远不够，他还必须接受大量正规而严格的口译训练，熟练掌握

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职业译员必备的交同传技能，才能最终成为一位名副其实的专业口译员。

口译与口译之间差别巨大，层级分明，但人们并非都能意识得到。很多人，甚至于部分外语和口译师生仍坚持认为：只要学好外语就能做口译。对口译缺乏了解导致人们将外语教学、教学口译和口译教学三者等同起来。于是乎，大学校园里的口语课变成了口译课，社会上大量的外语培训班也被人包装成了口译培训班，外语考试被拔高为口译考试。由于外语人才和口译人才的界限模糊，导致目前我国高校的口译教学办学目标不明，层次不清，合格师资缺乏，课程设置不当，训练手段落后，教学质量普遍不高。结果非专业口译员被当作专业译员大量复制，而合格的专业口译员却“一将难求”。

从国际范围来看，口译教学也经历过很多曲折。人们对口译教学的认识在经过不断修正和完善之后，才逐渐从最初的“外语教学”、“教学口译”过渡到了今天真正意义上的“口译教学”。法国巴黎第三大学高级口笔译学院所走过的路就证明：以语言教学为基础，按语言教学模式进行口译教学是很难培养出专业口译人才的；只有遵循口译实践和口译人才培养的规律，走口译教学的专业化道路，才能培养出既有很强口译实践能力，又拥有良好口译理论修养的合格口译员。

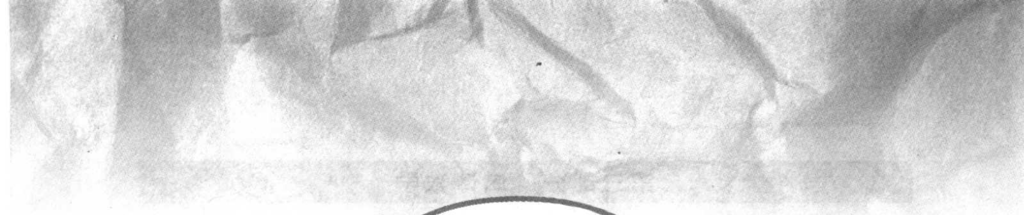
为了促进国内口译教学事业的健康发展，并使之早日走上专业化道路，上海外国语大学高级翻译学院于2004年11月6日—7日联合上外英语学院共同组织召开了“国际口译大会暨第五届全国口译实践、教学与研究会议”。这次口译大会是中外口译界对“口译专业化”议题进行认真交流的大会，也是国内口译界学习借鉴国际经验的一次难得的机会。在这次规模空前的国际口译大会上，来自我国外交部、中国翻译工作者协会、国际会议口译员协会、欧盟会议口译服务总司、法国巴黎第三大学高级口笔译学院、瑞士日内瓦大学口笔译学院、北京外国语大学高级翻译学院以及广东外语外贸大学英文学院翻译系等国内外专业口译服务机构和高等

院校的代表，围绕着“口译专业化：国际经验和中国的发展”这一主题展开了热烈的讨论。为了将与会代表们的真知灼见忠实地记录下来，我们从众多的会议论文中，选出了部分论文编撰成这部文集加以出版。我们希望这部论文集能够反映出本次口译大会的全貌，并为我们今后的口译实践、教学与研究工作提供参照和借鉴。

在本论文集发表之际，我们首先要衷心感谢本文集的各位作者和编委，以及上海外语教育出版社的编辑们，是他们的理解和大力支持才使得文集的出版成为可能；同时，我们还要特别感谢上外高翻学院的姜如芳、丁欣两位老师，她们对论文的前期收集和整理，为我们后期的筛选和编撰工作节省了大量时间和精力。

由于编者水平有限，文集中的疏漏和错误在所难免，我们恳请各位读者和口译界同仁批评、指正。

柴明颎
上海外国语大学
高级翻译学院院长
2006年3月



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第一部分

口译专业化

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Professionalization: Conference Interpreting — a new profession

Jennifer Mackintosh
AIIC President

Abstract: Conference interpreting as a profession is some 50 years old. This paper will look at the role played by AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence[1]) in creating and establishing that profession. It will also discuss the attributes that define a profession and result in recognition by practitioners and non-practitioners alike. These include a code of ethics, a training paradigm, recognisable working practices and a professional association to which most practitioners belong. The paper will conclude by looking at where the profession stands now, its strengths, the challenges facing it and how it may develop in the future.

Key words: professionalization; projects; challenges

1. Background

Although interpreters reputedly belong to the second oldest profession, modern conference interpreting is a 20th century phenomenon. Between the two world wars, in the days of the League of Nations, English and French consecutive[1] interpretation was provided at meetings of the League and a rudimentary form of simultaneous[2] interpretation was introduced. The interpreters of the time were urbane, well educated citizens of the world, at home with prime ministers, ambassadors and royalty alike. Accustomed to the limelight, they preferred the immediacy of a conference table where they performed their virtuoso feats of memory and oratory to the relative anonymity of simultaneous. The Nuremberg trials which followed the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945 were conducted in the three languages of the victors: English, French and Russian with German as the language of the vanquished. Consecutive was not an option given the length of time that would be required to reproduce each intervention in the three other languages of the proceedings. The interpreters had to work in simultaneous, and the authorities had to provide basic training for a task that very few interpreters had previously performed.[3]

---

[1] International Association of Conference Interpreters

The newly founded (1948) United Nations Organisation decided from the outset to use simultaneous interpretation and a number of universities established training programs: Geneva, Vienna, Heidelberg, Georgetown. In 1953, a number of conference interpreters got together in Paris to found the Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence (AIIC). This marked the start of the professionalization of conference interpretation. This paper looks at the contribution AIIC

---

1. In consecutive interpretation the interpreter sits at the table with the participants and takes notes of what is being said. When the speaker has finished, the interpreter reproduces that speech in his/her target language.
2. In simultaneous, the interpreters sit in specially constructed booths overlooking the meeting room. They wear headphones through which they hear what is being said and reproduce the speech into a microphone in the interpreter's target language. The participants listen through headsets.
3. For a description of how simultaneous interpretation was developed at Nuremberg, see Gaiba, (1998)

has made to that process.

2. Process and attributes of professionalization

There are many definitions of professionalization but most have in common that it involves a social process whereby people come together to engage in an activity as a means of livelihood, inculcating a shared set of attitudes, values and behaviours and involving the creation of a qualifying association whereby they can claim a professional identity.

The principal attributes of a profession are

- *a professional association*
- *communications*
- *a code of ethics*
- *professional standards and codified working practices*
- *a membership and admissions system*
- a *recognised training paradigm*
- *external recognition*
- *professional services to members*
- *self regulation*

If a specific activity can be demonstrated to be associated with each of these attributes, it is fair to conclude that that activity constitutes a profession. I shall address each in turn and endeavour to show how the role of AIIC has been crucial to the development and recognition of conference interpreting as a profession.

2.1 Professional association

As mentioned above, AIIC was founded in Paris in 1953, by a group of far-sighted colleagues who saw the need to establish the professional credentials of this new profession. AIIC is a worldwide professional association with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, staffed by an executive secretary and two full-time assistants. In April 2005, it had a membership of 2,676 members in 89 countries, organised into 22 regions, ranging from geographically small regions such as Belgium, with a very large number of members, to huge regions with relatively few members, e.g. the Asia-Pacific Region. Each region sends one or two (depending on size) members to represent it at twice-yearly meetings of the AIIC Council.

Council members are proposed by their regions but are elected by the triennial General Assembly, which also elects the President and Treasurer, all for 3-year terms, renewable once. The Assembly also elects the Membership (CACL) and Budget committees. The Council elects the AIIC vice presidents (3) from among its members and they, together with the President and Treasurer constitute the Bureau. The Council also confirms the membership of the various committees; e.g. Training, Research, Communications, Technical, Staff Interpreters, etc. The full list can be found on the AIIC website.

Each AIIC member belongs to or is affiliated with a region but members may also choose to identify with a Sector (each of the large institutional employers constitutes a sector and members working in a given sector meet to agree the terms of the agreements negotiated between that sector and AIIC). There is also a non-agreement sector, known as the Private Market Sector (PriMS) which meets twice a year to discuss issues of particular interest. These are varied and include statistics on market size, interpreter availability, demographics, marketing, business organisation, etc.

2.2 Communications

In the early days, AIIC communicated with its members by means of a quarterly Bulletin and special mailings. Its external communications were largely undertaken by the regions or were the natural spin-off of relations with international organisations and other users of interpretation services.

For the past few years AIIC's communications, both internal and external, have been primarily focused around the AIIC website: www.aiic.net. It is the main vehicle for projecting AIIC's image of professionalism and openness and a vital source of information to members and non-members alike. Anybody wishing to consult AIIC's statutes or other basic texts, to check the membership of AIIC committees, to read reports of their activities, to find out professional development courses are on offer, check the list of approved initial training courses and much, much more can log on to the website and spend hours browsing. A webzine *Communicate!* appears on the website 5 times a year, containing news of the profession and in depth articles addressing various aspects of the profession such as a recent research findings, developments in the profession, book reviews. The 22 AIIC regions may also choose to develop their own regional websites, using the standard AIIC format. Although this is a recent option (2005), there are already 7 regional websites (Canada, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Spain, Sweden, USA) with more under development.

The website has a public part, open to everybody, and a members-only part, the Extranet, requiring a user ID and a password.

The Communications Committee is responsible for overseeing the consistency and coherence of AIIC's communications. The Committee's convenor is the editor-in-chief of the webzine.

2.3 Code of Professional Ethics

One of the first priorities of the AIIC founder members was to adopt a code of ethics, binding upon all members and covering areas such as the obligation of total confidentiality, avoidance of conflicts of interest, professional solidarity, the commitment to only accept work for which the interpreter feels competent and for which s/he is properly prepared, to uphold working standards and conditions, not to bring the profession into disrepute, etc. Article 1 opens with the statement:

> *The Code of Professional Ethics (…) lays down the standards of integrity, professionalism and confidentiality which all members of the Association shall be bound to respect in their work as conference interpreters (www.aiic.net/ViewPage.cfm/article24.htm).*

Alleged infringements of the Code are dealt with by a Disciplinary Committee.

2.4 Professional standards and codified working practices

Alongside the Code of Professional Ethics, AIIC has adopted a Code of Professional Standards (www.aiic.net/ViewPage.cfm/article122.htm) which defines the framework within which the profession is practised. It covers the use of standard contracts which set out the terms of the engagement, cancellation provisions, team size, the languages to be used in the meeting, travel conditions such as accommodation, subsistence, travel arrangements and a disputes procedure. The standard contract is based on the Code of Professional Standards and is used by members when working for non-institutional (i.e. private market) employers. The Professional Code also covers matters such as professional address and team size (a function of the number of languages to be interpreted into and out of).

Codified working practices are also set out in the agreements AIIC negotiates between itself and the major institutional employers such as the United Nations Organisation (UN) and the European Union (EU) on behalf of all freelance interpreters. Other agreements include Interpol, the European Coordinated Organisations and International Trades Union Federations. These agreements define the technical and material parameters applicable to all freelance conference interpreters

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