

外研社 高等英语教育学术会议文集

# 职业化时代的口译研究、教学与发展

——第十一届全国口译大会暨国际口译研讨会论文集

**Professionalization in Interpreting: Research,  
Teaching and Development**

—Proceedings of the 11th China National Conference and  
International Forum on Interpreting

主 编：洪 明  
副主编：洪 宁 朱玲佳

Interpreting

外语教学与研究出版社  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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# 序 言

2016年10月22-23日，第十一届全国口译大会暨国际口译研讨会在浙江师范大学召开。此次两年一度的口译教学与研究学术盛会由中国翻译协会和浙江师范大学联合主办、浙江师范大学外国语学院承办。来自中国、意大利、英国、法国、澳大利亚等国家和地区的近300名口译教育者、研究者、从业者和管理者齐聚一堂，围绕“职业化时代的口译研究、教学与发展”这一大会主题进行深入交流，研究口译行业发展，探讨口译人才培养。

10月22日上午的开幕式上，中国翻译协会常务副会长兼秘书长、中国外文出版发行事业局副局长、国际翻译家联盟理事王刚毅先生、浙江师范大学副校长楼世洲教授、广东外语外贸大学校长仲伟合教授和浙江师范大学外国语学院院长洪明教授分别致辞。

来自意大利的里雅斯特大学的毛里齐奥·菲茨（Maurizio Viezzi）教授、北京语言大学高级翻译学院名誉院长刘和平教授、法国巴黎新索邦大学高等翻译学校丹尼尔·吉尔（Daniel Gile）教授、上海外国语大学高级翻译学院名誉院长柴明颀教授和英国赫瑞瓦特大学克劳迪娅·安吉莱利（Claudia Angelelli）教授分别作主旨报告，就口译质量、口译职业化发展、口译教育和译员角色认知等问题发表真知灼见。

10月22日下午和23日上午，与会代表分别进入15个分论坛，通过论文宣读、专家点评、讨论交流等方式，围绕口译教学、口译过程研究、口译理论研究、口译策略与技巧、口译质量评估、现代技术与口译职业、译员角色和语料库口译研究等问题进行了跨学科、多角度的深入研讨。

10月23日下午，上海外国语大学高级翻译学院戴惠萍教授、广东外语外贸大学高级翻译学院詹成教授、四川大学外国语学院任文教授、厦门大学外文学院陈菁教授、香港城市大学翻译及语言学系鄢秀教授和联合国日内瓦办事处大会管理部口译司司长李正仁先生等专家作主旨发言，从口译职业、医疗口译、口译实践与口译伦理、口译教学研究、口译实证研究和国际机构的专业口译培养等视角切入，探讨口译职业人才培养、口译发展规划等问题。

柴明颀教授致闭幕词并对大会作了总结。

无论是专家主旨报告，还是分论坛研讨，专家、学者交流充分，思想碰撞，精

彩纷呈。他们既秉承口译研究传统，又勇于学术创新；既关注职业化时代背景下医疗、军事、法庭等不同行业的口译实践特征，又结合口译教学理论与实践探讨职业化口译人才的培养问题。学者们灵活多样地运用调查访问、数据量表、实验参照、语料库、现场观察等研究工具，并融入神经科学、心理学、认知科学、社会学、人类学、伦理学、符号学等不同学科研究方法，开展跨学科研究，极大地拓宽了口译研究的视野和路径。

近年来，翻译市场蓬勃发展，促进了翻译教育的迅速发展。国内翻译本科专业、翻译硕士专业学位、翻译学博士教育，从无到有，在短短十余年间经历了快速发展和巨大变化。时代发展、市场变化、技术革新……诸多因素都对口译行业、口译教育提出了新的要求和挑战。“机器翻译是否会取代人工翻译？”是近几年翻译界所关注的重要问题，在本届大会上，人工智能、机器翻译、语料库与大数据等关键词频见于各个发言环节，也体现出口译界对时代发展的深刻观照。

值得一提的是，参会人员中不乏相关公司、机构的口译从业人员和管理人员，业界对学界的关注可见一斑。本次大会的“职业化”主题的提出正当其时、恰逢其势，展示出学界与业界加强交流、携手共进的发展态势。

会议期间还成立了中国翻译协会口译委员会，并举行了第一次全体会议。会议明确了口译委员会致力于推动中国口译事业发展这一使命和目标，并就如何推进口译委员会今后工作、加强口译领域的政、产、学、研之间的合作展开讨论。中国翻译协会口译委员会是中国翻译协会常务理事会批准成立的第十二个分支机构，其成立是我国口译事业发展的一个里程碑，将在今后较长一段时期里引领我国口译事业发展，也将为口译行业健康有序发展创造更多机会。

此次会议还组织了“博导沙龙”，为博导教授与青年学者之间的互动交流搭建平台。

本次大会共收到近百篇学术论文，大会学术组邀请专家进行评审，从中遴选部分论文并汇集部分专家主旨报告，集结成册，这便是本论文集的由来。论文集分为“专家论坛”和“口译论坛”两部分：“专家论坛”重现了大会部分主旨演讲专家的学术思想；“口译论坛”汇集了多位作者视角多样的学术思考，体现了新时代口译研究的发展趋势。

受篇幅所限，本论文集未能收入所有投稿，但仍可体现出当前口译研究的特点与未来发展趋势：研究视野愈显开阔、思考日趋深入、方法工具更为多元；关注学习主体、口译过程、口译产品、测试评价等多个维度；不拘泥于语言学等传统学科范畴，大胆借鉴神经科学、心理学、社会学、伦理学、人类学、符号学等跨学科研

究方法，呈现出跨学科发展态势。在飞速变化的新时代，口译学者不断创新，才能不断推动口译行业的发展，成就口译行业的未来。

最后，衷心感谢上海外国语大学柴明颀教授和北京语言大学刘和平教授在全国口译大会前期筹办和本论文集组稿工作中的指导，感谢浙江师范大学外国语学院各位老师的无私奉献，感谢中国翻译协会、外语教学与研究出版社的大力支持。

仲伟合

中国翻译协会常务副会长

中国翻译协会口译委员会主任委员

澳门城市大学特聘讲座教授

2018年3月20日

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# 第一部分

# 专家论坛

# Some Thoughts on Interpreting in the 2010s

Maurizio Viezzi  
University of Trieste

**Abstract:** The paper addresses a few issues that seem to be particularly significant on the interpreting scene in the 2010s. They concern, primarily but not exclusively, the area of public service and court interpreting where there are a number of challenges to be met and opportunities to be seized.

**Key Words:** culture; rights and quality; ethics and status; training

## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

Interpreting in the 2010s: is it different from interpreting in the 1990s or the 1970s? Is it different, for example, from interpreting in 1974 (the year when you turn 18 is always special)?

A possible answer is “no”: interpreting in the 2010s is not different from interpreting in 1974 because, after all, interpreting is interpreting is interpreting. Just as is the case for translation, interpreting is “source-text induced target-text production for a third party” (Neubert, 2000: 10): one produces a text in one language on the basis of a text in another language, and does it for someone else. This was true in 1974 (and at any other time in the past) and is still true today. Yet the world has changed beyond recognition since 1974, as some examples will clearly show. Two German teams competed in the 1974 FIFA World Cup and they even played against each other—East Germany won the match, 1-0, but the Cup was eventually won by West Germany. In Africa then there were countries such as Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Zaire (Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). When 1974 began, the president of France was Georges Pompidou and the president of the United States was Richard Nixon—neither were in office at the end of the year, though, as Pompidou had died and Nixon had resigned. The Vietnam War was still on—it would end the following year. The European Union was called the European Economic

Community and had nine member states and six official languages (30 language combinations)—today the number of member states is 28 with 24 official languages and 552 language combinations. In 1974 there was no such thing as globalisation, European cities were not characterised by their current super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007), the English language was important but did not enjoy the status of universal lingua franca, there was no Internet, ICTs were not all-pervading as they are today, etc.

Now, if “everything” has changed, interpreting must have changed as well—but has it really changed? Of course since 1974 the demand for interpreting has grown exponentially, in particular in public service settings. Furthermore, in 1974 interpreting studies were almost non-existent, although the foundations of the *théorie du sens* had already been laid (Seleskovitch, 1968), and the first large international conference on interpreting would only be organised three years later in Venice (Gerver & Sinaiko, 1978). Now interpreting studies are a thriving research area and interpreting conferences are incessantly organised the world over; and there is no doubt that technology has led to substantial changes in the working life of a conference interpreter. But have developments in research, training and technology led to better interpreters? What would a 1974 interpreter do today, confronted with PowerPoint presentations and supported by technological tools helping him/her in preparing for a meeting and in the booth? There are no answers to these questions, although one could confidently argue that no amount of technology will ever compensate for poor technique, poor language proficiency and poor mediation skills.

As regards the main themes discussed in the framework of interpreting studies, no comparison is possible with the mid-1970s for the reasons outlined above. A comparison with the early 2000s, though, reveals that little has changed. That conclusion may be reached by comparing and contrasting the programmes of two international conferences organised in Italy, one in Forlì in 2000—*Interpreting in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities* (Garzone, Mead & Viezzi, 2002; Garzone & Viezzi, 2002), and one in Trieste in 2016—*Translation and Interpreting: Convergence, Contact, Interaction*. The main difference between the two is a greater emphasis on non-conference interpreting in the latter, but there are many common themes, which suggests that the big issues have remained the same.

The 2016 conference ended on the third day with a round table where the

panellists were invited to discuss eight keywords that had emerged over the first and second days as being particularly significant and representative of the proceedings—eight keywords related to the most important and recurring themes and concepts addressed by the speakers in their papers and by the participants in the Q&A sessions. The eight keywords were (in alphabetical order): culture, ethics, mediation, quality, rights, status, subject-matter knowledge and training. While the eight keywords may not necessarily be said to cover the whole of the debate in interpreting studies today (technology is conspicuously absent, for example), they are a good starting point to reflect on interpreting in the 2010s in order to discuss the burning issues, identify the challenges to be met and the opportunities to be seized. That is what this paper is all about—a reflection on a few themes characterising interpreting in the 2010s, moving from the 2016 round table, but with no reference whatsoever to what was actually said and discussed there. As will be seen, most remarks concern interpreting in courts and in public services, which are without doubt the most topical interpreting settings, in Europe and probably elsewhere as well.

## 2. CULTURE

---

It is not easy to write about culture at a time when everything or almost everything is explained with or blamed on culture: a cup of tea is culture, a 10-minute delay is culture, domestic violence is culture, etc.; and it is not easy to write about culture without running the risk of adding to the many platitudes that have been written on the topic, in particular with reference to culture and language(s) or culture and translation. A brief reflection on culture is in order, though, as culture remains an important theme, one that is becoming ever more important and relevant to an interpreter's work.

I have always found Vermeer's view of culture very useful (Pöchhacker, 1995; Vermeer, 1983). Vermeer makes a distinction between *idioculture*, *paraculture* and *diaculture*. *Idioculture* is culture at the level of the individual, i.e., one's set of knowledge, experience, behaviour patterns, etc.; *paraculture* is culture at the level of a people, nation or society—it is what people refer to when they speak of "German culture" or "French culture" or "American culture". Needless to say such a concept might easily be conducive to stereotyping. One can hardly deny, though, that every people, nation or society shares a common tangible and intangible heritage (geography,

history, traditions, knowledge, experience, social functions, TV programmes, literature, etc.) setting it apart from (all) other peoples, nations or societies; finally, diaculture is culture at the level of a group of people sharing the same professional occupation, the same interests or the same background: it is what all dentists or all violinists or all pole-vaulters or all “German football fans” (Vermeer’s example) have in common.

Translation scholars have regularly dealt with the issue (and the problem) of culture, at least since the 1960s, with the translator being recognised as a cultural mediator—in this respect, the title of David Katan’s book, *Translating Cultures* (Katan, 1999) is very explicit. Conversely, interpreting scholars have traditionally attached less importance to culture, which is not surprising since interpreting research used to concentrate mainly on conference interpreting where the cultural or, rather, the cross-cultural dimension seems to be much less important than is the case in translation, in particular literary translation. If Vermeer’s categories are used, ignoring idioculture which is not relevant here, paraculture and paracultural differences do not play a significant role in conference interpreting, with the possible exception of problem triggers such as forms of address (Pöchhacker, 1995)—an easily predictable problem that may be dealt with and solved in advance, or the occasional culture-bound term (e.g., the dreaded cricket metaphors) or cultural reference—the occurrence of which is no doubt declining given the growing number of speakers who do not use their own language at international conferences. As regards diaculture, it is not an obstacle, but an aid in a conference setting. What conference participants (speakers and audience) share (their profession, their expertise, their research area, etc.) is more important than what they do not share (a language) and their knowledge of the topic can help or allow communication even when the interpreters are out of their depth and interpreting is less than optimal.

The situation is completely different outside a conference setting—for example in court interpreting or in public service interpreting, in particular when one of the users of the interpreting service is a migrant. First of all, rarely do participants in an interpreted event in court or in public services share the same diaculture; secondly, the interlocutors (legal professionals and defendants/witnesses, doctors/nurses and patients) may belong to paracultures that are very far apart; thirdly, the fact of

belonging to a specific paraculture may be a crucial aspect of a migrant's identity, just like his/her language or religion, and may be (experienced as being) in conflict with the fact that his/her interlocutors belong to the home paraculture, i.e. the dominant paraculture. As a result, migrants and their interlocutors may end up being separated by invisible cultural borders that hinder or even prevent communication: borders separating minority and majority, askers and givers, ignorance and knowledge, disease and health, weakness and strength, power and powerlessness. Obvious examples in a healthcare setting are borders separating different attitudes towards disease, pain or death, borders separating norms that allow or forbid certain medical practices, and the obvious gender borders.

Such borders can only be crossed or negotiated thanks to the interpreter's intercultural competence. Hence the need to allocate a substantial amount of time to developing intercultural competence during interpreter training, in particular in the training of future interpreters wishing to work in court or public service settings.

### 3. RIGHTS AND QUALITY

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The issue of rights—language rights—is probably the burning issue in interpreting, at least in Europe. The term “language rights” may be used to refer to no fewer than three areas—the right to language use, the right to language education and the right to language assistance, i.e., the right to translation and interpreting. It is the latter that is relevant here.

As a result of migration and internal mobility, the European Union has become increasingly multilingual and multicultural. As regards the population, here are some official figures (EUROSTAT, 2016) referring to the situation on 1 January 2015: 34.3 million people living in the EU were born outside the EU; 18.5 million people living in an EU member state were born in another member state; 19.8 million people living in the EU were non-EU citizens; 15.3 million people living in an EU member state were citizens of another member state. As regards languages, a study covering 21 countries, carried out in 2007, identified 440 spoken languages and 18 sign languages, but the researchers themselves said that the actual number of languages might be in the region of 600 (ECML, 2007: 27); and, according to London Metropolitan Police, some years ago no fewer than 340 languages were spoken in London alone (SIGTIPS,

2011). The figures are not updated, but given the size of the migration phenomenon that has been going on for some years now, there is no reason to believe that the European Union today could be less multicultural/multinational and multilingual than it was a few years ago.

Mobile EU citizens, migrants and refugees may not know the local language(s), they may therefore have language needs, in particular when accessing public services, and those needs may be met mainly through translation and interpreting services made available by public service providers. As may be expected, however, in particular these days with the lingering effects of the economic crisis and the rise of populism, many people object—they say that migrants and refugees and mobile EU citizens must learn the local language(s), they do not want their money to be spent on translation and interpreting for foreigners.

The two objections are legitimate, but untenable. First of all, because languages are not learnt overnight—and the kind of language proficiency one needs in a legal or a medical setting is much higher than a mere survival level. Secondly, if no money is spent on translation and interpreting in public service settings, migrants, refugees and mobile EU citizens may end up having no access to public services or receiving lower-quality services. In other words, they may end up being discriminated against simply because they do not know or do not know well enough the local language(s), which is a violation of a principle enshrined in a number of constitutions and legal documents, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union whose article 21(1) reads as follows: “Any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation shall be prohibited” (European Union, 2012).

Providing translation and, above all, interpreting in public services—in particular in sensitive settings such as justice or healthcare, where personal freedom, health or even life may be at stake—therefore means enforcing a fundamental human right: “interpreters also help the institutions of multilingual societies to function. They support immigrant communities in courts, hospitals, police and immigration services. Properly trained, interpreters thus contribute to safeguarding human and democratic rights” (European Union, 2005). Unfortunately, there seems to be no country where

there is the right to interpreting in all public services at all times. In the judicial field, though, a great leap forward was made by the European Union in recent years with Directive 2010/64/EU (European Union, 2010), adopted in 2010 and subsequently transposed into the member states' national legislations, which proclaims the right to translation and interpreting in criminal proceedings.

Needless to say, having directives and laws proclaiming rights is essential, but is not enough. The real questions are: are those rights enforced? And how? This is the point where the issue of rights merges with the issue of quality.

Quality is without any doubt one of the crucial issues in interpreting. It is important in all settings and absolutely vital in sensitive settings. Talking about quality in court or public service interpreting is not an abstract academic pastime, but something concerning people and their rights. Furthermore, interpreting quality in criminal proceedings is a legal requirement laid down in Article 2(8) of the Directive: "interpretation provided under this Article shall be of a quality sufficient to safeguard the fairness of the proceedings, in particular by ensuring that suspected or accused persons have knowledge of the case against them and are able to exercise their right of defence" (European Union, 2010).

This author has worked extensively on interpreting quality both in conference settings (Viezzi, 1996) and in non-conference settings (Viezzi, 2012) and developed a quality model based on four parameters: equivalence, accuracy, appropriateness and usability. The model seems to have stood the test of time, but while it was supposed to be applicable to all interpreting, it was developed for monologue interpreting, i.e., simultaneous and consecutive, performed by professional interpreters whereas what is found in courts, healthcare and other public service settings is dialogue interpreting often performed by non-professionals under conditions that are completely different from those characterising simultaneous/consecutive in conference or media settings or dialogue interpreting in political or business settings. Which does not mean that the four parameters are not applicable to court or public service settings, but it is clear that greater attention should be paid to the specific conditions of every interpreting assignment in order fully to appreciate the "tension between what is translationally desirable and what is feasible under the circumstances" (Pöchhacker, 2007: 129).

The fact that court interpreting and public service interpreting are often performed

by untrained, unaccredited, non-professional interpreters—sometimes family members, even children—is a serious problem that has been addressed by the research community for some time, notably through a series of conferences (NPIT) inaugurated in 2012 (the fourth conference in the series will be held in Stellenbosch in 2018). It is true that the sheer array of languages for which interpreting is needed makes it difficult to find properly trained professional interpreters at all times, but equating native speakers with interpreters or resorting to the waiter of the restaurant round the corner or to the patient's little daughter for an interpreting job are hardly conducive to interpreting quality, with all this may entail.

As regards court interpreting, another factor has an impact on quality. In many countries, in Italy for example, interpreters are not informed in advance about the case in which they have to work. Interviews carried out with legal professionals in the framework of several projects made it clear that there are two reasons for that: first, judges do not want interpreters to be biased (which may be understandable); second, judges feel that no information is needed because the interpreter is there just to translate (which defies belief). The latter is perfectly described by Jacobsen with reference to the attitude prevailing in Denmark: “the interpreter should function as a translating machine, or as a kind of transducer transforming an input in one language into an output, which is an exact replica of the original, in another language. The interpreter should just translate, s/he should translate everything and s/he should translate accurately” (Jacobsen, 2002).

Judges thus appear to be supporters of what is known as the conduit model (Clifford, 2004) which means that they know very little about interpreting (and, surprisingly, about language) and are not quality-aware. Hence the need to raise awareness among judges and all public service providers of what interpreting actually is and what is needed really to have quality interpreting, in particular in emotionally charged settings where communication in general and interpreting in particular cannot be based on mechanically applied standard rules. A significant example that comes to mind in this respect is interpreting in gender violence cases (Toledano Buendía & del Pozo Triviño, 2015), but of course most situations in the legal and medical fields are emotionally charged.