ROUTLEDGE

Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies

Edited by

Franz Pöchhacker

ROUTLEDGE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF INTERPRETING STUDIES

The *Routledge Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* is the authoritative reference for anyone with an academic or professional interest in interpreting.

Drawing on the expertise of an international team of specialist contributors, this single-volume reference presents the state of the art in interpreting studies in a much more fine-grained matrix of entries than has ever been seen before.

For the first time, all key issues and concepts in interpreting studies are brought together and covered systematically and in a structured and accessible format.

With entries alphabetically arranged and extensively cross-referenced, this text combines clarity with scholarly accuracy and depth, defining and discussing key terms in context to ensure maximum understanding and ease of use.

Practical and unique, the *Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies* presents a genuinely comprehensive overview of the fast growing and increasingly diverse field of interpreting studies.

Franz Pöchhacker is Associate Professor of Interpreting Studies in the Center for Translation Studies at the University of Vienna. His professional background is in conference interpreting, and he has worked freelance in conference and media settings since the late 1980s. He has lectured widely and published some 100 papers and reviews. He is the author of the textbook *Introducing Interpreting Studies* (Routledge 2004/2016), Associate Editor of the 'Benjamins Translation Library' series and co-editor of *Interpreting: International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting* (John Benjamins).

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Edited by
Franz Pöchhacker

Associate Editor:
Nadja Grbić

Consultant Editors:
Peter Mead and Robin Setton

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To Miriam Shlesinger
who would have loved
to live to see this book

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A perfect complement to the editorial team was Samantha Vale Noya, the Associate Editor in charge of the project at Routledge, whose competent support throughout the genesis of this project is gratefully acknowledged. I am also grateful to Isja Conen, her counterpart at John Benjamins, for lending a hand with software for compiling the index.

A warm word of thanks also to all those friends and colleagues whose company I consciously neglected during more than a year of intense editing work. I hope we can pick up where we left off.

Much more than I can express here and say thank you for has come from Doris, who has given me encouragement and strength throughout, and has brightened my life with her love.

FRANZ PÖCHHACKER
3 March 2015

INTRODUCTION

On what we know about interpreting, and how

As often happens with invited speakers, who are introduced by well-briefed chairpersons as needing no introduction, and then lengthily introduced after all, it could be said that this book needs no introduction. Most people would expect a volume with the title "Encyclopedia of Interpreting Studies" simply to give access to the knowledge available about interpreting, as developed in the academic field of study which gives the book its name. Indeed, the less familiar prospective readers are with this discipline, the more likely they are to skip this Introduction. With little need to take an interest in "The Making of...", they will assume that this Encyclopedia contains articles on the most relevant topics, written by those who know the subject best, and presented in the most appropriate form. Readers with more knowledge about the field, in contrast, may well have a greater interest in the rationale underlying this particular presentation of the state of the art in interpreting studies. The questions they might be asking about how this volume has been put together will be addressed here under a number of why-questions about the book and its contents, contributors, features and structure. This will not so much make the volume more usable (by offering guidance in a "how to use this book" format), as enhance its value for the scholarly community by making explicit some of the main choices and principles shaping its content, allowing fellow scholars to understand – and question – authorial and, in particular, editorial decisions, and thus reflect on how this account of their field of study might possibly be improved.

Why this book?

This Encyclopedia goes back to an idea in one of the relevant departments at Routledge to publish a reference volume similar to that edited for translation studies by Mona Baker (Baker 1998; Baker & Saldanha 2009). An invitation to take interest in such a project reached me on 1 July 2011, and drew considerable skepticism. Admittedly, the idea of a 'companion volume' had worked very well twice before, and given our field both *The Interpreting Studies Reader* (Pöchhacker & Shlesinger 2002) and the 2004 textbook analogous to Jeremy Munday's (2001) *Introducing Translation Studies*, now in its third edition. The idea of a parallel encyclopedia project seemed more problematic, however, given the coverage of interpreting in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, under such headwords as 'community interpreting', 'conference interpreting', 'court interpreting', 'dialogue interpreting', 'interpretive approach', 'relay' and 'signed language interpreting'. Moreover, comprehensive reference volumes on translation and interpreting studies had been prepared by other publishers, including, first and foremost, the Benjamins *Handbook of Translation Studies* (Gambier & van Doorslaer 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013), the Wiley *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (Chapelle 2013), with a section on translation and interpreting coordinated by

Claudia Angelelli, Brian Baer and Nadja Grbić, and the more compact *Oxford Handbook of Translation Studies* (Malmkjær & Windle 2011) – not to mention Routledge's own *Handbook of Translation Studies* (Millán & Bartrina 2013), in preparation at the time. With interpreting types and topics broadly represented in these volumes, usually by leading authors in the field of interpreting studies, it seemed doubtful, at best, whether there would be room, or need, for yet another reference volume on interpreting (studies).

The aim of offering added value was therefore the principal motivation behind my proposal for this book, submitted to the publisher, not without hesitation, in late 2011. Based on favorable responses from four reviewers, the project went ahead and a contract was signed – before I learned of parallel plans for *The Routledge Handbook of Interpreting* (Mikkelson & Jourdenais 2015). All the more reason to make this Encyclopedia a unique resource, with qualities not found in other reference volumes in the field of translation and interpreting studies.

The rationale for this volume, shared by most of the titles mentioned above, is to take stock of existing knowledge about interpreting. Efforts to do so were made on other occasions, and in other forms, in the past; examples include the 1994 Turku Conference on "Interpreting: What Do We Know, and How?", alluded to in the title of this Introduction, and the 2006 volume of *Linguistica Antverpiensia* entitled *Taking Stock: Research and Methodology in Community Interpreting* (Hertog & van der Veer 2006). The shift of emphasis toward community interpreting, and the fact that the proceedings volume of the Turku Conference (Gambier et al. 1997) ended up with 'conference interpreting' in its title, despite other types of interpreting being in evidence at that event, point to the fundamental objective of the present volume – that is, to achieve a single, detailed survey of the field that would include the various domains and research traditions of interpreting not only side by side, but in an *integrated* manner. This has major implications for the structure of the book as a whole, and for the content of individual articles. What it essentially means is that every article reflects an effort by its author to cover the headword, where applicable, *across domains, modes and settings.* Notwithstanding the often uneven pattern of research on any given topic, contributors have been asked to look beyond the type and modality of interpreting they may be specialized in, and consider the relevance of their topic in other areas of work.

The aim of making this volume *comprehensive* would be a more evident aspiration for an encyclopedia. In practical terms, comprehensive coverage is attempted in this book not only by ensuring breadth (e.g. by including less familiar topics) but also, and especially, by achieving depth. This depth of coverage relates to the choice of headwords, as explained in greater detail below. Rather than make do with the basic typological points of reference found in comparable publications (e.g. Baker & Saldanha 2009), the present volume has a *fine-grained* conceptual structure that allows the reader to zoom in and out, as it were, from familiar central categories. It is thus the goal of providing an integrated – that is, coherent and detailed – account of the topic, through a multi-layered arrangement of headwords in a differentiated conceptual structure, that made this Encyclopedia a project worth undertaking. If the volume meets its intended purpose of providing a coherent *web of knowledge* (or a 'hypertext', in the original sense of the term), the rationale for this Encyclopedia will have been fully achieved.

Why this structure?

The *macro-structure* of this volume corresponds to its underlying design, as well as the conventions of the genre. Unlike a handbook, an encyclopedia could be expected to be structured around headwords in *alphabetical* order. This is in fact the case for this Encyclopedia, though recent examples in the field of translation and interpreting studies include not only handbooks with contents in alphabetical order (e.g. Angelelli & Baer 2015) but also encyclopedias with a thematic arrangement of contents (e.g. Chan 2015).

If the basic structure of this Encyclopedia is more conventional, with a single main section containing all entries from A to Z, so is its medium of presentation in the form of a printed book – for the time being. This makes it somewhat more difficult for readers to take advantage of the hypertext design and quickly jump to related entries by following the *embedded cross-references* in the text, which appear in SMALL CAPITALS – once, when the headword referred to first occurs in a given article.

A future online version of the Encyclopedia would eliminate this inconvenience and make all content available as the web of interrelated knowledge as which this book has been designed. In either format, though, readers without a thorough understanding of the field will benefit from an account of the thematic and conceptual structure that is lacking in any alphabetical arrangement. This is provided in the book in two ways. First, the alphabetical list of contents is followed by a 'thematic outline of entries', in which an attempt has been made to assign the headwords to a set of broad thematic categories, such as 'History', 'Profession', 'Settings' and 'Methodology'. Admittedly, many headwords might well be placed into more than one category, so that the thematic outline must clearly fall short of a taxonomy, or a definitive 'mapping' (van Doorslaer 2009) of knowledge components in interpreting studies. This is addressed by a second feature, in the *micro-structure* of the Encyclopedia: the indication of key *conceptual links* underneath the headword. Rather than a list of related topics for 'further reading', these links to other articles at the 'head' of the entry represent the most immediate conceptual relations for a given headword, at three different levels: an upward arrow (↑) points to a closely related article on a headword that represents a superordinate concept, such as '↑ Strategies' in the entry on 'Anticipation'; a horizontal arrow (→) indicates a closely related conceptual link, such as '→ Quality' in the entry on 'Competence'; and a downward arrow (↓) points to key subordinate concepts, such as '↓ Video relay service' in the entry on 'Remote interpreting'. Conceptual relations are indicated only for the level immediately above or below. For instance, the upward link from 'Simultaneous with text' is only to 'Simultaneous interpreting' and not to the superordinate concept of 'Modes'; and the downward link from 'Quality' is only to 'Quality criteria' (among others), and not to subordinate concepts like 'Accuracy', 'Cohesion', 'Fluency', 'Intonation' or 'Voice quality'. In this case, in particular, but also in many others, the conceptual links provided may well be questioned; the complexity of many key concepts and the nature of categorization processes do not allow a more Cartesian formalization. Nevertheless, the reader should find it possible, in many cases, to develop a sense of conceptual relations even before beginning to read the article itself, which will then of course make the conceptual status of the headword more explicit in the form of definitions and theoretical analysis.

A more conventional, if not standard, micro-structural feature found in this book, apart from the embedded cross-references mentioned earlier, is the use of in-text references pointing to relevant sources. These are listed in a single collective bibliography at the end of the volume – a part of the macro-structure of this Encyclopedia which should prove highly valuable, in its own right, as a bibliography of reference in interpreting studies.

A feature that some readers will find missing is illustrations. The editorial decision not to include figures, tables or photographs may, indeed, be regretted. However, remedying this lack of graphic information would have required incommensurate effort to resolve issues of rights and reproduction, quite apart from questions of balance and epistemological needs. A larger editorial team may well be able to produce an 'illustrated encyclopedia' of interpreting studies in the future; the present text should serve well as a foundation.

Why these headwords?

Over and above issues of design and structure, the choice of headwords to be covered in the articles of the Encyclopedia is undoubtedly crucial. The procedure adopted for compiling the list of headwords can be characterized as a pragmatic data-driven ('bottom-up') approach. The original book proposal included a list of some 300 headwords, identified on the basis of the subject index in *Introducing Interpreting Studies* (Pöchhacker 2004a). Once the project was under way and Nadja Grbić had been recruited as Consultant Editor, the draft list was reviewed and checked against lists of entries in comparable reference publications and other bibliographic resources, with additional input from Consultant Editor Robin Setton.

The crucial next step of deciding which of the headwords should be treated in the form of full articles, and which by way of referral to other entries, was accomplished by screening the LIDOC bibliographic database maintained at the University of Graz for relevant publications, using titles and keyword information. (It was in this painstaking process that Nadja Grbić, with her mastery in querying that database, 'earned' her status of Associate Editor early on.) Thus, the decision to have a full entry on a given topic was not based on top-down mapping, as described by van Doorslaer (2009) for the keyword scheme in the Benjamins *Translation Studies Bibliography*; rather, it was based on the joint assessment of the published research output on the headword in question. While the Benjamins *Translation Studies Bibliography* also proved highly instrumental in this process, reliance on the LIDOC database was deemed advisable because of its particularly thorough coverage of publications on signed language interpreting. The goal was to establish whether there was a 'critical mass' of publications on a given topic, in the sense of a more or less coherent line of work, with studies building on one another, or creating new insights in a dialectical fashion. Even so, decisions were not based on purely quantitative parameters; a number of qualitative considerations (such as the type and medium of publication) were also taken into account in deciding whether to include a topic as a headword treated in a full article.

Editorial choices regarding the headwords concern form as well as content, and it proved unavoidable in some cases to impose one preference or another. Examples include opting for a full entry on 'Community interpreting' and listing its synonym 'public service interpreting' as a 'blind' (referring) entry, or preferring 'Dialogue interpreting' over 'liaison interpreting' and 'Time lag' over 'ear–voice span'. Similar choices concern lexical alternatives such as 'Signed language interpreting' vs. 'sign language interpreting' and 'Courtroom interpreting' vs. 'court interpreting', with the terminological rationale in the latter case being explained in the article.

This process led to a 'headword list' envisaging 297 entries (213 with full articles and 84 blind entries) at the start of the project. This served as the basis for recruiting contributors, who received the headword list as well as a description of the Encyclopedia's design. The ensuing collaborative process produced a small number of changes to the headword list. Some of these were due to preferences on the part of the contributing authors, and others were additions, often in the form of 'spin-offs' from larger entries by the same author – for example, in the case of 'Neutrality' as a separate subordinate entry relating to 'Ethics', or 'Footing' as a separate entry under 'Participation framework'. The final headword count thus comes to an even 300, 221 of which are entries in the form of full articles.

Why these authors?

Compared to the process of choosing headwords for inclusion and full coverage, deciding whom to invite as contributors proved relatively easy. As a collective effort by and for the interpreting studies community, this Encyclopedia is written primarily by authors who would indicate ‘interpreting studies’ as their main area of research interest or disciplinary affiliation. The fact that the interpreting studies community is not excessively large, and that research areas tend to be increasingly specialized, implied many rather obvious choices, and practically everyone I approached responded favorably, and often even with enthusiasm. It can thus be noted with some pride that the 139 contributors from some 30 different countries include most of the *leading scholars* in this field, from its most senior representatives to colleagues who have only recently completed their doctoral research.

Nevertheless, the list of contributors goes beyond interpreting scholars in the strict sense and includes authors doing research on interpreting in other disciplinary frameworks. This includes, in particular, experts in fields like history (such as Rachel Mairs and Natalie Rothman), cognitive psychology and psycholinguistics (such as Teresa Bajo and Annette de Groot) and qualitative social research (such as Ros Edwards).

With either type of contributor, the aim was to have topics covered by authors particularly well placed to do so on the basis of their specialist knowledge and experience. In most cases, this status is based on major contributions made to the state of the art by the authors concerned. The fact that these contributors thus describe, in large measure, their own work, or at least the line of work to which they have contributed, should ensure that the various entries in the Encyclopedia offer an authoritative treatment of the topics covered. A potential drawback could be seen in the possible lack of detachment or critical perspective, but this is, most crucially perhaps, where the role of the editor comes in, and every effort has indeed been made throughout the painstaking editing process to ensure that the knowledge (re)presented in every article of this Encyclopedia is as balanced and comprehensive as possible.

Why these sources?

The goals of balance and comprehensiveness, as well as integration across professional domains, language modalities and institutional settings, are reflected in the choice of sources referred to in the individual articles. As with some of the issues of content alluded to above, decisions regarding references were shaped by often considerable editorial ‘bullying’. Many authors would have preferred to give more references, but agreed to accept editorial suggestions that mainly related to the requirement for the bibliography to be as *relevant* and *accessible* as possible.

The assumption underlying this referencing approach is that the sources given in the text of the article are of particular relevance to a full understanding of the topic, in ways that become clear from how the in-text references are presented. This also implies that there is no need for a separate indication of references ‘for further reading’. Moreover, the multiple embedded cross-references often obviate the need for further explicit in-text references (which are also omitted where the reference would be to the author who contributed the article on the cross-referenced headword). Compared to the more extensive referencing common in research articles and papers, the use of sources – or even literal quotations – in the Encyclopedia articles may thus, in most cases, appear relatively sparse. The fact that the collective bibliography at the end of the book nevertheless runs to over 2,100 entries should be sufficient proof that the knowledge presented in this volume is adequately documented, aside from vindicating the editor’s plea for economy in the list of references.

The principle that references should be as accessible as possible was even more difficult to implement. The issues here relate to the language and the type of publication. With English as the language of this Encyclopedia, and the most common lingua franca of the field it covers, preference has been given, wherever possible, to published sources in that language. Aside from the vexed issue of linguistic hegemony, which is by no means specific to interpreting studies, opting for English also clashes, in part, with the goal of balanced and comprehensive coverage. Certain topics are treated more extensively in works published in one language or another, and yet, giving greater attention to such sources would make access difficult for many readers. Publications in German or Spanish, as well as in the major Asian languages, are obvious cases in point. This quandary has been hard to resolve in a principled manner, and much must be put down to the editor's discretion. The same applies to accessibility in terms of the type or medium of publication. The aim of making this Encyclopedia a reliable source of research-based knowledge would suggest giving preference to publications in peer-reviewed international journals, and this has in fact been done wherever possible. Nevertheless, publications in the relatively young discipline of interpreting studies, with its close links to concerns of the interpreting profession, are highly diverse, and relevant sources include documents on websites of professional associations and university journals, as well as unpublished theses and dissertations (often in languages other than English). Though the declared preference is for works published (in print, if possible) in 'mainstream' scientific media, numerous exceptions can be found.

With regard to references, as with other aspects of this Encyclopedia, absolute consistency has been impossible to achieve, if it is feasible at all in a project of this scope. What has been achieved, though, is the first ever comprehensive presentation of the state of the art in interpreting studies. This is above all a collective task, and it has been a privilege to steer this undertaking in the role of editor. No less vital has been the intensive collaboration with the other three members of the editorial team – Consultant Editors Peter Mead and Robin Setton and, in particular, Associate Editor Nadja Grbić. Their input and support provides the answer to the final why-question in this Introduction – that is, why the interpreting studies community and interested readers in other fields and walks of life now have access, in a single volume, to an impressive range of knowledge and insights about the multifaceted phenomenon of interpreting.

FRANZ PÖCHHACKER
3 March 2015

LIST OF ARTICLES AND AUTHORS

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Barbara Ahrens Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Michaela Albl-Mikasa Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur, Switzerland

Dörte Andres University of Mainz, Germersheim, Germany

Claudia V. Angelelli Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

Rachele Antonini Università di Bologna a Forlì, Italy

Jesús Baigorri-Jalón Universidad de Salamanca, Spain

María Teresa Bajo Universidad de Granada, Spain

Mária Bakti University of Szeged, Hungary

Claudio Baraldi Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy

Magdalena Bartłomiejczyk University of Silesia, Sosnowiec, Poland

Morven Beaton Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Martina Behr University of Mainz, Germersheim, Germany

Claudio Bendazzoli Università di Torino, Italy

Julie Boéri Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain

Hanneke Bot Utrecht, Netherlands

Sabine Braun University of Surrey, Guildford, UK

Jeremy L. Brunson Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, USA

Alev Bulut Istanbul University, Turkey

Svetlana Burlyay Moscow State Linguistic University, Russian Federation

Ivana Čeňková Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

Catherine Chabasse University of Mainz, Germersheim, Germany

Andrew K. F. Cheung Hong Kong Polytechnic University, China

Ingrid K. Christoffels Leiden University, Netherlands

Libby Clark Charles Sturt University, Australia

Ángela Collados Aís Universidad de Granada, Spain

Eugenia Dal Fovo Università degli Studi di Trieste, Italy

Helle V. Dam Aarhus University, Denmark

Elena Davitti University of Surrey, Guildford, UK

Annette M. B. de Groot University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Robyn Dean University of Rochester Medical Center, USA

Jean Delisle University of Ottawa, Canada

Ebru Diriker Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey

Rosalind Edwards University of Southampton, UK

Caterina Falbo Università degli Studi di Trieste, Italy

Isabel Galhano Rodrigues Universidade do Porto, Portugal

Nikolay Garbovskiy Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russian Federation

Olalla García Becerra Universidad de Granada, Spain

Giuliana Garzone Università degli Studi di Milano, Italy

Laura Gavioli Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy

Adolfo Gentile University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Daniel Gile Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, France

Nadja Grbić University of Graz, Austria

Patrice Guex Université de Lausanne, Switzerland

Ewa Gumul University of Silesia, Sosnowiec, Poland

Sandra B. Hale University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

Erik Hertog KU Leuven, Belgium

Adelina Hild University of Leicester, UK

Ildikó Horváth Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

Elaine Hsieh University of Oklahoma, USA

Emilia Iglesias Fernández Universidad de Granada, Spain

Moira Inghilleri University of Massachusetts, Amherst, USA

Susanne Jekat Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur, Switzerland

Mira Kadrić University of Vienna, Austria

Sylvia Kalina Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Frances Karttunen University of Texas at Austin, USA

Francine Kaufmann Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel

Nataly Kelly Nashua, NH, USA

Kim Nam Hui Kyungpook National University, South Korea

Leong Ko University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia

Turgay Kurultay Istanbul University, Turkey

Pauline Lane Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, UK

Eike Lauterbach Leipzig, Germany

Yvan Leanza Université Laval, Québec, Canada

Marianne Lederer Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, France

Lorraine Leeson Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Konstantina Liontou Ioannina, Greece

Minhua Liu Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, USA

Rachel Lung Lingnan University, Hong Kong, China

Rachel Mairs University of Reading, UK

Karen Malcolm Vancouver, BC, Canada

Aída Martínez-Gómez City University of New York, USA

Katrijn Maryns Ghent University, Belgium

Carlo Marzocchi General Secretariat of the Council of the EU, Brussels, Belgium

Ian Mason Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

Igor Matyushin Moscow State Linguistic University, Russian Federation

Peter Mead NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy

Raffaela Merlini Università di Macerata, Italy

Claudia Monacelli Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma, Italy

Ruth Morris Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel

Barbara Moser-Mercer Université de Genève, Switzerland

Ricardo Muñoz Martín Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

Jemina Napier Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

Natacha S. A. Niemants Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, Italy

Uldis Ozolins University of Western Sydney, Australia

Presentación Padilla Universidad de Granada, Spain

Carol J. Patrie Annapolis, MD, USA

Gracie Peng Tunghai University, Taichung, Taiwan

Isabelle Perez Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

Jessica Pérez-Luzardo Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

Franz Pöchhacker University of Vienna, Austria

Nike K. Pokorn University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Sonja Pöllabauer University of Graz, Austria

Macarena Pradas Macías Universidad de Granada, Spain

Erich Prunč University of Graz, Austria

Karin Reithofer University of Vienna, Austria

Sylvi Rennert University of Vienna, Austria

Alessandra Riccardi Università degli Studi di Trieste, Italy

Roda P. Roberts University of Ottawa, Canada

Siobhán Rocks University of Leeds, UK

Rhéa Rocque Université Laval, Québec, Canada

Pablo Romero-Fresco University of Roehampton, UK

E. Natalie Rothman University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada

Cynthia B. Roy Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, USA

Mariachiara Russo Università di Bologna a Forlì, Italy

Anja Rütten Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Heidemarie Salevsky Berlin, Germany

Annalisa Sandrelli Università degli Studi Internazionali di Roma, Italy

David B. Sawyer University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

Tomina Schwenke Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, GA, USA

Kilian G. Seeber Université de Genève, Switzerland

Robin Setton Paris, France

Sherry Shaw University of North Florida, Jacksonville, FL, USA

Yael Shlesinger Levinsky College of Education, Tel Aviv, Israel

Pascal Singy Université de Lausanne, Switzerland

Helen Slatyer Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

Michael Stinson National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester, NY, USA

Christopher Stone Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, USA

Daniel B. Swartz Cherry Hill, NJ, USA

Kayoko Takeda Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan

Masato Takimoto Ryukoku University, Kyoto, Japan

Christopher Thiéry Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, France

Anna C. Ticca University of Bern, Switzerland

Liisa Tiittula University of Helsinki, Finland

Šárka Timarová Leuven, Belgium

Rebecca Tipton University of Manchester, UK

Elisabet Tiselius Stockholm University, Sweden

Rachel Tribe University of East London, UK

Małgorzata Tryuk University of Warsaw, Poland

Chikako Tsuruta Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan

Anna-Riitta Vuorikoski Tampere, Finland

Cecilia Wadensjö Stockholm University, Sweden

Kim Wallmach University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Anne-Marie Widlund-Fantini Paris, France

Elizabeth A. Winston TIEM Center, Loveland, CO, USA

Michaela Wolf University of Graz, Austria

Dmitry Yermolovich Moscow State Linguistic University, Russian Federation

Elena Zagar Galvão Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal

Klaus Ziegler SDI Munich, Germany

Cornelia Zwischenberger University of Vienna, Austria

THEMATIC OUTLINE OF ENTRIES

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ACCENT

↑ INPUT VARIABLES, ↑ QUALITY CRITERIA

Accent is defined in (socio)linguistics as a manner of pronunciation specific to a given region, or to an ethnic or social group. Speakers using an acquired (foreign) language may carry over the phonetic patterns of their native language, giving rise to a non-native or 'foreign' accent, which is often understood to involve not only pronunciation (i.e. phonetic substitutions, deletions and distortions) but also non-native stress, rhythm and INTONATION. While both unfamiliar native accents and non-native accents may pose challenges in interpreter-mediated communication, most research attention is focused on non-native speech – mainly on the part of original speakers, but also on the part of interpreters themselves. In the former case, non-native accent is discussed as one of the INPUT VARIABLES in the interpreting process, while in the latter it relates to the QUALITY of the interpreter's output or performance.

Accent as an input variable

Among the input variables likely to affect an interpreter's performance, a speaker's unfamiliar accent is generally rated as one of the potentially most problematic factors, in both CONFERENCE INTERPRETING (Mackintosh 2002) and COMMUNITY INTERPRETING settings (Valero-Garcés 2003). The assumption is that non-native accents may increase the processing resources required for COMPREHENSION. Particularly in SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING (SI), where Gile's (2009) EFFORT MODEL indicates that the interpreter is usually working at – or near – the limit of available processing capacity, the demand for additional effort in listening to heavily accented input is likely to affect output quality (Gile 2011). Even so, there is little conclusive evidence of the link between unfamiliar accents and substandard interpreting performance. In studies with student subjects, Sabatini (2000) and Kurz (2008) found that output quality in SI deteriorated when the source language was heavily accented, and Lin, Chang and Kuo (2013) observed that accented speech led to information loss in SI.

The potential risk posed by non-native accents to the COMMUNICATIVE EFFECT of (simultaneous) interpreting is particularly relevant in relation to the widespread use of ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA in international conferences. An interview-based study by Chang and Wu (2014) among conference interpreters in Taiwan confirms that non-native speakers of English have become a normal part of professional reality. The survey indicates that accents are considered the major challenge in interpreting non-native speakers, with some accents perceived to be more difficult than others, and that experienced professionals have developed a number of STRATEGIES for coping with the difficulties arising from non-native English.

The way interpreters cope with accents also depends on DIRECTIONALITY. Understanding a B language when that language is 'clouded' by an unfamiliar accent is clearly more difficult than understanding one's A language in the same situation (McAllister 2000), and interpreters are known to perform better when the accented source language is their A language (Mazzetti 1999). It is thus possible that the difficulties of a speaker's non-native accent may be more readily overcome when an interpreter works from A into B. However, interpreters themselves may have a non-native accent when working into their B languages, which raises the issue of a non-native accent as a feature of the interpreter's performance quality.

Accent as a feature of output quality

An interpreter's strong accent would be likely to make listeners' comprehension more difficult. Since it is the interpreter's professional task to facilitate understanding, it seems safe to assume that a professional interpreter's non-native accent in the B language will not be so marked as to detract from intelligibility. Indeed, the results of SURVEY RESEARCH on USER EXPECTATIONS indicate that both conference interpreters and delegates rate a native accent as less important than such QUALITY CRITERIA as ACCURACY and faithfulness (FIDELITY) to the source message.

However, there may be variations in non-native accent tolerance among linguistic groups. For instance, it has been suggested that English and Russian listeners may be more tolerant of an interpreter's non-native accent than French listeners (Bartłomiejczyk 2004; Kalina 2005a; Martin 2005). Moreover, the location in which SI takes place may also determine the degree of importance placed upon an interpreter's native accent. For instance, a native German accent is a clear prerequisite when interpreters work for German TV stations (Kurz & Pöchhacker 1995) and for conferences that take place in Germany (Kalina 2005a). In addition, preferences for regional accents also vary. Although Taiwan and China both have Mandarin Chinese as their official language, the Taiwanese participants in Chang's (2009) study gave the highest rating of professionalism to a Mandarin interpreter perceived to be from Taiwan, whereas the participants from China gave the highest such rating to the interpreter perceived to be from that country.

How users evaluate the quality of SI with a non-native accent is therefore elusive. Cheung (2003) and Stévaux (2007), for instance, show that non-native accents can have a negative influence on SI listeners' quality perceptions, whereas research done in the context of various MA theses has yielded contradictory findings. However, all of these studies were conducted in an experimental setting, and the participants may have behaved differently from genuine conference attendees listening to SI.

In an effort to enhance validity, Cheung (2013) incorporated the "need for SI" into his experimental study of how native Cantonese speakers in Hong Kong rate SI into Cantonese by one native and two non-native interpreters: the requirement that participants take a comprehension test before filling in an evaluation questionnaire ensured that they would follow the interpretation attentively. The native Cantonese-speaking participants rated the two non-native interpreters (a native Mandarin speaker and a native English speaker) significantly lower than the native interpreter. The slightly higher rating given to the interpreter with a Mandarin non-native accent than to her counterpart with an English non-native accent may be attributed to participants' familiarity with Mandarin-accented Cantonese, as China is Hong Kong's major source of migrants.

Although most studies on non-native accents focus on simultaneous conference interpreting, interpreters with non-native accents also operate in other MODES and SETTINGS. Hale, Bond and Sutton (2011), in a study of CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING in a mock courtroom setting, found that interpreters' non-native accents did not affect how source speakers were perceived.

ANDREW K. F. CHEUNG

ACCREDITATION

see under CERTIFICATION

ACCURACY

↑ ASSESSMENT → FIDELITY,
→ QUALITY CRITERIA, → USER EXPECTATIONS
↓ ERROR ANALYSIS

The requirement of accuracy is specified in many codes of conduct for interpreters around the world. There are, however, few explicit definitions of the concept of accuracy, or consolidated descriptions of what accuracy in interpreting actually consists of. According to SELESKOVITCH (1968, 1978a), 'total accuracy' (or *fidélité absolue*, as it was labeled in French) is achieved when an interpretation ensures a COMMUNICATIVE EFFECT equivalent to the understanding achieved by the original listeners. In the literature on ASSESSMENT in interpreting, there seems to be a consensus both among interpreters and among interpreting scholars as to what accurate interpreting consists of. In this respect, Pöchhacker (2004a) refers to accuracy as a widely accepted yardstick that many researchers have sought to apply. Similarly, Setton and Motta (2007) describe assessors in one of their experiments as being "interpreters familiar with quality norms for accuracy, style etc. as applied in training institutions and by professional consensus". Jacobson (2009) stresses that accuracy is a vital part of a comprehensive instrument for assessing the construct of interpreter COMPETENCE.

Measuring accuracy

The interpreting product can be assessed in two ways: componentially, when the sum of different parts, such as accuracy, OMISSIONS, additions and FLUENCY, is used to measure the product; and holistically, when the product is measured as an intrinsic whole. There are many examples of different types of measurement in the literature on interpreting. Barik (1975) measured both accuracy, as gauged by omissions, additions, substitutions ('errors of translation'), and translation disruptions; Mackintosh (1983) measured the 'semantic equivalence' of 'meaning units'; Gile (1999a, 2011) investigated his 'tightrope hypothesis' through errors, omissions and infelicities; and when Kurz (1993a) followed up on Bühler's (1986) study on QUALITY CRITERIA, her surveys of different user groups included the expectation of "sense consistency with the original". These dissimilar conceptual approaches seem to indicate that accuracy has been used as an evaluation criterion without a uniform definition of what it consists of or how it is actually measured.

Déjean le Féal (1990) contends that there is a shared standard of what interpreters consider to be a professional interpretation. However, such a standard seems so far to have eluded a common definition. Gile (1999b), for example, noting that measurements of QUALITY rely heavily on the frequency of errors and omissions (Gile 2003), has demonstrated that users show highly variable results when evaluating interpreting, while Collados Aís et al. (2011) have shown that componential evaluations are affected by raters' variable and dissimilar understanding of the components to be assessed.

For measurements of the interpreting product in professional situations, such as CERTIFICATION tests, Turner, Lai and Huang (2010) claim that most such tests for interpreters use the following methods: (1) error analysis/deduction systems; (2) criterion-referencing (the use of scales of descriptors to describe test performance), with no system of error analysis/deduction; or (3) a combination of the two.

Accuracy seems to be fuzzily defined in certification tests, and perhaps deliberately so. The oral component of the US Federal Court Interpreter Certification Examination (FCICE) uses so-called scoring units (i.e. selected words and phrases deemed to represent features of language that must be rendered 'accurately and completely without altering any of the meaning or style of speech'); in order to pass, 80% of these scoring units have to be transferred correctly (FCICE 2014). In Britain, the candidate handbook for the Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DIPSI) gives the following description for the highest performance level regarding 'accuracy' (as opposed to 'delivery' and 'language use') in the interpreting units: "The candidate [.] conveys sense of original message with complete accuracy; transfers all information without omissions, additions, distortions; demonstrates complete competence in conveying verbal content and familiarity with subject matter" (IoLET 2010: 10). And in Sweden, the regulations for state certification include the following instructions for assessment: "Semantic/terminological rendering: The interpreter must provide the central information from both parties. During the test this is calculated from the number of transferred meaning-bearing elements. The interpreting is unacceptable if key information is omitted" (Kammarkollegiet 2014, my translation). The US FCICE is rare among accreditation tests in publically quantifying a passing score (80%).

Defining accuracy

Although it may seem obvious to strive for complete accuracy, defining it may prove challenging. Gile (2009), Hale (1997a) and others have pointed out that omissions may be necessary in interpreting in order to ensure accuracy, and that an acceptable target speech may in fact require deviations from linguistic equivalence. Donovan-Cagigos (1990) also underscores that accuracy is relative to a communicative situation. To date there are few definitions of total accuracy and few, if any, research constructs of accuracy to be tested.

Seleskovitch's (1978a: 102) definition of accuracy as dependent on the communicative effect of the interpretation is compelling, as it seems to encompass all types of interpreters and all types of interpreting. It is also hard to pin down, however, since there are as yet no measurements of how much information needs to be transferred in order for that understanding to take place. Information is by no means an ethically, culturally or linguistically unbiased unit. It can be argued that Seleskovitch's definition is monolingual and biased towards the concept of a standard, indivisible national language. Even listeners who share a language may understand information differently, depending on their social, cultural and economic background. Furthermore, accuracy in interpreting also differs according to whether the perspective is monologic or dialogic (Wadensjö 1998). If meaning is co-constructed in a dialogic interpreting context, then at least part of the accuracy is too.

There is arguably a least common denominator of what accurate interpreting consists of. Although many researchers have studied which elements both interpreters and their clients consider to be essential for good interpreting, few have investigated accuracy as a construct in its own right or ventured evidence-based definitions. It remains largely unclear what type of information, and how much of it, needs to be conveyed in order for communication to occur. Gile's (2009: 35) proposal to view accuracy, or FIDELITY, in interpreting as a variably weighted combination of 'content' (information transfer) and 'packaging' provides some conceptual foundation. It remains to be tested, however, how much information is 'enough' and what makes it 'understandable' in a given situation of interaction.

ELISABET TISELIUS

ACTION RESEARCH

↑ METHODOLOGY

Action research is a form of inquiry that aims to translate research outcomes into social gains by way of participatory and collaborative projects. Rather than a METHODOLOGY, action research is best described as an *orientation* to the research process (Reason & Bradbury 2008), since action research projects may reflect differences in EPISTEMOLOGY and employ a variety of research methods.

The origins of action research lie in philosophical explorations into the relationship between knowledge acquisition and experience, and into the interrelation between knowledge and action (see Kemmis & McTaggart 1988; Kemmis et al. 2014). These philosophical influences have engendered two main, but distinct, epistemological approaches to action research: reflective practice and critical theory, respectively. The former could encompass research to improve professional practice at the local, or perhaps the classroom or community of practice level, within the capacities of individuals and the situations in which they are working; for the latter, action research is part of a broader agenda of changing practice, changing systems, and changing society.

Social psychologist Kurt Lewin is most often credited with being the founder of action research. In a series of change experiments undertaken in workplaces in America in the 1940s, Lewin sought to change the attitudes and social conditions of participants through their active involvement in decision-making during the research process (Lewin 1947). He held that stakeholders who would be affected by change should be involved in the processes leading up to it, and that such participation was crucial to the success of the research.

The action research process is conceived of as a spiral or series of cycles, with reflexivity embedded in every step. Each turn in the spiral comprises the stages of analysis, reconnaissance, reconceptualization of the problem, planning the intervention, implementation of the plan and evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention. Subsequent cycles relate to revised planning and implementation, until outcomes are satisfactory in terms of resolution of the problem. More than one cycle must be undertaken for the reflective processes to be completed, though many published reports fail to clearly articulate the different cycles in relation to the procedures and methods followed.

Action research is typically undertaken *with* participants rather than *on* participants (Reason & Bradbury 2008), which tends to blur the traditional roles of researchers and research participants. However, reflective practitioners contest the necessity of collaboration, arguing that action research can also be implemented for individualistic applications.

In INTERPRETING STUDIES, action research has been applied primarily in the context of interpreter EDUCATION and training. Projects range from large-scale CURRICULUM evaluations and more focused projects on designing and implementing curricular innovation (e.g. Napier 2005a; Slatyer 2006) to evaluations of an intervention in the interpreting classroom (Boéri & de Manuel Jeréz 2011; Gorm Hansen & Shlesinger 2007; Krouse 2010; Napier et al. 2013; Pierce & Napier 2010). These projects are all observational case studies for which data was collected using one or more of the following methods: pre-/post-intervention surveys and INTERVIEWS, learning journals, focus groups, and collection and analysis of learning tasks and assessments.

The introduction of an innovation into an educational program requires careful monitoring of the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention. An action research orientation allows for the adjustment of the conditions of the intervention to ensure that it meets the needs of the participants. Typical of this type of action research is the project by Gorm Hansen and Shlesinger (2007), which was motivated by an economic and social imperative to reduce the number of face-to-face teaching hours and make learning less stressful in a course in CONSECUTIVE INTERPRETING. The PEDAGOGY was changed to a more self-directed learning approach, and new TECHNOLOGY introduced to enable students to work independently in the lab. With a similar goal of improving students' consecutive interpreting performance, Napier, Song and Ye (2013) explored the use of iPads and dedicated software in the interpreting classroom. The action research orientation allowed for ongoing monitoring and reappraisal of the methods and technology that were used.

Action research projects drawing on critical theory, where the aim is to implement a change in perceptions, cultures or systems, are rare in interpreting studies. Noteworthy exceptions include the Marius Project at the University of Granada (Boéri & de Manuel Jerez 2011), which sought to fundamentally change the social profile of conference interpreters by applying a social-critical stance to interpreter education in a series of dynamic change cycles, and the work of Weber, Singy and Guex (2005) in Lausanne. With the aim of increasing the use of interpreters in the health system, the researchers held focus groups with key stakeholders (patients, healthcare providers and interpreters) before and after an intervention aimed at enhancing the skills of medical interpreters. Divergent views about GENDER emerged as a major issue in relation to the ROLE of medical interpreters.

Individual reflective projects are less commonly reported. These are small-scale case studies of personal relevance that focus on aspects of practice as professional development. A notable exception is the special issue of *Deaf Worlds* reported by Hale and Napier (2013, Ch. 4), which was devoted to a series of interpreter case studies.

There is clearly much potential for greater implementation of action research in interpreting studies, in the educational sphere, but also beyond, so as to exploit the inherent reflexivity for interpreting practice and also to apply it in the broader context of social systems in which interpreters work.

HELEN SLATYER

ACTIVIST APPROACH

↑ ETHICS, ↑ IDEOLOGY

Activist practices of interpreting constitute a fairly recent object of enquiry in interpreting studies. It is in the area of CONFERENCE INTERPRETING that the activist approach emerged and developed, (a) as a result of the conference-like format of international activist gatherings and (b) as a reaction against the tendency of mainstream conference interpreting scholarship and professional practice to focus on providing a service for the most powerful players in society.

The scope of the literature on activist interpreting revolves around case studies of networks and associations of volunteer interpreters positioned outside the classic interpreting labour market and catering for the communicative needs of civil society and the social movements sector. These include ECOS – Translators and Interpreters for Solidarity – an association of volunteers based at the University of Granada, Spain, and Babels, an international network of volunteer translators and interpreters. Both support grassroots initiatives, broadly subsumed within the Alter-globalization and Global Justice movements. Another group is International Conference Volunteers (ICV), which works for the non-governmental sector, closely linked to UN agencies.

While activist interpreter groups give voice to resistant rather than dominant ideologies and to global political agendas, they may take different stances on activism – ranging from a charitable, humanitarian activism which responds to a need not covered by mainstream society, to political activism which seeks to bring about a transformation of society. Along the spectrum between the two, activist interpreting ranges from a free-of-charge conventional interpreting service (with an emphasis on efficiency, QUALITY and professionalism) to the launching of an alternative organizational policy for interpreting which prefigures the desired social change (with an emphasis on the empowerment of minoritized communities). Structures may vary accordingly, from strong institutionalization, typical of the non-governmental sector, to lack of formalization, typical of the large grassroots networks.

Even though activist interpreter communities take a clear stance within this spectrum of possibilities – ICV as an institutionalized group which offers a free but conventional interpreting service, and ECOS and Babels as participative networks which propose an alternative interpreting policy – they are pressured both to provide quality interpreting and to practise the political principles they advocate, as a result of their "hybrid interpreter-activist profile" (Boéri 2008: 31) and of the liminal space they occupy "between the service economy and activism" (Baker 2013). This inclines them to seek innovative ways of addressing issues related to quality and participation, as in the case of Babels and ECOS, which have professionals and novices teaming up in the booth and launching ad hoc training sessions (Lampropoulou 2010; Sánchez Balsalobre et al. 2010).

The uneven successes achieved by these groups in implementing political principles against logistical constraints make their relationships with the communities they serve (Boéri 2012), and with the professional conference interpreting community, particularly contentious. Boéri's (2008) analysis of the conflict between Babels and the professional conference interpreting community in the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) electronic forum accounts for a broad spectrum of attitudes, within professional circles, to activist interpreting: fierce opposition to volunteer work from a commercial standpoint; fierce opposition to activism per se, based on a professional ethos of NEUTRALITY; acceptance of a volunteer interpreting service subject to strict respect for professional standards; active support of Babels' alternative interpreting policy.

Privileging ethnographic fieldwork methodology, scholars have primarily focused on the collective identity, the collective action and the structure of these activist communities (an approach typical of Social Movement Theory), rather than on the actual interpreting. Apart from Gambier's (2007) descriptivist approach to activist groups of (translators and) interpreters, research has largely been carried out from a socio-critical perspective by scholars who are supportive (but at the same time critical) of the activist initiatives concerned. Such studies have been extended beyond civil society, in an attempt to examine the crucial role of researchers, educators and professionals in supporting and redressing the power asymmetries in the field and in society. This broad research agenda gave rise to the First International Forum on Translation/Interpreting and Social Activism (Boéri & Maier 2010). Beyond conference interpreting, it has led to the challenging of prescriptive codes of conduct that limit interpreters' capacity to promote "mutually effective dialogue oriented toward just outcomes" (Inghilleri 2010: 154), to calls for educators to educate citizens for society and not only to train interpreters for the labour market, and to appeals for a more inclusive and mutually supportive professional community of interpreters (de Manuel Jerez 2010; Kahane 2008; Boéri & de Manuel Jerez 2011).

JULIE BOÉRI

ADDITIONS

see under ERROR ANALYSIS

ADVOCACY

see under ROLE

AFRICA

↑ HISTORY

Though written records on the subject are scanty and interpreters have hardly ever occupied the limelight through the ages, it is reasonable to hypothesise that the practice of interpreting from one natural language to another on the African continent, as elsewhere, goes back thousands of years. For most of human history, communication has been based essentially on speech, and ORALITY and oral tradition are indeed of particular relevance in the African context.

In the ancient African kingdoms, such as those found in present-day Ghana, Mali and Zimbabwe, the professional linguist was considered the official spokesperson and the repository of the memory and knowledge of his people, with a special talent for narrating their history and culture (Bandia 2009). A case in point are the Ashanti 'linguists', whose functions are described as "repeating the words of their patron after him, acting as herald to make it clear to all his audience and to add to his utterances the extra authority of remoteness" (Danquah 1928: 42). On this account, the 'linguist' was also entrusted with perfecting the speech of a chief who was not sufficiently eloquent.

In many African societies, the professional linguist – also known as a *griot* ('bard') in Francophone Africa (Bandia 2009), or as an *imbongi* or traditional praise singer in Southern Africa (Stuart 1968) – belonged to a long line of gifted orators and tribal historians who devised praise songs to celebrate the 'praise names', victories and glorious qualities of the chief and his ancestors, and recited these on important public occasions. Professional linguists often enjoyed a privileged position in society, and wielded a great deal of political power due to their proximity to the king. Their interventions took many forms, from respeaking the king's words in more accessible or more poetic forms (intralingual interpreting) to interpreting into other languages. They were known for their mastery of several languages (Bandia 2010), and in fact the oral art of West African *griots* and Southern African *iimbongi* largely continues today, with praise singers acting as modern political commentators on post-independence leaders such as Senghor and Mandela (Kaschula 1999).

The history of interpreting in Africa can broadly be divided into three periods (Bandia 2009): the pre-colonial, the colonial and the post-colonial era.

The pre-colonial period

In West Africa, there was commerce with the Arab world as early as the seventh and eighth centuries, always involving locals who acted as intermediaries and interpreters. The Portuguese explored the eastern and southern coasts and traded with the locals from the fifteenth century, but beyond the trading posts on the coast, and strategically important areas such as Algeria and South Africa, the rulers of African land were African, and Europe saw no reason to intervene (Pakenham 1991).

Two famous interpreters from Southern Africa stand out as legendary figures: Autshumato and Eva. Autshumato ('Chief Harry'), seen as the embodiment of the interpreter as traitor, was a Khoikhoi leader. He became an interpreter for Jan Van Riebeeck, who wished to establish a refreshment station at the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa on behalf of the Dutch East India Company in 1652. Although the situation looked promising, the Company's need for cattle meant barter with the local inhabitants or *strandlopers* (lit. 'beach walkers'), who spoke an incomprehensible tongue. Chief Autshumato, who had learned to speak English after being taken to the East on an English ship, helped to facilitate trade. However, Autshumato rightly saw the Dutch as a threat to the existence of his tribe, and in 1658 was accused of misinterpretation and lack of loyalty to the Dutch. He was imprisoned on Robben Island, but was one of the very few political prisoners there who managed to escape.

Krotoa, also known as Eva, was Autshumato's niece, born around 1642, and was the embodiment of the interpreter as collaborator or 'slave'. Eva's story parallels that of MALINCHE. In return for cattle (to be secured by Autshumato), housekeeping and interpreting services, Van Riebeeck offered Krotoa a Christian home. She quickly learned Dutch, donned Western attire, converted to Christianity, and soon acted as both interpreter and mistress to Van Riebeeck. It is clear from a jubilant entry in Van Riebeeck's journal ("Eva says she has a Dutch heart") that the Dutch commander's interest in her was crucial to relations at the Cape. Much like the Mexicans' distrust of La Malinche, Khoi descendants saw Eva as 'the woman between', both collaborator and traitor. Dan Sleigh's book *Eilande*, written originally in Afrikaans and translated into English as *Islands* (2004), traces the stories of the early settlers in the Cape, with examples of FICTIONAL INTERPRETERS.

The colonial period: explorers, evangelists and their interpreters

By the mid-1800s, explorers such as David Livingstone had opened up the interior for discovery, and the 'Scramble for Africa' had begun. Within half a generation, Europe had annexed almost the entire continent, with six nations in particular – France, Britain, Portugal, Germany, Italy and Belgium – changing Africa's linguistic landscape forever. Journalist-explorers such as Henry Stanley, sailor-explorers like Pierre de Brazza, soldier-explorers like Frederick Lugard and gold and diamond tycoons like Cecil Rhodes all rushed to heed Livingstone's call in 1857 for a worldwide crusade to open up Africa to 'commerce and Christianity' and to combat the slave trade organised by Swahili and Arabs in East Africa (Pakenham 1991). There were hardly any exploratory expeditions into the African hinterland that did not include interpreters, some of whom no doubt saved their leaders from disaster, and others whose linguistic skills were doubtful in the extreme.

As time went by, interpreters were increasingly needed not only to facilitate trade and exploration, but also to assist in the negotiation of often one-sided treaties with colonial powers. When the colonisers proceeded to effective occupation, interpreters also became involved in the inevitable armed conflicts that ensued.

African interpreters proved indispensable to the operation of the colonial system. In courtrooms, district offices and health clinics, African colonial employees enabled communication, provided information, and oversaw the implementation – and reinterpretation – of colonial policies (Lawrance et al. 2006). Interpreters were crucial to the effective functioning of the colonial administration, because few Europeans learned African languages, but also because budgetary constraints prevented the hiring of European interpreters. The colonial period saw the STATUS of the African interpreter being raised and made official, bolstering his rank in the social and administrative hierarchy (Niang 1990). However, there were numerous issues with interpreters' NEUTRALITY, particularly in COURTROOM INTERPRETING, and many may have taken advantage of their privileged positions, as described by Amadou Hampâté Bâ (1973) in *L'étrange destin de Wangrin*.

Interpreters (and translators) have also played an important role in the evangelisation of Africa, assisting missionaries from Europe and America to spread the word of God and, at the same time, to codify the languages of Africa for the first time. This tradition continues today, with interpreting in RELIGIOUS SETTINGS being performed to assist multilingual congregations all over Africa.