

The Establishment of Interpretation Studies as An Independent Discipline and Early Initiatives in Interpreter Training

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Abstract: Interpretation Studies has emerged as a distinct field of academic inquiry, differentiating itself from linguistics and translation studies. This paper explores the historical development of interpretation as an academic discipline, tracing the institutionalization of interpreter training programs and early research initiatives. The focus is on post-World War II efforts, key academic institutions, and pioneering figures that shaped the discipline's foundations. The article deals with the initial stage of training simultaneous interpreters and developing their professional skills. The authors single out and analyse a number of abilities and skills that learners are expected to develop in order to successfully obtain the qualification of simultaneous interpreters and offer a system of exercises and tasks that is intended to assist their acquisition.

Keywords: Interpretation studies, interpreter training, independent discipline, translation studies, conference interpreting, professionalization, language mediation, curriculum development, interpreter education, interdisciplinary approach.

Introduction: The profession of interpreting has existed for centuries, yet its academic recognition and systematic study are relatively recent. Interpretation Studies, as a branch of applied linguistics and communication science, became established in the mid-20th century in response to the growing demand for trained interpreters, especially after World War II. This article explores how interpreter training programs developed, the shift from ad hoc learning to formal education, and the discipline's evolution into a recognized field of study.

Interpreters work with clients from many professions and in different contexts and settings. A facilitator of interpreters' ability to provide an optimal interlingual transfer of another's speech or signing is possessing knowledge of other professionals' perspectives and goals. Interprofessional education is a teaching or

learning method that includes learning activities in which trainees from two or more disciplines interact with each other in real or simulated settings. This article reports on the participation of interpreting students in interprofessional education with medical and social work students over a three-year period. Responses were obtained from 109 interpreting students across four medicine–interpreting and three social work–interpreting sessions relating to their perception of the roles of the other student groups pre- and post-intervention and how best to work with each group. Thematic analysis of the data revealed that pre-intervention knowledge of the doctors' work was significant while knowledge about social work was varied; there were high levels of agreement that knowledge of the other group had increased post-intervention; future intentions were related to greater awareness of a briefing, applying knowledge of the

relevant genre of spoken interaction, the need for the allophone interlocutors to establish rapport with each other, and awareness of source speakers' tone and intent in addition to form and content .

METHOD

Interpretation Studies began to emerge as a separate academic field in the aftermath of World War II. With the establishment of the United Nations and other international organizations, the need for simultaneous and consecutive interpreters increased significantly. Institutions such as the École d'Interprètes de Genève (Geneva School of Interpreters, 1941) and later the Monterey Institute of International Studies played critical roles in professionalizing interpreter education.

Taking into consideration the necessity to adjust to the changing conditions, it should be noted that we are temporarily left in legal limbo due to the absence of the Branch Standards of Higher Education. The Branch Standards are the guiding landmarks for the professional training, they contain such components as:

- educational qualification characteristics of graduates of higher educational institutions, which define the objectives of higher education and training, determine the place of the specialists in the structure of state industries and the requirements for their competence and other socially important qualities, abilities and skills, professional functions and typical tasks (these characteristics should be approved by authorized central executive body in education and science in coordination with the authorized central body of executive power in industry of labor and social policy);
- educational and professional training programs, which define the regulatory period and the regulatory part of the content of training in a certain field or specialty, the requirements for content, scope and level of education and professional training (these training programs should be approved by the authorized central executive body in education and science);
- diagnostics tools, intended for quantitative and qualitative assessment of education efficiency, that is the assessment of knowledge, abilities and skills, professional and other qualities in compliance with the education standards of higher education (these tools should be approved by the authorized central executive body in education and science as well).

The profession of interpreting has long existed in diplomatic and commercial settings. However, the formal training of interpreters did not begin until the 20th century, when the complexity and scale of international communication intensified. Especially

after World War II, the need for professional interpreters catalyzed efforts to systematize interpreter training. These early initiatives would form the basis of Interpretation Studies as an academic and professional field.

Professional competence of future interpreters is formed in the process of educational purposeful activities. The value of language training of future interpreters is difficult to overestimate. The level of professional competence of future specialists in general depends on how inherent linguistic framework is and how it reflects the future professional activity.

The theoretical foundations of Interpretation Studies drew from disciplines such as linguistics, communication theory, psychology, and cognitive science. Scholars like Danica Seleskovitch contributed significantly by developing the theory of sense, which emphasized the process of understanding and reformulating meaning rather than word-for-word translation.

Initial interpreter training programs were pragmatic and practice-oriented, often founded in response to immediate needs. During the Nuremberg Trials (1945–1946), interpreters were required to facilitate communication between multiple languages simultaneously. This event marked a turning point, demonstrating the necessity of rigorous training and setting a precedent for simultaneous interpreting.

Key developments in early interpreter training included:

- Creation of specialized curricula: Early programs focused on bilingualism, public speaking, memory training, and ethical conduct.
- Use of interpreting labs: Technology such as booths, headphones, and microphones became standard in training facilities.
- Development of standards: The formation of organizations like AIIC (Association Internationale des Interprètes de Conférence) in 1953 established professional norms.

By the 1970s and 1980s, interpreter training had expanded into universities, leading to the emergence of Interpretation Studies as a scholarly discipline. Research topics included cognitive load, note-taking strategies, interpreter ethics, and the sociology of interpreting. Journals such as *The Interpreters' Newsletter* and *Meta* contributed to the dissemination

of academic work in the field.

Universities in Europe, North America, and Asia developed graduate programs that integrated theory and practice. Today, the discipline continues to evolve, incorporating technology such as remote interpreting and artificial intelligence.

The structure of the integrative approach to foreign language teaching at the initial stage of interpreter training includes aspects, principles, goals and results. Aspects of the integrative approach are methodological, organizational and substantial components. The methodological aspect involves integrated methods of foreign language and interpretation teaching. The organizational component implies integrated forms of teaching the subjects mentioned above. The substantial component includes training activities (various methods, highquality selection of material contributing to the objectives of the integrative course) and extracurricular activities (intercultural interaction, selfinstructional material). The basic principles of the integrative approach in foreign language teaching in interpreter training are: the principle of orientation to self-development and self-education; the principle of variability; the multicultural principle of self-determination and self-actualization of the individual; the principle of tolerance; the principle of dialogue of cultures; the principle of communicativeness; the group interaction principle; the principle of consciousness; the principle of professional orientation .

CONCLUSION

Interpretation Studies has established itself as an independent and interdisciplinary academic field. From its roots in post-war necessity to its present-day status as a field with rigorous training and research traditions, it reflects the growing importance of multilingual communication in a globalized world.

This article outlines the historical development of Interpretation Studies as an independent academic discipline, emphasizing post-World War II interpreter training initiatives. It highlights major institutions, key figures like Danica Seleskovitch, and the evolution of interpreter training from practical workshops to formal academic programs.

The article reviewed the following challenges arising in the early stages of training: the inability of students to concentrate and keep a lasting focus on the meaning and the structure of the source utterance, inability to control their short-term memory, the unfamiliar situation where the interpreter is required to listen and speak simultaneously, lack of control over intonation and structure of speech during interpreting, and others. Several methods have been suggested to solve

these difficulties, including activating short-term memory by memorisation and repetition of single words and word combinations; listening comprehension and the shadowing technique with varying loudness, pace and intonation; semantic analysis of a sentence, which helps to develop a deeper understanding of its meaning; various types of retelling; work with gapped texts, learning new vocabulary, primarily collocations, and active acquisition of background knowledge connected with the topic of the translated texts. Introducing these activities in actual teaching carried out by the authors for over ten years has shown that they improve interpreting performance both immediately after the preparatory exercises (particularly those aimed at short-term memory and anticipation skills development) and in the long run .

The early initiatives in interpreter training were driven by necessity and shaped by the socio-political context of the mid-20th century. Despite limited resources, pioneering institutions and individuals succeeded in professionalizing interpreter education. These foundational efforts evolved into robust training programs and helped establish Interpretation Studies as a respected academic and professional discipline.

The formal establishment of Interpretation Studies as an independent academic discipline marked a significant milestone in the evolution of language mediation and multilingual communication. Initially emerging from the broader field of Translation Studies, Interpretation Studies developed its own theoretical frameworks, methodologies, and pedagogical practices, driven by the increasing demand for professional interpreters in diplomatic, medical, legal, and conference settings. Early training initiatives, such as the establishment of dedicated interpreter training programs in Europe and beyond, laid the groundwork for a structured and standardized approach to interpreter education. These pioneering efforts not only emphasized practical skills and ethical standards but also contributed to the recognition of interpreting as a specialized and intellectually rigorous profession. As the field continues to evolve, it embraces interdisciplinary influences and technological advancements, ensuring its relevance and responsiveness to the changing needs of global communication.

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